



UK Parliamentary Papers

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 ProQuest®

UK Parliamentary Papers are foremost among the richest and most detailed primary sources for the past three centuries, for Britain, its colonies and the wider world. As such, they constitute a major part of the world's historical record. Parliamentary Papers influenced public opinion and social and political philosophy and provided a forum for the ideas of thinkers of the day.



With the core content of House of Commons Parliamentary Papers and House of Lords Parliamentary Papers, the digitization of the Parliamentary Papers of the UK Parliament has made ProQuest the key research destination for everything associated with parliamentary research. Digitizing the Reports on Public Petitions would rounds out the Parliamentary collection by giving the database an aspect of popular constitutionalism to the workings of Parliament.

“...no single library brings together all parliamentary papers in their original format...”

— **Chelcie J. Rowell**, Boston College

A 2015 study, commissioned by ProQuest and Jisc, a higher education company in the UK, focused on the impacts to research and teaching of two collections – Early English Books Online (EEBO) and House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (HCPP). The research used the principles of the Toolkit for the Impact of Digitized Scholarly Resources (TIDSR) toolkit, which was created by Oxford Internet Institute, to better understand the quantitative and qualitative empirical evidence for the impacts that digital collections can have when it comes to research.

The study found ten key findings. What was found was that the use of digital resources is changing. It's not a “big bang” type of movement. Instead, it's an ongoing process that can be perfected. While universities tend to use both databases, many individual researchers do not use both EEBO and HCPP databases. Users are more concerned with gaining vital access, but not necessarily who the information comes from originally. The ability to dive in and experiment with keyword searching, without knowing what the search will retrieve, is a powerful experiment for the researcher.

The overall growth in the usage of these collections takes time. It can also be seen that the measures of impact take longer because practices constantly change and improve over time. Researchers need to look at the broader picture to conclude their research. Without collections like HCPP and EEBO, researchers would be vastly set back if the databases provided to them simply disappeared. Now, more than ever, the ProQuest databases are not only fundamental, but a necessary and vital part of modern research and scholarship studies for universities, faculty, students, and researchers alike.

“I use primary resources a lot in teaching and digital resources are a really good way of getting those, and I have lots of activities where students have to go and find a particular thing from a digital resource.”

— **(UK History Faculty Member)**

House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (18th-21st Centuries)

Observe history in the making with nearly 280,000 papers and 11 million pages of original documentation

This module includes the complete file of House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, also known as Sessional Papers or Blue Books, dating from 1688 through to today. This includes:

- Bills – drafts of legislation, to be reviewed through various parliamentary stages.
- House of Commons Papers – documents resulting from the work of the House of Commons.
- Command Papers – government papers conveying information or decisions the Government wishes to draw to attention of the House, presented 'by Command of Her Majesty'.

The latter two categories breakdown further into:

- Reports of Committees – Select or the Whole House. Appointed to investigate issues of concern.
- Reports of Commissioners – commissions appointed by the Crown to investigate social problems, to conduct inquiries into events, and as a preparation for legislation.
- Accounts – statistical information, originating primarily from the Treasury, the Board of Trade, and the War Office/Admiralty.
- Papers – correspondence from ambassadors, governors, army officers abroad; commercial, trade and navigation accounts, statistical abstracts: judicial, taxation, etc.; census data; slavery and slave trade documents; treaties.

Plus, the 18th Century Collection includes pre-Hansard debates, House of Lords and House of Commons journals, rare private bills, other legislative materials, and reports and papers presented to both Houses.

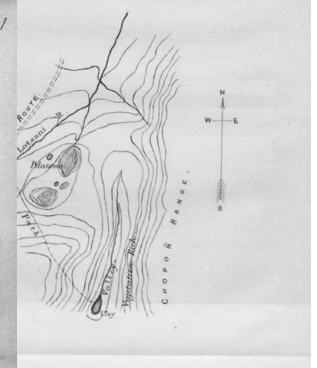
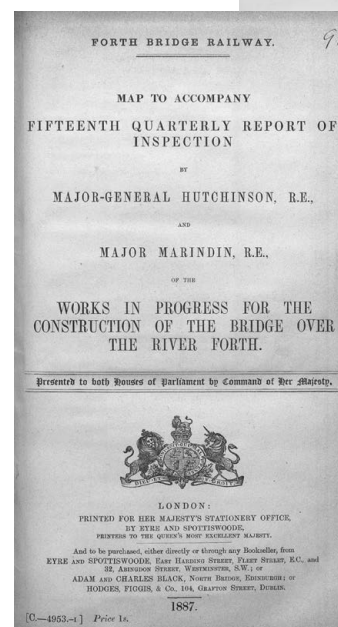
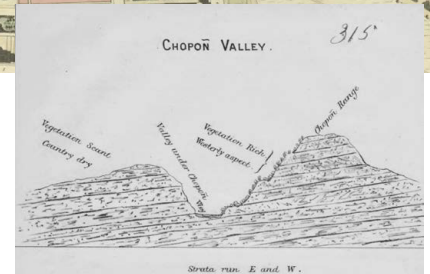
International Relevance

House of Commons Parliamentary Papers includes a huge range of content relating to the wider world: as well as the many volumes covering British dominions and colonies, there is extensive reporting on foreign affairs, including detailed trade statistics, correspondence relating to international events, and reports from British diplomats abroad on matters of interest in their location. For example, researchers can use U.K. Parliamentary Papers to find out how much coffee was imported into Holland in 1896, or the number, tonnage, and flag of steam and sail ships entering Brazilian ports in 1907.

Around half of the nineteenth century papers are focused on colonial or international matters.

“The resulting concentration of the world’s best expertise in the field of large-scale digitization and record preservation has produced a world class resource in House of Commons Parliamentary Papers. We should be clear that providing a full-text version of these papers on this scale is a considerable undertaking.”

– Martin Myhill



The House of Lords Parliamentary Papers (1800-1910)

Composed of nearly 3400 volumes, 43,000 documents, and 2.1 million pages of content heretofore unavailable

An essential research resource that, along with the existing U.K. Parliamentary Papers database, presents a complete and total view of the influence of the Parliament of the UK and in the administration of empire during the height of British global dominance.

The House of Lords Parliamentary Papers provides online access to previously unseen and valuable historical documents and is the only digitized collection of 19th century House of Lords Parliamentary Papers.

This unique project, done in partnership with the National Library of Scotland, allows those who are not able to access the documents in their physical form to broaden their research into this essential 19th century government documents resource. Enhancing the growing corpus of historical papers that ProQuest have digitized—including the House of Commons Parliamentary Papers—this collection improves research outcomes for scholars of British History, British Government, Political Science, History, and more.

Opening a hitherto untapped resource essential to understanding the workings of Parliament, including:

- Essential evidence heard by Commissioners, but not included in the Commons Papers
- Lords Minutes of Proceedings
- Papers on Peerage cases
- Lords' Private Members' Bills

These papers allow researchers to:

- Compare different versions of bills between the legislative bodies and track legislation that originated in Lords
- Review the Lord's views on issues covered in the Commons
- Research topics dealing with trials of Lords
- Explore a whole host of issues for the period from the Lords' perspective

International Relevance

The research value is of international significance, revealing previously unknown material such as statistical data, oral evidence, and letters and business papers relating to not only Britain, but also to the many parts of the world that were under British influence. For example, researchers can delve into Lords' investigations into Irish Nationalism and analyze its impact on the budget crisis of 1909; review slavery in the West India Colonies and the 1849 Lords committee evidence for the final eradication of the African Slave Trade; and examine the activities of the East India Company in both India and China.

Public Petitions to Parliament (1833-1918)

Included are individually rekeyed metadata records for every one of the more than 960,000 petitions accepted by Parliament

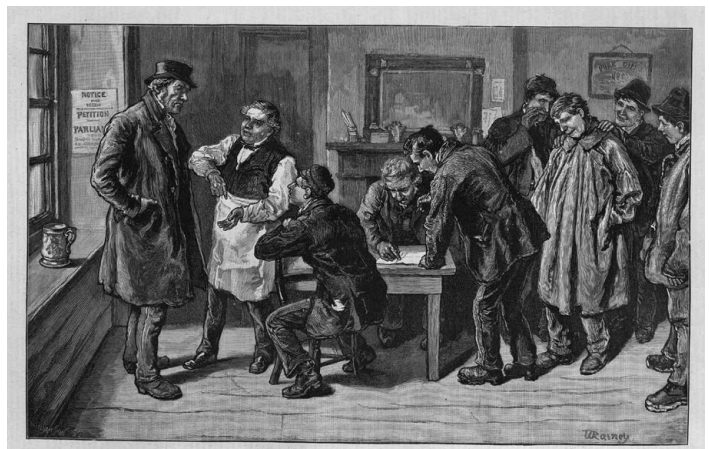
The collection includes Records of the Select Committee on Public Petitions, allowing researchers to gain insight on the formative role of petitions to Parliament during the 19th century (1833-1918), an unparalleled period of political modernization and democratization in Britain. Public Petitions to Parliament are very important indicators of the views and priorities of both the populace and Parliament. How Parliament addresses the petition, or doesn't address it, is a stark indicator of political and social priorities.

Petitioning was by far the most popular form of political participation, but it has long been overlooked by historians and social scientists preoccupied with elections and election rituals, campaigns to extend the right to vote, and the rise of national political parties. However, the utility to scholars of public petitions is not just limited to political historians studying the groundswell of public pressure for the expansion of the voting franchise.

This material appeals to all social, cultural, and religious scholars of Britain, and contains materials on:

- Petitions on ecclesiastical issues.
- Crime and criminals.
- Colonies, taxation, education, and every other issue of interest to the populace of Britain.
- Religious scholars interested on Methodism and the Church of England.
- Scientists concerned with pollution and pollution controls during the Industrial Revolution.
- Sociologists concerned with how these issues were influenced by the people.

The popular constitutionalism inherent in this collection (as opposed to the "top down" approach to looking at history), is at the cutting edge of historical research today and has wide appeal across campus.



Hansard (1803-2005)

Included are nearly 72,000 publicly available XML files created by the Hansard Digitization Project (led by the Directorate of Information Services of the House of Commons and the Library of the House of Lords) are the source for this material, which is being made available in its entirety at no extra cost for all institutions currently accessing any modules.

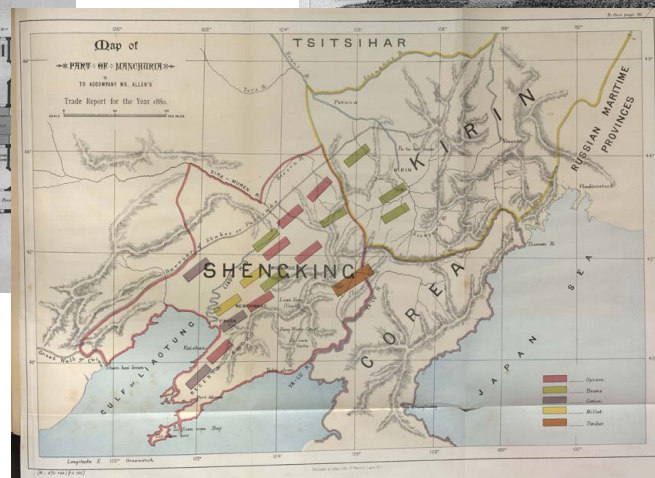
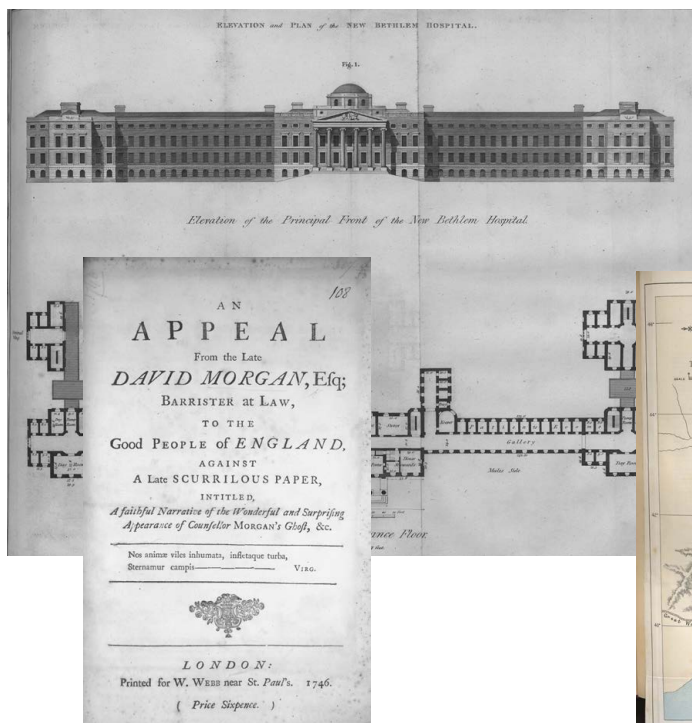
This significant enhancement enables the sessional papers and parliamentary petitions to be searched alongside Hansard from one interface.

Researchers can use Hansard alongside parliamentary papers to see how legislation and topics covered in reports, Command Papers, and other publications were discussed and debated in Parliament throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.

- The debates around the final passage of the Bill outlawing slavery in the British Empire in 1833.
- The discussions in the House of Lords about the passing of the Parliament Act of 1911, which limited their power.
- The debates on the Suez intervention in November 1956, alongside the treaties and agreements concerning the Suez Canal.
- Debates on the European Union and the single currency and potential for a referendum, together with Treasury papers on economic and monetary union, reports of the Select Committee on European legislation, and proposed referendum bills.

“The new interface comes close to replicating the ease of using the print [Hansard] volumes, useful for certain types of non-specific browsing, easier for scanning through and picking out particular terms, with the advantage of being more easily searchable.”

– Kate Wilcox, Institute of Historical Research



UK Parliamentary Papers Modules

18th Century House of Commons Parliamentary Papers

Over 58,000 records composed of ~ 600k pages

This collection contains printed documents from 1688–1834 that illuminates many aspects of 18th century history, from the widespread use of automated workflow during the industrial revolution to the shaping of a new democratic system during the American Revolution. Coverage also includes Edward Jenner's work with vaccination, the abolition of slavery, navigations of James Cook, the Seven Year War, the Battle of Trafalgar, and the tenure of Great Britain's first Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole. The collection was made possible through an innovative public/private cooperative publishing model; ProQuest partnered with JISC, BOPCRIS (British Official Publications Collaborative Reader Information Service) at the University of Southampton, the British Library, and the University of Cambridge. In addition to the sessional papers for both the Commons and Lords, this collection contains other parliamentary materials including:

- History and Proceedings/Debates 1660-1805
- Commons and Lords Journals 1688-1834
- Bills and Acts 1695-1834

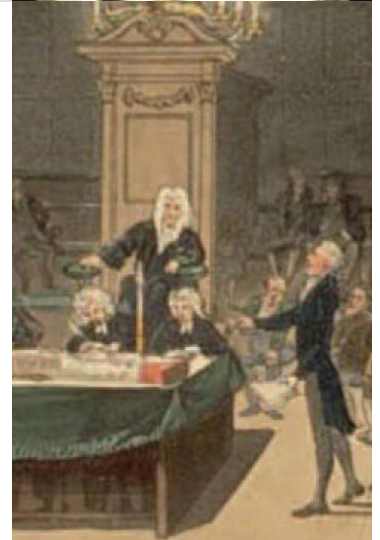


19th Century House of Commons Parliamentary Papers

Over 87,000 records composed of 4.2 million pages

Combining Resources to Unlock the 19th Century

The origins of this collection lie in the Chadwyck-Healey microfiche edition of the 19th Century House of Commons Sessions Papers. Published between 1980 and 1983, the microfiche edition includes filmed images of 4.2 million pages. The accompanying 5 volume index, the *Subject catalogue to the House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (1801–1900)* by Peter Cockton, was the first thematic listing of the complete set of parliamentary papers. U.K. Parliamentary Papers brings these two resources together, unlocking a century of policy making, investigation, correspondence, and reporting for researchers of all kinds, shedding new light on topics ranging from the Industrial Revolution to the interaction of colonial forces with indigenous peoples in Australasia and North America.



20th Century House of Commons Parliamentary Papers

Over 100,000 records composed of 5.6 million pages

Bringing the Most Comprehensive Primary Sources into the 21st Century

20th Century House of Commons Parliamentary Papers includes a comprehensive subject index for the century which is based upon the HMSO General Alphabetical Indexes from 1900–1979 and the Parliamentary On-Line Information Service (POLIS) database beginning in 1979. Broad subject terms (categories) from Peter Cockton's Subject Catalogue of the House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (1801–1900) have been combined with existing HMSO/POLIS terms along with new modern terms such as 'communications and mass media' to create the only comprehensive index to the papers from 1901 to current sessions. Users can search on such topics as the World Wars, decolonization, the formation of NATO and the United Nations, the IRA, Cold War, Falklands War, dismantling of Apartheid, September 11, and anti-terror laws.



21st Century House of Commons Parliamentary Papers

21st Century, 2005-2010 (Module 1 ~ 600k pages)

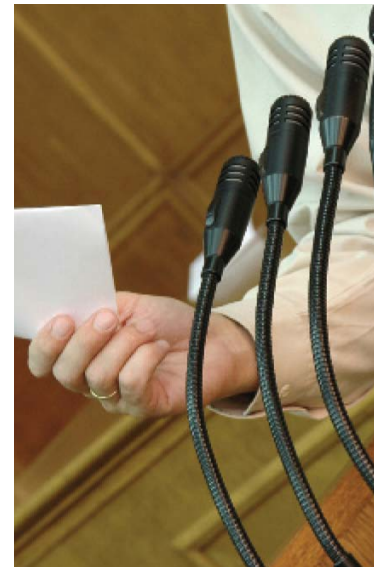
21st Century, 2010-2015 (Module 2 ~ 250k pages)

21st Century, 2015-2022 (Module 3 ~ 100k pages and growing)

Current Papers from 2005 to the present

In an ongoing digitization project, 21st Century House of Commons Parliamentary Papers makes all of the bills, Command Papers and House papers published since 2005 searchable in one location and cross-searchable with historical Parliamentary Papers.

By extending coverage beyond 2004, researchers have vital access to current government decisions applicable to work in a wide range of disciplines – economics, sociology, political science, women's studies, law, geography, demographics, humanities, and more. Content in 21st Century House of Commons Parliamentary Papers covers areas such as Scottish and Welsh devolution, counter-terrorism, future plans for the UK armed forces including Trident, NHS reform, Brexit, and coronavirus.



The House of Lords Parliamentary Papers, 1800-1910

Nearly 43,000 records composed of 2.1 million pages

An essential research resource that along with the existing U.K. Parliamentary Papers database, presents a complete and total view of the influence of the Parliament of the UK and in the administration of Empire during the height of British global dominance.

As the working documents of government, the House of Lords Parliamentary Papers encompass wide areas of social, political, economic and foreign policy, providing evidence of committees and commissions during a time when the Lords in the United Kingdom wielded considerable power. Most importantly from a legislative perspective, this collection will include many bills which originated and were subsequently rejected by the Lords – rich indicators of the direction and interests of the Lords that have been largely lost to researchers. The Minutes of Evidence heard by the Lords, but not by the Commons, are essential for understanding how the UK government addressed a myriad of issues of the day, from marriage and divorce to the working conditions of women and children, the coal trade and railroads, the Australian aborigines, and other topics of import throughout the far flung Empire.



Public Petitions to Parliament, 1833-1918

960,000 petition records

An online module of Parliamentary Papers covering the records of the Select Committee on Public Petitions, 1833-1918. It includes individually rekeyed petition records for every petition accepted by Parliament and the full text of each petition the Committee transcribed. Integrated fully with U.K. Parliamentary Papers, this collection shows how "the people" during the 19th Century influenced Parliament on political, ecclesiastical, colonial, taxation, and many other topics relevant to Britain and Empire.



Hansard, 1803-2005

Nearly 72,000 records

The full text backfile from Hansard, the Official Report of debates in Parliament, from both the House of Commons and House of Lords, is now included in HCPP from 1803 to 2005. Hansard provides an edited record of parliamentary debates and questions, including written ministerial statements and answers to parliamentary questions as well as the transcripts of debates. *All modules get access to Hansard parliamentary debates for free.*



Key Features

Faceted Search Results

- Open up the collection to new avenues of discovery and an easier and more intuitive research experience with post-search filtering.
- Facets are arranged by Paper Series, Paper Type, Century Collection, Subject, Chair/Author, and by Document Feature (map, illustration, etc.).
- Include or exclude multiple facets via the “More options” faceting button after retrieving search results.

Ability to Bookmark the Search Form

- Bookmark the search form with certain search segments, date parameters, collection, and paper types preselected.

Dedicated Search by Number Form

- Facilitate known-number searches (a Command Paper number, for example) so that the users won't need to know how the format of certain citations changed over time.

Full-text Searchable PDFs for Download

- Full-text searchable and fast web-enabled PDFs.
- Researchers can delve deeper into a document with enhanced navigation allowing the results to guide continued research.

Integration of MyResearch

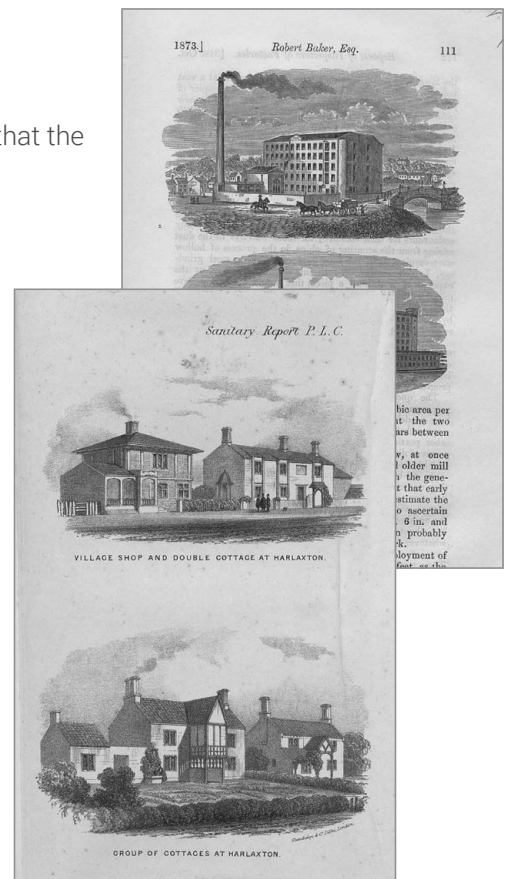
- Private research space that allows users to save, manage, and organize the content and supporting materials they find in U.K. Parliamentary Papers.

Related Results from ProQuest Historical Newspapers

- Research options are expanded with entitlement-based related news items displayed in the right hand “Related Documents” panel.
- Researchers can gain context for the particular document under review.

“Parliamentary papers are sources not only for traditional forms of scholarship, such as scholarly journal articles and monographs, but also for emerging forms of digital scholarship such as text analysis, mapping, and network analysis.”

— Chelcie J. Rowell, Boston College



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