



Finding free records on **FamilySearch**

With a total of 6.3 billion searchable records, **FamilySearch** now has a staggering 3 billion searchable images of historical records and a 'Maps' feature that goes far beyond the traditional reference **Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Register**, the classic guide to registration districts in England, Wales and Scotland

Most can be seen at home when you sign into a **free** FamilySearch account, but due to restrictions by some archives and record holders, others can only be viewed at one of the 100 Family History Centres in the UK and remember, FamilySearch is not just adding British records, but images and transcriptions from all around the world and it's always best to log in with 'Google Chrome'...

Getting started:

1. Start the search

Sign in to FamilySearch, hover your cursor over 'Search' on the menu bar of the home page, then choose 'Catalog'. The most useful ways to search are by place or by keyword, although you can use author or title if you want to locate a book.

2. Search by place

Suppose you want to see records from Birmingham. So, a place search for Birmingham gives you a list of types of records available for that location. If you choose 'Church records', you can see the 50 different records sets available.

3. View images

Select a record set. Scroll past the catalogue description and you'll see the film numbers/digital numbers associated with the registers. A camera icon means images are available to view, download and print, but a camera with a key means it's restricted.

4. Visit in person

If the image is restricted, you can only see it at an affiliate library or a Family History Centre – there are over 100 sites the length and breadth of the UK, plus three in Ireland.

To find the Family History Centres in the UK & Ireland, log into this link and search for the nearest centre: (<https://www.familysearch.org/locations>)

You could however, always start your search by going straight to 'Search Historical Records' with a name, or on the home page to save time, scroll down to 'Browse all published collections', then 'filter by collection title' with your search requirements on the left side, with more exact records/dates etc.

Now, the map feature; **England Jurisdictions 1851** which is a great help to find out more information on the following; County, Civil Registration District, Probate Court, Diocese, Rural Deanery, Poor Law Union, Hundred & Province, on the church you are researching, especially when Parish Records and Bishops Transcripts began, then click on 'Options' and the link to 'FamilySearch Research Wiki' for information on your church or place (<https://www.familysearch.org/mapp/>) also, for more 'Maps by Country' try (<https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Maps>)

Another link for your research can be found at the 'FamilySearch Research Wiki' (https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Main_Page) on the home page in the top right-hand box enter 'England Online Genealogy Records' and you will see all available records and if it indicates subscription site, you can view Ancestry, FindmyPast and MyHeritage for free at the Family History Centres, you can also look at all possible available records for Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and other countries or religions like Jewish history etc...

Citation

Sharon Hintze, former Director of The Family History Centre in London, located at The National Archives (TNA) in Kew, which has now become a FamilySearch Affiliate Library