

HLRV Fundamentals:

Session 2: Old Land Grants & Old System title deeds

Note: This guide will be suitable for most Grant and Old System deed searches but there are always exceptions. Follow this step-by-step closely otherwise you may not get the results you seek. We've included some tips and guides at the end. You can also send an inquiry to our [Ask-A-Librarian](#) service. We can give you guidance but cannot undertake your research.

1. Features of the HLRV Search page

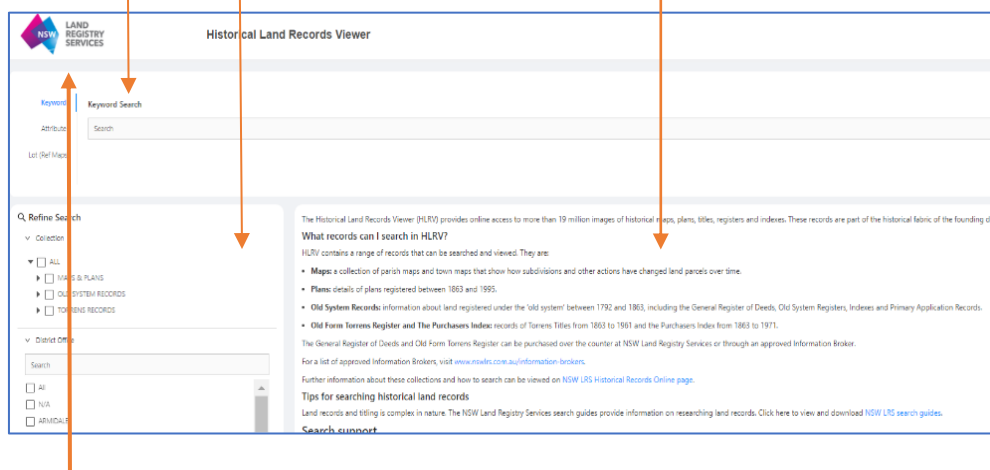
The HLRV website is here: <https://hlrv.nswlrs.com.au/> Read and accept the terms and conditions.

The screen is divided into 3 parts:

1: Keyword search (Attribute search)

2: Refine Search (List of collections in HLRV)

3: Instructions/Search results appear here



Clear your search: Click the **LRS icon** to clear your old results when starting a new search.

2. Finding Crown Grants (1792-1862)

The following step-by-step is for finding Crown grants where the grantee and approximate date of grant is known. If you don't know the name of the grantee or approximate date of grant have a look at the **tips** at the end of this guide.

2.1 Find the Grant number in the *Old System Grant Indexes* collection set

Refine your search


On the left of the screen you can set up your search in the 'Refine your search' column as follows:

- In the Collections section click on the arrow next to *Old System Records*.
- From the Drop Down click on the arrow next to *Old System Indexes*.
- Scroll down to *Old System Grant Indexes* and click on the box.
- This will search through 4 different grant indexes – the main one simply *Grant index* and 3 smaller grant indexes such as *Town Grants and Purchases*.
- **Tip:** You might find the Refine Column is not wide enough so some text is hidden. Hover over the words with your mouse to see the full name of the record set, **or** reduce your text size (Ctrl + Shift + Minus).

Set up your attribute

- Go to the Keyword Search Box at the top of the page and click on *Attribute*.
- In the 'Search by' box drop down click on the attribute *Surname initial*.
- A search box will appear next to the attribute.
- Enter the first letter of the Surname. Hit enter or click on the magnifying glass.

Search results for the Grant Number

- Search results will appear in boxes (datasets), each covering a particular year range for that surname initial. **Note:** They are not in any particular order. Each box has a number, date range and letter of the alphabet. For example: *7 1847-1855 R*.
- Select the box you want by clicking on the blue circle within it. The number in the blue circle represents the number of pages in that dataset.
- You will be taken to the image viewer. Icons on the top left include options such as enlarging the image, scrolling through the pages and in some datasets, allowing you to print or download the image. 
- Names are generally in alphabetical order but not always so browse carefully. Scroll through until you come to the name you are seeking.
- **Tip:** If a dataset has many pages, you can select the page you want at the bottom right of the screen.
- Once you find the entry, note down all the details including the serial and page number (generally the last 2 columns). Some grants have different numbering systems. See 2.2 below for tips. Eg if 1 number only, use the attribute year-number or attribute SerialLRS's [Grant Register Volume Numbers information sheet](#) might help.

2.2 Now find the Grant in the *Grant Register*

- Go back to the main HLRV search page by clicking on X in the top right of the image viewer. Don't click on your browser back arrow or you will leave HLRV altogether.

Clear your previous search results first:

- Click on the LRS Icon  in the top left on the main HLRV search page.


Refine your search

- Click on the arrow next to the collection set you want: *Old System Records*.
- From the drop down, click on *Old System Registers*.
- From the Drop down select the specific collection: *(61) Grant Register*.

Set up your attribute

- Go to the Keyword Search box at the top of the page and click on *Attribute*.
- Next to Attribute in the 'search by' box, click on the drop-down arrow and select *Serial and Page number* which is the attribute that the main *Grant Index* uses.
Tip: Other smaller grant indexes use different attributes. For example, *Town Grants and Purchases index* uses year and number. Some grants have a serial number only. Use the attribute Serial Number to then look for the page number of the grant. Some serial numbers include a surname initial. LRS's [Grant Register Volume Numbers information sheet](#) might help.
- A search box will appear next to the attribute.
- Enter the serial and page number you found in the *Grant Index*. Use a hyphen between the numbers For example: for Serial 17 Page 10, enter it as 17-10
- Hit enter or click on the magnifying glass to start the search.

Search results for the Grant

- You will get one result. Click on the blue circle within it. (The number in the blue circle represents the number of pages of the document).
- In the image viewer, use the icons to enlarge and go between pages of the Grant and print or download the Grant. 

3. Finding Old System Deeds 1794-1992


Old System Deeds 1794-1824 (Not on HLRV)

[Old Register One to Nine: The registers of Assignments and other legal instruments](#) started in 1802 but includes deeds as early as 1794. Use the CD Rom. This is available at the State Library Family History Service, and click on the link to find out where else it's held.



3.1 Old System Deeds 1825-1992

Old System deeds from 1825-1992 are on the HLRV. The following step-by-step is for finding an Old System deed where the name of the vendor is known (for the period 1825-1986) or the name of the purchaser is known (for the period 1896-1987) and the approximate date of the transaction is known. If you don't know the names or approximate dates of the sale, have a look at the **tips** at the end of this guide.

3.1.1 Go to the HLRV website at <https://hlrv.nswlrs.com.au/> and accept the terms and conditions, or, if you have already been searching in HLRV, clear your previous search by clicking on the LRS icon  in the top left on the main HLRV search page.

3.1.2 Find the Deed number in the *Vendors Indexes* or *Purchasers Index*

Refine your search


On the left of the screen you can set up your search in the 'Refine your search' column as follows:

- In the Collections section click on the arrow next to *Old System Records*.
- From the drop-down click on the arrow next to *Old System Indexes*.
 - Searching for Vendors (1825-1986): Scroll down to *(56) Vendors Index* and tick the box. For Mac and Mc surnames tick *(65) Vendors Index Only Mac Mc*.
 - Searching for Purchasers (Note: 1896-1987 *only*): Scroll down to *(57) Purchasers index* and tick the box.
- **Tip:** You might find the Refine Column is not wide enough so some text is hidden. Hover over the words with your mouse to see the full name of the record set, **or** reduce your text size (Ctrl + Shift + Minus).

Set up your attribute

- Go to the Keyword Search Box at the top of the page and click on *Attribute*.
- Next to the Attribute In the 'search by' box click on the drop down arrow and select *Surname Initial*.
- A search box will appear next to the *Surname Initial* attribute.
- Enter the **first 2 letters** of the surname eg SM (for Smith).
- Hit enter or click on the magnifying glass to start your search.

Search results for the Deed number

- You will get a number of results each for different date ranges.
Note: They are not in any particular order, there may be more than one box dealing with the same year and there may be several pages of these results.
- Select the result that covers the date you require (you may have to try a few if you are not sure of the date). Click on the blue circle with a number in it. The number in the blue circle represents the number of pages of the document.
- You will be taken to the image viewer. Icons on the top left include options such as enlarging the image, scrolling through the pages and allowing you to print or download the image. 
- Names are generally in alphabetical order but not always so search carefully. Scroll through until you come to the name you are seeking.
- **Tip:** If a dataset has many pages, you can select the page you want at the bottom right of the screen.
- Once you find the name, note down all the details including the *book and number*.
- **Tip:** sometimes Old System deed numbers are inverted in both the indexes and on the deeds. Eg deed reference number 79-661 is entered as 661-79 or 661-bk79 on the deed.

3.1.3 Now find the Deed in the *General Register of Deeds*

- Go back to the main HLRV search page by clicking on X in the top right of the image viewer. Don't click on your browser's back arrow or it will take you out of the HLRV.

Clear your previous search results first

- Click on the LRS Icon  in the top left on the main HLRV search page.


Refine your search

- Click on the Arrow next to Old System Records.
- From the drop down, click on the arrow next to Old System Registers.
- From the drop down, click on the box next to (64) *General Register of Deeds*.
- **Tip:** You might find the Refine Column is not wide enough so some text is hidden. Hover over the words with your mouse to see the full name of the record set, **or** reduce your text size (Ctrl + Shift + Minus)

Set up your attribute

- Go to the Keyword Search Box at the top of the page and click on *Attribute*.
- Next to the attribute in the 'search by' box click on the drop down arrow and select *Book and number*.
- A search box will appear next to the *Book and number* attribute.
- Enter the book and number you found from the Vendors' Index or Purchasers' Index. Use a hyphen between the numbers. Eg: For Book 79 page 661 use 79-661.
- **Tip:** sometimes these numbers are inverted on the index so if you don't get a result try reversing the order.

Search results for the Deed

- You will get one result. Click on the blue circle within it. The number in the blue circle represents the number of pages of the document.
- In the image viewer, use the icons to enlarge and go between pages of the deed.
 You cannot print or download deeds: you will need to order a copy from LRS.

4. Tips

Don't know the grantee's name or date of grant or number of the grant? Or don't know the old system title deed number or name of the vendor or purchaser or date of the sale or location of the land? Try the following resources:

- **Parish, town and county maps and crown plans:** If you know the approximate location of the parcel of land, the date and grantee or first title holder may turn up on either the map face or on one of the tables next to the map face – you may need to check a few editions of each parish map. If you have never searched for a parish map, do watch State Archives and Records Authority excellent webinars on [Parish maps](#) and [Finding Title Deed numbers](#)
- **Crown plans** which are surveys of parcels of land are a great source of information but are *only accessible on the HLRV terminals at State Archives and Records Authority at Kingswood*.
- **Primary Application records** sometimes provide Old System title deed numbers for other deeds related to the parcel of land you are searching. The Primary Application Search books and Search sketches are available to view on the HLRV. For how to search for Primary Application information on the HLRV, go to Session 3 in this webinar series: Torrens Title records and Primary Application search books and search sketches.
- **Torrens Title Deed:** The Grantee name and date of the original Crown Grant usually appears on a Torrens Title deed (Vol-Fol). Vol-Fol numbers are often written on the

map face of parish maps or on a table next to the map face. For how to search for Torrens Title Deed numbers and deeds on the HLRV, go to Session 3 in this webinar Series: Torrens Title Records and Primary Application search books and search sketches.

- **Annotations on records:** Keep an eye out for any annotations on Grants and Grant Index entries or on Old System title deeds and the deed indexes.
- **Old Register One to Nine:** Established in 1802, this register on CD Rom includes many deeds created between 1794-1824 and may provide useful clues including names, dates and deed numbers for your parcel of land.
- **State Records:** [State Archives and Records Authority website](#) indexes many records. Browse their Research guide under headings such as Land, Conditional Purchase, Crown land and Maps and Plans to access indexes and informative guides.
- **Geoff Cannon: First title holders in the County of.....** is a series of books which covers 14 of the early counties in NSW and may shed light on names, dates and locations. Copies are held at the State Library and check [Trove](#) for other holding libraries.
- **Ancestry:** You can find land grants on Ancestry but they may have different reference numbers to those on the HLRV. There is a conversion chart for Grant Register volume numbers on the [Land Registry Services Website](#) But land grants on Ancestry can at least give you the date which you can then use to search the Grant Index.
- **Other Records:** Think about what other resources might provide clues e.g. probate records, deceased estate records and council records and have a look at the guides below for more ideas.

5. Guides

- **Land Registry Services:** Links to brief guides and helpsheets, as well as Information Brokers who can undertake searches for you are available here: <https://www.nswlrs.com.au/Historical-Records-Online>. For more comprehensive guides which also include lists of abbreviations found in land records as well as glossaries of terms used in land administration is available here: <https://www.nswlrs.com.au/Searching-Guides>
- **State Records:** [State Archives and Records Authority website](#) : Browse their Research guides under headings such as Land, Conditional Purchase, Crown land and Maps and Plans to access indexes and informative guides. Watch their mini webinars.
- **Terry Kass (2019) *Unlocking land: a guide to Crown land records held at State Archives NSW***, Kass, Lidcombe (NSW). This is the first comprehensive guide to researching Crown land in NSW.