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ST GEORGE'S GERMAN LUTHERAN CHURCH, WHITECHAPEL

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INTRODUCTION

St George's German Lutheran Church on Alie Street, just east of the City of London, is the oldest surviving German church in Britain. It opened in 1763, and has changed remarkably little since (Figs. 1, 2 and 4-7).

German immigration to London, much of it by Protestant refugees fleeing religious persecution, had been significant in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There were several German churches in London by 1700, but these have all now gone.¹ Through the first half of the eighteenth century membership of London's German Lutheran churches doubled to about 4,000. Some of this rise can be attributed to the continuing immigration of those seeking religious asylum, and the additional impact of the arrival of the Hanoverian Court should not be forgotten. However, it was economic migration that was the main basis for the establishment of a German settlement in Whitechapel. Sugar refining in London had been in German hands from its introduction in the mid seventeenth century, expertise in processes previously established in the Hanseatic towns being deployed to build up a substantial sugar-baking industry in Whitechapel and other eastern districts close to the Port of London, into which huge quantities of sugar were being imported from the West Indies. The immigrant German sugar merchants, craftsmen and workers naturally held on to the secrets of their trade, giving it continuity and concentration in these east London locales that were remote from the existing German churches in the City of London and

Westminster. By the 1760s there were numerous sugarhouses in the immediate vicinity of Alie Street.²

FOUNDATION AND CONSTRUCTION

The lease of the Alie Street site was purchased for £500 on 9 September 1762 and the new church was consecrated on 19 May 1763. The principal founder was Dederich Beckmann, a wealthy sugar refiner, who gave the substantial sum of £650, much the largest single benefaction towards the total of £1,802 10s 9d that was raised for purchasing the lease and building the church.³ Beckmann (c.1702-66) was the father-in-law of the first pastor, Dr Gustavus Anthony Wachsel (c.1735-99).⁴ The early congregation was essentially made up of the area's German sugar bakers and their families, alongside some refugees escaping war in the German provinces.

The church was built by Joel Johnson and Company, which firm was paid £1,132 in 1763. The lease aside, this accounted for virtually all the funds that had by then been raised.⁵ Johnson (1720-99) was a successful local carpenter who had made himself a contracting builder. In 1747 he had worked on a Baptist meeting house further west on Alie Street, and in 1754 he built himself a large workshop near Whitechapel parish church, the site of which is now Altab Ali Park. From 1755 to 1759, Johnson worked under the architect Boulton Mainwaring in the building of the London Hospital further east along Whitechapel Road. He was also said, in an obituary that credited him with many chapels, to



Fig.1. St George's German Lutheran Church, Alie Street, Whitechapel, 1762-6. View from the south in about 1928, also showing the related junior schools of 1877 beyond. *English Heritage*.



Fig. 2. St George's German Lutheran Church, Alie Street, Whitechapel. View from the south-east in 2004.
English Heritage.



Fig. 3. St John, Wapping, 1756. View from the north-west in 1928.
English Heritage.

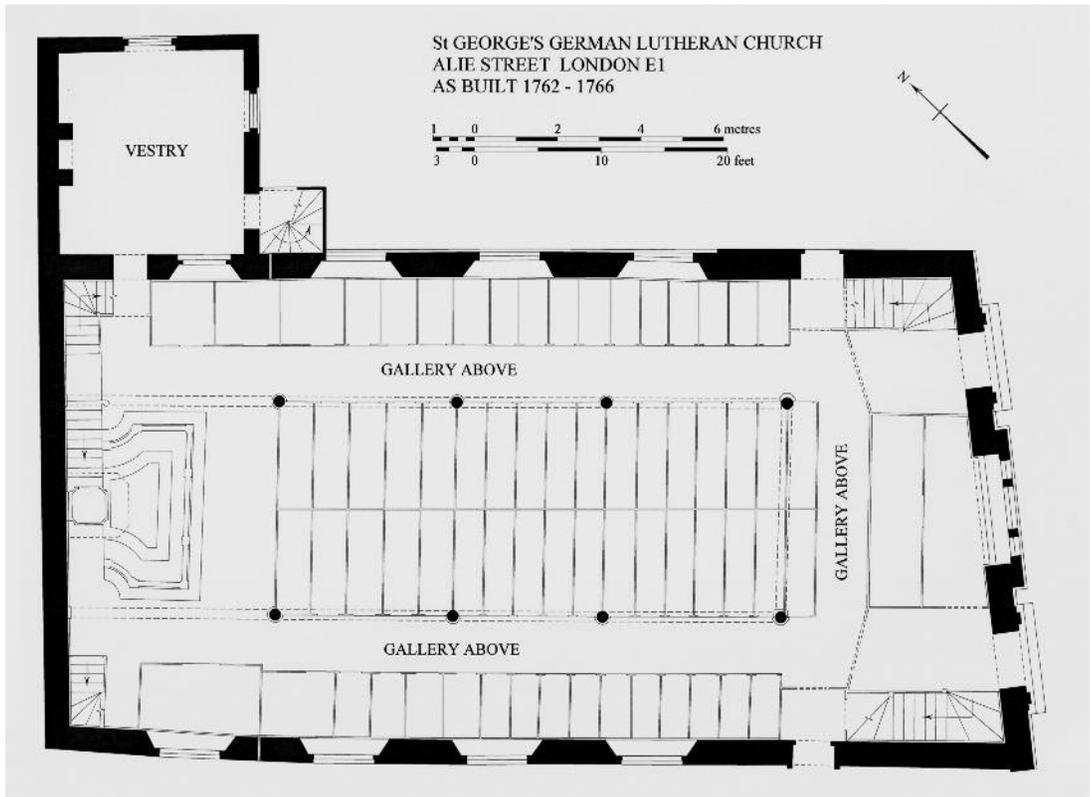


Fig. 4. St George's German Lutheran Church, Alie Street, Whitechapel.
Ground-floor plan as built in 1762-6. *English Heritage*.

have been the architect of the church of St John, Wapping, in 1756, a building with striking similarities to St George's (Fig. 3). However, it is possible that there too he was working under Mainwaring, who gave evidence about the state of the old Wapping church where Johnson did not. Indeed, Johnson himself related that he began 'to strike into the business of an architect' only in 1762. The absence of any record of payment to any other surveyor or architect at St George's leads to the surmise that this is what he was doing at Alie Street. It cannot, however, be ruled out that Johnson's firm was working under another designer, perhaps Mainwaring again. Johnson's wife and infant son died in 1763-4

and he left the conduct of business to a partner, a Mr Langley, 'troubling myself very little with the carpenters' business'.⁶

Johnson & Co. were paid another £494 3s in 1764-5, which probably related to an early extension of the church and the addition of the vestry block (Fig. 4). Seams in the brickwork of the east and west walls show that the church was initially intended to be one bay shorter, and that during construction it was enlarged to the north. In keeping with this vaults do not extend under the north end of the church. It is also evident that the extension came during rather than either before or after the fitting out of the interior. Already in May 1763, when the church was



Fig. 5. St George's German Lutheran Church, Alie Street, Whitechapel.
Interior from the south in 2004. *English Heritage*.

consecrated, Thomas Johnson was being paid for a marble slab, probably the floor of the altar dais that survives, and a mahogany frame to a communion table. The box pews, which also survive, were evidently in by February 1764, when Errick Kneller was paid for painting 159 numbers on them. Kneller was also paid for painting two boards, certainly those still in place bearing the Ten Commandments in German (Figs. 5 and 6). Others who received payments in 1764 included Paul Morthurst, carpenter and joiner, Thomas Palmer, plasterer, and Sanders Olliver, mason.⁷ It is notable that all these building tradesmen, except perhaps Kneller, appear to have been English. In its original architectural forms and constructional details, both outside and in, the church is not evidently German. The timing

of all these payments suggests that the main body of the church went up in 1762–3, the north extension following in 1763–4, with the two-storey vestry block to the north-east being added in 1765–6, all complete by 21 August 1766, which date appears on the brick apron of a first-floor vestry block window, along with the names of vestrymen, Beckmanns and Wachsel's to the fore (Fig. 7). This window faces a courtyard that until 1855 was a burial ground, the land immediately east of the church having always pertained to it.

The front of the church to Alie Street has handsome sub-Palladian proportional dignity, even though since 1934 it has lacked its crowning features, the clock that was at the centre of the pediment, the bell turret above, and the large weathervane in the shape of St George and the dragon (Figs. 1 and 2). In

its original form this elevation bears out the link with St John Wapping (Fig. 3), whether it was Joel Johnson, Boulton Mainwaring or both who were responsible for the designs. The two uppermost stages of the former turret were smaller versions of the upper stages at Wapping, and both churches had identical eyebrow cornices over their clocks. The central lunette below may once have been glazed, though an organ soon blocked it. The lettering, 'Deutsche Lutherische St Georgs Kirche Begründet 1762' in Gothic script, is a renewal of an earlier inscription. The other elevations of St George's are quite plain. East of the church, facing Alie Street, there was a substantial three-storey pastor's house, replaced in 1877 when the school that now occupies the site was built (Figs. 1, 2 and 8).

THE INTERIOR

Little has been taken away from the interior of the church that was built in the 1760s (Fig. 5). The furnishings are remarkably unchanged. Box pews still fill the floor, and the galleries that stand on eight Tuscan timber columns still loom overhead round three sides of the building. This is a simple Protestant layout, and a church in which the most has been made of limited space. There is no central aisle, and more of the building's width is galleried than is not.

Past this density the eye is drawn to the north (liturgically east) wall and its essentially original ensemble of pulpit, commandment boards and royal arms. The central pulpit stands above and immediately behind a railed altar, in an arrangement that may seem compressed to English eyes, but which is typically Lutheran. To emphasise the interdependent centrality of preaching and sacrament in its worship Lutheranism tended to favour bringing the altar and the pulpit as close together as possible, often with the altar raised on a dais, as it is here.⁸ The pulpit, raised to allow the

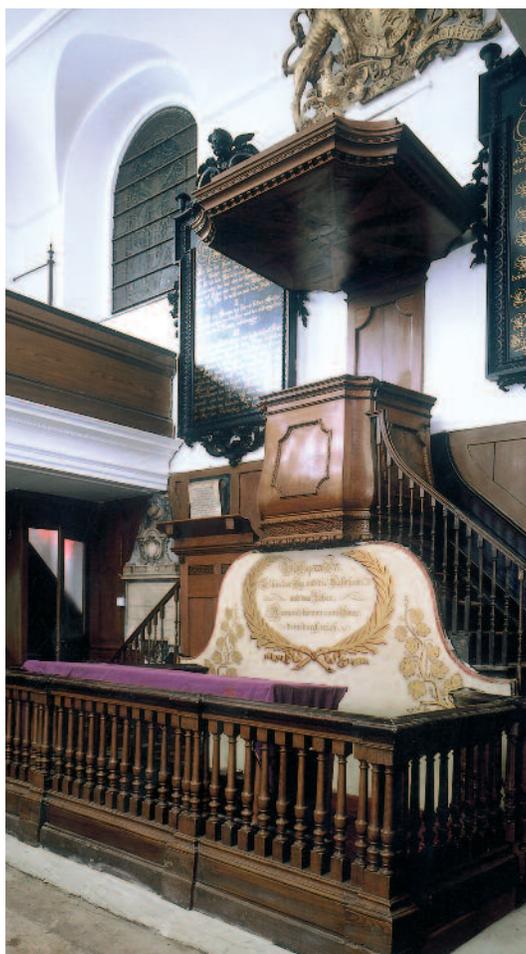


Fig. 6. St George's German Lutheran Church, Alie Street, Whitechapel. Detail of north (liturgical east) end in 2004. *English Heritage.*

pastor to address the galleries as directly as the rest of the congregation, comprises a shaped desk with a backboard and a large tented canopy or tester, atop which there flies a dove. It has always been approached by the stairs to its east, but to start with it would have seemed less hemmed in, apparently floating above the altar against the panelled back wall. The altar dais was originally relatively small, three steps up, with a black-and-white pattern marble floor. Originally the turned-baluster communion rails were



Fig. 7. St George's German Lutheran Church, Alie Street, Whitechapel. Detail of vestry window inscribed apron in 2004. *English Heritage*.

on the outer edge of a large second step that was wide enough for the pastor to walk round (Fig. 4).

In a prominent position above all this are the splendid gilt royal arms of King George III, in the form that they took up to 1801, presumably work of the 1760s (Figs. 5 and 6). Unique in a German church in England, these arms seem to be a clear assertion of loyalty to the Crown on the part of Whitechapel's German community. However, it should be noted not only that King George was the Elector of Hanover, but also that, however genuine and general loyalty might have been, there was opposition on the part of the great majority of the congregation to Beckmann

and Wachsel's preference for use of the English language (see below). It has to be wondered whether through these arms the founder and pastor were making a point. Flanking the tester are the sumptuously framed commandment boards, gilt texts in German, exquisitely lettered by Kneller in 1763–4.

The entrance vestibules both retain their original staircases, with closed strings and turned column-on-vase balusters, solid joinery that in the 1760s was old fashioned in terms of West End practice, but still entirely usual in east London. A blocked doorway under the south-east staircase originally led directly into the pastor's house. Panelling along the side walls, which breaks before the north bay, in line with external seams in the brickwork, and steps down at the same point in the galleries, indicates the late change of plan that extended the church northwards in 1763–4. Above a restored ceiling there is a timber king-post truss roof that is essentially that built in the 1760s. The roof space also retains fittings for the support of a central chandelier, long replaced, but of which no depictions have come to light. The first-floor committee room in the vestry block retains its eighteenth-century plain panelled walls, cornice and fireplace surround.

LATE GEORGIAN CONFLICTS AND ALTERATIONS

Despite having been enlarged during construction the church was soon found to be too small to meet early demand. In 1764 Pastor Wachsel was instrumental in securing temporary asylum for 600 Würzburger and Palatine emigrants who had been abandoned *en route* for America, finding them accommodation in London until they could be redirected to South Carolina.⁹ Whether or not this was a factor, there was overcrowding in 1768, many worshippers being forced to stand at the back.¹⁰

Beckmann had died in 1766, leaving the church a further £500.¹¹ On the north wall near the reader's

stairs there is a commemorative tablet to him, his sons and his wife, and there is also a floor slab in front of the sanctuary; he is said to have been buried under the communion table. It is significant that the Beckmanns were commemorated in English, and that the sons' names were anglicised to William and Henry. Another legacy of Beckmann's was linguistic disagreement between his son-in-law, Wachsel, and the other vestrymen. This and wider discord led to a riot in the church on 3 December 1767. There were deep disputes about the management and use of the church. This *Parteienkrieg*, as it was called, extended to liturgy and the nature of music in the church, as well as to the question of whether services should be held in English or in German. Wachsel introduced German hymns, then English hymns, and then sermons in English. Next he discharged the German choir and introduced 'violins, trumpets, bassoons, and kettledrums', this in spite of his theological roots in German Pietism, which had moved away from complex church music. As if this was not bad enough the musical performances were said, with indignation, to have been accompanied by the eating of 'apples, oranges, nuts, etc, as in a Theatre'. The church allegedly 'become a place of Assignment for Persons of all descriptions, a receptacle for Pickpockets, and obtained the name of the Saint George Playhouse'.¹² Amid fights and death threats a congregation that had been more than 400 had fallen to 130 by 1777. Despite an overwhelming vote for his dismissal in 1778 Wachsel held on to his post by going to law. Acrimony rumbled on. Having desisted for a time, Wachsel reintroduced music in 1786. At this point he was accused of violently assaulting the bellows blower. Another judicial intervention in 1789 ruled that Wachsel had misused the building, but arguments about the use of English continued up until his death in 1799.¹³ Wachsel has a humble plaque on the east wall, its inscription, inevitably, in English.

Early alterations to the fittings at the north (liturgical east) end of the church may have to do

with this power struggle. In 1784 a payment was made towards 'a Cloth Communion Table', perhaps identifiable as a surviving canvas reredos (Fig. 6).¹⁴ Gilded with vine leaves and the text of John 14.6, again significantly, in German, within a laurel wreath, this is a precious survival that changed the visual relationship of the pulpit and altar when it was introduced. At some point after this reredos was installed and before 1802, possibly in the late 1790s, the already small railed sanctuary was made smaller. The communion rails were moved marginally in on all three sides, and the dais was enlarged with a timber extension to meet the rails. This brought communicants closer to the altar, but accommodated fewer. This may be explained through Pietism, which would have stressed preaching and personal devotion, while de-emphasising weekly communion. On the other hand, it might have been a pragmatic or ergonomic change, or even a matter of making space for kettledrums.¹⁵

At the other end of the church there were two small curved-front upper galleries, possibly for children or a children's choir, on columns to either side of a small organ. It is possible that these were always present, but given the blocked lunette it is likely that they were an early change, perhaps from the late 1760s, when there was great demand for seating, or from 1778–9 when small sums were spent 'repairing the church'. The account of the *Parteienkrieg* reveals that there was a bellows blower by 1786, and an organ was certainly present by 1802. Another alteration carried out by 1802 was the fixing of reader's and clerk's desks immediately west of the pulpit. The reader's desk, at least, was being relocated. It is clear that it had been mobile previously, as it retains casters on the bases of its corner posts.¹⁶

Beyond the pastor's house along Alie Street a much smaller clerk's house was repaired or rebuilt in 1805, when a single-storey school replaced stable and coach-house buildings further east (fig. 8), perhaps to designs by Samuel Page (1771–1852), a surveyor who drew a plan of the site in 1802, when

deliberations about the future of the adjoining ground were underway.¹⁷ The foundation had included 'German and English Schools' from 1765, but it is unclear where the earlier school was accommodated.

Wachsel's successor, Dr C. E. A. Schwabe, was responsible for this school building. Schwabe was also chaplain to the Duchess of Kent, Queen Victoria's mother, who was the patron of the schools and who is said to have worshipped regularly at St George's. Schwabe has a commemorative tablet on the west wall, in German. Benefaction boards at the south end of each outer row of pews commemorate many gifts to the church, including a £50 donation from King Frederick William IV of Prussia in 1842. Through Schwabe's 44-year pastorate the German community in Whitechapel continued to grow, and other churches came into being. From 1809 there was a German Catholic church, dedicated to St Boniface. Rebuilt in 1958–60, this continues on Adler Street, nearby to the east. In 1819 St Paul's German Protestant Reformed Church opened on Hooper Square, just to the south, the congregation having its origins among late seventeenth-century Calvinist refugees from the Palatinate. This church was rebuilt on Goulston Street in 1887 and destroyed in 1941, the congregation then moving to St George's.¹⁸

RESTORATION IN 1855

A framed tablet under St George's west gallery, put up in 1856 and made by a Mr Cook for £5 14s,¹⁹ has a painted inscription that explains in German changes that had then taken place. Translated it relates: 'I SAM 7.12/ Hitherto hath the Lord helped us/ In the year 1855/ through voluntary contributions from the members of this parish and German and English friends the sum of £2,465 18s was collected in a few weeks and administered by John Davis as Treasurer. With this sum the church was completely renovated and beautified, the foundations for the capital assets of the parish lain, and the continuance of this place

secured for many years.' This happened under the leadership of Dr Louis Cappel (1817–1882), pastor from 1843 to 1882, who had come from Worms and who was of Huguenot descent.

The restoration of 1855 arose from the renewal of a 61-year lease that had been acquired in 1802. The appeal for money was launched on 7 June 1855, with the statement that 'It is a long time since any repairs have been done to the building; and in order to put it into proper condition, an outlay of £300 or £400 will be required.'²⁰ The successful fund-raising was broadly based, seemingly drawing primarily on Whitechapel's still strong sugar-baking German community. It remained the case that 'the Elders and Wardens of the Church consist almost exclusively of the Boilers, Engineers and superior workers in the Sugar Refineries.'²¹ Mid nineteenth-century attendances were said to be about 400 to 500, of which about 250 paid pew rents. A sub-committee of five led by Cappel managed the restoration; three of the others – Martin Brünjes, William Prieggen and Claus Bohling – were local sugar refiners. The church was closed for the building works during July and August 1855. Costs escalated and legal difficulties held up renewal of the lease; it was September 1856 before the congregation was asked 'to bear testimony to the present condition of the building and the propriety of its decoration.'²² The works had been supervised by J. Cumber, who was also surveyor to the Phoenix Fire Office,²³ and £540 was paid to the builders, William Hill and J. Keddell. In all £771 was spent on the restoration of the church, which included complete refenestration and redecoration.²⁴

Cast-iron framed side wall and south gallery windows with red and blue margin glazing replaced the original leaded-light windows. In addition James Powell & Sons of Whitefriars were paid £53 for two stained-glass windows that were designed by George Rees. These were a Crucifixion and an Ascension that originally flanked the commandment boards at the north end of the church. In 1912 the Ascension was destroyed and the Crucifixion was moved to the



Fig. 8. 'A Front View of the St George's German Church, Minister's House and School in Little Alie Street, Goodman's Fields', watercolour of 1821 in the former committee room over the church vestry. *English Heritage*.

south wall, reorganised to fit into the Serlian three-light opening. There it retains borders of stamped jewel work that are the first recorded instance of a technique that became a Powell speciality.²⁵

The redecoration of 1855 included the marbling of the columns, the graining and re-numbering of the pews, replacement of some top rails in mahogany, the removal of lamp or sconce holders (leaving mortices that can be seen to have been filled), and the removal of latch and lock plates. A large pew to the northwest was divided, cut down in height, cut back and carefully repaired so as to leave little trace of alteration. The enduring numbering of the pews and the survival of the church archives make it possible to trace who sat where in the church. The clerk's desk was removed, its lectern being shifted to the

east side, seemingly just for the sake of visual symmetry. The stairs to the reader's desk thus had to be remade, and it appears that the cheekpieces and balustrade of those leading to the pulpit were also similarly remade. On the south-west gallery staircase Greek-key-pattern linoleum may also survive from 1855, making it an early example of this kind of flooring, as may self-closing mechanisms on the vestibule doors leading into the church. Finally, the vestry block's winder staircase, previously timber framed, was enclosed in brick.²⁶

Given the extent and considerable expense of this restoration it is interesting that the interior was not more substantially altered, particularly when the generally radical and doctrinaire character of mid nineteenth-century English church restorations is

recalled. Box-pew seating was reviled by the contemporary Anglo-Catholic revival, but there is no reason to suppose ecclesiological influence in a German Lutheran church. Indeed, there was no Catholic revival in Lutheranism until the early twentieth century, and iconoclastic attitudes persisted through the nineteenth century.²⁷ Lutheranism aside, conservatism in church liturgy and architecture is entirely to be expected in an enclosed immigrant group like the Whitechapel German community. After the late eighteenth-century *Parteienkrieg* over the introduction of Anglican style worship it may not be unreasonable to see the conservatism of the 1850s as being more than just old-fashioned. Perhaps it reflected a conscious desire to steer away from any kind of liturgical innovation, especially any that might be connected to Anglicanism.

THE LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES

There was little physical change to the church through the rest of the nineteenth century. In 1859 an infant school was built on the former burial ground to the east behind the pastor's house. This was a gift of W. H. Göschen, a banker who was the son of Goethe's publisher, and the father of G. J. Goschen, who became an eminent politician, as a Liberal MP for the City of London and the first Viscount Goschen. Then in 1877 the whole frontage east of the church was redeveloped as large new junior schools, with E. A. Gruning, himself an immigrant German, being the architect of a large red-brick block that has been converted into flats (Fig. 1).

The organ in the south gallery of the church was replaced in 1885–6, the new instrument also displacing the upper galleries in works supervised by Gruning. Made by E. F. Walcker, then of Ludwigsburg, for £353, this organ survives, in an enlarged form following repairs carried out by the same firm in

1937. It was restored by Bishop & Son in 2003–4.²⁸ The loss of the upper galleries and the earlier removal of a pew behind the southernmost columns suggest declining attendances in the late nineteenth century. By the 1880s the local sugar industry had dwindled from 30 establishments to three, and those who could afford to do so moved away from Whitechapel, a part of the East End that had become notoriously rough. However, London's German population as a whole rose from 16,082 in 1861 to 27,290 in 1911, the East End remaining a focus for settlement, if only because most immigrants arrived in the docks. Whitechapel's German community shifted gradually from dependence on sugar baking to a range of other and more standard trades, becoming known for its butchers, bakers and domestic servants. From 1891 to 1914 Pastor Georg Mätzold (1862–1930) rebuilt the parish, religion being, as ever, paramount in cultural continuity for new immigrants. In the years up to 1914 St George's was said to be the most active German parish in Britain, with average congregations of about 130.²⁹

Repairs undertaken in 1910 under the supervision of Frederick Rings, another German architect, included the replacement of the vestry windows with those now in place (Fig. 7). These are "'Stumpfs" Reform Sash Windows', made to the patented designs of Abdey, Hasseroth and Co., 'builders of portable houses'.³⁰ The employment of German architects and contractors through this period is notably distinct from practice at both earlier and later times. In 1912 a fire in the building adjoining to the north led to the replacement of the Powell windows with new ones by Heaton, Butler and Bayne, again depicting the Crucifixion and Ascension.³¹ Other acquisitions from the wider period that are still in the possession of the church include a silver orb with an engraving of the façade of the church, a brass cross and candlesticks for the altar, probably designed by Alexander Koch (1848–1911), and a bible donated by Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1913.³²

The war years of 1914–18 were a difficult time for

the parish. Among the English there was enormous anti-German sentiment, often unthinking, though its local intensity is more readily understood when Zeppelin raids on the East End are recalled. Many in the congregation returned to Germany in 1914, and others were interned. Mätzold stayed and continued services in the church, also taking on a pastoral role in internment camps. Continuity broke down in 1917 when the school was forced to close and Mätzold was expelled from the country. He was unable to return until 1920, from which date he quietly held together a much-diminished congregation until his death in 1930.³³

FROM 1930 TO 2004

Part of Mätzold's caution through the insecure 1920s had been the deferral of necessary repairs. It was not long before his successor, Dr Julius Rieger, from Berlin, was obliged to deal with this problem. An extensive programme of repair work was begun in 1931, moving gradually as funds became available. Rieger took an early opportunity to pay tribute to his predecessor. The south end of the church under the gallery was re-organised in 1932 to create a committee room that was inaugurated and remains known as the *Mätzoldzimmer*. The creation of this room involved the loss of two large pews and circulation space. The panelling on the inner sides of the two entrance passages was extended northwards as far as the southern pair of columns, as is evident in construction breaks in both the panelling and its cornices. The eighteenth-century panelled partition that encloses the north side of the committee room has been turned around; it presents its fair raised-and-fielded face to the room rather than to the church. Pews on the other side of the columns were taken out, to create a narrow passage between the committee room and the remaining pews. Another more southerly pew had already been removed.³⁴

In 1934 W. Horace Chapman, architect, conducted

investigations of the roof and turret that discovered rot and woodworm. On the instructions of the District Surveyor the bell turret and the coved ceiling were dismantled.³⁵

By this time Rieger had more to worry about than woodworm. Adolf Hitler's rise to power in 1933 presented expatriate Germans with difficult questions. Rieger was an associate of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–45), the leading theologian and opponent of National Socialism, who spent the years 1933 to 1935 serving as pastor to London German congregations in nearby St Paul, Goulston Street, and in the German Evangelical Church in Sydenham. Rieger's parish became a relief centre, providing a base for advice and shelter for German and Jewish refugees, particularly children, and sending off references for travel to England. During the 1939–45 war German churches in Britain were not generally persecuted as they had been in 1914–18. It is nonetheless notable that at St George's services continued uninterrupted right through the war. Whitechapel was not only heavily bombed; it was also the heart of London's Jewish community. The church, which escaped any significant bomb damage,³⁶ was kept full into the 1950s, London's German community having been reinforced by the new wave of refugees. Rieger's successor in 1953 was Pastor Eberhard Bethge, Bonhoeffer's student, friend and biographer. His mentor had been hanged in April 1945 at Flossenburg concentration camp.

Attendance at St George's declined in the later decades of the twentieth century. In 1970 plans were drawn up by J. Antony Lewis, architect, proposing a major re-ordering that would have removed the pews and all but the west gallery.³⁷ Mercifully this was not carried through. In 1996, when there were only about twenty left attending regularly, Pastor Volkmar Latossek led the congregation into a merger with that of St Mary's German Lutheran Church, Bloomsbury. The church no longer being used for regular worship, its important library, the core of which was Pastor Wachsel's private collection, was transferred from its

home in the Alie Street vestry to the British Library, where it remains intact, incorporating some rare, indeed unique, German publications, and serving as a valuable record of German community life in London over more than 200 years.³⁸

To secure its future St George's Church was taken into care by the Historic Chapels Trust in 1999, and an extensive restoration programme costing £900,000 was carried out between June 2003 and July 2004. The restoration was supported by grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, St Paul's German Evangelical Reformed Church Trust and other private donations. Architects to the scheme were Daniel Golberg and Brian Lofthouse of Thomas Ford & Partners and the building contractors were Kingswood Construction. The work included the reinstatement of a coved ceiling, like that removed in 1934. Reinstatement of the tower was also considered, but grant support for that work was not forthcoming. The former congregation has an agreement with the Trust to use the church for occasional services of worship. The Trust has established a local committee for St George's that will be arranging concerts, lectures and other suitable activities in the building.³⁹

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTES

- 1 Johann Gottlieb Burckhardt, *Kirchen-Geschichte der deutschen Gemeinden in London*, Tübingen, 1798; G.J.R. Cienciala, *From many nations: A history of Lutheranism in the United Kingdom*, London, 1975.
- 2 Bryan Mawer, 'Sugar Refiners and Sugarbakers Database', at www.mawer.clara.net.
- 3 Tower Hamlets Local History Library (hereafter THLHL), TH/8662/3, St George's German Lutheran Church, Financial Summaries 1763–95, fols. 1–2.
- 4 Monuments in the church and THLHL, TH/8662/56, 'Statement of Facts on behalf of Elders and Vestrymen of German Lutheran Chapel', n.d., with a letter from the church committee to the parish about a judicial ruling, 25 July 1789.
- 5 THLHL, TH/8662/3, fols. 1–2.
- 6 Johnson's manuscript memoirs are held in the London Borough of Waltham Forest Archives, Acc. 10199. See also Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600–1840*, New Haven and London, 1995, 548 (where the obituary is mentioned) and 635–6 (for Mainwaring). I am grateful to Sir Howard for directing me to the memoirs and sharing his further interpretation of Johnson's achievements.
- 7 THLHL, TH/8662/3, fols. 3–4 and 6. Errick Kneller was not, it seems, a descendant of the German-born Court painter, Sir Godfrey (Gottfried) Kneller (1646–1723). Trained in London, Errick was granted his freedom through the Painter-Stainer's Company in 1732, having been the 'servant' (apprentice) of Gerald Strong. This suggests that he was born c.1711, perhaps earlier, but not later. When Sir Godfrey died in 1723 he had neither sons nor nephews, leaving his estate to his wife Susanna, and then to

- his grandson, Godfrey Kneller Huckle, not yet then
 21, provided the latter used the surname Kneller. Sir
 Godfrey's brother, Andrew Kneller, had daughters
 [London, Guildhall Library, MS 5668, Painter-
 Stainer's Company Freedom Admissions Register,
 1658–1820; London, National Archives, PROB
 11/594, will of Sir Godfrey Kneller, 6 Dec. 1723;
 J. Douglas Stewart, *Sir Godfrey Kneller and the
 English Baroque Portrait*, Oxford, 1983, 60 and 182].
- 8 Nigel Yates, *Buildings, Faith and Worship: The
 Liturgical Arrangement of Anglican Churches
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- 9 E. Alfred Jones, *The Old Silver Sacramental Vessels
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- 10 THLHL, TH/8662/3.
- 11 THLHL, TH/8662/3, fol. 3; National Archives,
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- 12 THLHL, TH/8662/56 (see note 4).
- 13 TH/8662/4, St George's German Lutheran Church,
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 1796–9.
- 14 THLHL, TH/8662/3, fol. 26v.
- 15 In 1796 £55 2s 6d was spent on 'repairing and fitting
 up the chapel, parsonage and other appurtenances'
 [THLHL, TH/8662/4]. See also THLHL,
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 8662/244, lease of 30 January 1802 with plan by
 Samuel Page, surveyor.
- 16 These were seen and photographed during
 restoration work. See also THLHL, TH 8662/3,
 fols. 20v, 21v; TH/8662/241, plan and section of
 1885; TH/8662/244.
- 17 THLHL, TH/8662/4a, St George's German
 Lutheran Church, Minutes and Proceedings at
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 TH/8662/244; Colvin, *op. cit.*, 720.
- 18 Historic Chapels Trust files (hereafter HCT).
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- 20 *Idem.*
- 21 *Idem.*
- 22 *Idem.*
- 23 THLHL, TH/8662/419, item 24, letter from
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- 27 Yates, *op. cit.*, 26.
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 information from John H. Bowles.
- 29 *Der Londoner Bote*, Sept. 1962, 3–9; Panikos Panayi,
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- 35 HCT, *Deutsche Lutherische St. Georgs-Kirche*,
 fund-raising leaflet, April 1934.
- 36 THLHL, TH/8662/231, war damage file, 1941.
- 37 THLHL, TH/8662/234, scheme for re-ordering,
 March 1970.
- 38 'St George's Lutheran Church Library', at
www.bl.uk/collections. The church archives were
 deposited at Tower Hamlets Local History Library.
 Having a fine musical tradition the church also
 amassed and retains an interesting collection of
 Protestant church sheet music.
- 39 HCT; *Church Building*, May–June 1999, 44–5;
 Jennifer Freeman, Daniel Golberg and Brian
 Lofthouse, 'Conserve, Restore, Repair', *Church
 Building*, 82, July/August. 2003, 16–19.