

## EAST END BOYS

The Pale of Settlement is a region of Imperial Russia bordering Germany and Austria-Hungary, where Jews are forbidden to live or work in the cities unless they have a permit. Such is the plight of Chayim and his brother Asher. Seeking work, they enter the city without a permit, and are attacked by two men. Goran Kroshnev, a government official, sees Chayim beat them off and quickly realises that people will pay highly to see a Jew beaten, maybe killed, in a boxing ring, and offers Chayim money to fight.

Chayim wins four fights and Asher bets on him, winning a substantial sum of roubles. Incensed that his plan has misfired, Goran orders his brother Ivan, a Cossack officer, to attack the brother's village. Too late to defend their family, the brothers flee. Chayim kills a Cossack, but in a twist of fate meets Ivan, who challenges him to a fight. The deal is that if Chayim wins, he can escape with a three-hour start. He wins.

After an incident at the German border, they bribe a customs officer to let them board the next ship out, which takes them to England, and to London's Docks. To integrate into their new community, Chayim changes his name to Wolfe and their surname to Brown. Using their roubles, they build a successful property business. Love blossoms for Wolfe as the fun-loving Eva Goldberg sets her sights on him, and to complete the love match, her friend Sarah falls in love with Asher. And so the dynasty of these two families unfolds.

When Eva's father, who owns a thriving bakery in the East End, is attacked on the way to the bank by four Irishmen, who rob him and beat him up badly, Wolfe and Asher seek out the thugs. In doing so, they meet Irish gang leader Billy Reed, who is appalled at what has happened and finds the culprits, leaving the brothers to mete out justice to the thugs. So begins a lifelong friendship. The brothers and Billy go into business together, opening an elite gambling club in East London, hoping to entice rich gamblers from the West End, but they are soon caught up in the shadowy world of French and Russian criminals, when the past comes to haunt them. Wolfe will have to fight for his life to protect himself, his family and friends.

David Brown, author of *East End Boys*, is in his mid 70s and lives with his wife Marlene in Norfolk. Originally from London, and most of his life a London cab driver and Blue Badge tour guide, he moved to his present home after a series of illnesses which resulted in the amputation of both legs. Writing has now become his passion. This is his first book and he is presently writing a sequel.

ISBN: 978-0-9572061-8-2

£7.99 UK

\$12.99 US

\$13.49 AUS

€9.49 EU



*The front cover illustration spans five generations. Featuring a photo of David's grandfather, it was designed and created by David's granddaughter, Zoë Brown.*

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Content Type: Black & White  
Paper Type: Creme  
Page Count: 232  
File Type: PDF  
Request ID: CSS1058553

