

Occupations Records Handout

This handout provides information and web links from the talk 'What Did They Do? – Sources for Occupations, Professions and Trades' presented online for Auckland Libraries on 3 August 2022.

Considerations

It is important to research our ancestors' occupations as it:

- Adds understanding of their life (Vital information; Personality; Conduct; Wealth)
- Helps research (the occupation can identify a specific person between several with same name)
- Clues to migration

There are a number of things to consider when looking at occupations:

- Some occupations can be easily mis-transcribed (Sailor/Tailor; Lawyer/Sawyer)
- Having a dictionary of occupations can be extremely useful especially noting that the meaning of many occupations changed over time.
 - *A Dictionary of Old Trades, Titles and Occupations* – Colin Waters (ISBN 1 85306 794 6)
 - Index of old occupations (<http://rmhh.co.uk/occup/index.html>)
 - *Cyclopaedia of Useful Arts, Mechanical and Chemical, Manufactures, Mining and Engineering* (Volume 1 - https://archive.org/details/gri_33125007986801/mode/2up; Volume 2 - https://archive.org/details/gri_33125007986744/mode/2up)
- Consider reasons for changing occupations
- Look for family patterns (skills/trade passed on through the family)
- Consider the timeline of working life (Apprenticeship, Enrolment, Employment, Retirement)

Sources for Trades, Occupations and Professions

The following websites were mentioned during the talk:

Commercial Websites

- Ancestry - <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/>
 - Use 'Card Catalogue' to find record sets
 - To view most occupation related record sets, go to 'Schools, Directories & Church Histories' in drop down 'Search' menu, then choose 'Professional & Organisational Directories' which covers many more record sets than just directories.
- Findmypast - <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/>
 - Use 'All Record Sets' to find the record sets
 - To view all occupation related record sets, go to 'Education & work' on left menu on main Search page; then click on 'Browse Record Sets' link in Search Form scroll through and keep clicking 'More' to see full list
 - Ability to search by Occupation on the Census record sets
- The Genealogist - <https://www.thegenealogist.com/>
 - Use 'Search' and 'Find Records' then scroll down and choose 'Occupational Records' to find relevant record sets
- Society of Genealogists Data Online - <https://sogdata.org.uk/bin/index.php>
 - Click on 'Occupations' under 'Browse Records'
- British Newspaper Archive - <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/> – newspapers also included on Findmypast (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search/british-newspapers>)

General Resources

- Archives – use their catalogue to search for records relating to occupations; search employer name for business records; search place of work (e.g. farm or estate or factory) – consider national, county, city and private archives (e.g. company specific)
- Cyndi's List (www.cyndislist.com) – use Occupations category or choose a Place and subcategory Occupations

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- Directories - Historical Directories of England & Wales via University of Leicester (<https://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4>) and Ancestry ('UK, City and County Directories, 1766 – 1946' (<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/3145/>)) – additional directories available at Findmypast, Ancestry, The Genealogist and SoG Data Online.
- Gazette – The London, Edinburgh and Belfast Gazettes include business transactions and bankruptcy (<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/>) – also holds company profiles with some records dating back to 1800s (<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/companies>)
- Museums – many museums have online catalogues of some of their objects as well as relevant documents and indexes, e.g. the Science Museum (<https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/>)
- Personal Ephemera – review what you and your family may own – business material, photos, objects
- Professional Lists – lists for various professions and years available at most commercial organisations in addition to Online Books and in libraries notably SoG, Guildhall and British Library
- Universities often have academic studies on an occupation or will hold archives for that specific occupation.
- Way Back Machine – if you find a website that is no longer active, paste the URL into the Way Back Machine on Internet Archive (<https://archive.org/>) to find archived webpages

Online Books and Journals

- Internet Archive (<https://archive.org/>)
- Hathi Trust (<https://www.hathitrust.org/>)
- FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/>)
- Google Books (<https://books.google.co.uk/>)

Help Guides

- TNA Record Guides (<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/>) – many on specific occupations
- FamilySearch Wiki (https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Main_Page) – search for specific occupation within categories
- Bodleian Library LibGuides – (<https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/subjects>) – various occupations covered

Occupation Specific Sources

Agricultural Workers

- Tithe Maps and Apportionments – available at The Genealogist (<https://www.thegenealogist.com/search/advanced/landowner/tithe-records/>) as well as at county and national archives – allows you to identify the land that your ancestor worked
- Gloucestershire Tithe Apportionments (<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/finding-items-in-our-collections/tithe-apportionments-database/>)

Apprenticeships

- Register of Duties Paid for Apprentices' Indentures 1710-1811 (IR/1) – available at:
 - Ancestry (images) (<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/1851/>)
 - Findmypast (indexes) (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/britain-country-apprentices-1710-1808>)
 - SoG Data Online (indexes) https://sogdata.org.uk/bin/aps_browse_sources.php?mode=list_sources&source_class=308
 - The Genealogist (images) (<https://www.thegenealogist.com/search/advanced/occupation/apprenticeship/>)
 - The National Archives (via digital microfilm collection (<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/r/C9339?uri=C9339>)) – use reference

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xx/yyy (Volume and Folio) to download pdf called IR/1/xx then double yyy to get approximate page number in the pdf – e.g. 13/84 => pdf IR/1/13 page 168).

- London Guilds and Livery Companies – indexes at Findmypast (https://www.findmypast.co.uk/search/historical-records?region=united-kingdom&keywords=london%20ap&page=1&order_direction=desc&order_by=relevance) ; books available from SoG
- Crisp Collection of Apprenticeship Indentures – images of indentures at SoG Data Online - https://sogdata.org.uk/bin/aps_browse_sources.php?mode=list_sources&source_class=308
- London Lives (<https://www.londonlives.org/>) – apprenticeship records from London
- Also search for parish chest apprenticeship records for cases where the parish have paid for someone to be apprenticed
- Consider if it was a private apprenticeship within the family (via fathers, uncles, cousins)
- Once apprenticeship finishes, they become a journeyman (not necessarily meaning they travel around) before they become masters. <https://classicalu.com/the-apprenticeship-model/>

Coastguards

- Coastguard Index – card index on SoG Data Online (https://sogdata.org.uk/bin/aps_browse_sources.php?mode=list_sources&source_class=480)
- Records of Service of the Coastguard 1816-1947 – via digital microfilm collection at the National Archives (<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C1884>)

Inventors

- Patents – European patents (<https://worldwide.espacenet.com/patent/>) and USA patents are on Internet Archive (<https://archive.org/details/uspto>)

Lacemaking

- ‘*Calais Lacemaker Immigrants to South Australia 1848*’ (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/calais-lacemaker-immigrants-to-south-australia-1848>) at Findmypast
- University of Nottingham Textiles, Lace and Hosiery Business Records Collection (<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/collectionsindepth/businessrecords/textiles-lace--hosiery.aspx> - paste into your browser) or (<https://tinyurl.com/y355nl2m>)

Lawyers

- ‘*England and Wales, Law List, 1843*’ (<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/8022/>) at Ancestry
- ‘*Gray’s Inn Admission Register 1521-1889*’ available at SoG Data Online (https://sogdata.org.uk/bin/aps_browse_sources.php?mode=list_sources&source_class=260) – index is on Images 0248-0287

Mining

- National Coal Mining Museum (<https://www.ncm.org.uk/library>)
- Coalmining History Resource Centre (<http://www.cmhrc.co.uk/>)
- Mining Durham’s Hidden Depths (<http://www.durhamrecordoffice.org.uk/article/10531/Search-Durhams-Hidden-Depths>)
- Alan Beales Database of Fatalities in the Coal Fields (<http://www.healeyhero.co.uk/rescue/Fatalities/Alan-Beales-Database.html>)
- Mining Index – of miners killed or injured c.1850-1920 (<http://web.archive.org/web/20101005215506/http://www.blacksheepindex.co.uk/MINING.htm>)
- England, Mining Disaster Victims (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/england-mining-disaster-victims>)

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- National Archives Research Guides – Mines and mining (<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/mines-mining/>)

Seaman

- Findmypast has a number of record sets ‘*Britain, Merchant Seamen, 1835-1857*’ (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/britain-merchant-seamen-1835-1857>), ‘*Britain, Merchant Seamen, 1918-1941*’ (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/britain-merchant-seamen-1918-1941>), ‘*England & Wales Merchant Navy Crew Lists 1861-1913*’ (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/england-and-wales-merchant-navy-crew-lists-1861-1913>), ‘*British Mariners, Trinity House Calendars 1787-1854*’ (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/british-mariners-trinity-house-calendars-1787-1854>) and ‘*Lloyd’s Register of Merchant Ships Index 1843*’ (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/lloyds-register-of-merchant-ships-index-1843>) as well as numerous Navy records.
- Ancestry has the following record sets ‘*UK, Apprentices Indentured in Merchant Navy, 1824-1910*’ (<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/60609/>), ‘*UK, Merchant Seaman Deaths, 1939-1953*’ (<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/61094/>), and ‘*UK, World War I and World War II Shipping and Seamen Rolls of Honour, 1914-1945*’ (<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/61000/>).
- CLIP – Crew List Index Project CLIP (<http://www.crewlist.org.uk/>) – crew lists for merchant ships mainly for late 19th century and early 20th century using various sources – ongoing project
- Royal Museums Greenwich (<https://collections.rmg.co.uk/archive.html#!asearch>) – includes crew lists and Lieutenants’ Logs
- Trinity House records including Petitions Index, Apprenticeships and Miscellaneous – available at SoG (http://sog.archiveps.co.uk/bin/aps_browse_sources.php?mode=list_sources&source_class=315)

Others

- Civil Service Evidences of Age – provide proof of age and cover pre-civil registration and cover Great Britain and further afield including Ireland, India, USA, and Malta – available at Findmypast (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/british-civil-service-evidence-of-age>) and SoG Data Online (https://sogdata.org.uk/bin/aps_browse_sources.php?mode=list_sources&source_class=485)
- Customs and Excise Staff Service Registers – available at SoG Data Online (https://sogdata.org.uk/bin/aps_browse_sources.php?mode=list_sources&source_class=461)
- Teacher Registration Council – available at Findmypast (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/teachers-registration-council-registers-1914-1948>) and SoG Data Online (https://sogdata.org.uk/bin/aps_browse_sources.php?mode=list_sources&source_class=311)
- ‘*Britain, Trade Union Membership Registers*’ (<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/britain-trade-union-membership-registers>) – available at Findmypast – originated from Modern Records Centre at the University of Warwick

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