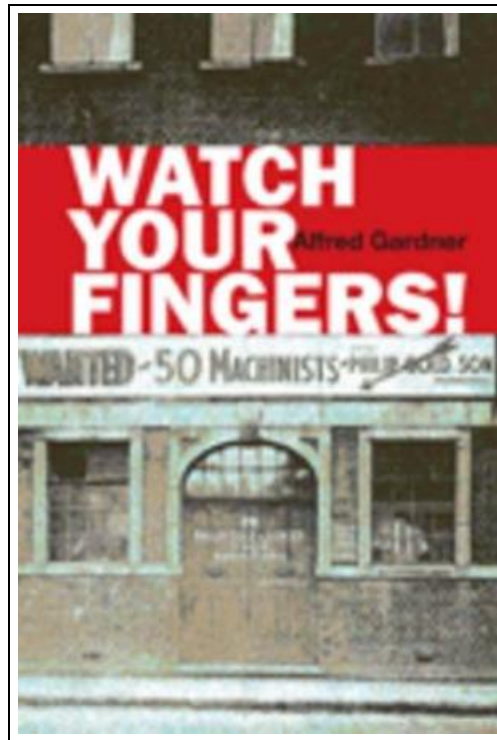


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The Merlin Press Ltd, United Kingdom, 2011. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 228 x 153 mm. Language: N/A. Brand New Book. A memoir of life in East London and of 43 years spent in garment factories across the East End. This memoir begins as Alfred Gardner prepares to leave school, ten years after the end of the Second World War. At fourteen, schoolboy Alf becomes interested in girls, and noticing that well dressed boys get the prettiest girls he saves up to buy a suit. The greater part of his book tells of his life at work. His first work, after school, was to earn money to buy a suit, with a Stepney firm, Standard Tailors (Men s Jacket Makers). The title is taken from a warning given when he begins to cut textiles: the ever present danger of cutting fingers as well as cloth. He describes how firms work and who does what: the preparation of designs and markers, cutting, types of machining, new designs, cabbage, commissions, deliveries, and payments. Much depends on a boss: some are unduly trusting, others deserve no trust and fiddle bills NI, PAYE and wages. Few workplaces are well adapted or fit for purpose. In an age where smoking was permitted at work, cloth cutting might easily catch fire, yet many workshops and factories lacked fire escapes. Many were infested with rats and other vermin. They were often badly heated and ventilated, and remained veritable sweat shops. There is a great deal of human interest and humour: he meets diverse characters and makes many new friends. But not always: he disdains the dishonest and the cheat; he refuses to tolerate rudeness. He tells of co-workers, bosses, shop keepers, vicars, and prostitutes. He also tells of friendships and loves; local sights and pubs: conversation and fun...

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