Finding Freemasons

A digitisation project between the Library and Museum and Ancestry will make searching for masons from the past much easier

he world's largest online family history resource, Ancestry has transcribed over two million records of Freemasons in the English and Irish Constitutions using the membership registers of the United Grand Lodge of England and the Grand Lodge of Ireland.

The names have created a searchable online database of Freemasons from the 1750s to the early 1920s. The database and images from the Grand Lodge registers are being made available via Ancestry's website. This will provide information about individual lodge affiliation, as well as address and occupation details.

It has often been difficult to track down the names of individual Freemasons if there were no details of their lodge. Grand Lodge's main communication was with lodge secretaries and there was no reason for the organisation itself to create an alphabetical index of members. It will now be much easier for family historians, researchers and those writing their lodge histories to access this information.

Ancestry provides a pay-per-view or subscription service and free access will also be available in the Library and Museum. Further details are available on the Library and Museum's website and at www.ancestry.co.uk

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: A page from a lodge membership register; Queen Alexandra Lodge, No. 2932, installation banquet in 1903; William Shurmur's masonic career can now be traced online

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