



GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE *for* SCOTLAND *information about Scotland's people*



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LIST OF MAIN RECORDS HELD BY THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE FOR SCOTLAND

Old parish registers (1553 to 1854) Before the introduction of compulsory civil registration in 1855, parish ministers or session clerks of the established Church of Scotland in some 900 parishes kept these registers, which record births and baptisms; proclamations of banns and marriages; and deaths and burials. The surviving registers are far from complete. Some parishes' earliest register dates from the early 19th century, and for other parishes there are no registers at all. The standard of record-keeping also varied. **Most entries contain relatively little information.**

Register of neglected entries (1801 to 1854) Births, deaths and marriages proved to have occurred in Scotland between 1801 and 1854 but which had not been entered in the old parish registers.

Registers of births, deaths and marriages (from 1855) The statutory civil registers of events which took place in Scotland, which district registrars have compiled since 1 January 1855.

Register of still-births (from 1939) Compiled by district registrars for still-births occurring in Scotland. These are not open for the public and we issue extracts only in exceptional circumstances.

Adopted children register (from 1930) Register of persons adopted under orders made by Scottish courts. There are no entries relating to persons born before October 1909.

Register of divorces (from May 1984) Register of divorces granted by Scottish courts.

Register of Civil Partnerships (from December 2005) Statutory civil registers, which district registrars have compiled since December 2005.

Register of Dissolutions of Civil Partnership (from December 2005) Register of Dissolutions of Civil Partnerships granted by Scottish courts.

Marine register of births and deaths (from 1855) and Air register (from 1948) Births and deaths on British-registered merchant vessels at sea or in British-registered aircraft in any part of the world, where it appears that one of the child's parents or the deceased person was usually resident in Scotland.

Service records (from 1881) These include **Army Returns** of births, deaths and marriages of Scottish persons at military stations abroad during the period 1881-1959; **Service Departments' Registers** which, since 1 April 1959, have recorded births, deaths and marriages outside the United Kingdom relating to persons ordinarily resident in Scotland who are serving in or employed by HM Forces, including the families of members of the Forces; and certified copies of entries relating to marriages solemnised by Army chaplains outside the United Kingdom since 1892, where one of the parties to the marriage is described as Scottish and at least one of the parties is serving in HM Forces.

War registers (from 1899) Registers are held of the **South African War** (1899-1902), which records the deaths of Scottish soldiers; of **World War I** (1914-1918), which records the deaths of Scottish persons serving as Warrant Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers or Men in the Army (but not officers); Petty Officers or Men in the Royal Navy; and of **World War II** (1939-1945), which comprises incomplete returns of the deaths of Scottish members of the Armed Forces.

Consular returns of births, deaths & marriages (from 1914) Certified copies are held of registrations by British consuls relating to persons of Scottish descent or birth. Records of births and deaths date from 1914 and records of marriages from 1917.

High Commissioners' returns of births & deaths (from 1964) Held from certain Commonwealth countries relating to persons of Scottish descent or birth. Some earlier returns are available for India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Ghana, and some returns are available also for marriages in certain Commonwealth countries.

Register of births, deaths & marriages in foreign countries (1860-1965) Births of children of Scottish parents and of the marriages and deaths of Scots, the entries being made on the basis of information supplied by the parties concerned and after consideration of the evidence of each event.

Foreign marriages (from 1947) Certified copies are held of certificates (with translations) relating to marriages of persons from Scotland in certain foreign countries according to the laws of these countries, without the presence of a British consular officer.

Enumerators' transcript books (from 1841) The Registrar General holds records of the decennial census of the population of Scotland for 1841 and every tenth year thereafter (with the exception of the wartime year of 1941). The open records relate to the censuses held on 7 June **1841**; 31 March **1851**; 8 April **1861**; 3 April **1871**; 4 April **1881**, 6 April **1891** and 31 March **1901**. These contain particulars such as name, age, marital state, occupation and birthplace of every member of a household present on census night. We hold street indexes for certain urban areas and a collection of privately produced name indexes to 1841-1861 census parishes and districts.

The records of **censuses taken after 1901 are still confidential** and are not available to the public. In line with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the 1911 census will be available in Spring 2011, once the 100-year closure period has elapsed.

Among the records *not* held in New Register House the following are perhaps the more important: For **wills, deeds, valuation rolls and pre-1855 baptismal records of churches other than the Church of Scotland**, contact the National Archives of Scotland, General Register House, Edinburgh EH1 3YT website (<http://www.nas.gov.uk>). For wills see (<http://www.scotlandpeople.gov.uk>). For records relating to **coats of arms and recorded genealogies**, contact the Lyon Office, New Register House, Edinburgh EH1 3YT. For Scottish divorce records prior to May 1984 contact Court of Session, Parliament House, 1 Parliament Square, Edinburgh, EH1 1RF (<http://www.scotcourts.gov.uk>) For records of **births, deaths and marriages in England and Wales** contact the General Register Office, PO Box 2, Southport, Merseyside PR8 2JD or visit their website (<http://www.gro.gov.uk>) for an on-line ordering service. For records of **births, deaths and marriages in Ireland**, contact the Registrar General, Oxford House, 49-55 Chichester Street, Belfast BT1 4HL, Northern Ireland or visit their website (<http://www.groni.gov.uk/index.htm>), or the Registrar General, Government Offices, Convent Road, Roscommon, Republic of Ireland or visit their website (<http://www.groireland.ie>).