



# Tracing Your Ancestors Through Local History Records: A Guide for Family Historians

*Jonathan Oates*

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Family history should reveal more than facts and dates, lists of names and places – it should bring ancestors alive in the context of their times and the surroundings they knew – and research into local history records is one of the most rewarding ways of gaining this kind of insight into their world. That is why Jonathan Oates's detailed introduction to these records is such a useful tool for anyone who is trying to piece together a portrait of family members from the past. In a series of concise and informative chapters he looks at the origins and importance of local history from the sixteenth century onwards and at the principal archives – national and local, those kept by government, councils, boroughs, museums, parishes, schools and clubs. He also explains how books, photographs and other illustrations, newspapers, maps, directories, and a range of other resources can be accessed and interpreted and how they can help to fill a gap in your knowledge. As well as describing how these records were compiled, he highlights their limitations and the possible pitfalls of using them, and he suggests how they can be combined to build up a picture of an individual, a family and the place and time in which they lived.

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