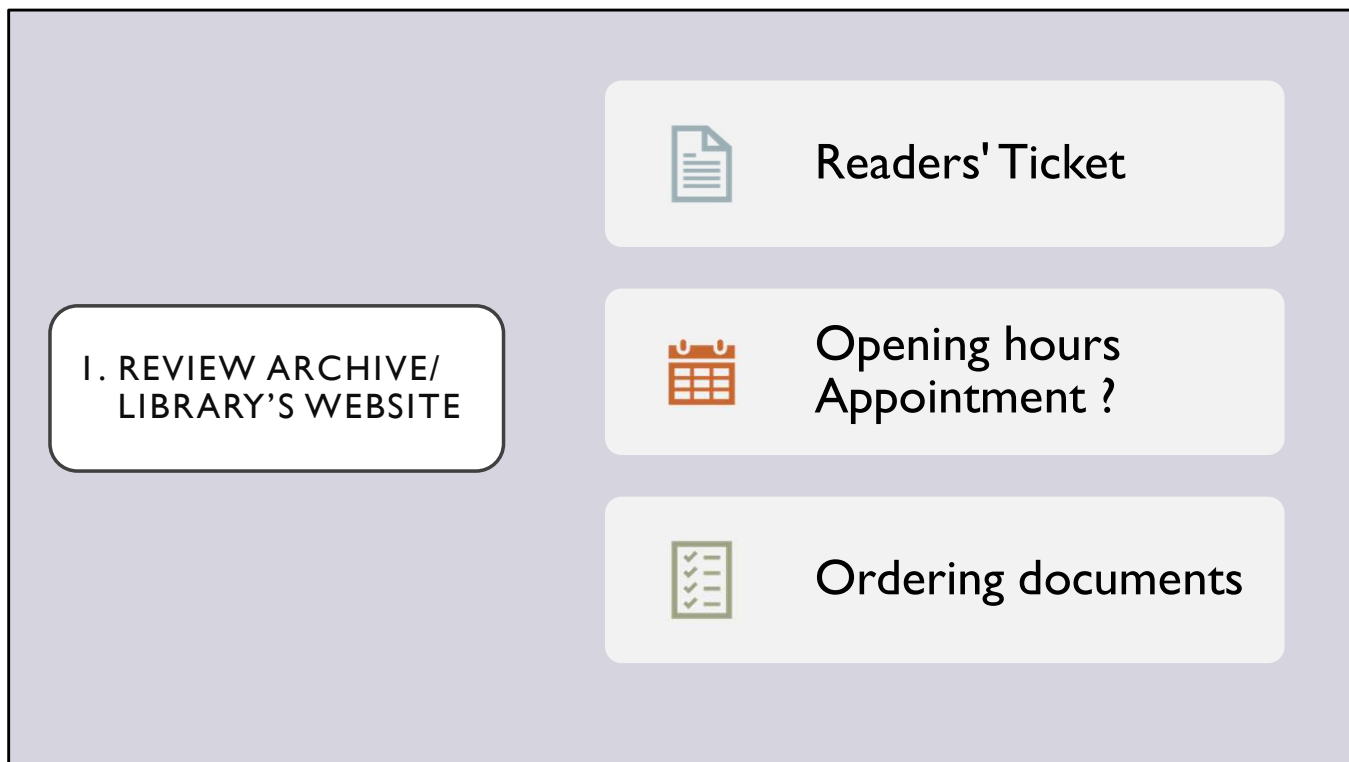




In preparing this talk I did consult some fellow family historians who shared some of what they do.



If this is your first visit to a particular archive or library

Start with some research on their website.

Do you need to apply for a reader's ticket?

If yes what documents do you need to provide and can you apply in advance?

Photo ID and proof of address e.g. Passport, driving license, utilities bill etc.

Check opening hours

do you need to make an appointment?

If yes how much in advance

Find out if you can order items in advance and on the day, and how you do it. Some items may be in remote storage so ordered in advance.

2. MAKE A LIST OF ITEMS TO VIEW



Investigate Archive or Library Catalogue



Search for topics/people you wish to research



Create a list of items you want to order

You might already know what you want to look at
But it's always worth investigating the Archive or Library Catalogue
is there a catalogue?
If not might be on The National Archives discovery
The catalogue of catalogues!
Use the search function to find the items you wish to view.
Create a list – I do this in a word document using copy and paste.
Can also use the FIBIS research guides, they have references numbers
for documents you might want to research

<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

BRITISH LIBRARY

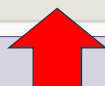
What's available?

We are recovering from a cyber-attack that disrupted our systems and services. Recovery is underway, but not everything is back yet. Thank you for your continued patience and support.

Find out what's currently available and how you can use the Library during this recovery period.

What's available? ↗

Guides and help ↗



The British Library is still recovering from a cyber-attack that disrupted the systems and services.

Recovery is underway, but not everything is back yet.

To Find out what's currently available and how you can use the Library click on box

BRITISH LIBRARY

[Collections](#)
[What's on](#)
[Visit](#)
[Stories](#)

What's currently available

Introduction

By content type

In our Reading Rooms

Support and advice

How to use the Library

- [Get a Reader Pass](#)
Find out how to get or renew your Reader Pass
- [How to search the catalogues](#)
A guide to effective searching, with instructions and tips
- [How to request collection items](#)
A guide to requesting items to consult in a Reading Room

What's currently available

Following a cyber-attack in October 2023 our research services are disrupted. Please check the lists below for the availability of the service you need.

Catalogues

Available	Not available
Online catalogue This catalogue is a searchable version of our main catalogue of books and other printed material, and some freely available electronic resources. It is being updated with records for new material periodically.	Archives and Manuscripts catalogue Printed catalogues and handlists are available in our Reading Rooms, or you can also try searching the National Archives Discovery catalogue and filtering by "Other archives only". <i>Work underway to restore in 2025</i>
Sound and Moving Image catalogue The interim Sound and Moving Image catalogue contains records for our sound and vision archive.	Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts
Incunabula Short Title Catalogue	Catalogue of Photographically Illustrated Books
British National Bibliography (BNB) Published as linked data	Evanion catalogue
English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) Explore the new beta version of the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) hosted by the Consortium of European Research Libraries (CERL) to search around 500,000 records of works printed in the English-speaking world before 1801.	Register of Preservation Surrogates A microfiche version is available, please ask our team for help
	Sloane Printed Books catalogue

As you can see there are available and not available catalogues

If you want to order a manuscript (including things with an IOR reference number) you need the number and description.

I usually go to the National Archives discovery catalogue to find these if I don't already know.

Many of the FIBIS guides have the IOR numbers listed

https://bl01.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=44BL_INS T:BLL01&lang=en

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

THE
NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

Visit

What's on

Explore the collection

Help using the archive

Education

Professional guidance and services

Explore the catalogue

Search for

Enter keyword(s)

Between

YYYY

and

YYYY

Held by

All archives

[Advanced search](#) or [browse](#)

Search

The National Archives Discovery catalogue is quite amazing but good to take time to experiment with how it works.

An example to find a British Library manuscript or IOR item

I searched for "John Smith", a little ambitious!

Home > Discovery > Your search results

Search results for john smith

john smith

Filter results

Held by ^

Other archives (40,241)

Held by ^

- ☐ National Maritime Museum (3,970)
- ☐ The London Archives: City of London (3,674)
- ☐ Lancashire Archives (1,910)
- ☐ Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (1,894)
- ☐ East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Record Office (ESBHRO) (1,826)
- ☐ West Sussex Record Office (1,559)
- ☐ Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (1,283)
- ☐ British Library: Asian and African Studies (976)
 - ☐ Birmingham: Archives, Heritage and Photography Service (968)
 - ☐ East Riding of Yorkshire Archives and Local Studies Service (958)

In the search results there is “Other archives”

This includes The British Library...

Subject of enquiry: John Smith. **Enquirer:** John Smith.

Records of the Military Department.Military Compilations and Miscellaneous Records.Soldiers' References.Soldiers' References. Subject of enquiry: John Smith. Enquirer: John Smith.

Held by: British Library: Asian and African Studies

Date: 1861

Reference: IOR/L/MIL/5/363/13658 Smith

Reference: IOR/L/MIL/5/363/13658 Smith

Description: Subject of enquiry: John Smith. Enquirer: John Smith.

Shelfmark / Manuscript reference *


Each copy of an item has a separate shelfmark, and each shelfmark is listed on a separate line in the catalogue. Please enter only one shelfmark below

IOR/L/MIL/5/363/13658 Smith

Title *

Please enter the title or a brief description of the item you wish to see

Subject of enquiry: John Smith. Enquirer: John Smith.


Collection item request form

Imagine this is the item you wish to view

Make a note of the reference number and title

Use these when you fill in the "Collection item request form"

Year

Please enter a year if you are requesting a multipart work. **For newspaper shelfmarks, please order only one year per request.** If you wish to order only specific months within a year, then please enter the month(s) in the Vol/ Part box.

Please enter at most 10 characters

Volume

Please enter a volume if you are requesting a multipart work

Please enter at most 5 characters

Other information

Please provide any additional details that will help us fulfil your request

Please enter at most 250 characters

When do you want to see the item? *

You can submit requests up to 28 days in advance. Requests for same-day delivery close at 16.00, any submitted after this time will be processed the next working day.

Please allow two working days (excluding Saturdays and Sundays) for delivery to our St. Pancras Reading Rooms for items stored at our site in Yorkshire.

Our Boston Spa Reading Room is open Monday – Friday; our St Pancras Reading Rooms are open Monday – Saturday. All our Reading Rooms are closed on Sundays and bank holidays. Please check the opening hours of our Reading Rooms before you visit at <https://www.bl.uk/visit/>

Please input date (dd/MM/yyyy)

You may need to give extra information like Year, Volume.

You can always add extra information as well

You then have to choose the day of your visit

Which Reading Room do you wish to use? *

Some items can only be consulted in specific Reading Rooms

Select your answer

- Humanities 1
- Humanities 2
- Rare Books & Music
- Asian & African Studies
- Social Sciences
- Manuscripts

Then select which reading room you would like to use.

BUT for IOR (Indian office records) you need to put Asian and African Studies.

Even if you don't that is where they will be available.

You should get an email confirmation that your order is being carried out, but no guarantee you will be able to see it on the day!

Someone else might have ordered it.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

THE
NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

Visit

What's on

Explore the collection

Help using the archive

Education

Professional guidance and services

[Home](#) > [Discovery](#) > [Your search results](#) > HO 17/35/10

[Start new search](#) [Print](#) [Discovery help](#) ★ [Bookmark](#)

→ [HO 17/35 - Petitions referenced Em, En and Eo. \(Described at item level\).](#)

Catalogue description

Prisoner name: John Smith and William Smith [brothers]. **Prisoner occupation:** John Smith...

Reference: HO 17/35/10

Description: Prisoner name: John Smith and William Smith [brothers].
Prisoner occupation: John Smith described as a licensed hawker of woollen ware.
Court and date of trial: Suffolk Lent Assizes, Bury St Edmunds, March 1827.
Crime: Horse stealing, namely stealing two mares, one the property of William Conisbee the Elder (since deceased) and the other the property of William Conisbee the Younger, of the parish of Lilley, Hertfordshire.
Initial sentence: Death recorded and commuted to transportation for life (or 14 years transportation).
Annotated: 'Apr 12 1827 Refused'. 'Nil 29 Aug 1831'. 'Any reason why he should

Ordering and viewing options

This record has not been digitised and **cannot be downloaded**.

You can [order records in advance](#) to be ready for you when you [visit Kew](#). You will need a [reader's ticket](#) to do this. Or, you can request a quotation for a copy to be sent to you.

[Book a visit](#)

[Request a copy](#)

Ordering at the National Archives is similar

First find item in catalogue

Click on book a visit and follow instructions.

With both the British Library and The National Archives you can still order on the day but only for items stored on site.

3. PREPARING FOR VISIT



Transport:
getting there



Facilities:
e.g. lunch



Are there any rules ?
e.g. lockers

Re visit the archive website and look at

Transport – trains, buses, parking etc.

Facilities – food and coffee (or tea)

Rules to follow like what you can take into archives

Do you need to use a locker do you need a pound coin.

The TNA asks you to watch a documents handling video.

4. NIGHT BEFORE



Find readers card or identification documents



List of things you want to view or have ordered



Pack your bag

Find readers card or identification documents
list of things you want to view or have ordered either digitally or on paper
Make your lunch or make sure you have money or card
Pack your bag: remember
A notebook and pencils (no pens)
Your list and ID stuff
Camera or phone to take pictures
I also take my tablet or laptop, including chargers for phone etc.
Money, train tickets or car keys etc.

Don't wear your best clothes, old documents are very dirty!
Wear layers, as archives can vary in temperatures



May sound a bit odd
But I bought a clear plastic pencil case
Keep pencils, phone charger and put readers card inside
Can quickly put in my backpack when visiting archives.

5. ARRIVE AT ARCHIVE



Get your reader's card



Put things in locker &
take photo number!



Head to archive

Get your readers card if needed or renew.

If you have not been to British Library since March 2024
you will need to renew your card.

Go to lockers and put away things you can't take with you
e.g. food and drink

Some places offer clear plastic bags to put your things in



Some archives have locker keys with numbers, but others have digital locks like a hotel safe.

6. READING ROOM



Retrieve items
ordered



Take photo of item
(e.g. box) including label



Handle items
carefully

Find out where to get the items you have ordered.

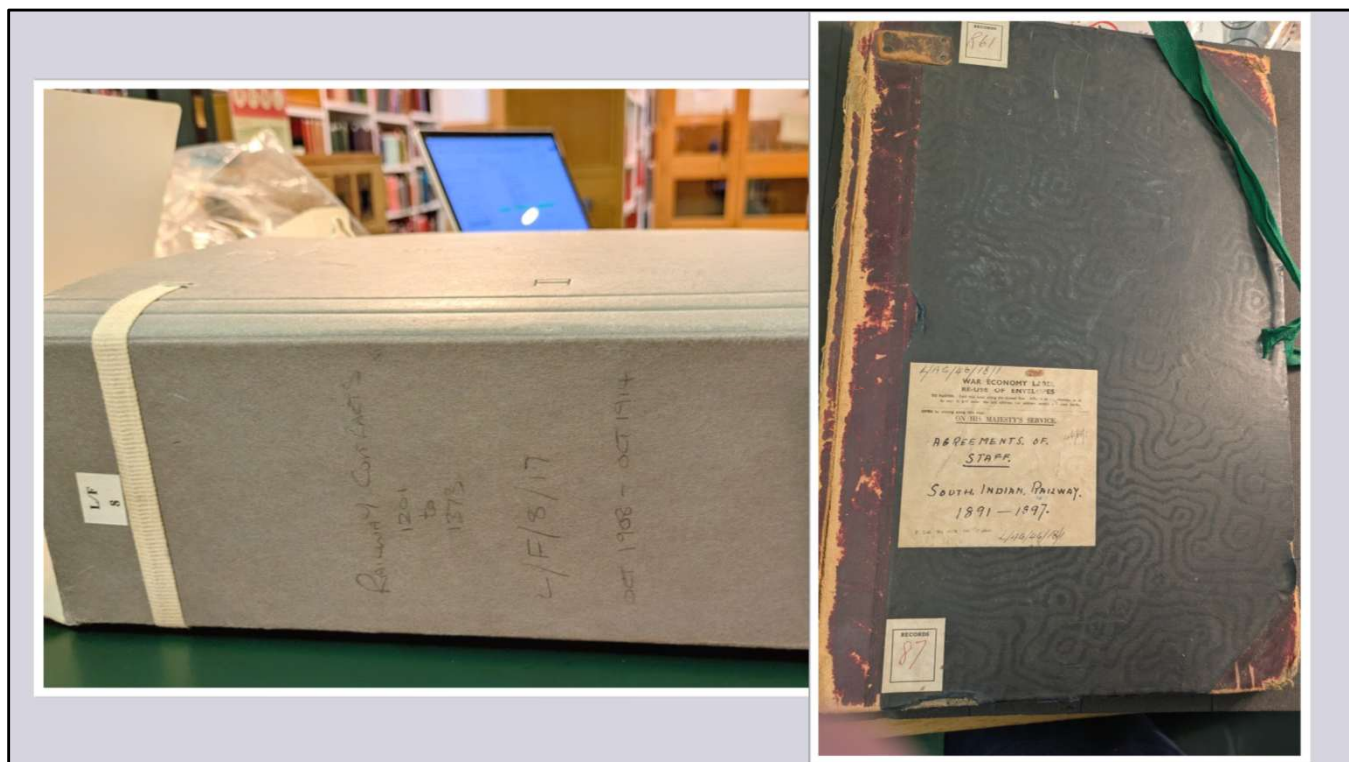
Staff are usually wonderful and will instruct about process.

Each place has different system.

I usually ask for items in the order of my list.

Once you are at your seat, I usually take photo of box, file folder or book the outside including label

Use a book rest etc ask if not sure.



This is the box this big book arrived in at the British Library

7. RESEARCHING



How does it work



Take photos of what you have found



Annotate your list with what you have found

Do you need all of item or just a part

Look over item to get to know its layout, particularly with books and boxes of documents. Does it have an index etc?

Once you have found what you are looking for take lots of photos.

Make sure, they are in focus [I use my tablet to check as they are backed up to the cloud].

Sometimes have difficulties with shadows etc.

If using proper camera may have problems with lights flickering creating stripey images. [I now mostly use my phone]

Annotate your list with what you have found [could also mark with photo numbers].

Return item then move on to next.

[I also photograph the floor in between documents so that when I'm reviewing a large pile of photos on my computer later, I can quickly pick out the new document starting point.]

(1) Canal	7, 8, 9
(2) Genrabandi	10
(3) Pain and ahar irrigation	11-12
(4) Well irrigation	13-15
JURISDICTION, POPULATION AND CASTE DISTRIBUTION	16-21
COMMUNICATIONS	22-23
TRADES AND MANUFACTURES	30
RAINFALL	31
FAMINE IN GAYA	32, 33

CHAPTER II.—HISTORY OF THE ESTATES UNDER SETTLEMENT.

THE TIKARI RAJ	34-37
THE GOVERNMENT ESTATES—	
(1) Escheated properties of Ekbal Bahadur	38-44
(2) Sarva mahal	45
(3) Nawada group	46-48
THE BELKHARA ESTATE	49-51

CHAPTER III.—THE SURVEY AND SETTLEMENT OPERATIONS.

The origin of the Survey and Settlement operations	52-54
The extent of the operations	55-58
The systems of rent payment in Gaya	59-78
The use of settlement records in Gaya	79-81
THE SURVEY AND SETTLEMENT OPERATIONS—	
A sketch of the procedure	82-84
Notifications	85-87
Traverse Survey	88-89
Cadastral Survey	90-96
Initial Record-writing or Khanapuri	97-103
Boundary disputes	104
Attestation	105-115
The Thikadari System	116-119
The use of rent receipts	120-121A

This book had a contents page

8. WHILST RESEARCHING



Take regular breaks



Check your photos
and power



Mark your research
list with both positive
and negative

Take regular breaks, especially for water or drinks [I used to end up with a headache because of dehydration]

Check photo quality regularly and battery power

Mark your list with what you have and have not found

Make notes on ideas for further things to research

9. BEFORE YOU GO



Review research list
Ask for help

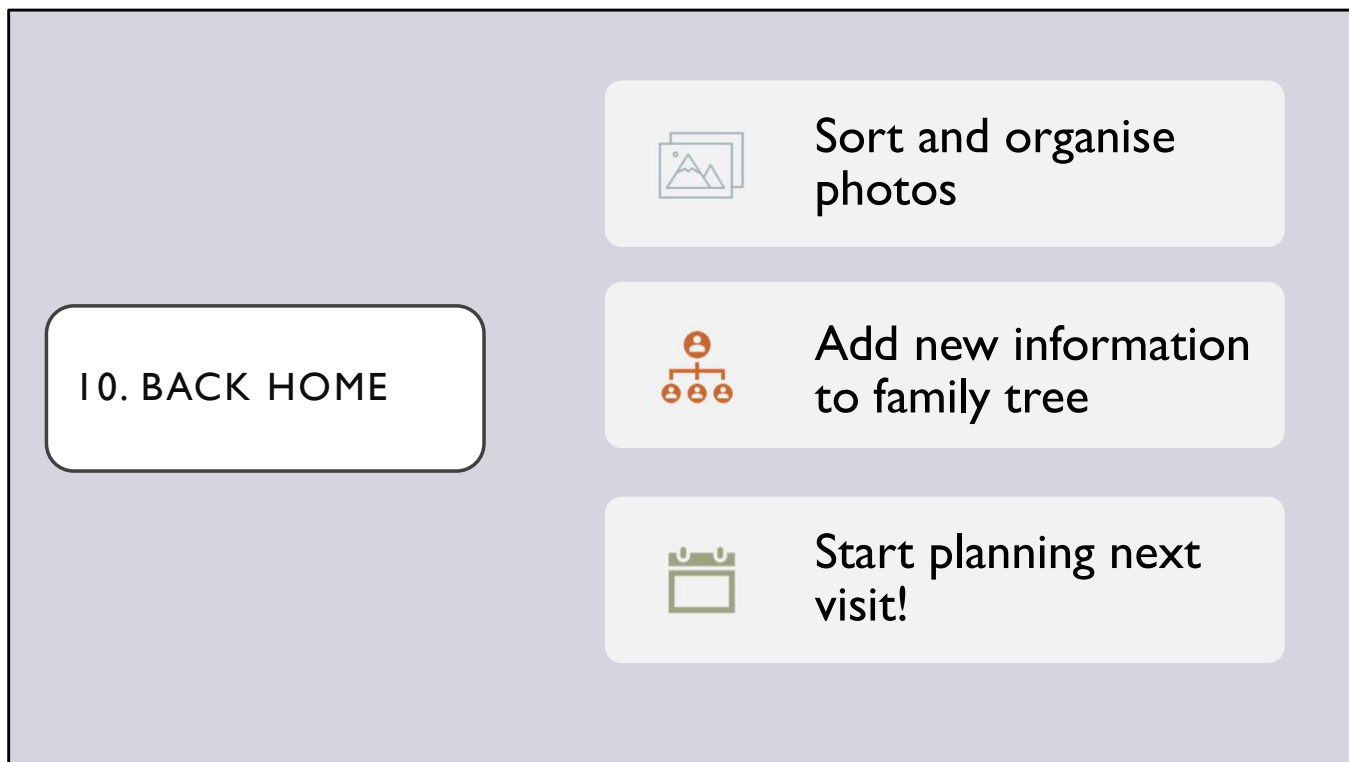


Have a wonder
around



Retrieve things from
locker

Take a final look at your list, is there anything further you can do today
Ask for help and look on library shelves
Collect things from locker and return plastic bag etc.



Once home


Sort photos, turn them around etc. Because they are on my phone I usually do this on the train!

Download them to your computer. I first put them in a folder labelled with archive name and date of visit

Get your list out and go through items, add images to persons folder on computer and add new information and images to profile on family tree.

Start planning next visit

THE _____
_____ LONDON
ARCHIVES



THE LONDON ARCHIVES

COLLECTIONS
CATALOGUE

YOUR ACCOUNT

Enter Your History Card Number:

Enter Your Password:

ISLAY, KERR AND COMPANY LIMITED

Date of Creation:

1924 - [1950?]

Reference Code:

CLC/B/123-34

From Collection:

INCHCAPE GROUP

Scope and Content:	Records of Islay, Kerr and Company Limited, comprising accounts, correspondence and photograph album showing office accommodation.
Extent:	4 production units.
Classification:	BUSINESSES
Former Reference:	MS 27766- 27769

It is not just the British Library and The National Archives that have records for our British India family

The following are just a small selection of other places to research.

London Metropolitan Archive for example I found records of the Jerusalem Coffee House, later the Jerusalem Shipping Exchange, including registers and lists of sailings and shippings, including some East India Company shipping; log of the voyage of the ship 'Walmer Castle' from London to India; agreements; and financial accounts.

Business records [Islay Kerr] father in law's father worked for them in Penang. owned by British firm so records came back to London.

Also wills of people

<https://www.thelondonarchives.org/your-research/about-our-catalogue>

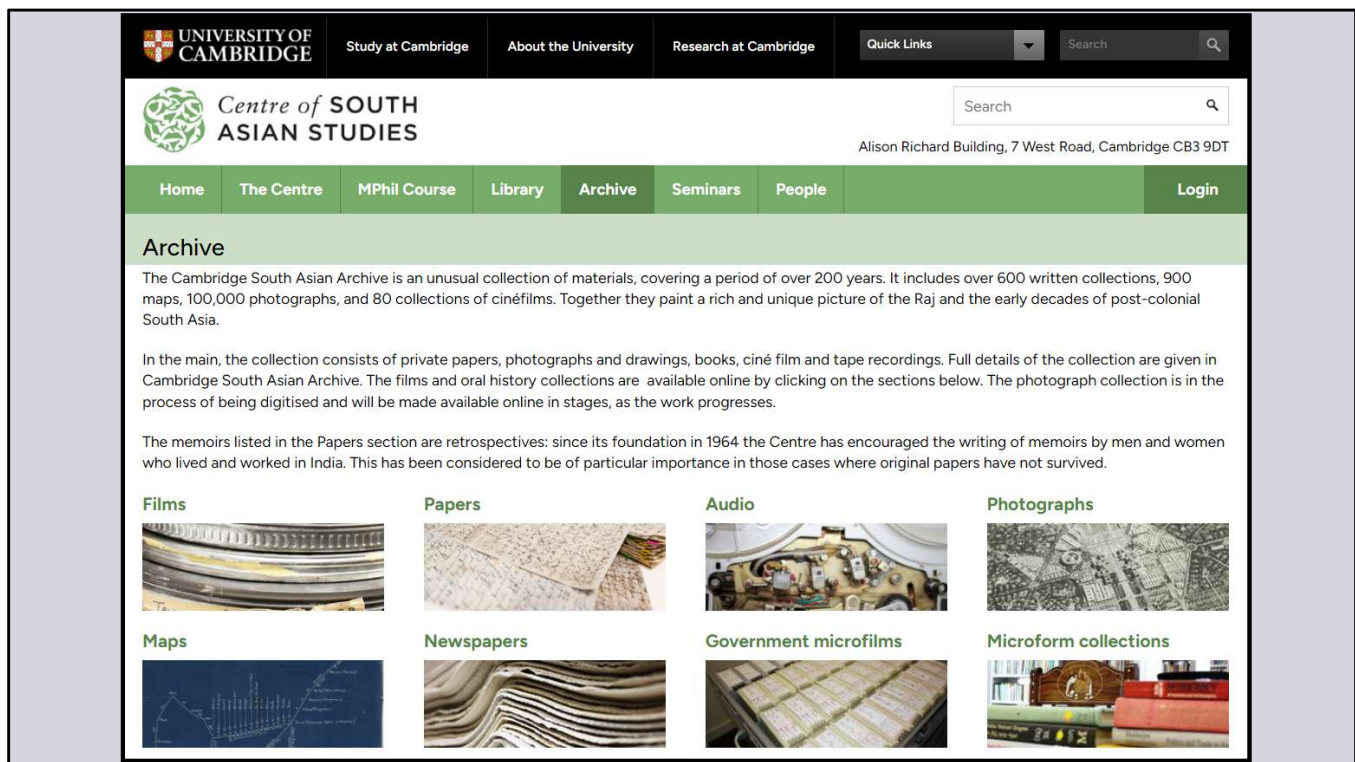
The screenshot shows the SOAS University of London Library catalogue interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the term 'penang' entered. Below the search bar, there are navigation links for 'Advanced search' and 'Resources'. The main content area displays a search result for a book. On the left, there is a sidebar with filters for 'Held By Library' (Libraries Worldwide, SOAS University of London, SOAS Library, Special Collections) and 'Filter by Format' (All, Book (16)). The search result itself includes a book icon, the title 'Our tropical possessions in Malayan India : being a descriptive account of Singapore, Penang, Province Wellesley, and Malacca : their peoples, products, commerce, and government', the author 'John Cameron 1835-1881', the publication details 'Print Book 1865, London : Smith, Elder, 1865.', and a status 'Available' with the location 'SOAS University of London, Special Collections Level F reading room'. There are also buttons for 'Cite', 'Share', and 'Save'.

SOAS

Has magazines, journals and books etc.

Some of the books are not in British library as published outside of UK

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/research/centres-and-institutes/soas-south-asia-institute>



The Cambridge South Asian Archive

An unusual collection of materials, covering a period of over 200 years.

Many personal papers etc.

<https://www.s-asian.cam.ac.uk/archive/>

And the Bodleian in Oxford has a similar collection

<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/collections/south-asian/>

Karen de Bruyne



notjustanyfamily@gmail.com



<https://notjustanyfamily.co.uk>



NotJustAnyFamily @karendebruynne



@karendebruynne



<https://www.facebook.com/notjustanyfamily>

Thank you for listening, I hope this has given you the confidence to make that first visit or given you some ideas to help with your next visit.

There is a copy of my talk notes on my website "Not Just Any Family"
I am a frequent archive and library visitor, so if you just have one thing you want to see, email me and I will get it next time I go.