

My Ancestor was in Parish Records – well they should have been!

By John Hanson FSG

Who Do You Think You Are Live – 26th February 2010

What are Parish Records?

The records of Baptism, Burial and Marriage in Church of England churches.

Look for the likes of Dade Registers in Yorkshire

Various Acts changed the ways that they were kept – Hardwicks Marriage Act 1853 – Rose's Act 1812

It might also be worth checking The Overseer of the Poor Accounts, Vestry Minutes, Church Warden Accounts (should be with the other records)

Coverage from 1538 in England and Wales, 1660 in Scotland.

Don't all survive – destroyed by Fire, Flood or Just Old Age

Problems

Not all events are where you expect them

Wife often went back to mother for first child

Multiple baptisms

Death away from home

Elopement

Were they non-conformists?

Was the burial in a municipal cemetery rather than a church?

Books to help

The Philimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers

Contiguous Parishes Series

The Parish Chest – W E Tate

The Complete Parish Officer

The Handy book of Parish Law

Poor Law Union Records

Specialist Indexes

My Ancestors was a ... series by SoG

What and where are they available

Should be in County Records Office – check availability with them

Copies in Bishops Transcripts from 1597 – Diocesan Records Office

Check for copies at the Society of Genealogists

Has it been scanned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints?

What about indexes

National and Local Indexes

Check coverage for the dataset you are looking in – does it include all parishes and dates?

Check what has been done by the local Family History Society

What's available Online

Useful websites

FindMyPast

www.findmypast.co.uk

Ancestry

www.ancestry.co.uk

(includes the London Metropolitan Archives records)

British Origins

www.originsnetwork.com

FamilySearch

www.familysearch.org

Society of Genealogists

www.sog.org.uk

Non-Conformists

www.bmdregisters.co.uk

Other Options

Check local Newspapers

Memorial Cards

Memorial Inscriptions in churchyard or cemetery