

1911 CENSUS FOR WALES GOES ONLINE

Find My Past - 1911 CENSUS FOR WALES GOES ONLINE

- * Online access to the records of 2.4 million people living in Wales in 1911
- * Major new family history resource

2.4 million people were recorded living in Wales in the census taken on the night of Sunday, 2 April, 1911. Today, after nearly 100 years, the Welsh census records are available to the public at Find My Past at www.1911census.co.uk.

Due to public demand for access to the 1911 census, the records have been released as soon as each region's records have been digitised. Following the initial release of 1911 records in January 2009, the records of people living in Wales in 1911 are being made available today for the first time.

The 1911 census records contain details about the lives of the ancestors of many of Wales' famous sons and daughters, such as Richard Burton, Dylan Thomas, Kylie Minogue and Tom Jones.

Find My Past

The census covered Wales, England, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, as well as recording those aboard Royal Naval and Merchant vessels at sea and in foreign ports and, for the first time in a British census, full details of British Army personnel and their families in military establishments overseas. It is the most detailed census since UK records began and the first for which the original census schedules have been preserved - complete with our ancestors' own handwriting - providing a fascinating insight into British society nearly a century ago.

www.1911census.co.uk is easy to access and enables the public to view high quality colour images of their ancestors' original handwritten census returns. Transcribed text versions of the records ensure they are fully searchable by name or address.

Public demand for the 1911 census, which will be a key resource for family historians, has resulted in the records being released earlier than the scheduled 2012 date. To make this early online release to the public possible, the 1911 census team worked around the clock for two years - scanning on average one census page per second. In line with data protection legislation, certain sensitive information relating to infirmity and to children of women prisoners will be held back until 2012.

Comprehensive and rigorously tested, www.1911census.co.uk has been developed by UK-based family history website findmypast.com, owned by brightsolid, in association with The National Archives.

Debra Chatfield, Marketing Manager at findmypast.com, said: "This latest release from the 1911 census offers a crucial new entry point to Welsh family history research for a wide range of people, from novice family historians to seasoned genealogists who have hit a 'wall' in their family tree research. As well as helping people trace their Welsh ancestors, these records shed more light on our predecessors' day-to-day lifestyles, providing a snapshot of a day in their lives, with details of their occupations, housing arrangements and social status."

The 1911 census is huge - occupying over two kilometres of shelving - an incredible eight million paper census returns have been transcribed to create over 16 million digital images. This makes the 1911 census one of the biggest digitisation projects ever undertaken by The National Archives in association with a commercial partner.

Oliver Morley, Director of Customer and Business Development at The National Archives, commented: "This is a major achievement. By teaming up with findmypast.com, we are bringing history to life for millions. This remarkable record is available online to researchers and family historians all over the world for future generations. The 1911 census is a poignant reflection of how different life was in early 20 century Wales, before the Great War."

Handwritten records

Completed by all householders in Wales and England on Sunday, 2 April 1911, the census records show the name, age, place of birth, marital status and occupation of every resident in every home, as well as their relationship to the head of the household.

People will also have unique access to their ancestors' handwriting as the original householders' schedules were preserved and used as working documents rather than copying the details in to summary books as was the case in previous census years. The launch of the records also creates a starting point for people to trace their own family tree by looking up their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents who were alive in the year 1911.

'Fertility Census'

The 1911 census was the first to ask questions relating to fertility in marriage. Married women were asked to state how long they had been married and how many children had been born from that marriage. The census also provides a fascinating snapshot of the population of the country just a few years before a whole generation of young men perished in the Great War of 1914-1918.

How to use the 1911 Census records

- * Log on to www.1911census.co.uk and register for free
- * Search for an ancestor in 1911 by entering their name
- * If the name is common you can enter their approximate year of birth, which will help to narrow down the results

- * Search for an address to look up the history of your house or an ancestor's address in 1911
- * Pay as you go to view each record. You will be charged 10 credits per transcript and 30 credits for each original household page. Visitors to the website can buy 60 credits for £6.95.
- * Findmypast.com vouchers are also valid on 1911census.co.uk. Vouchers can be purchased from The National Archives bookshop and redeemed on findmypast.com. Credits can then be spent on both findmypast.com and 1911census.co.uk.
- * For more information about using the 1911 census for family history research, 'Census: The Expert Guide' by Peter Christian and David Annal is available from The National Archives online bookshop at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

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