

Bristol Archives

## Building and house history: sources for research

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*A house in Temple Street, from a survey of the  
St Thomas church lands, 1816-1817 (P.St T/Ch/3/31)*

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**Online catalogue**

[archives.bristol.gov.uk](http://archives.bristol.gov.uk)

**Website**

[www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-archives](http://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-archives)

**Email**

[archives@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:archives@bristol.gov.uk)

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0117 922 4224

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# Contents

Introduction	4
How to start	5
Online resources	6
Know Your Place	6
Our catalogue	6
The National Archives' catalogues	6
Family history sites	7
Victoria County History	7
Land Registry	7
Listed buildings	7
Archival records	7
Maps and plans	7
Trade directories	7
Estate records	8
Manorial tenancies	10
Title deeds	10
Roots of title	11
Sale particulars	11
Insurance records and plans	11
Highway adoption notices	12
Records of the Bristol Blitz	13
Archaeological reports	13
Photographs	14
Records of occupants	14
Poll books and electoral registers	14
Censuses	15

Wills and probate	15
Taxes, rates, surveys and valuations	16
Taxes	16
Rates	17
Surveys and valuations	17
Other sources	18
General reading	18
Useful contacts	21

**We are grateful to the compilers of the many indexes, lists and transcriptions listed in this guide**

## Introduction

There are many different sources you can use to uncover the history of a building. These sources may help you to discover many different things, such as how and when it was built and modified; how it was used over time; how much it cost and who built it. You may also find out about the people who have lived or worked in the building.

The process of researching a building's history can be extremely rewarding, but it may also require considerable time and patience. There are almost as many different types of useful documents as there are different types of building, so you'll need to find out which ones are relevant for you.

It is important to remember that in the past, property was usually identified by the name of the owner, tenant or occupier, rather than the name of the site. The local area may not have had street names (or these may have changed) and house numbers were not used until the 19th century.

Even after tracing a property through the records, it still may not be possible to produce a comprehensive history of a building. The research process can nevertheless be a rewarding, and sometimes surprising, experience.

### About this guide

This source guide highlights some key collections and individual items for exploring the history of Bristol buildings, but it is not an exhaustive list.

To find further material, visit our [online catalogue](#) - see below for more information.

### Using our collections

To find out more information about visiting Bristol Archives, please [visit our website](#).

**Resources which are available online are highlighted in blue boxes like this**

## How to start

Before you consider looking at archive sources, start to familiarise yourself with the building you are researching.

### What do you already know?

What information do you already have about the building, anecdotally or otherwise? If you own or live in the building do you have any deeds, documents, or old photographs of it? You could also speak to your neighbours or local people to see what they may know.

### Explore the site

If it's still standing and you are able to visit, it's a good idea to walk around the building's site or footprint and to explore the local area. This will help you to get a sense of the types of local building materials used and vernacular architectural styles. You'll also notice other things, such as the landscape around the site and its proximity to important roads, rivers, canals, and so on. All of these things may have influenced the form and function of your building.

The building's style and construction materials may offer clues about the date of the building but remember that alterations and additions may mask an earlier core. Date stones might also be helpful but be cautious: a date stone merely records a date, which might relate to a person or an important event rather than the building.

### Who used the building?

You may start to identify people connected to your building, in deeds or through initials on date stones, or heraldic elements found on fixtures and fillings (including panelling and stained glass).

These might offer clues about how people or organisations were associated with the building at some point in its history. Many of the records mentioned in this guide will mention people connected to your property, so it will be useful to note these names.

### Reading material

Finally, published sources are also a good starting point. It can be useful to read some general books about tracing the history of a building and different architectural styles. Local books can also be very useful, as county and parish histories often give details of particular buildings. We have suggested useful titles in the reading list on page 18.

## Online resources

### Know Your Place

Historic maps of Bristol are available free of charge via the [Know Your Place website](#), which is supported by Bristol City Council. This digital mapping resource for the south west region also provides access to heritage collections and the council's Historic Environment Record data.

[Bristol's Know Your Place site](#) contains thousands of images from the city's collections, including images from Bristol Archives, the museum collections and the local studies section at Bristol Central Library.

### Our catalogue

Our [online catalogue](#) describes the collections that are available for research at Bristol Archives. In general, it provides only a description of the material, which anyone can come to consult in our public searchroom. However, we have digitised some large image collections and these can be viewed within catalogue entries.

To search the catalogue thoroughly:

- Try different search terms, including the name of the building, street and geographic area. It will help to know the parish the property belongs to and to remember that place names and parish boundaries change over time.
- Add an asterisk to your search term to find all results that start with those letters - for example, searching for 'Queen\* Square' will find variations such as 'Queen', 'Queens' or 'Queen's'.

### The National Archives' catalogues

Two catalogues on The National Archives website, to help you find records related to Bristol in other archive collections:

[Discovery catalogue](#)

[Manorial Documents Register](#)

## Family history sites

Sites such as [Ancestry.co.uk](https://www.ancestry.co.uk) and [Findmypast.co.uk](https://www.findmypast.co.uk) provide access to census records, trade directories and other records about people. These are both subscription sites but access is free at Bristol Archives and Bristol libraries.

During the coronavirus lockdown, Bristol library card holders can access Ancestry free of charge - see the [Bristol libraries website](#) for details.

## Victoria County History

Free access to many volumes from the ongoing [Victoria County History](#) series.

## Land Registry

The Land Registry can advise on ownership of property or land, prices paid (if sold since April 2000) and relevant rights of way or restrictions. An online service is available at [www.landregistry.gov.uk](http://www.landregistry.gov.uk).

## Listed buildings

For descriptions and images of current listed buildings, visit [Historic England's website](#).

## Archival records

### Maps and plans

Researching the history of a building or house usually starts with looking at maps of the area. Bristol Archives holds a large number of maps and plans. As these have been created for many purposes, they can be found in many different collections, from the records of Bristol City Council (and its predecessors) to the archives of private estates and companies.

For more information, see our separate guide to [maps and plans](#).

### Trade directories

As well as using local maps, initial research into the history of a building or house often begins with trade directories, which were first published in Bristol in 1775.

They list tradespeople and householders, with the earlier books arranged by name and trade. From 1870, the directories are also arranged by street and then become useful for dating streets and buildings.

Directories were generally published annually from the mid-19th century (except 1941-1943) until publication ceased around 1973.

Some trade directories for Bristol can be found on the Ancestry website (see page 4). [The University of Leicester Special Collections](#) website also provides free access to digitised copies of nearly 700 trade directories.

## **Estate records**

### **Corporation of Bristol/Bristol City Council**

The Corporation of Bristol (the predecessor of Bristol City Council) owned a number of estates and administered others on behalf of city charities. The estates were situated both in the city and in neighbouring counties and Bristol Archives holds maps and plans, surveys, rentals, deeds and leases from the 17th century onwards.

### **Bristol Municipal Charities**

Following reform of local government in Bristol in 1936, individual charities previously controlled by Bristol Corporation were amalgamated into the Bristol Municipal Charities (today called Bristol Charities).

This new organisation became responsible for managing properties owned by these funds and administering the income they raised. The charities held property in Bristol and neighbouring counties, as well as estates in Bradwell and Hockley in Essex. Their records therefore include maps and plans, rentals and surveys (Ref. [33041](#)).

You can see photographs of properties managed by BMC in 1906 on our online catalogue (Ref. [33041/BMC/12/1](#)) and on [Know Your Place](#).



## Society of Merchant Venturers

Another substantial landowner was the Society of Merchant Venturers. It acquired the manor of Clifton in the late 17th century and also administered estates outside Bristol as a trustee for the Colston charities and St Monica Home of Rest, including the manors of Monkton Stogursey and Locking. Amongst the Society's records are maps and plans, deeds and rentals for these lands (Ref. [SMV](#))

## Church of England

The Church of England was a major landowner and many collections of parish records include deeds dating from the Middle Ages to the 19th century. Parish collections ([see list](#)) may also contain maps and plans of the parish, including copies of enclosure and tithe maps, and of its property holdings.

The Bishop and the Dean and Chapter of Bristol (Ref. [DC/E](#)) held property in the city, surrounding counties and as far afield as Great Marlow in Buckinghamshire and Penarth in Glamorganshire. Records date from the 14th century onward and include maps and plans, rentals and leases.

## Other landowners

Bristol Archives holds records of several Bristol families who owned country estates.

The largest collection belonged to the **Smyth family of Ashton Court** (Ref. [AC](#)) who owned widespread estates in north Somerset and south Gloucestershire. Their estate records include rentals, surveys, valuations and accounts. There are also maps, some of which are accompanied by terriers (recording the type of cultivation and measure of each plot, plus names of tenants) and plans of some properties owned by the estate.

We also hold papers of the **Southwell family**, who were also local landowners (Ref. [42725](#) and others). They lived at **Kingsweston House**, which they owned for over 150 years. Edward Southwell commissioned Sir John Vanbrugh to design a new house in the early 18th century. We hold drawings produced by his office which include some for Kingsweston House (Ref. [33746](#)). There is also a volume of maps of several estates owned by Edward Southwell (grandson of the above), in the parishes of Henbury and Westbury-on-Trym, drawn by Isaac Taylor in 1772 (Ref. [26570](#)).

## Manorial tenancies

Manors were geographical areas, outside of towns, granted by the Crown. Tenants on the manor's lands held property by a system of 'copyhold'. Changes to copyhold were recorded in the manor court rolls and these provide the names of tenants and descriptions of the individual parcels of copyhold land. The manorial system was started by the Normans and continued until 1922. Where court rolls survive they can be used to trace the descent of properties sometimes over several centuries.

Records of some of the manors held by the Smyth family survive from as early as the 14th century and some continue into the 18th or 19th centuries (Ref. [AC/M](#)). Estate records of the Dean and Chapter of Bristol (Ref. [DC/E](#)) include, amongst others, the manors of Bradford-on-Avon 1563-1866 and South Cerney 1661-1858. Records of Queen Elizabeth's Hospital school (Bristol Municipal Charities collection, Ref. [33041/Sch/QEH](#)) include manorial records of Congresbury, 1589-1835.

Manorial records were written in Latin well into the 18th century. It is worth checking whether any court rolls have been transcribed by a local history society.

The [Manorial Documents Register](#) lists manorial records throughout England and in which repository they can be found. The website also provides explanations of the different type of manor documents and how to use them.

## Title deeds

Title deeds (referred to here as 'deeds' and including conveyances, mortgages and leases) are probably the most valuable source for tracing the history of a building. Each deed records changes in ownership, describes the property and its extent, and should specify if a building was newly-erected or substantially rebuilt.

Understanding the handwriting and terminology of old deeds can be challenging. They generally contain a lot of repetition and legal phrases and earlier deeds are written in Latin. However much of this is formulaic 'legalese' and several books and pamphlets available at Bristol Archives will help you to quickly identify the information relevant to your research.

Deeds were often made on very large parchment sheets, which have been stored folded. Over time these can become stiff and are sometimes tricky to handle. Our searchroom staff will be able to show you the best way to handle and read them.

Collections of deeds often include 'abstracts of title' which summarise the contents and are easier to use than reading each deed. Deeds occasionally include small plans of the property in question.

Our online catalogue contains details of large numbers of deeds for properties in Bristol and beyond, dating from the 12th century onwards. However, house numbers were only widely introduced in the 19th century. Before this, it can be difficult to identify a building described in a deed as (for instance) 'one messuage in Corn Street'. Earlier deeds may describe adjoining properties, known as abuttals, which can help to identify sites more precisely.

Entries in our catalogue generally include a brief description of each deed, the names of the parties involved and the name/description of the property.

When searching for deeds in our catalogue, try terms such as 'conveyance', 'mortgage', 'lease', 'release' in the title field as well as the surnames, if you know them, of any landowners, property owners, tenants, or businesses associated with your building.

## **Roots of title**

Roots of title are written summaries of ownership of property or land. They describe unregistered sites in enough detail to identify it and show the movement of the title (ownership) from one owner to the next, proving that the ownership is genuine.

Roots of title have been produced for many of the properties owned by Bristol City Council and are listed in our online catalogue (Ref. [RT](#)).

## **Sale particulars**

Bristol Archives holds a considerable number of 19th and 20th century particulars and conditions of sale. These are held within various archive collections and can be found by searching our catalogue. They are similar to modern estate agents' sale particulars but contain much more information and often include maps and photographs. They may relate to individual houses or to whole estates, including tenants' farms and cottages.

## **Insurance records and plans**

### **Fire insurance records**

We hold Sun Fire Office policy books for 1820-1866 (Ref. [37165/1](#)). These volumes are indexed by the personal name of the policy-holder. Most of the insured properties are in the city but some are in the surrounding countryside.

The books frequently contain details of the construction of buildings and for commercial premises, the entries often mention machinery and heating appliances. The occupier of the property (rather than the policy-holder) may be provided and sometimes details of adjacent properties.

## **Goad insurance plans**

From the late 18th century, commercial plan books were produced to inform fire insurance underwriters about the characteristics of buildings. After around 1880, Charles E Goad's company dominated the market until production stopped in 1970.

The plans cover central urban areas and contain numerous details about buildings, such as dimensions, construction materials, number of floors, types of doors and windows, and how buildings were used. They also give incidental information such as street widths and names, rights of way, property boundaries, boilers, engines and hydrants and other details needed by insurance companies. The scale was usually 1 inch to 40 feet.

The books of plans were leased to insurance companies. Periodically, they would be returned to Goad's to be updated. Often, only certain parts of a plan were reprinted and then pasted onto the original, which obscured earlier details and resulted in maps of multiple dates.

Bristol Archives holds four sets of Goad plans. Each contains basemaps dating from 1887-1896, with later amendments dated c1930-1942 (Ref. [40860/6](#)), c1930-1948 (Ref. [40904](#)), c1930-1960 (Ref. [43885](#)) and c1930-1961 (Ref. [35033](#)). These mainly cover central Bristol and areas of Bedminster, St Philips and Avonmouth docks.

You can see some **Goad insurance plans for 1887-1896** on [Know Your Place](#). These versions come from the British Library and their website has a useful guide to the [symbols used on the maps](#).

## **Highway adoption notices**

These records were created whenever Bristol City Council took on responsibility for a previously private street. They contain a written notice and a plan showing the position and numbers/names of buildings. They also include other information the council would need to look after the street, including measurements, gradients and the location of sewers and pavements. The records are catalogued by street name and cover approximately 1874-1970 (Ref. [40287](#)).

## Records of the Bristol Blitz

Between September 1940 and May 1944, German air raids on Bristol caused extensive loss of life and damage to properties and homes. The effects on the city's landscape are documented in sources including maps showing bombs dropped on the city (refs. [33779/7](#), [33779/8](#), [33779/9](#)) and plans for post-war reconstruction (Ref. [40267](#)).

Photographs of bomb damage can be found in images from the Bristol Fire Brigade (Ref. [PicBox/3/Blitz](#)) and press photographer Jim Facey (refs. [41969](#), [44460](#)).

Know Your Place contains a basemap of **aerial photography from 1946**, supplied by Historic England, which shows the extent of bomb damage in Bristol.

You can compare these images with two layers showing where bombs fell in the 1940 Good Friday air raid (from Ref. [33779/7](#)) and Jim Facey's bomb damage photographs.

To find out more, see our [Bristol Blitz source guide](#).

## Archaeological reports

If you are lucky, you may find that an archaeological report has already been conducted for your building or site. These studies can be required as a condition of planning permission when a property is redeveloped, especially for listed buildings or historically significant sites.

The reports record information that might be lost during redevelopment. They document the history of the site, with maps, plans and historic and modern photographs, and cite the archival and published sources used for research. Reports are listed on our online catalogue (Ref. [42743](#) and others).

You can find some of these documents on the **archaeological reports** layer on [Know Your Place](#) (black pins). The layer also gives the date and location of archaeological watching briefs and excavations (white pins).

## Photographs

The following photographic collections can be viewed on our online catalogue and include many images of buildings in Bristol.

### Photographs of buildings

Properties managed by Bristol Municipal Charities, 1906 (Ref. [33041/BMC/12/1](#)) ^

Bristol City Council: Housing Department, 1920s-1970s (Ref. [40307](#)) ^

Bomb damage during the Second World War, 1940-1944 (Ref. [41969](#)) ^

Industrial and commercial buildings in Bristol, 1950s (Ref. [39864](#))

Bristol City Council: photographs by conservation officer John Trelawny-Ross, c1970-c1990 (Ref. [45212](#)) ^

### General image collections

Bristol City Council: Public Relations photographs, 1897-1977 (Ref. [40826](#)) ^

The Vaughan postcard collection, mainly 20<sup>th</sup> century (Ref. [43207](#)) ^

The general postcards collection, mainly 20<sup>th</sup> century (Ref. [Postcards](#))

The PicBox collection (Ref. [PicBox](#))

^ Images from these collections can also be found mapped by location on [Know Your Place](#).

## Records of occupants

Learning about the occupants of a house can enhance its history, and sometimes, the only way to trace its history may be through the people who lived in it. Wills and inventories, census records, registers of electors, rate books, and trade directories are all useful sources of information.

### Poll books and electoral registers

We hold poll books and electoral registers showing the names of registered voters who were resident at a particular address.

They can be time-consuming to search, as they are not arranged by voters' names but by division, ward, polling district and then street within each polling district. However, a

useful pamphlet, 'A Guide to Bristol Poll Books and Electoral Registers' describes the areas covered by each division and ward (Ref. [InfoBox/31/31](#)).

Before the Reform Act of 1832, only burgesses (also known as freemen) could vote in Parliamentary elections. Printed poll books, arranged by parish and ward, record how burgesses cast their votes and these exist for various Bristol Parliamentary elections 1715-1847. After 1832, more men could vote, but still only a small proportion of the adult male population.

Electoral registers, which list people eligible to vote in Bristol constituencies, have been compiled annually since 1843. Acts of Parliament of 1867 and 1884 considerably extended the right to vote, so more men are listed after those dates.

From 1918, women over the age of 30 could vote and from 1928, everyone over the age of 21 could vote. In 1969, voting age was lowered to 18.

Electoral registers were not compiled from 1916-1917 or 1941-1944.

## **Censuses**

Taken every 10 years, the censuses record where everyone was living on the night of the census and their ages, occupations and birthplaces.

The first census was taken in 1801 but the early ones were purely statistical. It was not until 1841 that personal details were recorded. For reasons of confidentiality, the censuses are not released to the public until 100 years have passed. The 1911 census is the most recent available for study.

You can search and view census records on [Ancestry](#) and [Find My Past](#) (see page 4).

## **Wills and probate**

Before 1858, probate was dealt with by the church courts, also called consistory courts.

Wills held at Bristol Archives were proved in the Consistory Court of Bristol and date from 1572 onwards, with a few earlier ones back to 1546. The court covered areas within the City and Deanery of Bristol. This included some parts of north Somerset and south Gloucestershire, then a wider area from 1836, following boundary changes caused by reorganisation of the deaneries and archdeaconries.

If a person's will involved assets in more than one diocese, or if their goods were worth more than £5, the will was instead proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. Those wills are held by the National Archives.

However, only a small proportion of people made a will. For people who died without leaving a will (intestate) there may be a letter of administration or an administration bond (often referred to as “admons”). We hold letters of administration for 1770-1857 and bonds for 1661-1857. We also hold probate inventories, which list the deceased person’s movable goods and their value, from 1542-1804.

After 1858, England and Wales were divided into civil probate districts and wills were proved by the probate registries. We hold copies of wills proved by Bristol District Probate Registry 1858-1941, which covers a wider area than the Bristol Consistory Court.

Bristol probate records are available on microfiche in our searchroom. A will typically provides the names of the person’s spouses and relatives, along with an indication of the goods they owned and how wealthy they were. It may also mention other properties they owned. Earlier probate inventories were listed room by room, which may give you more of a sense of each room within the property.

You can access the following sources online:

- An index of Bristol wills from 1715-1758, available on our [online catalogue](#)
- Transcriptions of Bristol wills, 1546-1603 ([Bristol Record Society](#), volume 44)
- Transcriptions of selected probate inventories from 1690-1804 ([Bristol Record Society](#), volumes 54, 57 and 60)
- Copies of wills from 1384-1858 from [The National Archives](#), available to order online
- Copies of wills from 1858 from the [Probate Registry](#), available to order online

## Taxes, rates, surveys and valuations

We hold various taxes and rates records from the 17th century onwards. Some taxes and rate books are arranged by street, which can be helpful when tracing the history of a building or house. Some taxes and rates were paid by the owners of houses, while others were paid by the occupiers.

### Taxes

Some taxes were specifically house-related, such as the hearth tax (by which occupiers were taxed for each hearth) and the window and house tax. Bristol Archives holds hearth tax records for 1662 and 1665-1673, (Ref. [F/Tax/A/1/a](#)) window and house tax records of c1702-1808 (Ref. [F/WT](#)), and there are also records of the land tax 1696-1849 (Ref. [F/LT](#))



## Rates

Rate books for the old city centre parishes and the Castle Precincts ward survive for 1698-1878. The most complete series recorded the collection of the poor rate, which was levied by parish/ward twice a year between 1698 and 1823 (Ref. [F/PR](#)). There are a few earlier poor rate books amongst the records of individual city parishes.

Other series of city rate books include those for the lamp and scavenger rate, 1700-1806 (Ref. [F/LSR](#)), the watch rate 1755-1836 (Ref. [F/WR](#)), the harbour rate 1805-1823 (Ref. [F/HBR](#)), and the pitching, paving, cleansing and lighting rate 1806-1826 (Ref. [F/PPR](#)). From 1825-1878 the various city rates were paid together as 'consolidated rates' (Ref. [F/CR](#)).

Outside of the old city centre parishes and Castle Precincts ward, the poor rates (Ref. [F/PR](#)) also cover Clifton 1825-1845, St George 1800-1854, the out-parish of St Philip & Jacob 1810-1841, the out-parish of St James 1771-1786 and the out-parishes of St James and St Paul 1787-1832. The lighting and watching rate is also held for Clifton 1824-1842 (Ref. [F/CLR](#)).

The records of individual country parishes sometimes contain poor rate books and there may be other rates - for example, there are some highway rates in the records of the parishes of Bitton and Aust.

Among the diocesan records there are church rate books 1723-1860 (covering dates only) for a number of parishes, mostly those in the City and Deanery of Bristol. (Ref. [EP/A/47](#))

Aside from the years 1914 and 1925, (Ref. [F/Rat/B](#)), there are no rating records from 1879-1932. From 1933-1969, a large series of rate books, arranged by Parliamentary ward, covers the wider area of the modern city (Ref. [F/Rat/B](#)).

## Surveys and valuations

Surveys for the purpose of setting rates were made in 1823 (Ref. [04248](#)), 1837-1839 (Ref. [04249](#)), 1851 (Ref. [04250](#)), 1862 (Ref. [04251](#)) and 1871 (Ref. [04252](#)). They cover properties in the old city and (from 1837) the borough of Bristol, including areas that became part of the city when its boundaries were extended in 1835, such as Clifton, Westbury-on-Trym and Bedminster.

The surveys list owners and occupiers, with details of the properties and the rateable values.

There are also a number of valuation lists for some areas for the period, 1897-1938 (Ref. [F/Rat/V/1](#)). These list owners and occupiers, with details of the properties and the rateable values.

## Inland Revenue Valuation/ District Valuation

The Inland Revenue carried out a valuation of all land in 1910, to prepare for a new taxation on land values. These valuation books (often known as the 1910 Domesday Books) contain details of the owners and occupiers, descriptions of the properties and their rateable values (Ref. [37271](#)).

We hold valuation books covering Bristol (as far as Sneyd Park, Westbury Park and Bishopston to the north, Easton and Redfield to the east, Clifton and Leigh Woods to the west and Bedminster as far south as St John's Lane), Westbury-on-Trym, Henbury, Bishopsworth, Brislington and Whitchurch.

There are street indexes for most of these books, except the 'Bristol North' section (which covered an area including Bishopston, Redland and Westbury Park) and Henbury, Bishopsworth and Brislington and Whitchurch.

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## Other sources

- The Bristol Museums collections include a large range of maps and photographs useful for researching the history of Bristol buildings. These can be searched on the [museums' online catalogue](#).

The **Hartley photographs** information layer on [Know Your Place](#) contains photographs of Bristol buildings in the 1930s-1940s. These images from the museum collections were taken by commercial photographers Veale & Co.

- Bristol Reference Library (at the Central Library) holds a range of local history sources including maps, trade directories, electoral registers, illustrations, photographs, and local studies books.
  - Other record offices (locally and elsewhere) may hold records related to buildings in Bristol. Most have an online catalogue and their records may also be listed on The National Archives' Discovery catalogue: [discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk)
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## General reading

The following publications are available in our searchroom:

- *Tracing the History of Your House* by Nick Barratt, 2002 (Ref. [Bk/2281](#))
- *Tracing the History of Houses* by Bill Breckon, Jeffrey Parker & Martin Andrew, 2000 (Ref. [Bk/2198](#))

- *Investigating Old Buildings* by Lance Smith, 1985 (Ref. [Bk/55](#))
- *This Old House: a Pocket Guide to Tracing the History of Your House* by David Iredale, 1968 (Ref. [Pamphlet/1244](#))
- *Your House Has a History: A Brief Guide on How to Trace the History of a Building* by Kate Haslam & others, 1993 (Ref. [Pamphlet/1691](#))
- *Hidden House History* by The History Channel (Ref. [Pamphlet/1883](#))

## Bristol Architecture

- *Bristol: An Architectural History* by Andor Gomme, Michael Jenner & Bryan Little, 1979 (Ref. [Bk/237](#))
- *Bristol (Pevsner's Architectural Guide)* by Andrew Foyle, 2004 (Ref. [Bk/2322](#))
- *North Somerset and Bristol (Pevsner's Architectural Guide)* by Nikolaus Pevsner, 1958 (Ref. [Bk/936](#))
- *The Georgian Buildings of Bristol* by Walter Ison, 1952 (Ref. [Bk/236](#))
- *The Eighteenth Century Architecture of Bristol* by C F W Denning, 1923 (Ref. [Bk/233](#))
- *Victorian Buildings in Bristol* by Clare Crick, 1975 (Ref. [Bk/238](#))
- *The Bristol House* by Keith Mallory, 1985 (Ref. [Bk/167](#))
- *The Town House in Medieval and Early Modern Bristol* by Roger Leech, 2014 (Ref. [Bk/2540](#))

Data from Roger Leech's research has been mapped onto the **Bristol town houses** information layer on [Know Your Place](#)

## History of Bristol and its environs

- *The Topography of Medieval and Early Modern Bristol, part 1* by Roger Leech, Bristol Record Society volume 48, 1997 (Ref. [J/BRS/48](#) and [available on the BRS website](#))
- *The Topography of Medieval and Early Modern Bristol, part 2: the St Michael's Hill Precinct of the University of Bristol* by Roger Leech, Bristol Record Society volume 52, 2000 (Ref. [J/BRS/52](#) and [available on the BRS website](#))
- *A New History of Gloucestershire* by Samuel Rudder, 1779 (1977 edition) (Ref. [Bk/413](#))
- *The Ancient and Present State of Glostershire, parts 1-2* by Sir R Atkyns, 1712 (1974 edition) (refs. [Bk/414](#), [Bk/415](#))

- *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset, vols 1-3* by Rev J Collinson, 1791 (refs. [Bk/423](#), [Bk/424](#), [Bk/425](#))
- *Victoria County History: Somerset, vols 1-2* 1906, 1911 (refs. [Bk/930](#), [Bk/931](#))
- *Victoria County History: Gloucestershire, vol 2*, 1907 (refs. [Bk/929](#))

### Manorial records

- *Manorial Records* by Denis Stuart, 1992 (Ref. [Bk/2018](#))
- *Using Manorial Records* by Mary Ellis, 1994 (Ref. [Bk/2125](#))

Ownership of manors is recorded in published county histories such as those listed above. Many local history societies have also made studies of manors in their area.

### Title deeds

- *Reading Old Title Deeds* by Julian Cornwall, 1993 (Ref. [Pamphlet/1748](#))
- *Old Title Deeds* by Nat W Alcock, 1986 (Ref. [Bk/32](#))

### Tithe records

- *Tithe Surveys for Historians* by Roger J P Kain and Hugh C Prince, 2000 (Ref. [Bk/2201](#))
- *Tithe Maps, Apportionments and the 1836 Act* by E J Evans, 1993 (Ref. [Pamphlet /1601](#))

### Historic maps

- *Historic Maps in Avon* is a list of tithe and estate maps held in Bristol and other local record offices and is available in our searchroom
- *Maps for Local History* by P Hindle, 1988 (Ref. [Bk/67](#)) gives more information about using and understanding maps

### Photographs of Bristol

- The *Bristol As It Was, 1854-1959* series by Reece Winstone, 1957-1988 (Ref. [Bk/194-212](#), [Bk/2155](#)).

## Useful contacts

### Bristol Reference Library

Bristol Central Library, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TL

Tel 0117 903 7202

Email [refandinfo@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:refandinfo@bristol.gov.uk)

Website [www.bristol.gov.uk/libraries-archives](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/libraries-archives)

### Bristol Museum & Art Gallery

Queens Road, Bristol BS8 1RL

Tel 0117 922 3571

Email [bristolmuseums@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:bristolmuseums@bristol.gov.uk)

Website [www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/collections](http://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/collections)

### Bath Record Office

Guildhall, High Street, Bath BA1 5AW

Tel 01225 477421

Email [archives@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:archives@bathnes.gov.uk)

Website [www.batharchives.co.uk](http://www.batharchives.co.uk)

### Gloucestershire Archives

Clarence Row, Alvin Street, Gloucester GL1 3DW

Tel 01452 425295

Email [archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

Website [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives)

### Somerset Archives & Local Studies

Somerset Heritage Centre, Brunel Way, Langford Mead,

Norton Fitzwarren, Taunton TA2 6SF

Tel 01823 278805 (enquiries)

Tel 01823 337600 (appointments)

Email [archives@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:archives@somerset.gov.uk)

Website [www.somerset.gov.uk/archives](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/archives)

### Wiltshire and Swindon Archives

Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre, Cocklebury Road, Chippenham SN15 3QN

Tel 01249 705500

Email [archives@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:archives@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Website [www.wshc.eu/our-services/archives.html](http://www.wshc.eu/our-services/archives.html)

## Land Registry

- Online service: [www.landregistry.gov.uk](http://www.landregistry.gov.uk)
- Gloucester office: 01452 511111  
For enquiries about properties in Bristol and South Gloucestershire
- Plymouth office: 01752 636000  
For enquiries about properties in North Somerset and Bath & NE Somerset

## Historic England Archive Services

Including enquiries about listed buildings

The Engine House, Fire Fly Avenue, Swindon SN2 2EH

Tel 01793 414600

Email [archive@historicengland.org.uk](mailto:archive@historicengland.org.uk)

Website [historicengland.org.uk/listing](http://historicengland.org.uk/listing)

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