



# Waltham Abbey Enthusiasts



Date - Wednesday 20th May 2009  
Next Meeting - Wednesday 17th June 2009

Issue 30

[www.walthamabbeygenealogy.co.uk](http://www.walthamabbeygenealogy.co.uk)



## Notice Board

### ➤ Thank You To David

A big thankyou to David with helping us out at Essex Records Office. It was an interesting day and although not all of us had success we all however searched and had a look at many different records.

### ➤ Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2009

We are having a family history day in the library from 10am – 3pm. If anyone wants to come down and give us a hand be most appreciated.

### ➤ BMD Registers

Methodists, Wesleyans, Baptists, Independents, Protestant Dissenters, Congregationalist, Presbyterians, Unitarians, Quakers (Society of Friends), Dissenters and Russian Orthodox. Maternity Records plus various other BMD records

[www.bmdregisters.co.uk](http://www.bmdregisters.co.uk)

### ➤ The Ships Lists

Immigration reports, newspaper records, shipwreck information, ship pictures, ship descriptions, shipping-line fleet lists and more; as well as hundreds of passenger lists to Canada, USA, Australia and even some for South Africa.

[www.theshipslist.com](http://www.theshipslist.com)

### ➤ History House

A very interesting website for Essex researchers. Explore some of the history of Essex and there are plenty of different articles to read. Also the towns and villages are broken down into sections giving information on each.

[www.historyhouse.co.uk](http://www.historyhouse.co.uk)



## The Elusive Alice

For three years I wanted to find out where my paternal grand mother came from. She died in 1967 so I actually knew her. In fact she was the only grand parent I remembered. Anyway I decided I needed to find as many where and when's I could. I had her death certificate (the original) and I got a copy of her marriage certificate from 1913 but no way could I find her birth.

We suspected, correctly as it turned out, that she was illegitimate. We knew her father was John Webb but this doesn't help if she was born with her mother's maiden name. As there were several John Webb's with a daughter Alice we couldn't be sure which one was my Alice.

Her daughter, my Aunt, was still alive but even she was very vague about the exact birth date. Things were very confusing. The one recollection my mother had of her mother-in-law was that there was a hidden scandal and she was also not a popular person.

We eventually compiled a list of her brother and sisters which again we couldn't trace on any of the censuses. They allegedly were a travelling family and I was beginning to believe it.



Then along came the 1911 census. Sue sat at the computer for over 2 hours slowly tracking down each family member and cross referencing them with John Webb. Low and behold she identified the correct John Webb and there was Alice at home. Alice was born in 1892 with the surname of Dawkins. We also discovered she was not John Webb's daughter. Hoorah, we knew it, a scandal. We deduce that Alice, born 4 years before her mother's marriage was the daughter of a house owner as her mother, Mary Jane Dawkins, was in service at the time of her birth.

But it doesn't end there. Having discovered Alice's real name we made contact with one of Alice's sister's granddaughter who gave us some interesting facts. On her last E-mail to me she finished with "Of course you know that Alice's sister, Mabel, was really her daughter". What a bomb-shell, which we confirmed by obtaining Mabel's birth certificate. Mabel had been brought up as one of Alice's parent's children and my dad had a sister he didn't know about. The irony is that Alice had also been in service and lightning had struck twice. I can now follow back that side of my family. Again thank goodness for the 1911 census.

**Author - Michael Letts**

### THE LONDON METROPOLITAN ARCHIVES GOES ONLINE

Over the next year or so the LMA is going to start putting their records online and this is exclusive to Ancestry. There are more than 77 million records which cover from parish records, non-conformist registers, electoral registers, parish poor records, workhouse records, school records and more. This covers from 1500s - 1900s and includes

#### Helpful websites -

[www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma)  
[www.Robertdawson.co.uk](http://www.Robertdawson.co.uk)  
[www.romanygypsy.com](http://www.romanygypsy.com)  
[www.dglg.org](http://www.dglg.org)

## Was Your Ancestor a Gypsy?

It can be hard enough researching our family past and actually seeing our ancestor's names on a register or a census. Imagine if you discovered your ancestors were gypsies where would you look or start. Well it really depends on the sort of gypsies that your ancestors were and whether they travelled a lot or whether they stayed in the same area. Because a large percentage travelled around, it was rare that they registered births or were on any records. However on the other hand many are found on the censuses. The further you go back the harder it is to find the records and information.

The Gypsy appeared in England around the late 14<sup>th</sup> century - they were dark skinned with dark hair and named "Egyptians" after Middle East travellers from the past. It is believed that gypsies came from India but 'upped' and left in the 11th century probably due to persecution. They began to migrate through Afghanistan, Persia and Greece before entering the Balkans and spreading throughout Europe.

Originally they were called 'Domba' the Hindi for 'the people' this slowly changed to become 'Rom' or 'Roma'. The Romani language slowly developed and changed over the centuries from Hindi incorporating new words from the various countries they travelled.

#### Some of The Language

Abiav - wedding feast  
 Amoni - anvil  
 Amria - curse; oath  
 Angustri - ring  
 Beebee - aunt  
 Bibaxt - bad luck  
 Chavi - girl  
 Chava - boy  
 Cheros - time  
 Chet - write  
 Didikai - gypsy friend  
 Dilo - fool or imbecile  
 Ghel - girl  
 Gooi - pudding  
 Grast, grai, gry, groi - horse  
 Gajo - adult non gypsy (masc) (pl. gaje)  
 Galbi - gold coins

If you want to contribute to the newsletter or share your research please feel free to contact myself

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