

## The National Archives – ‘Archives for Everyone 2019-23’

<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk> – the link to more than 32 million descriptions of records held at Kew and at over 2,500 archives across the country. Over 9 million records are available to download. Frequent Searches:

- World War One army service records
- Passenger lists
- Merchant navy service
- World War One army war diaries
- Poor law
- Research Guides

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/) is the best place to start, just log-in, and scroll down and, click on ‘Family History’ with 190 guides available on *How to look for records of...*

### Understanding how TNA records are organized

**Departments:** There are over 400 collections relating to the work of government departments, the courts and armed services, each with a code of up to four letters.

- **ADM:** Admiralty (Navy and Marines)
- **AIR:** Air Ministry (RAF)
- **BT:** Board of Trade (Shipping)
- **CRIM:** Central Criminal Court
- **FO:** Foreign Office
- **HO:** Home Office (naturalization)
- **MEPO:** Metropolitan Police
- **RG:** Registrar General (census)
- **T:** Treasury
- **WO:** War Office (Army)

**Series:** Each department has various series of records arranged by topic or record type. In total, there are about 15,000 Series. Examples are:

- **BT 27:** Outward Passenger Lists 1890 – 1960
- **HO 1:** Naturalization papers 1789 – 1871
- **HO 334:** Duplicate nationality certificates 1870 – 1982
- **RG 12:** 1891 Census
- **RG 13:** 1901 Census
- **RG 14:** 1911 Census

**Piece:** This is the box, volume or file that contains the document(s). The individual contents of the Piece are known as *items*. There are millions of Pieces in the archive. An example:

- **RG 13/2891:** 1901 Census: Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire  
Civil Parish, Township or Place: Boldmere Maney

### ***Looking for a person – a place – a subject or Catalogues and online records:***

Finally, the designers of their sophisticated search engine and database have used '**Boolean operators**' and this is how it works:

- **marie smith:** This finds all results (also known as 'hits') that contain these two words one after the other. The problem with this is that, in many records, surnames are presented first (ie Smith, Marie)
- **marie AND smith:** This finds results containing these two words, even if not in this order. (Note that you don't need capital letters on the names when searching but the 'Boolean' bits must be in upper case.)
- **marie OR smith:** This finds results that contain any of the terms.
- **marie NOT smith:** This finds all results that contain the word Marie but eliminates any that contain the word Smith.
- **"milestone" (with inverted commas round a name or keyword):** This searches for the exact spelling and returns no alternatives.
- **fischer AND (carl OR frederick OR ludwig OR robert):** It is also possible to combine search options, as in this example. This would let you search for more than one member of a family at a time.