


## HOW TO USE THE ASSIZES

To view the Assizes database point to TABLES and click ASSIZES from the drop-down menu.

The database will appear as a series of records. An asterisk in each of the green column headings denote whether that field is searchable, and clicking on each one arranges contents ascending or descending - signified by an upward or downward pointing triangle respectively.

The Search Bar will accept any names, dates or terms and has options for entering multiple terms. The page selection buttons will move through pages of batched records - one page up or down, or to the beginning and end of the whole database or selection. There are also options to export data to Word or Excel files.

To view an individual record, click the magnifying glass button on the extreme right hand side of each one. 

The column names of a record's table are:

- Column 1 – **Reference No (\*)** - our internal database reference number in order of recording.
- Column 2 - **Place (\*)** - the town where the case was tried - either Canterbury, Dartford, Maidstone, Rochester or Sevenoaks.
- Column 3, 4, 5 - the assize's **Day (\*)**, **Month (\*)** and **Year (\*)** respectively.
- Column 6 – **Before whom (\*)** - the names of the judges presiding.
- Column 7 – **Assize record (\*)** – the original assize record manuscripts are held at the National Archives in London and this is their own archival reference number. For example, record 35/113/6 denotes series 35 in box number 113, and number 6 in that box. If you enter this number into the Search Bar you will see there are TWO items in that box – one for a grand jury and the other for a constables list for cases presided by judges Thomas Twisden J, and William Morton, J.

- Column 8 – **Number (\*)** - the book's running sequential reference number, assigned by the compiler to identify each case.
- Column 9 – **Title (\*)** - type of indictment or whether a jury, constable list (for pertaining to gaol delivery), writ list (summonses to be tried before a Royal court) or ignoramus (no case to answer).
- Column 10 – **M number (\*)** - this identifies the specific protective membrane holding the original calendar page. The prefix 'mm' denotes two pages spanning two membranes.
- Column 11 – **Outcome (\*)** - Sentence or punishment given or whether pardoned. Further outcomes are:

#### 1) Allowed Clergy

This must be Benefit of Clergy; originally immunity from secular courts granted to members of the clergy, but was extended over the years until in 1707 it could be claimed by anyone charged with an offence for which it could be claimed. It was abolished in the early 19th century.

#### 2) Returned Ignoramus

Ignoramus - "we know nothing" - if recorded on the Indictment the accused was discharged.




#### 3) Entered Recognisance to give evidence against him


A Recognisance is a bond, mostly to secure the appearance of defendants, prosecutors and witnesses at the sessions (as in this case); it can be used in other cases, such as the recognisance (guarantee) an alehousekeeper gives that he / she shall keep an orderly house.


#### 4) Endorsed True Bill


Recorded on the Indictment as being something that the prison could answer, i.e. the accusation against someone is regarded

as proved.

- Column 12 – **Verdict (\*)** – whether guilty, not guilty, if they confessed or the verdict is unknown.
- Column 13 -  - clicking on this will show you the individual record.
- Column 14 -  - for editors only.
- Column 15 -  - for editors only.

 Clicking on this symbol at the top of the page enables you to print the information as an Excel file.

 Clicking on this symbol at the top of the page enables you to print the information as a Word file.

 Clicking on this symbol at the top of the page enables you to print the information as an Excel CSV file (comma separated values).