

# Researching Scottish Ancestors

## *Class 3: Using the Scottish Census & Census Substitutes*

David Allen Lambert, Chief Genealogist, [dalambert@nehgs.org](mailto:dalambert@nehgs.org)

By using Scottish census and census substitutes you can learn more details about the immediate family of your ancestors. Using early tax records as substitutes for the pre-1841 census records, you can determine the social status and taxable belongings of your ancestors. The 1841–1911 censuses give you a wealth of genealogical detail to trace your Scottish ancestors. In many of these censuses, the place of birth, age, occupation, and the family structure are explained. Using these clues, you can better search church and vital records.

### **Pre-1841 Census of Scotland**

Research Guide: <https://nrscotland.gov.uk/research/guides/census-records>

#### **1801-1831 Census Content**

- Contains only statistical information
- Some parishes compiled lists of names and occupations (population lists)
- Surviving pre-1841 census entries are found in:
  - Kirk session records (most) - available on Virtual Volumes in the Historical Search Room and the ScotlandsPeople Centre
  - Old Parish Registers (a few)
  - Local Archives
  - ScotlandsPeople Centre Reference Library (photocopies, transcriptions, and indexes)

#### **Pre-1841 Statistical Data**

- Statistical charts available for the 1801, 1811, 1821, and 1831 Scotland censuses
- Government gathered statistical data to understand economy of the people
- Lists occupations, housing, and populations for every parish in Scotland; notes changes from previous census and reasons for those changes
- Online Historical Population Reports (OHPR) <http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/>
- Contains only statistical information
- Some parishes compiled lists of names and occupations (population lists)
- FindMyPast.co.uk pre-1841 Census available online: <https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/scotland-pre-1841-censuses-and-population-lists> (6 parishes)
- Ancestry.com: Scotland, Rolls of Male Heads of Families, 1834-1845: <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/70838/>

## Post-1841 Census

Ancestry.com has transcribed copies of the 1841-1901 Scotland Census (no images) online:

<https://www.Ancestry.com/search/collections/catalog/?title=scotland%20census>

**1841 Scotland Census** – Census day: June 6, 1841 – The population was 2,620,184

- FamilySearch: <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/442707?availability=Family%20History%20Library>
- FindMyPast: <https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/1841-england-wales-and-scotland-census>

**1851 Scotland Census** – Census day: March 30, 1851 - The population was 2,888,742

- FamilySearch: <https://familysearch.org/search/collection/2028673>
- FindMyPast: <https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records/1851-england-wales-and-scotland-census>

**1861 Scotland Census** – Census day: April 7, 1861 – The population was 3,062,294

- FamilySearch: <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/160553?availability=Family%20History%20Library>
- FindMyPast: <https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records/1861-england-wales-and-scotland-census>

**1871 Scotland Census** – Census day: April 2, 1871 – the population was 3,360,018

- FamilySearch: <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/162199?availability=Family%20History%20Library>
- FindMyPast: <https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records/1871-england-wales-and-scotland-census>

**1881 Scotland Census** – Census day: April 3, 1881 – the population was 3,735,573

- FamilySearch: <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/114528?availability=Family%20History%20Library>
- FindMyPast: <https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records/1881-england-wales-and-scotland-census>

**1891 Scotland Census** – Census day: April 5, 1891 – the population was 4,033,103

- FamilySearch: <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/164002?availability=Family%20History%20Library>
- FindMyPast: <https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records/1891-england-wales-and-scotland-census>

**1901 Scotland Census** – Census day: March 31, 1901 – the population was 4,472,103

- FamilySearch: Transcription currently not online
- FindMyPast: <https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records/1901-england-wales-and-scotland-census>

**1911 Scotland Census** – Census day: April 2, 1911 – the population was 4,760,904

- FamilySearch.org - *transcription currently not online*
- ScotlandsPeople.co.uk - searchable with images (purchase credit vouchers)

## Census Substitutes

Using a variety of pre-1841 census substitutes you can occasionally locate your ancestors, as well as various taxes they paid in Scotland. Note: these substitutes do not always survive for every county in Scotland from the 17th to 19th centuries.

- **Hearth Tax 1690-1695** <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/historical-tax-rolls/hearth-tax-records-1691-1695%e2%80%8b>
- **Poll Tax 1694-1698** <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/historical-tax-rolls/poll-tax-rolls-1694-1698>
- **Cart Tax 1785-1798** <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/historical-tax-rolls/cart-tax-rolls-1785-1798>
- **Carriage Tax 1785-1798** <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/historical-tax-rolls/carriage-tax-rolls-1785-1798>
- **Clock and Watch Tax 1797-1798** <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/historical-tax-rolls/clock-and-watch-tax-rolls-1797-1798>
- **Dog Tax 1797-1798** <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/historical-tax-rolls/dog-tax-rolls-1797-1798>
- **Female Servant Tax 1785-1792** <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/historical-tax-rolls/female-servant-tax-rolls-1785-1792>
- **Male Servant Tax 1777-1798** <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/historical-tax-rolls/male-servant-tax-rolls-1777-1798>

- **Horse Tax 1785-1798** <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/historical-tax-rolls/horse-tax-rolls-1785-1798>
- **Shop Keeper Tax 1785-1789** <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/historical-tax-rolls/shop-tax-rolls-1785-1789>

## **General Websites**

Ancestry.com [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

FamilySearch.org [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

Scotland's People <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>