

Addressing Health Pensions Database Readme

Introduction and acknowledgements

This document describes, in brief, the data available from the Addressing Health Data Mapper (<https://data.addressinghealth.org.uk>). It provides details on the origins of the data and descriptions of each variable.

This data can be used for non-commercial purposes only.

When using the data downloaded from the Data Mapper, users must agree to cite the source as follows:

Harry Smith, Douglas Brown, David Green, Ben Jackson, Kathleen McIlvenna, Holly Marley, Laura Newman, Nicola Shelton, and Natasha Preger, *Addressing Health Pensions Data Mapper* (2021), <https://data.addressinghealth.org.uk/>.

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Data sources

The Pensions Database is constructed from four different sources.¹

1. Pension Application Forms held at the Postal Museum in the series POST 1. These forms were submitted by every retiring postal worker who was able to apply for a pension or gratuity; they contain personal details of the worker in question, the cause of their retirement, information on sick and other leave taken and the date of their retirement.
2. Index to these forms, which contain the year of retirement, name, occupation and location of pensioners and gratuitants.
3. Lists of pensions granted and ceased published in the *House of Commons Sessional Papers*. The lists of pensions granted give personal details, cause of retirement, final salary, pension granted and, from the late 1880s onwards, location. The cause of retirement information provided is detailed until 1885 after which they merely distinguish between retirement owing to ill health, old age and for administrative reasons. The lists of pensions ceased provide much of the same information but add the date at which the pension ceased payment and the reason why, usually because the pensioner had died.
4. Death certificates provide information on the date, location and cause of death. Death certificates have been obtained and transcribed only for pensioners retiring in each census year: 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891 and 1901.

¹ Further details on the creation of the database can be found in Harry Smith, ‘Building the Addressing Health Pensions Database’, *Addressing Health Working Paper 1* (2021).

We have gathered all the information from the Index and the Parliamentary Paper lists of pensions granted and ceased for pensioners retiring between 1860 and 1902. We have collected only some of the data from the Pension Application Forms and death certificates. This has two consequences; first, some individuals have more complete data than others. For example, if an individual is currently only known from the Index then they will appear in the database with only information on their location and occupation at retirement, and their year of retirement. Additionally, individuals who retired towards the end of this period are less likely to have had their date of death traced. Furthermore, the Parliamentary Paper lists only include those granted pensions, not those awarded gratuities. The completeness of the database will continue to improve over time as more Pension Application Forms are transcribed. Secondly, the database remains under development and so will change over time as new records are added. As such users should note the date at which they downloaded any data and be aware that it may substantially change subsequent to that date as more data is collected and the accuracy of each entry is refined.

It is important to remember that the information provided in this database related to the pensioner or gratuitants' attributes at the time of retirement or, for some, at the time of death. This is particularly important when considering the location variables; these do not tell you where someone lived, but instead where their place of work was. For most employees, they likely lived close to their place of work. However, in some cases, such as Postal surveyors, workers in the Railway Post Office, their work took them far from their stated location.

Variables

ID

Type: text

Description: unique identifier, derived from their pension application form. It consists of the year of their retirement combined with the volume and page number within the POST 1 series held at the Postal Museum. For example, 18601060395 is the ID of James Jolly, a messenger between Wingham and Ickham in Kent. He retired in 1860 and his pension application form begins on page 395 of volume 106 in the POST 1 series. Page numbers and volume numbers were not available for pensioners in 1900-1902 when the IDs were constructed, as such their IDs simply include the year and a number beginning at 1 and increasing sequentially, for example Elizabeth McDonald's ID is 19000001201, she was the 1201st person listed in the 1900 Index.

Year

Type: numeric

Description: Year an individual's pension application was made.

Surname

Type: text

Description: Surname of the pensioner or gratuitant.

Forename

Type: text

Description: Forename(s) of the pensioner or gratuitant.

Married_Surname

Type: text

Description: Where both the maiden and married surname of a pensioner or gratuitant is known, the maiden name is given under [Surname] and the married surname given here.

Cleaned_Occ

Type: text

Description: The occupation of the pensioner or gratuitant held at the time of their retirement.

Occupation_Cat

Type: text

Description: The category of occupation held by the pensioner or gratuitant. Derived from [Cleaned_Occ]. There are thirteen occupation categories, as follows:

Occupation_Cat
Accounting, banking, registry
Clerks
Engineering, manufacturing, telegraph installation and maintenance
Inspector
Maintenance & estates
Management
Postmaster/postmistress (inc. sub)
Postmen/women/messengers/letter carriers
Sorting & returning
Telegraph
Transport
Undefined postal workers
Unknown

Clean_Place

Type: text

Description: Place of work of the pensioner or gratuitant at the time of their retirement.

Latitude

Type: numeric

Description: Latitude of the place of work, derived from [Clean_Place]. Where more than one place is given the latitude of the first location is used.

Longitude

Type: numeric

Description: Longitude of the place of work, derived from [Clean_Place]. Where more than one place is given the latitude of the first location is used.

Pop_Dens

Type: numeric

Description: The population density of the location given in [Clean_Place] given as people per acre. Where the location is a town (place above 10,000 in England and Wales, or listed as towns in the Scottish or Irish census) then the population density given is that of the town. For everywhere else it is given for the administrative unit the location resides in; in England

and Wales the Registration Sub District population density is given, in Scotland the parish figure, and in Ireland the figure for the Poor Law Union. The figure is given for the closest census year; thus, a pensioner retiring in 1875 has the population density from 1871, someone retiring in 1876 has the density from 1881. All population and area data are taken from the census reports.

Country

Type: text

Description: The country that [Clean_Place] is in; all locations outside of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales are given the value 'Overseas'.

County

Type: text

Description: The county that [Clean_Place] is in. Individuals are placed in the county their place of work was in in the closest census year; for England and Wales registration counties were used.

Place_Cat

Type: type

Description: The urban classification of [Clean_Place]. All towns above 10,000 in population in England and Wales, or listed as towns in the Irish and Scottish census are 'urban'; all other locations with a population density of 0.3 people per acre and above are 'semi-urban'; all other locations are 'rural'. London is a separate category.

Gender_Inferred

Type: text

Description: The gender of the pensioner or gratuitant as inferred from their forename. Some individuals are 'U' where there is not enough information to infer a gender.

Type_of_allowance

Type: text

Description: The kind of retirement award given, whether an individual received a pension ('superannuation') or one-off gratuity.

Cause_of_Retirement

Type: text

Description: The cause of retirement as given in either their Pension Application Form or the Parliamentary Paper list of pensions granted.

Cause_Cat

Type: text

Description: [Cause of retirement] classified according to the Addressing Health project disease classification. There are 14 categories, as follows:

Cause_Cat
Above retirement age
Consumption
Diseases of the circulatory system
Diseases of the digestive system
Diseases of the eye

Cause_Cat
Diseases of the lungs (not consumption)
General debility
Injuries and accidents
Mental health
Other diseases or unspecified
Redundancy
Relative of postal worker
Unknown

Age_at_retirement_years

Type: numeric

Description: Years of age of the pensioner or gratuitant at retirement.

Age_at_retirement_Months

Type: numeric

Description: Where given, the number of months in the latest year of a pensioner's or gratuitant's life For example, someone whose age was given as 49 years and 6 months would have a [Age_at_retirement_Months] value of 6.

Age_at_retirement_days

Type: numeric

Description: Total age of a pensioner or gratuitant given as total days; calculated as $[\text{Age_at_retirement_years}] * 365 + [\text{Age_at_retirement_months}] / 12 * 365$.

Age_at_retirement_cat

Type: text

Description: Age at retirement of the pensioner or gratuitant given in ten-year classes.

Length_of_service_years

Type: numeric

Description: Number of years worked on the Post Office establishment; for some workers unestablished work is included as well.

Length_of_service_months

Type: numeric

Description: Where given, the number of months in the latest year of a pensioner's or gratuitant's work. For example, someone whose length of service age was given as 15 years and 4 months would have a [Length_of_service_months] value of 4.

Length_of_service_days

Type: numeric

Description: Length of service given as total days; calculated as $[\text{Length_of_service_years}] * 365 + [\text{Length_of_service_months}] / 12 * 365$.

Length_of_service_cat

Type: text

Description: Length of service of the pensioner or gratuitant given in ten-year classes.

Salary_Pounds

Type: numeric

Description: Pounds of final salary of the pensioner or gratuitant.

Salary_Shillings

Type: numeric

Description: Shillings of final salary of the pensioner or gratuitant.

Salary_Pence

Type: numeric

Description: Pence of final salary of the pensioner or gratuitant.

Salary_Total_Pence

Type: numeric

Description: Final salary expressed as total pence; calculated as $[\text{Salary_Pounds}] * 240 + [\text{Salary_Shillings}] * 20 + [\text{Salary_Pence}]$.

Allowance_Pounds

Type: numeric

Description: Pounds of final allowance of the pensioner or gratuitant.

Allowance_Shillings

Type: numeric

Description: Shillings of final allowance of the pensioner or gratuitant.

Allowance_Pence

Type: numeric

Description: Pence of final allowance of the pensioner or gratuitant.

Allowance_Total_Pence

Type: numeric

Description: Final allowance expressed as total pence; calculated as $[\text{Allowance_Pounds}] * 240 + [\text{Allowance_Shillings}] * 20 + [\text{Allowance_Pence}]$.

Birth_Year

Type: numeric

Description: Year of birth of the pensioner or gratuitant.

Birth_Cohort

Type: text

Description: Decade of birth of the pensioner or gratuitant, derived from $[\text{Birth_Year}]$.

Date_of_Birth

Type: date

Description: Date of birth given as YYYY-MM-DD.

Retire_Date

Type: date

Description: Date of retirement given as YYYY-MM-DD.

Y1

Type: numeric

Description: First year of sickness data.

Y1_Ordinary

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'ordinary' leave taken in [Y1]. Only given from 1890s onwards; before then only sick and other leave specified.

Y1_Illness

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of sick leave taken in [Y1]

Y1_Other

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'other' leave taken in [Y1]

Y2

Type: numeric

Description: First year of sickness data.

Y2_Ordinary

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'ordinary' leave taken in [Y2]. Only given from 1890s onwards; before then only sick and other leave specified.

Y2_Illness

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of sick leave taken in [Y2]

Y2_Other

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'other' leave taken in [Y2]

Y3

Type: numeric

Description: First year of sickness data.

Y3_Ordinary

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'ordinary' leave taken in [Y3]. Only given from 1890s onwards; before then only sick and other leave specified.

Y3_Illness

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of sick leave taken in [Y3]

Y3_Other

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'other' leave taken in [Y3]

Y4

Type: numeric

Description: First year of sickness data.

Y4_Ordinary

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'ordinary' leave taken in [Y4]. Only given from 1890s onwards; before then only sick and other leave specified.

Y4_Illness

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of sick leave taken in [Y4]

Y4_Other

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'other' leave taken in [Y4]

Y5

Type: numeric

Description: First year of sickness data.

Y5_Ordinary

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'ordinary' leave taken in [Y5]. Only given from 1890s onwards; before then only sick and other leave specified.

Y5_Illness

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of sick leave taken in [Y5]

Y5_Other

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'other' leave taken in [Y5]

Y6

Type: numeric

Description: First year of sickness data.

Y6_Ordinary

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'ordinary' leave taken in [Y6]. Only given from 1890s onwards; before then only sick and other leave specified.

Y6_Illness

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of sick leave taken in [Y6]

Y6_Other

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of ‘other’ leave taken in [Y6]

Y7

Type: numeric

Description: First year of sickness data.

Y7_Ordinary

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of ‘ordinary’ leave taken in [Y7]. Only given from 1890s onwards; before then only sick and other leave specified.

Y7_Illness

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of sick leave taken in [Y7]

Y7_Other

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of ‘other’ leave taken in [Y7]

Y8

Type: numeric

Description: First year of sickness data.

Y8_Ordinary

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of ‘ordinary’ leave taken in [Y8]. Only given from 1890s onwards; before then only sick and other leave specified.

Y8_Illness

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of sick leave taken in [Y8]

Y8_Other

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of ‘other’ leave taken in [Y8]

Y9

Type: numeric

Description: First year of sickness data.

Y9_Ordinary

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of ‘ordinary’ leave taken in [Y9]. Only given from 1890s onwards; before then only sick and other leave specified.

Y9_Illness

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of sick leave taken in [Y9]

Y9_Other

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'other' leave taken in [Y9]

Y10

Type: numeric

Description: First year of sickness data.

Y10_Ordinary

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'ordinary' leave taken in [Y10]. Only given from 1890s onwards; before then only sick and other leave specified.

Y10_Illness

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of sick leave taken in [Y10]

Y10_Other

Type: numeric

Description: Number of days of 'other' leave taken in [Y10]

Illness_Days_Total

Type: numeric

Description: Total number of days off sick in the ten years prior to retirement. Note that for individuals receiving a gratuity, the total number of years worked was less than ten.

Other_Days_Total

Type: numeric

Description: Total number of days of 'other' and 'ordinary' leave taken in the ten years prior to retirement. Note that for individuals receiving a gratuity, the total number of years worked was less than ten.

Mean_Illness

Type: numeric

Description: Mean days of sick leave per year. Calculated by dividing [Illness_Days_Total] by the number of years for which data was given.

Mean_Other

Type: numeric

Description: Description: Mean days of other leave per year. Calculated by dividing [Other_Days_Total] by the number of years for which data was given.

Year_Allowance_Ceased

Type: numeric

Description: Year in which a pensioner's pension stopped being paid.

Cause_Allowance_Ceased

Type: text

Description: Reason why a pensioner's pension stopped being paid.

Year_of_death

Type: numeric
Description: Year in which a pensioner or gratuitant died.

Year_of_death_cat

Type: text
Description: Decade in which a pensioner or gratuitant died, derived from [Year_of_death].

Date_of_Death

Type: date
Description: Date of a pensioner or gratuitant's death, given as YYYY-MM-DD.

Death_Location

Type: text
Description: Location of a pensioner or gratuitant at the time of their death.

Death_Latitude

Type: numeric
Description: Latitude of [Death_Location].

Death_Longitude

Type: numeric
Description: Longitude of [Death_Location].

Age_at_death_years

Type: numeric
Description: Age at death given in years.

Age_at_death_days

Type: numeric
Description: Age at death given in days, calculated as [Age_at_death_years]*365.

Age_at_death_cat

Type: text
Description: [Age_at_death_years] given in ten-year classes.

Longevity_post_retirement_years

Type: numeric
Description: Number of years a pensioner or gratuitant survived after retirement. Calculated by [Year_of_Death]-[Year].

Longevity_cat

Type: text
Description: [Longevity_post_retirement_years] given in ten-year classes.

Occupation_at_Death

Type: text
Description: Occupation of the pensioner or gratuitant stated on the death.

Cause_of_Death1

Type: text

Description: First cause of death of a pensioner or gratuitant as given on their death certificate.

Cause_of_Death2

Type: text

Description: Second cause of death of a pensioner or gratuitant where given on their death certificate.

Cause_of_Death3

Type: text

Description: Third cause of death of a pensioner or gratuitant where given on their death certificate.

Cause_of_Death4

Type: text

Description: Fourth cause of death of a pensioner or gratuitant where given on their death certificate.

Cause_Death1_Cat

Type: text

Description: [Cause_of_Death1] as classified according to the Addressing Health project disease classification. See [Cause_Cat] for the categories.

Cause_Death2_Cat

Type: text

Description: [Cause_of_Death2] as classified according to the Addressing Health project disease classification. See [Cause_Cat] for the categories.

Cause_Death3_Cat

Type: text

Description: [Cause_of_Death3] as classified according to the Addressing Health project disease classification. See [Cause_Cat] for the categories.

Cause_Death4_Cat

Type: text

Description: [Cause_of_Death4] as classified according to the Addressing Health project disease classification. See [Cause_Cat] for the categories.