

Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies

Research Guide for Indian Family History

India Pakistan and Bangladesh : Family History resources

This is a list of some resources that are available to help you start your family history research if you have links with India. Some of the record sets will also cover territory now located within Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Finding documents for your research

UK records

Civil Registration

Records of births marriages and deaths England Wales 1837 –

Indexes to references you need to purchase certificates can be found on Ancestry, Find My Past, and Free BMD (www.freebmd.org.uk)

Census returns for UK 1841 – 1911

Found on Ancestry and Find My Past

Military records

- WWI soldiers records (Service and Pension) online at Ancestry and Find My Past,
- Memorabilia, diaries and photographs at the Imperial War Museum. ([Imperial War Museums \(iwm.org.uk\)](http://ImperialWarMuseums(iwm.org.uk))
- Commonwealth War Grave website for military deaths in WWI and for civilian and military deaths in WW2 (www.cwgc.org)

Newspapers :

- Held at the British Library,
- In local archives and libraries.
- British Newspaper Archive. ([Home](#) | [Search the archive](#) | [British Newspaper Archive](#))

Ship Passenger records : c1878 – 1960 on ancestry and findmypast

Probate : Indexes to wills from 1858 are on Ancestry and Find My Past

wills before 1858 are held at The National Archives ([The National Archives](#))

India Records

Civil registration

<http://crsorgi.gov.in/web/index.php/auth/login>

The history of Civil Registration System (CRS) in India dates back to the middle of the 19th century. In 1886 a Central Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act began **voluntary** registration.

Census

www.censusindia.gov.in/vital_statistics/crs/crs_division.html

The Indian Census is the largest single source of a variety of **statistical** information on different characteristics of the people of India. Held every 10 years, beginning from 1872 when the first census was conducted in India.

Online resources

National Archives of India <http://nationalarchives.nic.in/>

Families in British India Society <https://www.fibis.org/>

The East India Company

www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofEngland/The-East-India-Company/

British Library

<https://www.bl.uk/collection-guides/india-office-records>

The India Office Records are the archives of the administration in London of the East India Company and the pre-1947 government of India. The official archives of the India Office Records are complemented by deposits of private papers relating to the British experience in India. Many of these have been made available on the findmypast website:

Find My Past : British India Office Collection (www.findmypast.co.uk)

Findmypast is a commercial family history website. It can be accessed free of charge through your local Hertfordshire Library, or at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies.

The British India Office collection is a rich resource for those with ancestors who lived and worked in India. The records span the seventeenth to the twentieth century and include records of the East India Company, military personnel and civil servants, as well as other professions such as surgeons who travelled to the sub-continent. Categories include:

British in India

Names of British people who either lived, worked or travelled in India from as early as 1664 up to 1961. This collection includes carefully indexed records of births, marriages, divorces and deaths.

British in India, Directories 1792-1948 Browse

Collection of army lists, civil lists, almanacs, and directories 1792 - 1948.

British India Office Army & Navy Pensions

Records and pensions of soldiers and sailors in the British East India Company as well as European soldiers and sailors in the British Indian Army and the Royal Indian Navy.

British India Office Births & Baptisms

British India Office Marriages

British India Office Deaths & Burials

Births and baptisms, marriages, deaths and burials of ancestors who lived or worked in India and other territories administered by the India office (Pakistan, Burma, Bangladesh, St Helena, Sumatra, Aden, Penang, Macao).

British India Office Wills & Probate

Wills and probate records of European soldiers and civilians who died in India and Burma.

British Subjects Who Died in the Service of the Indian Empire

British subjects who died in the service of the Indian Empire. From the digital images included, learn an individual's name, birth and death years, rank, regiment, and service history.

East India Company Madras Records Of Service 1741-1858

Records of service for the East India Company in the Madras Presidency from 1741 to 1858.

East India Company & Civil Service Pensions

East India Company Pensions 1793-1833

Pension registers of ancestors who worked in India, Burma and other territories administered by the India Office with the British East India Company and the Civil Service.

East India Register & Army List 1855

India Office List 1933

Indian Army & Civil Service List 1873

Family Search (www.familysearch.org)

Familysearch is an extensive website of family history information, created by the Church of Jesus Christ of the Later Day Saints (also known as the Mormon Church). It is free to use, but creation of a user log in and password is required.

India births and baptisms 1786 - 1947

India marriages 1792 – 1948

India burials and deaths 1719 – 1948

Hindu marriage records 1958 – 2013

Maithil Brahmin genealogical records 1750 - 1990

Hindu pilgrimage records 1194 – 2015

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/India,_Hindu_Pilgrimage_Records_-_FamilySearch_Historical_Records

Hindu pilgrimage records kept by Pandit Madhukar Balkrishan Akolkar at Trimbakeshwar, Maharashtra, India. They include records for people from Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab and Rajasthan, India. These records are created and updated when family members pass on. The registers are arranged by caste and contain native place, names of family members, the last occasion on which a family member came to this place of pilgrimage and made an entry in the register, the ceremony performed at the time and offering made to the priest. No women are mentioned unless their deaths are referred to indirectly.

Note: although these records are shown as being on Family Search, unless you are a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latterday Saints you cannot view them.

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/India_Archives_and_Libraries

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/India_Online_Genealogy_Records

Ancestry (www.ancestrylibrary.com)

Ancestry is a commercial family history website. It provides access to records from across the world. It can be accessed free of charge through your local Hertfordshire Library, or at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies.

India, Select Births and Baptisms, 1786-1947

India, Select Deaths and Burials, 1719-1948

India, Select Marriages, 1792-1948

UK, Registers of Employees of the East India Company and the India Office, 1746-1939

Indian Army Quarterly List for 1 January 1912

UK, Roll of the Indian Medical Service, 1615 -1930

East India Register and Directory for 1830

Other online resources

Genealogy magazine: <https://blog.eogn.com/2017/06/20/family-history-research-for-ancestors-from-india-by-smita-biswas->

BBC Tracing your Asian roots on the Indian subcontinent

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/familyhistory/next_steps/researchplaces_01.shtml

Genuki: Guide to local resources in the UK and Ireland www.genuki.org.uk/

Cyndi's List: List of family history websites [Cyndi's List - Asia & The Pacific \(cyndislist.com\)](http://Cyndi's%20List%20-%20Asia%20&%20The%20Pacific%20(cyndislist.com))

World GenWeb a non-profit, volunteer-based organization dedicated to providing genealogical and historical records and resources for world-wide access [Home - WorldGenWeb Project](#)

Suggested reading : Book List

Tracing Your British Indian Ancestors	Emma Jolly	2012
A general guide to the India Office Records	Martin Moir	1988
The anarchy: the relentless rise of the East India Company	William Dalrymple	2019
India: a short history	Andrew Robinson	2019
The British in India: three centuries of ambition and experience	David Gilmour	2019
Coromandel: a personal history of South India	Charles Allen	2019
The East India company at home, 1757-1857	Margot Finn, Kate Smith	2018
Inglorious empire: what the British did to India	Shashi Tharoor.	2018
India conquered: Britain's Raj and the chaos of empire	Jon Wilson	2017
Asians in Britain	Tim Smith	2004
Partition voices: untold British stories	Kavita Puri	2020
Black lives in the English archives : imprints of the invisible	Imtiaz H Habib	2016