

This document is based on an earlier one created by the Cambridge University Archives, "How to find out about... Cambridge Alumni". Permission to use material from that document is gratefully acknowledged.

How to find out about Cambridge Alumni and Alumnae

General

Sources of information on men and women who have been students at Cambridge vary considerably in detail and location down the centuries. Because Cambridge is a collegiate University, data may be found in the archives of the Colleges as well as in the [University Archives](#). Each College administers its own records. College contact details are online at <https://map.cam.ac.uk/colleges/>. If you do not know the College of membership of an individual, central University records can act as an initial pointer.

By the fifteenth century, Colleges were beginning to admit and house male students although the University retained responsibility for the awarding of degrees. Colleges therefore may retain information on a student's origins and career after Cambridge while the University retains details of initial enrolment ('matriculation', as it is known) and degrees earned. From the later nineteenth century onwards, College records may also include details of accommodation, teaching and membership of clubs and societies. University records will be confined to formal dates of the start and finish of studies, examinations sat and degrees awarded.

The following notes provide brief guidance on how to start researching an individual's Cambridge connections.

1. Biographical information on students up to 1900 was compiled from original sources in the University and Colleges by John and J. A. Venn, and published as *Alumni Cantabrigienses from the earliest times to 1900* (Cambridge University Press, 1922-54). 10 volumes. This work is also available online – see point (3) below.
2. Women were not admitted to formal membership of the University until 1948, and do not appear in *Alumni Cantabrigienses*. For details of women students before then, researchers should contact the archivists of the two Cambridge colleges open to women, Girton College (www.girton.cam.ac.uk/library/archive-and-special-collections) and Newnham College (www.newn.cam.ac.uk/research/college-archives).
3. Both *Alumni Cantabrigienses* and the admissions registers for Girton and Newnham Colleges up to 1900 are now online as *A Cambridge Alumni Database* (ACAD) at <http://venn.lib.cam.ac.uk/Documents/acad/2018/search-2018.html>. It is possible to limit your search of the database to Christ's College students if you wish.

4. For the period 1901-12, a list of student names, with College of membership and dates of matriculation and graduation only, was published as *The book of matriculations and degrees 1901-1912* (Cambridge University Press, 1915)
5. For the period 1912-42, the same details were recorded, but not published, in "The book of matriculations and degrees, 1912-42" (held in the University Archives, classmark UA Degr.41-3; online description [here](#))
6. For the period ca 1880-ca 1965, student name and College, subjects of study and examination, examination results and dates of matriculation and graduation were inscribed in a series of record cards, but not published (held in the University Archives, classmark: UA Graduati 12-34; online description [here](#)).
7. For the period after ca 1965, when student records cards were computerised, student information is held centrally by the University's Student Registry (email: student.registry@admin.cam.ac.uk).
If your enquiry relates to the period after 1901 and before ca 1965 and you do not know the College of membership of an individual, it is best to write to the University Archives for help (email: archives@lib.cam.ac.uk)

Resources specific to Christ's College

1. Information on students at Christ's up until the start of the twentieth century is contained in John Peile [pronounced "Peel"], *Biographical register of Christ's College 1505-1905 and of the earlier foundation, God's House 1448-1505* (Cambridge University Press, 1910-13). 2 volumes. As well as being available in print, the volumes have been digitized as part of the Internet Archive, at <https://archive.org/stream/biographicalregi01peiluoft#page/n3/mode/2up> (vol. 1) and <https://archive.org/details/biographicalregi02peiluoft> (vol. 2). The best place to start when searching Peile is probably the index, which begins on p. 902 of volume 2.
2. The College's Alumni and Development Office (<https://alumni.christs.cam.ac.uk/>) has a database and other indexes to Christ's alumni. Contact alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk in the first instance. Student-related records held by the Alumni Office start around 1940, and in many cases are minimal in scope.
Put simply: if an alumnus/alumna stayed in touch with the College after graduating, we will potentially have more information about them than about someone who did not. In the latter case, a matriculation record and a record of the subject and class of degree obtained may well be all that we can offer.
3. The Christ's College Archive, stored in the Muniment Room above the Great Gate, mainly comprises material relating to the College's administrative history. Admissions Books covering the period from September 1855 to April 1948, the Admission Book of Fellows and Scholars from 1688 to the present day, as well the Minute Books of certain College Clubs and Societies, are housed in the Archive.