# Find London Freemen

**From celebrated public figures to simple city folk, hundreds of thousands of people have been awarded the freedom of London. See if your ancestors are among them.**

Our millions of occupational records reveal intricate details of your ancestors' working lives. Now, with our latest collection, you can track down the most prominent tradespeople in London over nearly 250 years.

London Freedom of the City Admission Papers, 1681-1925, gives details of over two centuries of self-employed workers in the English capital.

Today, you might think of the freedom of the city as a ceremonial honour. But from the 17th to the early 20th century, the award was extremely important to ordinary working people.

For one thing, it meant they enjoyed far more recognition in their chosen trade. Proving that you were a Freeman showed your customers that you were a prominent, respected and trustworthy tradesman.

Often, though, it also gave them certain privileges that were vital for them to carry out their work. Freemen could vote in parliament and in civic elections, and were even exempt from certain tolls. These rights were important to public figures like aldermen or sheriffs, and also more humble stonemasons and merchants.

The status of Freeman was traditionally reserved for members of livery companies and guilds. As time went on, though, individual citizens were granted the honour in recognition of their importance to the city – or because they paid a substantial fee for the privilege.

Our new collection, created from original records at the London Metropolitan Archives, reveals almost 600,000 London citizens. Despite the male-sounding title, it's important to note that not all Freemen are actually men – women have been among them ever since the 17th century.

Find an ancestor in the records, and you'll discover their birthplace and date, when they were given the Freedom, and often details of the Master they learned their trade from.

## Top tip

Many of London's Freemen served apprenticeships. You can look for details of their time learning their respective trades using the Apprentices' Register, 1710-1811

# 1911 Census – millions more searchable records

## We've finished the second part of our 1911 Census transcriptions, covering large parts of England – from 7th December over half the Census will be fully searchable!

Good news this month for millions of people looking for their ancestors' stories in many of the busiest counties in England. The second part of our 1911 Census transcriptions will be available from 7th December – and you're the ones to benefit.

We released the first load of transcriptions last month, covering Wales, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. With this latest addition, over half the 1911 Census records will be fully searchable on our site.

The new transcriptions hail from many of the most populated parts of the country. These include the most crowded area of all – London. By 1911, England's capital was well on its way to becoming the thriving metropolis that it today, with a population of over 4.5 million. Most of you will have family that lived in London, and even those who don't may well find ancestors staying at a second home or business premises.

But there's far more to this release than the capital. It includes records from Yorkshire – a centre of reform in 1911 with the rise of the Labour party; Lancashire – where the suffragette movement was particularly strong; Warwickshire – at the centre of the nation's travel industry; and several other counties. See a full list

Remember, the 1911 Census is the first where you can view the actual forms your ancestors filled in. That means you can study their handwriting and signatures, and look for any extra comments they may have made. The records also provide extra details not included in previous years, such as how long couples had been married and how many children they'd had.

All the scanned census images are already available at our site. Over the past few months, we've been working on the transcriptions that allow you to search for individual names and other details, as you do with most of our other records. We're continuing to work on the remaining transcriptions – these will be available on our site next year.

## Top tip

**Country-specific**

The search results from our UK 1911 Census page include matches from the 1911 Summary Books. If you only want results from the full Census, you can use the specific England, Wales, Isle of Man and Channel Islands search pages.

# Get started with… Searching

## Find your family's stories quickly and efficiently by making the most of our various search options

Our site is a goldmine of family history information, from 6 billion historical records to 20 million family trees. The best way to pick out the gems about your family is to use our search options.

There are several different ways to search. If you use our main Search page you're looking across all the different records on our site. This is useful if you're not sure where to look, but you can end up with a lot of results to wade through.

Alternatively, choose a category from the Search menu, such as 'Census & Electoral Rolls'. You can then select a particular group of records such as the 1851 UK Census, or a single collection like the Census for England. This is great if you know where and when your ancestors are likely to appear – but you need to be sure of your facts.

Whichever level you search at, you can choose basic or advanced options. The basic options are ideal if you're just getting started, as you can have a guess at a place your ancestor might have lived, and when they may have been born. When you've built up your knowledge of your family, click 'Show advanced', and you can be more precise about places and dates.

Once you've clicked Search you'll see a list of results, with the most likely matches at the top. Look for any that you think are your ancestors, and click on the collection name to see a transcription. If you're still convinced, you can then select 'View original record' to see the historical document.

If you end up with too many results, you can further focus your search at this stage. On the left of the screen, you'll see that you can 'Narrow by category'. You can then go even further, and focus on a single record collection, a particular year or period, or even a specific part of the country.

Of course, if you're still not happy, you can try your search again. You don't need to return to the Search screen to do this – just click 'Edit Search' on the top-left, and you can revise the details there and then, and see the results update before your very eyes.

## Top tip

**Recent searches**

If you're logged in as a member, our main Search page provides some handy extra features. Among these are your 'Recent searches' – just click on a name to return to that search, with the details filled in for you.

# Who Do You Think You Are? Live 2012

**The biggest event in the family history calendar is just around the corner. So what can you expect from the 2012 show?**

Who Do You Think You Are? Live is the perfect event for anyone who's interested in family history. Nowhere else offers the same opportunities to meet like-minded people, share your experiences, and get expert help with your discoveries.

This annual exhibition is once again just around the corner. Who Do You Think You Are? Live 2012 takes place at London's Olympia hall from 24th-26th February. Whether you're a regular attendee or a show newbie, you can't afford to miss it.

All family history's leading lights will be there, revealing their latest products and introducing you to new records. You can also meet local societies from all over the country, and get help with more specific questions.

Stars from the latest TV series will talk about their experiences and delve deeper into their stories in the celebrity theatre. Plus, look out for special areas dedicated to military history, DNA and photography.

Of course, at the centre of it all will be Ancestry.co.uk. We'll have experts on-hand to answer your questions and help you use the site. Plus, we'll be running free workshops all weekend at the Ancestry Academy.

You can save money on your visit to Who Do You Think You Are? Live, with our special ticket offer. Get 2 tickets for £25

## Top tip

Find out more about this year's show at our WDYTYA? Live 2012 page. Make sure you keep checking the page for the very latest news.

# Ancestry Advent Calendar

**Season's greetings! Get your hands on a stocking-full of holiday treats – from research tips to exclusive prize draws.**

On the first day of Christmas my true love sent to me... a calendar full of seasonal treats from Ancestry.co.uk!

That's right, the Ancestry Advent Calendar is back. And this year's holiday countdown is packed with even more research tips and special prize draws.

The fun started on December 1st, but don't worry you can still join the party. Just put on a bit of Slade or Wizzard to get you into the festive spirit, and head to our Advent Calendar page to open all the windows you've missed.

Then make sure you check back each day for all your great gifts. You'll find top tips to help you make the most of the site and grow your family tree; Christmas challenges to test your skills with our records; and chances to win a variety of great prizes!

By the New Year, you'll have all kinds of new tricks to try around the site, plus hopefully some exciting goodies to keep you occupied until Spring. That's got to be better than an orange and some socks!

## Top tip

**Check your post**
We'll be emailing round details of another cracking Christmas competition in the next couple of weeks. Check your email settings to make sure you can benefit from our special offers and promotions.

# Have you tried… the Ancestry app

## Download our new FREE app on your iPhone or iPad and you can edit your tree, view our records and even receive Hints on the move!

Build your family tree at our site, and you have your entire family history available any time you're sat at a computer. But now you can take that even further. If you have an iPhone, iPad or iPod Touch, download our new mobile app, and you have constant access to your discoveries, whether you're visiting a record office, chatting to friends or sat on the bus!

The Ancestry App is free to download. Install it on your phone or iPad, and you have access to your entire Ancestry.co.uk tree – or you can build one from scratch. You can add new family members, edit their information, add life events, attach historical documents, and even add photos. Any changes you make will automatically be applied to your online tree, so it's completely up-to-date next time you log on.

With the latest version of the app, you even receive Hints to help you make new discoveries. Just like if you were at our site, the Hints tell you that we think we've found new information about your ancestors in our records. Simply look for the shaky leaves on your tree.

Press on a Hint, and you can see the entire record we've found, and pan and zoom around to check every detail. If you don't have a membership that includes that record, you can preview it three times, and you then have the option to buy it from within the app.

If you like what you see, you can ask the app to automatically merge any new information – plus any new family members – into your tree. You can then go back and view the record any time you like.

The Ancestry App gives you access to your family history wherever and whenever you need it. To download it, just visit the App Store on iTunes or from your device. And if you own an Android phone, keep your eye out – we'll have a version for you very soon!

## Top tip

**Family Tree Maker**

The Ancestry App also syncs with the latest version of our software, Family Tree Maker, so you can edit your tree from anywhere and it always stays up-to-date. Find out more about Family Tree Maker 2012.