



'It's about time'

In this edition, we see how documents have been used to study the history and development of language and how different students have used First World War documents.

Sir John Fielden High School visit

You may remember from our last newsletter that the planned visit from students studying History of Language for the English Language A-Level module, Language Change and Development, at Sir John Fielden High School in Beccles was postponed until the new year. In February 2013, after many months of preparation, we welcomed the students to The Archive Centre.

The students started their session with a timeline activity in which they had to put documents into chronological order. Not as easy as it sounds as not all documents have dates, while one document of 1781 was at first thought to be much later because it was partly printed. The pupils looked at letter shapes and punctuation to help them work out rough dates. Next, they looked at the inventory of Thomas Briggs, of Beccles, 1729. Pupils considered how his property gave clues to his job, before creating their own inventory for their bedroom, which included items with a monetary and emotional value. Pupils also had a palaeography session with one of the archivists from the Record Office to help them in reading old writing.



Finally, the students looked at a number of letters from the mid seventeenth century to 1944 and considered which showed the greatest evidence that English has become or is becoming standardized and codified and which gave the least evidence of this, before discussing why this may be. On their return to school, the pupils used the same documents to consider

gender representation and gender rôles or, alternatively, social class and power.



Students studying documents to consider the standardization of English.



NRO, MC 2043/2/92
Holt Park Camp 1915.

First World War Commemoration

In the last edition of the newsletter we asked schools to contact us if they are interested in taking part in a project to create part of our First World War exhibition. In January, we were contacted by Gresham's School History Department will meet during the summer term to discuss the possibility of working with their Sixth Form students on the project. The school lost 107 pupils and three staff during the Great War and are already planning their own major commemoration of the centenary. Look out for more details in forthcoming editions of the newsletter.

Education otherwise

In March 2013 we welcomed a group of home-educated children to The Archive Centre. The pupils, aged between nine and 16, are currently studying the First World War. The pupils had a short session on document handling, before discussing research skills. The main part of the workshop focused on letters and diary entries of soldiers, Frank Dunham and Philip Heweston. Pupils compared the two soldiers' experiences of joining up, training, arriving at the front and everyday life in the trenches. They found huge differences: Philip had joined the army as an officer in 1914 and was promoted to Captain in 1916. Frank joined as a regular soldier in 1916. Having considered how their differing

roles in the army shaped the two men's experiences, the pupils learnt what happened to each soldier later in the war. In particular, Heweston was captured during a battle and died from his injuries. Lastly, pupils used a diary of 18-year-old Judith Ferrier to discover the early forms of war tourism in 1920. As next year is the centenary of the First World War, we will aim to make these resources available to all schools across Norfolk. Further information will appear in later editions of the newsletter.



Students studying First World War letters and diaries.



NRO, MC 947/1
War Diary of Frank H. Dunham
of Norwich, 1916-7.

UEA pupils visit the Norfolk Sound Archive

In February 2013, the Sound Archivist at the Norfolk Record Office ran a workshop for a group of 15 UEA undergraduate students who are studying the module 'UEA Britain at War and other Modern Myths', as part of their course on History. The session included a tour of the sound archive and the rest of The Archive Centre and a chance to look at documents such as the memoirs of Frederick Charles Jude, 1939-46, the Norfolk County Council Civil Defence War Diary, April 1942, and an index of names of persons bombed out of their homes. Pupils had to choose one document from each bundle and consider who created the items, why they were arranged in that order, and the format. Before they left pupils also listened to two sound recordings relating to two individuals. One was Tom Eaton (1918-2010), talking about the issues surrounding his return to civilian life after the Second World War.



NRO, ETN 1/3/1/8
Tom Eaton, c. 1939



If you need 'It's about time' 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.

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