



THE BIRMINGHAM GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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www.birminghamgenealogy.org
<http://birminghamgenealogy.wordpress.com/>

THE PIONEER TRAILS NEWSLETTER JUNE 2017

General Meeting for June: The Birmingham Genealogical Society will meet at **10:00 a.m.** on **Saturday, June 24th** on the fourth floor of the Birmingham Public Library (in the Arrington Auditorium). The Board of Directors will meet following the general meeting.

Please join us for “One for the Record Books: The English Census Workshop”: Searching for English ancestors? Genealogists know that census records are crucial to family history research, but there are some important differences between the U.S. Federal Census and its English cousin. This workshop (led by Mary Anne Ellis of the Linn-Henley Research Library) will show you how to navigate this important information source. **Please note registration is free but you must register by calling 205-226-3665. Please join us!**

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN TIME AND MEETING PLACE!

Research & Genealogical Tips - courtesy of © Michael John Neill,
“Genealogy Tip of the Day.” <http://genealogytipoftheday.blogspot.com>, TIPDATE.

Metes & Bounds Descriptions: In areas where real property is described in deeds using the metes and bounds, make certain you read that legal description of the property. While it may be tempting to gloss over the angles and lengths, the names of adjacent property owners could be helpful.

They Wouldn't Attend that Church! Never assume that your ancestor wouldn't have attended “that church” because it was the “wrong” denomination. It is possible that your knowledge of your ancestor's religion is not as accurate as you think it is or that the lack of a preacher of the right denomination caused someone to be married by a preacher who was “close enough.” In frontier times, people sometimes had to attend services of whatever what close—as long as the beliefs were relatively similar.

Don't Overlook State Records: Records created or archived at the state (or provincial) level should be included as a part of your research plan. These materials may mention state land purchases, state census records, court case appeals (even to the state supreme court), institutionalizations, and more. The state archives, state library, state historical society, or similar agencies are good places to start learning more about these records.



The past is not dead. It isn't even past. --William Faulkner
Scott A. Martin, BGS Newsletter Editor

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Researching Ancestors in the British Census

Contributed by Kimberly Powell

<https://www.thoughtco.com/researching-ancestors-in-the-british-census-1421864>

A census of the population of England and Wales has been taken every ten years since 1801, with the exception of 1941 (when no census was taken due to World War II). The censuses conducted prior to 1841 were basically statistical in nature, not even preserving the name of the head of household. Therefore, the first of these census enumerations of much use for tracing your ancestors is the British census of 1841. To protect the privacy of living individuals, the most recent census to be released to the public for England, Scotland and Wales is the 1911 census.

What You Can Learn From British Census Records

1841

The 1841 British census, the first British census to ask detailed questions about individuals, contains a bit less information than subsequent censuses. For each individual enumerated in 1841, you can find the full name, age (*rounded down to the nearest 5 for everyone 15 or older*), sex, occupation, and whether they were born in the same county in which they were enumerated.

1851-1911

The questions asked in the 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, and 1901 census enumerations are generally the same and include the first, middle (usually just the initial), and last name of each individual; their relationship to the head of household; marital status; age at last birthday; sex; occupation; the county and parish of birth (if born in England or Wales), or the country if born elsewhere; and the full street address for each household. The birth information makes these censuses especially helpful for tracing ancestors born prior to the onset of civil registration in 1837.

- **1851** - This census additionally recorded whether an individual was blind, deaf or an idiot; tradesmen usually identified as master, journeyman or apprentice; the numbers of employees of a master.
- **1861 & 1871** - These two census enumerations additionally asked whether a person was imbecile, idiot or lunatic.
- **1881 & 1891** - The number of rooms occupied by a family if less than 5 was also recorded, as was whether a working person was an employer, employee or neither.
- **1901** - The employer/employee question added in 1881 remained, with the addition of recording those working at home. Four categories of disability were recorded: deaf and dumb; blind; lunatic; and imbecile or feeble minded.
- **1911** - The first census for which the original household schedules were not destroyed once details had been transferred into the enumerators' summary books. For 1911 both the original census surveys filled out in your ancestor's own hand (complete with mistakes and additional comments) and the traditional edited enumerators' summary are available. An infirmity column allowed reporting of family illnesses and conditions, and the age at which these began. Details of children born to women in prison who were aged three or under at the time of the census were also recorded.

Census Dates

The actual census date varied from census to census, but is important in helping to determine an individual's probably age. The dates of the censuses are as follows:

1841 - 6 June	1881 - 3 April
1851 - 30 March	1891 - 5 April
1861 - 7 April	1901 - 31 March
1871 - 2 April	1911 - 2 April

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US Passport Applications <https://www.archives.gov/research/passport>

Passport applications can be an excellent source of genealogical information, especially about foreign-born individuals. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has passport applications from Oct. 1795-Mar. 1925; the U.S. Department of State has passport applications from Apr. 1925 to the present. The Department of State has issued passports to American citizens traveling abroad since 1789, but did not have sole authority to do so until August 23, 1856, when Congress passed an act (11 Stat. 60) prohibiting other governmental entities, such as state and judicial authorities, from issuing passports. Foreign travel in the nineteenth century was much more frequent than one might expect. Overseas travelers included businessmen, the middle class, and naturalized U.S. citizens who returned to their homelands to visit relatives. For example, statistics show that the State Department issued 130,360 passports between 1810 and 1873, more than 369,844 between 1877 and 1909, and more than 1,184,085 between 1912 and 1925. It is unknown how many American citizens traveled abroad with passports issued by state or judicial authorities prior to 1856 or without any passport prior to 1918. Although 95 percent of mid-19th century passport applicants were men, many women also traveled overseas. If the applicant was to be accompanied by his wife, children, servants, or other females under his protection, their names, ages, and relationship to the applicant were stated on the passport application. One passport was then issued to cover the whole group. Likewise, when children traveled abroad solely with their mother, their names and ages were indicated on the mother's passport application. Passport applications by women in their own names became more frequent in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and by 1923 women constituted over 40 percent of passport applicants.

To effectively and efficiently use passport application records, the researcher should identify the persons who traveled overseas and the approximate years of travel. The researcher should not automatically assume an individual never traveled overseas, because, as indicated above, foreign travel in the nineteenth century was more common than one might expect. Since passports were generally valid for two years or less, the researcher should search the indexes covering the individual's entire lifetime because he or she may have submitted several applications. Multiple applications by the same person may provide conflicting, but useful, clues for further research.

Example: Frank Bernard applied for a passport on August 9, 1900, and again on May 16, 1905. His 1900 application stated that he immigrated to the U.S. on Jan. 4, 1888, aboard the ship *Arabic* and that he was naturalized in the county court of Kings County, NY, on July 22, 1895 (M1372, roll 562, No. 31399, Aug. 9, 1900). Slightly different dates are reported on Mr. Bernard's 1905 application: February 12, 1888, for his immigration and July 22, 1896, for his naturalization (M1372, roll 677, No. 103830, May 16, 1905).

Limitations. Many U.S. residents traveled overseas without holding a U.S. passport, for two main reasons:

1. **Not Required.** As a general rule, until 1941, U.S. citizens were **not** required to have a passport for travel abroad. **Exceptions to general rule:** Passports were **required** from August 19, 1861, to March 17, 1862, during the Civil War; Passports were **recommended, but not required**, by President Woodrow Wilson's Executive Order 2285 of December 15, 1915, which stated that all persons leaving the U.S. **should** have passports; Passports were **required** from May 22, 1918 (40 Stat. 559), until the formal termination of World War I in 1921 by treaties. Passports have been **required** since the passage of the act of June 21, 1941 (55 Stat. 252) and subsequent legislation.
2. **Aliens were Ineligible.** As a general rule, the U.S. government only issued passports to U.S. *citizens*. **Exceptions to general rule:**

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Aliens who had declared their intent to become a naturalized citizen could obtain a passport pursuant to the act of Congress of March 3, 1863 (12 Stat. 754) which was repealed May 30, 1866 (14 Stat. 54). Few passports were issued under this law; however, Aliens who had declared their intent to become a naturalized citizen could obtain a passport pursuant to the act of Congress of March 2, 1907 (34 Stat. 1228), which was repealed June 4, 1920 (41 Stat. 751).

This section describes the four major types of passport applications: regular, emergency, special, and insular, and also describes miscellaneous related records.

Regular Passport Applications: Most passport applications were for "regular" passports. The earliest passport applications were generally handwritten letters, but by the 1860s most were submitted on printed forms. The State Department issued regular passports without charge until July 1, 1862, when a three-dollar application fee was instituted.

Information Content

Date of Birth: Most applications state the applicant's exact date of birth; however, earlier applications may not. **Example:** Mordecai D. Lewis was said to be "aged about Forty six years or thereabouts." (M1372, roll 4, No. 4232, Mar. 30, 1836).

Place of Birth: Most applications state the exact town of birth, but some simply indicate the state or country. **Examples:** George Eger's birthplace is simply stated as the "Kingdom of Wuerttemberg" (M1372, roll 183, No. 20973, May 20, 1872), while Mathias Mazanec's birthplace is stated exactly as Rybakovic, Bohemia (M1372, roll 214, No. 50445, July 13, 1876).

Physical Description usually includes the applicant's age, height, forehead ("broad, medium"), eye color ("blue," "grey," "hazel"), nose ("straight"), mouth ("medium," "mustache"), chin ("round"), hair color ("dark," "black"), complexion ("healthy," "fair"), and face ("round," "oval").

Occupation is sometimes indicated. **Example:** Michael Phillips was noted to be a member of the NY bar [i.e., a lawyer] (M1372, roll 214, No. 50343, July 6, 1876).

Foreign destination and the applicant's reason for foreign travel are stated on some applications. **Example:** Mr. J.B. Howard, in an application letter dated Mar. 31, 1836, at Philadelphia, wrote: "I was requested by Mr. Robt. W. Morris of Boon County Missouri to procure him a passport to the Spanish provinces." (M1372, roll 4, No. 4233, Mar. 31, 1836).

Naturalization: The passport application for a naturalized citizen may also state the court and date of naturalization and the date and ship upon which the applicant immigrated to the United States. Evidence of the applicant's naturalization as a U.S. citizen may be detailed or cursory.

Example 1: Michael Caffé, 1836. John D. Campbell, a notary public, stated on Michael Caffé's application that "I know him to be a naturalized Citizen of the United States of America." (M1372, roll 4, No. 4235, Apr. 1, 1836).

Example 2: George Eger, 1872. The date and court of naturalization is written vertically across the face of some applications, such as George Eger's, which indicates he was naturalized in "Comm[on] Pleas [Court] Hamilton Co[unty,] Ohio 30th March 1864." (M1372, roll 183, No. 20973, May 20, 1872).

Example 3: Michael Phillips, 1876. If the applicant became a naturalized citizen by virtue of being a minor at the time of his father's naturalization, it will usually be stated on the passport application. For example, Michael

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Phillips submitted the naturalization certificate of his father, Matthew, and his application stated that he "arrived in this Country under 5 years of age & am a naturalized Citizen by parentage, my father, now deceased, having been duly naturalized." (M1372, roll 214, No. 50343, July 6, 1876).

Example 4: Michael Mazanec, 1876. His application indicates that his surname was written as "Maraner" on his naturalization certificate, a valuable clue to the researcher who might otherwise never discover the naturalization record filed under the misspelled name (M1372, roll 214, No. 50445, July 13, 1876).

Photographs have been required with applications since December 21, 1914.

Regular passport applications have been reproduced in two National Archives microfilm

Emergency Passport Applications: Emergency passports were issued abroad by diplomatic and consular officials for emergency purposes only and were valid for only six months. Issuance of emergency passports began in 1874 but was discontinued pursuant to an act of Congress of July 3, 1926 (44 Stat. 887). Emergency passport applications of native and naturalized citizens include the applicant's date and place of birth, occupation, permanent U.S. residence, date of departure from the United States, place of residence abroad, purpose of the application, and the length of time the applicant intended to reside abroad. In most cases, applicants desired a passport for purposes of identification. Applications by naturalized citizens also include the original date and ship of immigration to the United States; the date and place of the ship's embarkation; the date and court of naturalization; the applicant's current foreign travel, including the date of departure from the United States, the ship's name, the arrival date, and the foreign port of destination.

Insular Possessions Passport Applications: In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the United States exercised sovereign control over certain lands referred to as insular possessions or territories. These residents applied to the Department of State for a passport on an insular passport application. NARA has such applications from residents of Hawaii (1916-1924), the Philippines (1901-1924), and Puerto Rico (1915-1922). These applications include the applicant's name, date and place of birth, occupation, permanent residence, physical description, and father's citizenship. The wife's name and the number of children were also included if they were going to travel with the applicant.

Paper copies of passport applications, 1795 - March 1925, can be ordered by mail from:

National Archives and Records Administration
Attn: Archives I Research Support Branch (NWCC1)
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20408-0001

To obtain passport applications through an online request

E-mail requests should be sent to inquire@nara.gov.

Please include the following information in your request: your name and mailing (postal) address; the passport applicant's name, year of birth, place of residence at the time the application was made, and the approximate year of travel. The applicant's year of birth and place of residence are used to distinguish between persons having the same name. If we locate the records that you request, we will send you an order form and instructions on ordering copies.

Paper copies of **passport applications, Apr. 1925-present**, can be ordered by mail from Department of State, Research & Liaison Branch, 1111 19th Street NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20522-1705.

AP. 6, '52

'My friend flicker'— 'Welcome' sign at Terminal Station may be headed for the scrap pile

BY GEORGE WHITTINGTON
News staff writer

Birmingham is about to lose its most "welcome possession.

That is, unless someone comes along with some \$3000 to save it.

The big electric sign at Terminal Station, which has welcomed Magic City visitors for a quarter-century, faces demolition.

City Purchasing Agent C. E. Wiberg said Saturday he has received orders from commissioners to advertise for bids on demolition of the sign.

There's only one alternative—some one or some group to put up money for renovation.

* * *

Rotted

BUILDING INSPECTOR H. E. HAGOOD, who has tried more than a year to have the sign either renovated or torn down, set the renovation price tag at between \$2500 and \$3000.

He said the framework has rotted from lack of paint, and that electrical wiring is in bad shape. Some letters in the sign have blinked crookedly for months.

Several months ago, Street Lighting Inspector E. Paul Ingram also discussed the sign with commissioners. He said it should be completely rewired or torn down.

"There's no uses putting bulbs in when the wiring is so bad," he said.

* * *

Opposition

COMMISSIONER JAMES W. MORGAN opposed extensive expenditures to renovate the sign. He said, instead, that the money should be spent on smaller signs at the airport and at main arterial highways entering the city.

Folks don't travel by train as much as they once did," he pointed out. "It isn't seen by as many people as it was when most folks

did their traveling by rail."

But general feeling at city hall has been against demolition, unless absolutely necessary. The sign has far too much sentimental value attached—particularly as far as old timers are concerned.

* * *

A gift

CONSTRUCTED IN 1925-26, the sign was a gift of the late E. M. Elliott. It first read, "Welcome to Birmingham. The Magic City."

During the administration of the late Mayor Jimmy Jones, it was decided that was small-townish. To make it more cosmopolitan, the words were chaged to simply, "Birmingham. The Magic City."

For many thousands of visitors to Birmingham, the big sign has become a sort of suspended "welcome" mat. For thousands of residents, it has become a cherished landmark.

But the city feels it has lost its dollar-and-cents value.

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