

First inhabited by Pictish-Gaels, Scotland has experienced Norse invasion and Anglo-Saxon intermingling. In 1707, Scotland joined the Kingdom of Great Britain. The official language is English, although Scottish Gaelic has some legal status within certain contexts. Scotland has also been known unofficially as "Caledonia."

Scottish Genealogy Tips and Tricks

with the
Redfern Genealogical Research Center

Genealogy Best Practices

1. Start by filling in a pedigree chart with info (approximate or exact) that you already know.
2. Talk to relatives for more information and stories.
3. Focus your search. What blanks do you want filled in?
4. Search the internet to fill in the blanks and work backward.
5. What can't be online can be found in a book. Check your library or surrounding libraries. Get acquainted with Inter-Library Loan.
6. Take classes, workshops, and get to know fellow genealogists and their research methods.

Scottish Specific Tips

Use spelling variations.

Make yourself aware of migration patterns. Your ancestors may have gone somewhere else before coming to America.

Check Scottish civil registrations.

Parish records often hold vital information and may even have some bibliographical information.

Poor relief records document vitals and biographical information. If they were denied assistance, their appeal may be found in the Sherriff's Court.

The heraldic Roll of Peerage contains names of earned heraldry and hereditary heraldry.

County boundaries altered in 1974 and 1996. Keep in mind how old your reference maps are.

What's with Clans?

Not every Scot has a clan. Surnames could be associated with profession (Brewster), location (Kirkland), physical feature (Cameron/Camshróin meaning crooked nose), or patronymic (Macbeth). Clans not only included the Chieftans' line but also, the families that pledged allegiance to the Chief which make up a clan's sept. If you can trace your line to the chief or sept, you've found your clan!

Research Sites

www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Scotland_Genealogy

www.nls.uk/family-history

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/

www.americanancestors.org/education/learning-resources/read/scottish-genealogy

www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/family-history

- 1513 - Earliest maps and wills
- 1703 - Earliest Roman Catholic Registers (baptism, marriage, burial, etc.)
- 1801 - First Scottish census
- 1845 - Beginning of civil Poor Relief
- 1855 - Civil Registration (birth, marriage, death)
- 1940 - Civil marriages