



Writing local history

John Beckett

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This fascinating book looks at how local history developed from the antiquarian county studies of the sixteenth century through the growth of 'professional' history in the nineteenth century, to the recent past. Concentrating on the past sixty years, it looks at the opening of archive offices, the invigorating influence of family history, the impact of adult education and other forms of lifelong learning. The author considers the debates generated by academics, including the divergence of views over local and regional issues, and the importance of standards set by the Victoria County History (VCH). Also discussed is the fragmentation of the subject. The antiquarian tradition included various subject areas that are now separate disciplines, among them industrial archaeology, name studies, family, landscape and urban history.

This is an authoritative account of how local history has come to be one of the most popular and productive intellectual pastimes in our modern society. Written by a practitioner who has spent more than twenty years teaching local history to undergraduates and M.A. students, as well as lecturing to local history societies, John Beckett is currently Director of the VCH.

A remarkable book that will be of great interest to students and scholars of local history as well as amateur and professional genealogists.

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