

Introduction to our older records

Family Historians are of course interested in registers of births, marriages and deaths but large numbers of nonconformist registers were collected by the General Register Office in 1837 when civil registration began and again in 1857 and are not therefore in local hands.

Our earliest register of baptisms- "Retford and Circuit (Wesleyan Methodist) Births and Baptisms from 1798 to 1837" -was surrendered to the Non-parochial Registers Commissioners in 1837 and is now deposited at the National Archives at Kew under the reference number RG4/1411 and can be consulted at Kew in London or on the Church of Latter Day Saints site using the batch number C075531. It appears that another copy of this was retained locally called the Parchment Register. It also starts in 1798 but continues to 1847.

Our register of burials from 1823 to 1837 was surrendered in 1837 and now has reference RG4/1352 at Kew. The entries for these years were copied into a new Register and the new volume used from 1838 until the graveyard closed in 1866. This Register has been deposited at the Nottinghamshire Archives and the original can be consulted there.

The 1836 Marriage Act made provision for the registration, for the solemnization of marriages, of any building certified as a place of religious worship. A registrar of marriages had to attend and register the marriage. There are very few early Methodist Marriage Registers. To give non-conformist bodies the same rights as enjoyed by the Established Church, Quakers and Jews, the Marriage Act 1898 provided for the appointment (by the governing body of a registered building) of an authorised person in whose presence the marriage had to be solemnized and by whom it had to be registered. Our earliest register of marriages is dated 1925 and is available for consultation at the Archives in Nottingham. An index from 1925 onwards is available on the web page and as a paper copy in church.

Other surviving material such as circuit preaching plans, our benevolent society minute book, list of Ministers, Pew seating plans, lists of early members, list of subscribers to the 1823 and 1880 buildings, Circuit Membership Lists 1803 to 1835 etc. are also at Nottingham. Anything appearing on this site has been transcribed from the originals deposited at Nottingham and are provided here as a courtesy to interested parties

Very little original material is available in the Church although you are very welcome to visit us.

Some images are taken from the Welchman Collection of Photographs and appear here by courtesy of Bassetlaw Museum, the WW1 material has been compiled from old copies of the Retford Times.

Each record has an introduction explaining its contents etc. and it is recommended that you read these notes. Although I have had extensive experience in transcribing documents some scripts are very challenging, e.g. 1831 lists of members , and errors have no doubt occurred.