



Church Records in the Archives and Heritage Service in Birmingham Central Library.

Registers for Anglican churches within the present-day Birmingham Diocese are held here. These include registers of churches which no longer exist and those of churches which were formerly in Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Worcestershire, such as Aston, Handsworth and Kings Norton. Details of many of the registers held here can be found at <http://calmview.birmingham.gov.uk> A large number of pre twentieth century registers have been microfilmed. The telephone number if you want to reserve a reader to view the microfilmed copies is 0121 303 4549, or email us on archives.heritage@birmingham.gov.uk Registers that have not been microfilmed may be available to view in their original format. These will be served in the archives searchroom on production of suitable identification. For further information please telephone Archives and Heritage on 0121 303 4549 or see the website <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/archivesandheritage>

FAQs

Q. Do you hold Catholic church records?

A. Archives and Heritage hold only a small number of transcripts. Please contact the Archivist at St Chad's for these records. Contact: The Rev. John Sharp, Archivist, Cathedral House, St. Chad's Queensway, Birmingham B4 4EU. Tel: 0121 230 6252.

Q. What about other non-conformist church records?

A. Some Baptist, Independent, Unitarian, Wesleyan and Presbyterian baptismal registers are deposited here. Many non-conformist records are available at <http://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/> (this website is subscription based).

Q. How far do parish registers go back?

A. Parish registers were introduced in the mid C16th. We hold registers from this date for some churches such as St. Martin's (Birmingham's Parish Church). However, not all registers date back this far.

Q. What does a baptism register show?

A. This varies between churches, but the standard format is that prior to 1812 registers contain very little information other than the date of baptism, the child's name and the names of the parents (sometimes only the father's name is given). From 1813 registers also include the full names of the parents, where they were living and the father's occupation. Some incumbents included the date of birth but this was not a requirement. Baptismal records do not include the mother's maiden name.

Q. What does a marriage register show?

A. Until 1753 the register will normally shows the names of both parties.

Between 1754 and 1st July 1837 the register shows:

Date and place of marriage

Names of the bride and groom and their marital status

Whether or not they are of the parish (this quite often appears as otp),

Whether the marriage is by banns, licence or with consent of parents (if either party is a minor)

The signature/mark of the bride and groom and witnesses (usually two)

During this period marriages other than for Jews and Quakers, had to take place in a parish church performed by an Anglican vicar.

From 1837 marriages could also take place at register offices and non-conformist churches, although at the latter a registrar of marriages had to conduct the civil part of the ceremony until the late 1890's. To obtain a certificate of a Register Office marriage you will need to contact the local Register Office.

Q. What does a burial register show?

A. Up to 1813 a burial register generally shows the date of death, name of deceased and very little other information (the age of death is not necessarily shown.)

From 1813 onwards the register shows:

Date and Place of burial

Name of deceased

Age at death -if a child is being buried the parents names may be given

Address

Some burial records are available in the National Burial Index – this is available on CD Rom in the Archives and Heritage section and on <http://www.findmypast.co.uk> (this website is subscription based).