

Sensational sources

What does it say?

Reading history

You can visit the National Archives in Kew and have a look at original historical documents from the time of the Civil War (or you can look at some on this website). However, a lot of the documents are hard to read. They are hundreds of years old and the writing has faded. Plus the way people wrote then was a bit different to now. They had different ways of expressing ideas and they had different ways of spelling words too.

Help

We've given you some help to get to grips with these sources.

- You can **listen** to the words being read out.
- You can read the words in a **transcript**. These are exactly the same words as in the original document but typed out so they are easier to read.
- You can read the **simplified transcript**, which has the same meaning as the original document but uses simpler and more modern English words.

Firstly though, why not try and read some of the original document itself **before** you click on the help features?



What does this document say?

To the Kings moste Excellency Ma^{tie}.

The humble petition of John Ruffey a sorrowfull pore.
 prisoner in yo^r Ma^{ties} gaol of White Lion, in Southwarke.

Moste humbly Sheweth

That, after that yo^r Highnesses petition^r was
 presented, by due order of yo^r Ma^{ties} Council, at the assise last holden
 in Southwarke, for yo^r Ma^{ties} Countie of Surrey, for the felonie of
 stealing of 3 horses, His^e upon humbles supplication, unto yo^r Ma^{tie}
 by yo^r Highnesses yratione, and Royall favour, was respited
 and save spared from execution, and deferred death, for which his^e
 yo^r Ma^{ties} penitent suppliant hath not bene ungratefull to praye
 God, and praye for yo^r yratione Ma^{tie}.

His^e yo^r Highnesses petitioner, in all hartly contrition for his
 heinous offence, was the first that ever he committed, in case
 of felonie, doth moste humbly (with bended knee, at yo^r Ma^{ties}
 feete) supplicate yo^r moste sacred Ma^{tie} to vouchsafe yo^r yratione
 pardon unto him, for his said offence, And that his^e maye bee
 sent to serve in yo^r Ma^{ties} warre, be mye ready & willinge to
 expose that deservable life, as forfeited and to him restored
 in the moste dangerous service, for yo^r Royall Ma^{tie}, and his
 Country.

And, his^e with his pore wife and children
 shall ever praye for yo^r yratione Highnesses
 long and prosperous raigne over us, &c.

At the Court at Whitehall: 20: March: 1639:

Mr Attorney Generall is forthwith to give a
 Pardon for the Pet^r aforesaid. for wch this
 shalbe his warrant.

John: Widdowes

