

## **PRIMARY SOURCES FOR SCOTTISH GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH**

### **THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS**

<https://www.familysearch.org/>

The LDS Church has extensive Scottish records available for those researching their Scottish roots.

By far the best place access these records is the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. There all the microfilms, fiche, CDs, books, and maps are available. Printer/scanner equipment is available to facilitate transfer of images to personal memory sticks.

If you are unable to travel to Salt Lake City, then the Local Family Search Centers are an alternative. There most of the CDs are available, plus some fiche and microfilm ordered by other patrons may be found. All of the microfilms and fiche can be ordered into the library, but there is a cost to order a film.

NOTE: The BCGS Walter Draycott Library and Resource Centre can also order films in from the LDS library at Salt Lake City.

Of particular interest are:

- **SCOTTISH CHURCH RECORDS CD**

This CD contains records of baptisms and marriages for the period prior to civil registration. Although the content is very similar to that found in the International Genealogical Index, my experience has found that there are some differences to the content. This CD is available at any Family Search Centre.

- **INTERNATIONAL GENEALOGICAL INDEX**

International Genealogical Index is a database that holds information on births, baptisms, christenings and marriages. The records don't hold death certificates. The IGI as such is not a source, however it does provide the information such as film, frame or reference number to allow you to view the record indexed in the IGI. The IGI can be searched on-line at no cost. The IGI also contains index records for the Scottish civil registration records of births and marriages between 1855 and 1875 held by the LDS.

[http://www.familysearch.org/eng/search/frameset\\_search.asp](http://www.familysearch.org/eng/search/frameset_search.asp)

The LDS church is currently in the process of rolling out a new web-site. From my personal experience, the new site does not provide any where near the functionality to search Scottish records as that provided by the existing IGI search screens.

- **1881 BRITISH CENSUS AND NATIONAL INDEX**

This set of CDs contains a transcription of the 1881 census of Scotland on two CDs. Although a transcription, it contains all the information that is found on the original record. These CDs are

available for purchase through the Family History Library and are at the BCGS Library or at any LDS Family Search Center.

Two other useful repositories on the 'old' Family Search website are:

- **ANCESTRAL FILE** – consisting of genealogical information taken from Pedigree Charts and Family Group Records submitted to the Family History Library. The information has not been verified.
- **PEDIGREE RESOURCE FILE** – Consisting of database of records available on compact disc containing family history records submitted by individuals through Family Search Internet Genealogy Service.

## **SCOTLANDSPEOPLE WEBSITE**

<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>

ScotlandsPeople is the result of a partnership between the General Register Office for Scotland, the National Archives of Scotland and the Court of the Lord Lyon to make more Scottish genealogical records from New Register House searchable online.

This site is a pay for use site. Viewing search results and certificates require credits. One page of search results (25 entries) costs one credit to view. One certificate costs five credits to view. All searches and certificates can be saved on the site and reviewed at no additional cost. For £7 (about \$11.00) you get 30 credits and access for one year. Unused credits do not disappear after the year, but another 30 must be purchased to reactivate your access.

At present the database contains entries for:

### **STATUTORY REGISTERS**

The statutory registers contain the official records of births, deaths and marriages for Scotland since civil registration was established on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1855. All records up to 2006 have been indexed and the index information will be returned in the results of search queries.

- **BIRTHS** – contains index entries of births from 1855 until 2006. Images of births from 1855 to 1910 are available for viewing on the site.
- **MARRIAGES** – contains index entries of marriages from 1855 until 2006. Images of births from 1855 to 1935 are available for viewing on the site.
- **DEATHS** – contains entries of births from 1855 until 2009. Images of deaths from 1855 to 1960 are available for viewing on the site.

### **OLD PARISH REGISTERS**

The old parish registers contain information on

- **BIRTHS/CHRISTENING**
- **BANNS/MARRIAGES**
- **DEATHS/BURIALS**

The information was from the registers of the Church of Scotland parish churches. The earliest records are from 1538 but vary from parish to parish. The records ended in 1854 with the initiation of civil registration. The content of the information can vary and most entries contain very little detail not present in the index entry.

### **CATHOLIC REGISTERS**

The catholic parish registers contain information on

- **BIRTHS/CHRISTENING**
- **BANNS/MARRIAGES**
- **DEATHS/BURIALS**
- **OTHER EVENTS** – Communicants, Confirmation, and Confessions, Seat Rents, Etc.

The information was from the parishes in existence by 1855. Record content varied over time with the responsibility of gathering information placed on the parish priest. Record keeping varied enormously from parish to parish. As a result the information may contain little detail. Most of the records begin in the 1790's.

### **CENSUS RECORDS**

The census records have been taken every ten years since 1801. The census prior to 1841 did not record individual names. The census records the details of a family and anyone who resided with the family on the night of the census. Of note, the 1911 census asked the wife the length of their marriage and the number of children born alive and still living.

### **VALUATION ROLLS**

Currently, the valuation rolls for 1915 are available. Over time the remaining rolls will be added to the site. Valuation rolls list every house or piece of ground, along with the names and designations of the proprietor, tenant and occupier, plus the annual rental value. Valuation rolls do not, as a rule name any other occupiers of the property.

### **WILLS & TESTAMENTS**

The wills and testaments index contains entries to Scottish wills and testaments from 1511 to 1901. There is no legal requirement to have a will. Searching this index is free. To view any will, testament or inventory, the cost is £5.

### **COATS OF ARMS**

The website provides access to digital images of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland from 1672 to 1907. These entries can contain significant amounts of genealogical information. The earliest records generally contain less information than those of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Again searching the indexes is free. To view any image, the cost is £10.

## **ANCESTRY**

Ancestry is a pay to use website that contains some very useful historical records for Scottish genealogical research. Since Ancestry is effectively in competition with ScotlandsPeople they do not generally have access to images of records under the copyright of the General Record Office for Scotland such as census records. They do however have extensive database collections covering

- Census Records – consisting of transcriptions of the 1841 – 1901 Scottish censuses. The quality of the transcriptions is variable but is a useful adjunct to the records available on ScotlandsPeople
- Birth, Marriage, and Death
- Immigration and Travel
- Military
- Directories
- Courts (Tax, Criminal, Land, and Wills)
- Reference dictionaries and Almanacs
- Publications & Newspapers

## **VISITING EDINBURGH**

### **SCOTLANDSPEOPLE CENTRE (FORMERLY NEW REGISTER HOUSE)**

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/>

This is home to the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) and is situated in Edinburgh. If you require information not contained in the Scotland's People online database, you may need to visit the building itself. There is currently a £15 daily charge. As well as all the physical records listed in the Scotland's People database above, New Register House contains:

- Census returns for 1841 – Army, Navy and Air Force Registers
- Register of Divorced (from 1984). Records names of parties, date and place of marriage and divorce and any provisions made.
- Register of Neglected Entries from 1801 – 1854. These are births, deaths and marriages that have been proved to have occurred but were not recorded in the OPRs.
- Adopted Children Register. The earliest entry is 1909.
- Scottish births, deaths and marriages occurring outside Scotland.

### **NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND**

<http://www.nls.uk/>

This is Scotland's largest reference library. Under the 1710 copyright act they have a legal claim to a copy of every book published in Britain. Over the centuries they have added to the

collections through purchase and donation. Registration is required to enter their reading rooms. Among other items their collection contains:

- Scottish Historical clubs and societies (from the 19th century)
- State papers
- Electoral Registers – a list of voters
- Military listings
- Graduation rolls
- Emigration (they have passenger lists and info from the mid 16th century)
- Newspapers – some going as far back to the 18th century
- Social and local history info
- Maps

#### **NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF SCOTLAND**

<http://www.nas.gov.uk/>

As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 the National Archives of Scotland has merged with General Record Office for Scotland to become the National Records for Scotland. The archive holds a very varied collection of records from the 12th century to the present day.

- Formal records from places like the law courts, land transfers, estate papers, church records.
- The register of wills and testaments from as far back as the 16th century
- The register of Sasines from 1617, which records the transfer of land and property
- Newspapers
- Valuation of Rolls – list of properties and land, and the names of the owners and tenants.
- Services of heirs and Retours of heirs – which gives proof of heirs.

### **OTHER SCOTTISH SOURCES**

Having accessed the records at the main libraries in Scotland, you may need to hunt deeper for the information you need. The same rules of research apply: know what it is you're trying to find and keep a note of everything.

#### **MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS**

[www.scotsgenealogy.com](http://www.scotsgenealogy.com)

These are recordings of the details of gravestone information. Not everyone could afford a gravestone. Many stones have fallen or are weathered, and are now unreadable. The Scottish Genealogy Society has the largest collection of Scottish monumental inscriptions in the world.

#### **MILITARY HISTORY**

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/looking-for-person/default.htm>

All British Army regiment records are kept in the National Archives at Kew. You will need to have information about the regiment served and when they served in it.

#### **FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETIES**

<http://www.genuki.org.uk/Societies/Scotland.html>

There are many societies throughout Scotland that gather information about their own area: monumental inscriptions, census, books etc. They have very eclectic records, with everything from where a house used to be, to names of people transported for wrong-doings. The Scottish Association of Family History Societies has a list of Scottish, English and Overseas societies.

#### **ECCLESIASTICAL RECORDS**

*Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae* is a list of ministers from the Established Church of Scotland. You can find this at main libraries. Scottish Catholic Archives are at 16 Drummond Place Edinburgh, EH3 6PL The Jewish Archive Centre can be contacted at 0141 332 4911. Episcopalian Records are held by each individual parish.

## **WEB GUIDE**

The following sites may provide additional sources for further research.

#### **SCOTTISH ARCHIVE NETWORK**

<http://www.scan.org.uk/>

The Scottish Archive Network website provides a portal which allows you to search the electronic catalogues of more than 50 Scottish archives. - over 20,000 collections of historical records.

#### **SCOTS ORIGINS**

<http://www.scotsorigins.com/>

Scots Origins is source of genealogical data for Scotland.

#### **DECEASED ONLINE**

<http://www.deceasedonline.com/>

Deceased Online contains burial and cremation registers for the UK and Republic of Ireland. Records are being continually added as burial authorities and crematoria join. This is a pay to view site, although searching is free.

#### **PUBLIC LIBRARIES ONLINE**

<http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/town/square/ac940/weblibs.html>

This site provides a comprehensive portal listing all of British public libraries alphabetically.

#### **SCOTTISH LIBRARIES ONLINE**

<http://www.scotlandsinformation.com/slir/>

SLIR Online is the web version of Scottish Library and Information Resources. It provides addresses and contact details of libraries and other information services located in Scotland.

#### **ANCESTRAL SCOTLAND**

<http://www.ancestralscotland.com/>

A site containing useful hints, features, ancestral and surname searches, which links into the ScotlandsPeople database.

#### **NEWSPAPERS IN SCOTLAND**

<http://scottishnewspapers.com/>

Newspapers can prove to be very beneficial. There are many great Newspapers available in Scotland - both regional or town papers as well as papers with a country-wide circulation. The site provides a portal to Scottish newspapers from the Borders to the Shetland Islands and everywhere in between.

## **LOCAL SOURCES**

Although many of the Scottish sources are by definition located in Scotland, not all the information we are seeking may be found in a Scottish resources. If your ancestor came to Canada by boat, then they may be found in the Passenger Lists which can be found in the Cloverdale branch of the Surrey Library. Likewise, if they died in British Columbia, then the death certificate will not be found at the General Records Office in Edinburgh, but rather at the Vital Statistics Branch of the Government of British Columbia. So just because we are researching Scottish Ancestors, do not assume that Scotland is the only country that contains Scotsmen. Their's mair oot than in.

#### **BRITISH COLUMBIA VITAL EVENTS INDEX**

[http://www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca/textual/governmt/vstats/v\\_events.htm#indexes](http://www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca/textual/governmt/vstats/v_events.htm#indexes)

The British Columbia Archives' **Vital Events** Indexes page contains summary information on **historical births, deaths and marriages** that were submitted to Vital Statistics Registrars and registered by the Chief Executive Officer.

#### **VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY**

<http://www.vpl.vancouver.bc.ca/branches/LibrarySquare/>

The VPL genealogical collection focuses on Canadian resources, most genealogy materials relating to the British Isles are secondary rather than primary. However, there are many resources that can help lay the groundwork and further your search for information about Scottish ancestors. The Library also receives British genealogy magazines, and subscribes to several relevant databases.

#### **SURREY PUBLIC LIBRARY – CLOVERDALE BRANCH**

<http://www.spl.surrey.bc.ca/Programs+and+Services/Genealogy/default.htm>

The Surrey Public Library's Canadian Genealogical Collection is housed at the Cloverdale Branch.

Once research has reached the point of entry into Canada, ships' passenger lists provide extremely valuable genealogical information such as names of people in the party, ages, sex, occupations, destination and sometimes the origin of the immigrant.

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR SCOTTISH STUDIES**

<http://www.sfu.ca/scottish/>

The Centre for Scottish Studies at Simon Fraser University provides a focal point for faculty, students and members of the community interested in exploring Scottish history and culture. The Centre for Scottish Studies presents Scottish Enlightenment and Emigration – Lectures.

**UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**

<http://www.library.ubc.ca/spcoll/>

The University of British Columbia Library, [Rare Books and Special Collections](#) has a wide variety of primary and secondary resources that may be useful for genealogical researchers, in particular, the [BC Voters Lists](#), [City Directories](#), and [more than 400 manuscript collections](#).