

Guide to marriage certificates

1 When married

This marriage happened on 18 September 1907 so it will be found in the GRO indexes for the September quarter for 1907.

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 means that the bride or groom was over 21.

4 Condition

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

5 Rank or profession

Don't assume a woman didn't have a paid occupation if there is no entry next to her name. It is common to find only the groom's occupation stated.

6 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.

7&8 Name and profession of father

These details are useful for checking you have the right certificate and will help you delve into the lives of your ancestors

Witnesses Always check the witnesses on a marriage certificate as they may reveal family connections.

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.

Married in... Often the parish church, but you may find a non-conformist chapel here and confirmation of whether your ancestors married by licence/banns.


CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE
 Application Number: SPECIMEN

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

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 th 1907	Arthur Conan Doyle	40	Widower	Author	39, Old Leece Street, S.W.	Charles Alhamont Doyle	Artist
		Jean Elizabeth Leekie	31	Spinster		Glebe House Blackheath	James Blythe Leekie	Merchant

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by licence or otherwise by me,
 This Marriage was solemnized between us, Arthur Conan Doyle in the Presence of us, James B. Leekie C. Cyril Angell
Jean Elizabeth Leekie Mary Josephine Doyle Lisa Leekie Officiarius

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 16th day of March 2015

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.


 PJS

It's quick and easy...

Online

It's quick, easy and cheaper to order a birth certificate online, just follow these three steps:

STEP ONE: Visit 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 an additional administration fee is payable and 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. You will be charged more for this service to cover the extra work involved, and it will take longer for your certificate to be dispatched if using the standard service. You will need to pay by credit or debit card.

If you apply by phone or post you will be charged an additional administration charge to cover the extra work of processing applications not made online

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

Refunds

If we are unable to produce the certificate you require, you will receive a partial refund of the certificate fee, less a deduction to cover work incurred. Any additional administration fees which may have been paid if not applying online or including a GRO index reference are non-refundable. For full details of fees see guide: **How to Order and Pay for Civil Registration Records**

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 compulsory 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 e.g Scotland. For Scottish records, visit www.scotlandsppeople.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.