

Crime & punishment

Waltham Forest Archives hold:

- Essex Quarter Sessions records on microfilm - originals in Essex Record Office
- Printed items regarding the Jeffryes murder in Walthamstow in 1752
- Walthamstow police committee minutes 1819-1822; 1826-1835 (microfilm)
- Local newspapers from 1876

The Essex Record Office also have Calendar of Assize Records going back to the 16th Century

Findmypast have on-line records from 1770 to 1935 including:

- Habitual Criminals Register, MEP06
- Calendar of prisoners, HO140, After trial calendars of prisoners listing prisoners tried at Quarter and Intermediate sessions and Assizes

Generally newspapers are the best way to find out if you have a criminal in the family, or if you have suspicions, to find out where they committed their crimes and so where to look for quarter Session records etc..

The Quarter Sessions records give time served, aliases used and the (known) rap sheet. The Habitual Criminals Register lists offences, convictions, prison, height, hair colour and any identifying marks.

The British Newspaper Archive <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/> is a good way of searching local papers which have reports that nationals don't.

Access to The Times Digital Archive 1785-1985 can be gained through many libraries (inc. Waltham Forest and Essex libraries). Access to 19th Century British Library Newspapers and the Guardian & Observer Archive can also be gained the same way.

<https://arena.yourlondonlibrary.net/web/walthamforest/newspapers-and-magazines>
<https://www.essex.gov.uk/Libraries-Archives/Libraries/information/Pages/Reference-library-online.aspx#newspapers>

Before the formation of the Metropolitan Police, some parishes had their own police constables, in many cases unpaid. Walthamstow had its own police from which some minute books have survived. The Walthamstow Police Committee records mostly cover patrols and accounts, but the details of at least one case involving The Chequers are in them, as do the drunk watchmen fighting. The names of the committee members occur frequently, as do the Subscribers who paid various amounts, and the Constables who were mostly paid. One subscribers list not only names the subscribers and the amount they paid which gives you an idea of their standing, but lists where they lived. This is particularly useful as it is 20 years before the 1841 census.

The Nuisance Removal minutes (also in WF Archives) might hold information too, but drainage is the most common topic of discussion.

The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1674-1913 are on-line at

<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/>

Criminal Registers of Prisoners in Middlesex and the City 1791-1800:

<http://www.londonlives.org/static/CR.jsp>

The London Metropolitan Archives hold a considerable quantity of records including Middlesex and Westminster Sessions Rolls, session and examination papers, also City of London Sessions papers. There are some transportation orders and contracts too. The LMA hold some journalistic accounts of trials which also might help research a story. The LMA have written some useful guides to using the records.

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/london-metropolitan-archives/visitor-information/Pages/default.aspx>

If your ancestor was in the Police:

- Metropolitan Police Heritage Centre
<https://www.metpolicehistory.co.uk/met-police-heritage-centre.html> holds Records of Service from 1911, including Joiners and Leavers (also at national archives), Divisional Ledgers, Subject and People files, and photographs
- Essex Police Museum
<http://www.essex.police.uk/museum/> (Chelmsford, open Saturdays or appointment)
You can search for an officer on-line and obtain a record of service for £20
Includes Southend Borough Police 1914-1969, and Reserves and Auxiliaries of WWII
- Herts Past Policing
<http://www.hertspastpolicing.org.uk/> is creating a picture of policing in the past
- London Metropolitan Archives
<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/london-metropolitan-archives/visitor-information/Pages/default.aspx>
Holds records of policing under CLA/048 and has record guides
- National archives
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/officer-in-police-force/>
- Thames Police Museum
<http://www.thamespolicemuseum.org.uk/>

Until 10th April 2016 the Museum of London is exhibiting items from the Metropolitan Police's Crime Museum. <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/>