



Derbyshire Record Office's online finding aids

A series of leaflets to introduce two complementary resources: the Derbyshire Record Office guide, and the online catalogue. To view the guide, visit www.derbyshire.gov.uk/recordoffice and click "our collection", then "record office guide". For the online catalogue, click "our collection", then "search collection".

How to search the online catalogue

What's in the online catalogue?.....	1
How to search the online catalogue	2
Searching using "Anytext"	2
Word options: PHRASE	2
Word options: AND	4
Word options: OR	4
Searching by title.....	5
Searching by reference number (RefNo).....	5
Searching by level	6
Searching by date	6

What's in the online catalogue?

When our archivists create new catalogues, they do so using a specialist database called CALM. From the moment a new catalogue is complete, it can be viewed via our website's "search collection" facility. We have been using this software since 2000, so every new catalogue since then is online. The online catalogue also includes a number of much older lists which had already been put online through the Access to Archives (a2a) project. Many of these are large family and estate collections.

Although many of the catalogues currently found on the search room shelves are not available in full via our online catalogue, we have an ongoing project to add the remainder. It takes time and expertise to catalogue archives – no two collections are the same and each can contain many documents. So please be patient if the collection you want is not yet available online.





How to search the online catalogue

Go to www.derbyshire.gov.uk/recordoffice and click on “our collection”, then “search collection”.

There are a number of boxes on the screen (“fields”). You may fill in as many or as few as you wish, then click “search”, or just press Enter.

AnyText	<input type="text"/>	
Title	<input type="text"/>	
RefNo	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Search"/>
Level	<input type="text"/>	
Date	<input type="text"/>	

Searching using “Anytext”:

The database will search all catalogues (title and description) for the text you type here.

Word options: PHRASE

The “Word Options” button is important.

Word Options

- AND
- OR
- PHRASE

To start with, PHRASE is the selected option. This means the database will look for all the words you give, in the exact order you give them. For instance, if we search using “Coal Aston” in “AnyText”, we get 38 results like these:

25	Fonds	D6407	Chesterfield Board of Guardians	1858-1861
26	File	D6581/1/4	Agreement re 6 Cunliffe Street, Coal Aston	1968
27	File	D6581/1/5	Agreement re 12 Cunliffe Street, Coal Aston	1968
28	File	D6581/1/6	Agreement re 12 Shaw Street, Coal Aston	1968
29	File	D6581/1/20	Agreement re erection of gas lamps on county roads in Coal Aston	1933





The hitlist shows the titles, reference numbers and dates of all 38 instances in which the words “Coal” and “Aston” appear next to each other. But what about the top example (number 25 of our 38 entries)? The text on the screen says “Chesterfield Board of Guardians”, with no mention of Coal Aston. The text on the hitlist is only the document title, so there may be further details in the full description. To see it, click the blue hyperlink ([25](#)):

Level	Fonds
RefNo	D6407
Title	Chesterfield Board of Guardians
Date	1858-1861
Description	<p>The 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act grouped parishes together into Unions for purposes of poor relief. The first meeting of the Chesterfield Board of Guardians was held in October 1837. In 1930 the functions of the guardians were taken over by the Public Assistance Committee of the County Council; this continued until 1948 when the Poor Law was abolished by the National Assistance Act.</p> <p>The Union was made up of the following parishes or townships: Ashover, Great Barlow, Little Barlow, Beighton, Bolsover, Brackenfield, Brampton, Brimington, Calow, Chesterfield, Clay Lane, Coal Aston, Dronfield, Eckington, Egstow, Hasland, Heath, Holmesfield, Killamarsh, Morton, Newbold and Dunstan, Temple Normanton, Pilsley, Shirland and Higham, Staveley, Stretton, Sutton cum Duckmanton, Tapton, Tupton, Unstone, Walton, Wessington, Whittington, Wingerworth, North Wingfield and Woodthorpe.</p> <p>Other records relating to Chesterfield Board of Guardians can be found in collections D522, D2741 and D5721.</p>

Now we see why this result was returned: “Coal Aston” appears in the description, as one of the places within Chesterfield Poor Law Union.

We can look at the next item on the hitlist by pressing “next record” at the bottom of the screen:

[First record](#) [Back 10 records](#) [Previous record](#) Record: [25 of 38](#) [Next record](#) [Forward 10 records](#) [Last record](#)

If we click “25 of 38”, we return to the list of 38 results. And, if we prefer to see these results ordered with the oldest document at the beginning of the list and the most recent at the end, we can click “date” at the top of the list. Clicking “title” orders the list alphabetically by title. This is the only method of ordering the results, as the “Field Sort Order” facility does not work.

To leave the hitlist, click “Return to Search Menu”. You cannot just press “back” on the web browser.



Word options: AND

What if we run the same search again, but using “AND”?

Word Options

- AND
- OR
- PHRASE

Now, the database searches for the words “Coal” and “Aston” anywhere in the entry, adjacent or otherwise. That means more results, like this one:

RefNo [D3155/WH/2200](#)
Date 1647-1769
Weston estate: account of lands sold by Roper to Robert Holden and; map of Westor Hollow by William Leaper 1723 (2 copies - 1 parchment, 1 paper); money given to the "coal cart servants" at Weston, 1737; plan of house, garden and park at Aston for James Shuttleworth 1747; inventory of goods of

As you can see, the description makes no reference to Coal Aston. It has been retrieved because it refers to “coal cart servants”, and “park at Aston”.

Word options: OR

What if we run “Coal Aston” again, using “OR”? The database returns every mention of “Coal” and every mention of “Aston”. The resultant 2111 hits are more than we would really want: “Aston” could be a reference to Aston near Hope, Aston on Trent, the surname Aston, or Aston Villa Football Club. And, not being case sensitive, the database makes no distinction between Coal with a capital “C”, and coal the mineral.

The “OR” operator is more useful if you have synonymous search terms, e.g.:

AnyText
Title
RefNo
Level
Date

Word Options **Field Options**

- AND
- OR
- PHRASE
- AND
- OR

The above search would return all entries using “sickness”, “illness” or “disease”. There is no reason not to enter as many words as you may be looking for at any one time.





Searching by title: This search is just the same as using “AnyText”, except that the database will limit the search to the titles of documents. You can use it in conjunction with the other boxes, too. This search:

AnyText
Title

Finds “sale catalogue” in the titles, and “Hognaston” in the description, e.g.:

RefNo [D6696/1/20](#)
Title Sale catalogue
Date 1932
Hognaston: field of meadow land, 8 acres, 0 roods, 14 perches, 3 Mar 1932;

To see how this individual item fits into the catalogue as a whole, click the hyperlinked reference number. This should show the entire collection.

Searching by reference number (RefNo): The database will limit your search to a particular collection. This is useful if you have already got the collection reference and want to search for items within that collection. For instance, if we have already seen the guide entry for Ashover Parish Council:

Ashover: minutes 1894-1980, Fall Mill management committee minutes 1985-1989, accounts 1894-1957, correspondence 1897-1938, pre 1894 inherited records (**D59**)

We may find out more about the correspondence with a search like this:

AnyText
Title
RefNo
Level
Date

Word Options **Field Options**

- AND AND
 OR OR
 PHRASE

Note that the Field Option is set to “AND”. This limits the search to entries featuring the word “correspondence” **which also** belong to collection D59. The resultant hitlist has 9 items. The same search set to “OR” would retrieve the whole of collection D59 and every entry in the entire database in which the word “correspondence” appears – 5827 hits in total. (Still a long way off the database’s 10,000-hit maximum).



Searching by level: The database limits searches to archival “levels”:

- The **fonds** (or **collection**), the entirety of a document collection, such as
D6491: Agard Street Baptist Church, Derby
- The **series**, the types of document found in a collection, such as
D6491/3: minutes
- The **subseries**, such as
D6491/3/3: Joint Deacons and Church Meeting minutes
- The **file** (or **item**: the reference you need if ordering a document), such as
D6491/3/3/4, Volume of Joint Deacons and Church Meeting minutes, covering the years 1963-1967

This type of search is most useful where knowing the level of the entry will help to narrow down a search that would otherwise return a very large hitlist.

Searching by date: this field will limit searches to the date (or range of dates) you give. For instance, if we were interested in the history of education in Derbyshire before 1837, we could limit a search for “school” like this (click on the 'Date' heading: this will list the earliest hits first):

Date

Which retrieves 311 references:

	<u>Level</u>	<u>RefNo</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	Fonds	D3287	Papers of the Gell family of Hopton	13th-20th cent
2	Fonds	D518	Stanhope of Elvaston, Earls of Harrington	circa 1270-1962
3	Fonds	D3580	Longsdon of Little Longstore Family and Estate Papers	14th-20th Century

The first three hits are at fonds level, and give the covering dates for the collection as a whole – the reference to a school may not be from the relevant period. The lower level hits might be more useful:

File	D3107 A/PZ/1/1-2	Receipts for gazing work done by James Wilson at Hallfield Gate School	late 18th cent
Series	D5430/25	Miscellaneous endosure, turnpike and school papers	1770-1878
File	D6104/1/2	Samuel Heathcote of Wooton, to his father Samuel Heathcote re school courses and 'cudgelling', 21 Jan	1771

Note that dates do not have to be specific years to be picked up by a date search: D3107 A/PZ/1/1-2 is dated as “late 18th cent”. In addition to ordering information by year, the database can understand the qualifiers “late”, “early”, “cent/century”, or “c.” for “circa”. But anything else in the “date” field (e.g. “medieval”) will yield no results.

