

Library of Birmingham Guide to using Ancestry

Hello and welcome to this guide to using Birmingham sources on Ancestry. Normal access to Ancestry is via a PC at the Library of Birmingham or a Community Library. Due to the current situation, Ancestry have kindly provided a link to access the Birmingham records for free from your own home.

You can access the link from the library catalogue [homepage](#). This guide is designed to assist your genealogical research should you be new to exploring your family tree or simply need a few tips on how to navigate around the pages. Ancestry does appear slightly differently depending on which browser you are using (internet Explorer, Edge, Chrome and so on) and the following is based on using Internet Explorer.

Please note that you do need to sign in and create an account with Ancestry, but you do not need to enter any card details to access the Birmingham records.

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Let's get started!

At the top of the landing page, there's the opportunity to search in all the available Birmingham data collections:

UK Library of Birmingham

Search


Match all terms exactly

	Day	Month	Year	Location
Birth	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Death	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Lived In	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="e.g. London, England"/>
Marriage	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="e.g. London, England"/>
Any Event	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="e.g. London, England"/>

Add family member:
 Father
 Mother
 Spouse
 Child

	First & Middle Name(s)	Last Name
Father	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Mother	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

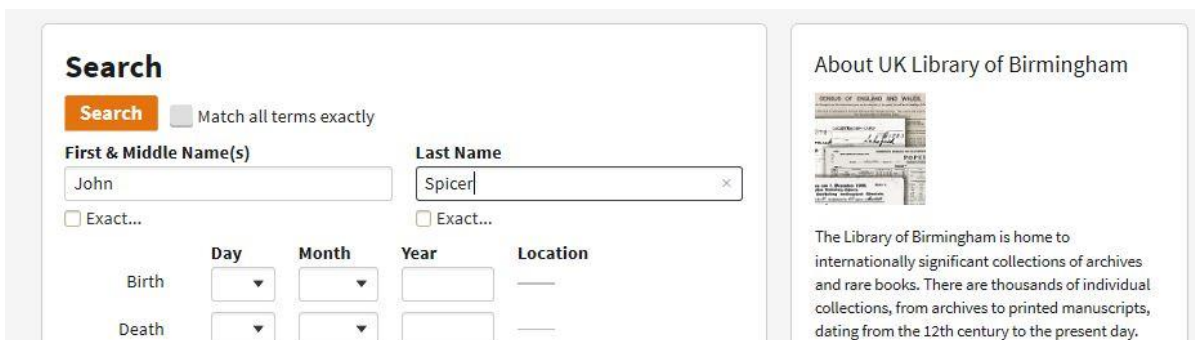
About UK Library of Birmingham



The Library of Birmingham is home to internationally significant collections of archives and rare books. There are thousands of individual collections, from archives to printed manuscripts, dating from the 12th century to the present day.

Birmingham Archives, Heritage and Photography actively collects and preserves original documents from the City of Birmingham and the official records of the Diocese of Birmingham. Their records reflect the rich history of the City through collections from religious and social organisations, to the internationally important collection of Boulton and Watt. The open research area provides access to many printed sources and the Wolfson Centre for Archival Research provides a pleasant environment to research the history of

To search, enter some information in the search boxes. This will very much depend upon what details you have at hand - you may not know all of the relevant information, but try to have a first and last name and a general idea of a year for the event for which you are searching.



Search

Match all terms exactly

First & Middle Name(s) Last Name

Exact... Exact...

Birth Day Month Year Location

Death Day Month Year Location

About UK Library of Birmingham

The Library of Birmingham is home to internationally significant collections of archives and rare books. There are thousands of individual collections, from archives to printed manuscripts, dating from the 12th century to the present day.

As you enter details, you will notice there is the option to place specific search settings on the names you are looking for. You can do this by selecting 'Exact' which appears below the search box. (See above image.) Other options include 'Sounds like', 'Similar' and 'Initials'. This feature will help you to narrow the parameters of your search and provide returns with content specific to the details you have provided. The 'Exact' function also provides background information to what these settings mean, along with tips on making your search more productive.

It's important to remember genealogy is not an exact science. Names are often misspelt, or their spellings can alter over time. Names can swap around - a middle name suddenly becomes a forename. You do not have to enter details in every search box and sometimes being broad with your parameters helps. Similarly, when you enter a year for the event, you can search up to ten years either side if you are not entirely sure of the date.

Be mindful not to take anything you've been told about an ancestor to be one hundred percent accurate, and that details in the records are sometimes missed out, or recorded differently, so do not give up hope if your search is not productive after your first attempt.

Once you are ready to proceed, click the 'Search' button and off you go. You should see a list of returns in a format similar to the one shown here:

All UK Birmingham Library results for John Spicer

Search Filters



JOhn Spicer

Broad Exact

Edit Search | New Search | **Update**

Results 1-20 of 106 Records | Categories

i To get better results, add more information such as **Birth Info, Death Info and Location**—even a guess will help. [Edit your search](#) or [learn more](#)

<p> Birmingham, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1937</p> <p><small>MARRIAGE & DIVORCE</small></p> <p>View Image</p>	<p>Name John Spicer</p>
<p> Birmingham, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1937</p> <p><small>MARRIAGE & DIVORCE</small></p>	<p>Name John Spicer</p>

New: instantly filter by location and time period.

To view the digital copy of a record, please select 'View image'. At this stage, if you have not signed in to Ancestry, you will need to do so to go any further. Once signed in, you will see a transcription of the record along with a digital thumbnail of the actual entry. Please click inside the thumbnail image to see the record in its entirety. (It's important to do this, because sometimes the transcriptions are inaccurate.) You can save a copy of the image by clicking on the 'Save' button in the top right-hand side of the page.

You will see from the image above, there are no dates of the records in the search results. If you click on 'Categories' it will show you the search results by data collection as shown below:

All UK Birmingham Library results for John Spicer

Search Filters

JOhn Spicer

Broad Exact

Edit Search | New Search | **Update**

106 results Records | Categories


Sort By: Count ▾

 Birmingham, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1937	39
 Birmingham, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1813-1912	29
 Birmingham, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1812	20
 Birmingham, England, Rate Books, 1831-1913	12
 Birmingham, England, Church of England Burials, 1813-1964	6

20 per page < 1 of 1 >

By clicking on each title, it will show you more details, including the date:

All Birmingham, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1937 results for John Spicer

 Library of Birmingham

Search Filters

Broad ▶ Exact

JOhn Spicer

▼ All Categories

- > Birth, Marriage & Death, including Parish ✕
- > Marriage & Divorce ✕

Results 1-20 of 22

View Record	Name	Birth Date	Marriage or Banns Date	Parish	Parent or Spouse	View Images
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="font-size: x-small; margin-right: 5px;">i</div> <div> <p>Note: To get better results, add more information such as Birth Info, Death Info or Location—even a guess will help. Edit your search or learn more.</p> </div> </div>						
View Record	John Edward Spicer	abt 1888	24 May 1915	Handsworth, St James	John, Ellen Jane	
View Record	John Spicer		24 Feb 1852	Bordesley, St Andrew	Samuel, Sarah	
View Record	John Spicer		7 Oct 1771	Birmingham, St Martin	Anne	

You can then click on View Record to access the transcription and thumbnail as described above.

You can see a list of which other Birmingham data collections are available on Ancestry as you scroll down the landing page:

Included data collections:

- [Birmingham, England, Rate Books, 1831-1913](#)
- [Birmingham, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1812](#)
- [Birmingham, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1813-1912](#)
- [Harborne, Birmingham, England, Confirmations, 1915-1931](#)
- [Birmingham, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1937](#)
- [Birmingham, England, Church of England Burials, 1813-1964](#)
- [Birmingham, England, Calendar of Prisoners, 1880-1891 and 1906-1913](#)

If you have any problems returning to the landing page, the best thing to do is to return to the library catalogue homepage and click on the link again.

By clicking on one of the data collections, you can also set up parameters for searching the records for a specific church by clicking on the upside-down triangle in the search box labelled 'Parish'. (See image on the following page.) You then have an option to scroll through pages one-by-one by clicking on one of the options in the 'Year Range' box, if using the search option does not flag up an entry you believe to be there.

Birmingham, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1813-1912

Search Match all terms exactly

First & Middle Name(s) **Last Name**

Birth Day Month Year Location e.g. London, England

Any Event Day Month Year Location e.g. London, England

Add family member: Father Mother Spouse Child

	First & Middle Name(s)	Last Name
Father	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Mother	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Spouse	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

REWRITING THE BOOK THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM Library of Birmingham

Browse this collection

To browse this image set, select from the options below.

Parish

Year Range

- 1813-1817
- 1817-1820
- 1820-1824

Please note the data collections on here are not a complete account of our holdings of Birmingham Church of England parish records. The following link provides more information on these specific holdings: https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/9977/parish_registers_on_microfilm

You can also discover more about each source by clicking on the relevant link in the data collection list. The example below is from the baptism registers, 1812 - 1913:

Parish Records:

Parish records--primarily christenings, marriages, and burials--are the best source of vital record information before the nineteenth century. Before Civil Registration began in 1837, key events in a person's life were typically recorded by the Church rather than the State. Starting in the sixteenth century, parish records are some of the longest running records available.

Beginning in 1598, clergy were required to send copies of their parish registers to the bishop of their diocese. These copies are known as Bishop's Transcripts. Bishop's Transcripts are useful in cases where originals are unreadable or no longer exist.

In 1812, George Rose's Act called for pre-printed registers to be used for separate baptism, marriage, and burial registers as a way of standardizing records. These standardized registers are included in this collection. For earlier registers, please see the link provided below in the Related Data Collections section.

registers in Birmingham.

All Birth, Marriage & Death, including Parish in the Card Catalogue

More help

- [Getting Started](#)
- [How to Search Ancestry](#)
- [Getting Started, Lesson 1: Starting Your Tree](#)
- [Visit Ancestry Support](#)

Happy Searching!