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 – ($- 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 - (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 – (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 – (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.

**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.

**Burials can also be found on the following websites:**

- www.ancestry.com
- www.findmypast.com
- www.freereg.org.uk

### 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
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
  - 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 (Historical Records Collection)
  - www.ancestry.com
  - Google “England Monumental Inscriptions”

### 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
  - Go to Search
  - Click A-Z or 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 (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 (1796-1903)

### Contents of Monumental Inscriptions:
- Name of the deceased
- Death date
- Age at death (may include)
- May name family relationships

### 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.
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)

**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

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