



# Frequently Asked Questions

*What are the benefits of using a professional genealogist?*

Subscription sites now provide access to billions of digitised records. Their search features and pop-up hints make it easy to produce a family tree. However, It is easy to spend time and money researching what turns out to be the wrong family. You may be led astray by hints, unsourced trees or negative searches. You may hit a brick wall and be unable to trace the family further back.

As a professional genealogist, I select the appropriate records for the time, place and information required. I am aware of their location (online or in a physical repository), historical background and idiosyncrasies. I use these records in combination with other records to build up a family history. I also have experience of finding ways around brick walls or record gaps. The finished result is created using accepted genealogical standards. It will include all records consulted so you can be confident that this is your family tree and your story.

*Which records do you use and what do you expect to find?*

The key records for family story packages are the census returns, vital (birth, marriage, death) records and the parish register. These records give basic details e.g. where and when your ancestor was born, married and died, and where and with whom they lived. I use other sources as necessary and as time allows. These sources may include newspapers, criminal records, apprenticeship/occupational records, military records, land tax, probate, etc. My aim is not to find every record in which your ancestor appears. Rather, I will build up a picture of how your ancestors lived and the key events in their lives. Results will vary depending on the time period and survival of relevant records.

The finished report includes copies of all records used, as well as birth and death certificates (where available) for each key ancestor. Additional certificates, or marriage certificates, may be ordered at cost price.

*How long does research take?*

Genealogy is time consuming. In addition to the research time itself, I may be visiting archives or waiting for ordered documents to arrive. Projects typically take six weeks to twelve weeks.

When you book with me,, I will provide you with a time estimate for the project. You will receive weekly emails to update you on progress so far, documents ordered and work yet to be completed.

*What areas do you cover?*

The set research packages are offered for research in England, Wales and Scotland. Archive research is offered in Wiltshire, Hampshire, Gloucestershire and Bristol.



## Family Story Research

### *What if you hit a dead end?*

There may be occasions where I am unable to find the information required. The records required may not have survived, or an ancestor may not be recorded in expected records. In this case, I charge for the research time so far and refund the remainder. If you would like to continue the research, we can discuss a different research direction.

### *What information do you need to start?*

For family history packages, I require details of the starting person:

- Full name (including maiden name, nicknames or aliases)
- Date and place of birth (a birth certificate would be useful)
- Any other relevant details or family stories

### *Do you offer research using DNA?*

I am familiar with the principles of DNA research, and I am happy to use DNA tests alongside traditional genealogy.

### *How much are your bespoke packages?*

Bespoke packages are charged at £20 per hour, plus additional costs:

- Archive (travel and photography) costs.
- Cost of certificates (£1.50-£9.25 per certificate) and wills (£1.50-£13.50)
- Report printing and presentation in deluxe spring back binder (if required - £40)

Costs given are examples based on current (2023) prices.

Many people find it useful to commission work in block of time (e.g. two or three hours). Alternatively, I will agree a budget with you before beginning work, and will not go over this budget without your agreement.

### *What presentation options do you offer?*

The report and supporting documents will be provided electronically. For an additional £40, I offer burgundy spring back binder finished in a deluxe soft touch cover with 'Family History' on the front and spine. The reports and documents are presented inside on acid-free paper.

I may be able to offer additional presentation options, including larger copies of your family tree. Please let me know what you require.

### *Will you include photographs in the report?*

I include relevant photographs of e.g. locations or occupations where available. However, it is unusual to find photographs of an ancestor. I am happy to include photographs supplied by you.