

Census and muster records

Info Guide 3.19

What census records are available for Australia?

Prior to 2001 it was Australian federal government policy to destroy all name-identified census returns for privacy reasons, and all returns for censuses conducted between 1901 and 2001 have been destroyed.

However, some 19th century census records have survived. These are valuable tools for locating ancestors in colonial Australia. Very detailed information about the dates, coverage and location of early Australian census records can be found in Nick Vine Hall's book *Tracing Your Family History in Australia : A National Guide to Sources* 3rd ed. pp. 138-147 (FAMHIS 929.394 2002).

General musters included all the inhabitants of the Colony and were held annually between 1795 and 1825. Other musters, taken more frequently and at different times, included musters of livestock, musters of convicts or musters taken specifically to include only males, females or children.

The first census of New South Wales

This was held in November 1828 and is the only census to survive in full to the present day. It provides the individual's full name, age, place of residence, ship of arrival, occupation and employer's name. The State Library of Queensland holds the *1828 Census of NSW* in the Family History Reference Collection (FAMHIS 929.3 1980) and on CD-ROM (QCFS 929.394 2001).

Other printed musters and censuses in the State Reference collection include:

Musters and Lists, NSW and Norfolk Island 1800-1802 (FAMHIS 929.3944 1988)

Land musters, Stock Returns and Lists, VDL 1803-1822 (FAMHIS 994.602 1991)

Musters of NSW and Norfolk Island 1805-1806 (FAMHIS 929.394 1989)

General Musters of NSW, Norfolk Is. and VDL, 1811 (FAMHIS 929.39944 1987)

General Muster of NSW, 1814 (FAMHIS 929.399441987)

General Muster, Land and Stock Muster of NSW, 1822 (FAMHIS 929.3944 1988)

General Muster List of NSW 1823, 1824, 1825 (FAMHIS 929.394 1999)

General Return of Convicts in NSW, 1837 (FAMHIS 929.3994 1987)

Next to the 1828 census the **1841 census** is the most comprehensive of the early census records for the colony. It is held on microfilm at MFL 929.3944 199- (AO/SR reels 2222, 2223, 2508, 2509) and there is an *index* to this census at MFL 929.3944 199- (AO/SR reels 1350, 1351, 1352). The index to the 1841 census is also online at <http://srwww.records.nsw.gov.au/indexes/searchform.aspx?id=18>.

The State Records Office of New South Wales has prepared a guide to all the various musters and census lists that exist for New South Wales, Norfolk Island and Van Diemen's Land. The guide includes records from the Public Records Office (AJCP) as well as records from the State Archives of NSW.

These records are held on microfilm at the State Library. Ask for the *Guide to Muster and Census Records* at the Family History Reference Desk (MFA 929.393 1986).

Australian census records on the Internet and CD-ROM

Archives Office of Tasmania has compiled an index of its available censuses between 1837 and 1857. The index is available at <http://portal.archives.tas.gov.au/menu.aspx?search=10>. Any results found through a search can only be obtained from the Archives Office but a digitised copy may be available to view and/or print.

South Australia 1841 Census [CD-ROM] / compiled by Graham Jaunay (QCFS 929.39423 2005)

Graham Jaunay's site <http://www.jaunay.com/auscensus.html> provides a comprehensive list of the 19th century censuses and musters taken in Australia (all States) with details of the institutions that hold the records.

What international census records are available?

The State Library holds some census returns for the British Isles. For details of these holdings, check under the County name in our One Search online catalogue at <http://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au>

Census substitutes for Ireland on microform include:

- *The 1901 Irish census index* for Fermanagh and Tyrone [microfiche] (MFCB 929.3415 1994)
- *Griffiths valuation 1848-1864* [microfiche] (MFCB 929.3415 1978) and the *Tithe applotment books c1823-38* [microfilm] (MFL 929.3 1990) are two valuable land records that substitute for destroyed censuses covering all Ireland.

Some partial census records are included on the following:

- *Irish Source Records 1500s-1800s* [CD-ROM] (QCFS 929.3 2000) includes some records from the 1841 and 1851 censuses and transcriptions from the 1851 census for Cork.
- *Irish Flax Growers* [CD-ROM] (QCFS 929.3415 1999) lists the 60,000 individuals growing flax for the Irish Linen Board in 1796.
- *Tithe Applotment Books, 1823-1838* [CD-ROM] (QCFS 929.3415 1999) indexes tenants in Northern Ireland paying tithes (taxes) to the Church of Ireland.
- *1851 Dublin City Census* [CD-ROM] (QCFS 929.341835 2001)

Check the chapter on census records in John Grenham's *Tracing your Irish ancestors* (FAMHIS 929.1072 2006) for further information and check the One Search catalogue for more census substitutes.

The State Library holds many British Isles census records on CD-ROM. The following census records on CD-ROM are just a few of those available. Please check our catalogue for availability:

- *1841 Census for Cambridge, Derbyshire, Dorset and Essex counties*
- *1841 and 1851 Census for Nottinghamshire county* [CD-ROM] (QCFS 929.34252 2003)
- *1851 Census Records, United Kingdom, Family Tree Maker* [CD-ROM] (QCFS929.341 1999)
- *1851 Census for Devon, Norfolk and Warwick counties* [CD-ROM] (QCFS 929.342 1997)
- *1861 Census for Cornwall, Dorset, Durham, Essex, Gloucestershire, Kent, Lanarkshire, Middlesex, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Somerset, Staffordshire, Suffolk, and Sussex counties*
- *1871 Census for Dorset and Surrey counties*
- *1881 British Census and National Index* [CD-ROM] (QCFS 929.341 1999)
- *1891 British Census index* [CD-ROM] (QCFS 929.342 2004)

Are any international census records on the Internet?

Check **ancestry.com** (Library edition), available *onsite only* at the State Library, to search British census records for 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1891 and 1901.

Check **findmypast.com.uk**, available *onsite only* at the State Library, to search British census records for 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1891, 1901 and 1911.

The 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871 and 1891 British census are available through **FreeCEN : UK Census Online** at <http://freecen.rootsweb.com/>. This website is part of a project that aims to provide an accessible online searchable database of the 19th century UK census returns through gradual transcription of the records by volunteers. It is not complete and is continually being added to.

The **1901 census** is available online at <http://www.1901censusonline.com/main.asp>. This census provides records for almost 32,000,000 householders in England and Wales. Searching the index to this census is free but there is a charge for viewing the full transcribed data for the householder.

The **1911 census** is available online at <http://www.1911census.co.uk/>. This census provides records for households in England and Wales and included institutions such as prisons, workhouses, naval vessels and merchant vessels. To search the index is free but payment is required to view the full transcription.

The **Census of Ireland 1901 & 1911** are available at <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/>. These censuses provide records for the island of Ireland and are arranged by townland or by street. They cover all 32 counties. The search of the index and viewing of original documents is free.

Census Finder: <http://www.censusfinder.com/> is a directory of free online census records. New records are added on a regular basis.

Census Links <http://censuslinks.com/> provides links to census information from various countries, from a wide range of sources.

Need further information?

State Library of Queensland, Queensland Cultural Centre, Stanley Place, South Bank, Reference Services. t. +61 7 3840 7810, w. www.slq.qld.gov.au/enquiry

Visit http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about/pub/info_guides/collections/fh to access all family history Info Guides