Searching the British Newspaper Archive www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk

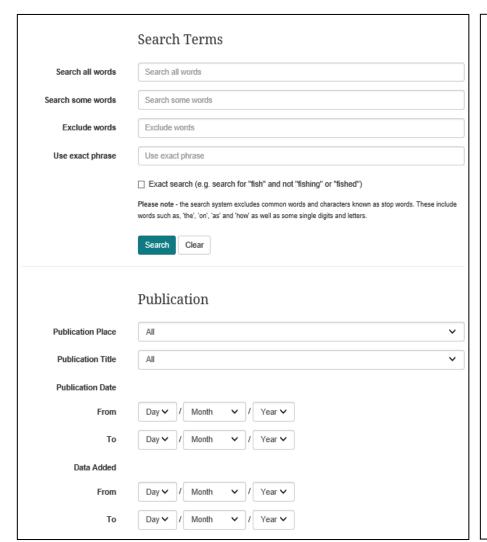
Searching the site is free of charge from any computer, so it may be an efficient use of time to search from your home PC or device and bookmark any articles of interest. When you're in the library, you can then easily view your bookmarked articles by logging into your account and using the library's subscription.



Although you can search just by typing into the search box on the home page, there are more options if you click "Advanced Search"

Tracey's

Top Tip



If you are searching for a name it's worth entering this in the "Use exact phrase" box (but see search tips overleaf).

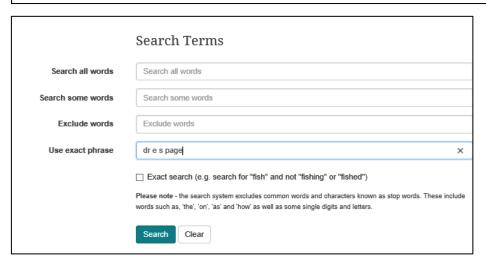
By default, the site uses a "fuzzy" search. If you tick the "Exact search" box you may get fewer but more relevant results.

If you know a specific newspaper and/or date and place of publication, you can put the details here, although it may be easier to leave these blank and filter the results once you have done the search.

Searching the British Newspaper Archive www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk

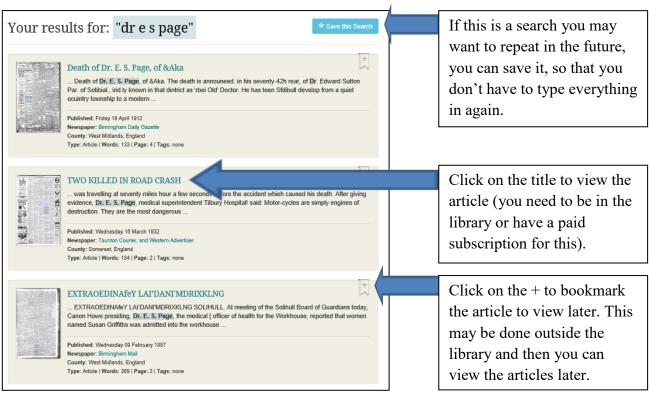
Search tips:

- Use different forms of the name if you don't get suitable results with the full name. Be mindful that society was much more formal in the past, and it was quite usual for first names not to be included in articles but initials and titles used instead. For example, Sergeant Isaac Leonard Williams, may be more likely to appear in newspaper reports as Sgt. I. L. Williams, rather than under his full name. It was normal for a married woman to be referred to by her husband's name rather than by her own name. e.g. Jane Williams, wife of Isaac, is more likely to be referred to as Mrs Isaac Williams or Mrs I. Williams, rather than by her first name. If you see Mrs Jane Williams, this is likely to imply a widow (or later, a divorcee).
- Combine names and places or occupations, especially if you have a common surname e.g. Williams Wolverhampton or Williams ironworks Wilden



Insert the name in the "use exact phrase" search box. You may need to experiment with variations using the search tips above.

For common names, it's worth adding in a place or occupation to the "all words" box.



Refining searches

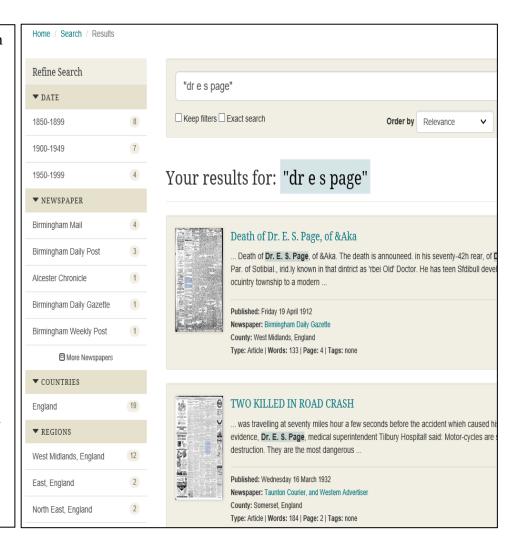
www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk

You can add extra terms in the search box (use "speech marks" if you want text to appear as a phrase e.g. "Solihull grammar school"

You can also filter results by date, newspaper or region.

Just click on the relevant date, newspaper or region on the left of the screen.

Filtering by date is probably the most useful option. Newspapers often reported content from outside their region so you may exclude potentially useful articles if you filter by newspaper title or region.



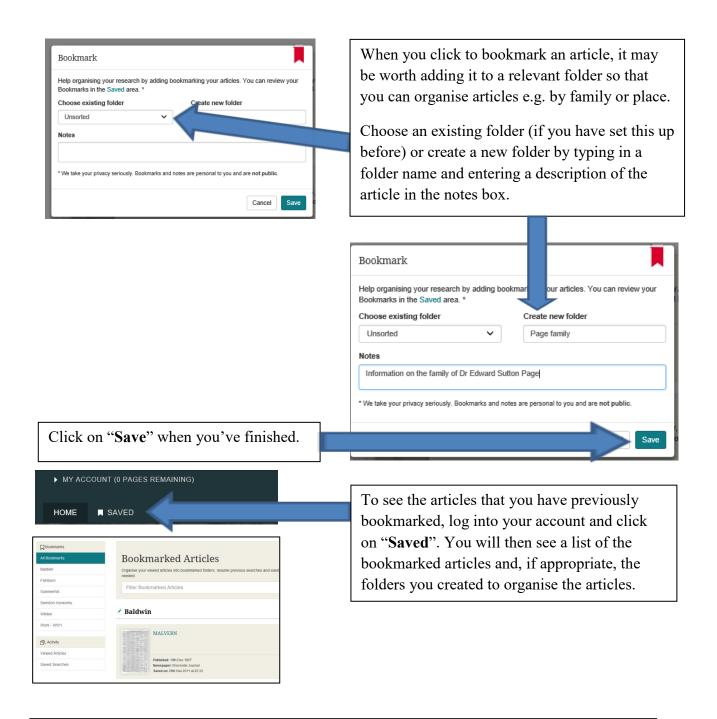


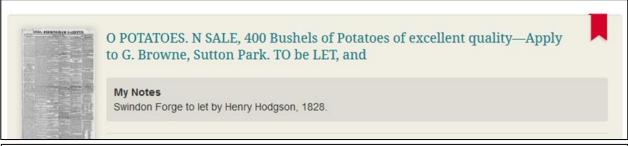
You'll notice that some text in headlines or previews appears as gibberish. The reason for this is that a computer is used to scan the original image of the newspaper page and turn it into text that can then be searched. This is known as Optical Character Recognition (OCR). It is very dependent on the quality of the original image, and can be wildly different from the actual text in the article.

For example, the actual headline of the above article is "EXTRAORDINARY LAUDANUM DRINKING AT SOLIHULL" which would not be something you could guess from the OCR version. OCR errors will affect the success of your searches if the search terms you use have been incorrectly transcribed in the article's text.

Bookmarking articles

www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk





When articles are bookmarked, they are saved with a title or headline that may not help you identify what relevance the article has for you. As you can see from this example, it can be very useful adding your own notes when you bookmark an article!