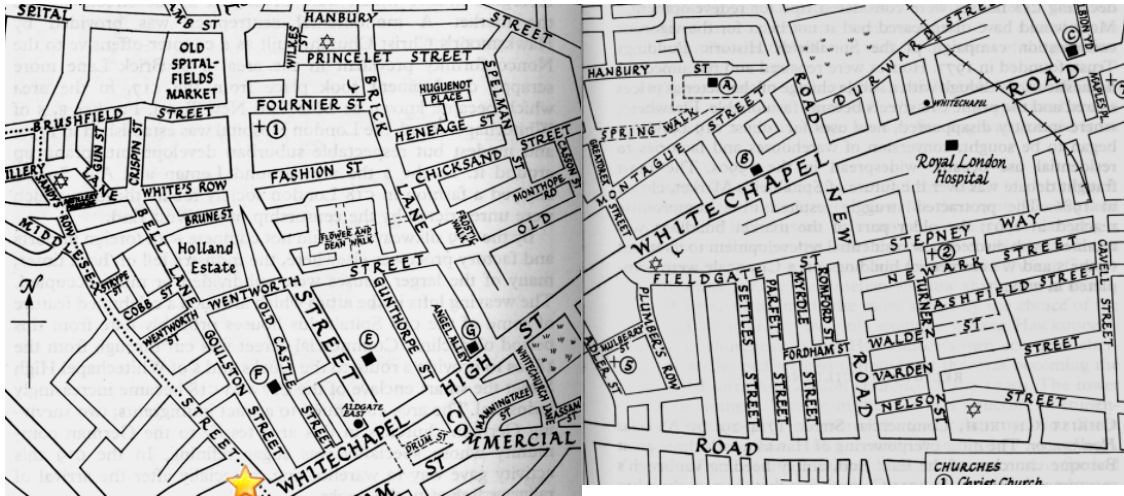


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Pevsner Architectural Guides

Story of London Walking Trails: High Street 2012, Roadway to Radicalism

YALE



East End.
This was the **Battle of Cable Street** on October 4th 1936, when local people repulsed an attack by Fascist leader Oswald

Continue east and turn right into Fieldgate Street, to view the **Tower House**, a former hostel built by philanthropist Lord Rowton. It was designed by H.B. Measures and opened in 1902. It originally had accommodation for 816 men - **Joseph Stalin** and **Maxim Litvinov** stayed here for 6 pence per night in 1907 while attending the **Fifth Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party** (see below). In his book *People of the Abyss* (1902), writer Jack London described it as a "Monster Doss House" full of "life that is degrading and unwholesome". The building has been converted to flats.

Begin the walk at Aldgate Tube Station (star on map). It is a very long trail, and continues via Whitechapel and Mile End Road to Bow Road Tube Station. This walk examines the history of all the radical political or religious movements which either evolved along High Street 2012 (the route to the Olympic Park, which includes Mile End Road) or roads leading off it, or played a part in the history of the area.

Aldgate Tube station was the site of one of the terrorist suicide attacks that London suffered on 7th June 2007. Walk east to the corner of Commercial Street and Whitechapel High Street, the so called **Gardeners Corner**, the scene of one of the most iconic events in the history of the

Mosley and his blackshirts.

Proceed along Whitechapel High Street and visit the famous **Freedom Press Bookshop** (Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street), publishers associated with the books produced by the political groups in the area. Also stop outside the old **Whitechapel Library** (adjoining Whitechapel Art Gallery) (G), once a centre for political meetings. The building was designed in the arts and crafts style 1891-2 by Potts, Son & Hennings. The façade is decorated with elegant terracotta plaques.



Return to Whitechapel Road – on the north side just before you reach Whitechapel Tube Station is **Fulbourne Street**; it was in a building in this street that the proceedings of the **Fifth Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party** took place in 1907. This convention discussed how Communist states would be run in the future, and solidified the supremacy of the Bolsheviks within the Communist movement.

Continue east and turn right into **Sidney Street**, where the famous **Siege of Sidney Street** occurred in 1911. The siege began after Latvian revolutionaries, wanted for the murder of four police officers during a botched robbery in Houndsditch, were traced to their hideout at



100 Sidney Street. Two hundred police officers and Scots Guards cordoned off the area; after a protracted gun battle, fire consumed the building. Winston Churchill, then Home Secretary, narrowly escaped death when a stray bullet went through his top hat.

Turn left into Lindley Street and left into **Jubilee Street**, once the site of the **Workers' Friends Club**, founded by **Rudolf Rocker** in 1906. Although born a Roman Catholic in Germany, Rocker was involved with the Jewish Anarchist movement in the East End and named the club after a Yiddish weekly newspaper.

Continue east along Redman's Road and Cressy Place to **Stepney Green**, one of the areas associated with the **Peasants revolt of 1381**. Led by Wat Tyler, the revolt was in response to heavy taxes levied by Richard II. On the west side are **Dunstan's Houses**, tenements



built in 1899 by the East End Dwellings Company. **Rudolph Rocker** lived at no. 43.

Walk north to **Mile End Road**. It was near here that **William Booth** founded the **Salvation Army** after a series of religious meetings held on the **Mile End Waste**, part of the old common land (that included Stepney Green) that survived on the north side of Mile End Road. Continue east along the north side of Mile End Road, past Stepney Green Tube Station and Bancroft Road, to the campus of **Queen Mary Westfield College, University of London**. It was founded in 1885 by Unitarian philanthropists who donated £20,000 to establish technical schools. The **New People's Palace**, now part of the university, was built in 1936 as an entertainment space for the local populace. The façade is embellished with impressive **relief sculptures** representing drama, music, dancing and sport by Eric Gill.



Continue east past Mile End Tube Station and end the trail at Bow Road Tube Station. Opposite the station is **Electric House**.

On the façade is the **Minnie Lansbury Memorial Clock**. The Heritage of London Trust recently helped restore it. A local suffragette and member of Poplar Council, Lansbury died after being sent to prison for refusing to levy rates on the local poor in 1922.



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