

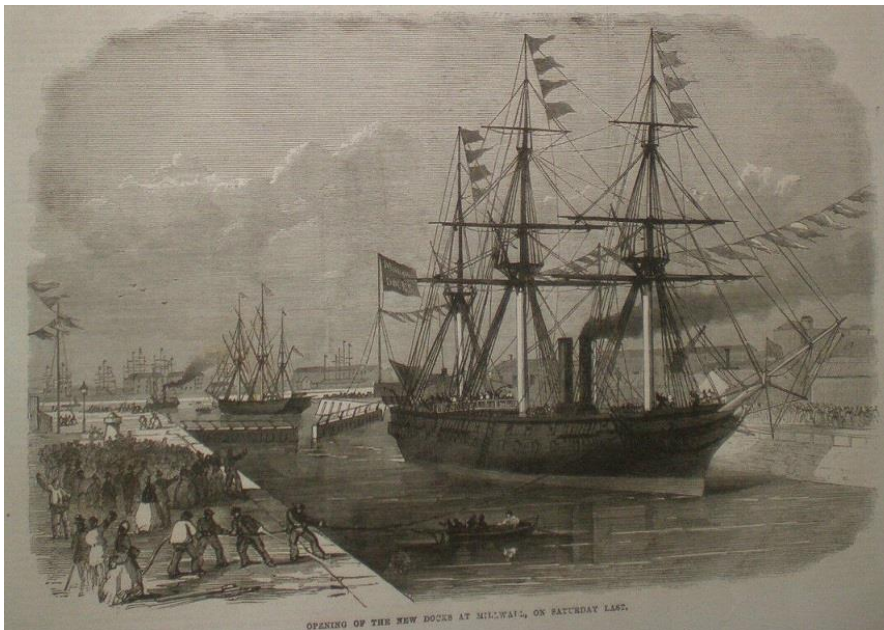
7 East Ferry Road, Isle of Dogs, Poplar, London and my Buckley grandfather Discoveries and Changes

The “discoveries” are mine and the “changes” are since his days in East London.

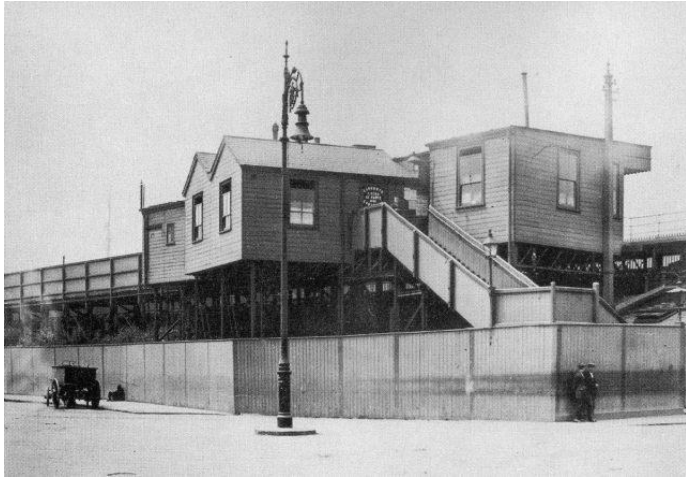
Having first used the Blackwall Tunnel over 40 years ago, I recently realised how close it is to the east side of the Isle of Dogs - it was not built until the 1890s though, so not around in grandfather's time. Even closer to No 7 is Harbour Exchange (HX) where I went for meetings in the 1990s - what a surprise to see the building when walking round from East Ferry Road to Marsh Wall on the way to South Quay DLR station in July 2021; I did not even know about my nearby family connections in those HX days! With my maternal grandfather being born in London I am not of 100% Scots background as I once thought and now feel a strong East London association. My paternal grandfather also spent time billeted nearby during World War 1 at Huddlestons Road, Forest Gate.



My maternal grandfather, Overton John Buckley, was born at 7 East Ferry Road on 29th February 1884 (an East Ender?). In 1851 his father and grandfather lived in Somerstown, St Pancras. His father was a boiler maker - the area has several ship yards and docks so work was most likely very nearby. Overton became an engineer with a railway in Buenos Aires and seemingly had a technical education near to his Isle of Dogs home. Poplar Technical College was not built until 1906 but it is unlikely, he went there at age 22. So where were colleges in or near the Isle of Dogs then? However, from an old map it looks as if his school was almost just across the road. In the 1891 Census the family lived at No 60 East Ferry Road.

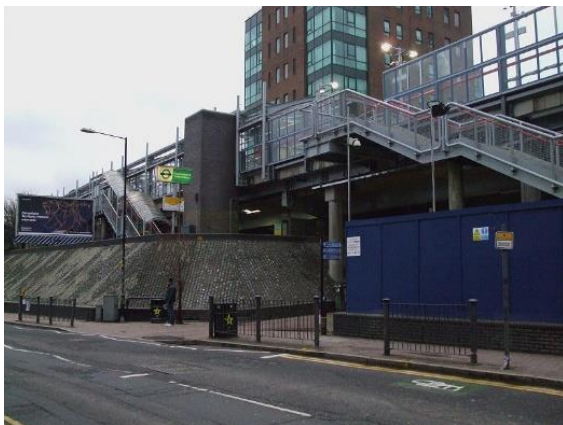


Opening of the new docks at Millwall in 1868. My great grandfather – Overton Truscott Buckley – was a boiler maker. He would have been 25 years old when these docks were opened.



← Millwall Dock station in the 1920s - it was opened in 1871. The original Fenchurch Street to Blackwall railway was branched as the Millwall Extension Railway.

Crossharbour station on the Docklands Light Railway is near No 7 and the view to that spot would not have been that much different in the late 1800s as it is now ↓



Street name may be the same now and paving blocks are not unfamiliar but look at the grey concrete box cover belonging to Post Office Telephones. Alexander Graham Bell patented the telephone in 1878. In 1878 one of the first telephone lines to be erected in the vicinity of London was from Hay's Wharf, south of the Thames, to Hay's Wharf Office on the north bank - very near the Isle of Dogs which now houses high tech, globally connected businesses.



Photo taken in 2021 outside where Number 7 would have been - a terraced house in Cubitt town – now the location of the Queen of the Isle apartments.

In 1884 no cars (Carl Benz invented the car a year later but unlikely they would have driven around here for some time). Yellow lines appeared in the 1950s - no need in Buckley family times!

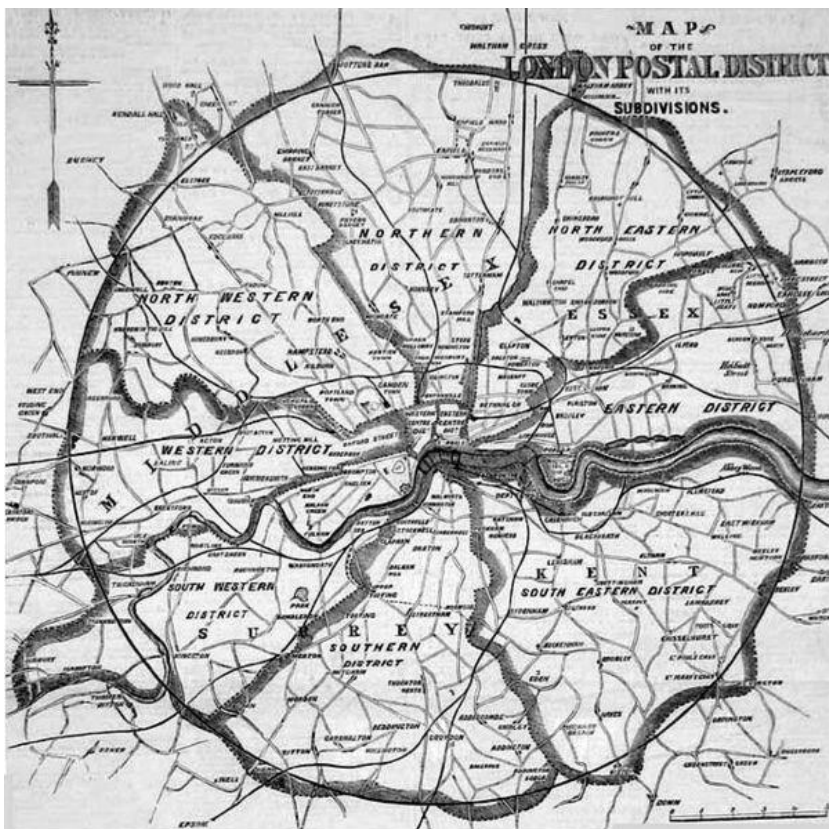
In 1882 The Electrical Power Storage Company set up a factory at 84 West Ferry Road, Millwall (the west side of the Isle of Dogs – now the A1206) producing accumulators for commercial electric lighting. When my grandfather was born (on the east side of the Isle of Dogs) batteries started to be supplied for private houses such as Sir David Salomons Broomhill residence in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Experiments with electric traction began in 1882 - the first production electric car appeared in London in 1884; 124 years later the first Tesla car appeared.



Cafe culture was certainly bouyant in downtown London in Victorian times. By the early 1700s there were hundreds of coffee houses in the city. Perhaps they did not percolate to the East End where there were many established pubs. Nearest pub to No 7 was the Queen built in 1855 but pubs had been on the Island since the 1700s. The nearest one still standing today is the George pictured on the next page.



One of the few if not the only building surviving from my grandfather's day - much of the area was bombed in World War 2; the rest demolished and redeveloped. The George pub on the corner of East Ferry Road and Glengall Grove has an address of 114 Glengall Grove, Millwall, London E14 3ND. See below for comments on post codes.



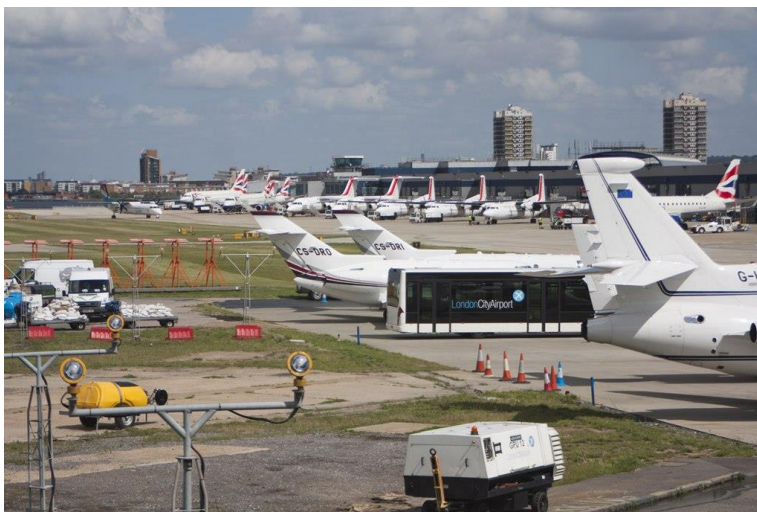
Because there were quite a few common street names in Victorian times London was split up into 8 wedges each with a letter corresponding to a point of the compass - the Isle of Dogs and points east as far as Romford became "E" - the Eastern District. Around the time of the First World War numbers were added and Poplar became E14.

Grandfather Buckley would have lived in London, E but at the time not E14.

Across the Thames from the Isle Of Dogs is the Millennium Dome (The O2 Arena) – this is a view from there across the river:-



Not only the buildings in and near Canary Wharf but also a view into the city of London (right hand side - including the so-called cheese grater) and in the centre - at a distance - the Shard by London Bridge station. East Ferry Road is on the Thames side of the sky scrapers. All quite different from the mid to late 1800s when the area would have been full of docks, wharves and ship building yards.



Nowadays the Isle of Dogs would be a good viewing point for some plane spotting, not least with City Airport just to the east. Overton Buckley and his father may have known the Royal Victoria and Royal Albert Docks as two of what later became the Royal Group of Docks with the addition of George V Dock in 1912 - the year my mother was born. However, no plane spotting in the late 1800s - the first flight with a powered, controlled aircraft was not until the Wright brothers in 1903.

London City Airport apron - [photo by Senseiich](#)



This [Photo by Katie Chan](#) sums up the changes since Overton Buckley's day - not least being an "aerial" photograph. No 7 is, more or less, under the red star. ★

Thanks mainly to <https://islandhistory.wordpress.com> for material used in my research.

More material on [East Ferry Road – the oldest road on the Isle of Dogs](#).



This is the only photo I have seen of my grandfather, Overton John Buckley, from an ID Card / Visa seemingly travelling from the Argentine to Brazil in 1945. A chance find on Wikitree in December 2019 with a link to Christine (Buckley) Milling - we have the same great, great grandfather. She surfaced a lot of information about our family - many thanks, Christine.

And finally - this building is the home of the Museum of London Docklands. Built in 1802 as sugar warehouses it was mostly likely seen not only by my grandfather and his father (working as a boiler maker on the Isle of Dogs) but also many family members.



However, this crane outside the Docklands Museum may be 20th century but the contrast between what they were used for in the 19th and 20th centuries and now is great. Antennas of this type not around in grandfather's day!



This article was compiled by Norman J Penny - grandson of Overton John Buckley - an Invernessian currently living in Birchington, Kent. normanjpenny@gmail.com