

## The Farrar Family of Ewood, Calder Valley

The Farrar family of Ewood was obviously one of some importance in the Upper Calder Valley, especially connected with Mytholmroyd, Midgley, and Luddenden. They are mentioned as Yeomen.

First a little background about this area. These are three villages, which traverse two local townships; Midgley and Warley. The Upper Calder Valley, about 15 to 20 miles in length extends from Halifax in the east to Todmorden on the Yorkshire/Lancashire border. It is a steep sided valley and many of the settlements are to be found on the 'shoulder' about 200 feet above the valley floor. Then the land rose again to the higher moorland at the top of the hills. This is a very basic description but the landscape played a big part in the early settlement and economy of the area.

The Parish was centred in Halifax around which there were 20 townships. One of these was Heptonstall where there is a church and a settlement. However, the area covered by the township was much larger and covered 5 or 6 of the local townships. Before 1600, there were only three churches in the Parish; Heptonstall being one of these. It served a very large area of sparsely populated land and all christenings, marriages and burials were carried out there, sometimes with journeys of many miles.

Parish registers first became compulsory in 1538, but written in books in 1598. These are the registers that we use today at Heptonstall. Luddenden church was established in 1620s, so all records before then will be from Heptonstall. Luddenden church was central to Midgley and Warley townships. Before that, the only records we have are from the Manor Court Rolls and family documents such as wills and land documents. The Rolls were the records kept from the local Manorial courts which met regularly and covered transfer of land, misdemeanours, disputes etc.

For more information about the area we have a book called Pennine Valley which covers all these points and many more.

<http://www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk/publications/index.html>

So, the early Farrar records come from Heptonstall Church because that was the only church at the time. However, Ewood was in Midgley township so nearer to the new church at Luddenden and so we see the family records in this register in the 1600s.

**The Halifax Antiquarian Society** has a number of papers about the pedigree of the Farrar family. These can be found at Halifax Library. We do have a few copies in our archives at Hebden Bridge, but unfortunately, both sources are unavailable just now. I do have one of the transactions at home and some information about the early family. However, I do not know if this is a direct line to your family, I cannot place many of your references.

The research carried out for this paper was for an American branch of the family. It was in 1939 and entitled 'A Recorded Pedigree of the Farrers of Ewood and written by

R Bretton. In it he uses references to the Manorial Rolls and family wills to establish relationships. There are several other papers dealing with the family.

Ewood in Midgley, Dent, 1939

The Brearly Halls in Midgley (De Lacy Family), T Sutcliffe, 1922

Bishop Robert Ferrer, Bretton, 1934

Joseph Ferrar MP, Bretton, 1972

The Pedigree of the Ferrer Family does include a Family tree of Henry Ferrer of Ewood who died in 1548 and the details come from his will. His wife was Agnes and it also mentions 4 sons and 1 daughter.

William who married Margaret Lacy, and he died 1571; Edward; John; Henry of Hollinghey in the township of Sowerby, who died before 1586; and Agnes who was mentioned in her father's will.

William had two sons, the younger went to live in Croxon, Lincolnshire. I think the elder died without issue.

Henry had two sons, John who died in 1610, married Susanna but no issue mentioned; William who died in 1603, married Margaret Bannister in 1575 (there is a marriage settlement) and they had three sons, all mentioned in their father's will in 1639, Abraham, Issac and Jacob.

Jacob married Mary Houghton and it is their sons, John and Jacob who went to America and settled in Concord in Massachusetts.

HBLHS has two other publications, which have some information on the family.

A group of local historians have transcribed some of the early wills from the township and one of these books is "The Midgley Probate Records". From 1531 – 1731. This includes two Farrar wills; that of Henrie Ferrer of Ewood dated 1549 from which were taken the references above; and another of John Ferrer of Midgley 1580.

From this I think we can conclude that these are two different families as Ewood is not mentioned in the second will.

The latter is interesting in that it names many of John Ferrer's siblings; brothers Henry, James and William and the nephew John, son of my brother Robert. This could be John of Oats Royd.

From these wills, there is evidence of another branch of the family as John of Elffaburghe is mentioned. This was later known as Elphaborough and is on the other side of the Calder River in a village now known as Mytholmroyd.

All the wills show that the family was of yeomen stock, probably clothiers, who managed the buying and selling of cloth from the handloom weavers.

The second publication is titled, "Pennine Perspectives. Aspects of the History of Midgley."

This is a collection of essays written by The Midgley History Group in 2004 and they cover a variety of themes relating the township in the past. Chapter 6, Population and People has several references to the Farrar families in that area.

I have copied a paragraph about Henry Farrer.

*Henry Farrer and his son William of Ewood were members of another important family, which was accumulating wealth through the cloth trade, with a stall at the Great Fair of Bartholomew in London."*

And another:-

*"In the early seventeenth century, the Farrer family acquired the lordship of the manor from the Laceys and the manor court was transferred to Ewood."*

*"Records of this period in Midgley are sparse, but the life of Henry Farrer had a dramatic conclusion when he was murdered in 1610 while attending a lawsuit at the Star Chamber. His assailant, Thomas Oldfield of Warley, was hanged, and Henry was buried in St. Margaret's, Westminster."*

The only records I can find from the local Parish registers which match with your list are the marriage of Jonathan Farrar with Martha Ackroyd in Luddenden on Dec. 26<sup>th</sup> 1695.

There was a Jacob Farrar in Luddenden at that time, but again, the record for his marriage seems to be to Marie Sharpe and there seem to be several offspring from that marriage, one of which was Jonathan. The only birth of a John with (possible) father Jonathan (clerks often shortened names, especially John, in registers) is in Luddenden in 1713. There are many births at this time in Luddenden, between 1695 and 1713, to fathers Abraham, Thomas, Matthew, Hugh, John and William. This tells us that there were many Farrer families in the area. It is still a widespread name in the valley.

There were no children named Robert, which, had it been a family name, we would expect. As you see from the list of transactions, there was a Bishop Robert Ferrer. He was the Bishop of St. David's. He was martyred by burning in 1555, soon after Mary Tudor came to the throne round 1553. There is a memorial stone in Halifax Parish Church which reads;

*"In memory of the Holy Bishop and Martyr Robert Ferrar, who was born at Ewood, in Midgley, in the Parish of Halifax, in the Reign of King Henry the Seventh. Not less distinguished by integrity, firmness and courage, than by piety, learning and zeal, he was preferred under King Henry the Eighth to the Priory of St. Oswald at Nostel; and under King Edward the Sixth to the See of St. David's; in the same reign for resisting the spoliation of the church, he suffered (sic) persecution and imprisonment; and under Queen Mary for rejecting Doctrines not taught by the Apostles he endured the*

Martyrdom of Fire at Carmarthen Cross on the XXX day of March, A.D. MDLV, forgiving his enemies and glorifying in his Lord and Redeemer.”

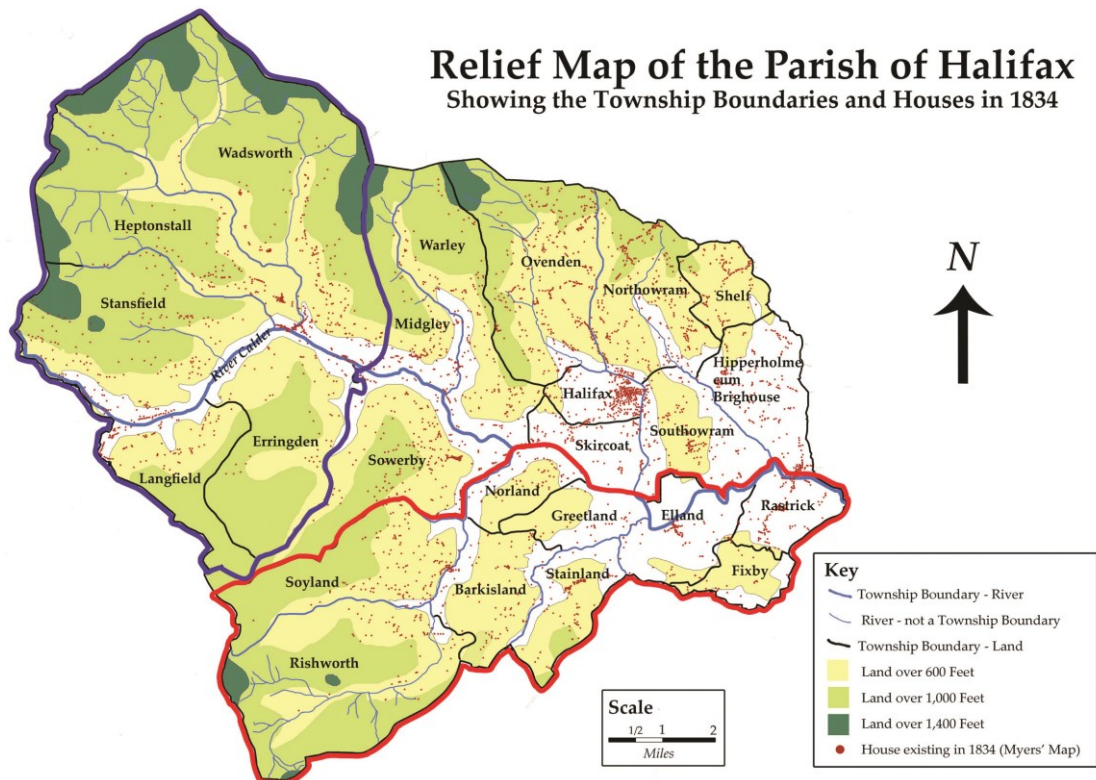
Robert Ferrar had married and had children but there is no evidence that there are any descendants from Samuel, his son.

From your records

Otesroyd is Oats Royd, which was an early farm in the valley.

Acker was Acre, on one early map it was Thacker.

This map shows the extensive Parish of Halifax and the townships.



The charts below from the Midgely Book contain references to the family.

Surnames found in the baptism registers for the period 1538 – 1624 for Midgley Township

Surname	No.	Variations
Midgley	96	8
Farrer	62	Farror, Faraw, Ferher, Farrar, Farrow, Farrowe, Ferrer, Farer.
Smith	48	3
Thomas	37	1
Townend	29	8
Oldfield	28	9
Lacey	25	Lacy, Lace, Layce, Lassye
Holdsworth	19	9
Ingham	19	10

This shows how prevalent the family was in this small area and how many branches of the family there must have been.

The chart below gives some impression of

1. The number of families of any standing in the township;
2. The existence of two distinct Ferror families, Royd possibly becoming Oat Royd over time.

I think your branch of the family may be Henry Ferror of Royd .

1588 levy to oppose the Armada. This was set at 2s 8d in the £ on land and 1s 8d on goods. No one paid both. The returns for the families in Midgley were as follows;

	£	s	d
John Lacie, Knight , in land	2	13	4
Henry Ferror, in land	1	9	4
John Deyne, in land		6	8
Gilbert Lacie, in land		5	4
John Padget in land		4	0
Edward Bannister in land		4	0

John Haldesworth	2	8
Richard Helliwell	2	8
John Beaumonte	2	8
Henry Ferror of Royd	2	8
Henry Ferror senior	2	8
R Smith	2	8
Henry Murgatroyd	2	8
Robert Deane	6	8