

# Remixing and Remaking Digital History

## The London Lives Petitions Project

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# London Lives 1690 to 1800 ~ Crime, Poverty and Social Policy in the Metropolis

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## Sources for London Lives

A fully searchable edition of **240,000 manuscripts** from **eight archives** and **fifteen datasets**, giving access to **3.35 million**

**SEARCH**

Keyword

# connectedhistories

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## British History Sources, 1500-1900

Connected Histories brings together a range of digital resources related to early modern and nineteenth century Britain with a single federated search that allows sophisticated searching of



**Digital Panopticon**

An experimental interface

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## Trace & Explore Convict Lives

The Digital Panopticon follows the stories of the 90,000 people sentenced at The Old Bailey between 1780 and 1875. You can help us trace them through historical records, determining what impact crime and punishment had on their lives.

- You can search all of our data, or search specific databases such as the [Old Bailey Proceedings](#), or the [Criminal Indents](#) (details recorded when convicts arrived in Australia).
- You might also want to create charts & graphs using the convict lives we've already managed to partially piece together.

**Search Our Database**

Forename(s)

Surname

Search

You could also try a more advanced

*The Proceedings of the OLD BAILEY* ⚖ London's Central Criminal Court, 1674 to 1913

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# London Lives, 1690-1800

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240,000 MSS, 8 archives, 3 million names

- Parochial poor relief records
- Criminal justice records
- Coroners' records
- Guild and hospital records

<https://www.londonlives.org/>

# Sessions Papers

27 June 1715	Paid y <sup>e</sup> Constable of Lebridge for conveying Joane Burnell from her house to Sutton ham being 3 Miles by Cart or horseback in 2 Days & time.
1 July 1715	Paid D <sup>r</sup> for conveying John Egson from Thorne to Donham by Cart or on horseback in 2 Days & time being 2 Miles by Order of Col <sup>r</sup> Alexander 30 : 7 : 6
1 July 1715	Paid D <sup>r</sup> for conveying John Price Tayler from Thorne to Higgleston in 2 Days & time being 2 Miles by Order of Ditto 30 : 5 : 0
5 Aug <sup>r</sup> 1715	Paid D <sup>r</sup> for conveying Mary Smith from Thorne to Higgleston in 2 Days & time being 2 Miles by Order of Col <sup>r</sup> Franklin 30 : 7 : 6
21 October 1715	Paid D <sup>r</sup> for conveying Mary Bedwell from Thorne to St. Edmunds Bury in 2 Days & time being 18 Miles by Order of St. Ro: Franklin 30 : 12 : 6
26 Nov <sup>r</sup> 1715	Paid D <sup>r</sup> for conveying Joanne Burns & her 4 Children to St. Mary Magdalene in three in 4 Days & time being 20 Miles by Order of Col <sup>r</sup> Alexander 30 : 15 : 0
2 Dec <sup>r</sup> 1715	Paid D <sup>r</sup> for conveying Hannah Penry from Thorne to Donham in Burke in 2 Days & time being 2 Miles by Order of Col <sup>r</sup> Franklin 30 : 5 : 0
5 Dec <sup>r</sup> 1715	Paid y <sup>e</sup> Constable of Hellingdon for conveying Isabella - Isabell from Thorne to Donham by Cart being a poor Sick Lame Woman 3 Miles by Order of St. Ro: Franklin 30 : 5 : 6
6 Dec <sup>r</sup> 1715	Paid D <sup>r</sup> of Lebridge for conveying Mary Stevens & her 2 Children from Thorne to Donham in Burke in 3 Days & time by Order of Col <sup>r</sup> Alexander being 2 Miles by Cart 30 : 5 : 0
23 Dec <sup>r</sup> 1715	Paid D <sup>r</sup> for conveying Eliz. Abbott & her Child from Thorne to St. Ro: Franklin 30 : 5 : 0
12 Jan <sup>r</sup> 1716	Paid D <sup>r</sup> for conveying Ann Lum & her Child to Hellingdon being 18 Miles by Order of Col <sup>r</sup> Franklin 30 : 12 : 0
24 Jan <sup>r</sup> 1716	Paid D <sup>r</sup> for conveying Sarah Pearce to St. Giles in 3 Days & time with loss of 17 Miles by Order of St. Ro: Franklin
6 Feb <sup>r</sup> 1716	Paid y <sup>e</sup> Constable of Hellingdon for Conveying Rents on horseback to Bur being 10 Miles by Order of St. Ro: Franklin 30 : 12 : 0
10 March 1716	Paid y <sup>e</sup> Constable of Lebridge for conveying Richard Powell from Thorne to St. Ro: Franklin 30 : 12 : 0
14 March 1716	Paid y <sup>e</sup> Constable of Hellingdon for conveying Elizabeth his wife & her Child from Thorne to St. Ro: Franklin 30 : 12 : 0
6 April 1716	Paid y <sup>e</sup> Constable of Hellingdon for conveying Rents from Thorne to St. Ro: Franklin 30 : 12 : 0
19 May 1716	Paid y <sup>e</sup> Constable of Lebridge for conveying Richard to St. Andrews Holborn being Col <sup>r</sup> Alexander 30 : 12 : 0
10 May 1716	Paid D <sup>r</sup> for conveying Katharine Pitts worth by Cart by reason of Charge about her being 3 Miles by Order of Col <sup>r</sup> Franklin 30 : 12 : 0
21 May 1716	Paid D <sup>r</sup> for conveying John Ross from Holborn being 3 Miles by Order of Col <sup>r</sup> Franklin 30 : 12 : 0

Duum Regum Annos  
JULY William Joyce et al Doffers

John Wilkins of Hyde Park corner in y<sup>e</sup> Parish of S<sup>t</sup>. George Hanover - Squares in y<sup>e</sup> County of Middle & Province Mahesh Oath if he well knows of Street in y<sup>e</sup> Parish of S<sup>t</sup>. Martin in y<sup>e</sup> Hertford & S<sup>t</sup>. James in y<sup>e</sup> City of Westm<sup>r</sup>. called y<sup>e</sup> Hay Market and says of William Wilkins his Dep<sup>t</sup> late Clerk deceased was as he believes appointed by Justices of Peace of the S<sup>t</sup>. County & City of London of such part of y<sup>e</sup> Street as was limited as for y<sup>e</sup> Market therof by an Act of Parliament of y<sup>e</sup> 5th & 6th Years of y<sup>e</sup> Reign of King William of Orange during y<sup>e</sup> 10 Years he contract at £ 100 per Annum for y<sup>e</sup> this Dep<sup>t</sup> sometime in y<sup>e</sup> Year 1702 became Apprentice to his s<sup>t</sup>. Uncle Edward w<sup>th</sup> him & his widow for 10 Years or thereabouts & served him & her as their Servant & Journeyman during y<sup>e</sup> time & during y<sup>e</sup> 10 Years he generally 3 or 4 times every week working y<sup>e</sup> day

ing of Pavement therof says he this day saw Edward his Uncle & his widow w<sup>th</sup> he believes were set up at y<sup>e</sup> Hay Market w<sup>th</sup> he believes were set up at y<sup>e</sup> for y<sup>e</sup> 20 Years ago therof he believes worn smooth for y<sup>e</sup> 10 Years Dep<sup>t</sup> hood w<sup>th</sup> them always paved y<sup>e</sup> street hood for y<sup>e</sup> 10 Years he has heard his s<sup>t</sup>. Uncle say y<sup>e</sup> or their Ord<sup>r</sup> as y<sup>e</sup> bounds of y<sup>e</sup> Market of bounds therof and for y<sup>e</sup> 10 Years he always required being of bounds therof and says y<sup>e</sup> 10 Years they were in y<sup>e</sup> Year 1702 & have not been dredged up.

John Wilkins

Middle: Ad Genuas Sessionis p[ro]ximis Annis Regis h[ab]ent & tendunt m[od]i apud Hertford in St. Godehard Street in County of Middle adiutorio die Sabati dicti ~~quarto~~ quarto die Junij anno regni Domini Georgij viiiii Regis Magni Britanniarum p[ro]ximo sexto -

His ordered by this Court that the within named Elizabeth Harding receive notice of this process, and that she doe attend his Maj[es]tis Justices of the peace for the County of Middle at the next Generall Quarter Sessions of the peace to be holden for the said County by adjournment on Friday the fifteenth day of July next at ten of the clock in the forenoon to shew cause why the within named Nicholas Rigby - should not be discharged from his apprenticeship within fourteen, and from the service of her Master Elizabeth Harding.

# Limitations of search

Searched for  
'petition' in  
Middlesex Sessions  
year: 1690

8 results:  
2 false positives  
5 petitions not found

X

1. [Middlesex Sessions : Sessions Papers – Justices' Working Documents SM | PS](#), 1st January 1690

... f thePeace for ye County of Middlesex :The humble Petition of John Rowell : Sheweth That yor Petior. on the Eighteenth Day of March One ThousandSix hundred eighty eight put his Stephen Thomas Cordwell unto Ed ...
2. [Middlesex Sessions : Sessions Papers – Justices' Working Documents SM | PS](#), 1st January 1690

X ... to attend Tho: Cordell an Apprentice Ordr to The Petition of John Rowell
3. [Middlesex Sessions : Sessions Papers – Justices' Working Documents SM | PS](#), 1st February 1690

... e held for the County of Middx: at Hicks Hall The Petition of Jno: Seller late Chappel Warden of the Hamlet of Wapping White Chapell Sheweth that yor. Peticonr: was Chappell Warrant of the said Hamlet in the ...
4. [Middlesex Sessions : Sessions Papers – Justices' Working Documents SM | PS](#), 1st April 1690

... f the Peace . att The Sessions att Hixes Hall The Petition of William Long . Silver Smith Humbly Sheweth That your poor Petitioner, the last Sessions humbly prsented yrWorships 1 Petition desireing your Worsh ...
5. [Middlesex Sessions : Sessions Papers – Justices' Working Documents SM | PS](#), 1st April 1690

... es of ye Poore for ye County of Middx The Humble. Petition of WilliamPattysone of Endfield White Smith Sheweth That yore. Peticonr: having Served ye Office ofConstable for Parsonage Word in ye Sd Parish of End ...
6. [Middlesex Sessions : Sessions Papers – Justices' Working Documents SM | PS](#), 15th July 1690

... lding their Sessions for ye Sd County. The humble Petition of Sr Richard Bulkeley Bartt , JohnJeffrey for Esqr Sarjeant at Law , and Charles Davenant Doctor of Laws all of RedLyon Square in ye Parish of St An ...
7. [Middlesex Sessions : Sessions Papers – Justices' Working Documents SM | PS](#), 23rd July 1690

... the Peace for the County of Middlesex The humble Petition of John Littell & Stephen Bonlton . Sheweth That yor Petitioners are inhabitants in the City ofLondon in Thomas Street in Tower Ward , where they ...
8. [Middlesex Sessions : Sessions Papers – Justices' Working Documents SM | PS](#), 1st December 1690

X ... atchat their own Charge.) Upon reading the humble Petition of the Inhabitants of Norfolk Street in the Dutchy Liberty in the Strand in theParish of St. Clement Danes in this County exhibitted untothis Court s ...

# Petition of Jane Young, 1691

To their most Honourable masters  
the poore at the Quarter Sessions held at  
Hilier Hall the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 1691

The Humble petition of Jane -  
Brownie of the parish of Wapping  
Whitechapel widow

Humbly sheweth

That yo<sup>r</sup> Honored poore petitioner was in company  
where a friend of hers was abused and the  
offenders fearing that she yo<sup>r</sup> poore petitione would  
be avised ag<sup>t</sup> your pooy<sup>r</sup> gave her no answer  
your poore petitione being guiltless of any  
manner of fault in that matter.

The plenipotentiary touching yo<sup>r</sup> poore petition  
have two small children & neyng to maintain  
her selfe & children but w<sup>t</sup> she got by her  
owne hand labour humbly names this Honourable  
Court that she may be salled & discharged  
she having now reparation ag<sup>t</sup> her & yo<sup>r</sup>  
petitione shewill over praye et

# Petition of Jane Young, 1691

To there Mats Honrable Justices of the peace at the Quarter Sessions held at  
Hickes Hall the 26th of May 1691

The Humble peticon of Jane Browne of the Parish of wapping White Chapple  
widdow

Humbly Sheweth

That yor Hounor poore peticonr Was in Company Where a Freind of her was  
abused and the offenders feareing that she yor poore peticon would bee evidence  
agt them they swore the peace agt your poore peticonr: She being guiltless of and  
maners of fact in that nature

The Prmisses Tenderly considered yor poore peticonr have Two smale children &  
nothing to maintaine her Selfe & Children but wch she getts by her owens hand  
labour Hambly wares this Honrable Bench that She may bee called & discharged  
she haveing noe Psecution agt her & yor peticonr Shall ever pray etc

most  
worthy gentallmen of the  
Court your humble petitionor  
Ester Cutler begs Consideracion  
being a wodown woman &  
nothing to live upon but what  
she can gitt out of selling a  
few herbs so that she humbly  
desires to be taken of that tax.  
of paying to the poor your

humble petitionor  
Ester Cutler

Petition of  
Ester Cutler,  
1715

MSP 1715 Jy/50

# Ester Cutler

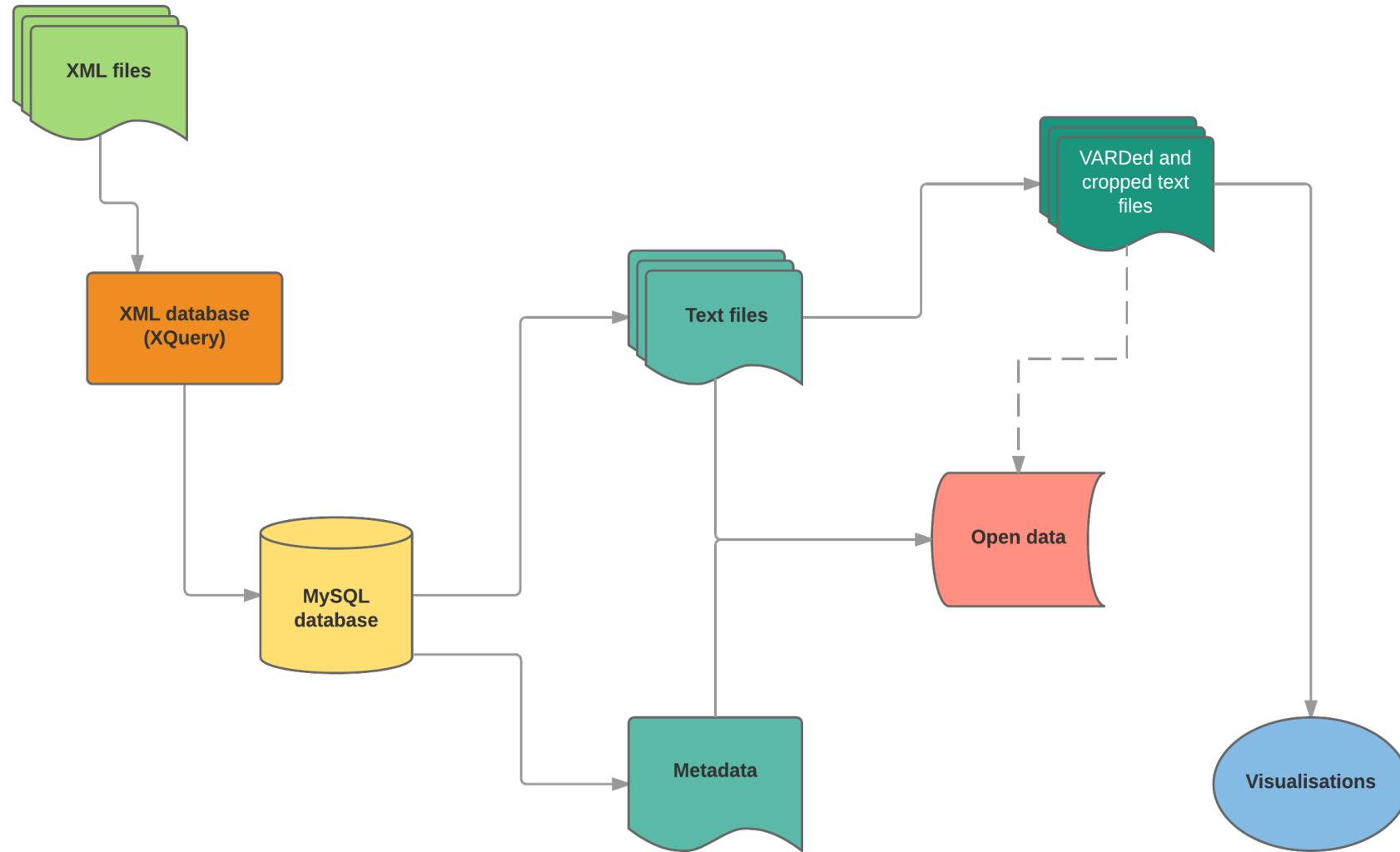
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Most

Worthy gentellmen of the Court your humble petishnor Ester Cutler  
begs Consederacion being a Weddow Womans nothing to line  
apon but what she can gitt out of Selling a few herbs so that she  
humbly desiers to be taken of that tax of passing to the poor your  
humble petishenor

Ester Cutler

# Remix Culture

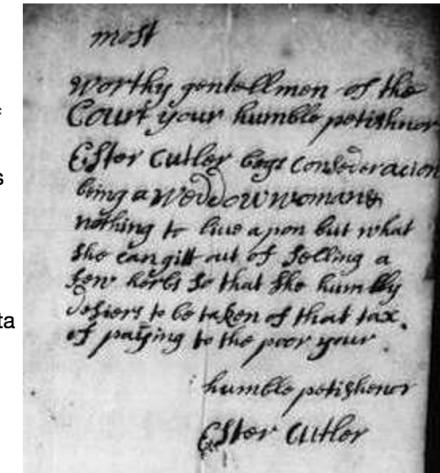


# The London Lives Petitions Project

## Introduction

The London Lives Petitions Project is a digital history project by [Sharon Howard](#) which aims to explore approximately 10,000 petitions (and petitioning letters) addressed to magistrates, contained in the voluminous records of eighteenth-century London and Middlesex Sessions of the Peace which were digitised for [London Lives, 1690-1800](#). These are important sources for the social history of eighteenth-century London, which have been difficult to access within the existing London Lives resource because of the sheer size and variety of the Sessions Papers documents.

- In the first phase of the project, I focused on discovery of petitions in the Sessions Papers, and the creation of new metadata that would facilitate access and analysis. This discovery stage is largely complete (February 2016), although there may be smaller future additions and corrections (particularly to deal with duplicates and multiple copies of petitions). The resulting data, consisting of structured metadata and plain text files, has been released as open data under a Creative Commons licence.
- Work on the data is ongoing to add tagging that will further aid access and re-use, particularly subject tagging and re-incorporating London Lives' existing tagging for petitioners' names. I also plan (eventually) to link the petitions to related documents (court orders, pauper examinations, etc) in the London Lives archives.
- The current focus of the project starts from the question: What can you do with 10,000 petitions? Can large-scale distant reading techniques tell us things that we didn't already know from close reading of smaller, personally-crafted collections of petitions? I'll be experimenting with various methods and data visualisations.
- But also: what can you *not* do with them? Understanding what doesn't work for data like this is important. For one thing, the quality of the transcriptions does not match up to traditional scholarly standards: is it good enough for 'big data' methods? And there are problems with uneven survival of the original records. Do quantitative methods produce results that are meaningful, insights of any significance?
- All of this doesn't mean the abandonment of good old-fashioned close reading - far from it. The sheer size of the collection means that even smaller niches can find plentiful material for qualitative analysis, and quantitative analysis enables close readings to be understood in their wider contexts and connections. I'm particularly interested in women petitioners and prisoners; but, by making the new data as re-usable as possible, I hope to enable and encourage other researchers to pursue their own interests and to experiment in their own ways.



[Petition of Ester Cutler](#) (1715)

LL ref: LMSMPS501460090

London Metropolitan Archives MJ/SP/1715/07

<http://earlymodernweb.org/llpp/>