

## Findmypast.co.uk publishes Westminster Parish records online

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findmypast.co.uk, a leading UK family history website, has published online for the very first time parish records held by the City of Westminster Archives Centre. The Westminster Collection at findmypast.co.uk comprises fully searchable transcripts and scanned images of the parish registers, some of which are over 400 years old.

The 1,365,731 records launched cover the period 1538-1945 and come from over 50 Westminster churches including St Anne, Soho, St Clement Danes, St George Hanover Square, St James Westminster, St Margaret Westminster, St Martin-in-the-Fields, St Mary-le-Strand, St Paul Covent Garden.

Debra Chatfield, family historian at findmypast.co.uk, said: "The Westminster Collection is one of the largest regional parish record collections we have ever published online and contains some truly wonderful gems. Family historians, wherever they are in the world, can now search this historical goldmine and uncover the fascinating stories of their London ancestors."

The launch marks the start of a painstaking project to preserve digitally the City of Westminster Archives Centre's collection, and sees the first tranche of its baptisms, marriages and burials go online. The remaining records are set to go live over the coming months, along with cemetery registers, wills, rate books, settlement examinations, workhouse admission and discharge books, bastardy, orphan and apprentice records and charity documents.

Adrian Autton, Archives Manager at Westminster Archives commented: "The launch of the Westminster Collection is of huge significance making Westminster records fully accessible to a global audience. This resource will be of immense value to anyone whose ancestors lived in Westminster and to anyone wishing to study the rich heritage of this truly great city."

The records can now be searched free of charge by visiting the Life Events (BMDs) section at findmypast.co.uk, and then selecting parish baptisms or marriages or burials. Transcripts and images can be viewed with PayAsYouGo credits, vouchers or a full subscription to findmypast.co.uk.

The new Westminster Collection at findmypast.co.uk joins a growing resource of official parish records (<http://www.findmypast.co.uk/search/parish-records/baptisms>) from local archives, including Cheshire Archives & Local Studies, Manchester City Council and Plymouth and West Devon Records Office, with many more in the pipeline and due to go live in the coming months. In addition over 40 million parish records from family history societies can be found at findmypast.co.uk in partnership with the Federation of Family History Societies.

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About findmypast.co.uk

Leading UK family history website findmypast.co.uk was the first company to make the complete birth, marriage and death indexes for England & Wales available online, winning the Queen's Award for

Innovation.

Findmypast.co.uk has subsequently digitised many more family history records and now offers access to over 750 million records dating as far back as 875 AD. This allows those wishing to undertake a family search (<http://www.findmypast.co.uk/home.jsp>) to look for their ancestors among comprehensive collections of military, census, migration, parish, work and education records, as well as the original comprehensive BMD records (<http://www.findmypast.co.uk/content/search-menu/life-events-bmds>). The company runs the official 1911 census website for England & Wales in association with The National Archives.

About Westminster City Archives:

Westminster City Archives aims to provide a centre of excellence, where archives and local studies materials are acquired, preserved and made accessible, in order to raise the profile of Westminster's unique heritage within a global context.

The Archives Centre is designated by the Bishop of London, under the terms of the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978, as the repository for ecclesiastical records for the pre-1965 City of Westminster and has also been appointed by the Lord Chancellor as a repository for specified classes of public records under the provisions of Section 4 of the Public Records Act 1958. It is also recognised by the Master of the Rolls as a repository for manorial and tithe documents under the Law of Property Act 1922 and the Tithe Act 1936.

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