BRITISH JURISDICTIONS
PROTOTYPE

BYU Family History Technology Workshop
Judy A. Jones, AG
Family History Library
Our Beginnings

• 5 years ago
• British Reference saw a need to provide patrons with an easier way to identify record-creating jurisdictions
• Developed paper product to meet need
• Has now migrated to electronic version (not to imply that the paper product isn’t still needed)
GIS System

• Geographic Information System integrates:
  – Maps projected to a real world setting
    • Longitude and Latitude
  – Data
    • Whatever we choose
    • Provided in Excel tables

• Combine to create a product giving us
  • search capabilities
  • visual presentation
  • flexibility

• Uses ArcView/ArcMap Software
What can we do with this technology?

• Use it as a Gazetteer
  – Tie known place names to jurisdictions with record-creating capabilities

• Simplify the research process by identifying appropriate record-producing jurisdictions without using 8-10 reference books

• Keep the user on track, not allowing him to waste time dredging through non-record-producing jurisdictions

• Link to FHL catalog

• Link to repository sites to identify records

• Link to indexes we have in our collection
  – Not just the catalog entry, but the actual index
This prototype includes:

- 7 Counties in England
  - Norfolk
  - Suffolk
  - Cambridge
  - Huntingdon
  - Bedford
  - Hertford
  - Essex
Organization

- Parish boundaries as base
Parish Boundary Base
Parish Boundaries
Organization

- Parish boundaries as base
- All jurisdictions overlay this parish boundary base.
Civil Registration Districts
Hundred Jurisdiction
Hundreds
Organization

• Parish boundaries as base
• All jurisdictions are laid over these parish boundaries
• Ordnance Survey maps as background
  – Show geographical features, such as rivers, roads,
  – Gives farm names, Halls, Manors, etc.
  – Not electronically searchable, but visually available
Ordnance Survey Background
Data Included in Prototype

- Place Type
  - Ancient Parish,
    Ecclesiastical Parish,
    Chapelry, Extra-parochial
- See References, Variant Spellings
- Other Places in the Parish
  - Hamlet, Village, Township
- Beginning Date of Church of England Parish Registers and Bishop’s Transcripts
- Non-Church of England Denominations
- Civil Registration Districts
- Hundreds
- Probate Courts
- Dioceses
- Rural Deaneries
- Poor Law Unions
- Notes giving changes in a parish over time or other helpful information
Selected parish
Selected Parish with Identify Results
Proposal #1

• Create enclosed polygons from a scanned or digitized image
  – Eliminate the costly drawing, conversion and/or clean-up process required to introduce maps and jurisdictions into ArcView software
  – Provide a technology that could enable the creation of jurisdictional maps for the entire world
Conversion Process

• Essex University produced parish maps in Adobe Illustrator format
• These files must be converted to a CAD format
• Then the CAD files must be moved into ArcView
• This becomes problematic
  – CAD files are “drawn”
  – ArcView requires enclosed polygons to function
  – Conversion process creates “leftover stuff” inside the polygons, once they are created
• We are seeking a solution to this problem
Proposal #2

• Develop user interface
  – Make it possible for a novice user to access the data and technology in an intuitive way.
Scenario 1

- In a family history, it states that your ancestor comes from a place called Keswick in England.
- You have looked on a map and did not find the place.
- You want to know where that place is in England so you can find him in the 1841 and 1851 Censuses.
Search for Keswick – 2 identified
Keswick Hamlet
Keswick, where are you?
The End