



### Wirral Archives Service

Contact Details  
Wirral Archives Service  
Cheshire Lines building  
Canning Street  
Birkenhead  
Wirral CH41 1ND  
Tel: 0151 606 2929  
Fax: 0151 606 2928

Email: [archives@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:archives@wirral.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)  
(please go to Leisure and Culture -> Records and Archives).

Opening hours  
Monday - Friday, 9.30 - 16.30  
Saturday, 10.00 - 13.00

Please note that access to the Service is via Shore Road.



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## Tracing your family history

Family history at Wirral Archives Service



#### Parish registers

Parish registers include records of baptisms, marriages and burials, and these are of particular value prior to the introduction of Civil Registration in 1837. Wirral Archives Service does not hold the parish records of local churches, so enquirers should contact Cheshire Record Office and Birkenhead Reference Library to view parish registers for local churches on microfilm.

Wirral Archives Service holds many other types of records which may be of value to family historians, for instance the records of institutions, organisations and individuals of Wirral to be found in our Private Deposited Collections and Small Private Deposits catalogues. Also of interest are the Title Deeds collections deposited by solicitors and private individuals.

#### Civil registration: births, marriages and deaths

For records of the civil registration of births, marriages and deaths in Wirral from 1837 contact: Superintendent Registrars Office  
Town Hall, Mortimer Street  
Birkenhead CH41 5EU  
Tel: 0151 666 4096

Places where ancestors lived can be investigated by using our maps and plans which date from the beginning of the nineteenth century. *(Please see user's guide to tracing the history of your house for more details on finding information on where your ancestors used to live.)*



## Family history at Wirral Archives Service

Tracing your family history can be many things: on the one hand, time consuming, puzzling and frustrating; on the other, deeply fascinating, surprising and rewarding.

Wirral Archives Service holds a number of resources that can help you trace Wirral-based ancestors, and this leaflet details some of the main information sources available.



### Microfilm resources

Please book a reading unit in advance of your visit in order to view microfilm or microfiche.

#### Census returns

The first national census for Britain took place in 1801, and have taken place once every ten years ever since, apart from 1941. The first census recording details of occupants was 1841. These records can help you to discover addresses, names of family members, occupations, ages, and places of birth.

Wirral Archives Service holds copies of census returns for the Wirral area from 1841 to 1901. (The 1901 census is the latest that you can consult, as census records are closed for 100 years.)

Census records are on microfiche, with the exception of 1881, which is on a CD-Rom that includes returns for the whole country.

The earlier census returns do not tend to give as much detail as the later returns, and may not list house numbers or road names.

#### Wirral census returns held elsewhere:

Birkenhead Reference Library, Wallasey Reference Library and Cheshire Record Office.

### Street directories

Street directories are local directories of residents, streets, businesses and public institutions.

Wirral Archives Service holds microfilm copies of Liverpool directories for the nineteenth century, in an incomplete series. Parts of Wirral are included in these directories from 1834 onwards (Ref: X/DIR/1-30).

#### Street directories held elsewhere:

Birkenhead Reference Library holds printed copies of local directories from 1766 to 1974.

#### Burial registers: municipal cemeteries

Burial registers are recordings of daily burials at a cemetery, and usually include dates of burial, age, rank or profession, abode, mode of burial (i.e. public or private grave), grave number, and by whom the ceremony was performed. *(Please see user's guide to cemetery records for more details.)*

#### Birkenhead Rolls of Honour

We hold microfiche copies of the records of servicemen from Birkenhead killed in the First and Second World Wars, which were used to compile the official Birkenhead Rolls of Honour.



### Original documents

Wirral Archives Service holds a wide range of original records of local government in Wirral, as well as collections relating to Wirral businesses, organisations and individuals. We also hold certain public records, including court and hospital records. Listed here are some types of original documents which may hold information for family historians.

#### School records

We hold records for various Wirral schools, for example, head teachers' log books, admission and discharge registers, school magazines, photographs and administrative records. *(Please see user's guide to school records for more details.)*

#### Poor Law Union and workhouse records

We hold records of the Birkenhead Poor Law Union, including creed registers, which may include details

of the inmates' age, address and next of kin, and registers of the births, baptisms and deaths of inmates. There are various other Poor Law records which contain information relating to individuals who either worked for or were cared for by the Poor Law Union. *(Please see user's guide to Poor Law records for more details.)*

#### Hospital records

We hold records of a number of Wirral hospitals. Almost all include some records of individual patients, but they do not cover every year or every type of patient. We also hold certain staff records, mainly registers of nurses, for many of the hospitals.

*(Please contact Wirral Archives Service for more information on hospital records.)*

Please note: records containing personal medical information are closed for 100 years.

### Other records

#### Electoral registers

Lists of people entitled to vote in Parliamentary elections were produced annually from 1832. Addresses of voters are arranged by polling districts.

Wirral Archives Service holds copies of electoral registers for divisions of Cheshire, which include Wirral, dating from 1842 to 1900, on microfiche (there are some missing years in this sequence). We also hold a limited number of printed copies of electoral registers, i.e. Birkenhead from 1946 to 1972, and Wirral Urban District from 1945 to 1949 and from 1953 to 1973.

Throughout the nineteenth century entitlement to vote was based on the ownership of property, and so only the wealthier inhabitants will be found in electoral registers. Women had no entitlement to vote until 1918. There are no indexes to these records but surnames are normally listed alphabetically within street or district.

#### Electoral registers held elsewhere

Printed copies of electoral registers, including twentieth century registers, can be found in the relevant reference libraries, i.e. Birkenhead, Wallasey and Bebington Reference Libraries.

### Newspapers

Local newspapers can be useful sources for information on local events and people, especially for births, marriages and deaths.

Wirral Archives Service holds bound copies of many Wirral newspapers. However these have become fragile over the years and where possible we encourage researchers to use the microfilmed copies held at the appropriate reference libraries, i.e. Birkenhead Reference Library for the



Birkenhead News and Birkenhead Advertiser, Bebington Reference Library for the Bebington News, and Wallasey Reference Library for the Wallasey News and Wallasey Chronicle.

You are welcome to use a camera to take pictures of the newspapers if you wish, as we cannot photocopy them for you.