

WHO BUILT NORWICH CATHEDRAL?

Meet the famous man of
Norwich who 'got the ball
rolling' to build the great
Cathedral in our special city of
Norwich!



Omne bonum mane ad te, Salve mi nomen Herbertus de Losinga. Gratum mihi Pro Cantione.

I'm sorry, is there a problem? Can you not understand me?

Look, I'm speaking Latin, it's the language of the Church after all. No? Would you rather I spoke in English then?

What I said was; Good morning everyone, my name is Herbert de Losinga.

Welcome to my Cathedral, or should I say 'yours' because it is here for everyone in this great County of Norfolk!

I say my Cathedral, because as the first Bishop of Norwich I built it, well not me personally I mean, not on my own that is. I brought in some Benedictine Monks from Canterbury, who were very good stone masons and carpenters and together with some of the local people, we built it.

The masons wanted **limestone** because it was easier to carve, so I decided that we would have the very best limestone, even if that meant bringing it all the way from Normandy in France by boat.

But how did all this come about? I hear you ask.

It's a fascinating story. Would you like to hear it?

I was born in Exmes in Normandy, so no, I am not English I am **NORMAN!** Have you heard of the Normans? We conquered England in 1066. Here in Norwich we built the magnificent Castle.

I wanted to serve God and so I took my monk's vows at Fe'camp Abbey in Normandy. I became the Prior (head man) of that Abbey, the head monk. I was happy there, but the King of England, William Rufus then invited me to come to England as he wanted me to become the Abbot of Ramsey Abbey.

But I was ambitious, and I wanted more. Who would not want to serve God in a higher position?

An opportunity arose for me and although it was wrong to do so, I took it. You see, I wanted to be a Bishop, and I knew that only the Pope in Rome could make me a Bishop, and that meant making a long trip to Rome.

But there was another way...

The King didn't get on too well with the Pope and he did not think it was wrong for me to be made a Bishop in England. ***The fact that I paid him £1,900 helped of course*** and included in the deal was that my father Robert de Losinga also became a Bishop. Whoops, that was a bit naughty of me I know!

So, my father became the Bishop of Winchester and I became the Bishop of Thetford.

I knew though that I had done something very wrong in paying that money to get what I wanted and it began to worry me. In 1094 I set off on the long journey to Rome to visit Pope Urban. I had decided to resign from my job as Bishop as an 'act of contrition' (that means to show how sorry I was, in churchy terms) and ask for forgiveness from the Pope.

Something surprising happened on the way however. I met King William Rufus, who said, "Well sir, you are no longer a Bishop so now you don't have to go to Rome." I decided to go anyway, and when I met the Pope a strange thing happened.

I told him I would leave my job as Bishop and the Pope then forgave me, but, ***he then made me a Bishop again!!*** Can you believe it?

"There is one thing you must do Herbert" said the Pope.

"Move your Bishop's See (that's the churchy word for the area in which I was Bishop) from Thetford to Norwich because far more people live there".

This meant ***building a new Cathedral in Norwich***, and I was also asked to start this enormous task. "Build lots of new churches and religious houses (monasteries for monks and convents for nuns) in Norfolk" asked the Pope. You see, he wanted us Normans to make sure that there were lots of places of

prayer all over the place.

I was happy to do this and as a result St Margaret's Church in King's Lynn and St Nicholas' Church in Great Yarmouth were built. I also founded Norwich School in the city. I am so grateful for all those skilled masons and monks and others who built all these wonderful buildings. May God bless them all.

Sadly, some died building the Cathedral you know. It was hard work and they were often working at such a great height. It was easy to fall and alas, some did.

Everyone was happy, except for the King. He was having a disagreement with Bishop Anselm, the Archbishop of Canterbury over who had the greatest power, the King or the Pope. This meant I had to make another arduous journey to Rome in 1116 to represent the King, and I'm afraid that I never felt well after that. I think I got too tired and I became ill.

I do hope that you enjoy learning more about my Cathedral, it is a magnificent example of Norman architecture, even if I do say so myself. *Why not look at one of those 'new fangled' films on something called You tube? Take a look at the sheet you can download from here with all the details on it about said film!*

You can tell my Cathedral Norman of course by the wonderful, curved, semi-circular arches (very difficult to make I will have you know!). You can also see curved, rounded arches on the walls of Norwich Castle as well.

I am not a well man anymore, and I don't think that the Cathedral will be finished in my lifetime, but I will be buried here, *perhaps you will be able to find my tomb as part of that 'virtual tour thing on the film'? Hopefully it will be marked with a large black stone and some candles. I would like people to remember me. I do hope I am buried at the East end in the Presbytery, near my Bishop's Cathedra throne!*

Goodbye, or we say in Latin, *Vale!*

By Michael Baldwin, Cathedral Schools Department Team

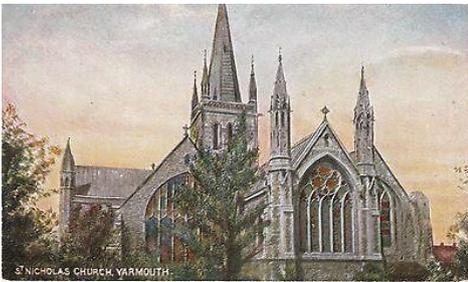
There is some more information and things to do on the next two pages.

Ramsey Abbey Gatehouse



**St Nicholas' Church
Great Yarmouth**

**Look at the arches
inside again!**



**This is an old painting of the
church when it had a spire.
Does it remind you of
Norwich Cathedral?**



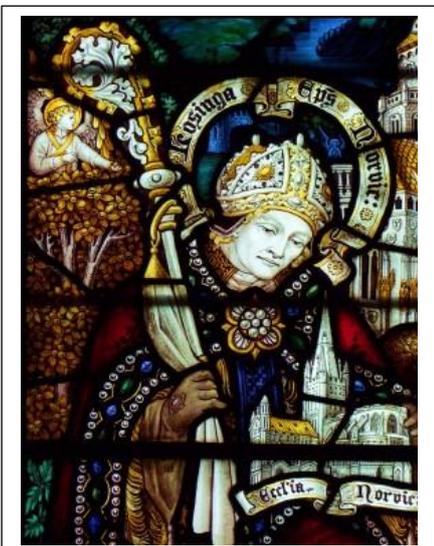
**St Margaret's
Church, King's
Lynn.**

**Look at the arches
inside. Can you tell
they are Norman?
How?**

**Do they remind
you of the arches
in the Cathedral?**



**Part of Norwich School which is next door to the
Cathedral showing the Chapel and crypt.**



Be creative...

1. Imagine you are a Benedictine monk who has been asked to come to Norwich to help build the Cathedral. **Describe what it is like working there with all the stone masons.** You can do more research about medieval building methods.

Imagine you are one of these monks. The Cathedral is half built but sadly, Bishop Herbert has died.

Write a poem or a story about how you are feeling as you walk around the Cathedral praying. Where will his tomb be placed? Tell us something about Herbert and what he did.



You could design a stained, glass window to remember Bishop Herbert. Here is a scribe, (writer monk) for you to colour in.

