



GILD OF FREEMEN
OF THE CITY OF LEICESTER



Gildhall News



Welford Road Alms House



THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL
OF THE
LEICESTER GILD OF FREEMEN



Number 92

November 2021



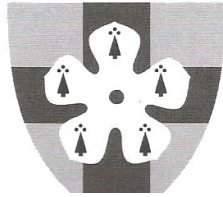
**Conferment of The Hereditary Freedom of the City of Leicester
Tuesday 26th October 2021**

GILDHALL NEWS

November 2021

Contents	Page
Editor's Comments	5
Report by Jeff Lewitt, Master of the Gild	5&6
Report by Barry Daniell, Chairman of the Board of Deputies	7&8
Chamberlain's Report	9
Future programme – dates for your diary	
Provisional Garden Party 12th June 2022	17
Gild Banquet 18th&19Th June 2022	18
Skittles Night 18th February 2022	18
Contributions to the Gildhall News	
Freemans Cottages Maurice Hill	19,20,21
Freemen's Holt How it all started. John Tolton	22,23,24
Genealogist Wizard of the County Lynn Roffee	25,26,27
Forms included with Newsletter (centre pages)	
Garden Party (?)	
Application for Membership & Associate Membership of the Gild	
Renewal Forms for Gild Membership	
Standing Order forms for Gild Membership Subscriptions	
Have you changed your address	28

GILD OF FREEMEN
OF THE CITY OF LEICESTER



Number 92

November 2021

Gildhall News



THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL
OF THE
LEICESTER GILD OF FREEMEN



Patron: Colonel Robert Martin OBE DL
President: The Lord Mayor of Leicester

OFFICERS 2021–2022

Master: J.D. Lewitt
Deputy Master: M. Ballard
Clerk: H. Lake
Chamberlain: M. B. Hill

WARDENS

N. Cave,
L. A. Roffee,
S. Freeman,
B. W. Mudford
K. Mardon (co-opted)



Editor's Comments

**Welcome to the second copy of the GHN
this year**

Here is the next gildhall news since the September issue and it will get us back onto being a quarterly journal again. On September 25th Mary and myself attended the Banquet of The Coventry Gild at Coombe Abbey and had a most enjoyable evening. They had to move their event due

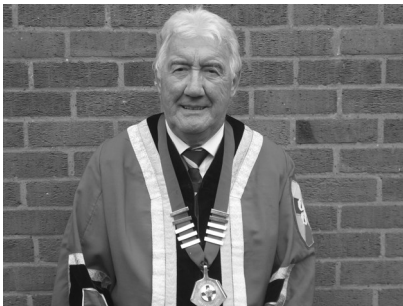
to the Covid Pandemic.

On Tuesday 26th October Jeff Lewitt and myself attended the City Rooms on Charles Street for the Conferment of The Hereditary Freedom of the City of Leicester upon 6 new Freemen by the Right Worshipful Lord Mayor of Leicester, Councillor Deepak Bajaj.

In December we have the pantomime on Friday 10th at the Little theatre and later in the month on Monday 20th the Carol service at St Andrews Church. I wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Malcolm Ballard

Deputy Master of The Leicester Gild of Freemen



Master of The Leicester Gild of Freemen

Autumn has arrived. I like the Autumn, the beautiful colours, the squirrels and birds stocking up for winter. The only downside is the constant clearing of leaves. Ever stood there waiting for that last one to drop?? My Wife thinks it's

personal. As she collects some, more take their place,

This year we have had to cancel many of our traditional events. Malcom and Mary, Mick and Jean, John and Josie attended the rearranged Coventry Banquet. Unfortunately we were, due to this, other commitments and illness, unable to attend the Civic Service this year. I have sent the Gilds apologies to the Lord Mayor.

On the 26th October there was a Freedom making ceremony at the City Hall. I was led to believe there were over 20 or more taking up the freedom, but only 6 were made free. Myself and the Deputy Master Malcolm represented the Gild. We wish them all well and I will be giving a short talk about the work of the Gild and a pack to encourage them to join us.

For your diary, The Pantomime needs to be booked as soon as possible if you want to go. Don't forget your waterproofs ?? The Carol Service is on the 20th December. This is a popular light hearted chance to sing all those carols we so love. It is at St. Andrews church. The tree will be superb, and the Organ, recently refurbished at great cost , will be played for us by the Musical Director Bruce.

This is a free event and refreshments will be provided in the Community Centre on the Holt afterwards. All are welcome.

As this is the last GHN this year, may I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a better New Year.

Jeffrey Lewitt

Master of The Leicester Gild of Freemen



Report by Chairman of the Board, Barry Daniell

On behalf of the whole Board of Deputies, I hope you are all keeping safe and well. Christmas will be here before we know it; with a bit of luck we will all be able to have a

better festive period this year. Residents at Freeman's Holt and our Deputies will be going to Kilworth Springs Golf Club on 8th December for Christmas Lunch. If any other Freeman would like to attend please get in touch with the office.

I would like to welcome the six new Freeman of the City of Leicester who were made free in October and thank the Lord Mayor's Office for organising the event. It is of paramount importance we all encourage family members to take their Freedom if they are eligible, the process is straightforward. We must ensure there are enough Freeman so our future generations can thrive.

The Board have decided to extend bungalow No.24. The administrative work is underway with our surveyors and we hope to be able to accept a quote ASAP. The Board have also decided to have plans drawn up to extend several other bungalows. Please contact the office if you haven't already done so to register an interest.

We have recently accepted an application for a standard bungalow from the Widow of a Freeman. The bungalow is undergoing certain improvements before the lady can move in. We have other standard bungalows available on the estate, if you would like to visit and view them, please get in touch with the office.

On Saturday 4th December, a Bingo/Quiz night will be held at the community centre. Entry is £5 per person, it will start at 7pm. If you would like to attend, please contact the office.

Our next Board Meeting is on Wednesday 1st December at 19:30 in the community centre. All Freeman are welcome and encouraged to attend. The Charity has vacancies for new Deputies (Trustees), if you would like to know more about what the role involves please get in touch.

Please note we have had an issue with our email account, it has meant we have not been receiving emails. Apologies if you have been trying to contact us. Please use the email address below going forward.

You can contact us at the Holt by

Phone: 0116 283 4017

Address: 32 Freeman's Holt, Old Church Street, Aylestone, Leicester, LE2 8NH

Email: office@leicesterfreemen.com

Take care and stay safe,

Barry Daniell
Chairman of the Board

Chamberlain's Report November 2021

At long last I can report good news for a change.

The talk about Joseph Merrick better known as "The Elephant Man", planned originally to take place Autumn 2019 and cancelled twice because of the pandemic finally took place on the 6th November.

I can report that a most enjoyable evening was had by all. Joanne Mungovin gave an excellent presentation and it was very rewarding to see so many people socialising once again.

Prior to the evening it became very close to being cancelled due to various people with health problems, but plan B was brought into operation and the result, success.

The next event we had arranged is the trip to the Pantomime on 10th Dec. and despite a few seats still being available we have had to confirm with the theatre that only 23 seats are required. Here's hoping that next year like previous years we will fill all allocated seats.

Monday 20th December 7:00pm is the Freeman's Carol Service at St Andrews Church (next to the Holt) and afterwards in the community centre for mulled wine, sausage rolls etc. With carols being accompanied by the new organ in the church plus a splendid Christmas tree it is a wonderful way to welcome Christmas.

Please attend and just bring your voice!

In the mean times we are carrying on finalising and identifying future events, including the Banquet and can confirm that the Skittles Night 18th February 2022 is booked and more details and a booking form are included in this issue of the GHN, also the Board have agreed Sunday 12th June for the Bi-annual Garden Party and shortly a start will be made finalising details, this requires a great amount of time and effort.

*Maurice Hill
Chamberlain*

GILD OF FREEMEN OF THE CITY OF LEICESTER

Application for Full Membership

Full Name
(BLOCK LETTERS)

Address

..... Post Code

Tel No.: email address

I am a duly sworn Freeman of the City of Leicester and apply to be enrolled as a Member of the Guild of Freeman, for which I enclose the sum of £10.00 (Enrolment fee of £1.00 plus the first annual subscription of £9.00).

Signature.....Date

Application for Associate Membership

Full Name
(BLOCK LETTERS)

Address

..... Post Code

Tel No.e-mail address

I certify that I am the (please delete where applicable)SPOUSE / WIDOW / WIDOWER / SON / DAUGHTER / GRANDCHILD,aged 18 years or over of

Mr / Mrs / Ms(Freeman of Leicester)

Or

I am a full member of the Guild of Freeman of.....(City or Town)

I apply to be enrolled as an Associate Member of the Guild, for which I enclose the sum of £7.00 (Enrolment Fee of £1.00 plus the first Annual Subscription of £6.00)

Signature.....Date

Please make cheques payable to 'Guild of Leicester Freeman'
and send with this application to:

Maurice Hill, 33 Mossdale Road, Kingsway, Leicester LE3 2UT

RENEWAL OF GILD MEMBERSHIP

(Payment by Standing Order)

(Kindly complete where marked by all dotted lines)

To: Maurice Hill,
33 Mossdale Road,
Leicester
LE3 2UT

Date.....20.....

I,

agree to pay my Annual Subscription to the Gild of Leicester Freemen on 1st April each year by means of the signed Standing Order that I have sent to my bank.

I understand that the annual subscriptions at present are £9.00 for a full member and £6.00 for an associate member, and that I can stop or amend this Standing Order simply by giving instructions to my bank.

Signature.....

Address.....

.....

..... Post code

Tel. No.....

email

Please complete the Standing Order form below,

STANDING ORDER-PLEASE SEND TO YOUR BANK MANAGER

To: Thee Manager.....Bank Plc

Address:

.....

.....Postcode.....

Please Pay to:- Lloyds Bank Plc,
 Old Market Square Branch,
 Nottingham NG1 6FD
 (Bank Sort Code 30-96-18)

For the account of the **Gild of Leicester Freeman** (Account
No.01409164)

The sum of £.....,

Commencing 1st April 22.....,and yearly thereafter until further notice.

.....(my surname and initial/s)

Name of Account to be debited.....

Account No.....

Signature.....Date.....20.....

Address.....

.....

Postcode.....

RENEWAL OF GILD MEMBERSHIP
(Payment by Cheque)
FOR THE YEAR 1ST APRIL 2022 – 31ST MARCH 2023

I would like to pay the annual subscription for my membership/
associate
membership of the Gild for the year commencing 1st April 2022

Membershipat £9.00 = £.....

Associate Membershipat £6.00 = £.....

My name is (BLOCK CAPITALS).....

My address is (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

.....

Post code.....Telephone.....

e-mail address.....

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £.....

made payable to “**Gild of Leicester Freemen**”

Please post to:

Maurice Hill, 33
Mosdale road,
Kingsway,
Leicester LE3 2UT

Any queries, please phone Maurice on **0116 289 5394**

Visit to the Little Theatre, Dover Street, Leicester, to see

Cinderella

On Friday 10th December 2021, starting at 7pm

Please reserve..... adult seats at **£15** each

..... children's seats (under 16) at **£12** each

Name is (capital letters)

.....

My address is (capital letters)

.....

.....

Post code..... Telephone.....

E-mail address.....

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £.....

Made payable to **"Gild of Leicester Freemen"**

Please send to

Brian Mudford

11 Huntsman Close

Markfield

LE67 9XE

Applications will be dealt with strictly on a first come, first serve basis

Skittles Night
Friday 18th February 2022 7.30pm
The Wheatsheaf Inn, Thurcaston, LE7 7JN
Supper Included

Please reserve for meplaces at £9.50 each

My name is.....

My address s.....

.....Post Code.....

Telephone..... Email address.....

I enclose my cheque for £.....

Made payable to "Gild of Leicester Freemen"

Please send to

Maurice Hill 33 Mossdale Road, Kingsway Leicester LE3 2UT

Applicants are dealt with on a first-come, first -served basis

.....

The Gild of Freemen of the City of Leicester
GILD PRODUCTS ORDER FORM

- | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|----------|
| 1. | Tie - navy | at £10.00 each | = £..... |
| | - green | at £10.00 each | = £..... |
| 2. | Gild Scarf | at £15.00 each | = £..... |
| 3. | Cuff Links | At £16.00 per pair | = £..... |
| 4. | Lapel Badge | at £2.50 each | = £..... |
| 5. | Gild Pens | at £3.00 each | = £..... |
| 6. | Gown, made to measure,
(includes delivery) | price on request | = £..... |

plus postage* @ £2.90 second class
@ £3.40 first class

TOTAL = £.....

I enclose cheque for the above total, made payable to:
"Gild of Leicester Freemen"

NAME

ADDRESS

..... POST CODE

EMAIL ADDRESS

Signed

Please post to:

**Sue Freeman, 5 LITTLE MILL CLOSE, BARLESTONE, LEICS. CV13
OHW**

Tel: 01455 291771

e-mail: suefreeman10@gmail.com

*Please note that any orders at and above £20 will need to be sent by recorded delivery at £7.25 (contact Sue for further details)

Programme of Future Events

Freemen's Garden Party Provisional date Sunday 12th June 2022

Plans for the 2020 Garden Party were well underway when guess what came along and stopped everything.

We now intend to pick up where we left off and towards the end of this year will be going all out to finalise the 2022 party.

We will be seeking help where necessary with physical tasks prior to, on the day and afterwards. One good thing to come out of the delay is that I understand the promised circus show has gained a number of extra performers who are all now undergoing full training.

So, fingers crossed, and everything else as well, we can look forward to a most enjoyable afternoon.

Finalised details regarding ticket applications etc. will be in future issues of the Gildhall News.

Looking forward to seeing you all next year

Maurice Hill

Gild Banquet Weekend 18th and 19th June 2022

This is to give you notice of the Gild's Banquet Weekend in June. We would very much appreciate your support.

The Banquet will be held on Saturday 18th June at a venue to be decided.

The Freeman's Service will be held on the following day, Sunday 19th June (10.30am) at **St Andrews Church, Aylestone, next to the Holt.**

The Banquet is open to **all members, their friends and relations.**

Please keep this weekend free in your diaries

*If you require any further information or would like
Details of hotels when venue confirmed,
Please contact Jeff Lweitt
0116 283 4357.*

Skittles Night

at the Wheatsheaf Inn, Thurcaston LE7 7JN

Friday 18th February 2022 at 7.30pm

Still only £9.50 per person

Moving closer to near normality we are once again holding our ever-popular annual skittles night at the Wheatsheaf Inn where the Coventry Gild will be challenging us and trying to prove their superiority. A super supper will be served consisting of faggots, sausage, black pudding, cheese onion and potato pie, chips, mushy peas and beans. There will also be a raffle. All Gild members, family and friends are welcome. So don't delay and reserve your places using the booking form in this issue.

The Freemen's "Cottages"

The new buildings that the Leicester University have had erected on land that was once part of the Freemen's Common tend to hide one of the few remaining jewels of what was Victorian Leicester

Facing University Road is a building, 161 Welford Road, now called the Leicester University, Freemen's Common, Health Centre, this building was originally the Freemen's Cottages

The original building was erected in 1856 by the Freemen on what was then part of the Common and was the original almshouses/cottages for the use of aged needy Freemen or Freemen's widows, now replaced by Freemen's Holt. With the help of the Leicester Victorian Society, I've been able to get the building listed Grade 2 status by English Heritage, this gives it a degree of protection and preservation (?).

The concluding remarks by the English Heritage listing inspector were:

"Freemen's Cottages were built in two main phases by well-known Leicester based architects. The buildings, now linked, are attractive but the real architectural interest lies in their design which aims to house a number of aged needy Freemen within a secure environment whilst enabling them to retain some independence in individual "Cottages". The Freemen played an extremely important part in the history of the City of Leicester from the medieval period, and the Freemen's Cottages represent one of the last physical reminders of their once extensive existence.... Their local significance is high enough to have national importance"



The word cottage conjures up in one's mind the picture of a small thatched building with roses around the door, but in truth the Cottages were far removed from this romantic ideal.

The building, after being extended in 1885 contained 18 "Cottages" each consisting of a single room within the building and the occupants were referred to as inmates. The whole concept was rather like a private workhouse owned and run by the Freemen.



The Freemen's "Cottages" now the Leicester University Freemen's Common Health Centre

The occupancy of the "Cottages" was intended for the most aged needy of the Freemen or Freemen's Widows applying for a Cottage, and when they moved in, they were paid an allowance not to exceed four shillings (80p) per week..

Now let us look at some of the rules applying to the "Cottage" inmates in 1907.

Each Inmate shall keep or cause to be kept his or her room in a clean and orderly condition.

Each inmate shall take his or her share in the keeping clean of corridors, staircases and water closets.

As gas is provided no Inmate shall be allowed to use an oil or spirit lamp for lighting purposes.

The gas will be turned off at 10 o'clock p.m. by the Caretaker appointed by the Deputies, unless any one of the Inmates shall be ill.

All visitors to Inmates must leave the premises by 9.30 p.m. at which time the outer doors will be locked by the Caretaker appointed by the Deputies.

No Inmate shall be absent from his or her "cottage" for a period exceeding seven days without the consent in writing of the Chairman of the Cottage Committee, and no such consent shall be given for a period exceeding twenty-eight days. The weekly allowance of any Inmate absent without consent shall be suspended during such absence.

A visit to Southwell to see the best preserved and remaining Workhouse shows a number of similarities with the Freeman's Cottages.

The Southwell Workhouse precedes the Cottages by only some 30 years and was built to introduce a revolutionary but harsh welfare system in 1824. The system spread nationwide, and after the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. The workhouses continued to provide accommodation and shelter for the poor well into the 20th century.

Although the Inmates at Southwell slept in dormitories, the doors were locked at night and the gas turned off, the same as the Freeman's Cottages, and the elderly Inmates had to take their share of cleaning. Of interest the prime reason for the doors being locked at Southwell and other workhouses was to keep the Inmates in and prevent their escape because work was considered to be a virtue and the inmates had to work to repay the cost of their keep. Some workhouses apart from the high walls surrounding the exercise yards had these walls topped

with spikes for the same reason. The workhouse at Rippon in Yorkshire is a good example of this. The average floor space of each of the Freeman's Cottages was approx. 18.5sq.m. (Compare this with the 76sq.m. of a single bedroom bungalow at the Holt).

Remember the inmate had to live, sleep cook and eat in this space that also had gas lighting and a fireplace for heating.

The single door of each Cottage opened directly onto a central corridor.

The reader can be assured that in its day it did look rather prison like, but that said the inmates always seemed contented with their lot.

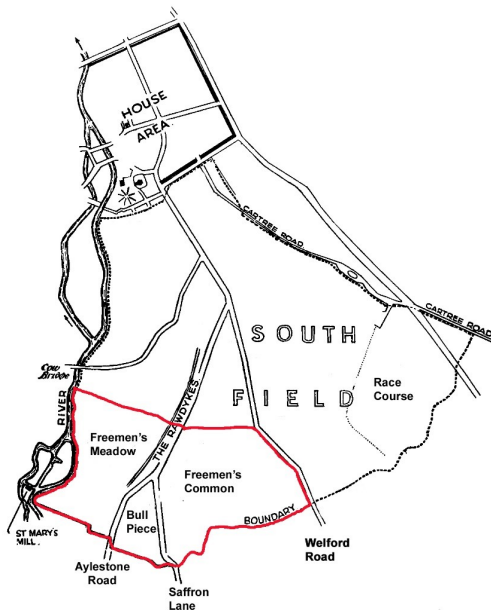
Freemen's Holt – How it all started

It is unimaginable that any freemen reading this article would be unaware of the existence of the Freemen's Holt even if not sure of its location or purpose. Situated just a couple of miles south of what was the boundary of medieval Leicester lies the village of Aylestone which is now a suburb of the City of Leicester and is the home of Freemen's Holt. One has to travel back in time to the last two decades of the 18th century to find the events that eventually led to the purchase of the land in Aylestone and the construction of Freemen' Holt.

Mad George was the King of England who had lost the American colonies, Madame Guillotine was the instrument responsible for the French Royal Family and their entourage of Aristocratic followers losing their heads, and in Leicester the Freemen and the Corporation were falling out over the potential enclosure of the South Fields. The South Fields were common land over which the freemen were granted special privileges of grazing and agriculture that they had enjoyed since Countess Judith had been gifted the land by William the Conqueror and possibly even before the Norman invasion. The Corporation wanted to enclose the land by Act of Parliament and then sell parcels of land for profit that did not include any benefit to the freemen which quite naturally raised the ire of the freemen at large. Although the corporation were all freemen; there were sixty freemen sitting as Aldermen; not all freemen were Aldermen. At that time there were around 3000 Freemen of Leicester. After some negotiation an agreement was reached in principle that enabled the Corporation to submit an Enclosure Act which was passed in 1804. The Act included for 125 acres of land to be held as freehold property in the name of the Freemen of Leicester and for the formation of a Board of Deputies to manage the estate, Twenty-four Board members were elected from the parishes of Leicester by the freemen living in the respective parishes, the number elected being dependant on the size of the parish.

1835 saw the demise of the old Corporation and the Freeman's hold on local government to be replaced by a democratically elected borough council whose members came from the general population of Leicester.

In 1845 the Leicester Freeman's Act was passed by parliament dividing the areas titled Freeman's Common and Bull Piece into allotments of up to 500 square yards at an annual rent of one farthing per square yard. It had become apparent that the vast majority of freemen by this time were not in a position to graze livestock and that the land would be much more usefully employed if broken down into allotment gardens. Provision was made in the Act for the construction of cottages for aged and needy freemen and freemen's widows and they were erected on Welford Road and still stand today used by Leicester University. Also included in the 1845 Act was a provision allowing the Board to buy and sell land, providing the majority consent of the freemen was obtained.



1804 Enclosure Act
Lands Acquired by Freeman

Over the ensuing years land was sold, some of it by compulsory purchase, to the Midland Counties Railway Company and to the Council for the construction of a power generating plant. The latter sale was the area known as Freeman's Meadows and was the final piece of land owned by the freemen used for grazing livestock. Land known as the Bull Piece was sold to the Corporation in October 1924. By 1967 the whole of the Freeman's Common except for the cottages on Welford Road had been sold.

At the time that the final sale was taking place the Clerk to the Board, Mr Reginald Moore, was aware of 7.5 acres of land that was for sale in Aylestone behind the church of St. Andrew. The Board of Deputies had inspected the land and recommended to the freemen at a general meeting that the land should be purchased for the purpose of developing the land as a complex of bungalows to replace the out-of-date cottages on Welford Road. There was an almost unanimous approval by the freemen and a firm of architects were employed to carry out a design of the estate. A layout of 31 bungalows was eventually agreed and submitted for planning approval and a local builder employed to carry out the construction. The first residents to occupy bungalows moved in on the 19th November 1968 and by the end of the year it was virtually fully occupied. One bungalow, number 11, was reserved for a resident warden who was responsible for the welfare of the residents. Quite a large area of the estate was still undeveloped from the entrance into the estate to the wall along Middleton Street and in 1973 it was decided to build a community room including a small kitchen and an office for the Clerk and the Accountant. At the same time it was also considered necessary to build a house for a warden to enable the Board to attract a younger person to apply for the post. The success of attracting the right person for the role living in a one-bedroom bungalow was limited. A suitable young couple were appointed as man and wife wardens and remained in post until 1996.

A further four one-bedroom bungalows were built in the same style as the 31 bungalows and an additional bungalow of a different style was built for a reserve warden to cover for the main warden.

The estate is now 53 years old and has seen a number of improvements including emergency service access to all bungalows and extended bungalows to provide more internal space for residents. There is no resident warden and the house is used as an office for the estate administration and the bedrooms provide overnight accommodation for visiting relatives. In the community room the kitchen was extended to include the room previously used as an office and the main hall extended to allow more space for functions. In all, a pleasant place to live.

John Tolton

Genealogist Wizard of the County

David Henry Hartopp (known as Henry) might not be a familiar name to most Leicester Freeman but perhaps he should be given the credit for his transcription of the Leicester Freeman's Admission Rolls. Henry was commissioned by the Corporation of the City of Leicester to abstract and edit the details of all Freeman listed in the borough records. The Register of the Freeman of Leicester 1196-1770 includes Apprentices Sworn before successive Mayors for certain Periods 1646-1770. This first volume was published in 1927. The 2nd Register covered the period 1770-1926 and also includes Apprentices Sworn before Successive Mayors for the same period. This Volume was published in 1933. The registers were published by Edgar Backus, 44-46 Cank Street and C. H. Gee Co. Ltd, 3 St Martins – both in Leicester.

The Registers continue to play an important role in identifying Freeman lineage and include the names of men made free together with their father's name and sometimes their great and great grandfather's names. There is a wealth of genealogical information for those interested in researching their Freeman history and these pre-dates the introduction of the registering of Births, Deaths and Marriages which commenced in 1837. The Civic Office maintain the Master Register use these rolls when receiving applications from people wishing to take their freedom.

Henry was born in Leicester in 1865 to Amos and Sarah (nee Taylor) and was the oldest of his seven siblings. His father's family originate from Warwickshire and worked as silk weavers. In the 1881 Census, at the age of 16, Henry was working as a Book Agent. In 1893 he married Anne Elizabeth Newell and they had a daughter, Florence May in 1895. Around 1906 and 1909 Henry was working as a Boot Manufacturer's Foreman so it could be assumed that recording and transcribing work was not paying the bills. The 1911 Census showed the family living at 81 Barclay Street, Leicester where they were to live for many years. At this time Henry was working as a Record Agent and Transcriber (Legal) and was self-employed.

Henry received guidance and tuition in transcribing and record searching from the Rev. William George Dimock Fletcher who was a former curate of the Holy Trinity Church in Leicester in 1883/85. Dimock Fletcher appears in the 1871 Census as a Solicitors articulated clerk and living in Loughborough. He transcribed many records and wrote books both locally and elsewhere in England whilst working as a clergyman.

One can only marvel at the commitment, dedication and patience of Henry to abstract the handwritten records that had been kept over a period of several centuries. Today, Microsoft Office provides us with help collating together this type of information but

Over the years Henry became a successful and respected record searcher and according to the Leicester Evening Mail *“solved many genealogical problems for literary and legal purposes”*. The paper said that during Henry’s career he had examined and indexed at least 100,000 documents. In addition to compiling the Freeman’s Roll, his work included compiling i) The Index to Administration’s from 1660-1750 Leicestershire Wills, ii) Leicestershire Marriages Licenses from 1570 -1750 and iii) The Calendar of Wills provided and of Administration’s Granted in the Commissioning Court of the Peculiar and Exempt Jurisdiction of Groby 1580-1800. Henry was also knowledgeable in the genealogy of some of the City and Counties prominent families and was called upon by incoming Mayors to write their biographies. He had also been appointed in Major Freer’s will as his literary executor to write a short and suitable biography about his life.

What is particularly interesting is the way Henry signed his signature. Most people use their abbreviated initials and full surname. Henry appeared to like to write his name in full and this can be seen when he was a witness to one of his sisters’ weddings and also when signing the census sheet in 1911. Perhaps this is his way of ensuring that his name can always be fully read or maybe a “Clerkly” humorous joke on his profession. Why he did that we may never know – but non the less it is an unusual way to sign one’s name.

Both Henry and Dimock Fletcher were members of the Leicestershire Architectural and Archaeological Society for many years. Dimock Fletcher was to become the Honorary Secretary, and then Henry became the Assistant Secretary and Librarian. Membership of the society comprised many of the city’s leading families, as well as some Freeman. From an early age Henry had an interest in history so it’s no surprise that he was a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

Henry had been in poor health for some time and his last work was compiling the roll of Mayors and Lord Mayors from 1209 until 1936. Shortly before his death on 20th November 1937 Alderman Hincks had paid for Henry to have a private room at the hospital. On the front page of the Leicester Evening Mail on 23rd November 1937 appeared a photo of Henry lying in his hospital bed. The heading to the article read *“Tribute from sickbed to Ald. Hincks”*. The article quoted Henry as saying *“I cannot do anything more than give Alderman Hincks a good name. He came to see me three weeks ago at my house in Barclay Street, where I was trying to struggle on alone while my wife was in the infirmary. I could hardly see or use my arms. He arranged for me to come in to this private ward in the hospital. Mr Hincks had always been very appreciative of the archaeological work I have done for the Corporation – such as preparing the Mayoral roll recently”*.

Henry died at the Leicester General Hospital on 29th November 1937 at the age of 72 and is buried at Welford Road Cemetery. The Leicester Evening Mail ran an article headed *“Genealogy Wizard of County, Mr H Hartopp dies”* and that is a fitting tribute.

Lynn Roffee

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature

David Henry Platt

Postal Address

81 Rowley Street
Leicester

Have you changed your address?

In the event that it is necessary to inform the Gild or the Board of any change in circumstances, the information should be sent to both:

**Mrs Hazel Lake
Clerk to the Gild of Freeman of the City of Leicester
The Malthouse
The Maltings, Ashley
Leicestershire LE16 8HW**

and

**Leicester Freeman's Deputies
32 Freeman's Holt
Old Church Street
Aylestone
Leicester LE2 8NH**

Telephone: **0116 283 4017**

E-mail: office@leicesterfreemen.com

***Copy for the next issue should reach the Editor
by January 19th 2022***

Write with your suggestions and contributions to:

**Malcolm Ballard
5 Snowdrop Close
Narborough
Leics. LE19 3YB**

Telephone: **0116 286 1507**

E-mail: romalc@btinternet.com

Leicester Freeman website: www.hazel.lake-leicesterfreemen@outlook.com

Gild e-mail address: leicester_gild@outlook.com

Facebook: search for "Leicester Gild"



Coventry Guild Banquet 25th September 2021, Coombe Abbey

The Clock Tower Leicester 2019



*Wishing you all A Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year*