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Created by Interwoven Productions CIC with the kind support of Devon County Council

#ConnectMe – Resource Pack 3

Celebrate your street – together!



Unit 5 - “Digging” up the history Part II – Other online resources/documents

Heritage Gateway

We mentioned the Heritage Gateway in the previous Unit and this can be a really useful resource to help you answer questions thrown up by maps. If you click on a feature turned up by the DCC Historic Environment Viewer, it should take you directly to the Heritage Gateway

<https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/>

Or, of course, you can go straight to the Heritage Gateway and use its search function for your street or any other nearby feature that you may have turned up in your research so far. The great thing about this resource is not only does it give you more information right away but it also lists lots of references and sources for further reading.

A note on references

A good research principle is, wherever possible, always follow items back to their original source. It's amazing how things change, in interpretation and translation, the further they get from the original record.

At the bottom of the Heritage Gateway listing you'll find a list of original references. These usually aren't links but if you copy and google them it's surprising how many journals and other sources are now online. Otherwise you can try and track them down in your local libraries – more on using libraries below.

Tithe apportionments

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/historicenvironment/tithe-map/> (click the “select a parish” dropdown and, if relevant, scroll to “Exeter” – the available Exeter parishes are listed there.

As we described in the previous Unit, Tithe maps show a code that relates to the Apportionment that holds all the detail. Fortunately for us, they have now digitised the Apportionments so that you can download them as spreadsheets and search them digitally using “Find” in your spreadsheet app.

Download the .csv version for this and you should find your Apportionment data looking like this:-

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1		Exeter St Sidwell Tithe Apportionment											
2	URN	Parish	Township/Tithing/	Landowner	Occupier	Plot No	Estate	Plot Name	Cultivatio	Acres	Roods	Perches	Notes
3	1	Exeter St Sidwell	Exeter St Sidwell	George Amory	George Amory	184		House and Garden			0	0	10
4	2	Exeter St Sidwell	Exeter St Sidwell	Joseph Allen	Joseph Allen	268		House and Garden			0	0	15
5	3	Exeter St Sidwell	Exeter St Sidwell	William Arden Esquire	William Strong	49		Garden	Garden		0	2	4
6	4	Exeter St Sidwell	Exeter St Sidwell	William Arden Esquire	William Strong	50		Field	Pasture		2	1	7
7	5	Exeter St Sidwell	Exeter St Sidwell	Mary Bailey	John Radmore	85		Field	Pasture		1	1	20
8	6	Exeter St Sidwell	Exeter St Sidwell	John Bailey	John Bailey	111		Garden			0	1	17

It’s the “Plot No” that relates to the Tithe Map.

Street directories

Street directories are incredibly useful ways of researching the occupation history and configuration of any particular street and are arranged in different sections of business and domestic addresses. Most local studies libraries will have a full set going well back into the early 1800s.

Covid note

At the time of writing libraries are just opening up again but with special social distancing measures. Check with your local studies library to find out what the current restrictions are.

Unfortunately not many of them have been digitised so they’re not freely available. It’s worth having a quick internet search though – for instance Besley’s Exeter Directory and Business Guide 1906-11 has been published by University of Leicester -

<http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/64290/>

Alternatively a subscription to one of the online family records search applications, such as *Ancestry* or *Find my Past*, will give you full access. Membership can be costly over long periods but occasionally they have free research days so it’s worth collecting your queries and keeping an eye out for their offers.

Census records

A census has been taken in the UK every ten years since 1841. This is a great way of tracking the occupation history of your home and street. Here are couple of things that it's useful to remember when searching Census records:-

- 1) Street names are likely to have changed since these early census records and you may need to make like a detective to track your street down.
- 2) There's a 100 year limit – so the 1921 census won't be available until 2021. Next year is a big year in local history circles!
- 3) The census captures who was in that house on that day, so may include people who don't normally live there or exclude individuals who were away.

1939 Register

At the outbreak of WWII the government undertook a survey of the population to help with managing the issue of ID cards, rationing and other wartime administration.

Again, both census records and the 1939 Register tend not to be freely available but can be accessed through *Ancestry* or *Find my Past*.

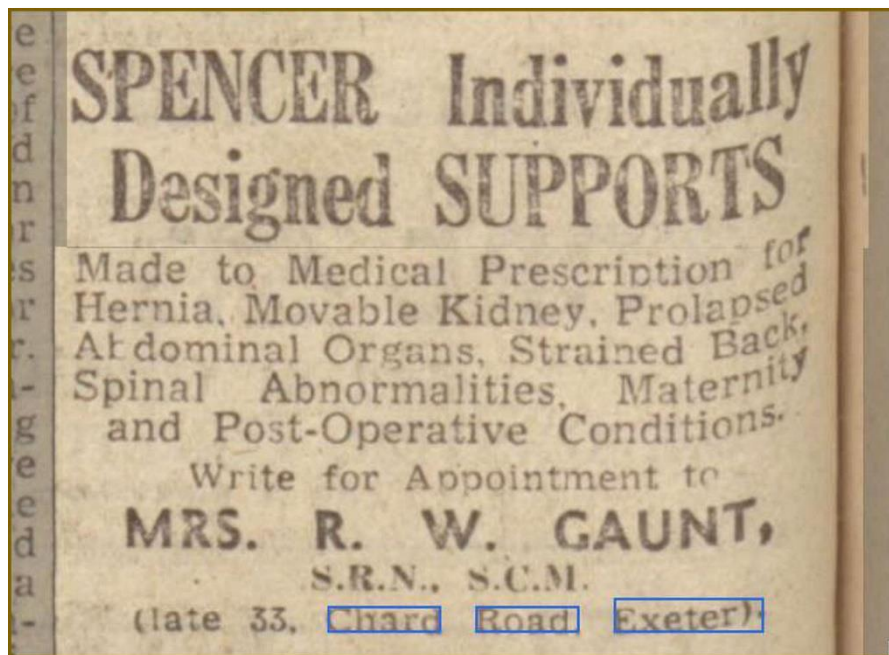
British Newspaper Archive

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/help/about>

This is a completely searchable archive of 40 million newspaper pages since 1800. You get the first 3 pages free but then you need to subscribe to a monthly fee. It's worth noting that newspaper and journal search is also available under *Ancestry* or *Find my Past* along with a whole set of other records, so that might be a better option for prolonged research.

Newspaper archives do have the great advantage that they flesh out history with stories of real people's lives – their businesses, their marriages, obituaries and their misdemeanours! This makes researching your street huge fun and is bound to turn up something interesting to stimulate your neighbours into some fun activity.

For instance, a quick search of Chard Road, Exeter revealed a wonderful advert for surgical supports! Newspapers can give us a rich and fascinating glimpse into past times.



Western Times, Friday 7th May 1943

Using other documents

Do check your own documentation too – rent agreements, property deeds, family correspondence – all great historical resources.

A note on libraries

If you have a local University don't forget that they usually publish their catalogues online and they often allow access to their libraries for references purposes.

Best to check this, especially during the Covid crisis, but University libraries – and particularly all of those hundreds of post-graduate theses, can be really useful reference sources.