

FORSTER GREEN

Best known for: Philanthropist and Business Man

Died: 21st October 1903. He is buried at Friend's Burial Ground, Balmoral in Belfast

Family life: Forster married twice - first to Mary Boadle of Whitehaven and later to Jane Houlding of Preston. He had 8 children, 7 of whom died of Tuberculosis, a common (at the time) and in many cases lethal infectious disease. Forster was also the great uncle of William Alfred Green, a renowned Quaker photographer who lived between 1870 -1958.

Educational Life: Educated at Friends School, Lisburn, he went to Liverpool for 3 years before returning to set up his company.

Professional life: He established the firm of Forster Green & Co. tea and coffee merchants, which was extremely successful and had premises all over Belfast. He had also been Life Governor of the Royal Victoria Hospital.

Forster Green Hospital: After suffering the distress of seeing seven of his children die as a result of Tuberculosis, he decided to use his considerable fortune to establish a hospital in a forty acre estate on the outskirts of Belfast, built with the purpose of treating those afflicted by the illness. The hospital was established in 1897.

Financial Support to Quakers: The records held on Lurgan Meeting advise that in the 1880s Forster gave £400 towards the rebuilding of the Lurgan Quaker Meeting House which at the time was a substantial portion of the rebuilding cost.

FORSTER GREEN HOSPITAL

The hospital that Forster Green built in 1896/97 is still a fully functioning hospital to this day.



Nowadays the facility is part of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and specialises in Neurology, Care of older people and has a Child and Family health unit.



*Friend's Burial Ground in Balmoral
where Forster is buried*

Forster Green House: In 1881, the Belfast Women's Temperance Association (BWTA) first began the charitable work of rescuing "young girls from homes made miserable by poverty, unemployment and abuse of alcohol and to prevent the possibility of them becoming prostitutes or involved in other kinds of crime." The BWTA founded 6 homes for these at risk girls, one of which was the Forster Green Home, which was funded by and named after Forster Green and his wife Jane. It is believed that Mr Green had given the BWTA a blank cheque and requested that the charity fill in the amount of the cost of building another home. At the time girls who entered the homes were taught cookery, laundry work and farm work in all its branches, including poultry keeping. Older girls who worked hard and showed special promise were given the opportunity to take a course in Domestic Science at the Belfast Technical College.

Forster Green Trivia: Forster had a pet white Skylark bird which he first saw hanging in a cage outside a house in Ballyhackamore, East Belfast when passing by one day. On seeing the bird, he was drawn to its unusual colouring, and so he knocked on the owners door and offered 10 shillings for it, which the owner gratefully accepted.

More Forster Green Trivia: Forster's youngest child Emily, Married Henry Albert Uprichard (a surname frequently seen in the Book of Members)