

# England Records From the Grave

Raymon Naisbitt, AG  
[naisbitr1@familysearch.org](mailto:naisbitr1@familysearch.org)

Many records may have been created when someone passed away in England. Among these records include: probate records, burial records, monumental inscriptions, death duty records, death certificates and cemetery registers. Many of these records can be found online while others are available at the Family History Library and other repositories throughout England.

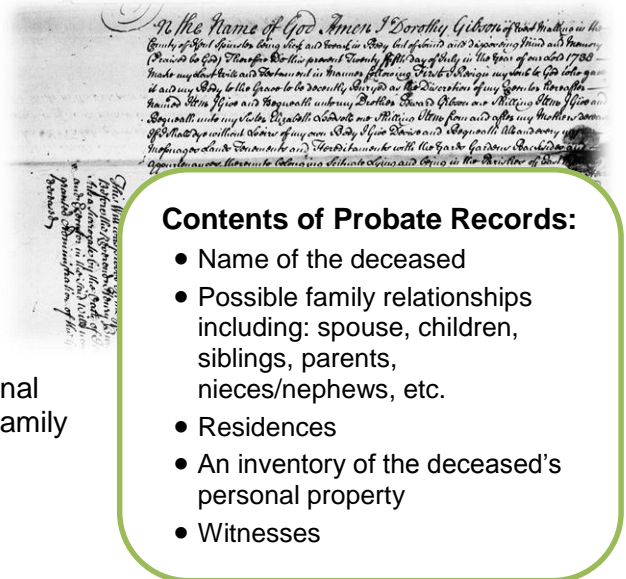
## TYPE OF RECORDS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

### 1. PROBATE RECORDS: (Beginning pre-1500s)

Wills are among the earliest records and are valuable because they were recorded even before church records and may contain family relationships connecting generations together. While those with money were more likely to leave wills, they were not limited to just the wealthy. They are well indexed and are being digitized online.

#### Finding Probate Records before 1858:

- [wiki.familysearch.org](http://wiki.familysearch.org)
  - In the Search box type the name of the County and add the word probate. I.e. “*Warwickshire Probate*”
  - Click the County probate page. See if there are any online county indexes. If not, go to Step 3: and find the parish where your ancestor died.
  - After finding the parish, click the name of the primary court and follow the instructions to find both indexes and original wills either online or on microfilm at the Family History Library.
- [www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com)
  - Click *Search*
  - Click *A-Z of record sets*
  - In the Search box type *Probate*
- [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) > go to *Search > Card Catalog > Keyword search* “Prerogative Court of Canterbury.” Highest court in the land, especially for those the wealthy.



#### Finding Probate Records after 1857:

- [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) – (Index for wills post-1857)
  - Go to *Search*
  - Click *Browse Card Catalog*
  - In the Keyword(s) box type *National Probate*

- Click the *England & Wales, National Probate Calendar*.....
- When you find your ancestor, record the probate court and the probate date in order to find the original will.
- [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) – (\$- Order the original will online post-1857)
  - In the search box type *Wills*
  - Click on *Find a will or probate (England and Wales)*
- [www.haine.org.uk/wills/willsearch.php](http://www.haine.org.uk/wills/willsearch.php) - (Find some wills on microfilm at the FHL)
  - Fill out the box for the person who died, court of probate and date of probate.
  - Click Submit. Scroll down and click on *View My Results* to get the film number.
  - Does not work if the will was proved in the Principal court or London.

## 2. PARISH BURIAL RECORDS: (Beginning in 1538)

In 1538 England began records church records which included baptisms, marriages, and burials. The burial record was recorded by the church and reflects the burial date, not the date of death.

### Finding Burial Records:

- [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) – (Records search)
  - Go to *Search*
  - Click *Records*
  - On the map, click *England*
  - Click on *England*
  - Scroll down and look for the County where your ancestor came from and click "*Parish registers.*"
  - Click on *Burials.*
- [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) – (Catalog search)
  - Go to *Search*
  - Click *Catalog*
  - In the *Places* search, type the name of the parish where your ancestor died, followed by the County.
  - Click *Church records*
  - Note: They may be digitized and available online. Click one of the options near the film number.
- Burials can also be found on the following websites:
  - [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)
  - [www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com)
  - [www.freereg.org.uk](http://www.freereg.org.uk)

Philomath Rumpe, a married man	July 16	30
1775.		
Jacob Cannon, a married man.	Feb. 6	2
Joseph Thurston, a married man	Feb. 28	
Winifred Wife of Henry Jves	Sept. 3	
Mary Gibson, a young woman.	Oct. 4	19
John Chapman, a married man	Jan. 5	
1777.		
Mary Wall, Widow	July 17	
	Aug. 16	
	Aug. 20	
	Nov. 15	
	Nov. 16	
	Dec. 20	
	Jan. 24	
	Feb. 9	

### Contents of Burial Records:

- Name of the deceased
- Date of burial
- Sometimes the age, place of residence, cause of death or occupation. This is more so after 1812.

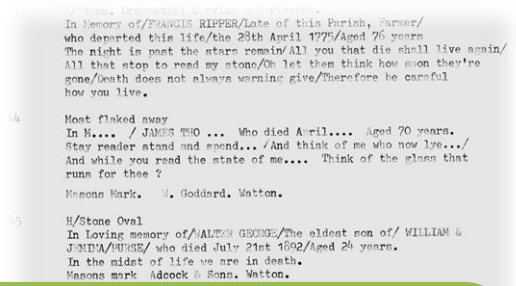
## 3. MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS: (Beginning 1600s)

Monumental inscriptions, or tombstones, may be useful in providing birth, marriage, and death information. They are the inscriptions written on the tombstones. They may contain more family information than the burial record or death certificate.

### Finding Monumental Inscriptions:

- [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

- Go to *Search*, then click *Catalog*.
- In the *Places* search, type the name of the parish where your ancestor died, followed by the County.
- Click *Cemeteries* (if available)
- Click the *Monumental Inscriptions*. Note: They may be digitized and available online. Click one of the options near the film number.
- [www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com)
  - Go to *Search*
  - Click *A-Z of records sets*
  - In the Search box type "*Monumental*"
  - Click the desired record
- A few Monumental Inscriptions can also be found on the following websites:
  - [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) (Historical Records Collection)
  - [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)
  - Google "England Monumental Inscriptions"



#### Contents of Monumental Inscriptions:

- Name of the deceased
- Death date
- Age at death (may include)
- May name family relationships

#### 4. ESTATE/DEATH DUTY REGISTERS: (1796-1903)

An act in 1796 that required that duty or a tax be paid on all bequests and succession to property over a certain value. Basically it was a tax on wills that were leaving a certain sum of money. If your ancestor left a will, or an administration was granted, they should also have a death duty record. These records can be more detailed than the actual will or administration and name family relationships.

#### Finding indexes to the Estate/Death Duty Records:

- [www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com)
  - Go to *Search*
  - Click *A-Z of records sets*
  - In the Search box type *Duty*
  - Click the *Index to Death Duty Registers 1796-1903*



#### Finding original images of the Estate or Death Duty Records:

- [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) (up to 1857)
  - Go to *Search*
  - Click *Catalog*
  - In the *Keyword* search type *Death Duty*
  - Based on the court named in the index click the appropriate link. Click on one of the options near the Film number.
- [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk) (1796-1903)

#### Contents of Estate/Death Duty Records:

- Name, address & occupation of the deceased
- Date of death, place of death and date of probate
- Names of heirs and their relationship to the deceased, even if not mentioned in the will
- Residence or death of heirs (rarely)
- Names, addresses, occupations of the executors
- Details of estates and related matters
- Amount of the duty paid.

- Estate/Death Duty registers are also available at the National Archives in England from 1796-1903.

## 5. DEATH CERTIFICATES: (Beginning July 1837)

Beginning July 1, 1837 the English government began recording birth, marriage, and death certificates. Death certificates generally do not give birth information or the names of parents, with the exception for young children.

### Finding Indexes to the Death Certificates:

- [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
  - Go to *Search*
  - Click *Records*
  - On the map, click England
  - Click on *England*
  - Click either *England and Wales Birth Registration Index, 1837-2008*; *England and Wales Marriage Registration Index, 1837-2005*, or *England and Wales Death Registration Index, 1837-2007*.
- Indexes are also found on the following websites:
  - [www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)
  - [www.ukbmd.org.uk](http://www.ukbmd.org.uk)
  - [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)
  - [www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com)

Thomas Naisbitt	
England and Wales Birth Registration Index	
Name	Thomas Naisbitt
Event Type	Birth Registration
Registration Quarter	Jan-Feb-Mar
Registration Year	1850
Registration District	Houghton Le Spring
County	Durham
Event Pl	
Volume	
Page	
Line Nu	

### Contents of Death Certificates:

- Name of the deceased
- Date of death
- Age at death
- Occupation
- Cause of death
- Name and residence of informant

### Finding Original Death Certificates:

- [www.gro.gov.uk](http://www.gro.gov.uk) – Original Death Certificates must be ordered from England.

## 6. CIVIL CEMETERY REGISTERS: (Beginning 1850s)

Before the Burial Acts of 1852 and 1853, the vast majority of the population were usually buried in the churchyards. Each parish church had their own cemetery. The Burial Acts allowed cities and towns to purchase land for public cemetery use. These cemeteries kept registers of those buried and may have recorded grave plots and other records.

### Finding Cemetery Registers:

- [www.deceasedonline.com](http://www.deceasedonline.com)
- [www.interment.net/uk](http://www.interment.net/uk)
- [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)
- Local archives and libraries in England

County Borough of Oldham.			REGISTER OF			
Number of Burial	Register and Number of Entries	NAME	RESIDENCE	Date of Death	Date of Burial	
1460	K13 5	Philip Stook	REMOVED FROM GRAVEYARD IN PROGRESSIVE METHODIST CHURCH, OLDHAM	Sept 1850	Dec 70	
1	K13 5	Betty Stook	do	Dec 1853	"	
2	K13 5	Ann Stook	do	Jan 1854	Dec 23	

### Contents of Cemetery Registers:

- Name of the deceased
- Burial date of deceased
- Name of cemetery
- May include death date and residence