

Above Map of Cawston, late 16th century NRO, NRS 21404

Norfolk Records Committee

Annual Report, 2004-2005

Overview

Programmes of lunchtime talks have proved very popular, and Family History Sunday attracted 500 visitors to The Archive Centre in a single day. Two outstanding large accessions of records were received: archives of the Borough of Thetford and of G. King and Son of Norwich. A new microfilming project has enabled surrogate copies to be produced of more than 3,000 vulnerable original documents. The first two large-scale exhibitions were mounted in the Long Gallery.

Accessions

346 deposits, gifts or purchases of documents were made during the year, compared with 262 the previous year. They include 23 accessions to the Norfolk Sound Archive.

Records of the Borough of Thetford span the 13th to the 20th centuries. They include assembly proceedings, 1574-1945, title deeds to the nunnery site, 1539-1783, a map of Methwold Warren, 1580, and Quarter Sessions records, 1632-1951.

Three substantial groups of manor court records were received, for Kavenham and Iron Hall in Stoke Ferry, Wereham and Wretton, 1536-1955, Surlingham, 1602-1998, and Ashwellthorpe cum Wreningham, 1660-1928. Three Church of England parishes, North Walsham, Sporle with Palgrave and Tharston, deposited records for the first time. The North Walsham archive is unusually large, and includes parish registers from 1557, churchwardens' accounts, 1580-1893, plans and drawings of the church, 19th-20th centuries, and extensive overseers' records, including accounts, 1563-1867, approximately 1,000 settlement papers, and documents relating to the parish workhouse, 18th-19th centuries.

A small map of parts of Sandringham and Babingley was acquired with the aid of a grant from the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund. Dated 1620, it includes drawings of deer in Sandringham Park and a swan at 'Swanneste'. A coloured, but faded, map of the estate of John Dey in Great Melton and Forncett, was made by John Buckenham, surveyor, in 1718.

Additional records of the White family of Salle, 16th-20th centuries, include an extensive series of estate maps dating from 1760. Six maps of an estate purchased by John Fielden of Todmorden in 1851 relate to Beechamwell, Shingham and adjoining parishes, 1766-1934. The earliest in the sequence was surveyed and vividly decorated by Thomas Spencer of Wickhambrook for Patrick Blake, whose arms are depicted on the map.

A pedigree of the Rolfe family of Heacham, 18th-20th centuries, relates closely to the Rolfe family archives already in the Record Office. It includes paintings of family members, a pedigree illustrated by coloured family crests, and family letters and other papers, 19th-20th centuries.

Three diaries received were all written by women. One, of a devotional nature, was kept by Elizabeth Blomfield of Wymondham, 1787-1824. The diary of Elizabeth Doyle, a Quaker widow living at Crimplasham Hall, records domestic and social events over the first half of 1854, including her private reading and studies, Society of Friends' monthly meetings, and anti-slavery meetings. Agnes Podd of Norwich was in her 70s when she wrote her diary, 1938-1945, recording her daily routine during the war years and through her husband's illness and death in 1944.

Another personal record, of a teenager, is an account book of Horace Good Winearls, 1887-1893. H. G. Winearls was a young clerk employed by J. T. Stanton and Co., timber merchants of King's Lynn. A private ledger of Thomas Theobald of Norwich, a merchant dealing in shawls and waistcoats, covers the years 1796-1837.

The archive of G. King and Son, lead glaziers of Norwich, 1924-2003,

including job files, accounts and photographs, extending to 667 boxes, was reprieved by the Minister for the Arts from threatened export to the USA in 2004. Thanks to a partnership with a Norwich charitable trust, the Norfolk Record Office acquired the archive in the summer of 2004.

Accessions to the Sound Archive included recordings from the 1950s onwards made by broadcaster Ralph Tuck, master tapes of Chatterbox Talking Newspaper, 1979-1985 and oral history recordings relating to several parishes, including Bramerton, Loddon, Pulham Market, Upwell, Wells and Whissonsett.

Below Francis Eginton, founder of Wadham College, Oxford: a photograph of stained glass restored by G. King and Son Ltd of Norwich. NRO, ACC 2004/53



Cataloguing and stocktaking

Backlog cataloguing completed included records of the manors of Micklehall and Loundhall in Briston, Sall Moor Hall and Hawes, and Edgefield and Ellingham, 1605-1935, farm accounts of Leonard Palmer relating to farms at Buckenham, Besthorpe and Rougham, 1845-1905, records of Marsham Parish Council, 1894-1984, Stow Bedon Parish Council, 1894-1993, South Norfolk Labour Party, 1918-2001, Great Yarmouth Labour Party, 1935-1999, Beeston with Little Bittering Primary School, 1953-1989, Norfolk Rugby Union, 1953-2000, and Norwich Area Brass Band, 1986-2003. Also listed were additional shipping registers for King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth, 1854-1989 and Lynn ships' registration files, 1924-1994.

An interim list was completed of title deeds in the Suffield of Gunton archive, 13th-19th centuries. A small collection of papers in the Bradfer-Lawrence collection relating to the Townshend family of Raynham, 17th-19th centuries, including state papers and others relating to foreign and military affairs, was also catalogued.

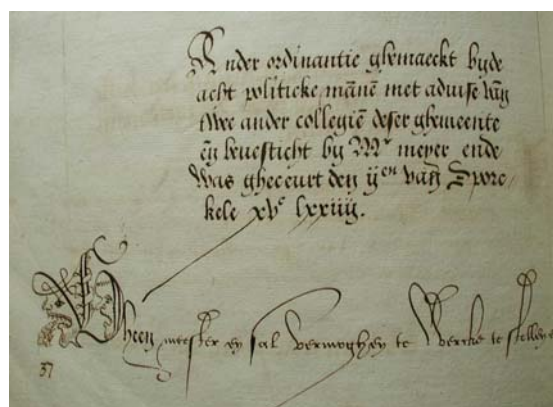
More than 900 catalogues were added to the NRO's CALM electronic catalogue as part of the retro-conversion programme. They include archives of the boroughs of King's Lynn and Thetford, several of the estate and family collections, the remainder of the catalogues of poor law union records, and 700 'Minor Collections' (a miscellaneous series). These catalogues are all accessible *via* the internet on <<http://nrocat.norfolk.gov.uk>>.

During the two weeks' stocktaking closure at the end of November and beginning of December, the locations of

over 100 maps were identified or corrected. The entire Ketton-Cremer and Walsingham archives were checked, Free Church records were partly re-organised, and a series of around 10,000 boxes containing miscellaneous series of non-official records was re-ordered on the shelves.

Microfilming

The Record Office received a grant *via* the Cultural Services Department to microfilm those parish registers and other heavily used documents which had not previously been filmed. Copies of the microfilms were to be provided for both the NRO and the Norfolk Heritage Centre in the Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library. Filming started in July, and in all, over 1,100 parish registers were copied, some 1,600 other parish documents, nonconformist registers, documents from Norwich City and Norwich Diocesan records, and some early 20th-century King's Lynn workhouse registers. 206 new reels of microfilm were added to the stock in the Record Office searchroom and the Norfolk Heritage Centre before the end of March 2005.



Above Extract from a book of orders for wool and bays in Dutch, 1582, from Norwich City records. *NRO, NCR 17d*

Public Services

Visits to the Record Office were made by 12,578 people compared with 9,264 in 2002-2003 (the last complete year of opening at Gildengate House). 20,829 original documents (26,165 in 2002-2003) were consulted by 3,934 people in the manuscript end of the searchroom.

13,161 postal, telephone and e-mail enquiries were answered during the year, compared with 8,776 in 2003-2004.

Use of NRO sources at the Norfolk Heritage Centre is not recorded separately.

Conservation

Among 11 maps treated in the Conservation section was one of the Harbord estate in North Walsham, Felmingham and Hempstead, 1741. This had been damaged by water in the aftermath of the fire in 1994 at the former home of the Record Office in Norwich Central Library building. A coloured parchment map of the parish of Easton, 1776, which had been deposited in a water-stained and distorted condition, was cleaned, flattened and repaired.

The two original charters of King John to the burgesses of Lynn, 1204, from King's Lynn Borough Archives, have each in turn been mounted and repackaged in the style which had already proved successful on the Norwich City charters.

Volumes conserved in-house included household accounts from the Le Strange of Hunstanton archive, 1518-1663, a Bethel Hospital Master's account book, 1795-1825, and a volume of letters, accounts and other papers relating to voyages of the King's Lynn brig *Exchange*, 1791-1792.

Two large runs of volumes water-

damaged in 1994 were returned from outside contractors who carry out work to Record Office specifications. A large series of Norfolk County Council committee minutes is now fully accessible to the public, with the return of 209 volumes repaired during the year. The other series was of 98 volumes from the records of St Andrew's Hospital, one of the archives worst affected by water in the aftermath of the fire in 1994. Overall, substantial progress has been made in the post-fire conservation programme during the last year.

A separate stream of work was been carried out to prepare documents for inclusion in the large-scale microfilming programme which began in July.

Norfolk Sound Archive

Audio equipment of professional standard has been installed in the Norfolk Sound Archive. It is linked *via* a patch panel to a PC which is used as a sound editor using specialised software. This allows for the creation of high quality copies for access and preservation. In addition, a set of basic audio equipment has been purchased to allow users to listen to access copies of original recordings held by the NSA in the listening room.

Numbering and cataloguing procedures, using CALM, have been established for original sound recordings and their CD-R access and preservation copies. Improvements have continued in the packing of sound archive accessions, and work has begun on making preservation and access copies of sound recordings on CD-R.

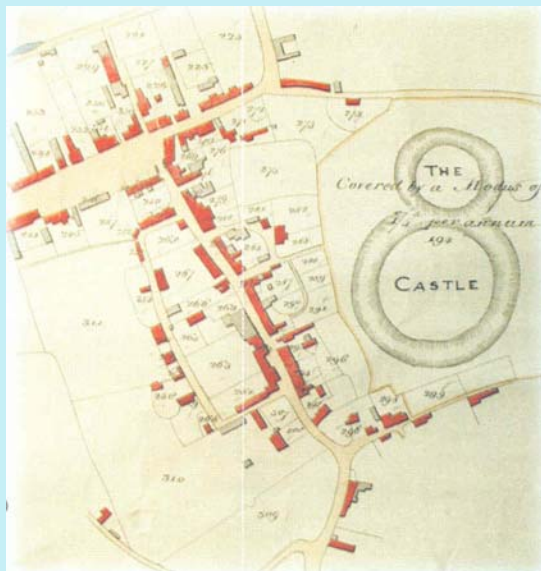


Left Julian of Norwich and her cat: design by G. King and Son Ltd for a stained glass window in St Thomas's church, Heigham, 1968. *NRO, ACC 2004/53*

Time and Tithe

Castle Acre tithe map, 1839, NRO, DN/TA 238

Tithes were a proportion of the produce from each piece of land under cultivation and were paid to the church to support the rector of a parish. As part of a process of changing this system into one of money payments, tithe maps and apportionments (schedules of owners and occupiers) were drawn up under the Tithe Commutation Act, 1836. The NRO has over 700 tithe maps - more than any other county.



In 2005, the NRO's entire archive collections were 'Designated' as being of outstanding national and international importance by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). Some of the documents cited in the NRO's case for Designation appear as illustrations in this report.

King's Lynn Borough Archives

306 visits were made to King's Lynn Borough Archives, compared with 290 in 2003-4. Of 1,272(1,762 in 2003-4) original documents produced, 1117 (1,686) were consulted by members of the public. 53 (73) telephone enquiries were answered.

Education and Outreach

84 groups, comprising 1,364 people, visited The Archive Centre for an introduction to the NRO, a tour and to see a specially selected array of documents.

NRO lunchtime talks in the Green Room from June onwards proved very popular. 249 people attended the first ten, and Archive Awareness Month events in November, including talks, tours and archival walks, attracted 212 people.

On 5 December, The Archive Centre opened for BBC Family History Day, in conjunction with the BBC's *Who do you think you are?* series. Around 500 people, many of whom had never previously been to the building or used a record office, visited during the day. Exhibitions of documents were on display and a Family History Fair was set up in the Green Room. A programme of talks in the searchroom covered different aspects of family history and tours around the building proved extremely popular.

18 study unit packs and 7 local history packs were sent out to schools. New titles are *The Victorian Child* and *Kett's Rebellion, 1549*.

Exhibitions and publications

The Long View, an exhibition of treasures held by the Norfolk Record Office and the East Anglian Film Archive, opened in June, and continued until the end of August. *King's Lynn, 1204-2004*, in celebration of the 800th anniversary of King John's charter, followed in September and continued until mid December. Free coloured brochures were produced to accompany both exhibitions.

At King's Lynn, a small display with the title *A Free Borough for Ever* was mounted in the Regalia Rooms from 24 May, and succeeded from mid July by a larger exhibition of facsimiles, *800 Years of King's Lynn*.

Five issues of the bimonthly NRO *Newsletter* appeared, and a new title, *Prisons and Prisoners in Norfolk*, was added to the series of free information leaflets. A bilingual history, *Norfolk and the Netherlands/Norfolk en Nederland*, edited by the County Archivist, was produced for the Apeldoorn Conference held in Norwich in March 2005.



If you need this leaflet in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact the County Archivist on 01603 222599 and we will do our best to help.