



Finding Scottish Ancestors Online

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In this presentation, you'll learn about familiar and lesser-known resources for Scottish research. Find links to Scottish records of all kinds. Then discover vintage maps for Scottish place names, get help with Scottish handwriting, take free online classes, and more.

1. Researching Scottish Immigrant Ancestors

Start:

- Name of your Scottish immigrant ancestor to research in Scotland's records
- Birth, baptism, or marriage date of your ancestor in Scotland – approximate or exact
- Locations in which your ancestor may have lived in Scotland

Remember:

- Work backward in time, from death to birth
- Search US. (or other country of immigration) records first
- Research every member of the immigrant family group
- Consider interim or permanent destinations besides the US, including England, Northern Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand

Use:

- Ancestry's Immigration and Travel Collection: <https://ancestry.me/2lWydnN>
- Scotland Departure Database: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/emigration>
- US Ports of Arrival and Their Available Passenger Lists 1820-1957: www.genesearch.com/ports.html

Bear in Mind:

- Names – spellings of both surnames and forenames can vary in the US and Scotland
- Ages – may have been misstated to conform to prevailing immigration policies
- Friends and relatives – people from the same area, congregation, or village may have traveled together
- Multiple trips – families did not always travel together, some ancestors made the trip more than once, or they immigrated to more than one country
- Family stories – may have kernels of truth that inform your searches
- Colonial- and Revolutionary-era migration may indicate Scots-Irish descent and migration to the east coast of British America from the Ulster area

2. Scottish Records and Search Strategies

Because Scottish records were usually created and kept at the town or parish level, the identification of your immigrant ancestor's native village, parish, or even province, is important.

Scottish records are indexed and digitized to a remarkable degree, making online research readily available. Of course there is a literal cost for this great organization and access.

Most primary sources records are only available at pay-as-you-go or subscription sites. Scotland vital records and census can be searched for free, but require payment before viewing or download.

Research Tip #1: Use free indexes below to narrow your results before you buy Scottish records online:

- FamilySearch offers 23 Scotland databases <https://bit.ly/2nbTARM>
- FreeCEN.org.uk www.freecen.org.uk
- GenUKI.org.uk www.genuki.org.uk/big/sct

Research Tip #2: Once you are certain of the records you need, then find and download digitized records at subscription sites.

ScotlandsPeople.uk.gov

<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/search-our-records>

ScotlandsPeople is the official Scottish Government website for government records from 1513 to the present. It is indispensable to Scottish genealogy research. This is a pay-as-you go site using credits with 30 credits = about US\$9.30 depending on exchange rates. Each image costs between 2-10 credits to view and download.

Old Parish Registers (Church of Scotland)

- [Births & Baptisms](#), 1553-1855
- [Banns & Marriages](#), 1553-1855
- [Deaths & Burials](#), 1553-1855

Statutory (Civil) Registers

- [Births](#), 1855-present
- [Marriages](#), 1855-present
- [Divorces](#), 1984-present
- [Deaths](#), 1855-present

Catholic Registers

- [Births & Baptisms](#), 1703-1919
- [Banns & Marriages](#), 1736-1944
- [Deaths & Burials](#), 1736-2023

Census Returns

Available [every ten years from 1841 through 1921](#)

Valuation Rolls (Owners and Occupiers of Buildings)

[Every ten years from 1855-1915, then every five years between 1920-1940](#)

ScotlandsPlaces

<https://www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk>

Maps and tax rolls

FindMyPast.com

<http://www.findmypast.com/scottish-records>

Excellent for Scottish newspapers and Passenger Lists Leaving UK 1890-1960 database

DeceasedOnline.com

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

Central database of statutory burial and cremation registers for the UK from 1850s on. Pay-as-you-go or subscriptions available.

3. Maps & Gazetteers

ScotlandsPlaces.uk.gov

<https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/>

Search three national databases for information about places throughout Scotland. Free and excellent for determining parish boundaries, jurisdictions, and spellings.

A Vision of Britain Through Time

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

Maps, historical descriptions of places in Britain from 1801 to the present

Phillimore Atlas & Index of Parish Registers

<https://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8830>

Atlas to old parishes prior to 1832, including the date of the earliest surviving registers for the parish, index via Ancestry.com.

Additional Resources

Sassy Jane eBook: [*Finding Scottish Ancestors Online*](#)

In *Finding Scottish Ancestors Online*, you'll discover direct links to everything from church and civil records to wills, tax lists, and tenant records.

Migration records help you find Scots immigrant ancestors to the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Maps and gazetteers locate ancestral villages. Scots DNA, naming conventions, clans and tartans and more in this eBook.

Jane's eBooks: www.sassyjanegenealogy.com/shop/

Jane's free monthly newsletter: www.sassyjanegenealogy.com/newsletter/

Sassy Jane eBook: [*European Immigrant Ancestors: Their Experiences & the Records*](#)

Find your European immigrant ancestors, their experiences, and their records with direct links to migration records in Europe, the US, and Canada.

Learn about the factors that pushed or pulled our ancestors from Europe to North America between 1820-1920.

Discover arrival and departure passenger lists, permission to leave records, shipping news, emigrant aid society records, naturalizations, and more in this [Sassy Jane Genealogy eBook](#).

