

# Solving English Research Problems With Lesser-Used Records

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Civil registration, census and church records resolve most English genealogical problems. When these major sources fail to provide adequate solutions, it's time to delve into England's many lesser-used sources.

For example, an illegitimacy problem may be solved by examining parish chest records (bastardy bonds, vestry minutes, etc.) or Quarter Session records. An elusive nonconformist ancestor may be found by using "location assistants" such as tax records, directories, probate indexes, marriage indexes or electoral registers.

The following table lists many, but not all, lesser-used records that are important to genealogists. The Uses column briefly describes how a record may be useful; the Location column provides key repositories where these records may be accessed. Codes used in the table are as follows:

## *Uses codes:*

A	Age	O	Occupation
I	Illegitimacy	P	Property
L	Location, residence	R	Relationships
M	Migration	V	Vitals (birth, marriage, death dates and/or places)

## *Location codes:*

B	British Library (includes the Newspaper Library and the Oriental and India Office Collections)	<a href="http://www.bl.uk/">www.bl.uk/</a>
C	County Record Office (Use genuki to access the CRO. Select the county and then "Archives and Libraries.")	<a href="http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/">www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/</a>
F	Family History Library (Salt Lake City, Utah)	<a href="http://www.familysearch.org">www.familysearch.org</a>
G	Guildhall Library	<a href="http://www.history.ac.uk/gh/">www.history.ac.uk/gh/</a>
L	Local church (Try a google search or use <i>Crockford's Clerical Directory</i> to obtain a postal address)	
N	The National Archives (includes access to National Register of Archives, Access to Archives, and the Manorial Documents Register)	<a href="http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk">www.nationalarchives.gov.uk</a>

S Society of Genealogists

[www.sog.org.uk](http://www.sog.org.uk)

<b>Record</b>	<b>Uses</b>	<b>Location</b>
Bastardy bond	I L R	C F L
Settlement certificate	L M O R	C F L
Settlement examination	A L M O R V	C F L
Removal order	A L M R	C F L
Vestry minutes	I L M R	C F L
Churchwarden accounts	L O	C F L
Overseers' records	L O	C F L
Church rates	L	C F L
Apprenticeship	A L O R	C F G N S
Freemen admittance	L O	C G
Union workhouse	L V	C N
Quarter sessions court	A I L O R	C F
Chancery court	L P R V	F N
Manorial court	L P R	C F G N
Church court	I L O R	C
Marriage license records	A L O R V	C F S
Deeds	L P R	C N
Directories	L O	B C F S
Newspapers	L O R V	B C
Military (e.g., pension/service records)	A L O R V	B F N
Militia lists	A L O	C F
Trinity House petitions	A L O R V	F S
Voting registers	L P	C F
Electoral registers	L P	C F
Tithe apportionment	L	C F
Tax (hearth, window, subsidy, etc.)	L	C F N
Protestation returns	L	C F
Probate	I L M O P R V	C F N S
Cemetery records	A L R V	C F
Monumental inscriptions	A L R V	C F L S
Peerage books (e.g., Burke's works)	L M O P R V	B C F S
Herald's visitations	A L R	C F

Use the Access to Archives web site, also known as A2A, to locate additional repositories with collections of these lesser-used records. A2A offers the capability to search hundreds of on-line catalogues for record offices, libraries, museums, archives and other repositories throughout England. This valuable site is searched by personal name, place or record type on a national or local level. A2A is easily accessed through The National Archives web site.

Obviously, not all lesser-used records are extant for all geographic areas and all periods of time. To learn more about these records, refer to the Suggested Reading List.

## ***Suggested Reading List***

Camp, Anthony J. *Wills and Their Whereabouts*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. London: Anthony J. Camp, 1974.

Ellis, Mary. *Using Manorial Records*. London: PRO Publications in association with The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, 1994.

Emmison, F.G. and Irvine Gray. *County Records*. Rev. ed. London: The Historical Association, 1973.

Fowler, Simon. *Army records for family historians*. London: PRO Publications, 1992.

Garrett, R.E.F. *Chancery and Other Legal Proceedings*. Oakhill, Somerset: The Oakhill Press, 1968.

Gibson, Jeremy S.W. *A Simplified Guide to Probate Jurisdictions: Where to Look for Wills*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Solihull, England: Federation of Family History Societies Publications, Ltd., 1985, updated 1988.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Quarter Session Records for Family Historians: A Select List*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Birmingham, England: Federation of Family History Societies Publications, Ltd., 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Hearth Tax and Other Later Stuart Tax Lists and the Association Oath Rolls*. Solihull, England: Federation of Family History Societies Publications, Ltd., 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_ and Colin Rogers. *Electoral registers since 1832, and burgess rolls*. Birmingham, England: Federation of Family History Societies Publications, Ltd., 1989.

\_\_\_\_\_ and Dennis Mills. *Land Tax Assessments*. Solihull, England: Federation of Family History Societies Publications, Ltd., 1987.

Herber, Mark D. *Ancestral Trails: the Complete Guide to British Genealogy and Family History*. Stroud, England: Sutton Publishing Ltd., in association with the Society of Genealogists, 1998.

McLaughlin, Eve. *Annals of the Poor*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Solihull, England: Federation of Family History Society Publications, Ltd., 1986.

Tate, W.E. *The Parish Chest*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Chichester, Sussex: Phillimore, 1969.

Watts, Michael J., and Christopher T. Watts. *My ancestor was in the British army*. London: Society of Genealogists Enterprises Ltd., 1992, 1995.