

# Searching the UK Archives Network and the National Archives

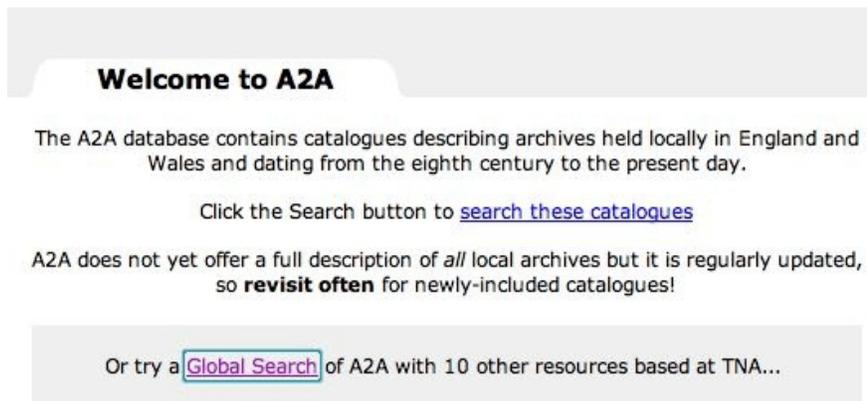
## What is A2A?

A2A allows you to search and browse for information across detailed catalogues dating from the eighth century to the present day from around 400 repositories in England and Wales beyond The National Archives at Kew. These archives are cared for in local record offices and libraries, universities, museums and national and specialist institutions across England and Wales, where they are made available to the public. The database is regularly updated, so revisit often for newly-included catalogues!

There are no digitized documents at the site, but you may arrange to see or to obtain copies of genuine historical documents.

## Accessing the A2A Database and the National Archives Database

- Go to <http://www.a2a.org.uk/>
- Click on “**search these catalogs**” to search the A2A databases or click on “**Global Search**” to search the A2A database plus the other resources available at the National Archives.
- Fill in the fields on the form and press **<enter>** or click on the **Search** button.



**Search**

**Standard Search**

Type a word or exact phrase into the box and click Search - you can also scroll to use the other options available below, or use the links on the left hand side of the page. Use help links for more information on each option.

**Keyword (or phrase)**

**Location of Archives**

**English Region or Wales**

**Dates of Archives**  
 Find descriptions of archives dated between the years:  
 Find descriptions of archives dated for a specific year:

and

**Dates of Catalogues**  
 Search only in catalogues added to A2A since:

Search window for A2A.

Search The National Archives and details of records held elsewhere

Keyword(s)

**Search tip** Welcome to the search page for The National Archives. Most of your hits will be catalogue descriptions of historical documents held in The National Archives or in other archives. These documents are the primary sources for research, fully worked-out information on topics such as Victorian Britain or the Crimean War. If you wanted this kind of material, a look at our [exhibitions](#) and our [education resources](#).

[More search tips...](#) [Frequently asked questions](#)

- The search results will appear.

{John?} Pickens of St. Hilary, labouring  
Date: 1806.  
Source: Access to Archives (A2A): not kept at The National Archives

[Online Document PROB 11/83](#)  
Will of John Picken , Yeoman of Maer, Staffordshire  
Date: 1594.  
Source: DocumentsOnline (images of documents from The National Archives)

[Devon Record Office 48/27/40a-c](#)  
ST. CLEER. (a) Receipt from Edward Dennys to John Picken for £40, part of £80 fine due, for the lease by Mary Bayly of Polligenna St. Cleer. 10 October, 1696. (b) Receipt from Edward Dennys to John Picken for £30, part of £80 fine due for the lease  
Date range: 1696 - 1698.  
Source: Access to Archives (A2A): not kept at The National Archives

[Assignment of a term to attend the inheritance 1987/14/5](#)

### UK National Archives Results

Click on blue link (words in blue that are underlined) to see more information.

- For the A2A database, there will be a listing and then the number of hits in that database. Click on the **hits** link to see the information found.

163 catalogues were found to match **John Stuart**  
Shown below are catalogues 1 to 25 (of 163)

		<a href="#">next</a>
Royal Society: Catalogue of the papers of Sir John Frederick William Herschel FRS (1792-1871) [JH/A/697 - JH/A/976]	1801-1939	<a href="#">20 hit(s)</a>
West Sussex Record Office: Additional Manuscripts, Catalogue 30	1360-1981	<a href="#">17 hit(s)</a>
Sheffield Archives: Wharnccliffe Muniments [Wh M/1 - Wh M/636]	1360-1933	<a href="#">10 hit(s)</a>
Manchester Archives and Local Studies: Papers of Millicent Garrett Fawcett	1610-1931	<a href="#">5 hit(s)</a>
Corporation of London Records Office: Corporation of London [COL/CSD/HO - COL/CCS/SO]	1545-1996	<a href="#">5 hit(s)</a>
Warwickshire County Record Office: Feilding family of Newnham Paddox [CR 2017/C1 - CR 2017/C328]	1536-1829	<a href="#">4 hit(s)</a>
Hull University, Brynmor Jones Library: Speech Attributed to John Stuart Mill	1825-1825	<a href="#">4 hit(s)</a>
Shropshire Archives: Messrs. Morgans, Solicitors, Ludlow	1619-1986	<a href="#">4 hit(s)</a>
City of Westminster Archives Centre: Book of letters concerning the painting of a portrait of John Stuart Mill by G F Watts and its subsequent bequest by Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke M.P. to Westminster City Council	1872-1906	<a href="#">4 hit(s)</a>

## Search Tips for Searching the UK National Archives

- The most relevant hits with all your words will be shown first. Relevance ranking looks at exact phrase matches, the number of occurrences of all your words and proximity.
- Your first results will be exact phrase matches, followed by hits containing all your words.

3. To find exact phrases only, surround your words with double quotation marks, for example "Crown jewels".
4. You do not have to type AND between words. By default we return hits that contain all your words, but don't use + or - signs.
5. If you want to, you can still use AND, NOT, OR, NEAR (Boolean searching).
6. To combine a Boolean search with a phrase, you must use double quotation marks for the phrase. For example "Prince of Orange" AND marriage.
7. To investigate your results by subject, use the links to the left of your main results: choose All Subjects to see the full list of results by subject.
8. For date searching, go to Advanced search. (Quick Search does not search all dates.)
9. Too many or too few results? Try Advanced search or consult our Research Guides
10. If you know we have some records but can't find them through searching, you may need to browse The National Archives Catalogue

### **Advanced search tips**

1. You can select searches for all words, any words and exact phrase.
2. You can use AND, NOT, OR, NEAR (Boolean searching), but don't use + or - signs.
3. You need to use quotation marks round exact phrases but not round single words.
4. You can narrow your search by:
  - A. Date searching
  - B. Restricting the search to one or more subject areas. For example, searching for:
    - a) a common term (a naval ship called: City of Oxford tick Armed Services). Remember not to type HMS as most entries do not use it.
    - b) a word with several meanings (relief: you can tick the subjects Tax, International or Health and welfare)
5. You can use a combination of all of these techniques.
6. Still too many or too few results? Consult our Research Guides
7. If you know we have some records but can't find them through searching, you may need to browse The National Archives Catalogue

### **Subject categories**

We have assigned thousands of collections (not individual documents) to subject categories. As some collections contain information on many subjects, some documents may appear in an odd category.

### **Excluded data**

Several other resources are not searchable from here, such as the Census websites, the Manorial Documents Register and the Hospital Records Database.

### **Alternative search terms**

Many catalogue entries use the spelling of surnames or places as given in the original documents. **Try using asterisks instead of vowels.** J\*nk\*ns will find Jenkyns, Jenkens, Jeynkyns as well as Jenkins; M\*nster will find Munster, Münster and monster.

Forenames are often abbreviated: William may be Wm or Willm, Elizabeth may be Eliz or Elizth. These have been automatically expanded in your list of results, if the abbreviation is next to a surname.

Abbreviations not next to surnames have been left as they are, so you may need to search again using any abbreviations you have picked up. For example:

Wm. and Elizth., the two children of Thos. {Thomas?} Whittington.

Think about nicknames as well – Billy or Betsy (not as likely as abbreviations of the formal name, but still possible).

Next steps

## **Viewing the National Archives Documents Online**

If you want to look at the actual documents, follow these steps:

1. Find out which archive they are held in by clicking through.
2. If it is not The National Archives, please contact the holder of the records, or check out their own website.
3. If it is The National Archives DocumentsOnline, images of these documents can be seen online for a small fee (and free from our Reading Rooms).
4. If it is in The National Archives Catalogue, you need to access the original another way. You can choose to buy a copy, come to see the document, or pay for research.