

Bits & Pieces – British Institute 2023

(This handout is a collection of “bits and pieces” from my notes from the 2023 British Institute in Salt Lake City. These are random notes from various lectures by Dan Poffenberger and Kori Robbins. They are in no particular order or context but might be of interest as random bits of information about miscellaneous topics in England genealogy research that might pique further study or reading.

Indexes have mistakes and omissions. Always check what the index shows against the original record.

Explore **Goldie May** Chrome extension to track searches.

The major databases like Ancestry, Findmypast and FamilySearch do not all always have the same records.

Remember that from 1754 to 30 June 1837 all but Quakers and Jews were required to marry in the Church of England (Lord Hardwicke's Act).

Stillborn deaths were not recorded until after 1874. You may or may not find a birth recorded.

No father is listed for an illegitimate child from 1850-1874.

Before 1858 divorce required an Act of Parliament. Civil divorce began in 1858.

For civil registration records:

- 1866 age at death added
- 1911 mother's maiden name added to birth index
- 1912 spouse's surname added to marriage index
- 1969 birth date added to death index

Non-conformity began to rise from around the 1780's.

Less than 10% of marriages were by license.

Parish Registers and Bishops Transcripts are organized differently. In PR all baptisms, then marriages, then burials in date order. In BT by year from Lady Day to Lady Day – baptisms, marriages, burials then next year.

Probate records exist even before civil registration and church records, some dating back to the 11th century.

It's important to understand the court structure to work with probates before 1858. (Dan says FSL has an excellent collection of wills.)

Jurisdiction	Official	Court
Parish	Rector, Vicar	Peculiar
Archdeaconry	Archdeacon	Archdeaconry
Diocese	Bishop	(Episcopal) Consistory
Archdiocese	Archbishop	Prerogative (Canterbury, York)

See FSL catalog for online version of the probate registers developed by the British Reference staff in the library:

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/1015583?availability=Family%20History%20Library>.

For death date, note that if the will was signed the person was still living as of that date. If there is a probate the person was dead and the death would be between the date of the will and date of the probate.

Every county has a probate record page in the Wiki. e.g. in the Wiki search box enter "Middlesex" and click on Middlesex Probate Records for the page.

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