

# Sources for researching the history of Sheffield's Italian community



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Front cover illustrations:

Giovani, Lucianna, Antonio, Andermucci and Alphonse Fergioni, 1905  
(*Sheffield Local Studies: Picture Sheffield: v05087*)

La Casina Bianca, Italian Restaurant, No. 74 Abbeydale Road, 1974  
(*Sheffield Local Studies Library: Picture Sheffield: y08931*)

Theresa Caira (nee Marcontonio), Achille Caira Ice Cream Cart, 1960s  
(*Sheffield Local Studies: Picture Sheffield: v03901*)

You can download a copy of this *Guide* from  
[www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives)

## **Disclaimer**

Please note that many of the web links in this document take you to external websites. We take no responsibility for their content, nor do we accept responsibility for any loss or damage resulting from the use of any information in this guide.

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## Introduction

This booklet lists sources available within Sheffield City Archives and Local Studies Library for the study Sheffield's Italian community.

This *Guide* is not a detailed study of the history of the Italian community in Sheffield. It merely points the reader who wishes to carry out their own research to what is available within Sheffield Libraries and Archives.

As more items are catalogued and the collections are used by researchers it is likely that additional references will come to light. More detailed searching of our catalogues for a wide range of terms may reveal additional material.

Many of the records detailed below are available online via Ancestry.com and FindMyPast.



Both websites are free to use at all of Sheffield City Council's libraries and at the City Archives.

## Timeline showing key dates

1820s	Increase in migration to the UK from Italy for economic reasons
1836	Francis Anzani, cabinet maker, trading in Sheffield (the Bazaar market, South Street, Moor) <sup>1</sup>
1844	San Martino, a native of Sardinia, a teacher of the Italian language, living in Sheffield <sup>2</sup>
1856	St Vincent's Catholic Church, Solly Street, Sheffield opened
1860s	West Bar area of Sheffield known as Little Italy
1863	Catholic Burial Ground at Rivelin Glen, Sheffield, opened
1901	The census records Sheffield's population as 381,000. 269 had been born in Italy.
c. 1962/3	Miss M Fantozzi believed to have opened the first Italian 'dining room' in Sheffield (at 24 Shalesmoor)
1963	First reference to an Italian restaurant listed in Sheffield's telephone directory – <i>La Favorita Espresso Rietorante</i> [sic], 22 Carver Street <sup>3</sup>
1996	St Vincent's Catholic Church closed
2001	A new St Vincent's Catholic Church opened (Pickmere Road)
2013	Plaque commemorating the city's Italian community unveiled at St Vincent's church

<sup>1</sup> *Sheffield Iris*, 12 Jan 1836 (page 2)

<sup>2</sup> *Sheffield Independent*, 25 May 1844 (page 5)

<sup>3</sup> *Sheffield and District Classified Telephone Directory*, May 1963 (Sheffield Local Studies Library: 914.274 SQ)

## List of documents, books, photographs and other items available at Sheffield City Archives and Local Studies Library

### Books

Price, David, *Welcome to Sheffield: A Migration History* (Ald Design and Print, 2018) (Sheffield Local Studies Library: 304.82 S)

Telling, Richard, *A Typology of Next Generation Employment Preferences in Family Businesses* (unpublished thesis, 2017)

This thesis refers to Italian families in the catering sector in Sheffield. (Sheffield Local Studies Library: 306.8 E)

### Cemeteries

Cemetery burial registers may record Italians being buried in Sheffield. For a list of cemetery registers available at Sheffield City Archives check the collections section at [www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives)

### Churches

The City Archives and Local Studies Library hold a large number of archives and printed items such as newsletters, etc. from churches and chapels; some of which may have been attended by members of the Italian community (for example, St Vincent's Catholic church from 1853 onwards).

For a detailed list of church records (including Catholic churches) at the City Archives check the collections section at [www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives)

### Census returns and population statistics

A UK population census has been undertaken every 10 years since 1801 (with the exception of 1941). Census returns record details of every citizen including name, address, age, marital status and birthplace. You can search these at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk) and [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk). They are kept confidential for 100 years so the latest you can see is 1921.

Examples of Italians living in Sheffield in 1881 include:

- Antonia Janini, lodger, hawker of Italy (25 Spring Street lodging houses)
- Augusto Camino, clerk foreign correspondent of Turin (95 William Street)
- Antonio Zanelli, labourer in steel works of Italy (44 Zion Lane)
- Lazarus Paldera, naturalist of Tuscan [sic], Italy (114 Allen Street)
- Francisco Balleni, toilet maker (cutler) of Domingo, Italy (99 Bard Street)
- John Vinezze, night watchman of Italy (Court 1, 1 Carlisle Street)

- Louis Cuneo organ grinder and Columbia Cuneo, wife, both of Italy (44 and 42 Copper Street) along with 11 Italian lodgers (all organ grinders)
- Peter Barretta, railway spring maker (unemployed) of Italy (114 Ellesmere Road)
- William Pessino, ice cream maker and Mary his wife, both of Italy (19 and 21 Furnace Hill) along with 5 Italian lodgers (all organ grinders)
- Joseph Menta gasworks labourer, of Italy (18 Harvest Lane)
- Soina family plus lodger (all musicians of Italy) (17 court, 1 Lambert Street)
- George Valliery, musician, and brother, Salvator Valliery, both of Italy (11 court, 4 Lambert Street)
- Andrew Cuneo, gardener of Italy (41 Lambert Street)
- Domenico Copperlo and 8 lodgers, all musicians of Italy (9 Lumbs Square)
- Giovanni Ferrario, looking glass maker (carver and gilder) of Italy (17 Penley Street)
- Peter Zonone, traveller of Turin, Italy (95 Porter Street)
- Bortolames Feiria 'mercant glazo' of Parma, Italy (22 Smithfield)
- Antonio Federici 'mercant glazo' of Parma, Italy and numerous Italian musicians from Parma, Italy (22 Smithfield)

The 1939 Register (containing details of every resident in the UK) is also available via [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk)

Published statistical reports, which include data on ethnic origin (but not generally broken down by nationality), are available up to the latest census (2021). Copies of statistical reports to 1991 are available at the Reference and Information and Local Studies libraries in the Central Library. Later ones are available online.

## Electoral Registers

Many UK electoral registers from c. 1832 onwards are available to search on FindMyPast [England & Wales Electoral Registers 1832-1932 | findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) and also Ancestry.com [UK, Electoral Registers, 2003-2010 | Ancestry®](http://www.ancestry.com)

UK electoral registers (edited versions) from 2002 onwards are available to search online on a number of websites including [Search for People, Businesses and Places - 192.com](http://www.searchforpeople.com)

Registers for Sheffield (c. 1841 onwards) are available at Sheffield Local Studies Library. For more information see [Electoral Registers archive \(sheffield.gov.uk\)](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk)

- There were no registers compiled between 1914-1920 or between 1939-1945.
- Until 1969 you had to be aged 21 to be on the register. After that date, those aged 18 were included.
- From 2002 onwards people could opt out from the published version for privacy reasons.

## Emigration / Immigration

You can search the Board of Trade lists of passengers arriving in the UK (1878 - 1960) on [UK and Ireland, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960 | Ancestry®](#) and [Passenger Lists Leaving UK 1890-1960 | findmypast.co.uk](#)

You can search the Board of Trade lists of passengers leaving the UK (1890 - 1960) on [UK and Ireland, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960 | Ancestry®](#)

Note: there are no passenger lists after 1960 and there are no passenger lists for people arriving in the UK by air.

Immigrants / non-British citizens were often referred to as 'aliens'. Certificates of alien arrivals and returns (1810-1869) are available on Ancestry.com. You can search them here: [England, Alien Arrivals, 1810-1811, 1826-1869 | Ancestry®](#). You can also search Aliens Entry Books, 1794 - 1921 [UK, Aliens Entry Books, 1794-1921 | Ancestry®](#)

Sheffield City Archives has registers of aliens for Sheffield and Rotherham, 1947-1997 (ref. 2004/79) but you need special permission to access these. Contact us for further details.

For further information see the National Archives guides [Emigration and emigrants - The National Archives](#) and [Immigration and immigrants - The National Archives](#)

Sheffield Local Studies Library and the City Archives have a useful book by Roger Kershaw, *Immigrants and Aliens - A Guide to Sources on UK Immigration and Citizenship* (The National Archives, 2004)  
(*Sheffield City Archives: 929.341 S; Sheffield City Archives: KER/FAM TREE*)

## Miscellaneous

National Coal Board (British Coal Corporation), North Eastern and Yorkshire Division, Public Relations Branch on statistics including: number of foreign workers down pits: 'Poles, EVWs (European Voluntary Workers from Germany) and Italians', c. 1940s - 1950s  
(*Sheffield City Archives: BCC/12/3/4*)

Sheffield Constabulary charge book, 1846 - 1848  
includes reference to Italian music boy, 20 Jun 1846.  
(*Sheffield City Archives: SY295/7/1/3*)

LEA Forms 7(i), Returns of Immigrant Pupils in Primary, Secondary and Special schools, 1969  
Statistical information including country of origin of school pupils (incl. Italy)  
(*Sheffield City Archives: CA764/1*)



## Name indexes

References to Italians in Sheffield will be spread across a wide range of records – schools, churches, courts, prisons, businesses and hospitals etc. A small percentage of these records have been indexed by name. This index is available to search on FindMyPast here: <https://bit.ly/3dYIWwR>

Entries in the name index can be cross referenced with census returns, newspapers and electoral registers to find out more about the individuals and other family members.

A few examples from the name index include:

- Filomena Fantuzzi, charged with playing an organ and obstructing the footpath in 1897  
(*Sheffield City Archives: Magistrates Court Register MC/2/12*)
- Marzillis Gabrialli, 33-year-old ice cream maker, admitted to South Yorkshire asylum, 1898  
(*Sheffield City Archives: NHS3/5/1/12 case 5054*)
- Joseph Monfredi, charged with obstructing the street with an ice cream cart, 1899  
(*Sheffield City Archives: Magistrates Court Register MC/2/14*)
- Angelo Pizanno, charged with being drunk and disorderly, 1847  
(*Sheffield City Archives: Police Charge Book: SY295/7/1/3*)
- Vincenzo Pizzute, charged with storing ice likely to infect or contaminate ice cream, 1902  
(*Sheffield City Archives: Magistrates Court Register MC/2/18*)

Another useful name index to Sheffield records is available <https://www.sheffieldindexers.com/>

## Naturalisation

The *London, Edinburgh and Belfast Gazettes* record details of naturalisation and changes of name. They can be searched online [London, Edinburgh and Belfast Gazettes Online - GenGuide](#)

Naturalisation case papers 1801-1871 (naturalisation petitions completed by individuals applying to become British citizens between 1801 and 1871) are searchable online: [Naturalisation case papers 1801-1871 - The National Archives](#)

You can request a search of certificates of British citizenship 1949-1986 via the National Archives [Request a search for a certificate of British citizenship 1949-1986 - Contact us \(nationalarchives.gov.uk\)](#)

For further information see [Naturalisation, registration and British citizenship - The National Archives](#)

## Newspapers

The British Library British Newspaper Archive (BNA) website includes over forty-six million pages from over 700 UK national and local newspapers (including a number of Sheffield titles, 1819 - c.1950). [Home | Search the archive | British Newspaper Archive](#). Access to the British Newspaper Archive is free at every Sheffield City Council Library and at the City Archives.

An example of a relevant article:

- 33 Italian strikers at the national Coal Board briquetting plant at Waleswood sent home, *Sheffield Telegraph*, 13 Mar 1952 (page 1)

Sheffield Local Studies Library local newspaper cuttings collection may include articles on Italians in Sheffield, c. 1950s onwards  
(*Sheffield Local Studies Library: microfiche*)

In addition, microfilms of the main Sheffield titles are also available at Sheffield Local Studies Library, namely: *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 1855 - 1986; *Sheffield Telegraph* (weekly) 1989 - date; *Sheffield Independent* 1819 - 1938 and the *Star* 1873 - date

Archives of some national newspapers are available on the internet, notably *The Times* ([The Times Digital Archive \(gale.com\)](#)) and *The Guardian* ([How to access past articles from the Guardian and Observer archive | Information | The Guardian](#))

## Photographs

Over 100,000 images from the Sheffield Local Studies Library and City Archives photographic collections are available to search online at [www.picturesheffield.com](http://www.picturesheffield.com).

## Rate Books

Rate books were compiled in order to keep a record of local people's rate assessment. Rates were based on an assessment of the yearly value of a property (i.e., the annual rental /rent) and were levied to pay for local services. The ratepayer was the person responsible for paying the local taxes and could be the owner or occupier of the property.

The information contained in rate books varies according to the date and type of rate collected, but rate books generally record the names of ratepayers, listed by street, and include the following details:

- Street
- House/Court number
- Name of occupier (head of household only)

- Name of owner
- Rates (amount due, received, arrears, etc.)

Some rate books from the 19<sup>th</sup> century up to 1974 are available at Sheffield City Archives. For more information see [Rate books \(sheffield.gov.uk\)](https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/rate-books)

### **School Records**

School admission registers can be useful for studying settlement patterns in the city. Sheffield City Archives has such records for over 200 schools dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Records from Roman Catholic schools may be worth checking. For example, there are admission registers and teacher's logbooks for St Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic school from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards (*Sheffield City Archives: HDR acc. 1989/75*)

For a detailed list of school records at the City Archives check the collections section at [www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives](https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives). Contact us for further information on how to access these items.

### **Trade directories / telephone directories**

Trade directories from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards list businesses and private residents in Sheffield. Those from the 1820s onwards in particular may list Italian families / businesses. Similarly, telephone directories of private residents and the Yellow Pages for businesses may reveal relevant references.  
(*Sheffield Local Studies Library and Sheffield City Archives*)

## Library and Archive collections held elsewhere

The National Archives holds documents of the UK Government. A search of their catalogue <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/> may reveal particularly relevant files.

The Archives Hub contains catalogues describing archives held in universities and colleges in the UK <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/>

## Useful Websites (all accessed October 2022)

[HOME PAGE \(anglo-italianfhs.org.uk\)](http://anglo-italianfhs.org.uk)

<https://westbaritalians.co.uk/>

[I reunited the descendants of Sheffield's Little Italy community | Who Do You Think You Are Magazine \(https://www.whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com/real-stories/reunited-descendants-sheffield-little-italy/\)](https://www.whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com/real-stories/reunited-descendants-sheffield-little-italy/)

## **Local Studies Library and Sheffield City Archives Facilities**

Sheffield City Archives and Local Studies services collect and preserve original records and printed material relating to Sheffield and the surrounding area.

The information dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century to the present and relates to Sheffield, South Yorkshire and north Derbyshire.

Included are extensive collections of books • pamphlets • photographs • church registers • newspapers • census records • minutes • diaries • films • maps • deeds • records from schools • hospitals • businesses and charities • family estates • personal papers etc.

Our facilities include:

- Study areas
- Expert staff on hand to help you make the most of your visit
- Library of reference books
- Photocopying and photography services
- Free Wi-Fi
- Free access to Ancestry and FindMyPast
- Microform machines and printers
- Catalogues and indexes
- CD-Rom library
- On-line image library

### **Adding to our collections**

Sheffield Libraries and Archives seeks to preserve information about events in our city's history. If you have photographs or personal papers that may be worth preserving, please consider safeguarding them for current and future generations by placing them in the care of Sheffield Libraries and Archives. It is only through the generosity of individuals and organisations that we are able to have a complete record of important events in the history of Sheffield and the nation. We are interested in photographs, flyers and posters, minutes of meetings etc. For advice on record keeping and the facilities we offer please email us ([archives@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:archives@sheffield.gov.uk) or telephone 0114 203 9395).

## Contact Details

### Sheffield Local Studies Library

1<sup>st</sup> floor  
Central Library  
Surrey Street  
Sheffield  
S1 1XZ

Tel: 0114 273 4753

Email: [archives@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:archives@sheffield.gov.uk)

### Sheffield City Archives

52 Shoreham Street  
Sheffield  
S1 4SP

Tel: 0114 203 9395

Email: [archives@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:archives@sheffield.gov.uk)

Website: [www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives)

Search our catalogues:

*(not all of the collections are fully catalogued so if you can't find what you are looking for please contact us for further advice)*

Local Studies Library catalogue: [https://library.sheffield.gov.uk/client/en\\_GB/default](https://library.sheffield.gov.uk/client/en_GB/default)

City Archives catalogue: <http://www.calmview.eu/SheffieldArchives/CalmView/>

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View some of our photographs on Flickr [www.flickr.com/photos/shefflibraries](http://www.flickr.com/photos/shefflibraries)