

## Useful Family History websites (May 2022)

The following websites are listed in the order in which they appear in the course An Introduction to Family History on the Internet, not necessarily in their order of importance or value. A few other relevant links have been added.

### M2 Getting Started

**Your-Family-History** <https://www.your-family-history.com/>

Discover how your ancestors earned their living and moved around the country. Find out more about your family history by using the Free Search box. Choose a year on the tab at the top, to see how the distribution of your family name varied over the years.

### Where to find records - Free sites

**Family Search** <https://www.familysearch.org/en/>

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) Wide range of records, a major record site. Set up a free login for yourself.

Recently updated and expanded. (Free)

England & Wales Census 1841-1911

Many other records eg BMD, but some incomplete.

### IGI Batch Numbers for the British Isles and North America

[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/IGI\\_Batch\\_Numbers\\_for\\_the\\_British\\_Isles\\_and\\_North\\_America](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/IGI_Batch_Numbers_for_the_British_Isles_and_North_America)

I.G.I. Search is another way to research names. This article explains that there are two valuable websites that list extracted records by locality and by batch number, as follows.

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~hughwallis/IGIBatchNumbers.htm>

One is by Hugh Wallis [hosted by RootsWeb]. He organized the batch numbers for each country, county, city and parish (British Isles and North America), so that you can easily see which batches and time periods are available for the area you are researching.

<http://www.archersoftware.co.uk/jgi/index.htm>

Archer Software has done the same thing but, has included some batches that were not on the Hugh Wallis website.

**FreeBMD** <https://www.freebmd.org.uk/>

Transcribed BMD indexes, very good coverage 1837-2000, possibly later

Go to Search. Select the Type of search you want, eg All Types, Births, Marriages, Deaths.

Record Year, Quarter, District, Book Number & Page Number to order copies.

**UKBMD** <https://www.ukbmd.org.uk/index.php>

UKBMD has lots of links, some to free sites:

**The National Archives** [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

The National Archives has thousands of records, only a small fraction digitised and put on websites. Original military, Customs & Excise records, 13-18<sup>th</sup> century manuscripts, bills, only some of which can be downloaded for a fee. Free to see in person at Kew.

Click on Explore our Records > Looking for a person?

The research signposts listed can help you uncover a person's history. Each guide tells you where you can find the relevant records, and how they can be accessed.

### Where to find records – paid sites

**Ancestry uk:** <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/>

You will need to register and pay to gain access.

Click search. UK & Ireland map. England. View all 68 B M D

UK Census Collection 1841-1911. US Federal and Canadian Censuses.

Select database eg England & Wales Free B M D index 1837-1983

Search complete England & Wales BMD index 1984-2005

Subscription site with 14 day free trial. DNA testing for family history research offered.

Note: Ancestry are currently available free online through Hertfordshire libraries: Get this working if you can.

**FindMyPast:** <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/>

Index of Births, Marriages and deaths 1837-2006. 1841-1911 census records. Parish records from 1538. Travel & migration records. Military records.

Use this site to find living relatives. Subscription site with 14 day trial.

**My Heritage:** <https://www.myheritage.com/login>

12.7 billion historical records, including England & Wales Census 1841-1911, 1939 Register, Birth, Marriage & Death Records 1837-2005. Military Records. Various Parish Records etc.

Subscription site but no free trial. DNA testing for family history research offered.

**The Genealogist:** <https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/>

Claims to be the Leading British Genealogy Research Website, Awarded Best BMD and Census. Census transcripts & Images 1841 to 1911.

Parish Records Non-Conformist & Non-Parochial records.

WW1, WW2, Casualty Lists, PoWs & more.

Three subscription packages offered, no free trial. DNA testing for family history research offered.

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### M3 Free Census Returns Online

**Family Search** [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

Free web site provided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who have a long history of developing family research. It contains a vast amount of information some of which may need to be validated via other sources. Log into Family Search and set up an account. You may need access to your email or phone to validate it.

**FreeCEN** [www.freecen.org.uk](http://www.freecen.org.uk)

FreeCEN, compiled by volunteers, provides free internet searches of the 19th century UK census returns. The interface is changing for better access through phones and tablets. Partial coverage from 1841 to 1891 Censuses: around 77% for 1841 & 1851 dropping to 37% for 1891. Variable coverage so you may be disappointed! Click on 'Transcriptions' to see how complete your area and data is. Can be useful as a cross-check.

### Paid for Census Returns Online

**Ancestry.co.uk** [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)

1841 to 1911 Censuses: probably the largest amount of information of any site. Subscription site.

Note: Free access to the site is available to Library ticket holders in Herts. Ask for Ancestry Library edition in any Library.

### Other subscription sites

**Find My Past** [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk)

Awarded BMD and Census site. Subscription packages: Starter, Plus (Includes 1939 Register) and Pro (includes British Newspaper Collection). Free 14 day trial – click on **Start free trial**, top right corner of home page.

**The Genealogist** [www.thegenealogist.co.uk](http://www.thegenealogist.co.uk)

Claims to be The Leading British Genealogy Research Website. Starter, Gold and Diamond subscription packages. Free 14 day trial – scroll to the bottom of the home page to find the offer.

**Genes Reunited** (Pay per view) [www.genesreunited.co.uk/home/index](http://www.genesreunited.co.uk/home/index)

Claims to be the best site for locating relatives.

Standard Subscription:

View trees of over 13 million Genes Reunited members

Contact members who share your ancestors to discover your family history.

Well worth signing up for.

Platinum Subscription - The above features plus:

Census Records 1841-1901; Birth, Marriage & Deaths 1837-2004 (England & Wales)

British Military Records from World War I and II

The complete 1911 census for England and Wales.

**Stories: what affects people and families**

Family History includes all the stories, activities people took part in, social background of the time, family tales, stories, photographs.

**How to Write Your Family History**

<https://www.thoughtco.com/steps-to-writing-your-family-history-1422877>

**Examples of what other people write up**

- Eloped with the vicar:  
<https://adamthwaite.one-name.net/thos-garretts-elopement/4531776525.htm>
- Australian, a WW2 POW in Burma:  
<https://flack.one-name.net/noteworthy/tfnormancharlesflack1920.php>
- Tobacco merchant:  
<https://heenan.one-name.net/biographies/james-heenan-tobacconist-to-londons-elite/>
- Blacksmith's tale:  
<https://tickle.one-name.net/the-blacksmiths-children/>

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**M4 Finding BMD Records****FreeBMD** [www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)

Years 1837-1992 (100% to 1984)

Select Search > select Type of search wanted

All Types, Births, Deaths, Marriages

Enter Surname only and click Find; select the most likely result. If too many results click the back arrow or Revise Query and enter either First name or Dates.

Still too many results? Enter either District or County (note you cannot enter district & county together). Save record and note: **District, Volume and Page**

**Ancestry.co.uk** [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)

Years 1837-2006

Select Search > Birth, Marriage & Death

Enter First & Last Name, Year and Location into the boxes for Birth, Marriage or Death

Click on Search. Select the most likely result

Save record and note the following:

- District
- Volume
- Page

**GRO website for Births & Deaths**

Log on to <https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/login.asp> (Search: gro.gov.uk)

This is free to search: Set up an account further down the page (note your login and password)

At RHS, click on Frequently Asked Questions and see what is online (currently births 1837-current year & 1984-current year; deaths 1837-1957 & 1984-current year) and prices of pdfs.

**Note:** Marriages are not indexed yet.

## Ordering Certificates

Certificates have to be ordered online

**General Register Office** <https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/login.asp>

Find the district, volume & page no first

Select eg Birth Certificate (England & Wales)

Is the GRO Reference Info known? Yes (see above)

Enter Year in which the event was registered

Confirm your details

Enter all required details

Submit and complete payment

Cost: £11 per paper certificate or £7 pdf info only

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## M5 Parish Records

Free transcription of Parish Records may be found on Family Search

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/location/1986340?region=England>

Images are obtainable on paid sites Ancestry, FindMyPast etc

### Bishops Transcripts

These are contemporary copies of the Parish Registers that had to be submitted by the church to the Bishop or Archdeacon within one month of Easter each year. Many are viewable through local council Record Offices.

There are lots of locally-held Parish indexes which are not in the big websites. Check out what is available for the area you are searching. Many county record offices hold Parish records and other local information that is of value to family historians: HALS (Hertfordshire Local Archives) has many for Hertfordshire.

### Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS)

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/libraries-and-archives/hertfordshire-archives-and-local-studies/hertfordshire-archives-and-local-studies.aspx>

Click **Family history** > **Search our family history records** to search **Hertfordshire Names Online**. If you are looking for specific information select it under **Advanced search**, eg **Marriages**.

## Monumental Inscriptions (MIs)

Many people were buried without headstones, but the headstones can be gold-dust. National Burial Index (in FMP) has recorded many MIs recorded by local FH Socs, and information may be obtained from them, eg by purchasing a CD-ROM. Many plaques in crematoria are included

Big providers are:

**BillionGraves** <https://billiongraves.com/>

BillionGraves is the world's largest resource for searchable GPS cemetery data, and is growing bigger and better every day. Free registration, free to search.

**Find a Grave** <https://www.findagrave.com/>

At Find a Grave you'll find details about cemeteries and individual memorials for many people buried in those cemeteries. Memorials generally include birth, death and burial information and may include pictures, biographies, family information. Free registration, free to search, linked through Ancestry.

**Deceased Online** <https://www.deceasedonline.com/>

Deceased Online is the central database for UK burials and cremations. Search registers by Country, Region, County, Burial Authority or Crematorium free of charge. Register as a Deceased Online user: free index only, pay per view.

**CWGC** <https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/>

Commonwealth War Graves Commission helps you find War Dead. You can explore the records of the 1.7 million Commonwealth men and women that they commemorate, and find information about the military cemetery where they are buried. **See the entry under Module 8.**

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## M7 Family Tree software

Many programs exist for storing all your family history information which run on Windows laptops, and some on Macbooks. The programs listed in this section predominantly run on PCs (including when run from a memory stick, and some on Macs, however for Macs go to **Family Tree Software for Mac** (below) for recommended programs. Likewise, go to **Genealogy Apps** (below) to use a portable device such as an iPhone/ iPad or Android Tablet/Smart Phone.

**Note:** These marked \* have free downloads with limited functionality so you can try and keep them. You will be able to transfer your data to a new package by Exporting a GEDCOM file from one program and Importing that GEDCOM file to your new program.

**Family Historian 7** <https://www.family-historian.co.uk/> £59.95 download

Best family tree software 2021. *Family Historian 6 (30 day free trial)*

**Family Tree Maker 2019** <https://www.mackiev.com/ftm/> £79.95 download Windows & Mac

**Rootsmagic 8\*** <https://rootsmagic.co.uk/> Basic £29.95, Standard £39.95, Platinum £49.95, RootsMagic 8 can be run off a flash drive so you can carry your research in your pocket.

**RootsMagic 8 Essentials** <https://rootsmagic.co.uk/try-rootsmagic-essentials/>. Free, contains RootsMagic core features including running off a flash drive.

**RootsMagic App** is available for Apple iPad and Amazon Fire, but not for Android.

**Legacy 9\*** <https://legacyfamilytree.com/> Deluxe \$34.95. Standard (free) limited features.

**Other packages worth considering** include:

**Family Tree Heritage Gold 16** <http://www.familytreeheritage.biz/> £40.82 download.

**Family Tree Builder\*** <https://www.myheritage.com/family-tree-builder> Free software, but subscription packages Premium, Premium Plus and Complete (billed annually): Complete gives access to 12.6 billion historical records, BMD etc.

Sync with free mobile app (Android tablet and iPad) to update your family tree on the go.

**Gramps 5.1.5** <http://gramps-project.org>

This is a more advanced package which will run on a PC, or Mac. It is also available in a version that will run on PortableApps, a suit of programs that will run from a memory stick plugged into a PC. you can enter data during the course and then run it on a Windows computer at home.

## Software reviews for PCs

**Hobby Help** (April 2022) <https://hobbyhelp.com/genealogy/best-genealogy-software/>

**Smarter Hobby** (Jan 2022) <https://www.smarterhobby.com/genealogy/best-genealogy-software/>

**The Genealogy Guide** <https://thegenealogyguide.com/genealogy-software>

**Family History Daily**

<https://familyhistorydaily.com/genealogy-help-and-how-to/best-family-tree-software/>

Looking for a New Family Tree Program? A Detailed Guide to the Top 6 Choices

## Family Tree Software for Mac

The following software was listed in **8 Best Family Tree Software For Mac of 2022** <https://machow2.com/best-family-tree-software-mac/> to whom copyright is acknowledged.

**MacFamilyTree 10** <http://www.syniumsoftware.com/macfamilytree> - built only for Macs

**Family Tree Maker 2019** <http://www.mackiev.com/ftm/index.html> -still one of the best

**RootsMagic 8** <https://www.rootsmagic.com/mac> - extremely powerful and popular with professional genealogists

**Heredis 22** <https://www.heredis.com/en> - huge online database, powerful search

**GEDitCOM II** <http://www.geditcom.com/index.html> – basic and quite dated software

**iFamily for Mac** <https://www.ifamilyformac.com> – dated but one of the cheapest family tree software on Mac

**Gramps 5.1.5** <https://gramps-project.org/blog> – well respected free family tree software for Mac and PC

**Reunion 13 for Mac** <http://www.leisterpro.com> - works on Mac, iPhone & iPad. Sync mobile app

**ReunionTouch** <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/reuniontouch/id911358745>

## Genealogy Apps

The use of a portable device such as an iPhone/ iPad or Android Tablet/Smart Phone can greatly enhance your family history research, as you can use them to directly record information, pictures and stories from relatives, and also record that information directly into your family tree. You can make an instant record of information you find at a record office or National Archive.

**FamilySearch Mobile Apps** <https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/mobile/> (*Not updated since 2017*)

- **FamilySearch Family Tree** - [iPhone](#) and [Android](#)
- **FamilySearch Memories** - [iPhone](#) and [Android](#)

**Have You Seen This? - Cool Features on the Family Tree App** (2019)

<https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/family-tree-app-cool-features/>

**Ancestry** <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/cs/ancestry-app> - [iPhone/iPad](#), [Android](#) and [Amazon Fire](#)

**Treeview Mobile** <https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/app/> - [iPhone/iPad](#) and [Android](#)

**MyHeritage** <https://www.myheritage.com/mobile> - [iPhone/iPad](#) and [Android](#)

**RootsMagic** <http://www.rootsmagic.com/app/> - [iPhone/iPad](#), and [Amazon Fire](#) but not Android

**Find A Grave** <https://www.findagrave.com/mobileapp> - [iPhone](#) and [Android](#)

**BillionGraves** <https://billiongraves.com/get-the-app> - [iPhone](#) and [Android](#)

**Software reviews for iPhone and Android Portable Apps**

**10 Free Genealogy Apps to Help You With Your Research** (*written 2017*)

<https://familyhistorydaily.com/free-genealogy-resources/free-genealogy-apps/>

**Tracing your family tree? The 10 best apps to help you find your relatives** (*written 2014*)

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2014/apr/05/family-tree-apps-genealogy-laura-berry>

## Family Trees Online

You can create your family tree online. Enter data person by person, or Upload a GEDCOM file. You can get information from other people's trees.

**Genes Reunited** [www.genesreunited.co.uk](http://www.genesreunited.co.uk)

Register for free, but it is well worth subscribing to this site. Standard £1.67/m: search and view other members' trees and send them messages. Platinum £6.67/m: all census and BMD records.

**Family Tree Explorer** [www.findmypast.co.uk/family-tree](http://www.findmypast.co.uk/family-tree)

Findmypast are UK based and have records you won't find anywhere else. Add the people you know, and their clever hints will help you find your ancestors.

**MyHeritage** [www.myheritage.com/page/family-tree-online](http://www.myheritage.com/page/family-tree-online)

## Shared Trees

There are several sites where the trees are shared. You do not own your own tree, but can add yours and help to edit duplicate names into one global tree

**OneGreatFamily** [www.onegreatfamily.com](http://www.onegreatfamily.com)

Claims to be the world's largest online family tree. Mostly USA records. Subscription site.

**Family Search: Family Tree** [www.familysearch.org/tree/overview](http://www.familysearch.org/tree/overview)

**WikiTree** [www.wikitree.com/](http://www.wikitree.com/)

It's probably best to do your own tree, and maybe only use these sites to solve brick walls. They are riddled with errors, as many US researchers don't do the research properly and claim high numbers of ancestors. so always double check any information they give.

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## M8 Wills and probate

Wills go a long way back because they deal with money. Before 1858, they were administered by Church courts. They may survive because they have been incorporated into property deeds which get handed on with the property. The probate record should be in the local archives.

Many wills have been collected in local archives when disposed of by solicitors, lawyers and families.

**Find a will** <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/#wills>

Click on the correct tab for Wills and Probate 1996 to present, Wills and Probate 1858 – 1996, and Soldier's Wills (WW1 and usually in a standard format).

You need to know the year of death and check that year and 2-3 years after it.

Register for free, pay to get the documents as pdfs to download, they cost only £1.50!

Grant only means it is an Admon, ie no will, which may still be useful for the administrator's name.

NB: Grant and will are two separate downloads. You have 55 days to download them.

## Finding people with the same name

**The Guild of One-Name Studies** [www.one-name.org](http://www.one-name.org)

World's leading organisation for one-name studies.

See if someone else is researching your family name; Enter name click search.

**Surname Navigator** [www.surnamenavigator.org](http://www.surnamenavigator.org)

Search multiple sites for different countries.

Select Country [say England] Enter surname (note pop ups must be allowed).

## Scottish, Irish records

### ScotlandsPeople <http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>

Official Govt site for Records of Scotland. Comprehensive website, easy to navigate

Births, Marriages & Deaths: 1855-1905

Old Parish Registers - Births & Baptisms, Banns & Marriages, Deaths & Burials: 1553-1854

Catholic Parish Registers - Births & Baptisms, Banns & Marriages, Deaths & Burials: 1703-1854

Census Records: 1841-1911

Wills & Testaments: 1513-1901

Valuation Rolls: Tenants & owners 1855-

B, M & D Certificates have far more information

Many Free to search

Pay per view – see list of charges

### Scottish Documents [www.scottishdocuments.com](http://www.scottishdocuments.com)

Scottish wills & inventories, births 100 yrs, marriage 75 years, deaths 50 years.

The index can be searched for free online on the ScotlandsPeople website at

<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>, where copy images can also be purchased.

## Irish Genealogy Research

### National Archives of Ireland [www.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.nationalarchives.ie)

Before 1922 Ireland was one country, then it became Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland.

Early census records were destroyed but 1901 and 1911 Censuses are searchable at

[www.census.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie)

National Archives of Ireland also holds a database of convicts transported to Australia.

### Ask About Ireland [www.askaboutireland.ie](http://www.askaboutireland.ie)

Ask About Ireland holds a free version of Griffith's Valuations, the best known Irish census substitute, begun about 1848. It is a listing of who the renters were and who owned the property.

The best site now is **John Grenham**: <https://www.johngrenham.com/>

### Irish Genealogy <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/>

Lots of searchable church & census records. Births, Marriages and Deaths (Index entry and register image) are now available to view: Birth register records – 1864 to 1920; Marriage register records – 1845 to 1945; Death register records – 1871 to 1970.

### General Register Office of Ireland <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/55ccbe-general-register-office-gro-research-facility/>

Apply for certificates online or by post. Links to [www.irishgenealogy.ie](http://www.irishgenealogy.ie) to search historical Birth, Marriage and Death records.

**Northern Ireland** see PRONI (Public Records of N Ireland) <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni>

## Wales sources

### National Library of Wales <https://www.library.wales/>

Primary resource is Newspapers collection online: 15 million articles and 1.1 million pages. Search for wills proved in the Welsh Ecclesiastical Courts before 1858.

### The Wales Collection <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/articles/world-records/search-all-uk-records/special-collections/the-wales-collection>

Note: In South Wales has many earlier parish records and chapel records have been lost.

This free page on Find My Past lists parishes included and also those declined to be included.

## Immigrants and Emigrants

Family member may have come to the UK, or emigrated

You need to check FindmyPast as well as Ancestry: both have records for outbound from UK and FMP has inbound to UK

**Immigration & Travel** <http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/category.aspx?cat=40>

Immigration & Travel is an important and valuable collection on Ancestry.co.uk. The records in this collection document the journey of your immigrant ancestor and their steps towards becoming a citizen of their new country. They include passenger arrival records, naturalisation records, border crossings, emigration records, passports, convict transportation records.

**USA: Ellis Island Foundation** for early US immigration records

<https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/passenger> Welcome to our free Ellis Island Passenger Search database, home to 65 million records of passengers arriving to the Port of New York from 1820 to 1957.

For Australian records see **Trove** <https://trove.nla.gov.au/>

Emigration societies/British Home Foundation sent children from workhouses to Canada then Australia. Best records are for their immigration into those countries.

## People and Places

**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/>

There are many Closed groups for particular areas of the country, both Local History and Family History. 'Worldwide Genealogy Facebook Group': lists thousands of FH groups.

**One-place studies:** <https://www.one-place-studies.org/>

These may exist for a location you are struggling with. By learning about your ancestors' neighbours and studying the historical environment and events that took place within a village, you can gain a greater understanding of your own genealogy.

**Online Parish Clerks:** [https://www.ukbmd.org.uk/online\\_parish\\_clerk](https://www.ukbmd.org.uk/online_parish_clerk)

The term OPC refers to unpaid volunteers who collect, collate and transcribe records for various parishes within their respective areas. They are willing to help others with their genealogical research.

**Surname Society:** <https://surname-society.org/>

**British Association for Local History:** <https://www.balh.org.uk/>

**Irish and British Villages:** [www.orion-arts.com/villages](http://www.orion-arts.com/villages)

Member sites contain information about villages in Wales, Scotland, Ireland and England (including the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and anywhere else normally considered part of (or near) the Irish Republic or the British Isles). They show details of the community, history, culture and trade of the chosen village(s). Press Ctrl-F to find the village you are interested in.

**CuriousFox,** <https://curiousfox.com/> the village by village contact site for anyone researching family history, genealogy and local history in the UK and Ireland. Free Search by Village or Town &/or person's Name.

**Pinterest** <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/>

It could be useful to find historical photos of places. You can find a lot of information without signing up, but doing so gives you access to more. The following links give you some idea about what is available.

- **Genealogy**

[https://www.pinterest.co.uk/search/pins/?q=genealogy&rs=typed&term\\_meta\[\]=genealogy%7Ctyped](https://www.pinterest.co.uk/search/pins/?q=genealogy&rs=typed&term_meta[]=genealogy%7Ctyped)

- **Family History**

[https://www.pinterest.co.uk/search/pins/?q=family%20history&rs=typed&term\\_meta\[\]=family%7Ctyped&term\\_meta\[\]=history%7Ctyped](https://www.pinterest.co.uk/search/pins/?q=family%20history&rs=typed&term_meta[]=family%7Ctyped&term_meta[]=history%7Ctyped)

## **Criminal Records**

**The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1674-1913** [www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org)

A fully searchable edition of the largest body of texts detailing criminal trials held at London's central criminal court. Click on Search or go to the Search pages. Search Surname, Offence, Verdict etc.

**Blacksheep Ancestors** <https://www.blacksheepancestors.com/>

You will also find numerous links to historical court records, execution records and biographies of famous outlaws & famous criminals across the US, UK and Canada. It is not easily searchable, but the site is littered with ads from commercial companies offering to search for you.

**Explore Genealogy** [www.exploreancestry.co.uk/criminalrecords.html](http://www.exploreancestry.co.uk/criminalrecords.html)

Using Criminal Records For Family History Research – this is a helpful article updated Aug 2020. This site may disappear as the owner looking to sell it on to someone who can develop the site.

**Convict transportation:** Search Australian sources: see later

## **Military Service Records**

Service records are not available for WW2 or after, except by applying directly to the appropriate military unit as an immediate relative:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-copy-military-service-records>

**Commonwealth War Graves Commission** [www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission helps you find War Dead. You can explore the records of the 1.7 million Commonwealth men and women that they commemorate, and find information about the military cemetery where they are buried.

Click **Find Records > Find War Dead**

Enter **Last name** and **First name** or **Initials** (eg Owen W E S) - and any other information you have. Select **War** click on **Search**.

**Armed forces & conflict records**

[www.findmypast.co.uk/content/search-menu/armed-forces-and-conflict](http://www.findmypast.co.uk/content/search-menu/armed-forces-and-conflict)

Search a range of historical lists and roll calls, including records for the Battle of Waterloo Army BMDs (not found in the civil indexes). Free search, pay to view original records or transcripts.

**Military records** <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/>

Ancestry also has similar military records, mainly WWI. You need to check both FMP & Ancestry as they have different people and different types of record on each site.

**Fold3** <https://www.fold3.com/>

Ancestry has started putting the images of its military records into a separate website Fold3 as a way of getting another subscription, where you can Browse Military Records by War. Occasionally there are free days of access around historic military days, eg Remembrance Day. There are other sources of information there, many are free from other websites, eg Trove - The National Library of Australia, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/>.

**UK and Ireland: Military Records** <https://www.genuki.org.uk/big/MilitaryRecords>

The National Archives holds the most comprehensive and important collection of official documentary records relating to Britain's involvement in the war. This website lists and explains this wealth of material systematically within thematically arranged sections. It also lists:

**British Military Records** [www.genuki.org.uk/big/BritMilRecs](http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/BritMilRecs)

This is a very useful article explaining where to find various British Army Service Records. It does not have any active weblinks or searchable records.

**More guides to military records:**

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/>

**Note:** The National Archives Research guides can help you uncover the history of a place, a person or explore a particular historical subject. Each guide tells you where you can find, access and understand the relevant records. 358 guides are available, but click in the box by “Show only guides with all records online” to see 65 guides which will show you where to find online data.

**Military service in India:** British Library: <http://indiafamily.bl.uk/ui/home.aspx?>

**Royal Navy ratings' service records 1853-1923**

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-ratings-service-records-1853-1928/>

Many of the records reveal year and town of birth, names of ships served on and the period of time served in the Royal Navy. You can search the records in the catalogue, by filling in the form.

**Prisoners of War**

**Service records** <https://www.gov.uk/get-copy-military-service-records>

WW1 and earlier Casualty Lists (including taken POW) (FMP & Ancestry)

**Far Eastern Heroes (WW2)** <https://www.far-eastern-heroes.org.uk/>

**FEPOW Family** <https://www.fepow.family/>

Click on Research > Prisoners of War > British FEPOWs (Service Personnel) or Far Eastern Internees (Civilians). Both listed by A-Z and include ‘How to Start Researching’.

**The National Archives** (eg Japanese POW cards, war diaries)

Some records are available to view and download online but many are not and you may therefore need to visit The National Archives in Kew to see documents. However, the search for records held at Kew can begin online, by searching for document references in their online catalogue:

<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

*Free digital downloads: While there is limited access to the Kew site due to Covid, signed-in users can download digital records for free.*

**Prisoners Of War 1715-1945**

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/prisoners-of-war-1715-1945>

Search and download selected prisoners of war records 1715-1945 on Findmypast (charges apply). These are selected digitised records from a variety of record collections held at The National Archives, including Foreign Office, Colonial Office, Admiralty and Air Force collections.

**UK, British Prisoners of War, 1939-1945** <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/1601/>

Search the British Army Prisoners of War, 1939-1945 database on Ancestry.co.uk (charges apply) for information about some British prisoners of war.

**Imperial War Museum** Where to Find Prisoner of War Records

<https://www.iwm.org.uk/research/tracing-your-family-history/prisoners-of-war/where-to-find-prisoner-of-war-records>

Records of prisoners of war (POWs) were compiled by each country and are now held centrally by the Archives Division and Research Service of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Switzerland, but given their sensitive nature, general files are made available only after 40 years have elapsed since they were created (and particularly sensitive ones after 60).

**Red Cross:** <https://www.icrc.org/en/home>

**Prisoners of the First World War**, the ICRC archives <https://grandeguerre.icrc.org/>

The belligerent countries involved provided lists of prisoners to the ICRC, which created an index card for each prisoner and detainee. Now, you can search through all 5 million of them. Enter Name, Nationality and Status (Military/Civilian).

## Newspapers & Trade Directories

**British Newspapers 1800-1900** <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>

Major resource covering two collections:

- 17th and 18th Century Burney Collection of printed papers
- British Newspapers 1800-1900 - 71 London, national and regional newspapers

Subscription site, free community version in public libraries. It is also in FindMyPast.

**Note:** Only 5% of their newspapers are digitised, but if you can work out which papers you wish to see it can be made available free at the British Library at St Pancras.

**Gazettes** <https://www.thegazette.co.uk>

Official Newspaper of Record for the UK. This is a searchable site for London, Belfast & Edinburgh Gazettes. They have many legal announcements, eg Bankruptcies, including details about bankrupt individuals.

### Historical Directories of England & Wales

<http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16445coll4>

This is a collection of digitised trade and local directories, part of the University of Leicester's Special Collections Online, covering England and Wales from the 1760s to the 1910s. It contains high quality reproductions of comparatively rare books, essential tools for research into local and genealogical history. The same content is now available in Ancestry UK, **City and County Directories, 1766 – 1946**, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/3145/>.

**Pigot's Historical Trade Directories** <http://www.familyrelatives.com/articles/details.php?aid=47>

The Pigot's Directories currently cover the period from 1830 to 1839 before the official Civil Registration began, so it is a valuable source of additional information when researching your ancestors.

**British History Sources, 1500-1900** <https://www.connectedhistories.org/>

Connected Histories brings together a range of digital resources related to early modern and nineteenth century Britain with a single federated search that allows sophisticated searching of names, places and dates. You can find information about all of them, including their coverage, their particular strengths and weaknesses, and any access arrangements which may apply. Connected Histories currently includes 25 major digital resources for the period 1500-1900 including:

- **British Newspapers 1800-1900** (See above)
- **Convict Transportation Registers Database**  
<https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/research-collections/family-history/convict-queenslanders>  
Information on more than 123,000 of the 160,000 convicts transported to Australia between 1787 and 1867 included in the Convict Transportation Registers Series (HO 11) held in The National Archives of the UK.

## Useful Genealogy Information

**UK Genealogy Links** [www.genealogy-links.co.uk/html/freebies.html](http://www.genealogy-links.co.uk/html/freebies.html)

- Your Guide to Finding Genealogical Resources & Information
- Free Genealogy Stuff & Worthwhile Freebies. Take your pick

**GENUKI** [www.genuki.org.uk](http://www.genuki.org.uk)

This is a virtual reference library of genealogical information, which is particularly relevant to the UK and Ireland. GENUKI is organised on the basis of historic counties.

**Society of Genealogists:** <http://www.sog.org.uk/>

The Society of Genealogists (SoG) is Britain's premier family history society. The Society's collections are particularly valuable for research before the start of civil registration of births marriages and deaths in 1837.

Their free starter **Record Guides** introduce sources and records used by family historians.

<http://www.sog.org.uk/learn/help-getting-started-with-genealogy>

## Archives

**The National Archives** [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Click on Records > Looking for a person?

The research signposts listed can help you uncover a person's history. Each guide tells you where you can find the relevant records, and how they can be accessed.

*Free digital downloads* Signed-in users can download digital records for free.

**Discovery** <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

Discovery (formerly Access to Archives) is part of the UK archives network. Discovery holds more than 32 million descriptions of records held by The National Archives and more than 2,500 archives across the country from 8th century to present day. Over 9 million records are available for download.

*Free digital downloads* During lockdown signed-in users can download digital records for free.

**British Library** <https://www.bl.uk/>

The British Library has huge possibilities for family research and supporting historical information. Old Electoral rolls, published historical family trees, original manuscripts, manorial records, patent libraries, British Newspaper Archives, sound archives. Catalogue is good, but searching through Google with 'British Library' included in the search text can find things not easily found in the catalogue.

**London Metropolitan Archives**

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/london-metropolitan-archives/collections/family-history-at-lma>

LMA is an essential destination for anyone researching ancestors from the London area. This holds the majority of London records useful to FH research, so there is a good chance that your ancestor may appear in their records in one form or another. The Parish Registers, Bishops Transcripts, Non-conformist records and some of the Boards of Guardians records listed in London Generations are now available through Ancestry.co.uk. There are large collections of maps, trade directories, images not available elsewhere.

**City of London Guildhall Library** The Library of London History

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/guildhall-library/family-history>

Guildhall Library is a public reference library specialising in the history of London. The printed books collection comprises over 200,000 titles dating from the 15th to the 21st centuries and includes books, pamphlets, periodicals, trade directories and poll books. This collection covers all aspects of life in London, past and present, its trade, people and buildings. Guildhall Library has an extensive collection of trade and telephone directories for the whole of the British Isles from the years 1667 - 1990, Apprenticeship records, information on members of many different professions and trades, and Census material. Census returns can be viewed online via the Ancestry

(<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/>) and Find my past (<https://www.findmypast.co.uk/>) websites. Some of the other records may also be viewed online – check the Guildhall Library website (above) for information and the link to the relevant website.

## Portals or Gateways, Blogs and Newsletters

**Cyndi's List** [www.cyndislist.com](http://www.cyndislist.com)

Cyndi's List is free for everyone to use and it is meant to be your starting point when researching online. It is a comprehensive, categorized & cross-referenced list of 338,640 links that point to genealogical research sites online.

**RootsWeb** [www.rootsweb.com](http://www.rootsweb.com)

The primary purpose and function of RootsWeb.com is to connect people so that they can help each other and share genealogical research. Rootsweb hosts many web sites as a courtesy to the community, mainly USA.

**RootsChat.com** [www.rootschat.com](http://www.rootschat.com)

RootsChat is the busiest, largest free family history forum site for Ireland and the British Isles. Its 274,891 members are ready to help you with your questions. Easy to use messaging forum for everyone researching their family history roots or local history.

**LostCousins** [www.lostcousins.com](http://www.lostcousins.com)

LostCousins is the ONLY family history website able to match you with others researching the same ancestors. You need to register and enter relatives in on your family tree who were recorded in 1881 or 1901 census - then click the Search button. You can enter the relatives listed on selected US, Canadian, British, or Irish Censuses.

Check out the **Beginner's Guide**

[https://www.lostcousins.com/pdf/TRACING\\_YOUR\\_BRITISH\\_ANCESTORS.pdf](https://www.lostcousins.com/pdf/TRACING_YOUR_BRITISH_ANCESTORS.pdf)

It not only tells you where to find information, but also highlights which resources are free.

Click on **Help & Advice** and **FAQs** for many detailed guides, and articles from past editions of the LostCousins email newsletter. Sign up for the free newsletter, it is always very informative and full of useful tips and articles to help you knock down 'brick walls' and take your research to a new level. Find the 'Masterclasses' for different topics, including a lot of information about DNA for family history research.

**Other useful resources****Google** [www.google.co.uk](http://www.google.co.uk)

Make sure you are on *.co.uk* not *.com* - if not, go to bottom right & click on *.co.uk*,

Go to **More** > **Settings** > **Advanced Search** to narrow selection.

See the following articles about using Google for genealogy research.

**How to use Google for genealogy research**

<https://www.family-tree.co.uk/how-to-guides/how-to-use-google-for-genealogy-research/>

**3 Tips for Using Google for Genealogy**

<https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/3-tips-google-genealogy/>

Go to  (Google Apps) for free downloads such as **Keep** or **Google Docs**, useful for taking notes, **Maps**, to see where your ancestors lived and how they moved around the country, and **Google Photos** for viewing images of documents. These apps are often pre-loaded onto Android tablets and smart phone, so if you use one of those devices you can use them to collect information while you are out and about, and then look at it all when you are back on your PC.

**Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS)**

[www.ffhs.org.uk](http://www.ffhs.org.uk) or <https://www.familyhistoryfederation.com/>

FFHS supports Family History Societies around the country. Click on Resources for Free Websites and Resources and various family history tutorials.

**Hertfordshire Family History Society** [www.hertsfhs.org.uk](http://www.hertsfhs.org.uk)

Herts FHS is engaged on a major Monumental Inscriptions project in churchyards and churches around Hertfordshire (click on Projects) and has several special publications on CD-Rom (click on Publications).

**UK Genealogy Archives** <https://ukga.org/index.html>

Aiming to be one of the best United Kingdom genealogy sources on the net. Many free databases and comprehensive links to most of the searchable genealogy databases you will need, including the usual subscription sites. In practice, not much content.

## Useful Charts

### Pedigree Chart

<http://www.cm.genealogicalstudies.com/cm/1forms/amet/Pedigree-noNumbers.pdf>

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/familyhistory/documents/pedigree\\_chart.pdf](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/familyhistory/documents/pedigree_chart.pdf)

Or use the pdf version in the FH kit.

Useful for showing four generations of a family Birth, marriage, death (date and place)

### Eichhorn Relationship Chart

<https://www.devonfhs.org.uk/pdfs/tools/eichhorn-rlationship-chart.pdf>

### Cousin Chart—Family Relationships Explained

<https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/cousin-chart/>

Scroll down the page and click on Download Cousin Chart or go to

<http://fh.familysearch.org/system/files/team/ait/images/blog/cousin-chart.pdf>

## Miscellaneous Useful Stuff

**Family Tree Folk** [www.familytreefolk.co.uk](http://www.familytreefolk.co.uk)

Archiving and storage of all of your valuable research material, old documents, wills, maps, newspaper articles, memorabilia and photographs, even if just copies of the originals, should always be done using archival acid free materials and safe archival products.