

Charles Towsey of Henley upon Thames in the County of Oxford Gentleman

Mary Harriet Sparks

H. B. Moorhouse

TOWSEY TALES

NAME: Edith Margaret Beers (née Towsey)

BIRTH DETAILS: Ch: 29 December 1852 Henley-on-Thames

DEATH DETAILS: 1 March 1939 Bromley, Kent

CHART REF: Towsey Chart B1

MARRIAGE DETAILS: 19 Sep.1876 Thanet, Kent

SPOUSE: Reverend John Banks Beers

Born 1843 Co.Down, Ireland. Died 1920 Somersetshire

Edith Margaret Beers

John Banks Beers

19 Sep 1876

Thanet Kent

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Edith was the fifth child and second daughter of Charles Augustus and Mary Harriet Towsey and the only one to marry, out of the three sisters who remained in England.

On the 1861 census, Edith was an 8 year-old student living at home in Henley. Ten years later, we see that she is a teacher at Spring Hill School, a small private secondary college for girls at Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, in one of the Stroud Valleys of the Cotswolds.

Edith married Reverend John Banks Beers in Ramsgate, where the Towseys were then living, in September 1876. The notice in the Thanet Guardian of Saturday, September 30th, says: *Marriage: Sept 19th at Christ Church. Rev John B. Beers of Notting Hill, eldest son of Rev. James A. Beers, Rector of Ballyrone, County Down, to Edith Margaret, eldest daughter of Charles Towsey Esq of Ramsgate, late of Henley-on-Thames.*

Edith and her husband, who did not have any children, spent at least the next 30 years moving frequently from one parish to another, staying in several for no more than one year. Were his sermons that boring?

The marriage announcement says that Beers was 'of Notting Hill', which was most likely his residence during his posting, from 1874 to 1880, at Saint Clement Church, Kensington, in the west of London. From there they moved to Saint Mary, Newington, in Surrey from 1880 to 1881, after which the ever mobile Edith and John moved to Essex, where he was Curate at Braintree. By the time of the 1881 census, Edith was also blessed with having her widowed mother-in-law, 61 year-old Alice Beers, living with them.

After just one year at Braintree, they moved to Sturmer, in Essex, where they managed to stay put until 1901.

It appears that Mary Harriet and her daughter, Gus, moved in with Edith and her husband some time during the 1880s, possibly after the elderly Alice Beers had moved in with some other relative (she died in Wandsworth in 1904).

The. We do not know how long they stayed with Edith, but Mary and Gus then moved to the Beaumont Hall Hotel, Clacton-on-Sea, where Mary Harriet Towsey died in 1901.

It is interesting to speculate on how Edith and John felt about the constant presence of widowed mothers: ensured that they were never left alone together and a number of interesting sit-com plots waft into the mind. Perhaps after having endured John's probably self-righteous mother (the widow of an Anglo-Irish Protestant minister), Edith took the opportunity, upon Alice's departure, to retaliate by inviting her mother to



Rev. John Banks Beers circa 1880

come and live with them. This might also explain why John and Edith had no children: they were too embarrassed to have sex with his mother in the house and, by the time she left, it was too late.

From 1901, John Beers had three one year postings, firstly at Moulsham near Chelmsford, then from 1902 to 1903 at Saffron Walden, both in Essex, followed by a year at Tempsforth, Bedfordshire from 1903 to 1904. After that, they moved back to the comfortable, twelve room Wimbish Vicarage in Saffron Walden,

It is not known exactly when Gus moved back into the vicarage at Saffron Walden, but she was there, with Edith and John Beers, when she died in 1918. She left her entire estate, of £1047-11-7 to Constance.

After being settled in Saffron Walden for so long, John and Edith had to go through one more move together, to Compton Bishop, in Somersetshire, where the Reverend John Beers died in 1920, leaving just £164-7-9 to his wife Edith, who lived for another nineteen years.

We do not know of Edith's movements from then on, but she died in 1939 at 87 years of age, at Bromley in Kent, leaving \$456-5-10 to her sister, Constance.

