

FAMILY HISTORY AT LONDON METROPOLITAN ARCHIVES

Are you interested in discovering the secrets of your family history? If so, London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) may hold the records to unlock the secrets of your past.

If your ancestor came from the London area, then the LMA is the place to visit. We hold over 70km of archives so there is a good chance that your ancestor may appear in our records in one form or another. Our holdings include some of the most important family history sources for London, including Parish Registers, Electoral Registers, Land Tax records, Parish Poor Relief and Boards of Guardians, which include workhouse records.

Our main opening hours during the week are 9:30am-4:45pm but we stay open late on both a Tuesday and Thursday night until 7:30pm. We also open on occasional Saturdays, usually two each month, (check out our website for full details <http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma>). So if you work during the week there are still opportunities for you to visit.

If you are still unable to visit us, or feel that you would like us to do the work on your behalf then you can use our dedicated enquiry team. For brief enquiries you can send us an e-mail (ask.lma@cityoflondon.gov.uk) or call the enquiries team (020 7332 3820). If we can answer your question there and then we will do otherwise we will try to get back to you with the answer as soon as possible. If your enquiry requires a good deal of time searching through our archives then you would need to use our paid Family History Research Service instead. Full details of this are available on our website.

LONDON GENERATIONS

London Generations is the name of the collection of our most popular family history sources. We have collected together our most popular family history

sources into one area conveniently located as you enter the Reference Room and an obvious starting point for family history research.

London Generations includes 7 different types of records: Parish records, Bishops Transcripts, Non-Conformist registers, Electoral Registers, School Admission and Discharge registers, Parish Poor records and the Land Tax. We have arranged the system alphabetically by modern London borough. If you are not sure what borough an area would come under then don't worry, there is an index to show you exactly which borough binder you need to consult. Each series of records is also listed on different coloured paper so you can quickly see if you are looking at the right thing.

Let's look at an example of how the system works.

- If you don't know the modern borough then consult the areas guide
- Choose the appropriate borough binder, check the outside of the binder to make sure it includes the records you are interested in e.g. Parishes
- Look in the binder to find your reference number, binders are usually arranged alphabetically.
- If your reference number starts with an X it means it is a microfilm, these are located in the grey cabinets in the middle of the room.
- Choose your microfilm viewer; pick up the yellow box alongside it (if there isn't a box it probably means that viewer is already in use by someone else)
- Find your film in the grey cabinets, when you have done this, put the yellow marker box in its place.

- You are now ready to view the film. (If you haven't used microfilm before then ask a member of staff who will be pleased to give you a demonstration)

Not all of our family history records have been microfilmed. If the reference does not begin with an X it means you will be consulting an original document. You will need to order this by completing an order slip, written in pencil only. There are collections every 20 minutes and you can order 5 documents per collection. Each item you require needs to be put on a separate slip. The orders are posted in the collection box on the Reference Room counter. When they are collected it will usually take about 15 or 20 minutes before they are ready to be viewed in the Reading Room. Look at the electronic noticeboards for collection information.

OTHER RECORDS YOU MAY BE INTERESTED IN

Whilst London Generations comprises some of our most popular family history archives it is just the starting point. Our vast holdings will include many other records that of interest to the family historian. These include:

Boards of Guardians: whilst early poor relief was dealt with by the parish the majority of late 19th and early 20th century records including workhouses, asylums and special schools will be found in this series

Wills: from the church courts of the Dioceses of London and Winchester

Hospital Records: including Guys and St. Thomas's as well as the former county lunatic asylums of Hanwell, Colney Hatch and Banstead

Photographs and Prints arranged topographically and by subject

Maps and Plans including parish maps and bomb damage maps

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR VISIT

If you are going to visit LMA you are going to want to make the most of your time.

Here are 10 handy hints to make sure your visit is a success:

1. Do your homework before you come. Make the most of the resources you have open to you. Talk to your older living relatives to find out what they know. If you have access to the internet there are a multitude of sites out there to help. Bring any information with you that you already have that might help, e.g. census record or certificates.
2. Come prepared. Have an idea of exactly what it is you want to achieve. If you have got back to a certain point, what is the next logical step to follow? It's very easy to get sidetracked by something else.
3. Before you arrive, find out our opening hours, late nights and last ordering times, so you can plan your day effectively. All this information is available on our website. Don't arrive an hour before closing and expect to get everything done.
4. Are you in the right place? Do we have the records you need? We don't hold the census but the Family Records Centre just around the corner from us, does. Although we have many hundreds of parish records we do not cover every Anglican parish in London. Some archives are still held at the churches, others are deposited elsewhere, e.g. parishes in the City of London are held at the Guildhall Library. It is always best to check first that we hold the records you want. A simple 'phone call or e-mail to the enquiry team should do the job
5. Make full use of our range of free information leaflets. We have produced leaflets on some of the more popular subjects of research. These are available in the Reference Room or on our website
6. If you are a complete beginner, why not sign up for one of our regular introductory talks. We often run Use LMA sessions for beginners to show them how to use the archives and particularly London Generations. You can book a place on our next session either by 'phone or at Reception.
7. Bring a pencil or two. If you need to order documents you can only do this in pencil. You will also need to use pencil when taking notes from original documents.
8. We do not operate a booking facility for microfilm readers, so it's first come first served. It is unlikely that all machines will be in use, but

this has happened on occasions, particularly Saturdays which can often be busy. Remember arrive early to avoid disappointment

9. Ask for help and advice, that's what we are here for. If you are new to the archives or simply can't remember where something is don't be afraid to ask a member of staff who will happily put you on the right track. Similarly, if you have hit a brick wall in your research we may be able to give you a new idea of how to tackle your problem.
10. Bring a camera. If you are viewing an original document and you want to get a copy, it's the easiest way to do so. All you need to do is get your camera checked by a member of staff and then pay a small fee for a day's licence. If you don't have a camera you can still make use of our in house reprographics service. Alternatively, if the document is on microfilm we have reader printers that will allow you to take a copy.

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