

A Blacksmith's Tale

or

An Abbreviated History

of

Marter & Martyr Families

from mainly

Surrey & Kent,

and their

Travels to Elsewhere

in the World

Volume 1

by

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Dedications

There are two people in my life without whom this family history story would firstly never have been started, and secondly would never have been finished.

The first person is my eldest son Philip who, during a time of my ill-health, suggested that I should dust off the old family bible, which had been languishing uncared for at my father's house for many years, and commence researching my 'roots' using the starting point of those entries contained within the bible's folios. Innocently, I accepted this tempting offer and began what has now become a never-ending Herculean labour of combing every available source for information relating to the names of Marter and Martyr. Some 15 years later, my family history story is reaching some sort of conclusion.

My son has much to answer for!

The second person is my long-suffering wife Jackie who, as my 'administrative angel' has borne the burden of my complete obsession with the Marter Family History over many years. She has done so with various degrees of equanimity throughout whilst I have been ensconced in my study up to my neck in piles of research papers whilst working on half-completed chapters, harbouring over-filled ring-binders by the dozen, watching the contents of my trash bin flow onto the floor and, worst of all, often neglecting my best friend. Some 15 years later, she deserves something more.

I have much to answer for to my wife!

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23rd July 2012

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Some Musings for the Reader - some Amusing others Bemusing

During the years I have spent trawling through the plethora of sources associated with family history, I occasionally came across some witty words and phrases that summed up the attitudes and thoughts of those who comment on various aspects of ancestry and/or family histories.

My family history project has grown like Topsy over the years, and I would like to think that it is a fairly serious piece of investigative 'journalism'. However, I also think that any such work needs to be sprinkled with a sense of humour and humility in order to make it acceptably interesting reading to anyone who might take a plunge into the pool of the past!

To this end, I have included below some pithy words of 'wisdom' and insights from many spheres of life, including those in the field of literature such as authors and actors, and politicians, as well as one or two from those of us who are mere mortals.

"Why waste your money looking up your family tree? Just go into politics and your opponents will do it for you." Mark Twain

"I don't know who my grandfather was; I am much more interested to know what his grandson will be." Abraham Lincoln

**"He who has no fools, knaves, or beggars in his family was begot by a flash of lightning."
Old English Proverb**

**"If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance."
George Bernard Shaw**

**"Genealogy is tracing yourself back to people who are better than you."
John Garland Pollard**

"I don't have to look up my family tree because I know that I'm the sap." Fred Allen

“A man who thinks too much about his ancestors is like a potato – the best part of him is underground.” *Henry S F Cooper*

“My ancestors wandered lost in the wilderness for forty years because even in biblical times, men would not stop to ask for directions.” *Clayne Boosler*

‘We’ve uncovered some embarrassing ancestors in the not too distant past; some horse thieves and some people killed on Saturday nights. One of my relatives, unfortunately, was even in the newspaper business.’ *Jimmy Carter*

“What can they see in the longest kingly line in Europe, save that it runs back to a successful soldier?” *Sir Walter Scott*

“Genealogy is an account of one’s descent from an ancestor who did not particularly care to trace his own.” *Ambrose Bierce*

“History is the essence of innumerable biographies.” *Thomas Carlyle*

“When a society or civilization perished, one condition can always be found. They forgot where they came from.” *Carle Sandburg*

“People will not look forward to posterity who never look backward to their ancestors.”
Edmund Burke

“Each generation, in its turn, is a link between all that has gone before and all that comes after.” *Fred Rogers*

As you read through this epistle try to keep a sense of perspective and a sense of humour. Too many pages in a work such as this have a tendency to become excessively ‘heavy’ reading, thereby sending the reader into the land of Nod, rather than the Land of Nod which is to the east of Eden of course, as per Genesis 4:16!