

Roots in the Forest



The Abbey Church, Waltham Abbey

WALTHAM FOREST FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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WALTHAM FOREST FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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The Journal of the Waltham Forest Family History Society

September 2022

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BOOK REVIEW

Mark Carroll

Tracing Your Family History with the Whole Family, by Robin McConnell, 2022, Pen & Sword Books, £14.99 or less, ISBN 9-78139-013888

What is the best way to engage the next generation of family historians? How does one motivate the youngsters of today to take an interest in the past? Robin McConnell, an expert in team leadership, thinks he has the answer: a family adventure for all ages. In so doing he addresses in a practical way his own mantra: family history is a history of the direct family in the past and in the present – recorded for the future. He is not alone in this venture, as genealogical organisations and history teachers in schools try to appeal to a younger generation otherwise fixated on their social media presence and video games. This book is a brave attempt to support this appeal.

The author starts with the premise that researching one's family history can be fun and stimulating for all the family and is not just for its older members. With so much genealogical information now available online, it is the internet-savvy teenager who has the appropriate skills to exploit it. The older generation of course has a strong oral tradition, with memories of generations past. One will then need to harness these complementary strengths through fruitful collaboration and communication in a structured format. The author has provided here a handbook to achieve this aim. I was impressed by the extensive range of resources he offers, and his broad spectrum of activities designed to capture the imagination of young and old alike. All are likely to foster a sense of achievement as distant ancestors have their lives fleshed out and placed in a historical context. No special expertise in genealogy is required, although it would no doubt facilitate the progress of the early stages of the project. The eventual outcomes capture the spirit of the endeavour: for example, a family reunion; personalised time capsules; and published material in various formats that can be disseminated to the wider family, now and into the future.

This book is certainly not short of ideas, although there is some repetition and the long lists do not make for easy reading. The emphasis throughout is on the UK and Ireland, but families worldwide can apply the same principles and use similar resources,

whilst employing the key attributes of good communication and efficient organisation. Even contemporary events feature here, such as the COVID-19 pandemic; and DNA testing provides a late dramatic twist that overturns some previously trusted research by the author's family. Whilst reading this book, I was nagged by a recurrent doubt: what went wrong in the genealogical endeavours of the author's family, and how did they learn from their mistakes? Fortunately, these very questions are addressed in full in Appendix II.

There are a few minor quibbles, some related to the accuracy of the content and others to its presentation. A few of the images are of poor quality and not well integrated with the text. The Hearth Tax was levied also in England and Wales, not just in Scotland (p55). The word "enervate" (pp2 & 115) has the opposite meaning to what the author intended. The bibliography has some truly obscure references. Given the author's roots in Ulster, the frequent references to Irish material are understandable; they might though appeal to readers in America, with its extensive Irish diaspora.

When one surveys any meeting of a family history society these days, one sees mainly white people with grey hair. Here, then, is a book that at least sets out to address the imbalance in ages, whilst at the same time creating for the whole family a multi-dimensional project with meaningful and tangible outcomes of historical relevance. For this reason, I recommend it.

I NEVER WIN ANYTHING ...

Mark Carroll

How often have you bought a raffle ticket and thought, "I never win anything ..."? Of course, most of us never do win a prize – that is the nature of a raffle or Premium Bond or whatever. The Society of Genealogists (SoG) each month reviews one of its publications relevant to family history, and then offers its members a competition to win a copy of that book. In its newsletter for February 2022 the prize was a book on railway workers. My maternal great-grandfather, Thomas William SMITH (1869-1933), worked for the London Midland & Scottish Railway based in the East End of London after his Army service ended in 1896. The prize was an incentive for me to

enter the competition, which was to answer the question: “What was the name given to the general strike of 1921 (not 1926)?” I cheated and used Google to come up with the answer, “Black Friday”. Feeling slightly guilty – but doesn’t everyone else use the Web for that purpose? – I sent in my answer to the SoG, not expecting to win, of course.

Imagine my surprise when a few weeks later I got an email from the SoG saying that I was that month’s competition winner! The prize was the book by Frank HARDY FSG entitled “My ancestor was a railway worker” (ref 1). The initials after his name tell you that the author is a serious and respected family historian. He also spent 50 years working on the railways as an engineer, and hence he has an informed insight into their operations. The book is written in an easily accessible style, with what the author calls “Cautionary notes” liberally scattered throughout it: hints for family historians on what mistakes to avoid when consulting the records. It gives a detailed overview of the everyday working of all parts of the railway system, with its multiple companies and their intersecting routes. In this sense the book is complementary to another one I have consulted: “Was your grandfather a railwayman?” (ref 2). The latter tells you where to find the sources that contain the service records of named railway workers – most of them are at The National Archives, but some have now been digitised by Ancestry.com. So it was that I was able to build up a detailed picture of the working life of my great-grandfather from 1897 to about 1925: where and when he worked, at what wages and with whom (ref 3). Certainly, for me it was worthwhile taking part in that month’s SoG competition. As they say, “If you are not in it, you can't win it!”

References

1. Hardy, F (2009), *My Ancestor Was A Railway Worker*, London: SoG Enterprises Ltd
2. Richards, T (2002), *Was Your Grandfather a Railwayman?* 4th edition, Bury: FFHS (Publications) Ltd
3. Carroll, M (2009) *Roots in the Forest*, Spring 2009, pp6–12, Waltham Forest FHS

The following article was written by a 4th once removed cousin, John William WEEKS, who sadly died in late 2021 in Australia. We never met but had been in contact since before computers for family history and the work that he has put in is invaluable. Our common ancestors are John and Diana WEEKS.

Handley's 'Aussie' Pioneers

Born in 1812, in Sixpenny Handley, Benjamin Weeks was the youngest son of John and Diana Weeks – formerly Hayter. His father John was a poacher who became far more familiar with the insides of the Dorchester courtroom than the Tolpuddle Martyrs. He was twice convicted to be transported to Australia.

Cranborne Chase was a lawless place at the time, with Handley being the worst parish of all. In 1830 there was even a riot among agricultural labourers in the village. The disorder started in Salisbury and also spread to Fordingbridge. The Handley crowd damaged machinery seen as a threat to agricultural jobs. Initially the farmers did not resist as they preferred their machinery to be damaged rather than their homes. With help from Blandford, the riot was eventually put down and eight of the leaders were put on trial. Handley at the time was described as being “*wild and disparate*” with a population of “*poachers, smugglers and deer stealers*”.

Benjamin had three sisters – Maria, Mary and Jane – and two brothers – John and William. Benjamin's parents, John and Diana, had married in Handley in September 1802. In October the following year a “*disorderly*” John was sentenced to one year's imprisonment at Dorchester quarter sessions for stealing deer.

Then in March 1815, John Weeks and his son William were in more serious trouble. No doubt caught while poaching, they were charged with assaulting William Brayley from nearby Martin. Benjamin's father was found guilty and sentenced to seven years' transportation. While it is known he served his sentence, there is no record of him being transported 'down under' but it is recorded that he spent four years in a Gosport prison.

While John was in prison, Diana gave birth to another son, Charles, who was baptised in 1817 with no record of his father. Life would have been particularly hard for Diana, who sadly died in March 1821 a year before her husband gained his freedom. However, John was back in Dorchester court in 1824 and 1828.

In 1836, Major Edward MACARTHUR sought the help of the Reverend John WEST, rector of Chettle, in finding suitable volunteers to emigrate to Australia to work on Macarthur's Camden estate in New South Wales. Camden Park was named after Lord CAMDEN, Colonial Secretary, who had granted Edward's father 2,000 hectares to breed the first merino sheep in Australia.

Edward Macarthur thought the selection of immigrants was like the planting of trees – *“each destined colonist should as surely have a known place assigned to him ... as every tree previous to its removal from its native soil has a spot prepared for its reception.”*

Although convict labour had contributed to Macarthur wealth, the family was keen to remove the *“plague spot”* of convict social influences from local society. Their ambitious plan was to make their Camden Park an estate of tenant farmers. Today, Camden Park House is the closest Australia has to a stately home.

After the Napoleonic Wars the conditions of agricultural labourers continued to deteriorate, and many parish officials encouraged them to emigrate. Economic depression in the South of England was caused by population growth, farmer mechanisation and foreign competition, particularly on wool. Farmer and political activist William COBBETT reckoned, for example, that new threshing machines could do the work of ten farm labourers. Immigration to Canada and the United States was less expensive and the voyage relatively less arduous compared to the long and more perilous journey to the Australian colony. Therefore, some form of incentive to emigrate *“down under”* was required.

As a consequence, the Bounty Regulations were published in October 1835. Settlers in New South Wales were allowed to recruit their own workers from Britain. On arrival, these immigrants were examined by an appointment board and if satisfied the settler could claim *‘bounty’* money from the government:

- £30 for a man and wife under 30 years on embarkation
- £15 for a single female between 15 and 30 years
- £10 for unmarried males 18 to 30 years
- £5 for each child over one year

Those accepted had to be either agricultural labourers or tradesmen.

The Reverend John WEST wrote to Edward MACARTHUR from Chettle on 26th September 1836:

“Permit me to thank you for the very kind and liberal present of wine, I really feel very much obliged. Though at times a little troublesome, yet I have always felt concerned, that in assisting the poor fellows to engage on the liberal terms you offer them in immigration, I was benefiting their conditions, and opening to them the door of hope, of getting out a hard servitude in poverty to some little independence for themselves and families, by honest steady persevering industry.”

Reverend John West’s task was not straightforward:

“The farmers are the most provoking race of men I have ever had to deal with – they are endeavouring to prevent, if they could, some of the young men going out, by persuading not to go to such a transporting country, but it will have however little or no effect, I believe.”

Local farmers would have suggested those considering immigration should have been content to live as their forefathers had lived. They ought not to have thought of undertaking the perils of immigration *“under the foolish idea you will better your condition in life”*.

Most of the men and women identified by the Reverend knew each other as the MACARTHURS wanted a close and self-supporting local community to be soon established. All the men were agricultural labourers apart from the wheelwright, Samuel Arnold.

Despite the brushes the WEEKS family had experienced with the law, Benjamin, young John and Jane Weeks were identified as prospective New South Wales immigrants. In preparation for their departures, there was a double Weeks wedding. On 17th October 1836, Benjamin married Frances JEANS and Jane married George VINCENT. Francis came from a Durweston/Stourpaine family and

unusually for the times could both read and write. John Weeks junior was already married, having wed Hannah HAYTER in September 1833.

Also chosen were Benjamin's assumed cousin Richard Weeks and his wife, Mary Ann, formerly BRADLEY. Richard was baptised in Handley on 30th June 1811, while Mary Ann came from Wimborne St Giles. They had married on 21st July 1833.

The Macarthur family offered Benjamin Weeks a three-year contract, an annual £15 wage, a cottage rent free and a plot of ground for a garden. A written agreement was drawn up with the parties, being Benjamin on the one part and James, William and Edward Macarthur on the other. Providing he got "*into no mischief*", he could keep a cow, pigs and poultry. If he remained in service for five years, he would be offered a tenancy of "*fertile land*". Service was to begin from 11th April 1837, which was the day Benjamin first set foot on dry land in Sydney. Individuals were at liberty to leave their employment at any time, but had to pay £15 if they left in the first year, £10 in the second and £5 in the third.

For the voyage on the ship *The Brothers*, the Chettel clergyman selected 15 families.

On the clergyman's list of 3rd October 1836 sent from Chettle to Major Edward Macarthur were:

Farm servants –

George Vincent and wife

John Weeks and wife – two children (Elizabeth Ann and Mary Anne)

Richard Weeks and wife – two children (William and Elizabeth Maria)

Benjamin Weeks and wife

In addition, Richard Weeks' two brothers-in-law George and William BRADLEY embarked on *The Brothers*. Frances' brother John and her sister Jane VINCENT also boarded the vessel.

The Reverend John WEST organised the party's departure, meeting up at Chettle church at 9am where they attended morning service. He addressed them and they then left in covered wagons owned by him

and another clergyman. The journey was broken at Ringwood for “*light refreshments*” before arriving in Southampton. The clergyman wrote, “*My promise of seeing the immigrants to the ship gave me so much satisfaction to the parties and relations, that I have pleasure in fulfilling it*”.

The four Weeks family groups then boarded the vessel *The Brothers* which sailed from Southampton on 20th November 1836, arriving in Sydney on 8th April 1837.

The Macarthurs brought out to the Camden area of New South Wales 41 families between April 1837 and March 1839. These included six from the Rhine Valley in Germany because of their skills and knowledge and wine making. Edward Macarthur’s role was at the English end to seek out suitable immigrants and to see them safely embarked aboard ship. After *The Brothers* two further vessels – the *John McLellan* and the *Royal George* – left for Australia carrying north Dorset immigrants.

Despite the attention to detail given to the voyage by Major Edward Macarthur, the Dorset families still faced the hazards of seasickness, boredom and potential shipwreck. They needed also to endure the rough English Channel and Bay of Biscay, the breathless heat of the Tropics and the cold, stormy conditions of the southern latitudes.

Handley immigrants were spared the normal indignities of the ‘crossing the line’ ceremony. This would involve, when crossing the equator, duckings in sea water and shaving with cream. This consisted of tar, tallow and every other filth imaginable. Failure to pay a fine could involve dousing in the sea from a great height if the unfortunate individual had offended the crew.

Robert TOWNS was both the master and owner of *The Brothers*. He was born in Northumberland in 1794 and has been variously described as businessman, slave trader and founder of Townsville, Queensland. In time he became one of Australia’s richest men. Not known for his generosity, the slave trading related to black birding. This was the practice between 1864 and 1904 of kidnapping South Sea Islanders and using them as slave labourers. Around 62,000 people were lured, coerced and deceived, to work in slavery-like conditions on Australia’s sugar plantations. A monument to Robert

Town in Townsville and the bitter truth of Australia's involvement in the sugar trade attracts controversy to this day. In time Towns ruled over a business empire from shipping to agriculture. He was also active in politics and became a member of the New South Wales legislative council. Fortunately for the Handley immigrants, the behaviour of Robert Towns on the voyage was constrained by the requirements of the much more enlightened Macarthur brothers.

The Macarthurs sought to give the immigrants secure rights with a minimal but high standard of living for the labouring classes at the time. Each family on *The Brothers* had their own lit cabin, tea caddy, eating utensils, sugar box, mattress and blankets. There were morning and evening prayers, a Sunday service and each family was provided with a Bible and prayer book. Food was provided already cooked and reading material was also supplied. The men had to rise at 6am to clean their berths, and swearing, gambling and alcohol were forbidden. During the voyage the men made up wool bales and nets while the women made clothing from material supplied.

They were paid for this work when they reached New South Wales and allowed to keep some of their clothing. Robert Towns commented:

“Many ... who embarked with scanty supplies, wrought themselves in this way an excellent supply of apparel.”

Frances WEEKS, Benjamin's wife, set up a school for 21 children on board ship and was to receive a mention in British Parliamentary papers:

Immigration report of 1837 for Australia

The woman (Frances Weeks) who conducted the school aboard The Brothers was remunerated for her trouble by Mr Macarthur with a gratuity of £5.

Testimony of Robert Towns, command of ship *The Brothers*.

Benjamin had been illiterate but by the time they reached Sydney he could both read and write.

Upon arrival each family was provided with a two-bedroom cottage with a kitchen, veranda and a quarter of an acre of garden. Some of

the immigrants who arrived in Camden did cause problems. However, the habits of their former life were soon “*repressed and reformed*”.

In contrast, back in Dorset Benjamin’s father John was back in front of the Dorchester court charged with stealing 7 bushels of wheat. He was found guilty and, at the age of 62 years, was sentenced to seven years transportation. This time he definitely was transported to Australia. He spent time in the convict hulk *York* berthed at Gosport. Conditions on prison hulks were so unhealthy that deaths were quite common with vermin everywhere. In the event of a death, convicts were required to bury the body at low tide on Burrow Island, better known as Rat Island. He spent six months incarcerated aboard the *York*, a converted decommissioned warship stripped of sail and rigging. John was then transported to Australia, as a guest of His Majesty, on *Lord William Bentinck II* which left Portsmouth in April 1838. He arrived in Hobart, Van Diemen’s Land (now Tasmania), in late August 1838. Two years later, the vessel was to make a navigational error during a storm off Bombay, India. The *Lord William Bentinck II* was wrecked and most of the crew lost their lives.

It is generally reckoned that there were two categories of convict. There were those who, for example, stole to feed a starving family while the second encompassed complete scoundrels. However, John CAPPER, Superintendent of Prisons and Hulk Establishments, suggested a third category – those who chose to be convicted! Did Benjamin’s father fall into this third category? He was a widower, his eldest children were getting on with their lives, while the three youngest had chosen to start a new life down under. While convict life had been described as ‘*hell on earth*’, life for the agricultural labouring classes was little better. By the 1830s news had reached north Dorset that life could be better in Australia.

After seven years’ hard labour and at the age of 69, John Weeks obtained his ‘certificate of freedom’ and, in December 1844, landed in Sydney. He became an ‘*emancipist*’ – a convict who had completed his sentence. John had travelled steerage class from Hobart, Van Dieman’s Land, on the vessel *Water Lilly*. No doubt he sought to join up with his offspring in Camden, New South Wales.

After a full and colourful life, John Weeks died in November 1857 at the age of 82 in Maitland. He may have been staying with his niece Elizabeth GOULD, formally Weeks. She was also from Handley and had married Henry Gould in 1827 in Handley. No doubt thanks to the Reverend John WEST, they had arrived in Sydney on the *Woodbridge* in 1838 and settled in Bolwarra, near Maitland. John had survived to witness the arrival of the railway in east Maitland eight months before he died. He was buried in the Church of England, Campbell's Hill Cemetery, Maitland.

John managed to survive an English legal system that pronounced the death sentence for damaging a fish pond and transportation for stealing fish from a river. The severity of such punishments encouraged the committing of more serious crimes on the basis that it was *'as well to be hung for a sheep as a lamb'*.

After completing their three-year contracts, Benjamin, John and Richard all took up long-term leases with the Macarthurs. Rents in the first year were low, yet rose in subsequent years in anticipation of improvements in productivity. In time, Benjamin became a prosperous farmer initially at Cawdor, a village just outside Camden, where he took up three leases, and later at Burrowa, where there was an established Irish community. Life must have been challenging in the village of Burrowa, some 150 miles west of Sydney. The village was known for its lawlessness involving cattle thefts, arson, border disputes and the occasional murder. On occasions, Benjamin must have thought he was back in Handley! Bushrangers, who were outlaws, roamed the surrounding lands. Once a bushranger was named an outlaw it was legal for anyone to shoot him. They were mainly escaped or released convicts or sons of convicts, many of whom were from Irish origins. In 1863, notorious bushranger, Ben HALL, who was responsible for one of Australia's largest gold thefts, robbed the main store of Burrowa. Bushrangers have now become as much part of Australian folklore as the cowboys of the Wild West.

In the early years, Frances had taken in washing to bring in extra income and also opened a school at Hovell's Creek. This made her one of Australia's earliest teachers. Benjamin and Frances had five children – Charles Jeans, Mary Ellen, William, John and Henry. The most difficult problem for immigrants was their sense of isolation

from relatives back home. Frances wrote many letters to her family in Durweston and Stourpaine but as the sea journey took around five months it would take nearly a year to receive a reply.

Benjamin died in unusual circumstances in 1885 at the age of 73. He met his death falling from a window of Mr J ARNOLD's Plough and Harrow Inn in Camden. He had been away from Camden for about 20 years and had returned to look up old friends. Benjamin arrived in the late evening seeking accommodation for the night. He was found dead the next day. Marks were found on the shingle of the veranda under the window as though he had been sitting on the window with his feet outside. There were no marks of footsteps around where he lay, and he probably dozed off and fell. There were no indications that he had been drinking.

At his inquest the jury, without retiring, returned a verdict of accidental death. The Plough and Harrow Inn is still trading today and can be found in Argyle Street, Camden. Benjamin had been a widower for three years and was living with his eldest son, Charles Jeans Weeks, in Burrowa.

Benjamin's brother, the young John Weeks, and his wife Hannah also arrived in New South Wales with daughters Elizabeth Ann and Mary Anne on *The Brothers*. There, they had a further five daughters and one son. In time John set up a family farm, Crosslea. Among their daughters was Jane who married a German vigneron, John GERHADT. The vineyards of Camden Park are considered to be Australia's first commercial vineyards and were established by the Macarthurs. William and James Macarthur had acquired their knowledge of wine making in France and Switzerland.

Benjamin's assumed cousin Richard Weeks was a shepherd by occupation. He was 26 years old when he arrived in Australia with his 24-year-old wife, Elizabeth. They brought with them their three-year-old son William and daughter Elizabeth Maria who was only six months old. With a newborn baby, the sea voyage would have been even more stressful for the young mother as infant mortality rates at sea were high. Young children were particularly vulnerable to infectious disease and on such long journeys there was a shortage of suitable food for young children. However, Elizabeth Maria Weeks

survived and lived almost to celebrate the dawning of the next century. Richard and Elizabeth had a further four sons and three daughters in New South Wales.

In 1847, Richard was still employed by the Macarthurs as a shepherd but in 1857 bought 35 acres of land at Taralga Creek. Taralga was a village 250 miles from Camden where most of Richard's neighbours were former convicts. Indeed, Elizabeth Maria Weeks married Norfolk-born former convict Edward Palmer SEAMAN. Taralga, originally a place where bushrangers and convicts were tried, became a town in 1860 and by 1866 there were 110 residents.

Like Benjamin Weeks, Richard prospered living at Richlands, Taralga, whose wheat obtained good prices in Sydney. He died in September 1868 when he collapsed working in the field. He was observed to "*stand up and rest up on the hoe which he had in his hand and then suddenly fell down*". Richard's wife Mary Ann died in April 1876 and was buried in Stonequarry Cemetery, Taralga, close to her husband.

In 2004, direct descendant, Canberra-based and former WWII veteran, John Weeks researched his family history. He then published a book *Bounty Immigrants from Dorset – Sixpenny Handley* which can now be found in the National Library of Australia. His diligent research identified more than 2,700 direct descendants of Benjamin and Frances Weeks. The tree from Handley envisaged and planted in 1837 down under by Major Macarthur has established deep and strong roots. Between 1836 and 1846, the population of the Australian colony grew from 77,290 to 190,000 with the village of Sixpenny Handley, for its size, making a disproportionate contribution.

However, not every member of the Dorset Weeks family emigrated to New South Wales. The 1841 census records listed another 16 of the Weeks family still living in Sixpenny Handley.

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THE BARING FAMILY OF HIGH BEACH, ESSEX

– Mark Carroll

Introduction

The area covered by Waltham Forest FHS extends as far north as Waltham Abbey in Essex and includes the village of High Beech – or High Beach – in Epping Forest. As part of the Society’s commitment to digitising local records, Tim Valder-Hogg and I have transcribed the marriage register (1838-1911) of the church at High Beech, held at Essex County Record Office. Two entries in particular caught my eye, one in 1893 and one in 1901. They related to two sisters whose father was Thomas Charles BARING. Did they belong to the family that owned Baring Brothers, the commercial bank brought to its knees by a ‘rogue trader’ in 1995? If so, what could we learn about the family and its links to that part of south-west Essex?

The marriage entries

The two entries in the marriage register are shown in Figure 1. The sisters were called Susanna Beatrix Baring and Muriel Ursula Baring (known as Ursula), with their middle names coming from their grandmothers. Ursula was living at Manor House, High Beech, in 1901. Their father, Thomas Charles, was already dead by then; he was recorded in the entries as having been a banker and an MP. One witness to the marriage of Susanna was a Susan C Baring – presumably her mother, Susan Carter nee MINTURN. In 1893 the minister was the Reverend Vincent H MACY, Susanna’s father-in-law; in 1901 the minister was Ursula’s brother-in-law, Vincent T Macy. Susanna, now Mrs Macy, went on to have two daughters and to die in London in 1956 at the age of 88. Ursula, now Mrs BRENTON, also had two daughters; she died in Loughton, Essex in 1950 at the age of 78.

1893. Marriage solemnized at Holy Innocents in the Parish of High Beech in the County of Essex

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession.
07	Nov 29	Susanna Beatrix Baring	25	Spinster	Clerk in Holy Orders	High Beech	Thomas Charles Baring Esq	Banker
		Vincent Thomas Macy	25	Spinster		High Beech	Thomas Charles Baring Esq	Banker

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church after being by us,

his Marriage was solemnized between us, { Vincent Thomas Macy } in the Presence of us, { Susan C Baring }

Figure 1. Marriage register entry for Susanna Baring

1801. Marriage solemnized at <i>Sty Innocents</i> in the <i>Parish</i> of <i>High Beech</i> in the County of <i>Essex</i>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
128	April 25	Henry Stephen Barente	45	Bachelor	Minister	14 Park Walk	Henry Begg Esq	Merchant
	1901	Ursula Ursula Baring	28	Spinster	—	Manor House High Beech	Thomas Charles Baring	Banker
Married in the <i>Parish Church</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <i>Established Church</i> with <i>Consent</i> by me, <i>J. Thomas Baring</i>								
This Marriage was solemnized between us, <i>Henry Stephen Barente</i> <i>Ursula Ursula Baring</i>				In the Presence of us, <i>J. Thomas Baring</i> <i>Wm. Baring</i>				

Marriage entry for Ursula Baring (images courtesy of Essex Record Office: www.essexarchivesonline.co.uk/)

High Beach

Construction of the Epping New Road was begun in 1834 to take traffic through the forest close to High Beach, thereby avoiding the hilly terrain around Loughton to the east. After Queen Victoria declared on 6th May 1882, at a grand pavilion in front of the King's Oak Hotel at High Beach (Figure 2), that Epping Forest should be “free to the use and enjoyment of her people for all time”, it became a favoured destination for day trips by East Enders. Some of them were disappointed though. One Cockney lad complained bitterly that on his Sunday School outing to High Beach, they had not seen the sea! However, their helpful coach driver had explained to them that “The tide is out at the moment”!



Figure 2. 1892 Map of High Beech (image courtesy of National Library of Scotland: <https://maps.nls.uk>)

The population of High Beech, which lies 2 miles south-east of Waltham Abbey, was 493 in 1851. Who were the residents of the area

at that time? One notable resident, from 1825 to 1845, was Dr Matthew HALL, who set up an asylum there caring for patients with mental health disorders by means of, at that time, revolutionary treatments. One of his financial backers was Alfred, Lord TENNYSON, and one of his inmates in 1837 was the renowned poet, John CLARE. Some idea of the local men's occupations comes from analysis of the parish registers (ref 1). They included: a gentleman, a yeoman, a merchant and a farmer, seven gardeners, four shoemakers, two shopkeepers, two policemen, two carpenters, a bricklayer, a blacksmith, an ostler, a gamekeeper, a silk weaver, four domestic servants and 39 labourers. One can see therefore a broad range of social classes, from the top to the bottom. The grand country homes, like Manor House where Ursula was living in 1901, are still marked on modern-day maps, as is Wallsgrove House, which was owned by the widow Susan Baring in 1897 (lower left corner of Figure 2). The farmers and gardeners at that time no doubt supplied food to the populace of an ever-expanding London. Transport of produce to the capital had been made easier by the extension of the railway lines to Waltham Cross in 1840 and to Loughton in 1856. As with any parish then, religion and the church played an important role in most people's personal and social lives. Indeed, this influence even extended to the local schoolchildren (see below). However, it is clear that many of the working-class folk in the area were illiterate in early Victorian times, as the entries in the marriage register often show brides, grooms and witnesses using an X rather than a signature.

The church at High Beach

The first well-documented church at High Beech was St Paul's, whose construction began in 1836. The incumbent there was able to conduct christenings and weddings, with the marriage register's first entry being in 1838. However, the church – in fact, the chapel as it then was, according to the register – had no graveyard, so burials had to take place at the 'mother' church at Waltham Abbey. Only in 1884 did it become a parish church. Another problem was the need to maintain the building with regular repairs, with the result that for weeks at a time no religious ceremonies could take place there. In any case the congregation was small: in 1848 the average number of churchgoers taking Holy Communion was only 25, although the church could seat 250 (ref 1).



Figure 3. Church of the Holy Innocents, High Beach

By the early 1870s it was apparent to many concerned parishioners that the church needed to be replaced. Thomas Charles Baring, one of the two churchwardens at the time, led calls for a subscription to raise funds for a new building, which was completed in 1873. It even had enough land for a churchyard so that burials could be carried out there. The name of the new church was not to be St Paul's, though. In recognition of Thomas's significant donation as the major benefactor, and the fact that he had lost two of his sons tragically young in 1866, the new name given to it was the Church of the Holy Innocents (Figure 3). Even then, it was not a particularly attractive proposition for any ambitious young vicar. The annual stipend was originally only about £100, without the benefit of any tithes; the incumbent was also paid 1s for each baptism and for calling banns, and 5s 6d for each wedding. It was not until 1903 that the stipend was raised to a more substantial level of £170, plus £38 in pew rents, £9 in fees and £25 in Easter offerings. Despite this shortcoming, Rev Josiah NORTON was to be the vicar at High Beech for over 40 years, from 1865 to his death in 1912. He even conducted the wedding ceremony of his own daughter there: Florence Elma Norton (known as Queenie) married Dr Lyonel John LOCK on 2nd July 1902. Up to 1895 the average annual rate for baptisms was 13, for marriages two,

and for burials (from 1884) nine. The old church of St Paul's was de-consecrated and demolished in 1885 (ref 1).

The church played an important role in local society also by making a substantial contribution to the education of its young parishioners. It had an active Sunday School, with nine teachers and an average attendance of 59 children in 1911. The vicar was also responsible for the running of the day school, which was a National School with three teachers and an average of 47 pupils in 1911. The latter school had been started in 1818 with about 28 pupils and was supported almost entirely by voluntary contributions. The income of the school was about £50 per annum, made up in part by the weekly fee of 2d (two pence) per pupil; the poorest children had their fees paid by local benefactors. Her Majesty's Inspector visited the school on the 14th March 1845 and reported: "This school is well supplied with apparatus; the instruction is very good. The children read *History of England*; write well on paper and slates; work higher rules in arithmetic and receive good religious instruction." However, by 1852 standards had declined, and in 1859 the Government Inspector noted that "The children know next to nothing". The appointment of Rev Josiah NORTON did lead to improvements though; in 1866 the report stated: "The instruction and order are very creditable" (ref 1). The evidence from the marriage register suggests that by the end of the 19th century, most young people in High Beech could at least sign their name.

Thomas Charles Baring

Thomas Charles Baring (1831-1891) – informally called "TC" or "Charley" to distinguish him from several other Thomases in the extended family – was a banker, a Member of Parliament, a classical author and a philanthropist (ref 2) (Figure 4). He was born on 16th May 1831 in the parish of Adderbury, near Banbury in Oxfordshire, the eldest son of Charles and Mary Ursula Baring. His father was a man of the cloth who would eventually become Bishop of Durham. His paternal grandfather, Sir Thomas Baring, 2nd Baronet, was a scion of the family's banking business, which had been founded in 1762 by Sir Francis Baring, Thomas Charles's paternal great-grandfather (refs 3 and 4) (Figure 5).

Thomas Charles was educated at the public school of Harrow, after which he entered Oxford University's Wadham College on 31st January 1849 at the age of 17 (ref 5). Indeed, he was a student there when the 1851 census was carried out. He stayed on for further studies, became a Fellow of Brasenose College (1852-59), and left with degrees of BA and MA. Afterwards he moved to North America to oversee the operation of that branch of Barings Bank, which had been established in 1823. It was in New York City in 1859 that he married the 21-year-old Susan Carter MINTURN. The couple went on to have seven children: four sons and three daughters. Tragically two of their sons died in America in the same year, 1866: Charles Cuthbert aged 6 and Robert Bowne Minturn aged 3 both succumbed to scarlet fever. By 1868 the Barings had returned to England, with their main residence being at 1 Grafton Street, Westminster; they were there in 1881 for the census that year.



Figure 4. Thomas Charles Baring (image courtesy of Wikipedia)

Some years earlier Thomas Charles had embraced politics. He was a staunch supporter of the Conservative and Unionist Party who was elected to Parliament in 1874 as MP for Essex South. He remained its representative until 1885, when the constituency underwent boundary

changes. During this time, he had a base in the constituency in the form of Wallsgrove House at High Beach (Figure 2). After a failed attempt to become MP for Essex South-West in December 1885, he was elected to Parliament in 1887 to represent the City of London. What did he achieve as a politician? One significant contribution was as a member (1885-87) of the Royal Commission on Loss of Life at Sea; he was also a Justice of the Peace for Essex and for London, as well as Deputy Lieutenant for Essex. Furthermore, he continued his philanthropic activity. In 1874 he gave £30,000 (equivalent to about £2.4 million nowadays; ref. 6) to enable Magdalen Hall to be re-founded as Hertford College, Oxford University; and in 1890 he had new almshouses built at High Beach.

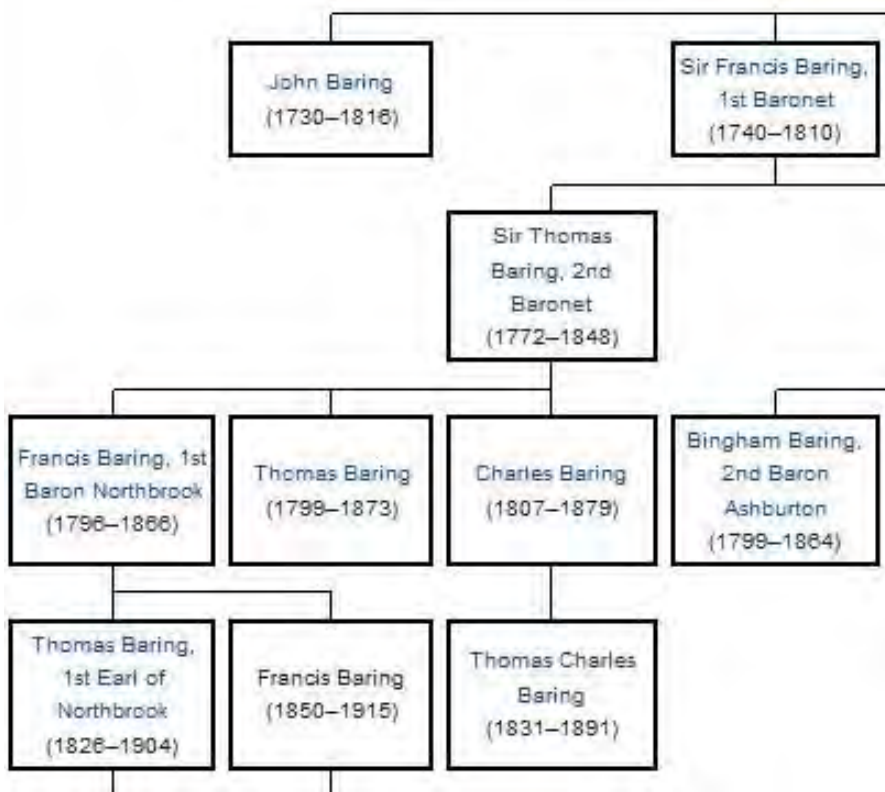


Figure 5. Partial family tree of the Baring family (image courtesy of Wikipedia)

Thomas Charles thought he had left his banking career behind him when in 1890 he was thrust back into the limelight at Barings Bank.

The firm faced a major crisis that year – the Panic of 1890 – associated with an acute recession brought on by a severe sovereign debt problem in South America. In order to save the family firm from insolvency, Thomas Charles risked his entire substantial personal fortune, together with support from a consortium of banks in the City of London, to ensure its continuing financial viability. In the process he successfully oversaw the transition of Barings Bank from a family firm to a limited liability company, with himself as its Chairman. However, he did not live long to enjoy the fruits of his success. On a trip to Italy the following year he died in Rome on 2nd April 1891 at the age of 59; the cause of death was an unsuccessful operation following an illness of several weeks. His body was brought back to England and was buried in the family vault, marked by a granite cross in the north-east corner of the churchyard of Holy Innocents; a memorial plaque in the church marks the event (Figure 6). Obituaries of Thomas Charles Baring were published in newspapers from London to Australia. An article in *The Australian Star* (Sydney, 23rd June 1891) took the view that he “combined, in an uncommon degree, business aptitude with literary culture”. When probate was granted in London on 30th May 1891, he left £823,304, later adjusted upwards to £896,518 – equivalent to over £80 million in present-day money (ref 7). He had not left a will, so a grant of Letters of Administration was made. One executor and the main beneficiary was his widow, Susan Carter Baring, who (according to contemporary newspaper reports) received £3,000 plus £1,000 per month for life, during which time she would also benefit from the use of the family homes in Westminster and High Beech. She did not remarry; she died six years later, on 11th January 1897, in East Sheen, Surrey, at the age of 59, and in her will she left £31,908 (ref 7).

Of Thomas and Susan’s surviving children, we have already considered Susanna Beatrix and Muriel Ursula (see second section, above). Godfrey Nigel Everard Baring (1870-1934) married Ada Sybil BURKE, only child of the 2nd Lord FERMOY. The couple moved to Limerick, Ireland, where he was a JP, High Sheriff and Master of the Foxhounds; they had one son and two daughters. Harold Herman John Baring MBE (1869-1927) was a witness at the marriage of his sister Muriel in 1901 (Figure 1). He married the

American Mary CHURCHILL in New York in 1908 and died at High Beech aged 57.



Figure 6. Memorial plaque to Thomas and Susan Baring in Holy Innocents' Church (image: ©Acabashi; Creative Commons CC-BY-SA 4.0; Source: Wikimedia Commons)

Constance Mary Baring (1862-1929) married Rev William Ewart Beamish BARTER in 1891 and by 1911 the couple had one son and six daughters; Constance died in Steyning, Sussex, aged 66.

Conclusions

In Waltham Forest FHS we tend to focus on the more populous areas of our 'patch', such as Walthamstow and Leyton. Naturally enough, for our ancestors – including my own – were most likely to find employment in the rapidly developing industries there or with the railways or docks, or they could easily commute from there to the City of London. Further away from the capital in places like High Beech, life changed little – or anyway, at a slower pace. The landed gentry there continued to live their manorial lifestyle with grand houses and servants, such as the Lord of the Manor of nearby Sewardstone, Rear-Admiral Charles SOTHEBY. They were joined by families such as the Barings, who made their fortunes in Georgian and Victorian times through international finance and commerce and by profiting from the slave trade. However, the financial crisis of 1890 was not the only one to have a devastating impact on Barings Bank. In 1994 a 'rogue trader' called Nick LEESON in Singapore gambled unsuccessfully with the bank's assets and brought it to a state of collapse. It was sold in 1995 for a nominal £1 to a Dutch banking group.

Acknowledgements

I thank the vicar of Holy Innocents' Church at High Beach for allowing me to photograph her church on 3rd June 2022. The church's website provided me with considerable valuable historical information (ref 1).

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BOOK REVIEW

Tim Valder-Hogg

Cemeteries and Graveyards – A guide for family and local historians in England and Wales by Celia Heritage

The book is written for those seeking the resting place of their ancestors or people they have become interested in while working on other history projects. It starts with the story of the author's quest to find an ancestor's grave and continues by covering subjects of use to those on similar quests.

Starting with a real-life problem is a good way of starting to look at the subject. It makes the book easy to start reading and various asides keep one's attention. The style probably comes from Celia Heritage's experience of giving talks and lectures, though not all techniques used in talks transfer well to books, particularly if they are likely to be used as reference books. The one standing out is the making of statements in a presentation which aren't quite true as if they were absolute, and then dealing with the exceptions a couple of slides later. Early in the book Celia makes the statement that an Act of Parliament was required to establish each cemetery before 1847, but as many know, Abney Park was opened in 1840 and was not established by Act of Parliament. This isn't acknowledged for four pages, and the reader is left wondering why an Act was not needed. The book has numerous case studies and examples which are interesting and helpful.

Those with family around London will find the pieces on Woodgrange Park Cemetery and St Martin's-in-the-Fields churchyard particularly interesting, but many others are mentioned, and the reader will find useful clues about how to progress their research. There are also references to some useful websites provided, and these may prove useful in some areas of research.

In general, I feel that this book has been written more from accumulated notes than from an understanding of how records and relevant legislation work. This gives rise to some accuracy problems when a probably correct statement has been rephrased. The author writes that a person who lived in a parish has the right to burial in the parish churchyard, but this is ambiguous. If she meant that a person who had at some time lived in a parish was entitled to be buried there, that would be incorrect; however, if she meant a person resident in a parish at the time of their death, then that would be correct. The statement that closed churchyards come under the authority of a local council is not necessarily true. However, for responsibility for a churchyard to be given to a local authority to maintain, it would need to have been closed. A closed churchyard is one which has been closed by order in council and (usually) permits no new graves to be dug. The book says that servicemen were reinterred in Cannock German Cemetery in 1959. However, it was only agreed in 1959 that remains of Germans and Austrians from

both world wars interred in cemeteries not maintained by CWGC would be removed to Cannock. This probably did not start immediately and in fact took many years, still being in progress in 1966. The cemetery was dedicated in 1967. Although the date the Council sold the Westminster cemeteries is correct, the Local Government Ombudsman ruled that the cemeteries must be bought back in 1988, not 1987, and the saga dragged on for four more years.

There are some parts of the book where I feel more could have been said. In part this means that it is covering the right kind of subject but leaves one dissatisfied. The section on churchyards talks about the way they were once used. It covers eves-drip burials and the tendency to have more burials on the south side but stops short of talking about the stigma of burial on the north side and the possible reasons for it. Though wills are mentioned as a possible source of genealogical information, I feel a little more could have been said about where to find them given that most can be located online. In the records section, some explanation of church structures would help the reader work out where to find records, not just for the church of England but also non-conformist churches. When talking about digitisation and filming, the section on online records seems to say that church records are owned by county archives. However, Church of England records belong to the Diocese, which means that the Church can and does withdraw records as it needs to. A Diocese may use a county archive as its repository. However, Diocesan boundaries do not follow those of counties. If one knows which Diocese a church (or circuit) is in, it is easy to find out which archive is the relevant Diocesan repository. The use of Faculties and Muniment books as an information source on monuments, buildings, cemetery consecrations, and exhumations has been overlooked. These can be records such as books, which cannot be easily split when a diocese is divided, which will be found with the creating diocese, so again some knowledge of how the records are created and church structures would be useful. The chapter heading, Ex-Parochial Graveyards, is jarring. The author must have meant Extraparochial, as in outside the parish structure rather than no longer part of the parish structure. The chapter covers the various kinds of non-parochial burial ground. As well as covering the better-known types of cemeteries and denominational burial ground, it is enlightening on those places which may

only be mentioned in whispers: burial grounds of hospitals, prisons and asylums.

I'm torn between recommending this book for its wealth of helpful and interesting information and saying it should only come with a warning about the accuracy of some of the statements in it. It was a good read, and I will probably refer back to it, but I will need to check statements in the book with another source. Perhaps a second edition of this book would be easier to recommend. On the whole this is a good book with lots of useful information in it, but it is let down by statements which are inaccurate or just wrong.

UNEARTHING A STORY FROM A FALLEN STONE – **Kathleen Partington**

A group of WFFHS members Barbara Durack, Lesley Drake, Gill Nichols and Kathleen Partington logged the graves in St Mary's churchyard, Walthamstow, over a number of years. It became noticeable that there are a number of graves that specifically mention that they were those of servants. One such is that of Eliza Finch which is in the area near the alms houses and is a fallen headstone.

Eliza was baptised at Loughton on 29th Jan 1815 and her father worked for the Powell family as a gardener. She had a brother, John, and in 1821 her mother Mary gave birth to another son, David, who died the same year. A burial for a Mary Finch is recorded in 1821, when Eliza was 6, and a possibility could be that this was Eliza's mother, and it was for this reason that she went to live/work with the Powell family at such a young age as stated on her grave. This is purely a supposition.

In 1841 we find Eliza as one of four servants in the household of a young couple, Nathaniel & Agnes Powell of Torrington Square, Bloomsbury. They had married on 15th August 1838 in St John the Baptist Church, Loughton. Nathaniel was a wine merchant. In 1850 Eliza made a will, dated 10th September 1850, while working in the Powell household in Grove Lane, Walthamstow. Obviously, she was

already ill as she bequeathed her silver watch, brooch and £5 to another servant, Mary Piddington, “my nurse in my last illness”.



The inscription reads: ELIZA FINCH / Aged 36 years / Born at Loughton Essex A.D.1814 / She lived from a child in one family / a faithful servant / Died beloved and respected / A.D. 1851

By 1851 she was living in Church End, Walthamstow, with her father James. This was because she was dying of some sort of brain tumour. The Powells were still living in Grove Lane, and they now had six servants including William Forster, Mary Piddington and Eliza’s niece Mary Ann Finch, all of whom were mentioned as beneficiaries in Eliza’s will. On 25th August 1851 she died of a “Fungoid Tumour in the Ears Pressure on the Brain from Growth of Tumour”.

But this is not the end of the story. In her will it was stated that she had lent William Forster, a fellow servant, £200 to be repaid by 10th September 1852, at the rate of interest of £3 10s per annum. This loan must stand until the date specified for repayment, which was one year after her death. When he had repaid the money, she left a legacy of £20 to her “kind mistress Mrs Nathaniel Powell for her kind attention”, £5 to William Forster, £5 and her two black silk dresses

and white shawl to Rebecca Goodwin, a fellow servant, £5 to her niece, £80 to her father and the rest to her brother John.

By 1861 we know William Forster had left service and had become a clerk, and it would be nice to think that maybe the loan that was given to him by Eliza helped him to go up in the world by paying for training in an office as a clerk. This is of course pure conjecture. In March 1867 at the age of 47 years in Hersham, Surrey, he married

1867. Marriage solemnized at <i>Hersham Church</i> in the Parish of <i>Hersham</i> in the County of <i>Surrey</i>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
75	March 2nd	William Forster Mary Piddington	46 43	Bachelor Spinster	Commissioner Agent	Canterwell Hersham	John Forster Charles Piddington	Officer in the Customs Carpenter
Married in the <i>Parish Church of Hersham</i> , according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by <i>Legate</i> or other <i>James Woodroffe</i> by me, <i>Thomas Handforth</i>								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		<i>William Forster</i> <i>Mary Piddington</i>		in the Presence of us,		<i>John M. Forster</i> <i>Maria W. H.</i>		

Mary Piddington, the woman who had nursed Eliza 17 years before. His occupation was a Commission Clerk.

By researching Eliza one gets a feel for the human interrelationships within one particular Victorian household and the closeness of those people working within such a household. The lending of this large amount of money to a fellow servant illustrates this closeness. How Eliza managed to save the sum of £200 is also an interesting question, given that the average wage in 1830 for a female servant ranged from £15 to £30 per year, dependent on her role.

Sources: Gravestone, St Mary's churchyard; Ancestry.com; GRO; Victorian web.org/economics/wage2

THE LAST WORD

Kathy Unwin

Whilst COVID is not over, things do seem to be getting back to normal. On 16th July the Society had a stall at the Highams Park Day. It was very hot, but the event was well attended and quite a few people showed an interest in the Society (Fig 1).



Fig 1. Our stall at Highams Park Day

This was followed on 13th August by a visit to Waltham Abbey (see cover photo), where we had an interesting talk and a guided tour of the church. I intend to write more on the Abbey church and its history in the next journal.

We then visited the Epping Forest Museum, where we saw the Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition. This was followed by lunch at Vince's Italian Restaurant (Fig 2). As you can see from the photo below, quite a few members were able to make it and hopefully we will be able to have another event next year.



Fig 2. Vince's restaurant

**Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month
(except August) at 8pm
Either at Spruce Hill Baptist Church Hall, Brookscroft
Road, Walthamstow E17 or on Zoom***

Subscription rates

<u>UK:</u> Individual £15	ejournal £12
Household £18	ejournal £15
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DIARY

**Please note that all workshops are in the hall and all talks are on Zoom.*

11th October	Workshop: Solving a genealogical puzzle – Mark Carroll
8th November	AGM – Zoom
13th December	Talk: Hidden in plain sight/site –Mia Bennett
10th January	Quiz and Social in the hall – Mark Carroll
14th February	Talk: Occupational records – Mark Carroll
14th March	Workshop: Standards in family history research – Mark Carroll

Waltham Forest FHS



The Society covers an area largely defined by the River Lea, M25 and A11/A104 roads. This includes the London Borough of Waltham Forest, comprising the old Essex metropolitan boroughs of Chingford, Leyton and Walthamstow, and extends to Waltham Abbey in the north.

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Family History Society

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