MORE GENEALOGICAL LIBRARIES IN GREAT BRITAIN

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Paul F. Smart is the Supervisor of the British section of the Library of the Genealogical Society in Salt Lake City.

With the ever increasing demands for information on local and family history, the Genealogical Society of Utah has established 'branches' in England and Wales.

The Genealogical Society of Utah was founded 13 November 1894 in Salt Lake City, Utah. It was a small beginning as the collection at that time consisted of about 100 printed volumes, mostly English genealogies and pedigrees. By the turn of the century the library consisted of 388 volumes. Now, eighty years after its founding the library's collection consists of nearly 161,000 printed volumes and over 1,110,000 rolls of microfilm.

The British Collection in the library includes materials not only from the British Isles but also the countries of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. This collection consists of over 24,000 printed and manuscript volumes representing family and local histories, biographies, guides to archives and libraries, historical, archaeological and family periodicals, as well as other printed source materials. The microfilm acquisitions began in 1938 and now amount to nearly 91,000 rolls of microfilm representing church records, censuses, civil records, probates and other items for each of these countries.

The Society has also gathered microfilms of original records from such areas as Central and South America, Scandinavia, Continental Europe, Africa and Islands of the Pacific and other oceans. The entire microfilm collection is the largest of genealogical materials in the world.

Some 700 employees work within the library system doing computer work, cataloguing, filming, investigating records for filming, processing film and providing reference service.

An average of 3,200 patrons visit the library each day. The reference librarians service these patrons who are trying to trace their genealogies. The staff does not actually trace the patron's genealogy, but advice is given as to which records would help.

These services are also for people outside the Salt Lake City area. Nearly 300 branch genealogical libraries have been established throughout the world. In the last two years five have been established in England and Wales. These branch libraries welcome both non-members and members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
The operation of these libraries is under the direction of the local Church authorities. They are normally open for a minimum of twenty hours a week. Exact hours may vary from one library to another. There are no admission charges — however, there is a small handling fee to off-set postage charges for each microfilm ordered.

For specific information on the operation, hours, etc. of any of these libraries, contact the BRANCH GENEALOGICAL LIBRARIAN and use the following list of mailing addresses and locations:

**Mailing Address**

Huddersfield England Stake  
Branch Genealogical Library  
P.O. Box B112  
Huddersfield, Yorkshire  
HD3 3BY

Leicester England  
Branch Genealogical Library  
133 Station Street  
Loughborough. Leics.  
LE11 08G

London England  
Branch Genealogical Library  
64/68 Exhibition Road  
London,

Sunderland England  
Branch Genealogical Library  
94 Marsden Road  
So. Shields, Tyne & Wear  
NE38 7QL

Merthyr Tydfil Wales Stake  
Branch Genealogical Library  
Public Weighbridge (Merthyr) Ltd.  
Weighbridge Yard  
Georgetown, Wales.

**Location and Phone**

Huddersfield Stake Centre  
12 Halifax Road  
Birchencliffe  
Huddersfield  
No phone

Loughborough Ward  
Alan Moss Road  
Loughborough, Leics.  
Loughborough 214991

Hyde Park Chapel  
64 Exhibition Road  
London SW7  
No phone

Sunderland Stake Centre  
Alexandra Road  
Sunderland, Tyne & Wear  
No phone

Merthyr Tydfil Stake Centre  
Top of  
Nantygwenith Street  
Georgetown  
Merthyr Tydfil, Wales  
Merthyr Tydfil 2455

A visitor to one of these libraries will find some of the following collections and services available:

1. MICROFILM CARD CATALOGUE (MCC) — Each branch library has a copy of the Genealogical Society's card catalogue. This enables one to know what records are available in Salt Lake City.
One drawback is the lack of frequency with which this catalogue is filmed. There has not been a filming since 1974 which means it is nearly four years behind. It also means that it will often be necessary to write to Salt Lake City to find out if your record of interest is actually available. It is planned to computerize this catalogue in the near future which should help alleviate this problem.

2. COMPUTER FILE INDEX (CFI) — This is a listing of over 37 million names from all countries and periods of time. Nearly 25 million of these names are for the British Isles. It is available at all branch libraries and is updated periodically. Those desiring more information, including what sources are indexed should refer to The Genealogical Department's Computer File Index, Series F4, a publication available at all branch libraries or by writing to Deseret Enterprises Ltd., 18 Hammond Avenue, Whitehall Industrial Estate, Stockport SK4 1PQ.

Great care has been taken in the preparation of this index. However, the possibility of error still exists.

3. BASIC COLLECTION OF BOOKS — It is recommended, though not required, that the British branch libraries obtain certain basic reference tools and guides for research. Items such as Crockford's Clerical Directory, instructional books and gazetteers and atlases, are often in these libraries.

4. RECORDS LOANED — All those records filmed by the Genealogical Society can be loaned to the branch libraries except those restricted by the archive or custodian of the original record. Printed and manuscript materials are not loaned unless they can be put on microfilm without violation of copyright.

Note that most of these libraries do not have large quantities of microfilm on hand. In most cases one visit to the library is necessary to order the records and then a return visit, a few weeks later when the microfilms arrive.

Researchers will find it necessary to look at other library and archival collections too because:

1. The Genealogical Society usually only films one major source (all christenings, marriages and burials for the British Isles) and a backup source (probates for the British Isles).

2. After placing a loan request it takes several weeks before a microfilm is received at the branch. Often it is faster to visit a record office or library.

3. The Genealogical Society hopes to build a 'complete' collection of vital records but some English counties are poorly represented. These include the former counties of Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire, Cambridge, Hereford, Hampshire, Kent, Norfolk, Huntingdon, Northampton, Rutland, Cheshire, Oxford and Surrey.
4. The staff at these local offices will be able to provide valuable assistance when it comes to using the records that might not be available in one of the Genealogical Society Branch Libraries.

The advantages of using the local record offices will never be replaced by these branch libraries. However, for those researchers who may not wish to travel the country in order to obtain records and who do not mind placing a request for them and waiting until they arrive, it is feasible to gain access to the 1841-1871 censuses, parish registers and/or bishop’s transcripts, and even wills and their calendars for a given locality or even several localities.