

MARY BAYLY

Extracts from www.historytalk.org Notting Hill history, *Notting Hill In Bygone Days* by Florence Gladstone 1924; *Ragged Homes And How To Mend Them* by Mary Bayly 1859, and *Home Weal And Home Woe* by Mary Bayly and Elizabeth Boyd Bayly 1892 pamphlets in Florence Gladstone's scrapbook at Central Library Local Studies, Hornton Street. PS Where is Mary Bayly House?

1855 The first medical officer of health, Dr Francis Godrich, found the Potteries to be 'one of the most deplorable spots not only in Kensington but in the whole Metropolis'; and set about evicting the pigs. But his attempts were thwarted by local resistance, including a lawyer's argument that the 'islanders' were there first and the respectable area was a nuisance to the pigkeepers.

The Vestry itself hampered the progress of Dr Godrich's inspection team, to prevent the pigkeepers becoming a charge on the poor rate, in the parish tradition. Then there was the legacy of Samuel Lake to contend with. According to *Ragged Homes And How To Mend Them* by Mary Bayly, 'great efforts were made to get rid of the swinish multitude altogether, but the shrewd chimney-sweep Lake seems to have foreseen this evil day, and 'for the purposes of pigkeeping' had been inserted in the very leases which the people were able to produce. Nothing but a special act of parliament could remedy the existing evil.'

The *Ragged Homes* sketch of 'Tucker's Cottage, the oldest house in Kensington Potteries' in 1855, depicts a quaint and at the same time foreboding row of tumbledown sheds with particularly rickety fences, a manure heap, a donkey, chickens and some fairly innocuous looking pigs. In the accompanying account of life there, Mrs Tucker described a typical day illustrating the socio-economic realities of the time: "We most of us keep a horse, or a donkey and cart, and we go round early in the morning to the gentlefolk's houses and collects the refuges from the kitchens. When we comes home we sorts it out, the best of it we eats ourselves, or gives it to a neighbour, the fat is boiled down, and the rest we give to the pigs... When they have lots of company they gets a deal of refuge... When the families goes out of town the servants is put on board wages, and they scrimps and saves everything, we ain't wanted to call then 'cause there's not a scrap left for us, oh no, we ain't no use then."

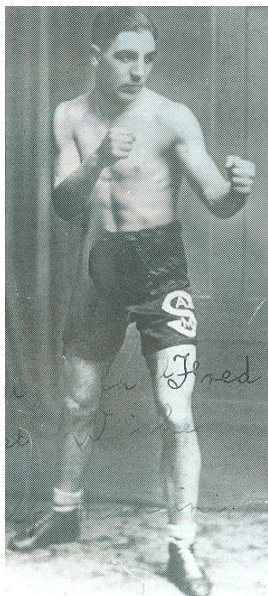
As the *Ragged Homes* philanthropist Mary Bayly began Mothers' Society meetings on Sirdar Road, she found the pigkeepers, though simple and uncouth, hard working, honest and, for the most part, sober. In *Bygone Days* (pages 137-9); 'In the middle years of the 19th century a widespread interest was felt in questions relating to the welfare of the poorer sections of society, and several fresh methods of philanthropy were introduced, Two of these new methods came into being in this 'frowsy suburb'. In the story of the establishment of the first Mothers' Meeting, and the earliest Workmen's Institute, graphic pictures are given of the early development of Notting Dale. (*Ragged Homes And How To Mend Them* 1859 and *Home Weal And Home Woe* by Mrs Bayly and Miss Elizabeth Boyd Bayly 1892)

'It was at the suggestion of Mr Parfitt, the City Missionary, that Mrs Bayly undertook the management of the 'Mothers' Society'. This met for the first time on the evening of Monday, November 3 1853, and it is remarkable how closely hundreds of Mothers' Meetings today conform to the scheme evolved nearly 70 years ago... Mrs Swindler, in 1915, told the writer (Florence Gladstone) that, when she was a young married woman living in Princes Road (now Princedale Road), she used to go on a Monday afternoon to Mrs Bayly's "little chapel", which was behind the present police station on Sirdar Road. This was on the outskirts of the Potteries' village, and fields reached almost to the door. Allotments and small market-gardens lay all around, and a narrow stream on the north side of St Katherine's Road, now Wilsham Street, had to be crossed in order to reach the Mothers' Meeting. Mrs Swindler's little son used to take crusts to feed the baby pigs and the geese met with on the way.'

1859 The Temperance or Rescue Society anti-drinking crusade acquired two 'skeleton-houses' on Portland Road, to turn into the Workmen's Hall 'pub without drink' featuring an Eddystone lighthouse model to guide drinkers to rescue. Here, under the administration of the *Ragged Homes* author Mary Bayly and her husband Captain Bayly, the likes of Jimmie the Devil, the tall pigfeeder who had been a hard drinker 'from 16 to 60', and Taylor the Navvy were rescued; the latter, to the extent of becoming 'the navy preacher'. (*Bygone Days* pages 146-8)

THE MANCINI FAMILY

Extracts from Notting Dale Urban Studies project at KCCHG Historytalk, 240 Lancaster Road, including interview with Len Mancini and short Mancini family history



Alf Mancini, the local hero 'gentleman boxer' of Notting Dale, fought from 1919 to 1931. Alf has been described by his nephew Len as 'the most renowned sportsman in Notting Hill' and 'the best fighter (of that era) that never won a championship.'

His parents, Guiseppe and Adollorata Mancini settled in London in the late 19th century and lived above their ice-cream parlour on Bramley Road at number 57. They had 20 ice-cream barrows and a stall outside the café in the summer. Before their eldest son 'Big Jo' and his wife Carmella took over the café, they recalled "it was full of thieves and villains."

Adollorata was the model for the Queen Victoria statue at the Buckingham Palace end of the Mall, with a baby – none other than Alf – and 'Big Jo' was the model for the blacksmith with a lion statue outside Buckingham Palace.

At the outbreak of World War II local youths stood on guard outside the Mancini's café as the windows of German and Italian businesses were smashed. Other Local boxing heroes produced by the Rugby Club on Walmer Road included Digger Stanley, Kipper Allum and Arthur Goom.

Mancini family reminiscence of the local boxing and pub historian Derek Jones: "Alf Mancini was a welter-weight, which is 10 stone 7, and he was a local hero, bit like in the 'Rocky' films, he was idolised in Notting Hill. I only saw the man once, he had a pub in Fulham Palace Road which is still there. When I used it it was called the Rifle, last time I heard of it it was called the Golden Gloves (then the Suffolk Punch), so the boxing tradition kind of carried on. I was maybe 20, early 20s, and me and a few of the boys used to go over there and Mancini was this titchy little fella, still had dark hair, used to serve behind the bar. I never spoke to him but if he'd known that I was Johnny Jones's boy, because apparently Mancini and my dad they were very good friends.

"There was a Mancini (Henry) who played football for QPR, there was another Mancini who boxed (Tony), a very clever boxer but he couldn't punch. So therefore he either won his bouts on points or got himself knocked out. He couldn't knock anyone else out because he didn't punch hard enough. But Alf Mancini, the great thing about him is he went to America to fight. I don't know how many fights he had but he never got beaten in America, apparently he had a wicked left hook, he could dig a bit. Also I'm told the old mum when she was young she was quite a good looking woman and Mancini was a bit of a Casanova, and the old man said to him, Alf, I don't care who you are, that's my bird, so leave her alone, which he did.

"In Bramley Road, a couple of doors up from the York pub, you had Mancini's ice cream shop and the woman in charge there was one of the Mancini sisters, her name was Carrie. Occasionally the old man

would take me into Carrie Mancini's, I remember she had a little bit of Italian about her but she had a broad cockney accent, dark hair, big beaky nose she had. There was another fella, the brother of Carrie and Alf Junior. I don't know what his name was but he was a massive man, big man with a bald head and he used to ride around on a bike and on the front of the bike was something like a fridge where he kept the lolly ices and the ice cream, and he'd cycle this thing, it was before ice cream vans came in. So he had his own ice cream bike and I think he was a little bit mentally defective and there was a story once about kids throwing stuff at him, but he was a Mancini. But, as I say, Alf Mancini he was a kind of a local hero."

