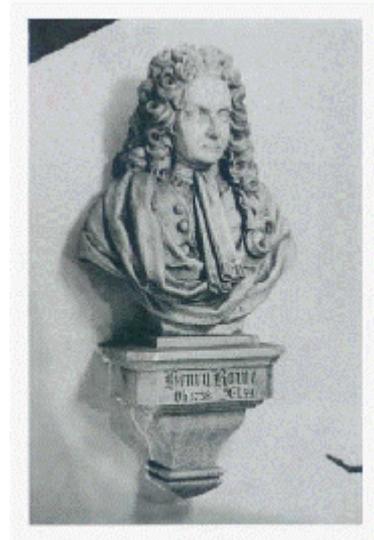


History

Raine's Foundation School

The Tower Hamlets college building in Arbour Square was previously occupied (1913-1985) by Raine's Foundation School which was founded in 1719, i.e., almost 280 years ago. Henry Raine was a wealthy brewer, who lived from 1679 until 1738 in the semi-rural hamlet of Wapping-Stepney, which was at that time the home of many of London's well-to-do merchants. In 1719, Henry Raine founded a school which was to provide education for 50 boys and 50 girls from the district. The first school buildings were located in **Charles Street**, and afterwards became known as "The Lower School". The Founder himself appointed the first master and mistress of the School; the master received £40 a year and the mistress a more modest sum of £20. Children were admitted between eight and nine years old and educated for four years, after which they were placed in suitable jobs - the boys usually being apprenticed and the girls going into domestic service.



In 1736, Henry Raine built his "Boarding School", known afterwards as "Raine's Hospital", for the education and domestic training of 40 girls, selected from the Lower School. Life at the Boarding School was quite comfortable and the girls were given a complete set of clothes and regular meals, probably for the first time in their lives. When the girls left Raine's they were found places of work by the Governors and there was some competition among employers to obtain Raine's pupils.

To accommodate the increasing number of pupils, a new building for the boys was erected on land belonging to the Foundation at the rear of the Boarding School. The Education Act of 1870 enabled the School to apply to the Charity Commissioners to erect new premises in **Cannon Street Road** and by 1885 both Boy's and Girl's Schools had taken up residence there.

Under an Amending Scheme of 1904, the Foundation Schools were conducted as a Dual Secondary School and the School premises at Cannon Street Road became quite inadequate. The Education Authorities repeatedly pressed upon the Governors the necessity for more suitable buildings on a larger site. A site was finally acquired in **Arbour Square**, Stepney. New buildings were erected at a cost of £36,500 and occupation took place in January 1913. The new School buildings provided excellent facilities to study Science, Manual Instruction and Technical Drawing, Domestic Science, Art and also a modern gymnasium in the basement. A rifle range was situated on the roof and this was eventually converted into three classrooms. In 1938 another addition was made, with the building of the Girl's gymnasium at the north end of the school. It was during this time that the public house to the south end of the school was demolished and the school canteen built. School life was from 8.30am to 4.30pm with a half-day every Friday.

Much of school life was centred on the spacious Hall, with its wide gallery - known as "The Great

Hall"- and its lower parts panelled in American ash, which was painted in Wedgewood colours during renovations in 1964. For 51 years before 1964 the Hall was divided into two parts, one serving the Boy's School and the other the Girl's. This division was accomplished by means of a great folding screen, which was reported in the "Westminster Gazette" in 1913 as being by far the largest in the world, its actual height being 24 feet. In 1964, the Boy's and Girl's schools were merged and the divided Hall became one.

In 1985, Raine's Foundation School moved from Arbour Square to a Lower School in **Old Bethnal Green Road** and an Upper School in **Approach Road, Bethnal Green**, where they remain today.



Old Lower School, built 1719



Boy's school, Cannon Street Road, Acquired 1880



Girl's School built 1885, Cannon Street Road

Atmosphere in the school throughout the century.



Arbour Square Building, built 1913



Girls School pupils on the steps of St. George's in the East Church, 1873



Chemical Laboratory, 1913



Teachers preparing for class



Boys School Class



The Great Hall, 1913