



South African War 1899-1902: Records relating to strategic direction, operations, and diplomacy

The crucial information needed for a search in the archives

The National Archives holds records which might contain the information you require and we can:

- Either search for it on payment of a fee and supply you with the information (if found)
- or
- Enable you to search for the information in other ways

Please send as much information as you can. Essential details required vary according to the records. Please see below for information required for each topic.

If you have all of the information listed against each topic, the standard charges for our searches will apply and these are shown on this leaflet. If you do not have this information, the standard charges will not apply, as the search time will increase by a large amount, and therefore the search will require a very high fee to be paid. Please contact us if you still want to proceed: enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk

1. Official, Private and Personal Correspondence

Roberts Papers; Kitchener Papers; Buller Papers

Standard charge: £90

Catalogue references:

Roberts Papers: WO 105/5-40; other relevant material in WO108/238-243; 291; 382; 409-11

Kitchener Papers Correspondence: PRO/30/5716-25; WO108/96; WO 32 CODE O(AU)) and CO correspondence

Buller Papers: WO 132/2-9

Information that this source should reveal:

Correspondence, Telegrams, dispatches, confidential memoranda.

Factors affecting success of a search:

Details of subject and date are essential prior to beginning research. Information about correspondent would also prove useful. Without the above information, search not feasible.

Ardagh Papers; Middleton Papers; Osborne Manse Papers

Standard charge: £75

Catalogue references:

Ardagh Papers: PRO 30/40/13-22;

Middleton Papers: PRO 30/67/5-19

Osborne Manse Papers: PRO 30/66/1-8

Information that this source should reveal:

Reports, papers, bundles of correspondence.

Factors affecting success of a search:

Detail of subject and date are essential prior to beginning research. Without the above information, search not feasible.

Brigadier Colvin's Papers

Standard charge: £105

Catalogue Reference: WO 136

Information that this source should reveal:

Diary, orders and other miscellaneous papers for Colvin and Cradock Corps.

Factors affecting success of a search:

Date and missive type are essential.

2. Staff War Diaries

Standard charge: £105

Catalogue Reference: WO32 CODE 0 (AU)

Information that this source should reveal: Daily record of operations etc.

Factors affecting success of a search:
Details of date and subject essential. Details of officer and unit would also be useful. Without these essentials a search is not feasible.

3. General Administrative Papers

Standard charge: £75

Catalogue Reference: WO 32 Code O(AU)

Information that this source should reveal:

A varied selection of files.

Factors affecting success of a search:

A precise subject is required as the bare minimum. Any additional information such as dates and names will also help to narrow the search.

War Office Internal Reports

Standard charge: £75

Catalogue Reference: WO 33

Information that this source should reveal:

Printed reports and memoranda.

Factors affecting success of a search:

A precise subject is required as the bare minimum. Any additional information such as dates and names will also help to narrow the search. There are few surviving files, so the chances of finding specific material are very slight.

4. Administrative Files

Standard charge: £75

Catalogue Reference: WO 32 (CODE O(AU))

Information that this source should reveal:

Registered papers on precise subjects.

Factors affecting success of a search:

A precise subject is required as the bare minimum. Any additional information such as dates and names will also help to narrow the search.

5. Intelligence Summaries

Standard charge: £60

Catalogue Reference: WO 32 (CODE O(AU)); WO 33; WO 132 (Buller Papers)

Information that this source should reveal: Telegrams: Field Intelligence Department papers detailing personnel.

Factors affecting success of a search: A date, subject and names are required for effective search. A search of WO 108 requires the name of the operative.

6. Orders and Instructions

Standard charge: £90

Catalogue Reference: See Official, Private and Personnel Correspondence (point 1 above) or WO 32 (CODE O(AU)/4755-4763

Information that this source should reveal: Publications relating to the compilation of an official history of the War.

Factors affecting success of a search:
Details of the order and the date are essential.

7. Ordnance and Logistics

Standard charge: £75

Catalogue Reference: WO 32 (CODE O(AU)); SUPP 5/137-8

Information that this source should reveal:
Registered Papers on precise subjects; Reports on Artillery Equipment.

8. Transport

General Administrative Files

Standard charge: £75

Catalogue Reference: WO 32 (CODE O(AU)); WO 108

Factors affecting success of a search:
A subject and date are required. Any search is, nevertheless, speculative, but it may indicate precise references.

British Transport Historical Records

Standard Charge: £90

Catalogue Reference: RAIL, ZLIB and ZPER ; BTHR Card Catalogue

Information that this source should reveal:
Records of railway companies, periodicals.

Factors affecting success of a search:
A subject and date are required.

Osborne-Manse Papers

Standard Charge: £180

Catalogue Reference: PRO 30/66/1-8

Information that this source should reveal:
This material is mainly concerned with South African railways.

Factors affecting success of a search:
A subject and date are required. Information about the correspondent would also prove useful.

9. Maps and Plans

Standard charge: £45

Catalogue Reference: WO 78/5453; CO 700; FO 925; Confidential print in CO 879; WO 33

Information that this source should reveal:
Distribution of British and Boer Forces, maps, plans, papers and memoranda.

Factors affecting success of a search: Topographical location is a necessity for each. Dates and nature of cartographic content are essential.

10. Photographs

Standard charge: £45

Catalogue Reference: WO 108; COPY 1

Information that this source should reveal:

Photographs of buildings and scenic panoramas in WO 108 and other photographs in COPY 1.

Factors affecting success of a search:

Must specify subject content, preferably with date. Even with specific details search is speculative and has little chance of success.

11. Operational Records: Admiralty.

Admiralty Administrative Papers

Standard charge: £165-180

Information that this source should reveal:

Correspondence, memoranda and papers.

Factors affecting success of search:

If the material described fits the enquiry, then potential success is high.

Admiralty and Secretariat Papers

Standard Charge: £150

Catalogue References: ADM 12; ADM 1

Information that this source should reveal:

Correspondence, memoranda and papers.

Factors affecting success of search:

Names and dates are required.

Admiralty and Secretariat Cases

Standard charge: £90

Catalogue Reference: ADM 116/104-111; ADM 116/641; WO 146/1

Information that this source should reveal:

Case files, honours and awards and submissions to Sovereign.

Factors affecting success of a search:

A subject and date are essential to identify specific item. Without either detail, a search is not feasible.

Africa Naval Station Correspondence.

Standard charge: £75 (or £180 for further correspondence search in ADM 1)

Catalogue Reference: ADM 123/134-135; ADM 1

Information that this source should reveal:

Reports, correspondence.

Factors affecting success of a search:

Name of correspondent and a date are required.

12. Naval Intelligence Papers.

Standard charge: £45

Catalogue Reference: ADM 231/29-37

Information that this source should reveal: reports on naval strength, coastal defences etc.

Factors affecting success of a search: Details of event and date are essential to make any search feasible. The author of paper would also assist.

13. Maps, Plans and Charts.

Standard charge: £60

Catalogue References: ADM 1; ADM 231; ADM 234; Admiralty Chart Card Index

Factors affecting success of a search: Need location and date as a minimum. Admiralty Chart Number is also useful. Please note that this remains a speculative search with a remote chance of success.

14. Ships' Logs.

Standard charge: £60

Catalogue Reference: ADM 53

Information that this source should reveal:
Records pertaining to specific ships.

Factors affecting success of a search:
Name of ship and dates must be provided.

15. Papers of the Cabinet Office, Colonial, Dominions, Foreign Offices

Cabinet Office

Standard Charge: £60

Catalogue References: CAB 37/50; 51; 57; 63

Information that this source should reveal:
Photographic copies of Cabinet Papers.

Factors affecting success of a search:
Details of subject, including date are essential.

Colonial Office:

Standard Charge: £120

Catalogue References: CO 417; CO 291; CO 224; CO 179; CO 48;
Confidential print in CO 879

Information that this source should reveal:
Correspondence relating to High Commission territories plus the Transvaal,
Orange River Colony, Natal and Cape Colony.

Factors affecting success of a search:
Details of the correspondent, subject and date are required to make a search feasible.

Dominions Office:

Standard Charge: £75

Catalogue References: DO 119

Information that this source should reveal:
Files covering individual subjects.

Factors affecting success of a search:
Details of subject, name of correspondent and date are required to make a search feasible.

Foreign Office

Standard Charge: £120

Catalogue References: FO 566/1647-165; FO 2/267-279; FO 2; FO 64

Information that this source should reveal:
Correspondence and papers.

Factors affecting success of a search:
Details of subject, name of correspondent and date are required to make any search feasible.

16. Papers Emanating from Boer Sources.

Treatment of Boer Prisoners

Standard Charge: £150 (per volume)

Catalogue References: CO 879/72; 75-76

Information that this source should reveal:
General administrative correspondence.

Factors affecting success of a search:
Details of correspondent, subject and date are required.

Anglo-Boer Treaties

Standard Charge: £60

Catalogue References: FO 93; FO 94

Information that this source should reveal:
Local agreements and treaties.

Factors affecting success of a search:
Details of treaty are required.
