

# Putting your Ancestors in their Place:

a guide to nineteenth century one place studies

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Our ancestors did not live in isolation. Family historians often focus on the nuclear family. Local historians concern themselves with events, buildings and famous residents. To understand our ancestors, they need to be 'put in their place' by investigating the community of which they were a part. To bring the history of a locality to life, it should be populated with ordinary people. A one place study brings family and local history together, to the benefit of both fields. A one place study involves dissecting a small, definable, geographical area, to examine the individuals, buildings and processes of the past, in as much detail as possible.

Few, Janet 10 Steps to a One-Place Study Blue Poppy Publishing (2020)

Kindle edition [www.amazon.co.uk/Ten-Steps-One-Place-Study-Janet-ebook/dp/B086HP46WY](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Ten-Steps-One-Place-Study-Janet-ebook/dp/B086HP46WY)

For paperbacks email me on [jfewhistory@gmail.com](mailto:jfewhistory@gmail.com)

A new edition of a more in-depth book *Putting your Ancestors in their Place: a guide to one-place studies* Blue Poppy Publishing (2024). For Kindle edition see

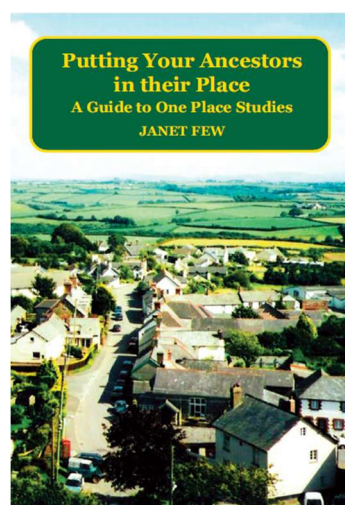
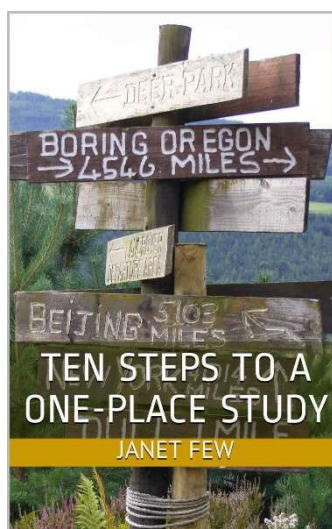
[www.amazon.co.uk/Putting-Your-Ancestors-their-Place-ebook/dp/B0DNXWX8X9/](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Putting-Your-Ancestors-their-Place-ebook/dp/B0DNXWX8X9/)

Janet runs online one-place studies courses for Pharos Tutoring and Teaching

[www.pharostutors.org](http://www.pharostutors.org)

First Steps to a One-Place Study

Discovering Your British Family and Local Community in the early 20th Century



## 10 Steps to a One Place Study

- ❖ Choose
  - Your boundaries
  - A starting point
- ❖ Reconstruct
  - Your physical space at different points in time
- ❖ Populate
  - Look at overall population statistics and profiles
  - List named individuals
- ❖ Collect
  - Data from specific sources
  - Biographical data
  - Data about dwellings, buildings and institutions
  - Data about events
- ❖ Connect
  - People in family groups
  - People with places
  - People with events
- ❖ Analyse
  - Draw conclusions about your place from the data that you have collected
- ❖ Synthesise
  - Draw on all your data to focus on a time period or theme
- ❖ Contextualise
  - Be aware of regional and national patterns and how your findings fit within this context
  - Compare your place with others
- ❖ Disseminate
  - Share your findings through websites, blogs, books, articles, displays or presentations
- ❖ Enthuse
  - Spread the word and encourage others to participate in the wonderful world of one place studies

### Looking for One Place Studies

#### Worldwide

Society for One-Place Studies <http://one-place-studies.org/studies>

Register of One Place Studies [www.oneplacestudy.org](http://www.oneplacestudy.org)

WikiTree One Place Studies [www.wikitree.com/wiki/Project:One Place Studies](http://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Project:One_Place_Studies)

#### In the UK

Local History Online [www.local-history.co.uk/index.html](http://www.local-history.co.uk/index.html) for a list of many local history groups

The British Association for Local History [www.balh.co.uk](http://www.balh.co.uk)

The Community Archives and Heritage Group [www.communityarchives.org.uk](http://www.communityarchives.org.uk)

### **In Australia**

Public History Australia

[www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/our-research/australian-centre-public-history](http://www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/our-research/australian-centre-public-history)

Australian family history and historical societies

<https://guides.slv.vic.gov.au/c.php?g=245303&p=1633146>

### **In America**

Preservation Directory [www.preservationdirectory.com/HistoricalPreservation/Home.aspx](http://www.preservationdirectory.com/HistoricalPreservation/Home.aspx)

American Association for State and Local History <http://about.aaslh.org/home/>

### **In New Zealand**

New Zealand Federation of Historical Societies Inc. [www.nzhistoricalsocieties.org.nz](http://www.nzhistoricalsocieties.org.nz)

## **Selected Classes of Record for One Place Studies**

- ❖ Maps
- ❖ Photographs
- ❖ Oral testimony, diaries and memoirs
- ❖ Vital Records of birth/baptism, marriage, death/burial
- ❖ Gravestones
- ❖ Newspapers
  - Britain: [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk) also available via [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk)
  - Worldwide [www.oldnews.com/en/newspapers/browse-locations](http://www.oldnews.com/en/newspapers/browse-locations)
  - New Zealand: <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>
  - Canada: <https://sites.google.com/site/onlinenewspapersite/Home/can>
  - Australia: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>
  - US: <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>
- ❖ Directories and Gazetteers
- ❖ Census records
- ❖ Tax lists
- ❖ Records of land ownership
- ❖ Records of education and occupation
- ❖ Records relating to the movement of people
- ❖ Records of local government

## **Population Statistics**

- ❖ UK: [www.histpop.org](http://www.histpop.org)
- ❖ UK: [www.visionofbritain.org.uk](http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk)
- ❖ UK: [www.populationspast.org](http://www.populationspast.org)
- ❖ USA: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
- ❖ Canada: [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)
- ❖ Australia: [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)
- ❖ New Zealand: [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)

- ❖ Ireland C20th: [www.cso.ie/en/index.html](http://www.cso.ie/en/index.html)
- ❖ Scotland: [www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/)

### Some themes you may wish to explore

- ❖ Migration
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Faith
- ❖ Occupations
- ❖ War
- ❖ Services and Institutions
- ❖ Your place in a particular time period

### Further Reading on Sources and Research Techniques

- Beech, G and Mitchell, R *Maps for Family and Local History* National Archives (2004)
- Few, Janet *Putting Your Ancestors in their Place: a guide to one place studies* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Blue Poppy Publishing (2024)
- Few, Janet *10 Steps to a One-Place Study* Blue Poppy Publishing (2020)
- Golby, John *Communities and Families* Cambridge University Press (1994)
- Hey, David *Family History and Local History in England* Longman (1987)
- Hey, David *The Oxford Companion to Local and Family History* 2nd edition Oxford University Press (2010)
- Hindle, Paul *Maps for Historians* Phillimore (1998)
- Kammen, Carol and Wilson, Amy H *Encyclopaedia of Local History* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition AltaMira (2012)
- Masters, Charles *Essential Maps for Family Historians* Countryside Books (2009)
- Mills, Dennis R *Rural Community History from Trade Directories* Local Population Studies (2001)
- Oliver, George *Photographs and Local History* Batsford (1989)
- Osborn, Helen *Our Village Ancestors: a genealogist's guide to understanding the English rural past* Crowood Press (2021)
- Richardson, John *The Local Historian's Encyclopaedia* 3rd edition Historical Publications Ltd. (2003)
- Riden, Philip *Record Sources for Local History* Batsford (1987)
- Stephens, W B *Sources for English Local History* revised edition Cambridge University Press (1981)
- Williams, Michael *A Researching Local History: the human journey* Longman (1996)

## Some One Place Study Websites

Glenaray, Argyll, Scotland <http://glenaray.wikidot.com/>

Coldingham, Berwickshire, Scotland <https://coldinghamoneplacestudy.org>

Wing, Buckinghamshire [www.wing-ops.org.uk](http://www.wing-ops.org.uk)

Bratton Clovelly, Devon <http://brattonclovellyops.com/wp>

Springhill, Rossendale, Lancashire [www.springhillhistory.org.uk](http://www.springhillhistory.org.uk)

Newdale, Manitoba <https://newdalembgenealogy.wordpress.com>

## One Place Software

We Are xyz <https://app.weare.xyz/>

Name and Place [www.nameandplace.co.uk](http://www.nameandplace.co.uk)

A one place study is what you make it. As long as the research techniques are sound, there is no right or wrong way of going about your work. This intensely personal brand of history is a wonderful way of encouraging others to engage with their heritage. Enjoy investigating and sharing the history of your place. Your perceptions of the past and indeed your life, may never be the same again.