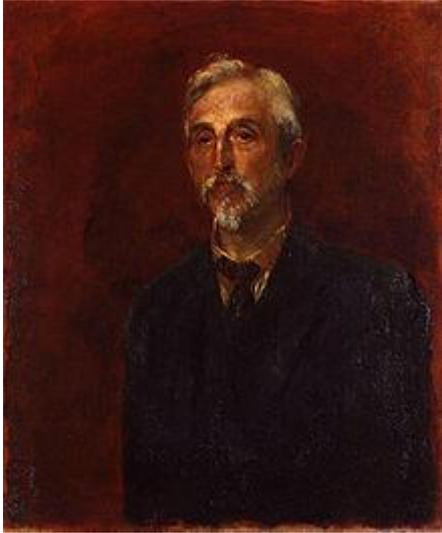


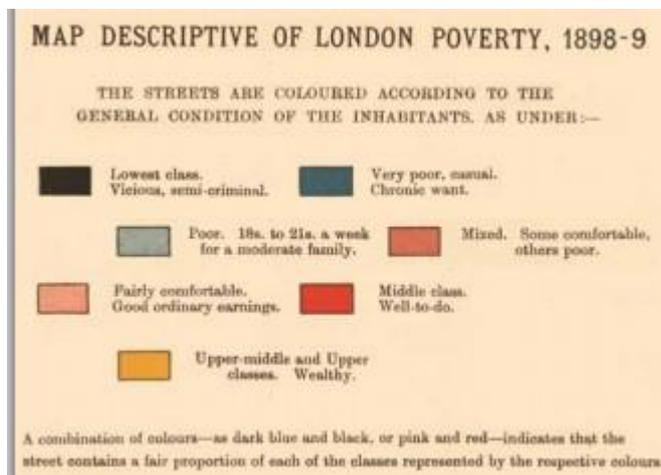
## Survey into Life and Labour in London (1886-1903) by Charles Booth by Julie Goucher

Charles Booth (1840- 1916) was an English social researcher.



Charles Booth painted by  
George Frederic Watts 1901

Booth is most well-known for his huge piece of work where he documented the working classes of London. In 1886 Booth started visiting every street in London where he recorded the details of the residents. He visited thousands of streets and it took him 17 years to do so. When he finished visiting the streets he set about documenting his findings in a series of maps, colour coded identifying the rich who employed servants and every classification right down to the label of black which was reserved for the vicious and semi criminal.



It was the basis of this study and Booth's findings that started the basic foundations for a campaign against poverty. It led to the Old Age Pension and School dinners, thus providing some form of care for those who were most at risk and vulnerable.



Booths Map showing Clerkenwell courtesy of London School of Economics (LSE)

In 2012, a BBC journalist set about making a programme, which revisited 6 of those London Streets recorded in Booth's map to see just what had changed in the intervening 100 years or so.

The BBC aired the series of 6 programmes in the summer of 2012. On the blog written to accompany the series the director stated that *"There were no 'experts' in Deptford High Street and historians don't specialise in single streets."* The journalist is wrong, but I cannot tell him that as comments to the blog are closed, but more on that later!

The BBC Series was called Secret History of Our Streets

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/tv/2012/06/secret-history-of-our-streets.shtml>)

The London School of Economics has placed the entire map online which is searchable. This is a fantastic resource. The website is available at <http://booth.lse.ac.uk>. There is a searchable facility and really my advice is to explore the site and see what gems you discover.

To give you an idea lets go on a little tour.....

From the main page I selected the Police digital notebooks

Inbox (437) - juliegoucher x Charles Booth Online Arci x  
booth.lse.ac.uk

 **Charles Booth**  
*Online Archive*  
Charles Booth and the survey into life and labour in London (1886-1903)

The Charles Booth Online Archive is a searchable resource giving access to archive material from the Booth collections of the Library of the London School of Economics and Political Science and the Senate House Library.

The Booth collection at LSE Library contains the original records from Booth's survey into life and labour in London, dating from 1886 to 1903. The archives of the Senate House Library contain Booth family papers from 1799 to 1967.

- [Introduction and guides to the archives](#)
- Poverty maps of London: [Browse](#) or [Search](#)
- [Inquiry into life and labour in London](#)
  - [Search the catalogue of original survey notebooks](#)
  - [Browse the digitised police notebooks](#)
  - [Browse the Stepney Union casebooks and Jewish notebooks](#)
- [Booth family papers](#)
- [Contacts](#)

[Contents](#) ▶

PhoneBooth: the Charles Booth Poverty Maps of London and Police Notebooks on mobile devices.  
Visit on your mobile browser: <http://phone.booth.lse.ac.uk/>  
More information is available on the [LSE Library website](#)

The Charles Booth Online Archive has been funded by the [Research Support Libraries Programme](#)

Winner of the Multi-Media and Web category, CILIP / Emerald Public Relations & Publicity Awards 2002.

From the main page I selected the Police digital notebooks

Inbox (439) - juliegoucher x Police notebooks (Charle: x  
booth.lse.ac.uk/static/b/districts.html

 **Charles Booth**  
*Online Archive*  
Police notebooks

[Home](#) [Search](#)

The links below lead to lists of walks with police officers and other interviews located in the following districts on London. For more information on these police notebooks, [click here](#).

- District 1: The City (not covered in police notebooks)
- [District 2: Strand and St Giles](#)
- [District 3: St James, Westminster, Soho, All Saints and Tottenham Court Road](#)
- [District 4: Clerkenwell and Grays' Inn](#)
- [District 5: Old Street, Finsbury and Shoreditch](#)
- [District 6: Hoxton and Haggerston](#)
- [District 7: Mile End Old Town and Spitalfields](#)
- [District 8: Aldgate, St George's in the East, Shadwell](#)
- [District 9: Bethnal Green, North and South](#)
- [District 10: Bethnal Green East](#)
- [District 11: Poplar and Limehouse](#)
- [District 12: Bow and Bromley](#)
- [District 13: South Hackney and Hackney](#)
- [District 14: West Hackney and South East Islington](#)
- [District 15: South West Islington](#)
- [District 16: Highbury, Stoke Newington, Stamford Hill](#)
- [District 17: Upper Holloway](#)
- [District 18: Somers Town and Camden Town](#)
- [District 19: Kenish Town](#)
- [District 20: Hampstead](#)
- [District 21: Marylebone \(Christchurch to St John\)](#)
- [District 22: Cavendish Square and St John's Paddington](#)
- [District 23: St Mary Paddington and Kensal Town](#)
- [District 24: St John Westminster](#)

I then chose district 4 – Clerkenwell and Greys Inn, which is the area known as Little Italy



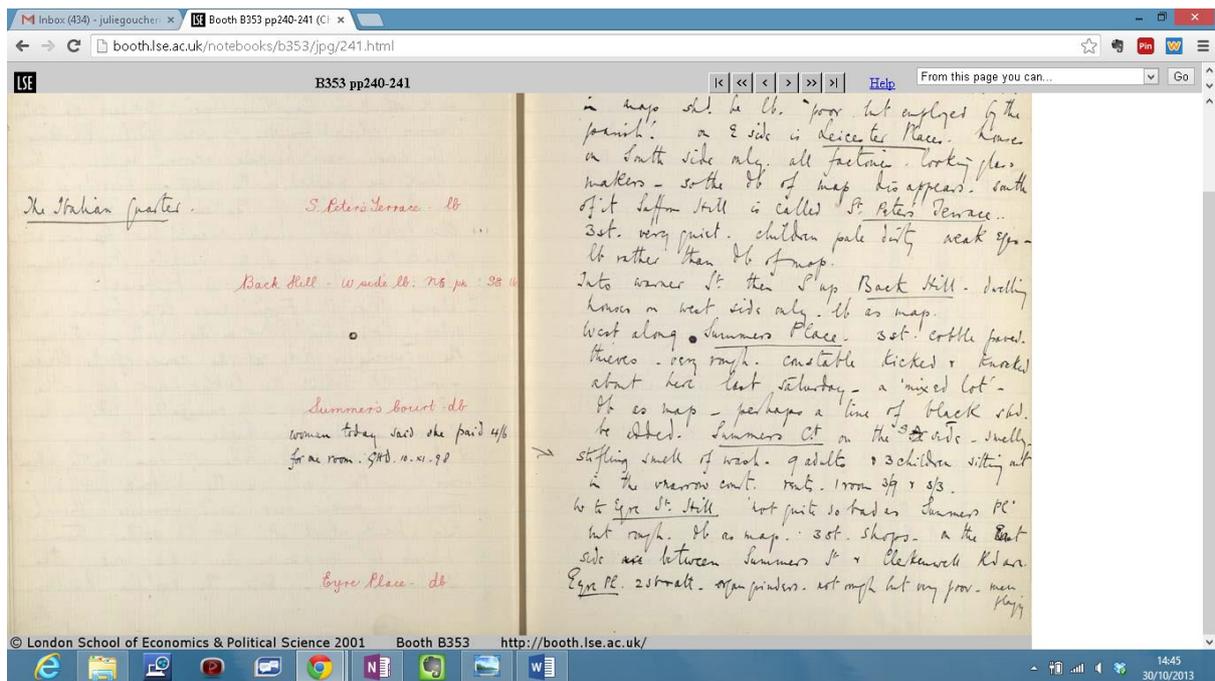
The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Charles Booth Online Archive. The page title is "List of walks and interviews in the digitised police notebooks relating to Booth District 4". The browser address bar shows the URL: [booth.lse.ac.uk/cgi-bin/do.pl?sub=list\\_walks\\_by\\_district&arg0=4](http://booth.lse.ac.uk/cgi-bin/do.pl?sub=list_walks_by_district&arg0=4). The page features a search bar with "District 4: Clerkenwell and Greys' Inn" selected. Below the search bar is a table listing notebook entries.

Notebook	Page(s)	Title of walk/interview
<a href="#">E353</a>	80-97	Walk with Police Constable R. Machell, 10 June 1898 ▶ <a href="#">Read full catalogue entry</a> ▶ <a href="#">Display digitised images</a> ▶ <a href="#">Find matching area on map</a>
<a href="#">E353</a>	98-107	Walk with Police Constable R. Machell, 13 June 1898 ▶ <a href="#">Read full catalogue entry</a> ▶ <a href="#">Display digitised images</a> ▶ <a href="#">Find matching area on map</a>
<a href="#">E353</a>	108-123	Walk with Police Constable R. Machell, 20 June 1898 ▶ <a href="#">Read full catalogue entry</a> ▶ <a href="#">Display digitised images</a> ▶ <a href="#">Find matching area on map</a>
<a href="#">E353</a>	124-141	Walk with Police Constable A.E. Zenithon, 21 June 1898 ▶ <a href="#">Read full catalogue entry</a> ▶ <a href="#">Display digitised images</a> ▶ <a href="#">Find matching area on map</a>
<a href="#">E353</a>	142-155	Walk with Police Constable A.E. Zenithon, 23 June 1898 ▶ <a href="#">Read full catalogue entry</a> ▶ <a href="#">Display digitised images</a> ▶ <a href="#">Find matching area on map</a>
<a href="#">E353</a>	156-166	Walk with Police Constable A.E. Zenithon, 24 June 1898 ▶ <a href="#">Read full catalogue entry</a> ▶ <a href="#">Display digitised images</a> ▶ <a href="#">Find matching area on map</a>

There are now several options, all the notebook interviews undertaken by Booth with the Police Constables who worked in this area of London. You can select the book to look at and then break the browse viewing by different pages.

I choose to at the first book and then to read the catalogue pages. At this point you can do a search for Italian to get a varied choice of responses. I then selected the fourth option – B353 Page241 “The Italian Quarter”. If you now click through to the map you will see image 3 displayed here.

By selecting the option see scanned pages you can view Booth’s writing (<http://booth.lse.ac.uk/notebooks/b353/jpg/241.html>) and there is also an option to see the other references on the same page.



The images can take a while to load, depending on your download speed, but what a phenomenal historical gem. The survey allows us to look at a community and delve deep into the social, economic and domestic lives of the inhabitants.

I mentioned that the producer said no one researched streets. Well they do, but perhaps not in his areas, or perhaps he didn't ask the right people! Check out the Society for One-Place Studies.

### Sources

- Secret History of Our Streets  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/tv/2012/06/secret-history-of-our-streets.shtml>
- A Tourist Guide to Our Secret Streets, written by the Open University in association with the BBC <https://css2.open.ac.uk/outis/docs/publications/OZNOSS.pdf>
- BBC Four have produced their London Collection which has a list of videos – hopefully they are available to those outside of the UK  
(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour/collections/p00synd3/london>)
- Charles Booth – Survey into Life and Labour in London (1886-1903) <http://booth.lse.ac.uk/>
- The Society for One-Place Studies <http://www.one-place-studies.org>
- The Anglo Italian Family History Society <http://www.anglo-italianfhs.org.uk/>
- London Metropolitan Archives (LMA)  
<http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/libraries-and-archives/Pages/default.aspx>
- GENUKI – London <http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/genuki/LND/>