

Freeman.

Freeman. A person in the possession and enjoyment of all the civil and political rights accorded to the people under a free government.

In the Roman law, it denoted one who was either born free or emancipated, and was the opposite of "slave." In feudal law, it designated an allodial proprietor, as distinguished from a vassal or feudal tenant. (And so in Pennsylvania colonial law.) In old English law, the word described a freeholder or tenant by free services; one who was not a villein. The term later referred to a member of a city or borough having the right of suffrage, or a member of any municipal corporation invested with full civic rights.

Free men. Before the Norman Conquest, a free man might be a man of small estate dependent on a lord. Every man, not himself a lord, was bound to have a lord or be treated as unworthy of a free man's right. Among free men there was a difference in their estimation for *Wergild*. See *Homo liber*.

Homo liber /hówmow láybər/. A free man; a freeman lawfully competent to act as juror. An allodial proprietor, as distinguished from a vassal or feudatory. This was the sense of the term in the laws of the barbarous nations of Europe.

Freeman's roll. A list of persons admitted as burgesses or freemen for the purposes of the rights reserved by the municipal corporation act. Distinguished from the Burgess Roll. The term was used, in early colonial history, in some of the American colonies.