From *Professional Genealogy* by Elizabeth Shown Mills
“A research report is a thoughtful, analytical document whose words are uniquely crafted to describe the problem, the mental exercises applied toward the resolution of that problem, and all the findings.” Page 349

**Physical Geography’s Impact**
- Determined what crops could be grown, and how successfully
- Influenced the success of animal husbandry
- Determined the daily conditions of transportation, economic exchange, and communication

**Political Geography’s Impact**
- Geography determined ancient political jurisdictions
- Influenced different traditions and cultural practices that in turn influenced the economic and political structures in certain regions
- Could isolate, expose, or facilitate rebellious populations

**Political Geography**
- Regions
- Counties (website slide)
- Hundreds and Wapentakes (website slide)
- Boroughs
- Cities
- Towns
- Villages
- Parishes
  - Can also use the genuki church database to find all the parishes in a certain radius (see Pratt handout for more details)

**Gazetteers and Maps**
- *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales* by John Marius Wilson, 1866-1872
- *Index Villaris* by John Adams, 1690
- *Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers* by Cecil Humphrey-Smith
- Use the source that is closest in time to your search, so as to avoid the problems of changes
- There are also specialized or local ones
- These are ESSENTIAL to the survey and beginning searches in England and Wales.
- Use Pratt’s handout County Table to coordinate FHL and HBLL call numbers for locations (browsing the shelves can be a fruitful exercise)
- Maps: Ordinance Survey maps
**Jurisdictions (This is absolutely essential to your further work)**
- Note all levels of secular jurisdictions applicable to your search area
  - Parish (or town/city) and county are generally enough for 20th and 19th centuries
  - For earlier centuries, knowing the hundred will also help
- Note all levels of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, especially before 1850s
  - Parish (peculiars), deanery, arch-deaconry, diocese, province

**Names**
- Origins and History
  - Begin after the Norman Conquest for the nobility, and then slowly trickle down the English social scale
  - Become hereditary for the bulk of the population by the late fourteenth century (though they could be changed or corrupted, and often were, after their adoption)
  - Names were adopted, and dropped, for numerous reasons and several may have been in use before one was settled on
  - Variations in pronunciation due to dialect and spelling do to no standardization contributed to corruptions and changes
  - In Wales, they did not begin to be used until the Unification with England in the mid sixteenth century
    - Some places in Wales did not use hereditary surnames until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century
  - Simultaneous with the development of hereditary surnames was a narrowing of possible Christian and last names
- Sources of names
  - Nicknames or bynames, personally descriptive names
  - Occupational
  - Locative
  - Topographical
  - Patronymic (or Matronymic)
    - Adding –s, -es, or –son was in common practice in England even if not strictly patronymic practice and it sometimes spread to Wales, where –ap and –ab were also in use as strictly patronymics
    - -ab and –ap came from mab and map, cognates of mac-, over time they picked up the Welsh f- preceding letter, but that was a soft pronunciation and therefore it eventually became just –ab nad –ap, meaning “son of”
    - mac- was used in Gaelic speaking areas to mean “son of”
    - Fitz- from *fils de* was also used in England the way –mac was used in Ireland and Scotland
  - Personal names, shortened or with added suffixes, such as Nicholas, Nicholls, Nixon, and Collinson all from Nicholas. These are not necessarily the same as patronymics.
The practice of women adopting first their father's and then their husband's surname gradually grew alongside the practice of hereditary surnames (so from 14th century on, for the most part). However, her maiden name could appear as a Christian name in later generations, or as an alias, or as a hyphenated surname.

Though the native stock of surnames decreased, England has always experienced influx of immigrants, who brought their surnames that may or may not have been eventually anglicized. European protestants fleeing various persecutions on the continent often fled to the protestant-loving England and brought their Dutch, French, Spanish, and Italian surnames with them.

Christian names (beyond the most popular of John, Richard, Robert, Thomas and William and Ann, Elizabeth, Jane, Mary and Sarah) can help when you have a common surname, or can give you a clue about religious influence.

**Distribution**

- Less common names may have a limited distribution that may give clues as to location of origin (see David Pratt handout that gives sources for determining distribution).
  - Charles Bardsley’s dictionary
  - Use the 1881 census on familysearch.org
  - At FHL the “British 19th Century Surname Atlas” on CD

**Finding the origin**

- P. H. Reaney’s *A Dictionary of British Surnames*
- English Surname Series (more of a historical study of distribution)
- Elizabeth G. Withycombe’s *The Oxford Dictionary of English Christian Names*
- OED