Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies

Research Guide for Caribbean Family History
This is a list of some resources that are available to help you start your family history research if you have links with the Caribbean.

**Finding documents for your research**

**Records in the UK**

Records of births marriages and deaths England Wales 1837 : on ancestry, findmypast, and FreeBMD

Online parish records of baptisms, marriage and burials ; see familysearch

Census returns for UK 1841 – 1911 on ancestry, findmypast,

Military records :

- WWI soldiers records (Service and Pension) online at Ancestry and Find My Past,
- Memorabilia, diaries at Imperial War Museum.
- Commonwealth War Grave website for military deaths in WWI and for civilian and military deaths in WW2

Newspapers :

- Held at the British Library,
- In local archives and libraries.
- British Newspaper Archive.

Probate : Indexes to wills from 1858 are on ancestry and findmypast

Ship Passenger records : c1878 – 1960 on ancestry and findmypast from

Slave registers/ Slavery :

Slave Registers c1814 – 1835 at The National Archives, also Ancestry.

- Your best chance of finding a record of an individual who was enslaved is to find them on a slave register. However, there are no registers of enslaved people before 1812. The best place to find information about an enslaved person before 1812 is in the private papers of the slave owner, or in records about the owner or his or her property. Papers might still be with the family or deposited in a local archive or library where the family lived or settled. A search for records of an enslaved person will be much more difficult if you do not know at least two of the following:
  - the name of the enslaved person and the slave owner, including possible variations in spelling – bear in mind that not all enslaved people had surnames
  - where they lived, including the parish if possible
  - as much information as possible about dates of births, marriages and deaths
Records in the Caribbean

Each Caribbean nation holds records for its territory, and the range and availability of these varies.

These are usually held at the record office, archive department or similar government department. You can expect to find the following types of documents:

Civil Registration (births, marriages and deaths)
Census returns
Original parish records
Wills and Probate

Getting started: a reading and online resources list

For more information on the history of the Caribbean presence in the UK, the slave trade or step by step advice on tracing your ancestry see resources and publications listed below

Caribbean links and resources

Genuki www.genuki.org.uk
Cyndi’s List www.cyndislist.com
Ancestry free access at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies or any Hertfordshire library
Findmypast free access at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies or any Hertfordshire library

National Archives https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/?search=Caribbean&research-category=

Research guides on records held at the National Archives relating to the Caribbean https://media.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php/whats-on-line-caribbean-connections/

This illustrative talk is an introduction to the history and primary sources for researching Caribbean migration and migrants to the UK.
This talk was delivered on 19 June 2020 at The National Archives by Guy Grannum (‘Tracing Your Caribbean Ancestors’), who has been writing and speaking about Caribbean heritage and family history for over 25 years.

University College London : Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slave Ownership https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs

Jamaican Gleaner newspaper https://gleaner.newspaperarchive.com

Black Cultural Archives www.bcaheritage.org.uk

Groups
www.caribbeanfamilyhistory.org and www.caribbeanfamilyhistorygroup.wordpress.com
www.caribbeanmemoryproject.com
www.everygenenration.co.uk
https://candoo.com/genresources
www.rootsweb.com/~caribgw

Selected Booklist
Guy Grannum Tracing your Caribbean ancestors 2012
Geraldine Lane Tracing ancestors in Barbados ; a practical guide 2009
Madelaine E Mitchell Jamaican ancestry : how to find out more 2019
Stephen D Porter Jamaican records : a research manual 1999
R Kershaw & M Pearsall Immigrants and aliens : guides to sources on UK immigration and citizenship 2004
Mike & Trevor Phillips Windrush : the irresistible rise of multi racial Britain 2009
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>T Sewell</td>
<td>Keep on Moving: the Windrush Legacy, the Black experience in Britain from 1948</td>
<td>1998</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Walvin</td>
<td>The Trader, the Owner, The Slave: parallel lives in the Age of Slavery</td>
<td>2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miranda Kauffmann</td>
<td>Black Tudors: the untold story</td>
<td>2017</td>
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<td>David Olusoga</td>
<td>Black and British: a forgotten history</td>
<td>2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Olusoga</td>
<td>The world’s war: forgotten soldiers of empire</td>
<td>2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Bourne</td>
<td>Black Poppies: Britain’s Black community and the Great War</td>
<td>2019</td>
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<td>Stephen Bourne</td>
<td>The Motherland calls: Britain’s Black servicemen and women 1939-1945</td>
<td>2012</td>
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