

This guide describes microform collections of early English/British official documents and periodical literature. **Subject librarian:**  
**Bruce Pencek**

## ***Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores [Rolls Series]***

Ultrafiche DA25 B5

These *Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages* contain the writings of most of the great medieval English chroniclers from 1066 onward, plus some public records, year books, calendars of State papers, patent and close rolls, and lists and indexes of public records. The *Rolls Series* editors sought to transcribe the most correct text should be formed from an accurate collation of the best manuscripts available in the 19th century. Each editor gives an account of the manuscripts used, their age and peculiarities, along with include a brief account of the life and times of the author and any comments necessary to explain the chronology -- but with no other note or comment except to establish the correctness of the text.

The 99 works in this series are individually catalogued in Addison.

### **Finding aids:**

- Annotated title list online: < <http://orb.rhodes.edu/Rolls.html> >

## ***The Thomason Tracts: [the Pamphlets, Books, Newspapers, and Manuscripts ... Collected by George Thomason, 1640-1661]***

Call number: DA410 T45 1977

Format: microfilm

Includes more than 22,000 individual items, representing about 80 percent of what was published in Britain and the Continent during the tumultuous years of the English Civil War, Protectorate, and Restoration. Contains a great deal of political material, notably speeches made in Parliament, tracts on the religious issues that reinforced political divisions, gossip from or about the court, sermons and political diatribes, news reports that provide detailed accounts of battles, negotiations, and political machinations. Complements *Early English Books, 1641-1700* (microfilm Z2002 U577), which is strong in the arts, philosophy, the sciences, popular culture, and women's studies

**Finding aid:** *The Thomason tracts, 1640-1661 : an Index to the Microfilm Edition of the Thomason Collection of the British Library: with a Cross-Index by Wing Number.* Microforms Index Area Z2018 T49 1981.

## ***State Papers (Foreign) of Edward VI, 1547-1553***

Microfilm DA345 A43 1979

Collection includes speeches, decrees, and petitions to sovereigns, and official correspondence transmitted from abroad, for the information of the English government, during the reign of Edward the sixth.

## ***Privy Council documents***

The Privy Council was the chief source of executive power in England before the emergence of the cabinet system of government. It developed during the latter years of the reign of Henry VIII (1509-1547). Under the later Stuarts the Council as a body declined in power as the kings worked instead with confidential committees within the council. After 1706, the Privy Council's powers and functions were rapidly assumed by the Cabinet. The UK Public Record Office describes Council functions and documents in several "pamphlets" for researchers online at <<http://www.pro.gov.uk/leaflets/Riindex.asp>>. Also check the "unclassified" fiche cabinets, which are arranged by author rather than call number, for works by "Great Britain. Privy Council."

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## ***Acts of the Privy Council of England: New Series [1542-1628]***

Microfiche J301 P73 1890

Collection consists of the texts of Acts proposed in the Privy Council between 1542 and 1628. See also the *Early English Books* microcard collection, which includes a number of Privy Council documents. These are individually cataloged in Addison.

## ***Acts of the Privy Council of England: Colonial Series [1613-1783]***

Microfiche DA25 L35 1908

Reveals the large share the Council played in the work of colonial administration. These records of transactions of the Council fall into three parts: (1) chronological accounts of the proceedings, written by one of the clerks; (2) the "Plantation Register which from 1677 recorded various colonial laws passed or approved by the Council, the instructions issued to governors, and certain formal letters written to them; and (3) miscellaneous documents, consisting mainly of petitions and reports issued to the Council by the Board of Trade. See also the *Library of American Civilization* ultrafiche set, which includes several collections of Privy Council documents relating specifically to British North American colonies, which are individually cataloged in Addison.

## ***Privy Council Registers, 1631-1637***

Microcard KD4460 G7

Contains the register of the Privy Council, comprising the minutes of its proceedings, its orders, certain proclamations and the reports of committees with the papers accompanying them, sometimes entered at length, sometimes in abstract only. From the late sixteenth century the registers generally contain lists of privy councilors and, occasionally, lists of committees and committee members, transcripts of official oaths, etc

## ***Early English Newspapers [1662-1820]***

Microfilm DA26 E2

This newspaper collection contains over 1,100 volumes. It includes some 500 titles from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as well as such predecessors of the modern newspaper from the seventeenth century as corantos, diurnals, and newsbooks; the earliest items that are recognizable as newspapers date from the early 1620s. The collection is particularly rich in 18th-century London newspapers: all the major titles are included, such as the *Daily Courant* from 1702 to 1735, the first daily newspaper published in London, and the *London Gazette* from 1665.

### **Finding aids:**

- *Early English Newspapers: Bibliography and Guide to the Microfilm Collection*. Ref room DA26 E223 1983
- *Early English Newspapers : Immediate Title Availability*. Stacks DA26 E22.
- *Primary Source Microfilm Online Guide: Early English Newspapers* website:  
<<http://microformguides.gale.com/BrowseGuide.asp?colldocid=1003000&Page=1>>

### ***Related materials***

This is a selective guide to microform resources at Virginia Tech. To view the wider range of related materials, begin by searching Addison for the following subjects (which may have various further "subdivisions"):

- Great Britain – History – Sources
- Great Britain – Politics and Government
- Great Britain. Privy Council.
- England and Wales. Privy Council.