



CIVIL REGISTRATION

Scotland

Civil registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths began in Scotland on 1st January 1855. Scottish Certificates generally hold more information than the England and Wales ones. If you can find one dated from 1855 itself then you are in luck as they contain a lot more information.

For further details please see

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/

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Ireland

Civil registration of all births, marriages, and deaths in Ireland began in 1864 (except for non-Catholic marriages, for which registration started in 1845).

Registration produced two sets of records: registers for births, marriages, and deaths and published indexes to these registers.

The repository split in 1922, with the records for Northern Ireland being kept by the General Register Office Northern Ireland (GRONI) in Belfast, while records for the Republic of Ireland are housed at the General Register Office (GRO) in Dublin.

If you wish to order certificates from Lancashire County Council (local Register), rather than from the GRO, then you should check with them for their latest information at:

www.lancashire.gov.uk/births-marriages-and-deaths/certificates/

It is not only Lancashire that has a Local index online. UKBMD gives a list of these at www.ukbmd.org.uk.

County & other BMD's available are -

Bath, Berkshire, Cheshire, Cumbria, Lancashire, North Wales, Shropshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands, Wiltshire and Yorkshire exist under the UKBMD banner

but many others exist like -

Caerphilly, Cambridgeshire, Darlington, Durham, Gateshead, Gloucestershire, the Isle of Wight, Kent, Leicestershire, Isle of Man, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Sheffield, Stockton on Tees, Sunderland, Tees Valley, Warwickshire and Wrexham

LFHHS Chorley Branch

LFHHS Chorley Family History Research Centre



Civil Registration

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CIVIL REGISTRATION

England and Wales

Civil Registration of births, marriages and deaths started on 1 July 1837 in England and Wales. The Government kept a copy of the certificate and copy a was kept by the Local Registrar. This led to two separate indexes being produced - one a national index and one a local index.

Initially the onus lay on registrars to discover and record events, so not every birth was registered. In 1875, the Births & Deaths Act 1874 came into force, whereby those present at a birth or death were required to report the event. This was later expanded in 1927 to also include stillbirths and adoptions.

Other alterations to the indexes took place. In 1866 the age at death was added. In 1911 the maiden name of the mother was put in the birth indexes. The surname of the other spouse was put in the marriage indexes in September 1911. Finally in 1969 the date of birth was put in death indexes.

The General Register Office (GRO) is based in Southport, Merseyside and holds records for births, deaths and marriages that have been registered in England and Wales from 1837. It can supply certificates for birth, death, marriage, civil partnership and adoption events registered in England and Wales and for certain British Nationals, who were born, married, formed a civil partnership or died overseas.

Additionally it can supply PDF's for historical digitised civil registration records held by GRO (birth entries from 1837 to 1919 and death entries from 1837 to 1957). The indexes can be viewed for births 1984-2004 and 1948-2019 but the PDF cannot be purchased. (The Certificates can.)

Their website; www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/ provides for the ordering of certificates and pdfs, as well as allowing free searches of the Birth Indexes 1837 - 1919 and 1984 - 2004 and the Death Indexes 1837 - 1957 and 1984 - 2019. It also has an invaluable "Frequently asked questions" section providing details about what can be found on the different certificates at different times, and the cost of each type of certificate / PDF.

Certificates should only be purchased directly from the GRO or a local Register / Record Office, and never through a third party intermediary

The GRO have licenced the following organisations to hold their indexes online, or on microfiche:

www.freebmd.org.uk - this is a volunteer project with indexes starting from 1837- 1983 for births, 1985 for marriages and 1983 for deaths. The indexes can be viewed free of charge.

www.familysearch.org - this is the largest collection of free family history, family tree and genealogy records in the world. Civil registrations go from 1837 to 2008 for births, 2005 for marriages and 2007 for deaths.

The following websites hold copies of index information that can be accessed on a "pay as you view" or subscription basis:

www.findmypast.co.uk
www.bmdindex.co.uk
www.familyrelatives.org
www.thegenealogist.co.uk
www.ancestry.co.uk

The range of dates covered by these are similar to Family Search.

It should be noted that the GRO does not provide these sites with annual updates to the indexes, and their sets of indexes end around 2007/8 - each site varies. There are only a very restricted number of libraries in the UK which do get an annually updated set of indexes on microfiche.

The only library for the North West region is:

Manchester Central Library St Peters Square, City Centre, Manchester, M2 5PD
Tel 0161 234 1966

www.lancashirebmd.org.uk This website allows free searches of the indexes held in the local register offices within the historic county of Lancashire. This index is not based on the National index but the Local index instead. This index is arguably more accurate than the National index.

Registration districts changed periodically as the population changed and UKBMD has a useful guide showing the composition of the civil registration districts in England since 1837 to the present, and in Wales between 1837 and 1996, which can be found at: www.ukbmd.org.uk/reg/

The indexes are not certificates and only include limited information.

The information on the certificates may not be what you are expecting to see. Spelling of names varies over time; is dependent upon who is writing them down - do not assume that your ancestor obtained a copy of the certificate to check it. Registration cost money, and certificates were an added expense. Even in relatively modern times people had no need of them, so parents may just have had a receipt for the registration of the event such as the type shown below.