WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY RECORD OFFICE

Priory Park
Cape Road
Warwick
CV34 4JS
Tel: (01926) 738959
Email: recordoffice@warwickshire.gov.uk
Website: http://heritage.warwickshire.gov.uk/warwickshire-county-record-office

Searching for manorial documents using the Manorial Documents Register

The Manorial Documents Register (MDR) is the official index to English and Welsh manorial records and provides brief descriptions of documents and details of their locations in public and private hands. A number of counties have been revised and made available online, including Warwickshire.

You can search only the data held within the MDR by using the Manorial Documents Register home page within the Discovery catalogue:
http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/manorial-documents-register

For the remaining counties you can visit The National Archives to access the MDR on microfilm at The National Archives, or contact them with your enquiry at mdr@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk. For more information about the Manorial Documents Register, read the section about the Manorial Documents Register on their website.

How do I search for manorial records?
You can search by:
- manor name
- parish (for England only)
- historic county
- document type
- date

There are two search types on the homepage for the Manorial Documents Register. You can
- Search by manor
- Searching for manorial documents

You can also browse the alphabetical list of manors.

1. How to search by manor

If you select 'search by manor', you can search by:
- standard manor name e.g. Bengeo
- alternative manor name e.g. Richmond
- parish (English counties only)
- historic county (using the drop down list)

Alternatively you can use a combination of the above.

1.1 Search by manor name
Use the manor name search box to search by standard manor name or by a variant name. A search using a recognised variant name or alias will bring up results under the standard

manor name. E.g. a search for Richmond will bring up results for the Hertfordshire manor of Bengeo.

1.2 Find manors within a parish

Use the parish search box to return results relating to a specific parish.

The parish field exists for England in the Manorial Documents Register to enable manors to be identified separately and to distinguish between manors with the same or very similar names, in the same county.

Each manor name is linked to one parish only. This is the ancient ecclesiastical parish in which the demesne lands of the manor lay or the majority of the manor lands were located. However, the counties of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire have used civil parishes to help researchers due to the sheer size of the ancient ecclesiastical parishes.

No attempt has been made to link a manor name to all the parishes in which lands belonging to the manor may have been located. Where there are several parishes with identical names within one county, a distinction is made between them by adding a further reference in brackets to the parish name.

Manor names in the Manorial Documents Register for Wales are not linked to a parish. This information has not been compiled due to its complexity and the lack of sources.

1.3 Find manors within a historic county

Use the county search box to return results relating to a specific historic county by selecting a county from the drop down list. This drop down list provides a list of the historic counties which have been revised and made available online.

For any English counties missing from this list, you can access the MDR on microfilm at The National Archives, or contact us with your enquiry mdr@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk .

For up to date information about the progress of our projects to revise the remaining English counties, please visit our webpage.

2. Understanding the search results for 'Search by manor'

Any of the above searches will return a list of manor names, which match your search terms. If you have more than one manor in the search results you can sort by 'Title - ascending' to see them arranged alphabetically.

The initial search results will provide the name of the manor with its location (parish and county) and if no records are known to survive for a manor, at this stage the following phrase will be seen "No records known to survive".

The next stage is to select a manor by clicking on the link.

Once you have selected a manor the information is divided into two sections:

- View details of this record creator
- Collections

2.1 View details of this record creator

This provides details about the location (place and county) of the manor and (if available) the history of the manor with links to any online related resources.

Collections

This section provides a list of all the documents associated with this manor name. It is arranged in chronological order with the earliest first.

A typical manorial record entry will contain the following information:

- a short description of the document(s)

- where the document is held
- the date range of the document(s)
- a unique catalogue reference - the format of the reference will be different for different archives and institutions but is usually the key to requesting and viewing records

The following references may also be included:
- 'Annual Return' means the information drawn from The National Archives' [Accessions to Repositories survey](#)
- MI [Manorial Information] means that the information regarding the location of the document is held on file. For further information, please contact the [MDR team.](#)
- NRA number e.g. NRA 18628. This indicates that a catalogue of the collection including the document is filed in the National Register of Archives (NRA) located at The National Archives. Users of the MDR researching a particular topographical area may find it helpful to consult the NRA lists, as they may contain references to records which, although not strictly manorial in nature and therefore not included in the MDR, may nevertheless prove useful to their research

2.2 What can I do now?
Not every document noted on the MDR will be available for research. You should always check with the repository first before making a visit to view the document.

3. **How to search for manorial documents**

If you select 'searching for manorial documents', you can search by:
- standard manor name
- alternative manor name
- historic county (using the drop down list)
- parish (English counties only)
- date (must be used alongside one other search option)
- type of document (using the drop down list)

Alternatively you can use a combination of the above.

3.1 Search options

You will see a number of fields to help structure your search:
'Find records of manors containing all these words'
Enter keywords in the search field to search descriptions of the manorial documents as well as the record creator information. You can use this field to search by standard or alternative manor name.

Find records within a historic county
Use the parish search box to return results relating to a specific parish
Use the county search box to return results relating to a specific historic county by selecting a county from the drop down county list. This drop down lists all of the historic counties in alphabetical order which have been revised and are available online.
For any English counties missing from this list, you can access the MDR on microfilm at The National Archives, or contact them with your enquiry mdr@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk. For up to date information about the progress of our projects to revise the remaining English

counties, please [visit The National Archives webpage](#).

Find specific document types

Select a document type from the drop down menu to search for a specific type of manorial document. For an explanation for each type of manorial document, click on the link "document types" next to the document type drop down list. The link directs you to the glossary page providing an explanation for each type of manorial document noted in the drop down list.

Search for manorial documents by date

You can search for documents by date range or by specific date. Two fields must be completed for this search to work and the date field should be completed alongside one other field, either "Find records within a county or parish" or "types of documents" or "Find records of manors containing".

For example:

If you want to search for all documents dated 1250 -1300 noted in the MDR , enter the dates you require in the dates field and add the word 'MANOR' in the 'Find records of manors containing all these words' search field. This will return the desired results.

If you want to search for all court rolls dated 1250-1300 noted in the MDR, enter the dates you require in the dates field and select "court roll" from the drop down menu in the "types of documents" field. This will return results that match your criteria.

If you want to search for all manorial document dated 1250-1300 for the historic county of Essex noted in the MDR, enter the dates you require in the dates field and select the historic county of Essex from the historic county drop down list, found under "Find records within a county or parish". This will return results that match your criteria.

4. Understanding your search results for 'Searching for manorial documents'

Search results will be displayed under the 'Records' tab which means that record entries or 'documents' matching the search criteria will be presented individually rather than grouped together under the manor name .

Once you have selected your search criteria, you can sort your results using the drop down menu above the search results. You can sort by:

• relevance
• reference
• title (ascending and descending)
• date (ascending and descending)

Sorting is only enabled when there are fewer than 10,000 results. Refine the search (using the filters) to reduce the number of results and enable sorting.

You can use the filters to narrow your search results by date and/or by location (whether it is held by other archives or The National Archives).

4.1 What can I do now?

Not every document noted on the MDR will be available for research. You should always check with the repository first before making a visit to view the document.