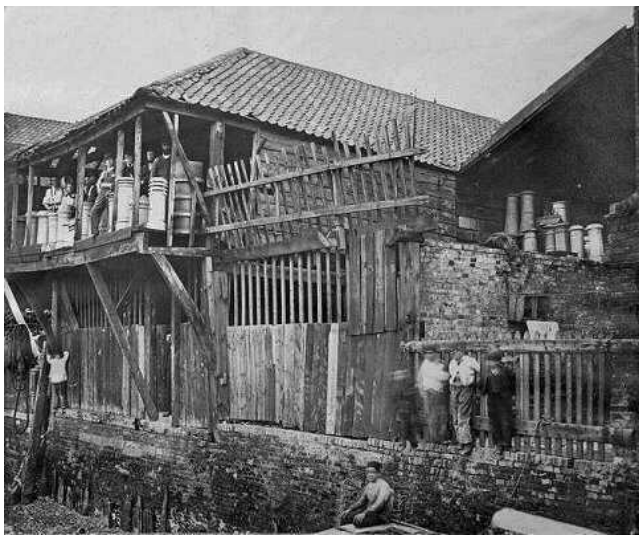
Albert Embankment



The Albert Embankment is on the east bank of the Thames and was created by Sir Joseph Bazalgette out of Fore Street, reclaimed land and numerous small timber and boat building yards. This embankment is one of three built by Bazelgette, the Victoria and Chelsea embankments being the other two.

Photograph of pottery wharf. The site later formed part of the Albert Embankment

The main reason for building the embankment was to protect the low-lying areas of Lambeth from flooding during tides and heavy rain. It also provided a much needed roadway to bypass the congested streets of the area.

LAMBETH FROM MILLBANK, c. 1866
The site later formed part of the Albert Embankment

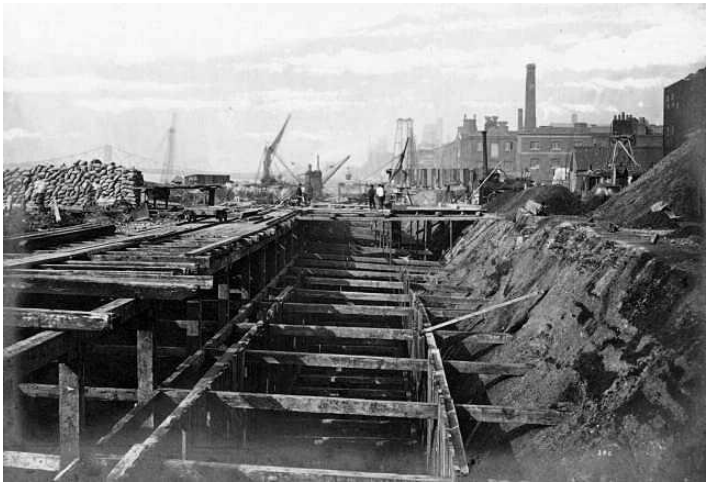
Work started in July 1866 and it was opened on 24th November 1869. It cost £1,014,525 and is about a mile long. Part of the cost was recovered by selling 8.5 acres of reclaimed land to the governers of St Thomas' Hospital that had been evicted from Southwark to make way for railways works.

New Street prior to demolition in 1866 prior to building of Albert Embankment

Bazelgette pioneered the use of Portland Cement in all his building works as it is very strong (compared to the then common type called roman cement) and it is also waterproof. This cement was a recent development and Bazelgette insisted on strict quality control measures another first in modern civil engineering.

High Street Vauxhall 1904 (probably incorrectly dated) prior to building of Albert Embankment

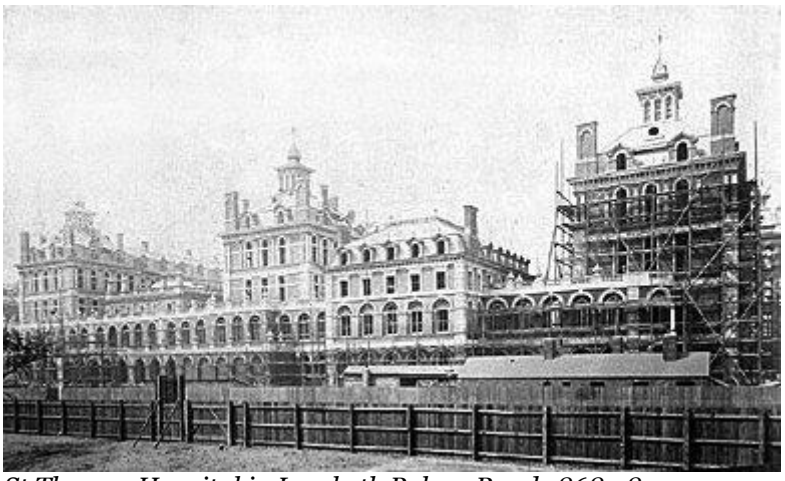
During construction pieces of pottery were found these came from numerous potteries that covered the area and date back to Elizabethan times. Royal Doulton carried on the pottery tradition with a factory and studio till 1956 when they moved to Burslem in Staffordshire.



Foundations for the Albert Embankment c1867

WH Smiths also had a distribution centre here, this was replaced by the International Maritime Agency Organisation. Close by are the London Fire Brigade Headquarters which was designed by E.P. Wheeler, was opened by George V in 1937.

Albert Embankment date not known



St Thomas Hospital in Lambeth Palace Road 1868-1871