



NEWSLETTER

Issue 18 - 3/4 Autumn 2018

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**Meetings are held at: Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Theatre
Street, Trinity Close, Dereham NR19 2EP**

On the third Wednesday of the month ... Starting at 7.30 pm

Programme

19 September 2018	Victorian Photographs – Tom Doig Followed by the Annual General Meeting
17 October 2018	From Austerity to Prosperity – Frances & Michael Holmes
21 November 2018	A Christmas Carol – Mike Wabe

A few words from your Editor ...

Hello from the sunny Costa Del Norfolk!

Thank you for your contributions to the Newsletter, very much appreciated, please keep them coming in. The local NBI is now available again, it has been transferred to Excel so the print out isn't exactly the same but all the information is there. Its still free of charge to members if accepted by email.

Please return the General Data Protection Regulations sheet to Sheila if you have not already done so, this will enable the Society to protect your data and get it right.

Kate (Editor)

Format for Newsletter Contributions Preferably typed using Microsoft Word or handwritten, the ideal size up to 700 words, then please either:

- email the file to me at kate.easdown@btinternet.com or
- post handwritten copy/CD, to me at the address on the back of the Newsletter

Please contact Sheila Moulton, the Membership Secretary if you change your address or email address (contact details on back cover).

**Deadline for inclusion in the next Newsletter -
17th October 2018**

LET'S LOOK AT A CHURCH

No. 91 – Little Ellingham, St Peter



On the 1st December 1867, the church of Little Ellingham, St. Peter a Listed Building was struck by a disastrous fire which completely gutted the structure. As we have previously noted, in 1959 the same misfortune befell Morley St. Botolph which lies not far away. A Fire Fund was quickly set up and much of what we see in St. Peters today is thanks to money thus collected which paid for a complete reconstruction of the nave and chancel. Luckily, the handsome medieval tower which probably dates from before 1270 with its finely worked bell openings which feature cusped tracery and quatrefoil sound holes survived the conflagration and now stands as the only fully original feature of the church if we discount its parapet which was added in modern times. The tower, which is on the south side of the nave forms a porch into the church, a feature also found at nearby Wicklewood. The fire was particularly unfortunate as it occurred only four months after the church had

been restored and the chancel enlarged so work had to start all over again. Little Ellingham which is mentioned in the Domesday Book, is a small village situated between Great Ellingham and Hingham and the church has stood in the middle of the community for nearly a thousand years. The WWII American air base of Deopham Green also lies partly within the parish. St. Peter's has a simple yet light and pleasing interior. Of particular interest is the Victorian font which is made of brown porphyry, a hard marble like stone used since ancient times, and is of rectangular design and mounted on pillars. It certainly stands out! Also of note is the east window which depicts scenes from the life of Christ. A list of rectors starts with one Hugh Perpunt of Kilverstone who held the post from 1317 to 1349. Before you leave, note in the sanctuary an incised stone slab with zig-zag and circular designs thought to be of Norman origin.

The original registers are held at the Norfolk Record Office (Cat. Ref. PD568) and are Baptisms 1649-1652, 1663- 1682, 1693-1697 and 1713-2000, Marriages 1666-1696 and 1727-1980, Burials 1662-1882, 1695-1696 and 1727-1999 and Banns 1755-1812 and 1824-1992. There are microform copies covering the same dates but Baptisms end in 1928, Marriages in 1900 and Banns in 1942. The Archdeacon's and Bishop's transcripts all start in 1600 but Baptisms and Burials end in 1907 and Marriages in 1837. There is a small Parish Chest consisting of Tithe apportionment 1839, map 1840 and alterations 1862 as well as a Fire Fund account book following the church fire of 1 Dec. 1867 with a subscription list and accounts 1867-1870. There are Churchwardens' accounts 1802-1965, an Overseers' account book 1836-1889 and deeds relating to Town Lands 1769-1853.

Roderic & Denise Woodhouse

YOUR LETTERS

I would like to thank Harold Hazell for all the information he has sent in about World War I.

Everyone knows the Exhortation adopted by the Royal British Legion in ceremonies of Remembrance ... but do you know where it came from?

It is the fourth verse of a poem by Lawrence Binyon – ‘For the Fallen’

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

Ernie Wright, one of our ‘distant members’, wrote to say that he found the 1939 Register on findmypast so useful, especially the added bonus that it gives people’s full date of birth. He has many Norfolk ancestors and wonders if any reader can link the following surnames with WRIGHT: Barter, Bracey, Collins, Dunham, Fulcher, Gibbs, Hatch, Lynch, Mayes, McBride, Taylor, or Wilkinson. Please let Kate (Ed) know if you can.

THE 1939 REGISTER IS NOW ON ANCESTRY

Not long after receiving Ernie’s letter it was announced (May 2018) that a version of the 1939 Register would be available on Ancestry. This prompted me to do a little research and I discovered a few interesting facts (mainly from [The National Archive \(TNA\) website](#)). Did you know that although the Register contains information on virtually all the 40 million people who were living in England and Wales on 29th September 1939, members of HM Forces were not included (with the exception of those on leave).

Scotland and Northern Ireland had their own registers.

Post War, the register continued to be updated with changes of surname (marriage/deed poll) and Deaths (after 1952 changes of address were not amended. From 1948 it was used as the National Health Service (NHS) Central Register until 1991, when the paperbased system was discontinued,

Virtually all the 65,000 Enumeration Books have survived and were put on line by FindMyPast.Co. (FMP) in association with The National Archives (TNA) and released on 2 Nov 2015. Unfortunately, the register is subject to a 100 year rule, i.e. Individuals' records are withheld for 100 years from their date of birth (Freedom of Information Act 2000) or until proof of death. Consequently, many entries are closed (blanked out) and it will be 2039 before ALL the entries can be seen. Meantime, FMP have checked the names and dates of birth in the 1939 Register against the General Register Office indexes of death and opened many records where exact matches were found. Furthermore, the records of individuals born 100 years ago (according to the date of birth shown in the Register) are opened on FMP on a regular basis. Apparently, it is intended to update the Ancestry version annually.

It is only digital copies of the 1939 Register that are available to the public. The original register books are **not** held at TNA but are retained by the Health and Social Care Information Centre, now called NHS Digital. So where can the digital copy be consulted?

1. At the National Archive, Kew - Reading Room (free of charge)
2. www.findmypast.co.uk (£)*
3. A version is available at www.ancestry.com (£)*
4. Transcription (without images) [www. MyHeritage.com](http://www.myheritage.com) (£)*

**(One of these is usually available at Public Libraries and all can be seen at The Church of Latter Day Saints Family History Centres, free of charge)*

If you can prove a person's death (by submitting a copy of a death

certificate), FMP subscribers can request an entry be 'opened' free of charge, via their website. However, non FMP subscribers must apply to open a 'closed entry', via the TNA, (using a [Freedom of Information request form, accompanied by a copy of a death certificate](#)) for which there is an administration non-refundable fee of £23.35.

TFG

GOOD NEWS – THE MNFHS LOCAL NBI WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE ONCE MORE

For New Members - What is it? Many years ago we, the Mid Norfolk Family History Society (MNFHS), transcribed Burial Register entries for our Area, approximately a 12 mile radius of Dereham, for submission to a National Burial Index. This was organised by The Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS), who combined all the submissions from member societies into a National Burial Index (NBI). This was an on-going project and the results were published periodically on CDs [Still available – latest I believe is NBI4]

The problem is that the program used to input the data became obsolete and not compatible with Windows 10, consequently inputting new data ceased.

The FFHS, on behalf of participating societies, negotiated with Findmypast (FMP) and the information is now on the FMP website, for which we receive 'royalties'.

However, the FFHS only used the basic information ie Name, Date of Death and Age and, although some burial register entries have additional information, which was transcribed, it was not used. Fortunately, as part of the programme we were able to make printouts of all the transcribed information for any surname held in the database which we called our Local NBI, but again it would not work on Windows 10.

The original programme uses Excel, Word and probably DB4, The good news is, thanks to advice from several society members and a bit of very clever data shuffling by Barry Hughes, our NBI Co-ordinator, we have managed to make it available once again. Remember, the database only contains Burial details from Registers in our Area and only for the dates transcribed.

E mail Kate with your Surname of Interest and she will extract all the entries for that name and a list of the parishes/dates that are included in the database – free of charge for members (via e-mail only). TG

INLAND REVENUE VALUATION SURVEY, 1910 (Lloyd George Domesday / 2nd Domesday)

At our February meeting Gill Blanchard gave a presentation on Lloyd George's Domesday Survey which is summarised below.

What is it? In 1908 the Chancellor of the Exchequer David Lloyd George introduced a new Pensions Act and planned unemployment benefit. This was a plan to raise money to help pay for it.

The Finance Act of 1910 included new duties on land. Some exemptions, but to gain a baseline figure a valuation of all England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales was to be made. The survey was nicknamed Lloyd George's 2nd Domesday Survey.

The valuation was carried out by the Estate Duties department in the Inland Revenue, who created 118 valuation districts. The task took longer than anticipated and by 1912 the surveyors were ordered to streamline the process. England and Wales was surveyed between 1911 and 1915. The Act was repealed in 1920 and the tax never implemented. Fortunately, much of the survey (except Field Books) has survived and provide a useful source for researching properties

1910 Survey has three Linked Documents:

1. The Survey Maps: These were Ordnance Survey maps with each plot of land identified by a number and often colour-washed – the colours have no special significance. The numbers given to each plot cross-reference to the relevant valuation book

2. Field Books: These contain the original survey notes and sketches originally intended as a comprehensive assessment of each property from its physical state to its legal and financial status. Forms were sent to owners or their agents to fill in. Once received the information was extracted by Inland Revenue staff into the field book and the surveyors organised their visits to value the properties

3. The Valuation Book: Printed in a large format book containing the summarised details taken from the field books and entered in columns, each entry was numbered to correspond with the coded Survey map.

Not all surveys have survived. Many areas only have the valuation books and maps.

Surviving records of all three documents are at The National Archives. In addition, one copy of the map and the valuation book should be at county record offices but these are often incomplete. Check before you travel. The Genealogist website www.thegenealogist.co.uk has begun digitising and indexing the valuation books and maps but the Field Books are not included in this project.

There are a few parts of the survey on line i.e. Valuation books for the City of London and are on Ancestry, but without the maps www.ancestry.co.uk. Working copies of the valuation books used by the survey team for West Yorkshire are held at West Yorkshire county record office and are available on Ancestry, but incorrectly labelled “field books” and are without maps. Valuation books for Plymouth and nearby areas are on Findmypast, but again without the maps www.findmypast.co.uk

Scottish and Irish records are held at their National Archives.



Example of Valuation Book and Map for Cherry Hinton Cambridgeshire

As can be seen in the example, the Inland Revenue Survey Map, is an ordnance survey (OS) map with each holding identified by an assessment number annotated to show each plot within an area. Which are also used to identify the appropriate Field and Valuation Books.

NATIONAL FARM SURVEY 1941 -1943

Gill went on to introduce the National Farm Survey of any landowner with more than 5 acres of land, taken between 1941 and 1943 which can be linked with the 1910 Valuation Survey, the 1939 Register and Electoral Registers. The survey consists of 4 written documents linked by number to an annotated OS map. These were:

1. The Agricultural Census of 1941: This was compiled by the farmer and describes type of crops and acreage under cultivation, details of livestock, including horses, their ages and whether pregnant etc.
2. The Soft Fruit and Vegetables for Human Consumption Schedule: Again

completed by the farmer it lists acreage of soft fruits, vegetables and stocks of hay and straw. The schedule also identifies market gardeners and fruit growers

3. Labour and Motive Power survey: Compiled by the farmer this survey lists the labour working on the farm and farm machinery, such as tractors and steam engines. It also lists length of occupation by that farmer, whether owned or rented and rent paid

4. Farm Survey form: This was compiled by a surveyor who visited the farm. It provides information regarding the state of the farm and its management. If there was a problem it might be graded 'B' or 'C'. Where there were obvious failings the government could and did step in and replace the farmer.

There is also a section to identify fields ploughed up by order of the War Agricultural Committee and the crops designated to these fields

The above four documents which form the Farm Survey are held at The National Archives in classes MAF32 & 78. They are filed by Parish name, then numerically in four sets

For members unable to attend our meetings Gill Blanchard is a professional family history researcher (see her advert on page 23) and regular speaker at our meetings. Thank you Gill for allowing us to reproduce the above information from your power point presentation.

TG

Editors Note: We would like to hear from any readers who have used the two surveys mentioned in the article, problems with gaining access, or/and how they aided their research

SO, YOU THINK YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE!

Continued

I visited Longstowe church shortly afterwards to see what remained of the monuments of Anthony Cage (ii) and Sir John Cage. Sadly they had been seriously neglected and by 1727 the chapels in which they were located

were in ruins. Eventually what remained was relocated albeit in a highly distressed condition. However, some of the inscriptions were sufficiently legible to identify the names of those commemorated.

Given the names commemorated which were common in my family the thoughts of consanguinity were heightened and I remembered John Durbeyfield's words in Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* 'Under the church of that there parish lie my ancestors - hundreds of 'em - in coats of mail and jewels, in gr't lead coffins weighing tons and tons. There's not a man in the county that's got grander and nobler skillentons in his family than I'. It's strange to relate how the mind of a 16 year old works but after all CAGE was an uncommon name and we knew that our origins were in Norfolk where there had been a manor near King's Lynn. The question was exactly where because absolutely nothing more was known of the family except the names of my grandparents.

Forty years elapsed before the search began again but this time I followed the traditional method of working back through time. Ably aided by Gill Blanchard 1693 was quickly achieved with the marriage of my 5x great grandfather at Scarning. His name was Anthony CAGE. My fourth and third great grandfathers were also called Anthony and born in Beetley and Scarning respectively. Despite a prolonged search I could not make a connection between the Cambridgeshire and Norfolk families even though all the Anthonys I traced up to 1800 had origins in either Cambridgeshire/Suffolk and Norfolk. The proverbial brick wall had been reached.

I had, however, noticed that many Americans claimed descent from Anthony Cage (i) and as Ancestry had implemented DNA analysis I decided to see if there was a connection by undertaking the test myself. The supposition being that perhaps a few Americans had also undertaken the test and their genetic profile would be similar to mine.

However, during the early days of my research, I discovered that my grandfather's father and mother were unmarried. Eyebrows were raised

even higher when I found that they were uncle and niece and had had six children together. From a relationship perspective my grandfather's maternal grandmother was also his aunt and his mother was also his cousin! There were other incongruities. Why had my grandfather used the name 'HARGRAVE' intermittently for almost 20 years of his life when his birth certificate and baptismal record clearly identified him as 'CAGE'? My father always believed that this was because he had run away from home and joined the army as a drummer boy and assumed the name HARGRAVE to hide his real identity. In reality the truth was more prosaic. His putative father had deserted the family in 1890 and his mother had then married Thomas HARGRAVE in 1892. It was assumed that all the children, except for two who had left home, had used the name HARGRAVE for the sake of propriety. My grandfather returned to using CAGE upon his marriage in 1909 and again from 1916 when he was discharged from the army.

When the results of the DNA test came through it showed that I belonged to haplogroup I2b1 which accounts for 40% of the population in Scandinavia but only 18% in England. (The dominant haplogroup in England is R which accounts for 70% of the population). As I have Dupuytren's Contracture - 'the Viking disease' - the Scandinavian connection was appropriate but what did come as a surprise was the extensive list of people who had similar genetic markers which identify a Most Recent Common Ancestor (MRCA). These ranged from two people who had identical genetic markers indicating MRCA's at the third generation and 140 + others up to the 35th generation. Those who had identical markers were unknown to me or my family and examination of each other's family trees was both inconclusive and confusing. Disappointingly there were no CAGES in the list but by now you will have guessed that there were HARGRAVES. Four of them.

The HARGRAVE markers show a range of MRCA's from the 14th generation (approximately 1570/71) to the 31st generation (approximately 1065/66). This stretches the imagination somewhat given that at the 31st generation I would, even after adjusting the figure to say 41% of the maximum theoretical number of my ancestors to allow for duplication, have more ancestors than actually existed!

However, you cannot ignore the science. Or can you? There are two important factors which have caused me to question whether I am a HARGRAVE. Firstly a provision in the Will of Thomas HARGRAVE where his bequests are '....to my dear wife Sarah HARGRAVE her heirs'. Note the word 'her' not 'our'. Does this mean that Thomas HARGRAVE regarded Sarah HARGRAVES offspring as his step-children?. The answer is I don't know. Secondly in the quest for an answer I also took medical history into account.

If we assume that my grandfather's biological father was the person named on his birth certificate I needed to bear in mind the death from cancer of some of my great grandfather's female siblings and all of my grandfather's sisters together with their daughters and most of their granddaughters. From the little research I have carried out the number deaths of HARGRAVE females from cancer do not occur at the same level of remorseless throughout the generations. I maybe a CAGE after all.

I have now arrived at the title of this story 'So, you think you know who you are'. I cannot ignore the science yet the doubts outlined above do not permit total acceptance. At the moment I do not know for sure whether I am a CAGE or a HARGRAVE. I may never know but for those of you who are tempted to submit to DNA testing remember that the outcome may not be what you expect or desire. Apart from the possibility of negating years of research there is this uncertainty of not knowing who you are despite documentary evidence to the contrary. In itself this may not matter because we are who we are but it would still be nice to know.

Perhaps the last word should go to my late father who said that 'when it comes to family history some things are best left alone'. He was probably right.

Chris Cage

LONDON LABYRINTH

At our April meeting, Kathy Chater gave us an interesting talk entitled London Labyrinth – an insight into the problems of London research. The research facilities in London seem to always be on the move. Even the boundaries of London itself and local government change. For example it wasn't until 1965 that the County of Greater London was formed incorporating Middlesex (north of the river) and parts of Kent, Hertfordshire, Surrey and Sussex, into 33 London Burroughs. London police, education, housing, hospitals etc often had their own boundaries of jurisdiction.

In addition many National Institutions are/were based in London. Summarised below are some of the places where we might find research material:

Record Offices: London Metropolitan Archives (Greater London, now including City of London), Guildhall Library - City livery companies - some businesses City of Westminster Archives, National Archives: The National Archives at Kew British Library at Euston - Oriental & India Office-National Sound Archives - British Library Newspaper Library (for publications not yet on line)

County Record Offices: Surrey at Woking, Kent at Maidstone, Essex at Chelmsford

Museums: Imperial War Museum, Army Museum at Chelsea, RAF Museum at Hendon, National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, Bank of England Museum in the City

Religious Denominations: Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace Library, Huguenot Library (currently at TNA), Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), Dr Williams's Library (Nonconformists), Jewish Museum, Roman Catholics (Foreign legation chapels Westminster Archives) Specialist Libraries: Society of Genealogists, LDS Family History Centre at South Kensington (currently TNA), Wellcome Trust Library for the History of Medicine – Freemasons - College of Arms

Academic & Professional Bodies :HE institutions, e.g. King's College, Royal Colleges, e.g. Physicians, Surgeons, Scientific societies, e.g. Chemistry, Cultural bodies, e.g. Royal Albert Hall, Museums, e.g. Natural History, Businesses, e.g. Lloyds Register, BT

National Organisations: Post Office archives: British Telecom archives, Businesses in London Metropolitan Archives and in the Guildhall Library, Charities (some still with the organisation, some deposited in LMA), Insurance companies in the Guildhall Library

Above are just some of the places that Kathy identified but, apart from giving an insight into the vast number of places where answers might be, I think the most useful part of her talk came at the end when she asked: **Is your trip really necessary?** Are the answers on line or published in print or on CD? Is there an on-line catalogue (The National Archive Discovery Catalogue may also list other archives and if obtainable on-line)

If your trip is necessary, plan your trip: Contact the archive by phone/email:

1. Do they hold what you are looking for, if not do they know who might?
2. Are they open on the day/time you plan to visit? [LMA opening hours are due to change in September]
3. Do you need an appointment or readers ticket? You may need a photo and/or proof of identity to obtain one
4. Get hold of a London Bus Route map, Kathy's had all the major landmarks printed on and she drew on those places she intended to visit
5. Finally, having visited the archive DO make a note of what you looked at and the result of your search (+ve and -ve) this could save you going through the same procedure in the future.

Kate (Ed)

GIVING A LITTLE BACK - INDEXING WITH FAMILYSEARCH

Most of us are aware that the Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS) hold the world's largest collection of family history research material. In



the 2017 Winter Newsletter we reported that they had discontinued their microform loan service, as most of the information is freely available on line. At our January meeting Andrew and Heatheranne Farley from the Dereham LDS Family History Centre (FHC) gave a presentation on what is available on line, what is available at their FHC and the new Indexing programme.

Obviously, it is not possible to list exactly what is on line but, on your own PC, go to www.familysearch.org , click on search and (especially if you have not used the site before), you could be amazed. However, for access to some documents you do need to sign in. Do not be alarmed, you are not signing up for some unfamiliar religion and you will not be flooded with church e-mails, you have to make a conscious effort to even see the word "church". You only have to sign in once, the site will remember your name and password.

So why do you need to go to the LDS FHC ? Firstly, the staff at all centres can give advice and help with research problems. Secondly, their centres have internet access to many pay- to-view sites, which they are happy to freely share with non-church members . These include 19th Century British Library Newspaper Digital Archive, Ancestry, Findmypast, The Genealogist, My Heritage, plus about 10

more, some of which I have never heard of. Repeating the advice from a previous article - to find your nearest FHC, contact number and opening times go to <https://familysearch.org/locations>

Finally, familysearch hold millions of documents which still need indexing and they are asking for our help, using our own computers in our own homes to do some web indexing. There's nothing to download or install and you will be asked to transcribe in small batches, sometimes just a single page, which will take, at most an hour, so you are not committing yourself to hours of work.

To find out more go to www.familysearch.org Somewhere along the line, you will be asked to sign in as explained in Para 2 above.

Family Tree Search Memories Indexing

Click on "Indexing"

Now "learn more" – the red panel gives some interesting statistics including the number of entries awaiting arbitration. As I understand it all entries are independently keyed in twice. Only when both agree are they transferred to the database (thereby ensuring that the indexing is accurate) to be freely available to all from your home computer

You can take a guided tour, unfortunately this shows an American WW2 Draft Registration, with which we are not familiar but, Familysearch is a worldwide organisation, they could have shown an English Parish Register, or even a French will. To me, having done some indexing, this appears complicated but the principle is the same and we, as indexers, are allowed to choose our own project, from their current list. So don't be put off, continue -

Now find a project – choose a country and language - for UK at the time of writing they have three projects running 1. Bedfordshire and 2. Lincolnshire Parish Registers and 3. War Office Enlistment Rolls 1772 – 1935.

I did a couple of Parish register pages and one for an officers Enlistment Roll

Click on “Start Indexing” and then “Project Instructions”

Up to this point you are looking for information only – you can see what you are being asked to index, but you haven’t pressed the “Does this item need indexing – YES box”.

Do have a look, the project transcriptions may not be exactly what you are interested in, but do it as a thank you for all those times you have found your answers. This is your chance to give something back.

Editors Note: We will be interested in hearing how well, or how badly you get on Waiting to hear from you!

WAS YOUR ANCESTOR A FREEMAN OF NORWICH?

Although originally associated with the protection and development of trade, over time Freeman came to control civic affairs of many towns. However, with expanding trade, the Industrial Revolution and the desire for democracy, there were demands for a reduction in their powers. In some places, loss of privileges led to a drastic fall in numbers, to the point where they failed to regenerate themselves. In consequence,



Norfolk's Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth were amongst the 100 or so, boroughs where enrolment lapsed. Nevertheless, today there are 58 former boroughs still admitting freemen, each with differences in customs and procedures. Probably the best known is London where there are an estimated 28,000 Freemen of the City and the right to purchase freedom continues with approximately 1,400 admissions each year.

Closer to home, the Freemen of Norwich are still very much alive and active, what is more, the City has one of the most complete sets of Freeman's registers in the country, dating back to 1317. Using them, it may be possible to trace master to apprentice or father to son lines, back to earliest times. Traditionally there were four ways a man could qualify to become a freeman:

1. Patrimony - the legitimate son of a Norwich Freeman
2. Service – 7 year (initially) apprenticeship & become a competent worker
3. Purchase – “foreigners” with particular skills e.g. 15th century weavers.
4. Order of Assembly – granted to persons likely to benefit the community

After the admission ceremony the names of new freemen were/are entered into the current register, usually chronologically, but some books were in a calendar format, in alphabetical sections like giant address books. Here, as in pre-printed books, there might be hundreds of names beginning with B, and when the space were filled, further entries would be made wherever there was room – perhaps under I or U, making searches difficult. Almost twenty years ago, Shirley & Keith Howell (MNFHS Member no. 67) helped simplify research by transcribing (from 90 plus microfiche) the details of the 13,227 Norwich Freemen listed in the registers between 1752 and 1981. This they indexed and a bound paper copy was produced, which is now alongside printed transcripts from 1584 to 1751, on open shelves at the Norfolk Record Office (NRO). Shirley also wrote a short paper, which is in our library, briefly describing the Norwich

Freemans' story and their Admission Rolls. The above is mostly taken from that paper and reproduced with her permission.

Fast forward to 2018: Daughters and wives of Norwich Freeman have been admitted since 2010. Of the 1000 plus freemen today, over a third are women. There is a website at **www.norwichfreemen.org.uk** which has a simple expandable timeline and two short videos telling the story of Norwich freemen, and the charities which they administer, almost the story of Norwich itself. Last year, to celebrate their 700th Anniversary, they commissioned an online database of the registers. The first phase, based on the work of the Howells (1752 to date), is available now at **www.nfro.norwichfreemen.org.uk**. The remainder, back to 1317, we are promised, will appear in due course. This is a superb free website, no 'signing in' or password required, giving more detailed information about the registers and the part played by the Freeman in the development of Norwich in the past and today. Now, without having to visit the NRO, from your own PC, you can learn more about the Freeman of Norwich and satisfy your curiosity – was your ancestor a Freeman of Norwich?

TFG

NORFOLK RESEARCH

Parish Records, Census Searches

Certificates

£5 per hour

Send SAE or IRC for details to:

W Hepburn, 11 Preston Avenue, Wymondham, Norfolk

NR18 9JE

Or contact by email: Willie.h.1945@virgin.net

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