



Poor Law Records



The new casual wards at St Marylebone Workhouse

The parishes entrusted the care of the poor to *overseers* or *guardians of the poor*. Their *minutes* and *accounts* contain some references to individual paupers.

Under the laws of *settlement* which were introduced by the Poor Law Act of 1601, the legal place of settlement where people were entitled to poor relief was the parish where they had lived for at least a month. After the Settlement Act of 1662, people could obtain a settlement in any parish through marriage, apprenticeship, domestic service for over a year or occupying property worth more than £10 per annum. Anyone not fulfilling these criteria was liable to be removed to their original parish. *Removal orders* were introduced in 1691. After 1795 no-one could be removed unless they did become chargeable to the parish. When paupers moved after 1697, they needed to carry a *settlement certificate* with them to show that their parish of legal settlement would take them back if necessary. If they requested poor relief, the parish they had moved into would examine them to see where their legal right of settlement lay. *Examination books* contain many interesting biographies of paupers.

Paupers might receive *outdoor relief* which consisted of payments to supplement their income. The destitute would be sent to the *workhouse* where they were expected to work to pay for their upkeep. Outdoor relief was limited after 1834 and the use of the workhouse became more widespread.

Unmarried mothers were often put into the workhouse. If the father of the child could be traced, he was obliged to enter into a *bastardy bond* to pay for its upkeep. From 1743 bastards took the same settlement as their mothers rather than their own place of birth. Children were educated in parish or charity schools before being apprenticed to learn a trade. *Apprenticeship indentures* were signed by the parish and master tradesman before two Justices of the Peace. Some children were sent to work in mills in the Midlands and north of England.

The administration of the poor law was transferred from the parishes to *boards of guardians* after the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act or the 1867 Metropolitan Poor Law Act; the exact date for each parish is indicated in this list. Parishes could join together into *poor law unions*. Records of the boards of guardians are held at the London Metropolitan Archives; any records held at the City of Westminster Archives Centre after that date only deal with the collection of rates.

South Westminster Parishes

In this list covering dates for classes of records do not necessarily imply a complete series, but large gaps in dates are indicated. This list indicates if the records are arranged alphabetically by name or if the names are indexed.

St Anne Soho

See parish records catalogue 'A'

Board of guardians overseers' minutes, 1849-1900
Overseers' accounts, 1719-1860
Settlement papers and removal orders, 1736-1835 (indexed)
Indemnification bonds, 1686-1742
Petition for poor relief, 1822
Miscellaneous letters and orders, 1782-1822
Workhouse admissions list, 1781-1782
Workhouse work books, 1785-1838
Workhouse administrative records and accounts, 1781-1836
Apprenticeship register and indentures, 1686-1834
Bastardy registers, 1790-1825
Records of poor children and nursery, 1789-1793, 1818-1838

Joined Strand Board of Guardians, 1837 and transferred to Westminster Board of Guardians, 1868

St Clement Danes

See parish records catalogue 'B'; see also Holborn Estate Charity Acc 1576

Overseers' and churchwardens' minutes, 1779-1850, 1878-1900
Overseers' accounts, 1604-1900
Settlement examination books, 1703-1707, 1739-1836 (indexed 1739-1836)
Settlement registers, 1699-1707, c1715-1750
Legal case papers re settlement and removal, 1806-1836
Settlement certificates, 1701, 1771
Registers of indemnification bonds, 1689-1694, 1755-1779 (indexed 1755-1779)
Removal registers, 1752-1836 (indexed)
Removal orders, 1645 (in apprenticeship book), 1719, 1821-1835,
Petitions for poor relief, 1809-1836
Lists of pensioners and outdoor poor, c1710-1740, 1757-1765, 1820-1823 (in vestry clerk's memorandum book), 1823-1836 (alphabetical)
Lists of workhouse inmates (including admission and discharge details), 1785, 1834 (alphabetical 1785)
Workhouse clothing books, 1785-1796 (alphabetical)
Workhouse administrative records and accounts, 1788-1834
Apprenticeship indentures and registers, 1640-1711, 1784-1841
Bastardy examination books, 1786-1798, 1809-1818 (indexed)
Bastardy bonds, 1641, 1705
Records of poor children and nurses, 1719-1727 (alphabetical by nurse), 1767-1822 (alphabetical by child 1787-1798)
Nursery accounts, 1832-1836

Joined Strand Board of Guardians, 1836

St George Hanover Square

See parish records catalogue 'C'

Governors and directors of the poor minutes, 1753-1867 (indexed 1780-1867)
Overseers' minutes re jury and voters' lists, 1874-1900
Overseers' accounts, 1726-1727
Workhouse committee minutes, 1726-1753
Workhouse visiting committee minutes, 1861-1867
Workhouse accounts (in vestry and churchwardens' records), 1725-1735
Workhouse admission and discharge records, 1856-1869
Minutes of committee re soup kitchen and schools of industry, 1799-1803, 1833
Apprenticeship indentures, 1738-1742, 1752, 1767

Formed St George's Board of Guardians, 1867

St James Piccadilly

See parish records catalogue 'D'

Vestry minutes re poor relief, 1862-1900
Governors and directors of the poor minutes, 1767-1890 (indexed 1767, 1809-1890)
Governors and directors of the poor order book, 1868-1890
Governors and directors of the poor letter book, 1826-1833 (indexed)
Overseers' accounts, 1785-1828, 1837-1838, 1883-1901
Removal orders, 1801-1825, 1857-1867
Petitions for poor relief, 1692-1694
Lists of poor relief payments, 1688-1695, 1820-1869 (alphabetical 1821, 1826-1869)
Workhouse admission and discharge registers, 1791-1797, 1803-1807, 1812-1814, 1819-1828, 1835-1867 (all indexed)
Workhouse death registers, 1803-1818
Workhouse work books, 1836-1868
Workhouse accounts, 1813-1868
Minutes and accounts of charity for supporting workhouse paupers (Jackson's Bounty) 1832-1881 plus register of the poor, 1848-1881
Register of insane poor, 1849-1885 (indexed)
Apprenticeship register, 1848-1868
Registers of poor children at schools, 1843-1869 (indexed 1843-1862)

Formed Westminster Board of Guardians, 1868

St Margaret and St John, Westminster

See parish records catalogue 'E'; see also United Westminster Almshouses Acc 882, Grey Coat Hospital Acc 1648 and United Westminster Schools Acc 1657

Churchwardens', overseers' and governors and directors of the poor minutes, 1752-1756
Governors and directors of the poor minutes and reports, 1824-1868 (indexed 1820-1867)
United Vestry overseers' minutes, 1882-1900
Minutes re subscriptions for the poor, 1814-1815
(continued over page)

St Margaret and St John, Westminster (continued)

Overseers' and treasurers' accounts (including warrants re rate arrears), 1561-1895
Settlement examination books, 1711-1752, 1809-1810 (indexed 1711-1752)
Registers of settlement certificates, 1701-1752 (indexed)
Settlement certificates, 1708-1730, 1753
Registers of indemnification bonds, 1657-1722
Indemnification bonds, 1670-1701, 1713-1726, 1771, 1797, 1801, 1813, 1823
Registers of passes, 1713-1766 (indexed 1729-1766)
Vagrants' passes, 1752-1788
Removal orders, 1694, 1752-1796
Legal case papers re settlement, 1710, 1716-1722, 1727-1728, 1744, 1754, 1763-1778, 1793-1799
Letter re settlement, 1850
Petitions for poor relief, late 1650s, 1789
Accounts re subscriptions for poor, 1827
Subscriptions for poor relief, 1776, 1784, 1789, c1806, 1809 (alphabetical by recipients 1776, alphabetical by subscribers and recipients 1814)
Workhouse minutes, 1726-1752 (indexed 1730-1749)
Workhouse building minutes and reports, 1805-1828, 1831, 1842, 1851-1856
Workhouse building accounts and papers, 1851-1877
Workhouse rules, 1742
Workhouse diet, 1801
Workhouse admission and discharge registers, 1843-1847
Workhouse inmates lists, 1747-1748
Workhouse general reports on paupers' work, 1752-1763
Workhouse accounts, 1692-1815, 1850-1861
Workhouse visiting committee report, 1854
Appointment of workhouse masters, 1624, 1655, 1852-1855
Expenses of contractors for employing the poor, 1606-1607
Bond re contract for employing the poor, 1671
Petitions for hospital admission, 1784
Hospital admission certificates, 1710, 1794
Lunacy bonds, 1710, 1714, 1754, 1761, 1774, 1796, 1804
Charities' lists of paupers, 1678-1875
Apprenticeship registers, 1606-1634, 1767-1792
Apprenticeship indentures, 1648, 1666, 1692-1693, 1696-1697, 1703, 1712, 1718-1799
Releases of claims re apprentices, 1699-1729
Correspondence and reports re apprentices in mills, 1802-1803, 1847
Charities' apprenticeship indentures, 1767-1889
List of children at the Grey Coat Hospital (in governors' and directors' reports), 1705
Bastardy depositions, 1712-1750 (indexed)
Bastardy maintenance orders, 1733-1734, 1753, 1764-1765, 1779, 1797
Bastardy bonds, 1697-1698, 1706-1828
Bastardy releases (indemnifications), 1733-1794
Legal cases re bastardy (including warrants), 1725-1735, 1779-1797
Account to the Grey Coat Hospital re orphans, 1711
Accounts for nursing, 1773-1779 (nurses indexed)
Lists of nurses, 1792, 1795 (alphabetical)

Formed St Margaret's Board of Guardians 1867, which joined St George's Board of Guardians, 1870

St Martin-in-the-Fields

See parish records catalogue 'F'

Churchwardens' and overseers' minutes, 1755-1764, 1772-1892 (indexed 1774-1784, 1856-1863)
List of churchwardens and overseers, 1755-1856 (indexed)
Poor rate collectors' accounts, 1574-1598
Churchwardens' and overseers' accounts, 1598-1844
Settlement examination books, 1708-1795, 1816-1827 (index in progress)
Legal case papers re settlement, 1722-1723, 1747-1756, 1772-1789, 1807-1826
Scotch and Irish passes, 1828-1861
Registers of removal orders, 1710-1742 (indexed 1710-1735)
Removal orders, 1710, 1714, 1771-1800, 1816-1817, 1824, 1827, 1832
Registers of indemnification bonds, 1694-1695, 1707-1741
Indemnification bonds, 1649-1678
Petitions for poor relief, 1665-1666
Lists of the poor (in churchwardens' accounts), 1741-1742, 1758-1761 (alphabetical)
Lists of pensioners, 1654, 1659, 1673, 1695-1696, 1706-1708, 1715-1716, 1749-1750, 1768-1769 (alphabetical)
Accounts re houses visited by the plague, 1625, 1630-1631, 1636, 1665-1666
Lists of plague victims relieved, 1636-1638
Workhouse building minutes, 1770-1783
Workhouse sub-committee reports, 1817-1822
Workhouse admission and discharge registers, 1725-1729, 1741-1846 (alphabetical)
Workhouse admission registers, 1818-1833
Workhouse day books (including admissions and discharges), 1737-1826
Workhouse selling books (forfeits of food in return for day out), 1826-1835
Workhouse building accounts, 1770-1830 (alphabetical by subscriber)
Workhouse accounts, 1725-1750
List of lunatics (in workhouse day book), 1744-1748
Bonds re hospital certificates, 1677-1703, 1711-1719
Apprenticeship registers, 1762-1769 (in workhouse day books), 1767-1842
Apprenticeship indentures, 1637-1685, 1729, 1739-1740, 1770-1779, 1786, 1791-1795, 1800-1814, 1824-1835
Apprenticeship indentures cited in settlement cases, 1781-1828
Apprenticeship lists, 1824-1835
Bastardy bonds and releases (indemnifications), 1638-1724, 1798-1821
Registers of poor children, 1767-1828 (indexed 1767-1798, 1800-1801)
Bonds re the care of children, 1649-1666
Guardians of the poor children minutes, 1767-1813
Guardians of the infant poor report, 1821
Lists of nurses and children (in workhouse day books to 1769), 1762-1763, 1768-1769, 1779-1795
Nursing accounts, 1769, 1779-1809 (indexed 1779-1795)
Lists of orphans, 1654, 1659, 1673, 1715-1716, 1721 (alphabetical)
Lists of charity school children, 1718 (in examination book), 1721 (alphabetical)

Formed St Martin's Board of Guardians 1835; transferred to Strand Board of Guardians, 1868

St Mary le Strand

See parish records catalogue 'G' and Acc 452

Churchwardens' and overseers' minutes (in vestry minutes), 1741-1768, 1793
Committee of inquiry into poor relief minutes (in vestry minutes), 1795-1830
Overseers' accounts, 1620-1655, 1674-1836, 1870-1901
Settlement examination books, 1740-1810 (indexed 1740-1785)
Registers of removal orders and settlement certificates, 1724-1785 (indexed)
Workhouse trustees' minutes (in vestry minutes), 1811-1814
Workhouse external contract, 1762-1765
Workhouse inmates list (including admission and discharge details), 1812-1836 (alphabetical)
Workhouse accounts, 1793-1795
Workhouse deeds, 1811-1823
Apprenticeship register, 1767-1788
Guardians of the poor children minutes (in vestry minutes), 1767-1787
Registers of poor children, 1762-1788

Joined Strand Board of Guardians, 1836

St Paul Covent Garden

See parish records catalogue 'H' and Acc 426

Churchwardens' and overseers' minutes, 1780-1809
Committee of management (as guardians of the poor) minutes, 1834-1836
Overseers' accounts, 1647-1873
Administrative papers and correspondence including the appointment of overseers and rate collectors, 1837-1838
Settlement examination books, 1781-1800, 1829-1834 (indexed 1781-1800)
Legal case papers re settlement and removal, 1833
Lists of pensioners and orphans (in vestry minutes), 1702-1706
Workhouse accounts (in churchwardens' and overseers' minutes), 1773-1795
Workhouse master's notebook, 1822-1826
Guardians of the poor children minutes, 1768-1795, 1834-1836

Joined Strand Board of Guardians, 1836

Precinct of the Savoy

See parish records catalogue 'J'

Overseers' accounts, 1750-c1760, 1830-1836, 1871-1901
Settlement certificate, 1755
Removal orders, 1747-1763

Joined Strand Board of Guardians, 1836

Liberty of the Rolls

See parish records catalogue 'K'

Committee for managing the affairs of the poor minutes, 1816-1834 (draft minutes), 1820, 1824-1836
Overseers' accounts, 1750-1837, 1871-1901
Overseers' correspondence, 1783, 1813-1814
Settlement examination books, 1762-1780, 1833-1836 (indexed 1833-1836)
Legal case papers re settlement, 1791-1823
Indemnification bonds, 1774-1781
Removal orders, 1736-1824
Petitions for poor relief, 1826-1827
Lists of pensioners, 1782-1783, c1789, 1796-1805, 1821-1834 (alphabetical)
Workhouse committee minutes, 1737-1744, 1750-1824
Workhouse inmates lists (including admission and discharge details), c1780-1783, c1787-1789, 1799-1806, 1812-1828 (alphabetical)
Workhouse clothing books, 1796-1822
Workhouse accounts and contracts, 1798-1822
Legal case papers re bastardy, 1773-1824
Bastardy bonds, 1756-1799, 1805, 1808
Lists of poor children, 1788-1789, 1797-1806, 1812, 1821-1828
Abstracts of parish poor children, 1768, 1798, 1806-1807, 1816

Joined Strand Board of Guardians, 1836

North Westminster Parishes**St Marylebone**

See parish records catalogue 'T'; other poor law records after 1777 are at London Metropolitan Archives

Overseers' accounts, 1730-1742, 1750-1766, 1769-1792
Workhouse committee minutes, 1752-1765
Workhouse employment book, 1777-1781
Guard book including examinations and removals 1788-1790, appointment of an apothecary at the workhouse 1767, apprenticeship indentures 1772, 1791, bastardy papers 1765, 1816, enquiry re the treatment of infant paupers 1843

Formed St Marylebone Board of Guardians, 1867

Paddington

See parish records catalogue 'P'; there are no poor law records before 1822 at London Metropolitan Archives

Vestry minutes re poor relief, 1820-1823 (rough minutes including settlement examinations), 1820-1822
Guardians of the poor minutes, 1823-1826 (rough minutes including settlement examinations),
1824-1837, 1827-1833 (rough minutes)

Charity estates minutes, 1838-1934

Charity estates committee minutes (including list of lunatics), 1828

Charity trustees' minutes, 1828-1856

Charity almshouse trustees' minutes, 1848, 1866-1915

Index to Paddington Charity minutes (including almshouses), 1866-c1900

Overseers' accounts, 1670-1838

Charity estates accounts (including apprenticeship fund accounts), 1838-1955

Settlement examination books, 1773-1780, 1815-1823 (indexed; including bastardy 1815-1823;
see also vestry and guardians' rough minutes above for 1820-1833 and removal orders below for
1779-1780, 1798-1803)

Inspector's accounts re settlements and removal, 1823-1826

Legal case papers re settlement, 1820-1846

Removal orders, 1715, 1773, 1779-1780, 1796-1803, 1810-1837 (including settlement examinations
1779-1780, 1798-1803)

Vagrant's pass, 1798

Irish passes, 1826

Accounts of pensioners, 1811-1838

Casual poor accounts, 1803, 1811-1838

Charity registers of recipients, 1888-1930

Workhouse matrons' accounts, 1825, 1828-1829, 1832-1833, 1837

Apprenticeship indentures, 1689-1762, 1801-1841 (indexed 1689-1833)

Charity apprenticeship indentures, 1837-1875, 1928-1940

Bastardy examination, 1803 (see also settlement examination books above for 1815-1823)

Bastardy examination book of the Queen's Lying-in Hospital, Bayswater, 1791-1797

Bastardy account, 1803

Bastardy bonds, 1685, 1702-1703, 1801

Bastardy releases (indemnifications), 1820-1824

Joined Kensington Union 1837-1845; formed Paddington Board of Guardians, 1845

20th Century Records**City of Westminster Union**

Vaccination registers, 1919-1936