

University of Strathclyde Centre for Lifelong Learning

Family History Research: An Introduction



University of
Strathclyde
Humanities &
Social Sciences

Week 6: Part 1:

What did they do all day? - Occupations

General Outline of Session

- History of Burghs, Burgesses and Guilds
- Apprentice System
- Licensing
- Directories
- Individual Occupation Records

Burghs

Scotland's earliest burghs date from the reign of David I (1124-53).

He introduced feudal tenure into Scotland and encouraged the growth of towns as a means of fostering trade and increasing crown revenues.

The burgh's privileges and obligations, including trading privileges and the right to hold markets, were enshrined in a charter granted by the king or other feudal superior.

The merchants dominated the magistracy of the towns, as the royal charters of trading privileges were in effect charters to merchants as they brought in the largest part of the burgh revenues, the burgh customs.

Burgesses

Burgesses were originally any inhabitant of a burgh who held land there. The status was later restricted to merchants and craftsmen, who also usually organised themselves into Guilds (Wrights, Hammermen, Merchants etc). Burgess tickets were also granted to outsiders who had performed some service for the burgh.

Getting a Burgess Ticket

The usual way to be admitted to the Burgess Roll was to live and work in the Burgh, be a member of a guild or hold land.

However, admission could be by right, of various kinds:

- having served an apprenticeship to an admitted Burgess
- inherited by right from a father, husband, or mother
- through marriage to a woman who had inherited the right
- to a non-dweller who performed some deed or service for the Burgh.

Note: Until quite late on, women could not be Burgesses in their own right, but were granted the right to open shops, trade etc, if they inherited from their husbands or fathers.

Burgh/Burgess Records

The Scottish Record Society has published indexed lists of admissions of burgesses of Edinburgh (1406-1841), Canongate, Glasgow (1573-1846) and Dumbarton.

Some of these are available at the Internet Archives at:

<http://www.archive.org/details/texts> - search using the term 'Scottish Record Society' for a huge list.

For other burghs, you will need to search the burgess rolls or court books of the appropriate burgh, many of which are held in local archives.

English 'Freedom of the Borough'

In England, becoming a freeman of the city or borough usually gave you the right to trade and own property in the area along with other rights.

Before parliamentary reform in 1832, freedom of the city or town conferred the right to vote in the 'parliamentary boroughs' for MPs. Until the Municipal Corporations Act 1835 the freemen were the exclusive electorate for boroughs.

There is not a unified catalogue of 'freedom' records. Each city or borough has their own records. Look in local archives, County archives, libraries, family history societies, etc.

For example:

- The London Metropolitan Archives holds London's records, some at Guildhall Library.
- The Norfolk Record Office has records for Norwich.
- The Bristol and Avon FHS has transcribed and indexed the Bristol burgess and 'freedom' rolls (1557-1995)...you can buy a CD of these from their website.

London Livery Companies

Livery companies are trade associations based in the City of London, almost all of which are known as the "Worshipful Company of" the relevant trade or profession. Livery companies originally developed as guilds and were responsible for the regulation of their trades, controlling, for instance, wages and labour conditions.

Until about 1800, any adult male practising a trade or craft in or around the City of London would almost certainly have belonged to a City of London livery company.

Guildhall Library in London

The original Library at Guildhall was founded in the 1420s under the terms of the will of Richard Whittington. It is a major public reference library which specialises in the history of London, especially the City.

Their records include: livery companies, apprenticeship in London, London directories, Lloyd's Captains' Registers, 1869-1948, Clockmakers' Company records and much more.

<http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/visiting-the-city/archives-and-city-history/guildhall-library/Pages/default.aspx>

Craft Guilds

Craft guilds (or incorporations) were formed in the Middle Ages and were an important part of burgh/borough life then and for centuries to come.

Each craft jealously guarded its own monopolies and standards of workmanship, acquired property to raise funds, provided for its own poor and took part in other social and civic activities.

Guild records contain lists of members, information on journeymen practising in the town, and advancements from the rank of apprentice to journeyman and from journeyman to master. Contracts between masters and parents of apprentices may also be included.

Apprenticing

The apprenticeship system was fairly widespread until quite recently, and usually the father of the apprentice would enter into an agreement (an indenture) with the master. A person was usually apprenticed between the ages of 7 and 18 years.

An indenture was a legal agreement that bound the apprentice to serve a number of years, often 7, but it depended on the craft.

Indentures usually contain the names of the apprentice and the master, the master's trade and residence, the terms of apprenticeship, and sometimes the name, occupation, and residence of the apprentice's father.

Apprentice Records

The **Guildhall Library** in London has indentures included in their livery company records for London.

National Records of Scotland

A few indentures are registered in the Register of Deeds, others are scattered among collections of private papers. (Start by searching in the catalogue by the person's name who donated the collection papers)

Other records can be found in the papers of George Heriot's Trust, relating to the charity school set up for orphans and poor children of burgesses and freemen.

Local Archives

Local burgh or craft guild records may include apprenticeship records. You'll probably need to know rough dates to search these.

Indentures at The National Archives

Records for English & Scottish apprenticeship indentures from 1710-1811 can be found at TNA. From 1710 stamp duty was charged on indentures, thus records of apprentices survive in the *Stamp Board's Apprenticeship Books, 1710-1811* which are at TNA in London. You can browse many of these amongst the TNA Digital Microfilm collections. See <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/SearchUI/details?uri=C9339>

Also...

Ancestry has digitized these in a database (523,475 records) called '**UK, Register of Duties Paid for Apprentices' Indentures, 1710-1811**'. You'll see name, address & occupation of the master, name of apprentice and date the apprenticeship began. Earlier records have the father's name.

Find My Past has them as well, but from 1710-1774. You can view the image of the stamp duty pages and search by individual's name.

Edinburgh Apprentices

The Scottish Record Society has published lists of Edinburgh apprentices for the period 1583 – 1800. These are available for free download at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/records/> - where you will also find more user-friendly title lists for the Scottish Record Society publications available on the Internet Archive.

Pre-1710 and generally:

Until the Statute 8 Anne c.5 (1710) made stamp duty payable on indentures of apprenticeship, no central register of apprentices was kept in England and Wales. Evidence of apprenticeship must thus be sought in local archives, in the surviving papers of guilds, firms, parishes, charities and individuals.

Individual Trades – General Sources

The **NRS** is a good source of information for several trades – get a list of records available at: <http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/guides/crafts-and-trades>.

Scottish Business Archive at Univ. of Glasgow has an internationally important collection of business records. Many of these records will contain information on employees and suppliers.

- Shipbuilders: John Browns, William Denny, Scotts, etc.
- Brewers & Distillers – many brands represented
- North British Locomotive Co.
- Gourock Ropeworks Co and their New Lanark Mills;
- J & P Coats in Paisley;
- House of Fraser department store group;
- Anchor Line, shipping company

And many, many more.

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/archives/collections/business/>

GENUKI has a good list of resources:

<http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/Occupations.html>

Remember also to look in the lists of trades in Street and Trade Directories: Post Office, Pigot's (1820-1837) and Slater's (1852-1928) to see names of individuals taking part in those trades and usually their addresses (work & home).

D.R.Torrance. *Scottish Trades, Professions, Vital Records and Directories - a Selected Bibliography*. Published by Scottish Association of Family History Societies.

List of Occupations at Scotland's People

A list of over 1500 occupations, their definitions and variants, compiled from various sources.
<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/content/help/index.aspx?r=551&430>

Ranks, Professions, Occupations and Trades in England and Wales - GenDocs

<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/hitch/gendocs/trades.html>

Books on Occupations

There is an entire raft of books published that deal with individual occupations and their sources. Check with your local library or family history society for these.

Examples:

Richards, Tom (2002) *Was your grandfather a railwayman?* 4th ed. Federation of Family History Societies.

Fowler, Simon. *Researching Brewery and Publican Ancestors*, Birmingham, Federation of Family History Societies (2003) 48 pp.

Spirits / Brewing / Pubs

Scottish Business Archive at Univ. of Glasgow holds the Scottish Brewing Archive:
<http://www.archives.gla.ac.uk/sba/aboutsba.html> ; an up-to-date list of holdings is at
http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_328078_en.pdf

Anyone selling drink after 1759 had to be licensed. These were granted by the local burgh court or Justices of the Peace. These records are kept either in the NAS or a local archive.

Lesley Richmond and Alison Turton's, *The Brewing Industry, A guide to historical records*, (1990, Manchester University Press). This book has brief histories of British breweries and gives the location of company archives.

Teachers

Pre-1872 (Compulsory Education in Scotland)

Teachers in burghs were appointed by the burgh council and were recorded in burgh council minutes. (Local Archives or NRS).

Teachers outwith burghs were usually nominated by the parish heritors and minister. Records should be found in heritor records with the confirmation found in the presbytery minute books. (Local Archives or NRS)

- The Educational Institute of Scotland, founded 1847, is the professional assoc. for teachers. Its records give names of its members – they are held at NRS.
- Records for Highlands and Islands Government grants financing extra schools (1840-1863) record teacher names. (records held at the NRS)
- The Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge (SSPCK) set up schools. Cowper, A.S. (1997) *SSPCK Schoolmasters, 1709-1872*, lists teachers with dates of service.
- The 'Dick Bequest Trust' assisted schoolmasters in Aberdeen, Banff and Moray, beginning 1832. (records held at NRS)

Teachers Post-1872

Responsibility for provision of schools and appointment of teachers passed to school boards after 1872. School Board Minute books mention the appointment of teachers and pupil-teachers. These are usually in county council records and can be found in local archives. A few are in the NRS.

Miners

The National Coal Board records are in the NRS. Most are from the 20th century and list names of miners, the work done and the amount paid. Some records do date back to the 18th century.

Mines that were on private estates may have records in the landowner's papers, which may be in the NRS or local archives. Search by mine, estate or landowner's name for these.

Coalmining History Resource Centre: <http://www.cmhrc.co.uk/>

Database of over 164,000 recorded accidents & deaths, full text of 1842 Royal Commission Reports, maps of coal mines...

The Scottish Mining Website: <http://www.scottishmining.co.uk/>

Provides information on Scottish miners and mining areas, compiled from old reports, gazetteers and newspaper articles. The mining accident section covers fatal accidents for the whole of Scotland. These are mainly sourced from the Annual Reports of the Inspector of Mines. Other sources include newspaper articles, and other resources.

The site currently contains more than 20,000 names of those involved in the mining industry in Scotland. Other resources include information on miners' housing, the 1842 Children's Employment Commission, lists of mines and collieries, a glossary of mining terms and a section on war memorials.

Railway Workers

Firstly, you'll need to know the name of the company for which your ancestor worked.

Most of the records of the numerous railway companies that used to exist in Scotland are in the NRS. Many staff records do survive and some give date of birth and details of posts held at the company.

The TNA has records for many of the railway companies in England/Wales but not all have staff records. A good resource:

Hawkings, D.T. (1995) *Railway ancestors, a guide to the staff records of the railway companies of England/Wales, 1822-1947*. Sutton Publishing

Other sites to begin researching background information on the history of the railway industry are www.railarchive.org.uk and e.g. <http://www.crassoc.org.uk/cra/index.php> (Caledonian).

The NRS has a railway research advice page at:

<http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/guides/railway-records>

See John Airey's Railway map of Scotland at the NLS website:
<http://maps.nls.uk/scotland/detail.cfm?id=823>. There are more listed at:
<http://maps.nls.uk/scotland/thematic.html>

Merchant Seamen

The main source of information is the agreements made between the seamen and their captains. These agreements became compulsory in 1835. However, you'll need to know the name of the ship and in some cases, the name of the port she sailed from.

These agreements survive in many places:

NRS, Glasgow City Archives at the Mitchell, TNA and the National Maritime Museum in London.

FindMyPast has some merchant navy records licensed from TNA. The TNA website also gives guidance on merchant seamen's records. Many of the records on FMP include document images showing the employment details of individuals.

Other sources of information are detailed at the National Maritime Museum's website:
<http://www.rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum/caird-library/family-history-research>

Shipbuilding and Related Industries

An unknowable number of men, women and children have worked in shipbuilding and related industries around the United Kingdom with, as we know, one of the major hubs of the industry being Glasgow and the West of Scotland.

The 3 main repositories for surviving company records are:

Glasgow City Archives at the Mitchell Library

<http://www.glasgowlife.org.uk/libraries/the-mitchell-library/archives/collections/shipbuilding-archives/Pages/default.aspx>

University of Glasgow Archives:

http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_60314_en.pdf

NRS – see their guide to shipbuilding records at:

<http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/guides/shipbuilding-records>

Textile Workers

Archives Hub – Scottish Textile Heritage page:

<http://archiveshub.ac.uk/features/textiles.shtml>.

Links to information on textile related collections and a gallery of textile industry images.

University of Dundee – Jute Industry records: <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/archives/>

University of Glasgow – West of Scotland textile records

http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_116940_en.pdf

Teasdale, Vivian (2009) *Tracing Your Textile Ancestors: A Guide for Family Historians*. Pen & Sword Books.

Ministers

A major source for Scottish ministers is the:

'*Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*: the succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation" by Hew Scott, published from 1915 to 1928 in 7 volumes. Four more recent volumes take the coverage up to 1999.

- Volumes 1-8 are provided online by David Walker.
Vol I.: **Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale**
Vol II: **Synods of Merse and Teviotdale Dumfries & Galloway**
Vol III. **Synod of Glasgow & Ayr**
Vol. IV. **Synods of Argyll and of Perth and Stirling**
Vol. V: **Synod of Fife, and of Angus and Mearns.**
Vol. VI: **Synods of Aberdeen and of Moray.**
Vol. VII: **Synods of Ross, Sutherland and Caithness, Glenelg, Orkney and Shetland**
Vol. VIII: **Ministers of the Church from date of publication of volumes I-VII, 1914-28, to union of the churches, 2nd October 1929, and addenda and corrigenda, 1560-1949**
<http://www.dwalker.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/Map.htm>
- Ancestry.co.uk – has vols. 1-6 (1560-1866)
- The Internet Archives has a few volumes as well: <http://www.archive.org/details/texts>

Clergymen

Information on clergy of the Church of England, Wales and Ireland and the Episcopal Church of Scotland:

Crockford's Clerical Directory (1858 - present).

NLS has this, as do a few Scottish Universities. Ancestry has a selection of *Crockford's*, dating from 1868 to 1932.

Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae lists senior clergy in England & Wales with biographical details (1066-1857). British History Online has it in full text (many volumes) at:
<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/search?query=fasti>

The Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540-1835 makes available and searchable the principal records of clerical careers from over 50 archives in England and Wales with the aim of providing coverage of as many clerical lives as possible from the Reformation to the mid-nineteenth century.
<http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk/>

Methodist

Hall, Joseph '*Hall's Circuits and Ministers*' lists ministers in Great Britain from 1765-1932. The NLS has copies of these. Most years covered are also on the internet archive (1765-1896):
https://archive.org/stream/28455030.1897.emory.edu/28455030_1897#page/n1/mode/2up

Other denominations – check with church archives for sources. *Ancestral Trails* by Mark Herber has a list of other resources available.

Medical

Doctors

Doctors are listed in:

- The Medical Register (1859 -). Ancestry has every fourth year online, 1859-1959.
- Medical Directory for Scotland (1852-60) – held at NLS.
- London and Provincial Medical Directory (1861-) – 1870 onwards held at NLS.

Nurses

Registers of trained nurses (1885-1930) are at NRS.

Glasgow Dentists

Lists of members (1879-1961) are at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow's Dental Archives page. See below for website address.

Scottish Medical Pre-1858

For information pre-1858, it's best to contact one or more of the professional bodies:

Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh

<http://www.rcsed.ac.uk/site/560/default.aspx>

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow

<https://www.rcpsg.ac.uk/library/heritage-collections/family-history.aspx>

They have the Medical Register (1859-current) & Alexander Duncan's *Memorials of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow*, James Macle hose and Sons, 1896. This lists members from 1599-1850 and more.

Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

<https://www.rcpe.ac.uk/library-archives/services-visiting-us#quick>

Scottish Legal Profession

Published listings of lawyers include the following, many of which are available on the Internet Archive at archive.org (search 'Advocates Scotland', for example):

- *The Faculty of Advocates in Scotland 1532-1943* edited by Sir Francis J. Grant, published by Scottish Record Society, 1944
- *The Lord Advocates of Scotland* by George W.T. Omond, published in 3 volumes (1883-1914).
- *History of the Society of Advocates in Aberdeen* edited by John A. Henderson, published by New Spalding Club, 1912
- *History of the Society of Writers to H.M. Signet* (including list of members from 1594-1890), published by the Society of Writers to H.M. Signet in 1890.
- *The Register of the Society of Writers to the Signet*, published at Edinburgh in 1983 (lists members from 1500- recent times)
- *Scottish law list*, published 1848-1849
- *Index iuridicus: the Scottish law list* from 1852 onwards

(Thanks to GENUKI Scotland for the above list!)

Print Trade in Scotland

The Scottish Book Trade Index

Held at the National Library of Scotland:

<http://www.nls.uk/catalogues/scottish-book-trade-index>

It lists names, trades and addresses of people involved in printing in Scotland up to 1850. It covers:

- Printers
- Publishers
- Booksellers
- Bookbinders
- Printmakers
- Stationers
- Papermakers

That's a brief introduction

There are many other occupations and trades to cover but not enough time and space, so...

- Check your local library/FHS for printed information on the occupation in question.
- See if there is a dedicated archive or library for the occupation.
- Check lists of occupations at genealogical websites such as Cyndi's List:

<http://www.cyndislist.com/occupatn.htm>