

## **George Plunkett, Norwich photographer, 1913 - 2006**



**A popular photo of his: City Hall from the Castle battlements [2352] 1938-04-18**



**George aged 5 in 1918**

George Plunkett's parents never had a camera, so one of the earliest photos of him, dated 1918, was taken in a photographer's studio. This print of it is on one side of an unused postcard. There is a similar one of Ellen, his sister. Perhaps copies were sent to their father, who was then in the trenches of Ypres.



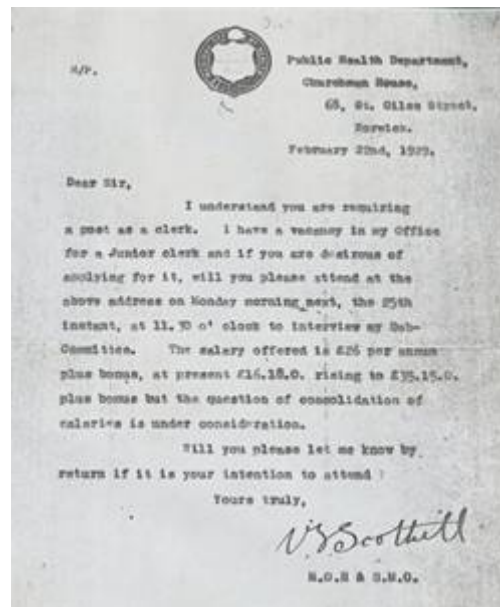
**49 Pembroke Road - home from 1916 to 1935**

Although the family rented a house in Dereham Road until 1916, George's earliest memories were from their next home, in Pembroke Road, near Park Lane. His parents were not wealthy. After the war, his father worked for the Norwich Box Company, a small factory in Fishergate, supplying the shoe industry. His mother collected insurance premiums door-to-door and took in dressmaking to supplement their income.



**City of Norwich School 1925**

George attended the Avenue Road School nearby, followed by the City of Norwich School. There, in July 1928, he passed the School Certificate, with credit in Art, French and Arithmetic. He remained at school for two more terms, until his sixteenth birthday, learning the practical skills of book-keeping and shorthand.



### George's job interview letter 1929

He then obtained employment with the local government in Norwich. As a junior clerk in the Public Health Department, his starting annual salary including bonus was 42 pounds 18 shillings. Promotions during the next decade raised that to 225 pounds, as clerk-in-charge of the School Medical Service.



Churchman House at St Giles and Bethel Streets [4448] 1956-06-13

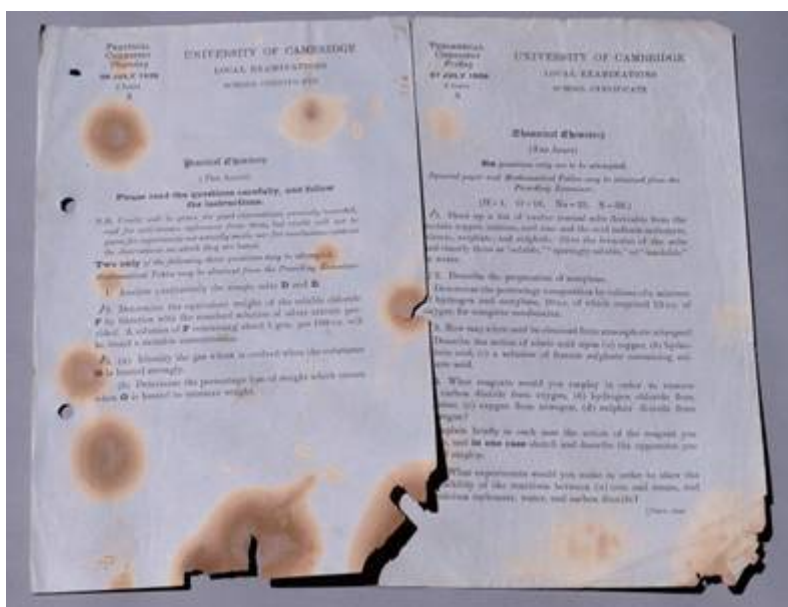
His office was in Churchman House, located at the junction of St Giles and Bethel Streets. It's undoubtedly one of the city's finest eighteenth century buildings.



George with box camera on holiday in Southend-on-Sea 1931

## The 1930s

He obtained his first camera, a free 'box' camera, in 1931 by sending in coupons from his father's *John Bull* magazine.



Chemistry exam test paper 1928

Even though did not excel in Chemistry at school, he enjoyed developing and printing his own films. With the aid of old black-out curtains he turned bathrooms and kitchens into a temporary dark-rooms.





**The old Fye Bridge [B074] 1931-08-03**

Around the city, one of the first things that George started systematically recording in 1931, with a series of 70 photographs, was the rebuilding of Fye Bridge. The narrow hundred-year-old cast iron bridge was worn out.



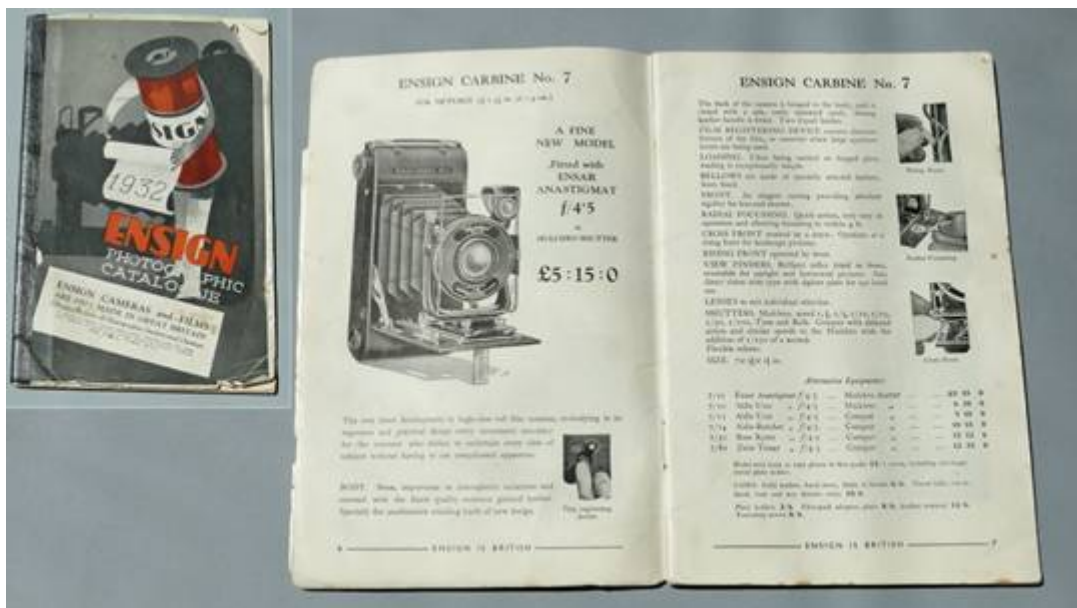
**Fye Bridge re-construction [B293] 1932-05-23**

To keep traffic flowing, including trams, one side was completely rebuilt and re-opened before the other side's demolition commenced.



**The new Fye Bridge [0619] 1935-08-06**

The new bridge, much wider and longer than before, was of reinforced concrete and brick, and looks much the same today.



**Ensign 1932 photographic catalogue**

Having found severe limitations with the box camera, the next year he obtained an Ensign Carbine No. 7 camera. At 5 pounds 15 shillings, plus a leather case for 10 shillings and sixpence, it was more than a month's pay.

Folded up and in its case, the camera is easily carried.



**Ensign Carbine No. 7 camera: front, back and case**

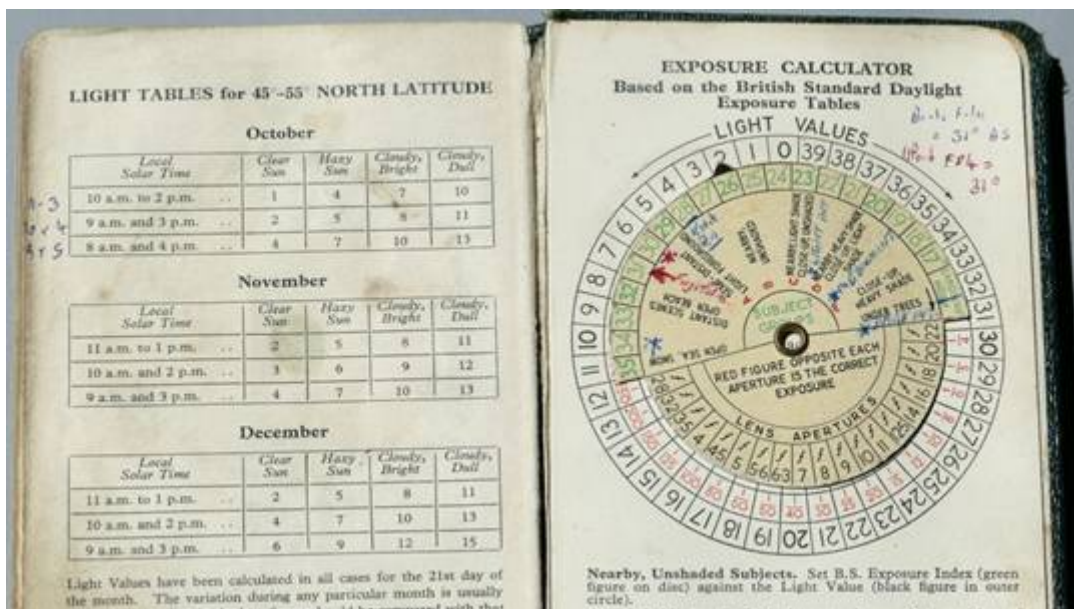
It's a medium-format camera, and takes a 120 (One Twenty) -type film, with eight images per roll. Each image is  $2\frac{1}{4}$  by  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

The camera's lens is mildly wide-angle. It has a 100 millimetre focal length, which is equivalent to a 44 millimetre lens on a 35 millimetre film camera.

Amazingly, more than a century after their introduction, the roll films are still manufactured. The black and white Ilford FP4 type, which he used latterly, now costs about 5 pounds a roll.







### Exposure calculator

Working without a light meter, every shot required judgement to avoid over- or under-exposure.

Instead he had an 'exposure calculator'. This consisted of look-up tables to give a numerical light value, dependent on the month, time of day and cloud condition. Knowing the speed of the film, the calculator's dial could then be rotated and suggested camera settings, read off.

For example, using Ilford FP4 film (speed = 31) on a cloudy bright noon in October (light value = 7), it would suggest settings from a hundredth-of-a-second at full aperture (f4.5), to quarter-of-a-second at the smallest aperture (f22).

Usually though, he just used settings based on experience. To an extent, he could make adjustments during the printing process, to correct under- or over-exposure.



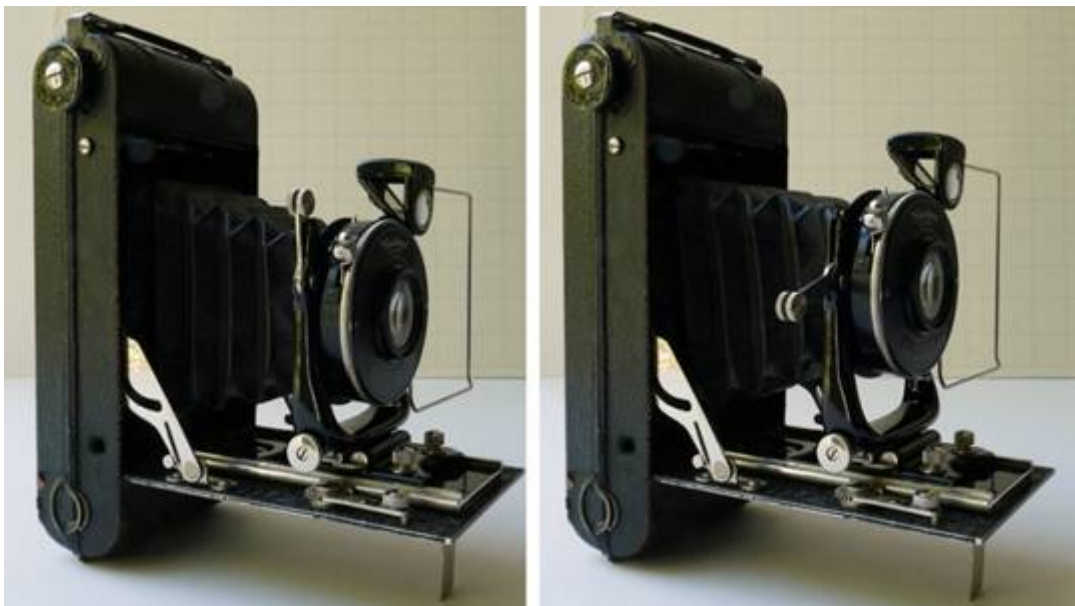
Camera focus ratchet and scale (from 3 feet to infinity)

Focussing the camera required estimating distances. For close subjects this was often done by counting paces. By moving a ratchet, the camera lens slides along a scale to bring into focus subjects at the indicated distance.



**Mirror viewfinder and wire frame viewfinder**

The camera has two types of viewfinder. He found the little optical viewfinder, made of lenses and mirrors, too small. He preferred to hold the camera up to his eye, and use the flip-out wire frame viewfinder.



**Camera shift lens (rising front) operated by ratchet**

An unusual feature of the camera is the ability to move the lens upwards parallel to the film, by up to 8 millimetres, in order to capture the tops of buildings without tipping the camera backwards. This facility can be used in both landscape and portrait orientations, and would nowadays be called a *shift lens*, though this camera maker called it a *rising and cross front*.



**Without and with use of shift lens (Fountain PH [1089] 1936-07-07)**

He did not want buildings to look as if they were falling over backwards, but tried to keep the vertical lines of a building, as parallel as possible.



**Dark corners defect of camera lens (Nestles [7354] 1996-07-07)**

In some pictures, particularly when the lens is shifted, its defects unfortunately become more noticeable, with a darkening and loss of sharpness in the top two corners.





### **Camera film winder and frame number window**

On the back of the camera is a round red frame-number window. After taking a photo, the film is wound on until the next number appears.

Forgetting to wind on and getting a double-exposure, or winding on twice and wasting a frame, occasionally happened.



### **Double exposure of his father playing chess in 1932**

A deliberate double-exposure seems to have been made only once: in a photo of George's father playing both sides in a chess game.





**Bartholomew's half-inch Norfolk map from 1931**

This map of Norfolk, dated 1931, was carried on photographic bike-rides outside the city. It has a 12-mile radius circle drawn on it to define his limit for an afternoon trip.



**Locomotive being turned in Wells-next-the-Sea [0676] 1935-08-13**

For some more distant destinations, the train was an option.



### Photo albums

The prints he made went into albums. Ultimately, there were five Norwich albums, four Norfolk albums, two Other Counties albums, and one Family album.

The Norfolk albums are arranged alphabetically by place name. But the Norwich albums are partly arranged by street name, and partly in one of 36 themes. So for example, all the City Wall photos are collected together as one theme, all the Medieval Church photos as another.

Surprisingly, he never owned a photographic enlarger: all the prints he made were contact-prints, i.e. made with the negative placed directly on top of a piece of photographic paper. They were thus the same size as the negative, 2¼ by 3¼ inches. As many as six contact-prints could thus be mounted on a single album page.

April 1936. 858-890													
Date of Exposure	Subject	No.	Film	Time	Light	Stop	Exp.	Ap.	Sh.	Temp.	Temp.	Exp.	Print Grade
19.4.1936	Old Houses, 154-158, Oak St.	858	Ilford	10.45	1/2	1/5	1/50	8.4	31	56	58	1/16	vg. Blue 1:1
do.	Old Houses, 125-127, Oak St.	859	do.	10.42	1/2	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	2/16	Blue 3
do.	Old, Oak Street (Old House)	860	do.	10.44	1/2	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	1/16	do. do.
do.	Old Terrace, Jenkins Lane (Old)	861	do.	10.46	1/2	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	1/16	do. do.
do.	Old House on North Side of Dog Yard, Oak St.	862	do.	10.48	1/2	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	1/16	do. do.
do.	Rem. of Houses on South Side of Dog Yard, Oak St.	863	do.	10.50	1/2	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	1/16	do. do.
do.	Old Houses, looking North, Jenkins Lane	864	do.	10.52	1/2	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	1/16	do. do.
do.	Old Houses, 59-67, St. Martin's Lane	865	do.	10.54	1/2	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	1/16	do. do.
do.	Old Houses, 69-53, St. Martin's Lane	866	do.	10.56	1/2	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	1/16	do. do.
do.	Georgian Houses, 9 & 11, St. Martin's Lane	867	do.	10.58	1/2	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	1/16	do. do.

### Photo register

George was always well organised, and good at keeping records. Details of every photo were written in a register, with columns for date and time, subject, photo number, film

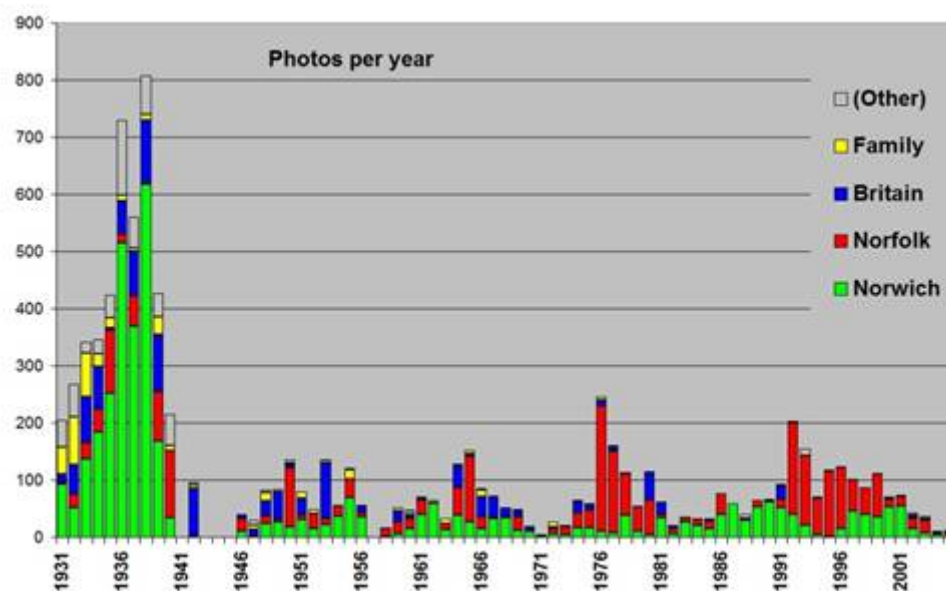
type, strength of light, exposure settings, and an indication of whether the resulting negative was OK, or not.

When he printed a photo, he noted the grade of printing-paper and length of light exposure that gave a satisfactory print, so that reprints could be made without further experimentation and wastage.

From the registers, it can be seen that sometimes he'd progress down a street filling a roll of film in just a few minutes.

Each image can be identified by its photo number, starting from 1. They would have been unique, except that in 1934 after reaching 813, he started from 1 again. To avoid confusion, photo numbers are now known as: [B001] to [B813], then [0001] to [7967].

The total number of exposures listed is 8780. Of those, 8141 still exist. The other negatives were either faulty, so discarded, or were given away, having been taken on commission entirely for someone else's benefit.



**Graph of photos taken, per year**

He was busiest taking pictures in the 1930s. Almost half of all his pictures were taken in that first decade. A steady but much reduced output followed during the subsequent 65 years.



**Waterloo Park [B556] 1933-04-30**

The theme of Public Parks and Gardens, particularly the new facilities at Eaton and Heigham Parks, was recorded in the early 1930s. Waterloo Park also was clearly popular with the public, photographed the day after its opening in 1933.

George tried to get clean pictures, without cars and people. Sometimes though, it was unavoidable. Their presence now often adds contemporary social interest.



**Ring Road roundabout at Dereham Rd [B652] 1933-08-05**

Another theme, of new Road Schemes, in the 1930s featured new sections of the Ring Road. The Dereham Road roundabout and Sweet Briar Road beyond were eerily quiet on a Saturday in August 1933.





**Tram track repairs St Giles Gates [B794] 1933-10-08**

Tram track maintenance was a spectator sport in October, even though the system ceased to operate just two years later.



**Bethel Street Fire Station girders [B784] 1933-10-05**

Meanwhile a new fire station was being built in Bethel Street. George photographed it 30 times during its construction.



**Bethel Street Fire Station [0278] 1934-08-26**

It was completed in 1934.



**Theatre Royal after fire [0135] 1934-06-24**

However, just before the new station's opening, the Fire Service was unfortunately unable to prevent a cataclysmic blaze from gutting the Theatre Royal nearby, leaving little except its frontage.



**Haymarket Picture House at night [0316] 1934-11-20**

During the winter of 1934-5, the city after dark was another theme of George's photography, particularly its cinemas. Unsurprisingly, his photos of cinemas, theatres and pubs have become the most popular.



**New Star pub in Quayside [0973] 1936-05-18**

The city reputedly had a pub for every day of the year. He photographed many, but it was the ancient wood-framed New Star Inn, in Quayside, more than any other building, that upset George when the council allowed its demolition in 1963.





**Claude Benton's White Lion Street shop [0378] 1935-02-27**

An example of a commission photo is this one of Claude Benton in his White Lion Street pharmacy, taken in 1935. Lit just by electric lights, it required a five second exposure.



**Silver Jubilee in Rampant Horse Street [0499] 1935-05-01**

That year was the Silver Jubilee of George V. Many streets, buildings and homes were festooned with flags and bunting, competing to be the best decorated.



**Mousehold Silver Jubilee beacon [0550] 1935-05-06**

Jubilee Beacons were set up around the country. Local Scouts built an impressively large one on St James Hill.



**Mousehold Silver Jubilee crowd [0540] 1935-05-06**

That evening, it brilliantly lit up crowds gathered in front of Britannia Barracks, as a tram edged down Gurney Road during this 30 second exposure.



**8 Somerleyton Street - home from 1935**

In that same year, George's family moved from Pembroke Road to Somerleyton Street, off Unthank Road.

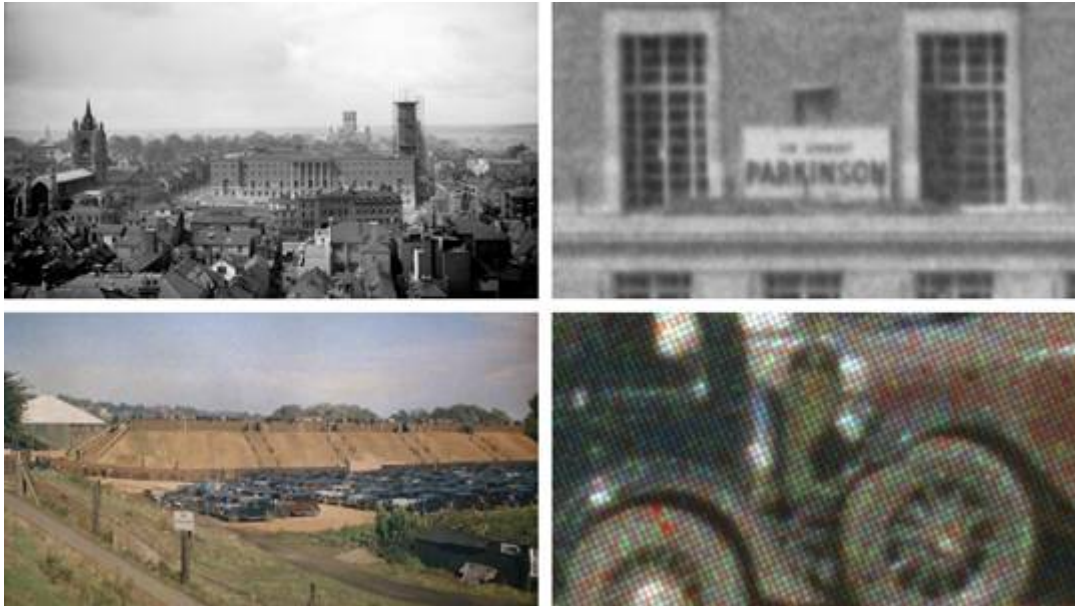
Although it looked quite a desirable property from the outside, by the mid 1960s, when his parents left it, it was cold and damp. With most of rest of the street, it was then flattened to make way for the 'Somerley' Care Home.



**George's parents and sister, Ellen in their Somerleyton Street garden, in 1935**

In 1935 though, his father's pride and joy was that house's garden, with grape-vines in its greenhouse. His parents and sister posed there, for this unique colour picture.

This was George's first use of the new Dufay colour transparency film. Each roll held 6 pictures, and had to be sent away for processing. The results returned, mounted in glass slides.



**Monochrome (City Hall from Castle battlements [2352] 1938-04-18) and  
Colour (Carrow Road [0759] 1935-09-14) and sections magnified 20x**

Although interesting, the colour film did not hold as much detail as black and white, revealing a lattice-like appearance when magnified. Also, as he could not make prints from them, he only shot nine rolls in colour.

1935.

4	7.	18	By Postage	23	..	1	..	..
		18	" Hospital Fund (the 2 <sup>nd</sup> week)	77.	..	4	..	..
		21	" Dufay Color Film.	137	..	3	4	..
		21	" Processing of Dufay Color Film.	137	..	1	6	..
		23	" M.Q. Developer (200) <i>Hyge &amp; Hyge Film</i>	137	..	2	4	..
		24	" Eastern Evening News.	96.	..	1	..	..
		24	" Overdue Library Book	96.	..	2	..	..
		25	" Postage.	97	..	..	..	..

**Cash book page in 1935**

George used the book-keeping skills he'd acquired at school to keep track of his personal finances. From his books for 1935, it can be seen that colour worked out at ten (old) pence per photo, which was five times dearer than black and white.



**Murrell's Yard in King Street [1265] 1936-08-13**

Slum clearance which started in the 1920s was responsible for the demolition of many old and dilapidated buildings and courtyards in the city centre. He tried to photograph those still standing in the 1930s.

With the aid of a map, he planned his *Photographic Survey* of the city centre. Going street by street, with priority on areas being transformed, he captured interesting, old and unique buildings.



**Tudor houses in Oak Street [0586] 1935-05-19**

Fortunately some were saved, so this attractive range of Tudor houses in Oak Street, not only survived the clearance, but also the blitz and the Inner Link Road that cut the street in half in the 1960s.





**Methodist chapel in Calvert Street [0825] 1936-03-24**

But being 150 years old and in good condition wouldn't save the Calvert Street Methodist chapel, when it was swept away for the new St Crispin's Road.



**Municipal buildings for Coronation [1557] 1937-05-09**

King George VI's 1937 coronation saw the city decorated once more. At the back of the Market Place near the Guildhall, were the smartly adorned Municipal Buildings. The following year, they would be knocked down after the council moved into the City Hall, built behind them.



**Cathedral spire view west [1832] 1937-08-06**

Perhaps for reasons of health and safety, the public now aren't allowed up the wooden ladders inside the Cathedral spire to take photos from its top-most opening, as George did, adding to his themed collection of panoramic views. In the distance on the left, he could see the City Hall taking shape.



**City Hall from the Castle battlements [2352] 1938-04-18**

Eight months later, and from the Castle battlements, the City Hall clock-tower nears completion.





**Market Place reconstruction [2522] 1938-07-06**

The old Municipal Buildings were then swept away, and the Market Place expanded and repaved.



**City Hall and empty Market Place [2848] 1938-11-05**

The City Hall was opened in October 1938.

That year was the peak of George's photographic hobby, shooting, developing and printing 100 rolls of film.



**New homes in Union Street [3010] 1939-05-25**

By the end of the decade, the clearance of slums and old housing-stock had transformed large areas, with new housing in its place as well as in new suburbs.



**Air raid shelter in Chapel Field [2956] 1939-04-11**

Even before the declaration of war in 1939, work had begun on the construction of public air-raid shelters around the city centre.



**Churches before their destruction**

George had been particularly busy photographing the city's churches in the 1930s. Perhaps just as well, as St Paul's, St Benedict's, St Julian's, St Bartholomew's in Heigham and St Michael at Thorn were all casualties of air raids. Only St Julian's was rebuilt.

His interest in churches was entirely architectural: he never went out of religious belief, despite several years of Sunday-schooling as a child.



**Sandbags around the Guildhall [3276] 1939-10-08**

Until he was called up, he continued his photography. Subjects now included air-raid shelters, and measures taken to protect windows against blast damage.



**Churchman House air raid shelter [3448] 1940-07-08**

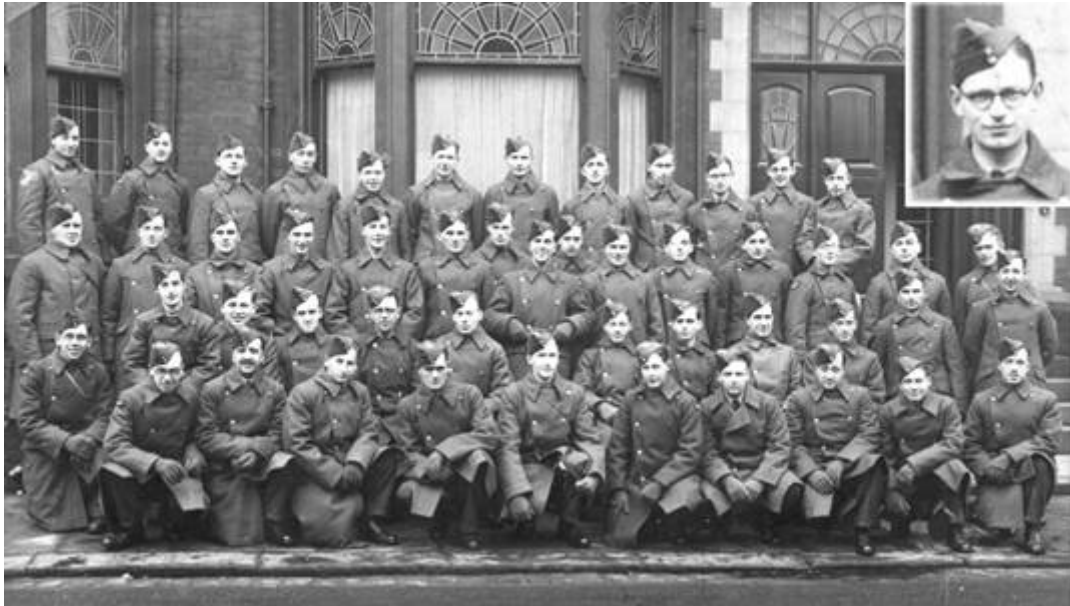
### **The 1940s.**

Mr Harmer, the caretaker of Churchman House, and his family, in the shelter dug in its back-garden, keeping still for a five-second exposure.



**St Mary's church in Haddiscoe [3471] 1940-07-10**

In July 1940, after taking this photo of Haddiscoe church with its boarded up window, a concerned local resident accused him of spying for the Germans, saying he could be photographing Caister Water Tower (10 miles away!)



**George of the RAF in Blackpool 1941**

In January 1941, he was called up by the RAF, and received initial training in Blackpool.



**Market Harborough Leicestershire [3549] 1942-03-29**

During the next two years at decoy sites around Leicester, his (rather unsuccessful) mission, with dummy lights and fires at night, was to mislead enemy planes into dropping their bombs harmlessly onto the countryside, rather than the city.

Having off-duty time during the day, Leicestershire's towns were a target for his camera in 1942.

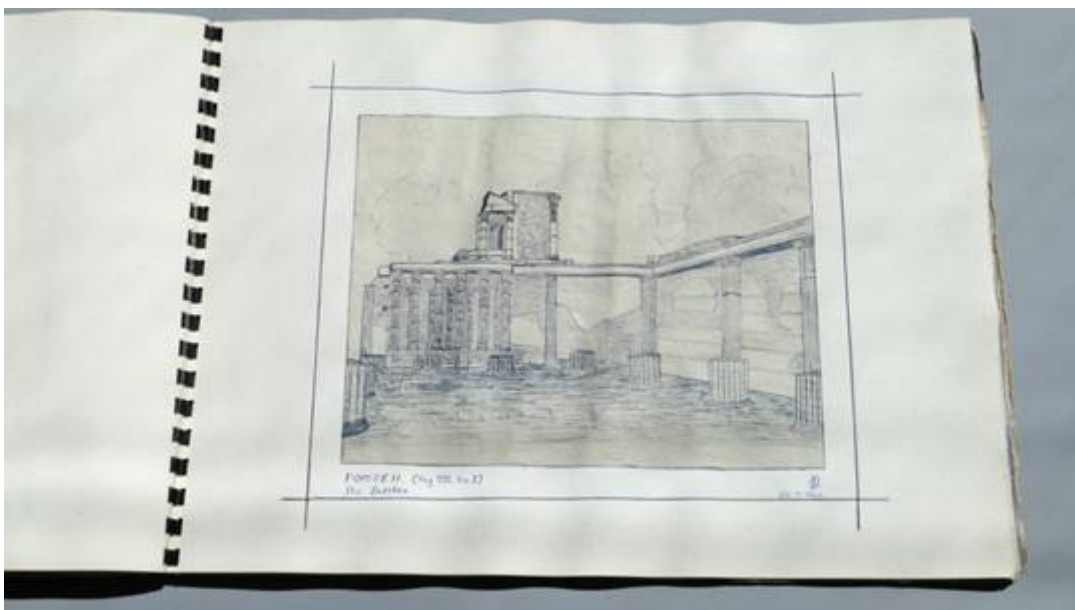




**George of the RAF in Naples 1945**

In January 1943, he was posted overseas to Algeria with 255 Night Fighter Squadron. This time he was lighting real air-strips, not dummies. As the battle-front advanced, the squadron moved through Tunisia and Sicily.

During 1944-5, after things had quietened down, he was stationed near Naples performing clerical duties.



**George's sketch of Pompeii 1945**

While there, in his time-off, he enjoyed visits to Pompeii, Herculaneum, Capri and Rome. Being without his camera, he used pen and paper to draw and write about the local architecture.



**Wife Margaret (1916-1990) on the Isle of Wight in 1947**

After being demobbed, he returned to Norwich, resuming work at the Health Department in Churchman House, and there met Margaret, a qualified nurse, midwife, and health visitor.



**23 Margetson Avenue - home from 1947 to 1957**

They married in 1947, set up home in Thorpe St Andrew, and had two sons. Busier at work and at home, he averaged only 80 photos a year in the next decade.



**Royal Oak pub in Oak Street [2687] 1938-08-03**

### **The 1950s.**

During the 1950s he traced his ancestry back to the 1790s in St Martin at Oak, Norwich, and in Wymondham prior to that. He discovered that many of his ancestors had worked in the weaving and shoe industries, and his great-great-grandfather, Robert Carpenter, had run the Royal Oak pub in Oak Street, in the 1830s.



**Garsett House in Princes Street [4449] 1956-07-08**

Garsett House, also known as Armada House, overlooks St Andrew's Plain. Its first floor housed the library of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society. He was a member from 1935, wrote articles for its annual publication, and was its honorary librarian for three decades, enjoying many hours amongst its bookshelves and card indexes.



**Curls in Orford Place construction [4277] 1954-08-25**

In 1954 the former Debenhams department store, formerly Curls, was built on a site that had been destroyed by air raids.



**Fire Service display at City Hall [4313] 1955-06-23**

The Civic Week of 1955 saw the Fire Service swing into action, demonstrating their ability to drive round the corner from Bethel Street to the City Hall: mounting the pavement and demolishing a lamp-post in the process.



**253 College Road - home from 1957 to 1967**

In 1957 the family moved to a four bedroom terraced house in College Road, off Earlham Road. At least cycling home from work now didn't involve the ascent of Ketts Hill.



**Library in Bethel Street construction [4715] 1962-09-09**

In the 1950s he sold enlarged prints of over 600 photos to the Norwich Public Library, shortly before it relocated to Bethel Street. Although lost in the library fire of 1994, the prints were easily replaced, as he had wisely kept the negatives.





**Bawburgh Hall before demolition [4567] 1960-08-01**

### **The 1960s.**

Although a good proportion of the buildings he photographed in Norwich haven't survived, there have also been a few losses around the county.

A summer afternoon's cycle-ride captured this picture of the dilapidated Bawburgh Hall, built 1634, and demolished 1963.



**Horstead watermill before fire [3369] 1940-04-07**

Horstead watermill, was another loss in 1963, after catching fire.



**City wall and tower in Queens Road [4663] 1962-05-06**

Meanwhile, in the city, the construction of the Inner Link Road in the 1960s revealed long stretches of the City Wall, as shabby old adjoining buildings were demolished. How and whether to preserve the remaining pieces of wall, had vexed the city council since before WW1.



**Drill Hall turret in city wall tower [B096] 1931**

The Drill Hall near St Giles' Gates was built in 1866, and incorporated one of the City Wall's semicircular towers.



**Drill Hall turret demolition [4731] 1963-07-14**

Demolished for the Inner Link Road, the tower's site is now marked by semicircle of cobbles in the Chapel Field Road roundabout.

George was particularly annoyed that a long stretch of wall, several feet high, on Grapes Hill, received the same treatment, despite it not being particularly close to the widened carriageway.



**St Stephens south side before demolition [4611] 1961-06-18**

Nearby, work continued in the 1960s, widening St Stephen's Street. The entire south side was cleared away. Instead of the tiny Elmo's shop, there would be a massive new Key Markets supermarket at the top of the road.



**St John Maddermarket [4344] 1955-07-30 and New Mills [4640] 1961-08-27**

It was around then that George's sons, Philip and Jonathan, photographed here, would try to get in the frame, perhaps making up for the scarcity of family photos.



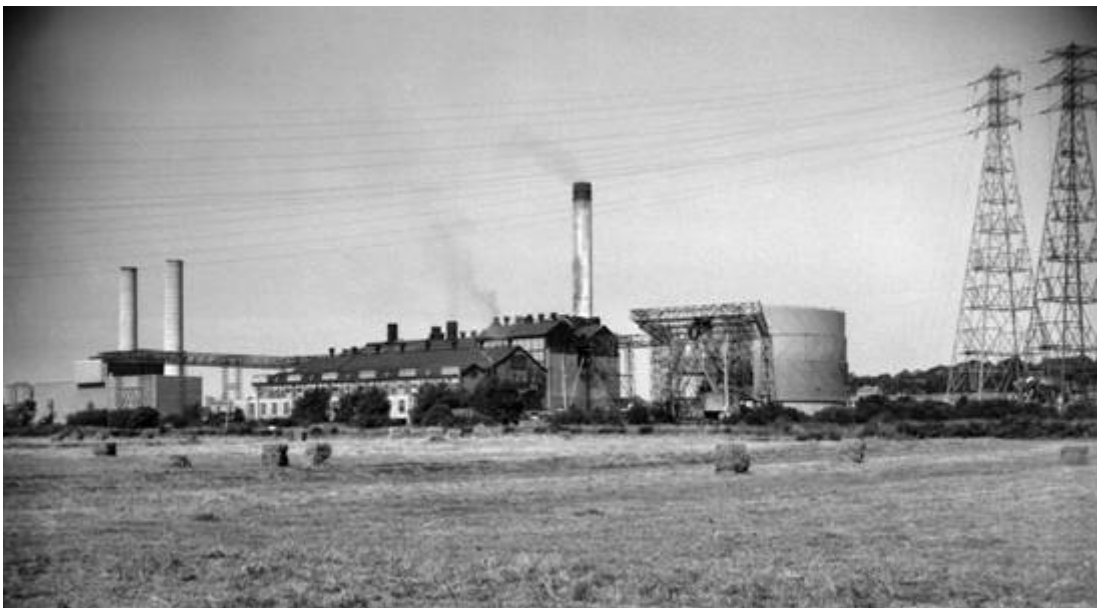
**The Ensign Optiscope Sociable No. 5 slide projector and 3¼ inch square glass slides**

As well as having a projector for the colour slides, George copied some of his black and white pictures to glass slides. He was invited to give illustrated talks about local history a few times in the 1950s and 60s. On command, the projector operator, usually a family member, would insert the next slide at the top and catch the previous hot one being ejected from the side.



**Old Gas Works near the Cathedral [4904] 1965-05-01**

From a bygone age, but still there in the 1960s, the Gas Works in Bishopgate. Its proximity to the Cathedral doubtless caused considerable damage to its stonework.



**Old Power Station near Whitlingham [5080] 1966-08-20**

Another industrial relic photographed in the 1960s, is the old Power Station. On open days, they gave rides on the coal-cranes over the river.



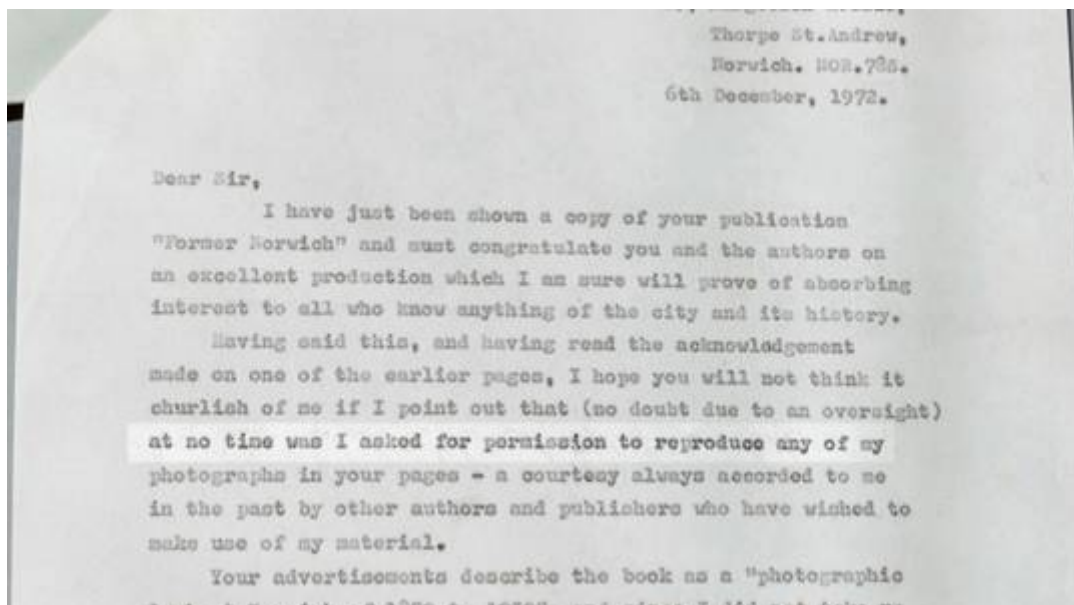


**29 Margetson Avenue - home from 1967**

With more of the houses around Earlham Road being divided into flats and bedsits for noisy students from the new UEA, the family decided in 1967 to move back to Thorpe St Andrew. Their new home, just three doors away from the one they'd left 10 years earlier, had the luxury of central heating, albeit with a solid-fuel boiler.

### **The 1970s.**

Local authors who perhaps had found the prints of his photos in the public library began asking permission to use them, and George was always pleased to help. However, in 1972 he was particularly annoyed to discover six of them published in a book without any such request.



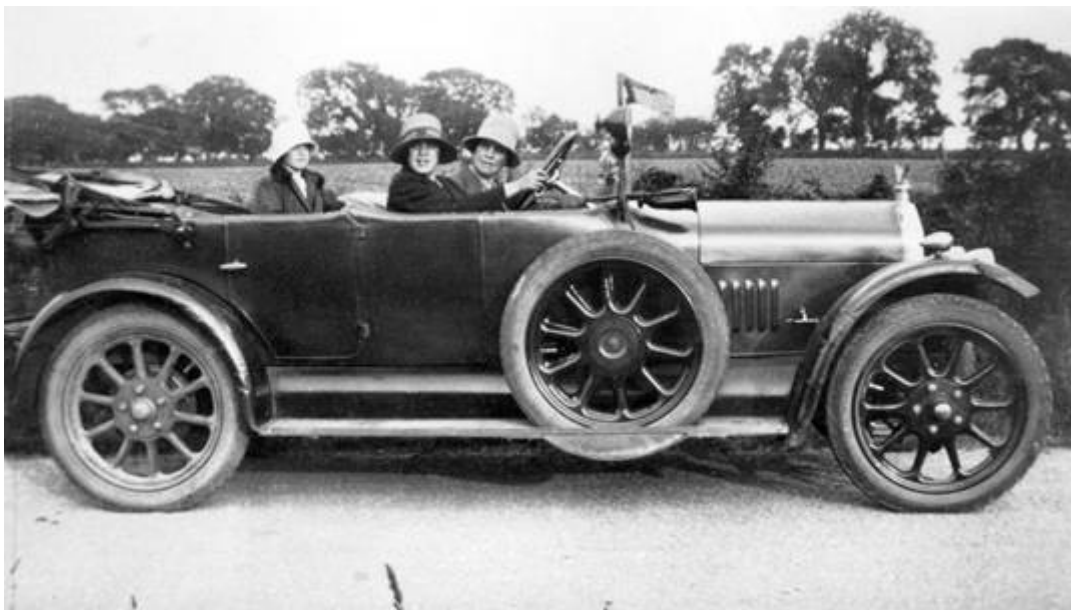
**Letter to publisher of Former Norwich in 1972**

He politely pointed out the omission in a letter to the publisher, and an apology was promptly received from one of the two authors, blaming the other for the oversight.



**Norwich Union offices in Surrey St [4711] 1962-09-07**

After 44 years in the same building, Churchman House, George finally decided to have a change. In 1973 on reaching 60, he retired from local government and joined Norwich Union, working in the insurer's various city centre offices for five years, until state-retirement age.



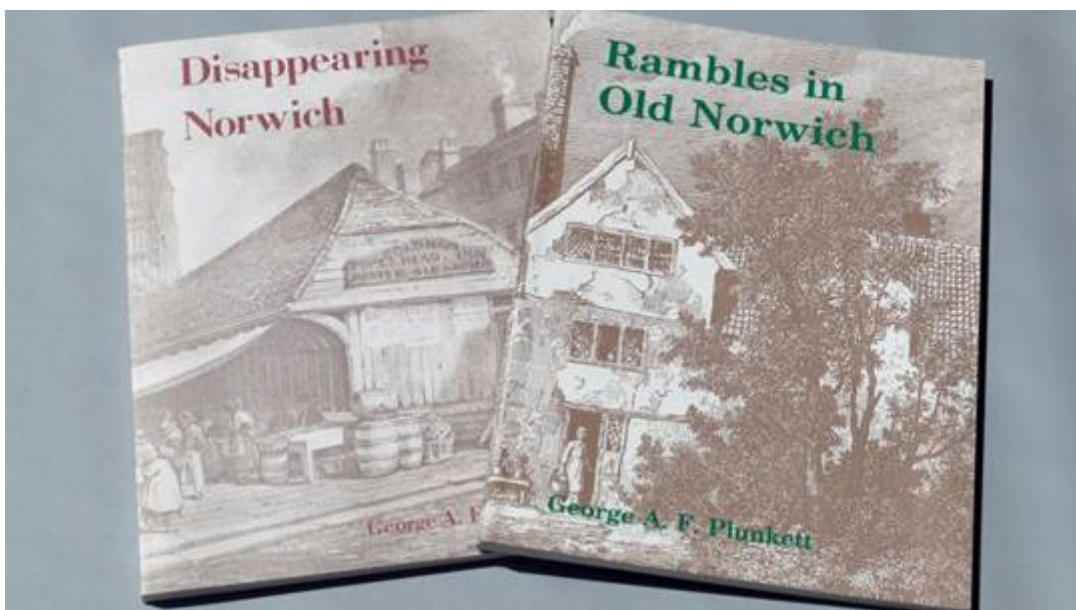
**Margaret aged 12 at the wheel of her parents' car in 1929**

George never had a driving licence. But his wife had acquired her licence before driving tests were introduced in 1935.



**Margaret at the wheel aged 59 in 1976**

However, they didn't own a car until 1976: bikes and buses having been their main modes of transport. Now, parts of Norfolk that hadn't been reached before could be photographed.



**George's two books in 1987 and 1990**

### **The 1980s.**

Having seen others' books, he decided in the 1980s to have a go writing one himself, to be accompanied by his own photos.

In the days before self-publishing, it required some effort to find a publisher willing to print a book, even though the author would receive only a small percentage royalty. But having signed up with one, he became somewhat despondent while being kept waiting two years for it to appear in print.

In 1987 George's first book *Disappearing Norwich* was finally published, illustrated by his photographs of sights and scenes that had subsequently been lost. It sold over 5000 copies.

Three years later, *Rambles in Old Norwich* joined it, giving the history of some of the city's lesser-known buildings. Disappointingly, it only sold a quarter as many copies.



**Newspaper cuttings book (the last of 64 volumes) and index cards (A and B)**

From the 1930s, George had been carefully scouring the local daily newspapers, the Eastern Evening News and Eastern Daily Press, for articles relating to the city's history or development. These were duly cut out and kept. Together with a carefully maintained card-index, they formed a convenient source of information to draw upon for his books.

He also contributed to the newspapers himself for many years: occasionally writing letters, supplying photos and information.



**Anglia Square Odeon [6529] 1989-03-20**

Of all his photos, some were taken of brand new buildings, while others were of those just prior to demolition.

Although Anglia Square and the new Odeon cinema had opened nearly 20 years



previously, George didn't bring himself to photograph the development until 1989.

Perhaps he was just wishing for the area to be redeveloped, again.



**Castle Mall excavations [6612] 1990-06-16**

### **The 1990s.**

The construction of the Castle Mall in 1990 gave a great opportunity for archaeologists to explore the site in depth. George didn't volunteer to do any of the digging himself. Although he was a member of the local archaeological society, his interests were definitely more towards the above-ground, than the below.



**Former watermill in Hingham [7656] 1999-07-16**

In the run-up to the millennium, car trips with his sons around the county enabled George to finish visiting its 600-plus parish churches, and a good number of its surviving and former water-mills and windmills.





**First website containing photo album pages in 2000**

## **The 21st Century.**

Pages from George's Norwich photo albums were scanned and put online in 2000.

From the outset, the website generated a steady stream of kind comments from online visitors, and George was always glad to help with enquiries, pleased that the output of his hobby could be appreciated.

Starting in 2003, all his negatives were scanned in order to preserve the images in as much detail as possible. A little digital touching up was done to remove any obvious dust and scratches. The total time expended was about 3000 hours.



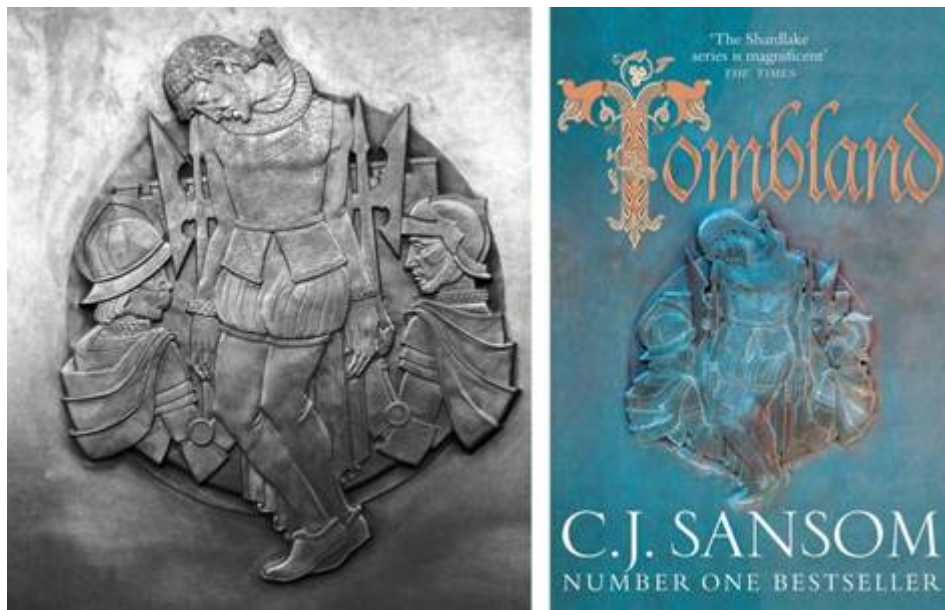
**George aged 93 in 2006 and Norfolk Naval Pillar, Great Yarmouth [7967] 2005-10-05**

The last photo George took was of the Norfolk Naval Pillar, in Great Yarmouth, after its renovation in 2005. He had used the same camera for 74 years. That image together with all the others he took in the city and county are online.



### **More than 100 books use his photos**

During the first 20 years of the website's operation, over 1600 people emailed in, with many requesting permission to use photographs in books, magazines, displays, websites, social media or videos.



### **City Hall door [2420] 1938-05-23 and Tombland cover**

Most such books are on local history, but some are fiction. The 2018 best-seller *Tombland* by C J Sansom uses a photo of the Robert Kett plaque on the City Hall's bronze doors that George took when they were new in 1938. The publishers digitally aged the bronze, adding a green patina for the book-cover.



**Pull's Ferry information board in 2010**

The keen-eyed may spot the odd photo of his on information boards around the city.



**Great British Railway Journeys credits in 2020**

Or find his name in end credits on TV.





**The Garnet pub [1359] 1936-08-30 and [0153] 1934-07-05**

Requests to display photos have come from shops, cafes, offices, museums, schools, hospitals and the best pubs.



**City Hall from the Castle battlements [2352] 1938-04-18**

And finally: this popular view, from the Castle battlements shows the half-finished City Hall in 1938. It's appeared in books, calendars, newspapers and an episode of Michael Portillo's *Great British Railway Journeys*. It's exhibited in the *Garnet*, a very popular city-centre pub, and in 2018, a particularly large print of it was installed in the Bethel Street Police Station.

Please look out for it, if you should ever find yourself inside.

Jonathan Plunkett, 2022. [www.georgeplunkett.co.uk](http://www.georgeplunkett.co.uk)