

A Guide to Indexes

The Somerset Heritage Centre holds over five miles of records, so indexes to our holdings can be a very useful and quick way to access them. Unfortunately, indexes are seldom comprehensive and you should not expect them to answer all or even most of your questions. You will still need to seek advice from the staff and to use the sources imaginatively.

The majority of the indexes are stored on the open shelving in the searchroom; however, a small number are stored in the strongrooms and will need to be ordered out accordingly. Please ask the staff for assistance in finding the indexes and in their usage.

General indexes

Online and Paper Catalogues: Both are available in the searchroom and provide descriptions of the majority of listed items we hold. They should always be consulted before ordering an item from the strongrooms.

Places, Subjects and Persons Index: Indexes containing brief details of documents held for each parish in the county; general subjects, such as churches, education, inns and tithe papers; and persons. Since switching to computer cataloguing these indexes are no longer kept up to date. However, they are still worth checking in conjunction with the online catalogue.

Parish and Church Indexes

Genealogical Index: Arranged alphabetically by parish, it contains information such as dates of creation of modern parishes, existence of transcripts, and whether the parish is covered by Dr. Campbell's or Phillimore's indexes. This is stored at the searchroom Help Desk.

Somerset Parish Register Indexes: These are the main indexes for genealogy, arranged alphabetically by parish in a series of folders. They detail which church registers cover baptisms, marriages and burials, and identify relevant microfiche copies of these registers.

Somerset Parish Locations Index: Index of all Somerset parishes. Gives the name of the church, National Grid reference (NGR) location, an indication of approximate distance from a nearby town, and also a list of immediate neighbouring parishes.

Dr. Campbell's Index: Index by surname for the parishes of south and west Somerset. It covers baptisms and marriages from the start of the registers to c.1899 (dependent upon the date of deposit of the registers). Marriages in parishes covered by Phillimore (see below) were indexed from 1813. See key map for details of coverage.

Phillimore's Marriage Index: Indexed by surname, it usually covers from the beginning of the registers to 1812, but sometimes up to 1837. See key map for details of coverage.

North Somerset Marriage Index: Index, by male surname, to marriage registers for those Somerset parishes that were part of Avon, 1754-1837.

North Somerset Monumental Inscriptions Index: Index, by surname, to monumental inscriptions for those Somerset parishes that were part of Avon.

Bishop's Transcripts: An index, by parish, for existing Bishop's Transcripts, (covering only about two thirds of the county of Somerset). From about 1600 but with less than 20% surviving up to 1800. Coverage is fairly complete up to 1800-1837. (D/D/Rr).

Dwelly's Bishop's Transcripts Index: Index, by surname, to some pre-1812 Bishop's Transcripts, covering parishes scattered over about a third of the county.

Settlement and Bastardy Papers Index: Index, by surname, of settlement and bastardy papers found in parish and other collections

International Genealogical Index (Mormon Index): Index, by surname, of births/baptisms and marriages. The index covers a small percentage of register entries for the county, but provides almost comprehensive coverage of surviving pre-1837 nonconformist register entries.

Clergy Index: Index, by person and place, to ordination and presentation papers, 1697-1837. See also F. W. Weaver (ed), *Somerset Incumbents*, 1889, which can be found on the library shelves, and the **Fitzroy Jones Clergy Index**, which is an index to Somerset clergy, 1309-18th century, based mainly on information from Bishop's registers, and thus largely excludes curates.

Glebe Terriers Index: Index to Glebe Terriers (D/D/Rg), being surveys of glebe lands and tithes belonging to each parish, largely for the 17th century.

Marriage Licences Index: Index, by surname, to marriage bonds and allegations. Main diocesan series, 1756-1850; Bridgwater area, 1787-94, 1801-11, 1817,1818; Peculiars from c. 1740.

Deposition Books Index: Index, by person and place, to diocesan deposition books (D/D/Cd), covering some books in the period 1670-1744.

Parish Register Indexes: Many parish registers have been indexed by private individuals. A list of any indexes available is included in the Somerset Parish Register Indexes, and there is a master index in collection A\CQY.

Census Indexes

Surname Indexes: Printed indexes, arranged by surname, are available for many parts of the county for the years, **1841**, **1851**, **1881** (whole county, can be searched by surname, census place or birthplace) and **1891**. For **1851** we also hold the Avon pages, which cover those North Somerset parishes that were originally within Avon. For **1871** a surname index exists for Taunton only, providing fiche and folio numbers.

Census Indexes by Street: Various street indexes to 1841-1901 censuses for some of the bigger Somerset towns only. Ask a member of staff for details.

Indexes to documents

Manorial Indexes: Contains brief details, by manor (*not* parish), of manorial documents held (e.g. court rolls, surveys etc).

Quarter Sessions Index: Index to places, persons and subjects mentioned in Quarter Sessions Rolls (Q/SR). Covers the years 1607-16 and 1660-1750. For index to 17th century Quarter Sessions Order Books, civil cases only (Q/SO), see Somerset Record Society vols 23, 24, 28 and 34, which can be found on the library shelves. For index to enrolled deeds (Q/RDd), see vol 51.

Wills Indexes: The majority of Somerset wills proved in the Consistory and Archdeaconry courts were destroyed in 1942. The office holds copy Estate Duty wills, 1812-1857, which are indexed in a bound volume which can be found on the library Quick Reference shelves. Original, copy and précis wills held in various office collections are indexed on cards. There is also a bound index to Somerset wills, both in the searchroom and elsewhere, along with indexes to Prerogative Court and Canterbury wills.

Probate Inventories Index: Index, by person and place, chiefly of inventories for the Archdeaconry of Taunton (DD/SP), c.1630-c.1730. Also includes inventories found in other collections.

Brown's Index: Index, by surname, to wills and pedigrees contained in 32 ms volumes compiled by the Revd Frederick Brown, a printed index has been compiled by F. A. Crisp entitled *Somerset Wills*, which can be found on the library Quick Reference shelves.

Taunton Courier Index: Index, by place and subject, to the "Taunton Courier" newspaper, 1808-c.1831. Only references to Taunton, Wellington, and parishes in the immediate neighbourhood of Taunton are covered by the index. Further indexes to individual years of a variety of Somerset newspapers can be found on the library shelves at 072.

Vernacular Architecture Index: Index, by parish, to reports on individual properties inspected by members of vernacular architecture groups (ongoing). See also Listed Building Reports.

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