

REVIEWS

DATA CDs

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A new section to Your Family Tree's reviews, here's our guide to the latest newly-released data CDs – reviewed by James Taylor

The Lancashire 1861 Census



● PUBLISHER: S&N British Data Archive [w] www.britishdataarchive.com [t] 01722 716 121
● PRICE: £59.95

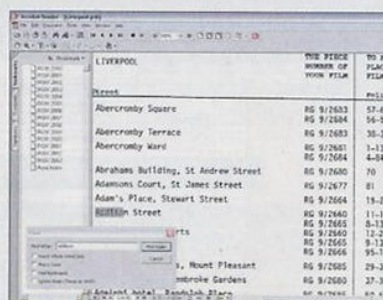
This is a new release of 200,000 images of census pages in a boxed set of 24 CDs, covering the whole of Lancashire including Liverpool, Manchester and Preston or, more specifically, piece numbers RG9/2650-3173. Each CD covers a Registration District, based on parliamentary boundaries, and has linked area and street indexes.

Using *Acrobat Reader 4* or *5* you get the familiar split-screen, with a left-hand panel for the bookmarks and a larger, right-hand panel for the images. Unlike the online 1901 Census you can't search for individual names, although S&N is working on a separate name index (in which purchasers of this set can participate). In the meantime there's a street index for areas of high population, plus a district index. Otherwise, you have to scan the pages as

you would microfiche or the real books. The street index on each CD arranges street names alphabetically and refers you to the appropriate piece, so you can scroll down the list of streets to find the one you want. Alternatively, you can use *Acrobat Reader's* Find facility. Of course, you need to know which area your street is in and hence which CD to use. If you have no idea at all, there's a master index on CD24.

The census is arranged by Registration District and Sub-District, and you can find these from the bookmarks. The information comprises addresses, full names, relationship to head of household, occupations, ages, gender, whether married or not, parish and County of birth, medical disabilities, and employment status. You may have to struggle with the Victorian lettering and to help you there's a brief note on

NAVIGATION: With streets arranged alphabetically, it's easy to find the one you want by scrolling down or you can use *Acrobat Reader's* Find command



reading handwriting in the introductory guide. One benefit in having an image of the original document is that you can make up your own mind about indistinct entries and not have to rely on an index. The guide has more helpful information, definitions, a map of population density and notes on the Census books, spoiled only by referring to the 1891 Census. ■



BUY IT FOR...

A comprehensive, partially indexed Census listing for 1861 Lancashire

National Burial Index for England and Wales



● PUBLISHER: FFHS & Associates, TWR Computing [w] www.twrcomputing.co.uk [t] 01284 828 271
● PRICE: £59.95

The first CD covers burials from 1538 to 1825 and CD2 covers burials from 1826 to 2000 – very contemporary in genealogical terms. The chronological arrangement was adopted to avoid splitting the data across three disks, which would have been necessary with an alphabetical arrangement owing to grouping of surname variants.

The National Burial Index (NBI) claims more than 5.4 million burials in England and Wales from 1538 onwards, taken from some 4,440 burial registers. The coverage is best for 1813-1837. No monumental inscriptions or death registrations are included. The NBI Project was begun by the FFHS in 1994, and this First Edition of the Index is the work of more than 50 member societies. Transcribers were encouraged to record



'as seen' from the source originals – accounting for some bizarre spellings.

You can search on a number of parameters: date, standard surname and forename synonyms, a list of uniquely-occurring surname spelling variants, or by using 'wildcards'. You can restrict your searches by county, town or, in some cases, registration district. By default, surname searches will return the

EXPORT RESULTS: As well as being displayed, search results can be printed or exported to GEDCOM, dBase III (.DBF) or HTML formats

names that match what you entered, plus a number of variants. You can search on forenames only, (including a multiple forename) or a combination of forename and surname.

Data returned includes forename(s) and surname of the deceased; date of burial; age; County (historic); place; name of the church, chapel or cemetery where the burial was recorded. Search results are displayed in a table, which can be sorted on any column, and on a small map of England and Wales. Records can be tagged for printing or export to other applications.

The NBI does not contain full transcriptions of the burial records – it's an abbreviated index, and you will need to check the original source record. ■



BUY IT FOR...

Fully-indexed burials with some versatile reporting

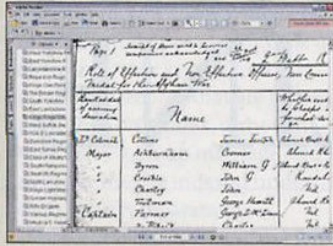
Afghan War Medal Roll 1878-1880

PC

● PUBLISHER: YesterYears Genealogy Supplies
[w] www.yesteryearsgen.com
● PRICE: £24.99 & P+P

After the first Afghan War of 1838-1842, the British, alarmed by Shere Ali Khan's pro-Russian policy, invaded Afghanistan in 1878. This single CD presents, in PDF format, the scanned images of 1660 pages of the original handwritten medal rolls (as held in the National Archives, Class WO100, piece numbers 51 to 54). It lists all 'Effective and Non Effective Officers and Non Commissioned Officers and Men entitled to the Medal for the Afghan War'.

There is no index, although the regiments are in bookmarked sections, making your research a little easier if you know in which regiment your subject served. Many pages appear to have been damaged, leading to illegibility, especially at the edges – where the vital army numbers are. The handwritten entries can be hard



HANDWRITTEN: Some entries are clear and easy to read, others are faint, scrawled or damaged

to decipher too, but that's par for the course with old documents.

Apart from who is entitled to which medal, bar and clasp, you also get personal details like who was 'non-effective' – usually through dying – and who was discharged and for what reason, and even who was in custody. ■



BUY IT FOR...
Otherwise-hard-to-get records of serving soldiers

Poor Law Records, Mid Kent

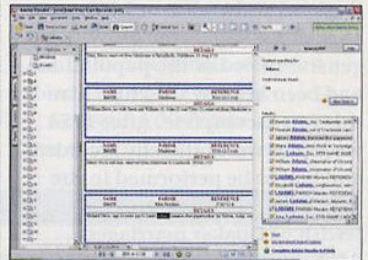
PC

● PUBLISHER: Kent Family History Society [w] www.kfhs.org.uk
● PRICE: £15 (discount to members)

Coming on one CD, here are nearly 19,000 entries in surname order of Poor Law records for mid-Kent, being transcripts of Settlement Certificates, Bastardy Bonds, Removal & Settlement Examinations, among others. They have been transcribed from the parish collections held at the Centre for Kentish Studies and Medway Studies Centre and covering certain Poor Law Unions areas. In a few parishes details of apprenticeships have also been faithfully transcribed.

As well as surnames (listed alphabetically and bookmarked), the transcripts also show parish, the archives reference, document number, type of record, and year of event. In addition the body of the transcript can reveal further interesting details like occupations, other members of a household, and full dates where given. Everything is searchable, including the body of each entry.

The data is presented as a PDF document. You get details of where the original records are kept and a helpful list of abbreviations used to categorise the type of document: A for Apprenticeships; BEO for Bastardy Examination and Order; V for Vagrancy Record and so on. There's also a useful glossary of terms used in document records generally and further listings of other KFHS publications. ■



GOOD LAYOUT: Alphabetic bookmarks, and comprehensive search facilities



BUY IT FOR...
A rare glimpse of society's unfortunates, well indexed

Norfolk Marriages 1801-1837 v.1.1

PC

● PUBLISHER: Norfolk Family History Society
[w] www.norfolkfhs.org.uk [t] 01603 763 718
● PRICE: £15.90

This is exactly what it says, a listing of marriages from 705 Norfolk parishes (plus 25 Suffolk bordering parishes). The original transcription from the parish registers at the Norfolk Record Office was the work of one man, Philip Hamlin, who single-handedly copied 100,000 marriage events. The NFHS then transferred the data to computer. This first computer version was in Excel spreadsheet format and suffered from some omissions. The later version 1.1 as reviewed repairs those omissions, as well as adding the Norfolk Quaker marriages and is in PDF format.

The transfer to PDF is very well done. You also get a listing of all the parishes concerned. However, the main content is in two bookmarked listings, one alphabetically for grooms' surnames and one for brides' surnames. Both listings show the date of the marriage, the name of the other party, and the parish in which it occurred. You can

therefore scroll down the listings looking for the name you know and discover or confirm the other details.

But this CD does better than that. It also contains an index where you can search for the name of either party or any parish. And you don't just get a reference. Each search result is hyperlinked to the entry in the relevant listing, making for very easy researching. ■



SEARCHABLE: The Norfolk Marriages PDF also includes useful bookmarks



BUY IT FOR...
Well-conceived and executed, searchable index and well laid-out content

Royal Marine Barracks, Chatham

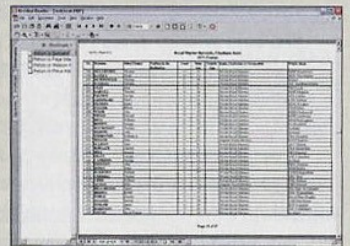
PC

● PUBLISHER: Kent FHS [w] www.kfhs.org.uk
● PRICE: £15

This single CD is a set of Census records for one place over time. The place is the Royal Marine Barracks at Chatham in Kent and the census dates are 1841 to 1901. This is actually a very useful approach by the publishers, the Kent FHS – one to be noted by others.

The transcripts are from prints of the original records held at Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, Strood. Ages given on the 1841 Census were rounded down for adults over 15 years of age and could consequently be up to four years out.

Surnames are alphabetically listed, together with transcript page, Census year, reference number, and forenames. Having made a note of these you select the Census year and page number and are transported to the records. There's also an index that hyperlinks you to about the right place in the list. And you can use Acrobat Reader 5 (but not 6 – its



MILITARY FASHION: The clearly laid-out Census transcripts for the Royal Marine Barracks at Chatham

Search gives spurious results). The data returned is surname, other names, position in the 'Institution', condition (whether married), gender, age, rank and where born.

If you can't find your man, note that the Marines had permanent bases overseas – for instance HMS Tamar, which was the base ship at Hong Kong from 1897 to 1941,



BUY IT FOR...
Unique content and some efficient indexing