



Enfield Museum, Local Studies
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London Borough of Enfield Local History Sheets.

Literary Enfield a history



Sir John Betjeman 1906/84

Poet Laureate from 1972 until his death. Taught at the Heddon Court School, Cockfosters from April 1929 to July 1930. Many years later he recalled this period in his poem "Cricket Master".

Charles Cowden Clarke 1787/1877

Author of a Concordance to Shakespeare and other Works of literary criticism. He grew up in Enfield Town, where his father, John Clarke, ran a boys boarding school in a house on the site of Enfield Town station. He was a close friend of both Keats and Lamb.

Isaac Disraeli 1766/1848

Prolific essayist and novelist. He spent his early years in Enfield, where his father had a house in Baker Street. He is now chiefly remembered as the father of Benjamin Disraeli, Prime Minister 1874/80.

Thomas Hardy 1840/1928

This famous Dorset novelist and poet is connected with Enfield through his second wife. Florence Emily Dugdale, who he married in 1914, was an Enfield school mistress, daughter of Edward Dugdale, headmaster of St Andrew's School. The wedding took place at St Andrew's Church.

Thomas Hood 1799/1845

Poet. Lived at Rose Cottage, Vicars Moor Lane, for three years from 1829.

Leigh Hunt 1784/1859

Essayist and poet. Born at Eagle Hall, Southgate High Street.

Jerome K. Jerome 1859/1927

Prolific novelist, dramatist and essayist, now chiefly remembered as the author of "Three Men in a Boat". He spent part of his childhood (c.1870/1) living at Springfield Road, New Southgate. The site of the house is now occupied by Garfield School.

John Keats 1795/1821

Poet of enduring fame. Educated at John Clarke's school at Enfield (on the site of Enfield Town station) 1803/10. He was later apprenticed to an Edmonton doctor, Thomas Hammond of Church Street, 1810/3.

Charles Lamb 1775/1834

Essayist and poet. Charles Lamb and his sister Mary visited Enfield in the summer of 1825 and again in 1827, on both occasions lodging at Clarendon Cottage, Gentleman's Row. In September 1827 the Lambs moved to The Poplars, Chase Side. In October 1827 they moved to the house next door, lodging with the Westwood family. In 1833 they moved again to Bay Cottage, Church Street, Edmonton. It was there that Charles Lamb died in 1834. He and his sister are buried in All Saints' churchyard.

Queenie Leavis (nee Roth) 1906/81

Literary critic. Born in Edmonton where her father had a drapery business in Silver Street. Educated at the Latymer School. Married to the Cambridge critic F.R. Leavis.

Walter Macqueen-Pope 1888/1960

Theatre manager and theatrical historian, who grew up in Highbury. Manager of Alexandra Palace 1922/5. His latter years were spent living in Oakdale, Southgate.

Frederick Marryat 1792/1848

Naval officer and novelist. A prolific writer of sea stories such as "Midshipman Easy" now chiefly remembered for his children's novel "Children of the New Forest". Educated at Rev. Stephen Freeman's Academy at Clay Hill, Enfield, where one of his contemporaries was the future mathematician, Charles Babbage.

Walter Pater 1839/94

Art critic. Lived at a house on Chase Green, 1848/58. Pupil at Enfield Grammar School.

Paul Scott 1920/78

Novelist, author of the "Raj Quartet" and other works, mainly set in India. Born at no.130 Fox Lane, Palmers Green and educated at the Winchmore Hill Collegiate School.

Osbert Sitwell 1892/1969

Poet and short story writer. Educated at the Ludgrove School at Cockfosters which he detested.

John Thomas Smith 1766/1833

Engraver and antiquary. He spent some years at "the Firs", Firs Lane, Winchmore Hill as drawing teacher to the daughters of Sir James Lake. His autobiography, "A Book For A Rainy Day", contains many references to Edmonton and Enfield. His book "Nollekens and His Times" is perhaps the most spiteful biography ever written.

Stevie Smith 1902/1971

Poet, novelist and short story writer. Born in Hull but moved to Palmers Green in 1906. The family settled at no.1 Avondale Road, which was to remain her home for the rest of her life. Her writings contain many thinly disguised allusions to Palmers Green and the surrounding area.