

The Politics of the Working-class Suburb: Walthamstow, 1870-1914

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The rise of suburbia was one of the most significant social changes in Britain after 1850. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Greater London, where the population of the extra-mural suburbs (those outside of the London County Council administrative area) rose from 414,000 to 2,996,000 between 1861 and 1921.¹ Until recently, the growth of suburbs was thought to have played a crucial role in the emergence of Conservative political hegemony between 1885 and 1902.² This interpretation of suburban politics was first expounded by James Cornford in 1963, and has been restated since. Savage and Miles, for instance, argue that “Once underway ... suburbanisation had a widespread impact. It created generally middle-class areas which formed an increasingly solid bedrock of Tory support”.³ Philip Waller summarised the whole interpretation thus:

Suburbia tended to Conservatism in politics, a counterweight to urban Radicalism and socialistic collectivism, which were hated for their high spending egalitarian tendencies... Pervasive Tory politicians took account of these tendencies in the redistribution of constituency boundaries in 1885.⁴

More recently, however, this view of the political impact of suburbanisation has been criticised, along with the “electoral sociology” approach to political history, of which it forms part. A number of studies have revealed that suburbs were neither reflexively Conservative, nor socially homogenous. Frans Coetzee has demonstrated that, in nineteenth-century Croydon, local Liberal parliamentary candidates actually performed relatively well, seriously threatening Conservative control; suggesting that the image of suburbia as an automatic Tory stronghold is misleading.⁵ Elsewhere, Tom Jeffrey argues that the suburbs of the inter-war era were not monadic Tory bastions, preferring to place the politics of these areas within a more dynamic framework.⁶ Mark Clapson also challenges the image of the intrinsically conservative suburb, highlighting the suburban basis to the politics of the “Middle Way” in the post-war era.⁷

These revisionist perspectives raise important problems for understanding the nature of suburban politics; indeed, they even tend to suggest that the search for a peculiarly suburban politics is flawed. They have, however, neglected to address the working-class suburb. This is an important omission, because, in terms of population, working-class suburbs were among the largest and fastest growing of suburban areas. In 1901, just four working-class suburbs, Tottenham, East Ham, Walthamstow and Enfield, could field a combined population of around 450,000. Despite the absence of a thoroughgoing investigation of their politics, working-class suburbs have come to be viewed as a factor tending toward the ‘de-radicalisation’ of late-Victorian working-class culture and politics. This is in large part due to Gareth Stedman-Jones’s argument that working-class suburbanisation contributed to the movement away from a work-centred culture that undermined artisan Radicalism.⁸ By looking in detail at the actual political experience of one suburb, in this case Walthamstow, this chapter challenges this view and attempts to show that Radicals could successfully operate within a working-class suburb. Radicals contested the social and political identity of suburbia, especially through suburban municipal politics and the struggle for local democracy. In turn, they faced strong opposition from anti-democratic and anti-populist forces, represented by an alliance of

Conservatives and former Liberals within the 'Moderate' movement. The suburb was a battleground in which class played an important role in efforts to promote, or retard, democratic politics.

Walthamstow underwent a remarkable transformation between 1870 and 1914, when the parish's population increased from just 10,000 to some 125,000 people.⁹ Until the 1870s, Walthamstow was no more than a large Essex village with a population composed of a combination of wealthy city merchants, bankers and their servants, mixed with rural workers and more prosperous London shopkeepers, with a sprinkling of artisans who had moved away from the city.¹⁰ The parish constituted three separate villages: one centred on the parish church of St Mary; one in the west at St James's Street; and another to the east at Wood Street.¹¹ The beginnings of suburbanisation were indicated by the arrival of the railway in 1870, but rapid urban change only began in the 1880s, with the fastest expansion in the following decade.¹² For Charles Booth's study of London labour, Jesse Argyll described the inhabitants of Walthamstow thus:

As a rule their condition assimilates to, but on the whole is better than, that of their kindred in Bethnal Green or Shoreditch, whilst the presence of those from other parts, more particularly of country people who have obtained work in London and settle here tends to raise the tone. As might be expected the wood and furniture trades are largely represented, and there are many of the better paid section of riverside workers - warehousemen, etc; the building trades account for a good number and beyond this the occupants are, of course, of all kinds.¹³

Although predominantly populated by the working class, the new suburb was never socially homogenous. There were a substantial number of middle-class residents, who constituted the core of the local elite. There was also a growing proportion of white-collar workers. In 1901, for instance, 11 percent of the occupied male population was classed as engaged in professional or commercial occupations, and, by 1911, this figure had risen to 14 percent.¹⁴ Consequently, there was a degree of residential segregation within Walthamstow. In his description, Jesse Argyll revealed the differing social characteristics that various areas of the town exhibited. Hoe Street Ward was described as the "'West End' of Walthamstow ... inhabited by well to do city men and smaller houses for clerks and those of professional grade".¹⁵ Wood Street had the character of a country village, and Higham Hill was a "healthy northern district too remote from the railway to be troubled by newcomers of the poorer sort".¹⁶ These social differences partly reflected the pre-urban structure of Walthamstow, in which the three villages of St James's, Church Common and Wood Street had dominated the parish. Each followed its own developmental path, partly determined by their proximity to London.

One of the natural results of urban development was that the village's identity entered a period of flux and uncertainty. Descriptions of Walthamstow in the 1870s and early 1880s, naturally enough, tended to describe it as a parish, or village, rather than a town.¹⁷ This, partly, reflected the real geography of Walthamstow, and, partly, the existing residents' identification of rural Walthamstow with the institutions of parochial government and the traditional political dominance of a wealthy local elite. Initially, limited development was seen as the most desirable path to pursue. The earliest suburban development in Walthamstow, from the 1850s, was based on the erection of freehold cottages for respectable artisans. Many Freehold Land Societies advocated the construction of suburban dwellings in places like Walthamstow in order to promote temperance and suffrage causes and to remove the respectable worker from the depraved influence of the city.¹⁸ One local developer of freehold estates, Ebenezer Clarke, defended his activities in his *History of Walthamstow*:

The result of the division of the Freehold Land estates has been that many persons have been provided with commodious houses and neat gardens who previously had dwelt in habitations badly built, ill ventilated and at an inconvenient distance from their employment. It has brought many persons with their wives and families from the fog and smoke of London into a clearer atmosphere, and enabled others to purchase land and build their own houses. There are many who can date their first practical effort to provide for their future independence to these societies, and several journeymen mechanics have been raised, through their instrumentality, to the position of employers.¹⁹

Suburbanisation even offered to solve a political problem by allowing a limited number of the more desirable members of the working class effectively to purchase the suffrage. Clarke reported that 203 of 402 persons who claimed the vote, on the County of Essex register, did so on the basis of freehold property ownership.²⁰ By 1875, there were 314 persons on the register in the Walthamstow Polling District who claimed the vote on the same basis.²¹ This paternalistic ideal of suburban development was shared by other members of the local elite, and even united political opponents. In 1877, David Morgan, the Conservative chairman of the Local Board stated that, "I should like to see the lodger converted into a tenant and the tenant into a freeholder. Temperance, with hard work, self-denial, and forethought, are in God's providence, the means to this end".²² Walthamstow might develop, but only in limited ways that did not challenge middle-class control of the political structure of the town.

In time, however, it became clear that this vision of Walthamstow would be challenged. From the 1880s, the construction of a mass of small dwellings by speculative developers, signalled the beginning of the transformation that would make Walthamstow an urban working-class area. Inevitably, such development challenged the elite vision of Walthamstow as a centre of limited residence for a respectable minority. In turn, it prompted a defence of the character of the local community, which focused on Walthamstow's rurality and the undesirability of urbanisation. Resistance to speculative development united middle-class and respectable working-class elements and took the particular form of opposition to the provision of 'urban' services, thought to portend an end to the condition of rurality. At a public meeting preceding the Local Board election of 1877, Morgan was questioned over his views on the future of the town. One resident, Mr Hudson, "urged the Board to be very careful of the ratepayer's money, and not to indulge in large works, but to keep Walthamstow a country parish as long as possible".²³ There was also opposition to the costs of urban development in the area. John Higham argued that the Great Eastern Railway Company's plans to increase the provision for working-men on the railway should be opposed as:

It would not be in the interest of the ratepayers for increased facilities to be given by the railway company for bringing greater numbers of the working-classes to the parish, as to increase the number of small houses would materially increase the rates.²⁴

This sort of anti-development sensibility remained present throughout the 1880s. In 1882, there was opposition to draft by-laws, proposed by the Local Board, on the grounds that they would alter the structure of property use in the district and risked alienating the respectable enfranchised working class. At a public meeting of property-owners, a resolution was moved, which stated that:

The meeting viewed with deep concern and indignation the action of certain members of the Board in connection with the bye-laws relating to houses let in apartments by which the majority of inhabitants of the parish would be injuriously affected, their social status lowered, and much respected enfranchised residents degraded, by their houses let in apartments being liable to the same visitation as houses frequented by tramps, casuals and vagrants.²⁵

This was more than a "growth revolt" against working-class development. After all, the membership of rural Walthamstow was perceived to include "respected enfranchised residents", even if they were of

working-class origin.²⁶ Rather, opposition to suburbanisation was a defence of an idealised form of paternalistic community. To this extent the opposition to suburbanisation incorporated a political, as well as a social, vision of Walthamstow.

Nonetheless, by the end of the 1880s, it was clear that Walthamstow had an urban, rather than a rural future, and there was little that could be done to prevent development. As early as 1877, the *Walthamstow Guardian* had observed that resistance to the suburbanising trend was futile:

We must be content to see the best sites in the neighbourhood devoted to building, which in its train will necessitate the acknowledgement in due time - not so far hence - that Walthamstow is no longer a village, though difficult to find another term for it.²⁷

The town's growing working-class community, as predicted, fundamentally altered the social and political character of Walthamstow. Working-class political leaders sought to promote a politics that they believed better reflected the new town's working-class identity. One figure played a particularly important role in the emergence of Radicalism in Walthamstow. In 1886, the Irish Nationalist and Radical schoolteacher, James Joseph McSheedy, moved to the district.²⁸ McSheedy, a naturally belligerent and outspoken individual, quickly became a dominant political figure, with an openly articulated programme that aimed at uniting local radicals, in opposition to the traditional elite. His work began with a campaign against alleged corruption, in the Vestry's administration of the charities, a struggle that continued until 1895. The campaign enjoyed some modest success; in 1890, for example, the Radicals managed to force the resignation of the exasperated Vestry Clerk, William Houghton.

While the Vestry agitation served the useful purpose of galvanising Radicals against a traditional enemy, they were unable to make any significant advances in terms of local representation. This reflected the strong propertied bias of the electoral system that decided the membership of suburban Local Boards until the mid-1890s. It was the introduction of Urban District Councils, in 1894, accompanied by the expansion of the local electorate and removal of the property qualification for membership, which opened the door to local representation for Radicals.²⁹ It also enabled them to pursue the implementation of a democratic vision of Walthamstow, which, it was argued, better represented the real nature of the suburb. In 1894, McSheedy was optimistic that the replacement of the Local Boards would allow the true character of the town, as a working-class district, to flourish. Walthamstow, he said:

[W]as a working-class locality. Now in a district like this, the only safeguard of the interests of the people is to be found in the general, intelligent, and continuous interest which they take in the good governance and the pure and efficient administration of the affairs of the town.³⁰

Invoking the long tradition of Radical dissent, McSheedy continued:

It was hoped that this Act would bring to the fore the Local Hampdens, who could now struggle more successfully for the rights of the people against mere social position and wealth...there would be no property or money qualification for the new councillors and that the voting was to be on the good principle of "One man, one vote" and that all members, even guardians would be chosen by ballot.³¹

Although "the privileged classes of Walthamstow will make a big fight for their happily vanishing authority", McSheedy was confident that, once the working class was united, "all the troubles and difficulties which have blocked the march of progress in this town will disappear as the mists in the morning sun".³² The Radical democratic political vision of Walthamstow contrasts with the paternalistic view of Clarke and Morgan. Radicals emphasised Walthamstow's working-class identity and the necessity of

struggle to attain local political and social dominance. At its root, the Radical struggle over Walthamstow's identity as a place was a class struggle.

This struggle was also reflected in the development of a local Radical news media that sought to articulate the working-class presence in Walthamstow and its political claims. The establishment of the Radical organ, the *Walthamstow Whip*, in 1897, was justified, in terms of the neglect of working-class needs and interests in "traditional", or middle-class, local journals.

The want of a good newspaper has been very much felt in Walthamstow for years past. The oldest standing journal has always been recognised, in spite of assertions to the contrary, as being devoted principally to the wealthier classes, and, in consequence, those who are not wealthy do not accept it as their journal.³³

This was a particular attack on the *Walthamstow Guardian*, which had monopolised the market in local news since the 1870s. The *Whip's* politics reflected the logic of this belief that the working class had been actively ignored for too long, when the paper stated that, in future local elections, it would actively support working-class candidates to represent working-class wards:

In the case of Walthamstow where the majority of inhabitants are workmen, there is no doubt that the majority of members on the governing body should be the more intelligent class of mechanics and labourers, if representation means anything at all. For how can a number of workmen be said to be "represented" by a professional or independent man, who presumably knows nothing of their wants and requirements and, in many cases, cares less.³⁴

It is useful to contrast this position with the patrician assumption that had dominated earlier bourgeois accounts of Walthamstow. Increasingly, it was assumed that the town had conflicting class interests, which had a right to their own separate representation. This vision of Walthamstow was in tune with the nature of social change in the district, and proved electorally successful, especially after 1897 when Radicals came to dominate the new Urban District Council. Between 1897 and 1913, they exercised a controlling majority on the UDC, with the exception of the period from 1901 to 1904. A working-class Walthamstow, apparently, was indeed also a Radical one.³⁵ As if to confirm the triumph of the working class, many middle-class residents increasingly articulated a view that the quality of the community had irredeemably declined. The result was a flight of the bourgeoisie. Throughout the 1890s and 1900s, the churches and chapels complained of the removal of their wealthier members from the district, and of the growing burden of finding the resources to expand their operations.³⁶ By 1910, the Anglican Church in Walthamstow was heavily dependent on subsidies from the Bishop of St Albans Fund, in stark contrast to the situation in the 1870s, when a few wealthy contributors had donated most of the required funds.

Despite this flight, however, the Radical vision of a working-class, and democratic, Walthamstow remained contested. Opposition to working-class democracy manifested itself in a number of ways. One was the split that emerged within the Walthamstow Liberal caucus during the 1890s. As the McSheedyite Radicals, centred on the district of St James, grew in strength and articulated an increasingly working-class vision of the suburb, so middle-class Liberals in other parts of the district became alienated from the language, tactics and aims of McSheedyism. In 1894, these tensions poured forth in an open split within the ranks of Walthamstow Liberals. Divisions outside St James's refused funds and electoral assistance to the "Jimmysites", on the grounds that they were poisoning local politics with class interest.³⁷ Although relations were partially patched up, working-class Radicals continued to be in regular conflict with middle-class members of the local Liberal party, with the consequence that, during the 1900s, some former Liberals, such as J.W. Dunford, preferred to ally with Tories in the newly-created Walthamstow Ratepayers' Association,

in order to oppose the Radicals.³⁸ Out of the Ratepayers' Association, would emerge the 'Moderate' party that opposed the Radical dominated 'Progressive' alliance in the 1900s.

The Ratepayers' Association and, later, the Moderates, adopted a line that abjured partisanship in local politics and presented their Radical opponents as representatives of a narrow clique of interests, condemning their aggressive political tactics as mere "hooliganism".³⁹ In particular, Moderates exploited growing fears over the affordability of local services, which expanded considerably under the local Radical administrations of the 1890s and 1900s. Such fears had formed a part of early opposition to mass suburbanisation. Now, the financial question became the core of Moderate condemnations of Radicalism. It also provided the basis of an argument that attempted to legitimise the civic role of the middle class in the district. Moderates developed these ideas into an argument that the UDC should actively promote a mixed form of development for the district that would undermine the working-class monopoly and the political basis of Radicalism along with it.⁴⁰ In 1912, the *District Times* protested that something should "be done to arrest the continual growth of [tenement] property which is such a drain on the district".⁴¹ Directly confronting the Radical vision of the suburb, it argued that:

It is very nice to be proud of the fact that Walthamstow is the dormitory for London workers, but we can easily foresee the time when residents will be driven from the more highly rated properties to seek less rated districts if the wholesale catering for democracy goes unchecked. Some misguided folk look upon the providers of tenement property as public benefactors in the development of the district, but their knowledge is of the most superficial nature, as a most cursory investigation will easily disclose the fact that every artisan family of five or more souls that comes into the district is a distinct burden to the more highly rated property of the town.⁴²

The Moderates presented an explicitly anti-democratic alternative to the Radical democratic vision of Walthamstow; they criticised Radicals for doing away with the "men in authority in those days with a stake in the district they represented" and argued that the egalitarian vision of Walthamstow prompted "reckless extravagance" and "corruption".⁴³ Authority and paternalism were thus contrasted with spendthrift municipal socialism. In 1912, discussions over the making of a Town Plan gave further substance to these efforts to challenge the working-class suburb, as Moderates pressed for more mixed-class development to be included.⁴⁴

The Moderate effort to revive a hierarchical vision of Walthamstow was assisted by the emergence of local history and efforts to preserve the historical memory of pre-urban Walthamstow. In February 1910, the Conservative *District Times* presented to its readers the idea that:

The appreciation of the history and tradition of the district or township in which we reside has much to do with the fostering of good citizenship...the memory of these brings with it a pride in the place of our abode, a sense of its corporate individuality, and stimulates men to act in accordance with the best traditions of its history.⁴⁵

In glowing terms it reported the efforts of George Bosworth, one of Walthamstow's earliest local historians, "who, by patient research, has collected material which, if arranged in a book form, would present a full and vivid history of the great suburb once called Wilcumstou".⁴⁶ Bosworth gave a series of lectures, entitled *Walthamstow of Yesterday*, in the winter of 1909-1910.⁴⁷ His efforts to preserve the memory of an older non-working-class Walthamstow contributed to establishing the legitimacy of an alternative vision of the town. This use of local history to "foster good citizenship" had as much to do with challenging a Radical vision of working-class Walthamstow as it did with the pursuit of scholarship.⁴⁸

The Moderate challenge to Radicalism met with increasing success during the 1900s, although a Moderate majority was only achieved in 1913, and it is unclear whether this would have proven sustainable

before the Great War finally upset the political norms of the District. What is clear is that Moderation was an increasingly popular choice, and that it reflected the interests of particular suburban groups who felt neglected, or even persecuted, by Radical-Progressivism. A key point, in this respect, is the changing economic and social structure of Walthamstow. By the 1900s, suburban growth was slowing, and, as suggested above, much of the growth that did take place encouraged the migration of new white-collar groups to the area. Walthamstow was also beginning to develop its own economic infrastructure, and there were increasing numbers of local tradesmen serving the local community. To these new groups the question of rates was often of greater importance than abstract questions of representation. Radicals had difficulties appealing to these groups. After the reform of local government in the 1890s, the Radical argument that Walthamstow required democratising seemed an increasingly abstract problem, compared to the issue of how to afford the local services needed by a large and complex urban community. Worse, the traditional Radical language of class explicitly excluded these groups of “shallow pated, flat-chested, round-shouldered, miserably paid clerks”.⁴⁹ By the end of the 1900s, therefore, the classic moment of suburban Radicalism appeared to have passed in Walthamstow, ironically, because the suburban migration process was itself changing.

The evidence from Walthamstow suggests that Radicals had no difficulty in building a suburban variant of metropolitan Radicalism in the suburbs. Rather than declining into a sort of complacent domesticity, Radicals found sufficient resources to challenge the political dominance of existing suburban elites. In part, the very nature of suburban development was a key variable in the transition of Radicalism to Walthamstow. Early efforts to secure a politically and morally acceptable version of development, by native middle-class residents, were swept away by speculative development for profit. In turn, the tight social and political control that this class exercised over the district was ceded, and the doors opened to Radicalism. By 1900, after a series of large Radical electoral victories, Walthamstow looked a secure working-class, democratic and Radical space. Yet, there remained strong opposition to Radicalism among both Liberals and Conservatives, who, through the Moderate alliance of the 1900s, were able to articulate a counter-vision to the democratic politics of Radicalism. This vision emphasised the economic costs of municipal undertakings and claimed that only a mixed-class district, led by a rate-paying elite, could run local affairs in the future. This challenge to the Radical vision, of an exclusively working-class space, drew increasing strength from the slowing pace of suburban migration to Walthamstow in the 1900s, and from an increasing proportion of white-collar workers and native trades-people in the district. By the end of the 1900s, the momentum that had sustained Radicalism during the 1890s was diminishing. The politics of class remained of vital importance, particularly in the rise of local socialist movements, but that is another story.

Biographical Details

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- ⁹ P. C. Plummer and W. H. Bowyer, *A Brief History of Courtenay Warner and Warner Estate* (2000), 4.
- ¹⁰ G. Houghton, *Walthamstow Past and Present* (1929), 21-30.
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- ¹⁴ Accounts and Papers (P.P. 1902, CXVIII), *Population of England and Wales 1901*, 80-1; Accounts and Papers (P.P. 1912-13, CXI), *Population of England and Wales 1911*, 394-5.
- ¹⁵ Argyle, 'Walthamstow', 260.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ See *Walthamstow Guardian*, Saturday 20 January, 1877; Saturday 3 March, 1877.
- ¹⁸ M. Chase, 'Out of Radicalism: The Mid-Victorian Freehold Land Movement', *English Historical Review*, 106 (1991), 319-45. My thanks are due to Malcolm Chase for allowing me to see a related but unpublished conference paper on 'Converting Thrift into Consumption: Working-class Home Ownership'.
- ¹⁹ E. Clarke, *The History of Walthamstow* (Walthamstow, 1861), 46
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*
- ²¹ Essex Record Office, W/46/7, *Register of Voters for Walthamstow Polling District*, 1875.
- ²² *Walthamstow Guardian*, April 14, 1877.
- ²³ *Stratford Express*, March 31, 1877.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ *Walthamstow Guardian*, July 29, 1882.
- ²⁶ M. Baldassare, 'Suburban Communities', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 18, (1992), 475-494.
- ²⁷ *Walthamstow Guardian*, April 14, 1877.
- ²⁸ J. Shepherd, 'The Lib Labs and English Working-class Politics, 1874-1906' (Ph.D. diss, London University, 1980), 223.
- ²⁹ On the Local Government Act of 1894 see: E. Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform: Popular Liberalism in the Age of Gladstone* (Cambridge, 1992) 319-328; J. Moore, 'Liberalism and the politics of suburbia: electoral dynamics in late nineteenth-century south Manchester', *Urban History* 30 (2003), 245; P. A. Readman, 'The Role of Land and Landscape in English Cultural and Political Debate c.1880-1910' (Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 2002), 272-5.
- ³⁰ *Walthamstow Guardian*, October 26, 1894.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*
- ³² *Ibid.*
- ³³ *Walthamstow Whip*, January 16, 1897.
- ³⁴ *Walthamstow Whip*, February 13, 1897.
- ³⁵ Unfortunately there is no space here to develop the intricacies that lie behind this statement. The Radicals' successes in the local sphere were translated into successes on the parliamentary level in a complex way, and partly through compromises that played a role in undermining extreme Radicalism based on class and promoting the development of a more quiescent Progressivism. For details of this see T. Cooper, 'The Politics of Radicalism in Suburban Walthamstow', (Ph.D. diss, Cambridge University, 2005).
- ³⁶ Vestry House Museum, Waltham Forest, W .83.1.5, *St Mary's Parish Magazine*, May 1897, 9; *Walthamstow Guardian*, August 12, 1882.
- ³⁷ *Walthamstow Guardian*, February 14, 1894.
- ³⁸ *Walthamstow Guardian*, November 23, 1894.
- ³⁹ *District Times*, April 11, 1902.
- ⁴⁰ On the rise of 'Moderation' in local elections see: K. Young, *Local Politics and the Rise of Party: The London Municipal Society and the Conservative Intervention in Local Elections, 1894-1963* (Leicester, 1975), 57-112.
- ⁴¹ *District Times*, September 6, 1912.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*
- ⁴³ *District Times*, January 5, 1907.
- ⁴⁴ National Archives (NA), HLG/4/2413, *Walthamstow Urban District Council Town Planning Scheme*.
- ⁴⁵ *District Times*, February 25, 1910.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Patrick Joyce has identified similar processes occurring in the making of Victorian provincial civic histories, see P. Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class* (Cambridge, 1994), 181.

⁴⁹ *Walthamstow Reporter*, March 29, 1901.