

Genealogical Resources

Section Contents

- Birth Records
- Marriage Records
- Death Records
- Church and Cemetery Records
- Probate (Wills & Administration) Records
- Orphans' Court
- 18th Century Tax Records
- 19th Century Tax Records
- General Holdings List
- Online Indexes
- Newspapers
- Links

Section i.

Birth Records at Chester County Archives

Chester County kept birth records for limited years. The first set of records covers the years 1852-1855. Birth records were not kept again until 1893.

In **1906** the State of Pennsylvania began keeping the records; Chester County **discontinued** its records in **1907**.

Note: county government records **never existed** for other years; other than the listed years, the county **did not** record births.

- **County / State Records**
- **Alternative Sources**

County /State Records

1852-1855

The 1852-1855 birth records contain detailed information, including the maiden name of the mother and names of any other children born previously. The records are incomplete; many births were not recorded.

Photocopies of the 1852-1855 records are in a notebook labeled "Chester County Birth Register, 1852-1855" in the "Chester County" section of the reading room bookcases. The index is arranged chronologically within the first letter of the last name. The "folio" number refers to the page number. There are six birth records on each page.

1893-1907

Between 1893-1907 information on births was compiled by local tax assessors and then turned in to the county. Often a birth was recorded six months to a year after the date of birth. The records do not include maiden names of mothers. Records are incomplete; not every birth was recorded. The only record that exists is the register itself; there are no additional records or certificates on file.

The 1893-1907 records are arranged by first letter of the last name, then chronologically by date of recording. There is an alphabetical index to the three birth registers. Only the index to no. 1 (1893-1899) has been proofread for accuracy and completeness.

Delayed Birth Records

A person whose birth was not recorded or who wished to correct a birth register entry could file a delayed birth record. These records began in 1941, but cover births for the 1893-1907 period (some are earlier). Married women are indexed under both maiden and married names. To request a delayed birth record, put "DBR" and the name and record number on a call slip.

An index to the delayed birth records is now available online.

Records after 1906

Beginning in 1906, the state government of Pennsylvania began keeping birth records. These records are available by mail. The reference archivist can provide you with **one** copy of the request form. It is recommended that you submit multiple requests individually, one check per form.

This form is also available at Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Top

Alternative Sources

Chester County Archives has the following additional sources for birth information:

"Eventlog" Genealogical Database

The Archives has a database, compiled by volunteers, of births, deaths, and marriages from various sources. If you would like to use this database, please request assistance from the reference archivist. There is a printed index to this database (*black notebook with "Eventlog" on spine*), but it does not include all of the information available on the computer.

Published birth records

- *Pennsylvania Births, Chester County, 1682-1800*
- *Pennsylvania Births, Delaware County, 1682-1800*
- *Pennsylvania Births, Lancaster County, 1723-1777*

all by John T. Humphrey from **selected** church birth and baptismal records

Poor School Children, 1810-1836 (*blue notebook*)

Before the establishment of public schools, poor children were educated at private schools at county expense. The records generally list the head of the household and the names and ages of the children. Children ages 5-12 were eligible for county-paid tuition; most were ages 6-11.

Poorhouse Indexes (*blue notebooks*)

Births that occurred at the county home can be found in the indexes to the admissions books (1800-1858) and steward's books (1821-1823, 1825-1829). Birth dates of children bound out by the directors of the poor (1800-1825) can be found in the notebook labeled "Chester County Poor House Indexes, Vol. 1."

Tavern License Petitions, 1887-1923 (*green notebooks*)

Tavern and hotel keepers had to apply for a license every year. Beginning in 1887 applicants had to list their place of birth and, if not native-born, where and when they were naturalized. Check the index labeled "Chester County Tavern Petition Index 1800 - , Arranged by Petitioner Name." To request a petition, write "tavern petition," the petitioner's name, and the year of the petition on a call slip.

Published church records and CD-ROMs

The Archives has a growing collection of published reference materials and CD-ROMs, including church records and published genealogies.

In addition to the material listed above, the Archives has other records that may be used to determine ages. Please ask a reference archivist for assistance.

Section ii.

Marriage Records at Chester County Archives

Chester County kept marriage records for limited years. The first set of records covers the years 1852-1855. Marriage records were not kept again until 1885. The Archives has records for 1852-1855 and 1885-1930; they are described below. Records for 1931 to the present are available from the Clerk of Orphans' Court in the Chester County Court House .

Note: county government records **never existed** for other years; other than the listed years (1852-1855, 1885-present) the county **did not** record marriages.

- **County Records**
- **Alternative Sources**

County Records

1852-1855

The 1852-1855 records contain detailed information, including parents' names and the type of ceremony by which the marriage was contracted. The records are incomplete; many marriages were not recorded.

Photocopies of the 1852-1855 records are in a notebook labeled "Chester County Marriage Register, 1852-1855" in the "Chester County" section of the reading room bookcases. The index is arranged chronologically within the first letter of the last name. The "folio" number refers to the page number. There are four marriage records on each page.

1885-1930

Accessing marriage records is a two-step process. The indexes are in two volumes (1885-1908, 1909-1929) and one folder (1930). They are in the tall roller shelving in the reading room. The indexes are arranged by first letter of the last name. You can locate a marriage by the name of the man or the maiden name of the woman. Men are listed in the left column, women are listed in the right column. (Being on the same line does not mean that the man and the woman married each other.) If you cannot find a marriage after looking for one person's name, look for the other person.

The index entry includes a docket number and a page. The marriage dockets are in the same shelving as the indexes. The docket gives basic information about the couple and where and when the marriage took place. The docket also has the application number, which is found in the margin or at the top of the entry. The application is the paper that was filed when the couple requested a marriage license. **It is recommended that you look at the application**, not just the docket. Applications for 1885-July 28, 1913 may contain information that is not in the docket but after July 28, 1913 applications contain much more information, including names of parents.

To request marriage license applications, put "M.L.," the application number(s), and your name and today's date on a call slip.

If both the docket and the application do not include the return of the marriage certificate, the marriage may not have taken place.

An index to the 1885-1900 marriage applications is now available online.

Note: marriage license applications were supposed to be filed in the county in which the marriage was to take place. In practice, this was not always the case. It was also not unusual for people in Chester County to go elsewhere to get married. Popular locations include neighboring counties such as Montgomery and Delaware; Elkton in Cecil County,

Maryland; Philadelphia; and Camden, New Jersey.

Alternative Sources

The Pennsylvania Genealogical Catalogue, Volume I, Chester County, 1809-1870

This CD-ROM includes death and marriage notices published in *The Village Record*, a West Chester newspaper. Entries are not limited to West Chester. If you have not used this CD on the Archives' computer before, please ask for assistance.

"Eventlog" Genealogical Database

The Archives has a database, compiled by volunteers, of births, deaths, and marriages from various sources. If you would like to use this database, please request assistance from the reference archivist. There is a printed index to this database (notebook with "Eventlog" on spine), but it does not include all of the information on the computer.

Deed Books and Miscellaneous Deed Books

Premarital agreements and marriage contracts, if recorded, were entered into deed books and miscellaneous deed books. They can be located by using the miscellaneous deed grantee or grantor indexes. It is recommended that you check under both indexes for both names (if the maiden name of the woman is known). These indexes are arranged by pairs of initials (last and first names). Entries within a set of initials are then listed chronologically by date of recording. If the book listed contains a letter (example - "A-2") it is a deed book; if it is only a number, it is a miscellaneous deed book. Both types of books are in the small room to the left of the lockers outside the reading room door.

Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series, vol. II

The first part of this volume lists "names of persons for whom marriage licenses were issued in the province of Pennsylvania previous to 1790." The entries are arranged alphabetically by last name; marriages can be located by looking under either the man's or the woman's name. The researcher is advised to read the note of explanation preceding the list of marriages.

Pennsylvania Births, Chester County, 1682-1800; Pennsylvania Births, Delaware County, 1682-1800; Pennsylvania Births, Lancaster County, 1723-1777

All of these volumes were compiled by John T. Humphrey from **selected** church birth and baptismal records. These records also include birth or baptismal dates for married women; in some cases the maiden name is given. These entries are in the back of each volume. The researcher is advised to read the explanation in the beginning of each volume.

Published reference materials and CD-ROMs

The Archives has a growing collection of published reference materials and CD-ROMs, including church records and published genealogies.

The Archives has other records that may be used to determine marriage dates. Please ask a reference archivist for assistance.
Section iii.

Death Records at Chester County Archives

Chester County kept death records for limited years. The first set of records covers the years 1852-1855. Death records were not kept again until 1893. In 1906 the State of Pennsylvania began keeping the records; Chester County discontinued its records in 1907. Note: county government records **never existed** for other years; other than the listed years the county **did not** record deaths.

- **County/State Records**
- **Alternative Sources**

County/State Records

1852-1855

The 1852-1855 death records contain detailed information, including date and place of birth, names of parents, and name of spouse. The records are incomplete; many deaths were not recorded.

Photocopies of the 1852-1855 records are in a notebook labeled "Chester County Death Register, 1852-1855" in the "Chester County" section of the reading room bookcases. The index is arranged chronologically within the first letter of the last name. The "folio" number refers to the page number. There are four death records on each page.

1893-1906

Between 1893-1906 information on deaths was compiled by local tax assessors and then turned in to the county. Often a death was recorded six months to a year after the date

of death. The records do not include the names of parents unless the deceased was a minor at the time of death. Records are incomplete; not every death was recorded. The only record that exists is the register itself; there are no additional records or certificates on file.

The 1893-1906 records are arranged by first letter of the last name, then chronologically by date of recording. There are alphabetical indexes to all death registers. Researchers are advised to examine the actual entry after locating someone in the indexes, as the indexes do not contain all of the information in the registers.

The index is also available at : <http://courses.wcupa.edu/jones/his480/riggstown.htm#rod>.

Records after 1906

Beginning in 1906, the state government of Pennsylvania began keeping death records. These records are available by mail. The reference archivist can provide you with **one** copy of the request form. It is recommended that you submit multiple requests individually, one check per form.

This form is also available at Pennsylvania Department of Health

Top

Alternative Sources

Chester County Archives has the following additional sources for death information:

Index to Wills and Administrations, 1714-1923 (roller shelving)

Beginning in late 1874, the date of death was entered in the probate index. If the death occurred in 1906 or after, this date can be used in a request for a death record from the state. Please see the sheet "Probate Records at Chester County Archives" for an explanation of these indexes.

Coroner's Records, 1720-1957

The coroner or his representative investigated deaths that were suspicious, unexpected or sudden, as well as deaths resulting from accidents or crimes. The amount of information in coroner's records varies. Generally bills contain less information than reports or inquisitions. For access, see the notebook index to bills and inquisitions (1752-1912), and the notebook index to dockets (1897-1915). To request a record, please put type of record (docket, bill, or inquisition), name of deceased, date, and bill number or volume on a call slip with your name and today's date.

The Pennsylvania Genealogical Catalogue, Volume I, Chester County, 1809-1870

This CD-ROM includes death and marriage notices published in the Village Record, a West Chester newspaper. Entries are not limited to West Chester. If you have not used this CD on the Archives' computer before, please ask for assistance.

"Eventlog" Genealogical Database

The Archives has a database, compiled by volunteers, of births, deaths, and marriages from various sources. If you would like to use this database, please request assistance from the reference archivist. There is a printed index to this database (black notebook with "Eventlog" on spine), but it does not include all of the information available on the computer.

Veterans Burial Records (1885-1979) (blue notebook)

These volumes record veterans buried at county expense. For the years 1917-1961 there are also records for the burials of veterans' widows. To request a volume, please write "Veterans Burials," the volume number, your name and today's date on a call slip.

Veterans Burial Cards (microfilm)

These cards include burial location and military service information for veterans buried in Chester County cemeteries, as compiled by the Chester County Office of Veterans Affairs.

The cards are arranged alphabetically on the film.

Poorhouse Indexes (blue notebooks)

Deaths that occurred at the county home can be found in the indexes to the admissions books (1800-1858) and steward's books (1821-1823, 1825-1829). Researchers should also consult the index to outdoor allowance books (1801-1856) in the notebook labeled "Chester County Poor House Indexes, Vol. 1."

Published reference materials and CD-ROMs

The Archives has a growing collection of published reference materials and CD-ROMs, including church records and published genealogies.

In addition to the material listed above, the Archives has other records that may be used to determine death dates. Please ask a reference archivist for assistance.

Section iv.

Church and Cemetery Records

Church and cemetery records are private records and therefore are **not** collected and housed at the Chester County Archives. Most church and cemetery association records remain with the originating church or cemetery. The records may also be housed with the historical society affiliated with the church, especially if the church is no longer in existence. You may also find church and cemetery records at private historical societies. For Chester County church and cemetery records you may wish to contact the following:

- Chester County Historical Society
- Historical Society of Pennsylvania
- Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania
- Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College (Quaker)
- Archdiocese of Philadelphia
- Presbyterian Historical Society
- Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society
- Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic
- United Methodist Church

Section v.

Chester County Probate Records

- Where are Chester County probate records?
- What can I expect to find in will and administration files?
- How can I find a will or intestate file in CCA indexes?
- How can I find someone named in a will or administration file?
- What information does CCA have on probate records for areas outside Chester

Co.?

- Where can I write to get copies of a probate file?

Where are Chester County probate records?

Chester County Archives has probate (estate settlement records) for the years 1714-1923. Before 1714, records were filed in Philadelphia. Even after the Chester County records start, some residents still filed wills and administrations in Philadelphia. This practice of filing where it was convenient continued until the Revolution (CCA has published abstracts of Philadelphia wills for 1682-1784). Chester County records after 1923 are available at the Register of Wills Office , Chester County Court House.

Top

What can I expect to find in will and administration files?

A typical will (testate) file contains a will, an inventory of the decedent's personal goods, and an account. A typical administration (intestate) file contains a bond of administration, an inventory of the decedent's personal goods, and an account. Not all files are complete, as many executors and administrators never filed inventories or accounts.

Other papers, which are less common, include: a codicil (addition made to the will by the testator after the original will was written), a vendue list (list of items sold at public sale), supplemental accounts, and a renunciation (of right to administer the estate).

Note: there are no petitions for letters of administration naming next of kin until the late 19th century; there are no accounts of distribution until the 20th century.

Top

How can I find a will or intestate file in CCA indexes?

Wills and administrations (intestates) are indexed together. There are two sets of indexes. Which index you need depends on what year the record was filed.

1. **1714-1850** – this index is alphabetical. You need the file number that is written in either margin to request the record. If there is no number, you will need to get it from the 1714-1923 index.

2. **1714-1923** – these volumes are arranged by initials. The letter on the spine of the volume is the first letter of the last name. Look at the chart across the top of the page for the first letter of the first name of the person you're looking for. The number underneath that letter is the first page of entries for people with that set of initials. Decedents within that group are then listed chronologically. The file number is in the "No. of Papers" column.

You should always check Orphans' Court after using probate records.

Top

How can I find someone named in a will or administration file?

Chester County Archives has abstracts to wills and administrations for 1714-1844. The abstracts are summaries of the wills and administration bonds. Every name is indexed. The abstracts do not include names listed in accounts of administration. The abstracts are the best way to narrow your search before requesting numerous files of a common surname. After you locate an abstract that interests you, **request the original file.**

Top

What information does CCA have on probate records for areas outside Chester Co.?

CCA has the following probate abstracts and indexes

(**note:** most abstracts do not include intestate records):

- Delaware Co., PA – Index 1789-1850, Abstracts of Wills 1789-1835
- Lancaster Co., PA – Index 1729-1850, Abstracts of Wills 1732-1785

- Montgomery Co., PA – Index 1784-1850
- Philadelphia, PA – Index 1682-1810, Abstracts of Wills 1682-1784
- Delaware – Calendar of New Castle Co. Wills 1682-1800 (abstracts)
- Maryland – Index to Wills 1634-1777, Index to Cecil Co. Wills 1674-1777,
- Calendar of Wills 1635-1743 (abstracts)
- Various PA counties – Abstracts on CD-ROM

Note: Lancaster Co. (1729) and Delaware Co. (1789) were formed out of Chester Co.; Montgomery Co. (1784) was formed out of Philadelphia Co.

Top

Where can I write to get copies of a probate file?

For information on how to obtain copies of Chester County probate files (1714-1923), please contact: ccarchives@chesco.org

Section vi.

Orphans' Court Records at Chester County Archives

- What is Orphans' Court?
- Where are Chester County Orphans' Court records?
- How can I find an orphans' court file in CCA indexes?
- Are there Orphans' Court dockets for Chester County?
- Where can I write to get copies of an Orphans' Court file?

What is Orphans' Court?

Always check orphans' court if you are doing family history. The court handled the sale and division of real estate out of estates, the confirmation and auditing of accounts, and the guardianship of minor children (who may not be orphans).

There are two types of orphans' court files:

A **decendent's estate** contains records of an estate settlement; it is a continuation of the probate process. The most common type of record in these files is an account of administration. Most of these are duplicates of accounts that were filed with the will or administration (probate) records. Records related to the sale or division of real estate

are not duplicated in the probate file; these papers may list family members. Records related to the auditing of accounts may also contain information of genealogical value.

A **minor's estate** contains guardianship papers. A minor was someone under the age of 21. A child could have a guardian even if one or both parents were alive. The guardian was given charge of the minor's **property**; in most cases, the minor continued to live with family members. Guardianship records often name one or both parents and state if the child was above or below the age of fourteen. Typical files contain petitions for guardians; by the second half of the 19th century, inventories and guardianship accounts become more common. The files are **not** duplicates of probate records.

Top

Where are Chester County Orphans' Court records?

Chester County Archives has records for 1714-1923. Records after 1923 are available at the Register of Wills/Orphans' Court, Chester County Court House.

Top

How can I find an orphans' court file in CCA indexes? There are three sets of indexes. Which one you need depends on the type of file and the year the file was started.

1. **1714-1881** Decedents' Estates – this index is alphabetical. The year of the entry is the year that the first record was filed in the proceedings. This may be several years after the death of the decedent.
2. **1714-1881** Minors' Estates – this index is alphabetical by surname only. Siblings tend to be listed together. The year of the entry is the year the guardian was first appointed.
3. **1882-1923** (microfilm) – this index contains entries for both decedents and minors. It is arranged by initials. Locate the section on the film for the first letter of the last name. Look at the chart across the top of the page for the first letter of the first name of the person you're looking for. The number underneath that letter is the first page of entries for people with that set of initials. Names within that group are then listed chronologically. Each entry indicates if the file is for a decedent or a minor. The file number is the "Estate No."

Top

Are there Orphans' Court dockets for Chester County?

Chester County Archives has Orphans' Court dockets for 1716-1923. In most cases, the information in the docket is less detailed than what is in the decedents' and minors' estate files.

The orphans' court dockets for 1716-1781 have been transcribed and indexed; they are available in the CCA reading room. The dockets contain the court proceedings and summaries of the records filed by the court. Every name is indexed.

1716-1761 dockets are published. The page numbers in the indexes refer to the original page numbers (included within the text), not the numbers at the bottom of the page.

1762-1781 dockets are in notebooks. The page numbers in the indexes correspond to the numbers at the bottom of the page of the transcription.

For orphans' court proceedings before 1716, see the published transcriptions of the early court dockets of Chester County (1681-1710), available in the CCA reading room.

Top

Where can I write to get copies of an Orphans' Court file?

For information on how to obtain copies of Chester County Orphans' Court files (1714-1923), please contact **Email:** ccarchives@chesco.org
Section vii.

18th-Century Tax Records

With very few exceptions, Chester County Archives (CCA) has all of the surviving 18th century Chester County tax records. Records are extant for 1715, 1718-1740, 1747-1800 (bulk dates – there are years within these time spans for which tax records have not survived or taxes were not collected). All 18th-century records held by CCA were microfilmed by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. They are arranged in three series, designated by the letter "C" for County, "P" for Provincial, and "S" for State. Each tax is labeled with specific information as to statute, the date ordered, and the dates of returns and appeals. A complete set of this film is available at the Chester County Historical Society Library (CCHS) and at CCA. Access to the original records is limited as they are fragile.

For ease of use, photocopies of the following taxes are available in the CCA reading room: 1715, 1718-1732 (all extant records within time span), 1765, 1767, 1780, 1783, 1796, 1799, 1802.

The taxation process generated three types of tax records:

1. **return** of taxables (list of names with taxable property, no value assigned)
2. **assessment** (list of names with taxable property with values)
3. **rates** (list of names with amount of tax – there may be a second set of adjusted rates drawn up after appeals)

All pre-1765 tax records at CCA are rates, with the exception of a 1726 return for Thornbury. CCA also has photocopies of rates for 1693 and 1696 and the return for 1760 (originals at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania).

There are four categories of taxables:

1. **landholder** – held land by lease or deed (PA taxed the occupant)
2. **inmate** – married or widowed, landless (contract labor)
3. **freeman** – single, free man at least 21 years of age (as of 1718). Had to be out of servitude or apprenticeship at least 6 months at time of tax. Taxation of freemen was inconsistent. It appears that before 1755 single men living with their parents were not taxed.
4. **nonresident landowner** – owner of unseated (unoccupied) land

In practice, the very poor or infirm were dropped from the tax rolls. The only surviving pre-1765 return (1726, Thornbury) lists people who are not on the 1726 tax rate. For example, Eleanor Clues ("a poor widdow woman never yet assessed") and Charles Howel ("he is a poor man has a wife & one child") only appear on the return. There is no reason to believe that assessors in other townships were not making similar judgments.

Certain tax records provide additional information. State taxes to fund the Revolutionary War often include notations as to whether a person supported the Revolution. The 1783 state tax gives the number of white and black inhabitants in each household, as well as the number of buildings on the property. The 1796 and 1799 county taxes often provide some description of buildings.

Tax indexes:

1. 1693-1740, 1747-1763 –microfilm (Latter Day Saints). These indexes were compiled by Gilbert Cope; the original volumes are at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The advantage to these indexes is they are phonetically arranged; alternate spellings are grouped together. Because these indexes are to tax rates, they essentially duplicate the information in the original record: name,

township, and amount of tax. They do not consistently include the designation "freeman." If there is any question, check the original record on film (or photocopy at CCA). Certain tax amounts are good indicators of possible freeman status (although it varied, 12 shillings or 9 shillings was often the "head tax" paid by freemen). The 1693-1740 index does not include the townships that become Lancaster County. People in those townships are on a separate LDS microfilm roll. These are the best indexes for pre-1764 records. Available at both CCA and CCHS Library.

2. Futney and Cope's *History of Chester County* includes selected early tax lists in the township history section. Available at both CCA and CCHS Library.

3. Indexes for selected years (1693, 1718, 1730, 1740, 1750, 1765, 1775, 1785, 1799) compiled by Jack Marietta of the University of Arizona. The information for each person (township, assessed value, tax category) is coded numerically. These are the best indexes for post-1764 records. Available at CCA.

4. Card index for 1775-1783. This index is incomplete and includes out-of-date labeling of some taxes. Absence from this index does not mean absence from the actual records. It only includes people that were taxed in present-day Chester County townships; townships that are now in Delaware County are not included. Available at CCHS Library (closed stacks) and CCA (microfilm).

5. Published *Pennsylvania Archives* (3rd series). Indexes to and copies of selected tax records. These reflect out-of-date labeling. The information was put into a standardized format that eliminated all "extraneous" material. There are enough errors in these transcriptions to make them a last resort. They should only be used as a locator; the information should be verified against the original record. Available at CCHS Library.

Section viii.

19th-Century Tax Records

What is available:

Chester County Archives has all of the surviving 1801-1900 county tax assessments. The original records are large volumes that are quite fragile. With the support of a grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Chester County Historical Society microfilmed the 1801-1870 records. This film is available to researchers in the CCA reading room; it is in film jackets and is arranged chronologically within each township and borough. Post-1870 records are also in the Archives and may be used by researchers, but they cannot be photocopied.

Content of records:

The tax records typically list name of taxable, taxable property (land, buildings, livestock, occupation), the assessed value, and the amount of tax. The 18th-century terms "freeman" and "inmate" continue in use; eventually they are eliminated and taxables are listed in two categories: owners and tenants.

A new assessment was done every three years (triennial); taxes in the intervening years were based on the previously done triennial assessment. Changes in property that occurred during a non-triennial year may not be reflected in the tax records until a new assessment was done. Triennial years include: 1802, 1805, 1808, 1811, 1814, etc. This practice continued into the 20th century.

From 1810 into the 1830s, taxes may include a list of "poor children" at the end of each township. These are children educated at public expense before the establishment of public schools. These lists may include the head of household, name of child, and age of child. By law, poor children between the ages of 5-12 years old were eligible. In practice, most were 6-11 years old.

After the 1820s, when printed forms came into use, the records become less informative. Often the value of the buildings is included with the value of the land, making the records much less valuable for determining construction dates.

Tax indexes:

CCA has indexes for 1805 and 1814.

There is a separate index to poor school children, 1810-1836.

Section ix.

Chester County Archives General Holdings

Section x.

Online Indexes

- Marriage Applications 1885-1900
- Delayed Births Records 1857-1906
- Feme Covert Records 1842-1848
- Fugitive Slave Records 1820-1839
- Indentured Servants and Apprentice Records 1700-1855
- Insolvent Debtor's Petition & Bonds 1724-1850
- Naturalization Records 1798-1906
- Petitions for Sheriff's Deeds 1728-1835
- Registry of Automobiles 1903-1905
- World War I Servicemen (County War Aid Association) 1917-1921
- Coroner's Inquisition Papers 1740-1940

Section xi.

Newspapers

The Chester County Archives does **not** have a newspaper collection. For the largest extant collection of Chester County newspapers please contact the Chester County Historical Society.

Section xii.

Other Resources Links

(listed on <http://dsf.chesco.org/archives/cwp/view.asp?a=3&Q=610760&archivesNav={34185}>)

Chester County Resources

Historical Societies

- Charlestown Township Historical Society
- Chester County Historical Society
- Downingtown Area Historical Society
- Phoenixville Historical Society
- Tri-County Heritage Society
- Valley Forge Historical Society

Current Public Records

- Register of Wills/Orphans' Court
- Recorder of Deeds

Genealogical Resources

- PA GenWeb - Chester County
- Chester County Genealogy Message Forum

Delaware County Resources

Public Records

- Delaware County Government

Historical Societies

- Chadds Ford Historical Society
- Delaware County Historical Society

Lancaster County Resources

Public Records

- Lancaster County Government
- Office of Records and Archives Services

Historical Societies

- Lancaster County Historical Society
- Mennonite Historical Society

Montgomery County Resources

Public Records

- Montgomery County Government
- Montgomery County Records Department

Historical Societies

- Historical Society of Montgomery County

Pennsylvania Resources

Public Records

- National Archives, Mid-Atlantic Region
- Pennsylvania State Archives

Historical/Genealogical Societies

- Historical Society of Pennsylvania
- Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania
- Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania

Genealogical Resources

- Cyndi's List of Pennsylvania Resources
- Online Pennsylvania Death Records & Indexes

Delaware Resources

- Delaware Public Archives
- Genealogical Society of Delaware
- Historical Society of Delaware

Maryland Resources

- Cecil County Historical Society
- Maryland State Archives
- Maryland Historical Society