

15 reasons to join



TheGenealogist.co.uk

This leading, family-run site has a host of unique features and millions of records to explore

In the cut-and-thrust world of genealogy websites, one stands out for its friendly ethos and impressively broad range of content: The Genealogist (www.thegenealogist.co.uk). It's easy to see why the site was voted Census and BMD site of the year in the 2008 Your Family Tree Awards, where it was praised for its collection of both census transcripts and original page images, and its clever search tools for birth, marriage and death records.

The site has perhaps the widest range of data available, too – everything from a database of the

Knights of England going all the way back to 1127, to civil registration indexes from as recently as 2005.

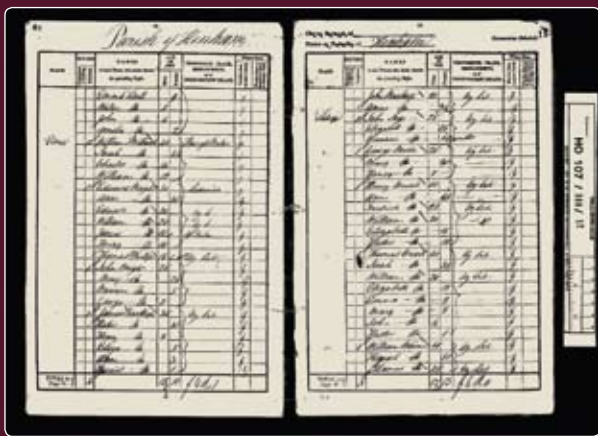
You might expect the firm behind such a large site to be a huge, faceless corporation, but what's all the more impressive is that it's a family-run business. Nigel and Sue Bayley set up the sister company, S&N Genealogy Supplies, back in 1992, and since then have expanded the business year after year – their three sons all work for the business, one of them writing the innovative web code behind many of The Genealogist's unique features.

A genealogy business that's all about family – what could be more appropriate?

But why should you use The Genealogist? Below are 15 great answers to that question...

1 Images & transcripts
Various sites offer large collections of census data, but The Genealogist is the only one that has both transcripts and original page images for all the censuses for England and Wales from 1841 to 1901.

Census transcriptions provide you with much more information than a mere index – they're fully ▶



Pre-1837 You'll find a huge range of parish records at TheGenealogist

searchable and give details for all the family members. They take the hard work out of trawling through thousands of pages of handwritten census material. They provide information as clear, typed text, searchable by forename, surname, age, occupation, relationship to head of household and birthplace.

All this data is stored as plain text, which means that even if you don't have a broadband connection, you can get to it quickly. If you do have broadband, you'll enjoy the benefit of seeing the original census images.

2 1000s of parish records
Parish records are the most important source of information

for family historians prior to civil registration beginning in 1837, and in many cases they date back to the early 1500s. Few other websites have managed to gather together a significantly large collection of them. The Genealogist transcribes original parish records and produces searchable databases of baptisms, marriages and burials and, where permission is granted, even makes images of the original pages available. Much of this work is undertaken in conjunction with family history societies around the country.

Anglican churches. The Genealogist has led the way in providing easy, searchable access to nonconformist records, too. These cover Methodists, Wesleyans, Baptists, Independents, Protestant Dissenters, Congregationalist, Presbyterians, Unitarians and Quakers. They're invaluable for research prior to census and BMD records. The data includes images of early birth certificates and registers, which cover baptisms, marriages and burials. These records and images are unique to The Genealogist and can only

"The Genealogist has led the way in providing access to nonconformist records"

The complete collection of WP Phillimore's 19th century transcriptions of marriage and other records is available here. In total, The Genealogist has parish record transcripts for 21 English counties, and parish records taken from printed books for 28.

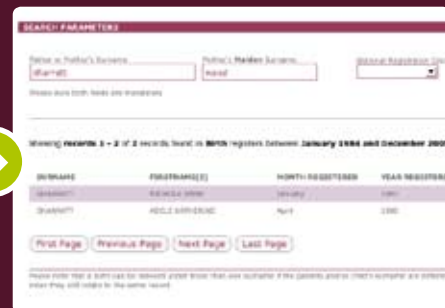
3 Nonconformist records
Parish records, important as they are, only cover standard

be found on this site and its official sister site, www.BMDregisters.co.uk.

4 Wills & testaments
Wills are a valuable source of genealogical information. They can give details of family members, places of residence and burial, as well as revealing fascinating details about your ancestors' possessions.

5 Step-by-step: SmartSearch

The Genealogist's new SmartSearch function makes it easy to find recent BMDs



1 SmartSearch is a new way of searching the birth, marriage and death data for 1984 onwards. It utilises an intelligent search system to perform a reverse look-up. For this example, you'll need to go to the main BMD index search page first and select the 1984-2005 collection. You'll then see the screen above

2 Let's try SmartSearch for birth records – click the second SmartSearch button and the new form shown above will appear. All you need to do is enter the surnames of the father and mother (maiden name), and the system will comb through post-1984 records to see if any couples of those names had children

3 And here they are – click 'View' next to the names to see the full civil registration reference for ordering a certificate through the GRO. You can also use SmartSearch to find birth records after 1865 for any death registered after 1984 – making these connections so easily saves a lot of time

A new feature for The Genealogist is the Wills and Testaments Index Viewer. To date, this provides access to will indexes for Bristol, Edinburgh, Leicestershire, Northampton and Yorkshire, with dates from the 16th century (14th for Yorkshire) to the 18th. There's also an Irish Wills Index for 1536-1810 and more than 460,000 indexes and original page images for Prerogative Court of Canterbury probate jurisdictions from 1384-1858.

6 Directories
Various directories have been produced for well over 300 years and can prove to be an invaluable source of information about local communities. The Genealogist has many directories available, from 1677 to 1905 and covering 39 counties from England and Wales, plus a recently added collection of 1905 directories from Ireland.

If you're researching ancestors alive at the time of the 1911 Census, directories from that era have been helpfully grouped into a special, easy-to-search 'Circa 1911' collection.

7 School registers
Registers from secondary, further and higher education are generally recent additions to genealogy collections, and The Genealogist has once again led the way with a diverse collection. Available at the site are registers for nearly 20 educational institutions around England and Scotland, including Eton and Rugby schools, and Aberdeen,



Will-full Find out what your forebears' last wishes were at The Genealogist



Glasgow, Oxford and Cambridge universities. There's also an official list of registered teachers from 1917.

8 Landowner records
You'll find a 19th-century tax survey at The Genealogist, which provides an index to all individuals who owned land of one acre or more in 1873. It's arranged alphabetically by county, and you may find holdings in more than one. It provides the name of the owner, the town or village where the land was located, how much land they owned and its estimated rental value. The data covers all of Britain and Ireland.

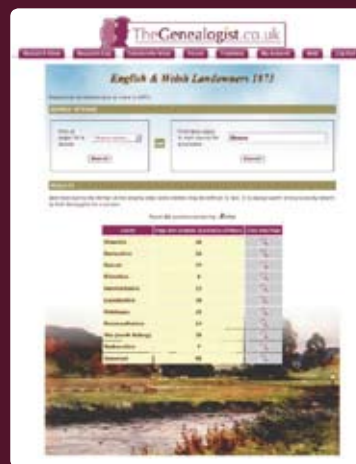
9 Military records
The Genealogist can help with military research, too. In addition to Army and Navy lists for World War I, there's a Navy list for 1944, and a Roll of Honour covering both World Wars. Records include detailed biographies with portraits and information on birth date, birthplace, father's name, education, career, and circumstances of death. The data comes from the National Roll of Honour, British Roll of Honour and De Ruigny's Roll of Honour (including photographs), with over 1.5 million records included.

For WWII, the site also has some notifications of deaths of members of the British Armed Services, prisoners of war, civilians, internees and deaths



Top and above
The directory records collection covers England, Wales and Ireland

Left Find your wealthy ancestors in the Landowners records



through lost aircraft, plus records covering deaths in Japanese and German internment camps.

10 Surname maps
The Genealogist's BMD index includes the fascinating and useful ability to produce a Surname Distribution Map for any year from 1851 to 2002. This is a great way to see where you may get the best research leads and how families dispersed.

11 TreeView: The site's tree builder

The Genealogist helps you build your family tree and more

CHANGE OF VIEWS

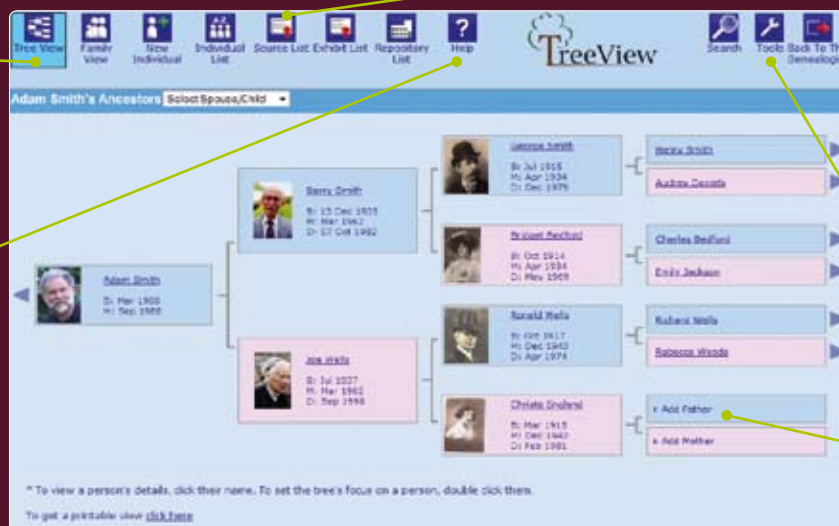
The screen here shows Tree View, but Family View is also useful: it shows a person's connections at a glance, with links to the other family members

ADVICE

A comprehensive help section is available – this has detailed breakdowns of each feature of TreeView, along with a useful four-minute tutorial

PRINTOUT

TreeView is designed to look good on screen, but it's also easy to see what a printout would look like. The printable view option removes extra formatting and colour so you can see just the facts



LISTING

Select 'Individual List' to see a summary table of all the people in your tree, listed alphabetically, showing birth and death dates. There are also quick links to each person's Tree or Family View

IMPORT & EXPORT

You don't have to build your tree from scratch (though that's easy to do, too) if you have compiled the data before. TreeView will import GEDCOM, the standard genealogy format, and export it too

NEW NAMES

It's easy to expand your tree step-by-step – if you've recently discovered details of someone's parents, for example, just click Add Father or Mother and a form will appear, where you can add names, places and dates

"The new phonetic search system is based on speech patterns and the way surname variations sound the same"

This feature is also available for the censuses from 1841 to 1901 – use it, for example, to find where your ancestors lived before the boom in population and rapid expansion to towns and cities caused by the Industrial Revolution.

12 Unique search tools Along with the unique SmartSearch system for birth, marriage and death indexes, The Genealogist has powerful search tools to help you find ancestors in the censuses and BMD records that are unavailable elsewhere. The new phonetic search system, for example, is based on speech patterns and the idea that surname variations generally sound the same despite wide variations in spelling – this feature is only available at The Genealogist. You can also search

the site for groups of forenames where a surname may have varied over time.

13 Keeping track of your research

The Genealogist's handy Research Log feature lets you keep details of the people you've found while searching through the site's databases. You can add records to your research log from the census transcripts, plus BMD records from 1984 onwards, and parish record transcripts will be available soon.

14 Free credits when you volunteer

The Genealogist's sister site, www.ukindexer.co.uk, lets you register as a volunteer to help maintain the site's reputation for high quality data, as well as expand the collections. You



Family site The Genealogist team works hard to bring you the most up-to-date records

can do as little or as much as you like, and you can earn free subscriptions or credits to use at The Genealogist.

15 Great value for money

The Genealogist packs a huge amount into its terrific subscription options. A Personal Plus account is only £55.95 a year and gives you 800 credits to spend – you can even carry these over to the next year if you don't find time to use them all. Or there's Personal Premium – for just £78.95 a year, this gives you unlimited access to everything at the site! ■