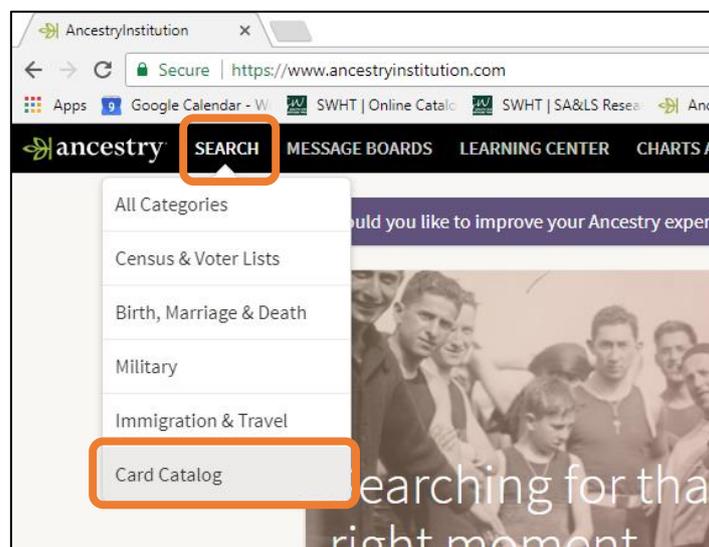


A Guide to Finding Somerset Parish Records on Ancestry

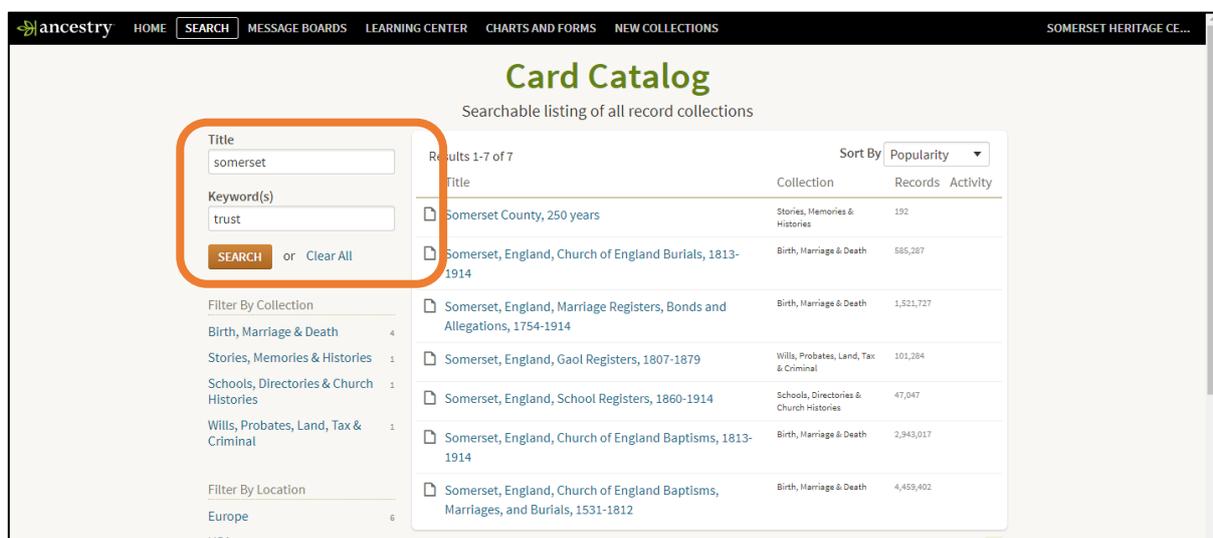
With more than 30,000 databases, Ancestry is very useful resource but can be overwhelming. This guide will help you narrow your search to just Somerset records, do an effective search within the records, show you how to read through the registers in e-reader mode, and point out some of the other useful resources on Ancestry

Narrowing your search

Start by clicking on **Search** and then **Card catalogue**. This takes you to a list of all the databases on Ancestry.



Type in 'Somerset' into the **Title** box, and 'Trust' into the **Keyword(s)** box, then click the orange 'SEARCH' button. You will see the number of databases reduce to just a handful.



You can now choose which database suits your research. They are:

- Church of England Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1531-1812
- Church of England Baptisms, 1813-1914
- Church of England Burials, 1813-1914
- Marriage Registers, Bonds and Allegations, 1754-1914
- Gaol Registers, 1807-1879
- School Registers, 1860-1914

Searching the databases

Start with a simple search, without giving too much information: this can sometimes weed out entries that might have been useful, and you can always narrow your search later

The screenshot shows the Ancestry search interface for the 'Somerset, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1531-1812' database. The page title is 'Somerset, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1531-1812'. The search form includes a 'Search' button and a 'Match all terms exactly' checkbox. The main search fields are 'First & Middle Name(s)' and 'Last Name'. Below these are filters for 'Birth', 'Death', and 'Any Event', each with dropdown menus for 'Day', 'Month', and 'Year', and a 'Location' field with a dropdown menu. There is also an 'Add family member' section with tabs for 'Father', 'Mother', 'Spouse', and 'Child', each with 'First & Middle Name(s)' and 'Last Name' fields. A 'Keyword' field is at the bottom left. On the right side, there is a logo for 'South West Heritage Trust' and a 'Browse this collection' section with a 'Parish' dropdown menu and a 'Year Range' field. Below that is a 'Related data collections' section with a link to 'Somerset, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1813-1914' and a description: 'This collection contains images of Church of England baptism records for the years 1813-1914 from the county'.

While Ancestry have transcribed and indexed the Somerset registers, because of the condition of the originals and the variations in handwriting and spelling, a search will not always be successful. If this happens, it can be helpful to read through the register yourself.

Reading the registers

On the right-hand side, drop down the **Parish** menu and click on your parish. Ancestry will display the date ranges available for that parish, which correspond to a volume: select the one which fits your research.

The screenshot shows the Ancestry search interface for the collection 'Somerset, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1531-1812'. The search filters include:

- Search** (Match all terms exactly)
- First & Middle Name(s)** and **Last Name** text boxes
- Birth**, **Death**, and **Any Event** filters with dropdowns for Day, Month, and Year, and a text box for Location (City, County, State, Count).
- Add family member:** Father, Mother, Spouse, Child (with text boxes for First & Middle Name(s) and Last Name).
- Keyword** text box (e.g. pilot or "Flying Tigers").

The **Browse this collection** section on the right includes:

- Parish:** A dropdown menu currently set to 'Aisholt'.
- Year Range:** Three options: [1652 - 1679](#), 1679 - 1796, and 1796 - 1812.

The 'Browse this collection' section is highlighted with an orange box in the image.

You will be taken to an e-reader mode, starting with the front cover of the register. The filmstrip at the bottom allows you to navigate between the pages, and the toolbar on the right allows you to zoom in and out, turn each individual page, and to print.



Other useful resources on Ancestry

- UK Census collection
- UK Poll Books
- Civil Registration Indexes
- Medal Roll Index Cards
- Passenger & shipping lists
- Commonwealth War Graves index & rolls of honour

A full list can be viewed and narrowed in **Card Catalogue**.

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