

FAMILY HISTORY



A guide to research
sources in Renfrewshire

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Introduction

More and more people are interested in finding out about their ancestors, about their lives, their homes, their work.

Developments on the web have increased people's access to information about their families from across the world but there can be nothing quite as exciting as seeing the real thing, in the place where your people lived. Many primary sources of information on the old County of Renfrew are still located in the county. If you are interested in researching your family history, this leaflet will provide you with the basics - what

is held where, and how to access it. It will also provide contact details for local history and family history societies.

Remember, staff in the various departments and organisations are often willing to help in your search, but please give as much notice and as much information in advance as you can, to help them refine their investigations.

Central Library Heritage Centre

68 High Street, Paisley PA1 2BB, Tel 0141 889 2360, Fax 0141 887 6468
E-mail: heritage@renfrewshire.gov.uk



This is the main location for much of the area's resources.

The Heritage Centre is situated in Paisley Central Library and is open from 9am - 5pm on **Monday, Wednesday, Friday** and **Saturday** and 9am - 8pm on **Tuesday** and **Thursday**. The collection is extensive and includes current and historical sources which may help you with your family history research.

Copying - The Heritage Centre can provide copying services, subject to copyright, for some of the resources in the collection. However, not all the material is suitable for copying. Staff can advise you on the service and charges.

The Heritage Centre's Resources:

Census Records

Census returns for Renfrewshire are available on microfilm. The years available in the Heritage Centre are 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891 and 1901. There are accompanying indexes to help you search these records. Census records are closed for 100 years. The most recent available Scottish Census is for 1911. It is available online on the 'Scotlandspeople' website.

COUNTY ELECTION.
MONDAY.
GROSS STATE
OF THE
POLL,
At 4 o'clock, Dec 26th 1832

Sir Michael,

Paisley,	211	
Pollokshaws,	196	
Neilston,	60	
Lochwinnoch,	91	
Greenock,	100	698

Mr. Bontine,

Paisley,	219	
Pollokshaws,	48	
Neilston,	75	
Lochwinnoch,	50	
Greenock,	40	412
<i>Majority in favour of Sir Michael</i>		286



Old Parish Records (OPRs)

The Old Parish Records give information on births and marriages, and some deaths prior to 1855.

The OPRs in Renfrewshire are seldom available much earlier than the mid 18th century. There was a low registration amongst Catholics and Nonconformist. The records can be accessed on microfilm in the Heritage Centre and online on the 'Scotlandspeople' website.

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk

'Scotlandspeople' website is a pay per view website. It contains Scottish birth, marriage and death records from 1855 to present day. It also has Scottish Census Records, Catholic birth, marriage and death records and other family history records. Renfrewshire Libraries can offer library members reduced cost access to the 'Scotlandspeople' website.

Ancestry.co.uk

The Heritage Centre has a subscription to Ancestry.co.uk. Renfrewshire library members can access this, free of charge, in the Heritage Centre. It contains Scottish Census records, military records, immigration and emigration records and historical phone books along with other related records.

Monumental Inscriptions for Renfrewshire

This is another useful source for pre-1855 burials. It has a name index and is available in the Heritage Centre.

Local Newspapers

Local Newspapers dating from 1824 to the present are available in the Heritage Centre. These include indexed extracts concerning Renfrewshire from the Glasgow Journal between 1755 and 1774; the Paisley Advertiser and the Renfrewshire Advertiser from 1824 to 1850; the Paisley Herald

and Renfrewshire Advertiser from 1853 until 1883; the Paisley and Renfrewshire Gazette from 1864 to the present; the Paisley Daily Express from 1874 to the present; the Johnstone Advertiser from 1957 to 1982; the Renfrew Press from 1925 to 1928 and from 1969 to 1983; the Renfrew Post from 1983 to 1989.

Paisley Pamphlets

This collection of ephemera includes subscription lists, reports, minutes, rules and regulations, financial statements, and AGMs of a wide range of local societies and institutions such as the Paisley Philosophical Society, Rowbank Angling Club and Paisley Infirmary. The Pamphlets cover a range of topics, chiefly politics and religion. There are catalogues for exhibitions, memorabilia such as concert tickets and programmes. Each volume has a table of contents at the beginning and there is a single volume cumulative index of the whole collection. The collection, probably put together by antiquarian Robert

Brown of Underwood, is not solely devoted to Paisley, but includes information on the surrounding towns and villages.

The Cairn of Lochwinnoch

This is a collection of 46 leather bound volumes of manuscript, including an index. They contain information often derived from interviews with local people presenting a lively picture of life in Lochwinnoch and the surrounding area. They include family trees, births, marriages, deaths, murders and suicides, a heads-of-families census for Lochwinnoch dated 1821, extracts and clippings from newspapers and books. There are a further ten volumes associated with the Cairn of Lochwinnoch, including Lochwinnoch Matters, the Bridgend Papers, the Craigend Papers and Auld Ballats with Lochwinnoch Matters. They were all compiled by Andrew Crawford who was born in Johnshill Lochwinnoch in 1786 and died in the village in 1854.



Postcards

The Heritage Centre has a collection of over 1400 postcards, the earliest dating from 1890.

Trade Directories

These are also known as Post Office Directories. The Heritage Centre's collection of Renfrewshire Trade Directories begins in 1810 for Paisley and continues until 1937, although it is not complete. Not all towns and villages are included and the type of information varies from year to year.

Trades Societies Records

The Heritage Centre holds minutes of a number of trade societies including the minutes of the Paisley Society of Tailors from 1658 - 1764, the Hammermen from 1761 - 1803, an index and minutes to the Incorporation of Old Weavers in Paisley 1729 - 1900.

Sasines from 1781 - 1947

These document the transfer of ownership of a piece of land or a building. Names of new and former owners and a description of the property are included. The Heritage Centre holds Sasines for Renfrewshire from 1781-1947.

Confirmations and Inventories -

from 1877 to 1936 the Calendar of Confirmations and Inventories indexes all wills that have been confirmed in Scotland between 1877 and 1936. Estates valued at over £50 sterling were included. Confirmations are arranged alphabetically and bound by year.

Official Records

The Heritage Centre holds the official records of the former burghs of Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew, the records for the County Council of Renfrewshire, Renfrew District Council, Strathclyde Region and those for Renfrewshire Council. Some of these collections are incomplete.



5 Applicant's Age, *43*
 6 Place of Birth, *Principal Island*
 7 Occupation, *A day labourer*
 8 If wholly or partially Disabled, *Was employed with John Lindsay former East Fife...*
 9 Description of Disablement, *on 20th September last - and while lying resting in the field between 2 & 3 o'clock of that day a gun loaded with hail was discharged at him by Robert Fleming gamekeeper with Campbell of Blythburgh which entered his body arms legs and head and which has wholly deprived him of his eyesight besides damaging him otherwise in his person*

ELECTORS!

FRIENDS of the SCOTTISH CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT!

SELECT from among yourselves, for the Office of COUNTELLORS, in all the Wards, men who revere the Institutions of our Country, and will stand firm in the Cause of TRUTH.
 Is it proper, is it right, that INFIDELS and DISSENTERS should be invested with the PATRONAGE of the Town Churches? NO!
 Beware of the several SECTS, whose views of matters are as different and shallow as themselves; who, instead of unanimity, would, from their continual cry for Change, frustrate desirable measures, and attempt to tear down that GLOARIOUS BULWARK—the Ornament of Scotland, and the Admiration of surrounding nations—the ESTABLISHED CHURCH!



Maps

The Heritage Centre map collection contains maps and plans of Renfrewshire from circa 1490 to the present. The earliest map in the collection is a plan of Paisley between 1490 and 1545 drawn from the Chartulary of Paisley Abbey. Eminent surveyors such as Timothy Pont, and John Ainslie are included, as well as local surveyors such as Charles Ross and James Knox. Ordnance Survey maps include cover at 1:10560 from 1857 to the 1940s, 1:2500 from 1857 to the 1970s, 1:5000 for more recent maps. There is also 1:500 cover for Paisley for the 1856 -58 edition.

Poll Tax rolls of 1695, Hearth Tax records of 1691

These taxes were designed to raise funds for the armed forces. For the Poll Tax all those liable to pay are listed. There is an index for each parish as well as a place index. The Hearth Tax lists only householders, there is an index of names.

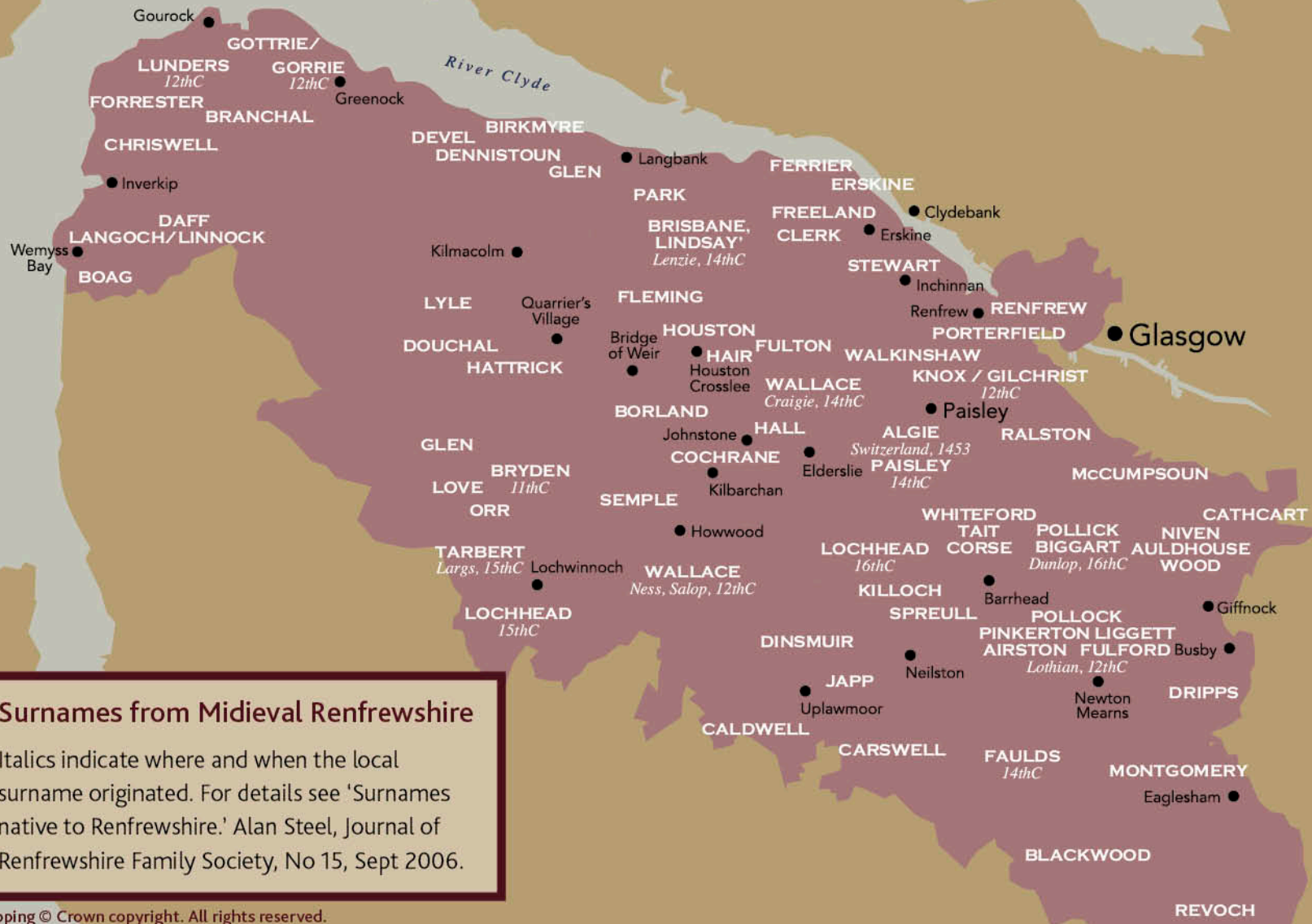
Valuation rolls

These record property, listing owners, occupiers and rateable values. The Heritage Centre holds a large collection. The collection is currently being indexed.

Paisley Poor Law

The Heritage Centre's collection of Poor Law volumes are some of the richest in Scotland. There are volumes with indexes from 1839 until 1930. There is a 70 year rule of closure on these records due to the sensitivity of the records.

The information in the applications for poor relief can be a great source of information to people researching their family history. Records can give details such as name, age, marital status, previous spouses, children, employment, other sources of income, previous addresses, religion and the reason for the application.



Surnames from Medieval Renfrewshire

Italics indicate where and when the local surname originated. For details see 'Surnames native to Renfrewshire.' Alan Steel, Journal of Renfrewshire Family Society, No 15, Sept 2006.

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Paisley Museum and Art Galleries

ram.els@renfrewshire.gov.uk, High Street, Paisley PA1 2BA ,Tel 0141 889 3151,
Fax 0141 889 9240. Open Tuesday - Saturday 11am - 4pm, Sunday 2pm - 5pm.



The Museums hold a collection of more than 20,000 historic photographs dating from the 1850s to the present day. Street scenes, buildings and industries feature prominently. The Archive collection, shared jointly with the Heritage Centre includes records from J & P Coats, the world-famous thread manufacturers, together with collections relating to Paisley, Renfrew, Johnstone and other parts of Renfrewshire. Copies of images from the historical photographic collection are available on request.

The collections of archaeological, social and industrial artefacts tell the story of Renfrewshire's people from the earliest inhabitants right up to the present day. Food, textiles, engineering and shipbuilding industries of the 19th and 20th centuries are represented by a variety of objects. Contact the Museum by letter, phone or email giving as much notice as possible and as much detail as possible to help refine any search before you visit.



Registration Offices

Area Office and Registration of Births,
Deaths and Marriages
Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street,
Paisley PA1 1BU
Tel: 0141 840 3388
Fax: 0141 840 3377

Records of births, deaths and marriages dating back to 1855 are held in the registration offices, which hold the records for the whole of the Renfrewshire area.

Our offices also have on-line access to the alphabetical lists of entries (indices) held at the General Register Office, Edinburgh.

These alphabetical lists cover the statutory records of births, deaths and marriages from 1855; Old Parish Registers and the Census Records of 1881, 1891 and 1901 for the whole of Scotland.

Cemetery and burial records

Environmental Services Cemeteries Section, Renfrewshire Council
Headquarters South, Cotton Street,
Paisley, PA1 1BR,
Tel: 0141 840 3504 / 0141 842 5979
Fax: 0141 840 3192
Office hours **Monday - Thursday**
8:45am - 4:45pm Friday 8:45am - 3:55pm Sat / Sun closed

Renfrewshire Council is responsible for burial records of the locations below. Depending on the accuracy of the information which you can provide, there may be a charge for lair searches. Staff can advise you further on charges.

Cemeteries

Abbey Cemetery -
Abbey Road, Elderslie PA5 9UR
Date opened - 21 January 1887

Broomward Cemetery -
Old Road, Elderslie PA5 9EH
Date opened - 30 October 1991

Hawkhead Cemetery -
133 Hawkhead Road, Paisley PA2 7BE
Date opened - 13 April 1891

Arkleston Cemetery -
Arkleston Road, by North Arkleston Farm, Paisley PA3 4JD
Date opened - 7 April 1902

Bishopton Cemetery -
Houston Road, Bishopton PA7 5NX
Date opened - 14 November 1938
Extension 1994

Inchinnan Cemetery -
Old Greenock Road,
Inchinnan, PA4 9PH
Date opened - 22 January 1929

Kilbarchan Cemetery -
Bridge of Weir Road,
Brookfield, PA5 8UP
Date opened - 12 February 1897
Extension opened 1997

Houston Cemetery -
Crosslee Road, Houston, PA6 7EJ
Date opened - 19 November 1857
Extension opened 1999

Lochwinnoch Cemetery - Linthills Road, Lochwinnoch PA12 4DJ
Date opened - 11 May 1895
Extension opened 2004 Woodland Burial Site opening summer 2006

Churchyard Records

St. Columba's Gaelic Churchyard - Oakshaw, Paisley PA1

Renfrew Parish Churchyard - High Street, Renfrew PA4 Date opened - 15th century

Erskine Old/New Churchyard - Erskine Ferry Road, Bishopton PA7 Date opened - unknown

Inchinnan Parish Churchyard (Old Hallows) - Greenock Road, Inchinnan PA4 Date opened - unknown

Houston and Killellan - Kirk Road, Houston PA6 Date opened - 1635



No. 15177

- 1 Applicant's Name.
- 2 Present Residence.
- 3 Married or Single, Widower or Widow. If Child, Orphan, Deserted or Bastard.
- 4 Name of each Child living with Applicant.

- 5 Applicant's Name,
- 6 Place of Birth,
- 7 Trade or Occupation,
- 8 If wholly or partially Disabled,*
- 9 Description of Disablement,
- 10 Means and Resources of Applicant besides Parochial Relief,

- 11 Names, Ages, and Weekly Earnings of Parents,

- 12 Names, Ages, and Weekly Earnings of children not living with Applicant, and whether married, and

Proclamation

BY THE
Lieutenancy, Sheriff,
And Justices of Peace,
 OF THE COUNTY OF RENFREW,
 And by the Provost and
 Magistrates of Paisley.

ALL well-disposed Inhabitants of the Town and Suburbs of Paisley are hereby warned to keep themselves and their whole Household within doors after

Eight o'Clock in the Evening,

so long as the present riotous disposition continues, certifying to all that disregard this Proclamation, that they will have themselves to blame for any injury they may sustain from the Military force, which the Magistracy are under the necessity of employing, in the most decisive manner, to prevent a repetition of the late riotous assemblies, and mischievous attempts to pillage, plunder, and destroy.

A Reward of 30 Guineas

is also hereby offered, for such information as will lead to the discovery and conviction of the miscreants who have been concerned in breaking Street Lamps and Windows, or in destruction of other Property.

Council Chamber, Paisley,
 15th Sept. 1819.

J. Neilson, printer.

Paisley Cemetery Company Ltd.

Woodside, 46 Broomlands Street,
 Paisley PA1 2NP. Tel. 0141 889 2260.

www.paisleycemetery.co.uk

Office hours are **Monday to Friday**
9am - 1pm, 2pm - 5pm,
Saturday 9am - 12 noon

The company owns and operates
 Woodside Cemetery and
 Crematorium.

Cemetery records go back to 1845
 and Cremation records to 1938.
 Genealogical searches can be carried
 out if the name and date of death,
 or a close approximation, are
 provided. A charge may be made
 for this service. All enquiries should
 be made to the Registrar at the
 above address.

The Book of Remembrance may be
 viewed at the Crematorium Monday
 -Friday 9.00 - 5.00, Saturday
 9.00 - 12.00, Sunday 2.00 -
 4.00. Closed public holidays.

The Latter-Day Saints Family History Centre

Glenburn Road, Paisley,
 Tel. 0141 884 2780.

The Centre has the facility to order
 all the microfilms and microfiche
 available from the Family History
 Centre in Salt Lake City. The Centre
 has extensive Irish records.

Sma' Shot Cottages

www.smashot.co.uk

Open April - September, Wednesdays
 and Saturdays 12pm - 4pm.

The weaver's cottage and mill
 worker's house hold a collection of
 relevant artifacts, plus the minute
 book of the Incorporation of Old
 Weavers in Paisley, dating from 1704.
 The book is not available for research,
 but a microfilm copy is held in the
 Heritage Centre. See website for
 further details.



Paisley Threadmill Museum, Mile End Mill

www.paisleythreadmill.co.uk

Open April – September, Wednesdays
and Saturdays 12pm - 6pm.

Based in a converted mill building,
the museum holds a collection of
artifacts and photographs relating
to work in the Coats and Clark mills.
See website for further details.

Local Societies

Renfrewshire Family History Society

Please visit the society's website
for their contact details -
www.renfrewshirefhs.co.uk

The Society has recently set up
a small resource centre in Paisley
Abbey. For more information visit
the website. Regular meetings are
held in Paisley Museum please see
the website for further details.

Renfrewshire Local History Forum

The forum is the umbrella group for
several smaller local history societies
based throughout the area, and the
Archaeology Section. Contact the
Forum through www.rlhf.info

Useful family history websites

There are many family history
websites. The Heritage Centre has
found these particularly useful,
both for beginners and for more
experienced researchers.

Scotland's people - the official
government source of genealogical
data for Scotland
www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk

General Register Office for Scotland
www.gro-scotland.gov.uk

Renfrewshire Family History Society
www.renfrewshirefhs.co.uk

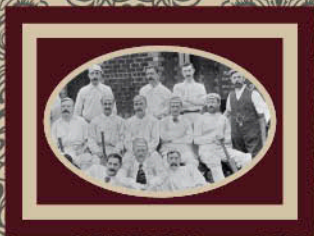
The Association of Scottish
Genealogists and Records Agents
www.asgra.co.uk

Scottish Genealogy Society
www.scotsgenealogy.com

If you plan to visit Renfrewshire to take your family history research further, you will find information on accommodation in the area on www.visitscotland.com

Travel by air couldn't be easier - Glasgow International Airport is just 1.5 kilometres from the centre of Paisley. By train, Glasgow Central Station, which is a hub for long distance routes, is 11 minutes from Paisley with a service every 10 - 15 minutes. For more information see www.nationalrail.co.uk





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<http://www.facebook.com/renfrewshirelibraries>

www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/familyhistory