

# From East End To Essex: Jewish Migration Routes

Migration has been a key theme of European Jewish life over the last few centuries.

Following the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 waves of pogroms swept across Russia and its neighbouring countries.

Persecution, intimidation and economic hardship forcing more than two million Jews to leave their homes. Reaching the coastline of Europe these displaced people made their journeys to a new life in Great Britain.

This exhibition tells the stories of grandmas, grandfathers, mothers and fathers who settled in the East End as immigrants and who migrated further east to Essex to create new lives for their families in the post war years.

*“... the East End was so much more alive, in so far as that people did their own thing in so many ways, not against the law that much, but to express themselves, don't forget that they'd come from... countries where tyranny was in vogue and they couldn't express themselves, they were always dodging the law, or hiding away from the law, or twisting or bending the law... but in their eyes it was trying to stay alive, so when they arrived in England with its democratic ways of living, it was a revelation to them, they could live and express themselves, which they did”*  
(Gus)



Seder at Norwoods, c.1950.  
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum.



Lowry Dried Fish Shop in Brick Lane, 1895.



Jewish Newsagents in Brick Lane, c.1900.

Fleeing Nazi Germany a second wave of immigrants arrived between 1933 and 1939.

*“... all the immigrants used to take that boat because the captain of that boat used to take bribes, and for very little money he would allow you go onto his boat and he'd take you to London Bridge, but also at that time, you didn't need a passport or a visa. Providing you behaved yourself in the country, in England, they let you stop here. And that's exactly what happened with my father... I wonder how that boat ever arrived at London Bridge, it was so crowded with passengers it should have sunk halfway across”*  
(Gus)



Jewish Tailor and Family in Bethnal Green, 1910.

Pavilion Theatre in Stepney, c. 1920s.



An Eastside Community Heritage Exhibition. Visit: [www.hidden-histories.org.uk](http://www.hidden-histories.org.uk)