

North Cheshire Family History Society

UK FAMILY HISTORY SOURCES Quick Reference Guide

Source	Description
Census records	Available every ten years from 1841 to 1911. Copies of original returns available on CD-ROM, usually without index (except 1881), also fully transcribed and indexed on internet.
Civil Registration (birth, marriage and death certificates)	Started in 1837. National index available. Certificates can be obtained from appropriate local registrar for £7, or from General Register Office for £8 50 post/phone or £7 on line, if index reference known, else £11.50
Church records	Most Anglican records archived and available on film; very few in churches, except current registers. Many transcribed, indexed and printed or filmed. Many Anglican and Non-conformist records indexed by Mormons and published in the International Genealogical Index (IGI). Many Non-conformist records held at Kew and becoming available on the internet. Catholic records are in the Central Catholic Library or remain at churches.
Directories	A number of firms (eg Kellys, Slaters & Whites) published directories of local and trade information in the 19 th century. Some by the 20 th century, became complete town directories, with all residents listed by name and by address. Many available on CD-ROM and some on the internet.
Education records	Some school log books are in County Record Offices and can offer much detail of school and local life, not just lists of names.
Electoral registers	Various lists of people able to vote have been compiled over the years. Names of lists varied – poll book, burgess list, freemen list, electoral register. If looking for the possible mention of an ancestor, ask the record office what it holds.
Occupational records	A wide range of records can be found, mostly at Kew, although rather hit and miss, few lists being complete. Subjects include apprenticeships, medical practitioners, merchant seamen, lawyers, police, railway workers and teachers.
Manorial records	Many people up to the 19 th century were tenants of large estates, the records of which often are available in record offices.
Migration records	Ships' manifests are becoming available on the internet, particularly from the 1890s onwards. Earlier lists are sporadic.
Military records	There are many recent army, navy and air force records, also militia records in earlier centuries.
Miscellaneous transcriptions and indexes	Many organisations publish these as print, microfiche or CD-ROM. There are many subjects, from baptisms, marriages, burials and memorial (gravestone) inscriptions to lists of immigrants, soldiers records, gypsies, convicts and many other categories of person.
Newspapers	Copies (usually on film) of most national and local newspapers are held at the British Library Newspaper Library. Film of local papers are also often held in the local studies section of main libraries in towns.
Quarter Sessions records	Many survive, in county record offices and archives. They contain references to wide variety of criminal and civil misdeeds.
Poor law records	Some records remain of people who received parish relief or who were removed from one parish to another.
Tax records	There have been many forms of tax, back to the 12 th century. Some records remain. Poll tax, window and hearth taxes and land tax records can be useful.
Wills	Wills before 1858 are usually in county record offices, sometimes indexed. National indexed from 1858 to 1943, including grants of administration where no will made, available in Record Offices. Later indexes are at District Probate Offices. Copies of wills from 1858 can be obtained from York and cost £5.

We have a number of help sheets which expand on some of the sources described above.

Places and Organisations Where Records Can Be Found

County Record Offices and Archives.
 Libraries: large libraries have dedicated Local Studies Sections.
 The National Archives at Kew, London.
 Mormon Family History Centres, located in many large towns.
 Family History Societies.