

Gen-Guide to  
NEW ZEALAND RECORD COLLECTIONS:  
**NZSG Pre-1856 NEW  
ZEALAND MARRIAGE  
RECORDS COLLECTION**



**A guide to accessing information from, and submitting information to, the NZSG Pre-1856 New Zealand Marriage Records Collection.**



New Zealand Society of Genealogists Inc.

FAMILY HISTORY - PRESERVING OUR PAST FOR THE FUTURE



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## NZSG RECORDS COLLECTIONS

Since it was founded in 1967 the New Zealand Society of Genealogists (NZSG) has been steadily building record collections to assist members to research their family history. This Gen-Guide is one in a series that explains what the collections contain, how to access the records, and how to contribute to the collections.

### The Pre-1856 New Zealand Marriage Records Collection

This is a New Zealand Society of Genealogists members-only service. It is a collection of information about marriages that took place in New Zealand before the civil registration of births, deaths and marriages, which had begun in 1848, became compulsory on 1 January 1856. Under the circumstances finding records of marriage pre-1856 is difficult because there is no official source or repository.

The database contains over 28,000 entries from sources including civil registration entries, church records, newspaper marriage notices, family and social history publications, Maori mission records, Bible entries, ministers' diary and journal entries and submissions from NZSG members, to name a few.

This database contains the only complete matching of brides and grooms from the Registrar General's Index pre 1856 that is currently available to research anywhere in New Zealand.

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#### MARRIED.

**On Wednesday last, the 3rd inst., at Clifton Cottage, Dunedin, by the Rev. Thomas Burns, JOHN HYDE HARRIS, Esq., late of Deddington in the County of Oxford, but now of Dunedin aforesaid, to ANNIE CUNNINGHAM, second daughter of Captain William Cargill, late of Her Majesty's 74th Regt., and Commissioner of Crown Lands for the District of Otago.**

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*Example of a newspaper entry from which details in the Collection have been extracted – The New Zealander newspaper, 19 January 1850, page 2. [Copy held in the Auckland Central City Library].*

### HISTORY OF THE COLLECTION

The collection began in the early 1980s as a private collection which in the mid-1980s was donated to the New Zealand Society of Genealogists. The collection was originally handwritten on cards, but in 1993 it was computerised as a database, enabling the use of powerful searching and matching options. The now retired Pre-1856 New Zealand Marriage Collection Officer, Heather Bray, has contributed a significant number of entries to the Collection in her time as Officer from 1993 – 2018.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF USE**

This service is only available to members of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists. There is no charge for this service.

Information from the collection is available to NZSG members without charge on the understanding that it is to be used for their personal research only. Information gained from the service should not be passed to non-members, nor should access to the collection be made available to non-members.

Research Services will check a members' inquiry against the database and report on their findings. Any further research in relation to entries found on the database is not their responsibility.

## **INFORMATION AVAILABLE**

A pre-1856 New Zealand marriage should provide the names of the bride and the groom, their date and place of marriage, and a source from which further information can be obtained.

Entries from the Registrar-General's indexes will give only the names of the bride and the groom, the year and the reference number, with further details being available on purchasing the certificate.

Where additional information has been made available it may also be possible to provide the ages of the couple, their residential addresses, names of their parents, previous spouses' names, name of the officiating minister and the names of the witnesses.

Detailed searches can be made to find a marriage where the surname has been misspelt in the original records, e.g., Murray instead of Murphy. It is also capable of grouping all marriages performed by a specific minister or marriages that took place in a specific location.

Inquirers may receive more than one source for the marriage, e.g., a church record and a notice from a newspaper. Multiple sources may result in conflicting information, e.g. spelling of names. It is recommended that members check the original source(s).

An index to this collection is included on the *NZSG Kiwi Collection*. The marriages 1836-1855 are also published on the *New Zealand Marriages 1836-1956* CD-ROM published and sold by the NZSG.

Further information about this collection can be found in *The New Zealand Genealogist*, Vol. 40, No. 320, November/December 2009, pages 263-264.

## SEARCHING THE COLLECTION

If you know the name of either party to a marriage, you can request a search to find the other party and details of the marriage.

You can search both NZSG publications *Kiwi Collection* and the *New Zealand Marriages 1836-1956*.

You can also use the collection for one-name study purposes by requesting all marriage references related to a specific surname. The search facility allows for searches of all variations of spellings, e.g., Pat\* will turn up all surnames beginning with Pat, e.g., Paterson, Patterson, Pattison, etc.

### *How do I request a search of the Collection?*

There are two options for requesting a search of the collection.

1. You may make a search request via the Society's website.
  - a. Go to the NZSG website and log in. Under Resources, choose Collections then move to Pre-1856 New Zealand Marriage. Further down the page there is an invitation to go to the on-line Pre-1856 NZ Marriage Search Request form :  
[https://www.genealogy.org.nz/Pre1856\\_Search\\_Request\\_379.aspx](https://www.genealogy.org.nz/Pre1856_Search_Request_379.aspx)
  - Complete the request form to the best of your knowledge. Note that the fields with an asterisk are required fields, i.e., they must contain an entry otherwise the search cannot be completed.
  - b. Click on the 'Submit Request' button when finished.
  - c. You will receive a reply by email.
  
2. You may write to Research Services at the address below.
  - a. You must include your full name, street address, and NZSG number. Failure to provide these may mean that your request cannot be fulfilled.
  - b. Provide a stamped self-addressed standard DLE envelope (business sized 225mm x 114mm). Your request document will be sent to you in this envelope.
  - c. You must provide a minimum of the bride's name, the groom's name, and an approximate date of the marriage to enable the search to be made.
  - d. Post your request to:

Research Services  
P.O. Box 14-036,  
Panmure,  
Auckland 1741.

For enquiries contact: [researchservice@genealogy.org.nz](mailto:researchservice@genealogy.org.nz)

## CONTRIBUTING TO THIS COLLECTION

Members are encouraged to add to this collection by supplying as much detail as possible of a pre-1856 marriage with the full reference to the source of the information.

E.g. Diocesan Record, Nelson, Book 1, page 6, entry 1099.

The NZSG is always grateful to learn of any new sources of marriages in this time period. If you know of the whereabouts of any pre-1856 marriage records that could be included in this collection, please let the Projects Co-ordinator know so that she can try to gain access to that source. Please do not negotiate on the Society's behalf for access to any new sources, but leave the negotiating to the person nominated by the NZSG Council.

### *How do I contribute to the Collection?*

Log in to the NZSG website. In the Collections options under Resources, log into Pre-1856 New Zealand Marriage Records and access the contribution form at:

[https://www.genealogy.org.nz/Pre1856\\_Submission\\_380.aspx](https://www.genealogy.org.nz/Pre1856_Submission_380.aspx)

- a. Download and print the Pre-1856 Marriage Submission Form. There is a copy appended to this guide. Complete the form, using a separate sheet for each marriage. Give as much detail as possible, especially the source of the information.
- b. If you have a copy of the original certificate or entry, please include a photocopy of this with your form.
- c. If you do not have the information to complete all of the relevant fields, still send in the form with the details known. There may already be reference to this marriage on the existing database and if so, we will be able to provide you with details of the missing data.
- d. Post the form, together with a photocopy of the certificate or entry, to:

NZSG Project Co-ordinator  
P.O. Box 14-036,  
Panmure,  
Auckland 1741.

For enquiries contact: [nzsg.projects@genealogy.org.nz](mailto:nzsg.projects@genealogy.org.nz)

## New Zealand Society of Genealogists Inc.

PRESERVING OUR PAST FOR THE FUTURE


**NZSG PRE-1856 NEW ZEALAND MARRIAGE DATABASE  
F30 DATABASE INFORMATION SUBMISSION FORM**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE No. (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ NZSG No. \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BRIDE</b>	<b>GROOM</b>
SURNAME	SURNAME
FIRST NAMES	FIRST NAMES
ADDRESS AT TIME OF MARRIAGE	ADDRESS AT TIME OF MARRIAGE
AGE AT MARRIAGE	AGE AT MARRIAGE
OCCUPATION AT TIME OF MARRIAGE	OCCUPATION AT TIME OF MARRIAGE
NAME OF FATHER	NAME OF FATHER
NAME OF MOTHER	NAME OF MOTHER
PLACE OF BIRTH (IF OUTSIDE NZ)	PLACE OF BIRTH (IF OUTSIDE NZ)
NAME OF PREVIOUS SPOUSE	NAME OF PREVIOUS SPOUSE
DATE OF MARRIAGE	DATE OF MARRIAGE
OFFICIATING OFFICER	OFFICIATING OFFICER
PLACE OF MARRIAGE	PLACE OF MARRIAGE
ORIGINAL SOURCE OF MARRIAGE	ORIGINAL SOURCE OF MARRIAGE
OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION	OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

Please complete as many details as are currently known and return the form to:  
Project Co-ordinator, P.O. Box 14-036, Panmure, Auckland 1741

