

## Census (Scotland)

Taken every 10 years since 1801, you should be able to follow your ancestors from 1841 to 1911. Those which were taken in 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831 were only statistical returns that showed the headcount plus just three categories of work that might have been undertaken. Returns were completed by the householder and passed to the enumerator who then completed schedules. However, you need to bear in mind that the one taken in 1911 is still the enumerator's schedule and not the household return as it is for the English and Welsh 1911 census.

### When was the census taken?

1841 – 6th June  
1851 – 30th March  
1861 – 7th April  
1871 – 2nd April  
1881 – 3rd April  
1891 – 5th April  
1901 – 31st March  
1911 – 2nd April

### What will you find on them?

The details that you will be able to see from **1851 to 1901** are:

- ~ first name, middle names (or initials) and surname
- ~ relationship to the head of the household
- ~ marital status
- ~ age
- ~ sex
- ~ occupation
- ~ place of birth
- ~ whether they had certain disabilities
- ~ their full address

**In 1911**, you will also find:

- ~ for a married woman, the length of her present marriage, the number of children from that marriage and whether they are dead or still alive.
- ~ more detailed occupational information
- ~ more detail about, for example, exact birthplaces for people born in England or Ireland

However, **the 1841 census** had less information:

- ~ first name and surname
- ~ age (Note: This was rounded down to the nearest five years for those aged 15 or over)
- ~ sex
- ~ occupation (Note: Enumerators were instructed to record occupations in an abbreviated form, so H.L.W. denoted handloom weaver, for example.).
- ~ whether they were born in that county (Recorded as Y or N)
- ~ whether they were born in England (E), Ireland (I) or Foreign Parts (F)

One thing to remember is that, although married women were generally recorded by their married surname, they could also be recorded under their maiden name – especially if they had been widowed.

Also, the family name may have been altered after immigration to or emigration from Scotland or migration from the Highlands to the Lowlands.

These do not always make searching very easy, so inventiveness such as searching just under first name and year of birth might be called for.

## Where can they be found?

Those from 1841 to 1891 can be consulted at the General Register Office for Scotland, in Edinburgh. Now, I know that it is not always practical to visit Edinburgh to undertake your Scottish research and so the Scotland's People website is able to provide digital images of the returns for a fee. The years 1841 to 1911 inclusive may be found there. Other Pay Per View websites also provide information, but only in the form of indexes

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It may be that you are not sure of how to find a particular entry for an ancestor. Well, another opinion – or more! - can help. Register for FREE at <http://www.genealogy-specialists.com/> and post details of your hard to find ancestor. The members will do their utmost to track them down for you!

If you would like to find out more about Censuses, how they were taken and the best ways of finding your elusive forebears, listed below are some products that will certainly help you along your way and all of them are available from [www.parishchest.com](http://www.parishchest.com). Just pop the reference number in the website search box to see the details.

- Family History Research Sources In Central Scotland (Booklet) Ref: CSFHS-M5
- Researching Scottish Family History Ref: FHP-NB02
- Scottish Family History on the Web Ref: FHP-134

Parish Chest also has a complete section dedicated to censuses, which is broken down by county. Log on to [www.parishchest.com](http://www.parishchest.com) and take a look at the Scottish census records.