

# GUIDE TO MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES

## CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE

**1 When married**  
This marriage happened on 18 September 1907 so it will be found in the indexes for the September quarter.

**2 Name and Surname** The names given by the bride and groom at the time of the marriage.

**3 Age** The age given by the bride and groom is only as accurate as they believed it to be. If it says 'Of full age' it just means the bride or groom was over 21.

**4 Condition** This shows the marital state of the parties. Bachelor or spinster for those who had not married before; or widower/widow or marriage dissolved.

**5 Residence** The address given here can be misleading as some couples used a temporary address to qualify for marriage in the parish. Some just name the parish.

1907. Marriage solemnized at The Parish Church in the Parish of St. Margaret Westminster in the County of London

Column No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
373	Sept 18 <sup>th</sup> 1907	Arthur Conan Doyle	48	Widower	Author	39, Old Queen Street, S.W.	Charles Alhamont Doyle	Artist
		Jean Elizabeth Leckie	31	Spinster		Glebe House Blackheath	James Blythe Leckie	Merchant

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by License or after by me,  
 This Marriage was solemnized between us, Arthur Conan Doyle in the Presence of us, James B. Leckie C. Cyril Angell  
Jean Elizabeth Leckie Mary Josephine Doyle Lucia Leckie Officiary Minister

**10 Married in...** Normally the parish church, but you may find a nonconformist chapel here and indication of whether your ancestors were married by licence.

**9 Signatures** The certificate you receive from the GRO is a copy of the register. Although it doesn't show actual signatures it will show if your ancestors could sign their name. Those that couldn't marked an 'x' here.

**8 Witnesses** Always check the witnesses on a marriage certificate as they may reveal family connections and add to your tree.

**7 Rank or profession** Don't assume a woman did nothing to earn money if there is no entry next to her name. It is common to find only the groom's occupation.

**6 Father's name and profession**  
These details are vital for checking you have the right certificate. No name would suggest illegitimacy.

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a register of Marriages in the Registration District of St George Hanover Square  
 Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 20th day of February 2012

MXF 566249

CAUTION: THERE ARE OFFENCES RELATING TO FALSIFYING OR ALTERING A CERTIFICATE AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE. ©CROWN COPYRIGHT

WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.





HM Passport  
Office

# GUIDE TO MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES

Collect the evidence for one of the most important days in your ancestors' lives and take your research back another generation

## It's quick and easy...



**ONLINE**  
It's quick and easy to order a marriage certificate online, just follow these three steps:

**STEP ONE** Visit [www.gov.uk/bmdcertificates](http://www.gov.uk/bmdcertificates) and click on 'Start now'. Select 'Order a certificate online now' and register if you have not registered before (you will need an email address).

**STEP TWO** Select 'Marriage Certificate' and if you know the GRO index reference number, click yes, if not click no. You will need to add the year of the marriage (if you do not have the index reference number a search will be carried out for you that covers a three year period around the year you provide).

**STEP THREE** Once your address has been confirmed you will be asked to provide the information you have got from the index. You can order a certificate without an index reference number but you will need to give some identifying information such as the names of the bride and groom, year of marriage and district of marriage. You will not be charged more for this service but it will take longer for your certificate to be dispatched. You will need to pay by credit or debit card. See right for fees.



**BY PHONE**  
If you don't wish to order online you can apply by telephone with a credit/debit card on 0300 123 1837. Lines are open Monday to Friday 8am – 8pm, Saturday 9am – 4pm.



**BY POST**  
Application can also be made by post and forms can be obtained from GRO or downloaded via [www.gov.uk/bmdcertificates](http://www.gov.uk/bmdcertificates)

## REVEAL YOUR FAMILY UNIONS

Marriage certificates are key documents and provide a wealth of information on two strands of your family tree. They will help take you back to the next generation by providing the father's name for the bride and groom as well as their occupations and may lead to surprising discoveries, for instance the

witnesses may be family members.

The General Register Office (GRO) in Southport holds comprehensive records of all marriages recorded in England and Wales from 1837 onwards as well as records for some British Nationals married overseas dating back to 1761.

	Standard Service	Despatch target	Priority Service	Despatch target
<b>Certificate with GRO index reference number supplied</b>	£9.25	Four working days	£23.40	Next working day if ordered before 4pm
<b>Certificate without GRO index reference number supplied</b>	£9.25	Fifteen working days	£23.40	Next working day if ordered before 4pm

## How to find an index reference

The GRO provides a public index that lists basic details of every marriage recorded in England and Wales. The index is divided into four quarters for each year and can be viewed online for free at libraries and record offices, or visit [www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk). This free-to-use

website has an almost complete transcription of the indexes for England and Wales from 1837 to 1983. You can also search the complete indexes for a fee using commercial websites.

Once you have found the right marriage record you will need to note the following:

- Full name of at least one of the people on the certificate
- The year and quarter in which the marriage was registered
- The registration district
- The volume and page number of the entry



## FIND THAT MARRIAGE

Try these five tips if you can't find an ancestor's nuptials recorded in the indexes

### TIP 1

Prior to 1875, the registration of an event was not enforced and therefore some were missed.

### TIP 2

Marriages sometimes took place after the birth of the first child. Widening the timescale searched may help.

### TIP 3

A marriage might have taken place outside of England and Wales. For Scottish records, visit [www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk).

### TIP 4

The bride may have been married more than once – try looking under the name of the groom instead.

### TIP 5

Bear in mind that there may never have been a marriage. Couples often lived together as man and wife because divorce was rare and expensive. Some did not remarry after their spouse died.

