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Learn about these records

Searching these records

We have split up our vital records by origin: civil records versus parish records. Civil records have been divided into official government births, deaths and burials, and civil marriage and divorce. Parish records have been broken into the following subcategories: parish baptisms, parish burials, parish marriages, and parish registers. If you know that you only want records from a parish and you are interested in a death, then you can select 'parish burials' and perform your search on just those records. If you simply want to find any records on the death of an ancestor, you can select 'browse subcategory' on the search page and select all subcategories of relevance to your search (e.g. parish burials, civil deaths and burials).

United Kingdom

Ireland

United States & Canada

Early births, marriages, and deaths in the United States were sometimes recorded in register books until the early 1900s, when producing certificates became more common. Every state eventually developed its own laws and established a statewide registration system. These records are called vital records because they record significant events in a person's life.

U.S. vital records are usually documented by a civil authority, or local municipality, although local churches often provided the earliest instances of birth, marriage and death certificates well before mandatory government registration. For the most part, vital records weren't kept in the United States until the early 20th century. They include birth certificates, death records, marriage licenses, divorce decrees, naturalization records, adoption records, and land records from every state, territory, and county.

These certificates are accurate sources recorded close to the actual event. As well as parish, county, and state registers, more than 177 million U.S. and Canadian live event records include a list of U.S. veterans' gravesites; birth, marriage, and death notices; and the Social Security Death Index, which contains over 100 million death records from every state in the United States between the 1930s and the present day.