

Cam & Dursley U3A Family History Group

Notes of meeting 22 January 2018

How to get the best from village records

Speaker: Rose Hewlett

The [Gloucestershire Family History Society](#) provides advice on what to research, where to research and how to interpret the records. Subscription websites such as Ancestry and Find My Past can be accessed for free at the Gloucestershire Family History Centre and local libraries. Most other websites mentioned below are currently accessible free of charge, or free at local libraries.

Village records cover families, activities, properties and land. Records include:

1st, 2nd and 3rd editions of OS maps; the 1st edition, c1880, has colour and provides detail such as garden paths and privies. The 2nd and 3rd editions, c1901 and 1922, are less detailed. ([National Library of Scotland's](#) website which includes survey and publication dates, unlike the [Know Your Place](#) website which has the maps without an exact date).

The **1939 Identity Cards Register** ([Find My Past](#)) provides the address, name, date of birth, marital status and occupation of a person. The 100-year rule applies although it is possible to get a 'closed' record opened upon proof that the person concerned has died.

The 1911 Census (Ancestry and Find My Past) includes summary books which generally show the order in which the enumerator walked round. Earlier censuses (1841-1901) are generally laid out in this order which is not always logical. Individual records for 1911 show the number of rooms in a property. The 1921 census will be available soon, but was taken in June so some people may have been on holiday at the time.

The Gloucestershire Registers of Electors 1832-1974 ([Ancestry](#)). Although indexed, like many datasets on Ancestry and Find My Past, the indexing can be patchy so it is worth looking 'the long way round' as well as on a name search.

Gloucestershire Wills (1541-1858) ([Ancestry](#)). Need to match exact name which you can pick up from the Gloucestershire Archives genealogical database. **Probate records** (post-1858) also on [Ancestry](#).

The 1909 Lloyd George Survey of Land Values for Gloucestershire provides a unique number for each property through which the owner's and occupier's names can be found. Sometimes the tenants' names were not provided by the owners. Not all maps and records survive. The extent to which the records of other counties survive is unknown.

Estates' records can be very comprehensive so are worth consulting if ancestors are likely to have been tenants. Rent rolls, maps, sales particulars, deeds, abstracts of title, tradesmen's bills etc.

Sales particulars often give the name of an owner and/or tenant. There are several collections at Gloucestershire Archives from the county's major auctioneers.

Gloucestershire Land Tax Assessments (1741-1833) show owners, occupiers and assessments (Ancestry— search Card Catalogue for “Gloucestershire”, and if you put in a filter for “added recently” it comes out near the top).

Parish registers can go back to 1538, but survival is patchy. All extant [Gloucestershire Parish Registers and Bishops' Transcripts](#) (copies of the registers submitted annually to the bishop) are available on Ancestry unless they are still in use. In addition to the registers of christenings, marriages and burials, there may be marginal comments on a bad flood or plague during the year, and apprenticeship records/lists of churchwardens, vicars etc can also appear. These will not be indexed on Ancestry. **Vestry Minutes, Churchwardens Accounts and records of the Guardians of the Poor** (Gloucestershire Archives). Sunday school records can include the children's names, and **National School logbooks** can provide family information and often comments on local events. **Parish magazines** illustrate the life of the time and feature people's names.

Non-conformist records (Gloucestershire Archives). Gloucestershire Family History Centre has many helpful aids such as transcriptions of non-conformist registers and memorial inscriptions

Pew returns may tie in with a census year if they survive.

Memorial inscriptions (up to c1800) in Gloucestershire are listed in *Bigland's Monumental Inscriptions*.

Trade directories, notably *Kelly's*, provide local business information at specific dates, together with lists of private residents; the commercial entries are paid for and so should be accurate ([Leicester University's website](#) also via [Ancestry](#)).

Newspapers ([Find My Past](#) and [British Newspaper Archive](#)) Weddings often feature in local newspapers so a newspaper search can be fruitful. Crime can be found by newspaper searches, and the [Gaol records](#) for Gloucestershire are very detailed (Ancestry). There are also more general criminal records ([Ancestry](#)). If an ancestor was buried 'by coroner's order' look in the newspapers, coroner's records and, if appropriate, in the gaol records, as well as parish magazine.

Suggested sources of help:

The Local Historian's Encyclopaedia by John Richardson

Tracing the History of Your House by Nick Barratt

UWE and Gloucestershire Archaeology are building a website called *Know Your Place*, which will include early history such as enclosure maps, and tithe maps, but it is not known whether the associated narrative records will be available. Tithe apportionments give the owner and occupier of land/property, its size and use.

Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Heritage has useful papers on former mills – www.gsia.org.uk

Di Hay

24th January 2018