

An introduction to ScotlandsPeople

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk

- ScotlandsPeople is [National Records of Scotland's](http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk) (NRS) online resource for family history research where you can access digital images of statutory registers of births, deaths and marriages (1855-current); Old Parish Registers (1553-1854); census returns (1841-1911), valuation rolls, legal records and more.

Getting started

- If you are not an existing ScotlandsPeople customer you can register an account for free at: www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk
- You can explore the site by starting to search our records, use the search tips on the search forms and find guidance when you need it: www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/search-our-records
- Use our help and guidance pages to find out what records are in the site and how they can be used for different kinds of research. You can also get advice on technical issues like image viewing, filtering and sorting searches and managing your account: www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/guides
- Check our charges page for ordering certificates and buying credits for pay-per-view research, and how to redeem vouchers: www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/content/our-charges

Useful links

- Scottish Handwriting website: for online tuition in palaeography for historians, genealogists and other researchers for help reading manuscript historical records written in Scotland from 16th to 18th centuries: www.scottishhandwriting.com
- Dictionary of Scots language for tracking down the meaning and historical origin of Scots words: www.dsl.ac.uk
- The Scottish Register of Tartans: a single, independent Scottish register of tartans which promotes and preserves information about historic and contemporary tartans from Scotland and throughout the world: www.tartanregister.gov.uk

'Tracing Your Scottish Ancestors: The Official Guide' National Records of Scotland. (Birlinn Ltd., 2020)

This official guide to the records made available via ScotlandsPeople and NRS is indispensable for family historians, historians and biographers. The seventh edition is packed with up-to-date information about how to trace Scottish genealogy in the unique treasure trove of Scotland's national archives. Available for the first time in both paperback and e-book versions. Please visit the [Birlinn website](http://www.birlinn.com) or other online retailers to purchase a copy.

Keep up-to-date

You can find out more about family and historical research at ScotlandsPeople and you can keep up-to-date with news and events by subscribing to our newsletter and following ScotlandsPeople on Facebook and Twitter.

Contact us

If you have any questions, please get in touch with us at:

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/contact-us

An introduction to ScotlandsPeople

SLIDE 1: Introduction

[Image: The Scottish Register of Tartan's Tartan. Crown copyright, NRS, SRT1000.]

Hello I'm Tessa Spencer, an archivist at the National Records of Scotland (or NRS). This talk will give you a brief introduction to NRS' online service ScotlandsPeople. It has been produced for the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society and the American Scottish Foundation to mark Tartan Week.

We will learn about the wealth of documents searchable via ScotlandsPeople, including the kirk session and other church court records from the Church of Scotland, which are now available to view online for the first time. We will explore this diverse material explaining what the records are and how you can access and use them for genealogical research.

But first a brief introduction to NRS – who we are, where we are and what do we do and hold.

SLIDE 2: NRS

NRS is a non-ministerial department of the Scottish Government and was established on 1 April 2011, following the merger of the National Archives of Scotland and the General Register Office for Scotland. We have a duty to collect, preserve and produce information about Scotland's people and history and make it available to inform current and future generations.

SLIDE 3: What we hold

NRS holds around 80 km (or 49.7 miles) of records which are stored in secure and temperature controlled rooms in four buildings in Edinburgh. The records span from the 12th to the 21st centuries, touching on virtually every aspect of Scottish life.

We are responsible for the public and legal records of Scotland but we also have many local and private archives. They relate to a variety of subjects including: the church, law, government and everyday life. We hold and make available one of the most varied archive collections of records in Britain.

SLIDE 4: ScotlandsPeople

<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>

ScotlandsPeople is the official Scottish Government resource where you can access digital images of statutory registers of births, deaths and marriages (1855 to the current day), Old Parish Registers (or OPRS) (1553-1854), census returns (1841-1911), valuation rolls, legal records and more. It is used by hundreds of thousands of people each year to apply for copies of official certificates and to research family history, biography, local and social history.

SLIDE 5: Register for an account

Before you begin, you will need to log in or register with us for free in order to see search results. You do not need to pay anything until you want to view, download or order copies of the records. Click on the green 'Register' button at the top right hand corner of the home page and complete and submit your details in order to register for an account.

SLIDE 6: Start searching

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/search-our-records

You can explore the site by starting to search our records, use the search tips on the search forms and find guidance when you need it.

SLIDE 7: Help and guidance

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/guides

Use our help and guidance pages to find out what records are in the site and how they can be used for different kinds of research. You can also get advice on technical issues like image viewing, filtering and sorting searches and managing your account.

SLIDE 8: Our charges

www.scotlandspeople/content/our-charges

Check our charges page for ordering certificates and buying credits for pay-per-view research, and how to redeem vouchers.

SLIDE 9: Advanced people search

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/advanced-search

On the ScotlandsPeople homepage, you can select the blue 'Advanced people search' option beneath the hero image. Alternatively, you can navigate to this option by clicking on the 'search our records' page.

Six categories of records are indexed by personal name: the statutory (or civil) registers, church registers, census returns, valuation rolls, legal records and poor relief and migration records. They can be searched for free in different ways and you can pay for copies using credits or vouchers.

We will now provide examples of some of these indexed records explaining what they are and how they can be used for research purposes. The kirk session and other church court records will be covered later on in this talk.

SLIDE 10: Statutory registers

The statutory registers are official records of births, deaths and marriages. They have been kept in Scotland from 1855 onwards when compulsory civil registration was introduced to replace the system overseen by the Church of Scotland (the Established Church). In more recent years registers of divorces, dissolutions and civil partnerships have also been kept. The registers can be searched by personal name but some modern records are closed to protect the privacy of individuals.

SLIDE 11: Searching for a birth record John Baird

Using the statutory registers of births we can search for the birth record of John Logie Baird, the television engineer. Enter his forename and surname into the search boxes, select his gender and the year he was born 1888 (which we found from other sources) and then click search.

SLIDE 12: Birth John Loggie Baird

We are presented with a list of search results for John Bairds born in 1888 and can purchase and view the image of interest: 'John Loggie Baird'. In the image viewer, you can also save the image to your account or download it to your own device.

SLIDE 13: Birth record John Loggie Baird

[Birth entry for John Logie Baird in the statutory register for Row or Rhu. Crown copyright, NRS, 1888/503/133.]

John Logie Baird was born on 13 August 1888, the son of John Baird, a Church of Scotland minister and Jessie Inglis. The entry in the statutory register of births for Row or Rhu gives the place of birth at The Lodge, West Argyle Street, Helensburgh. His middle name is spelt Loggie with two 'gs'. The record also details that his parents were married on 18 September 1878 which is useful information for conducting further research.

SLIDE 14: Agatha Christie's 2nd marriage

[Entry for Agatha Christie in the statutory register of St Giles. Crown copyright, NRS, 1930/685-4/938.]

The statutory registers of marriages also include some famous names, such as Agatha Christie, the 'Queen of Crime', a prolific writer of murder-mystery stories featuring the Belgian detective Hercules Poirot or the English Miss Marple.

Agatha Mary Clarissa Miller or Christie married Max Edgar Lucien Mallowan on 11 September 1930. The entry in the statutory register of marriages for the district of St Giles in Edinburgh gives the place of marriage as St Cuthbert's Church. The entry also shows that she had obtained a decree of divorce from her first husband, Colonel Archibald Christie. Her usual residence was 22 Cresswell Place in London but she was living at the Broadford Hotel in Strath at the time of this marriage.

SLIDE 15: Death during construction of Forth Bridge

[Entry for David Clark Russell's death in the statutory register of Inverkeithing, 13 September 1888. Crown copyright, NRS, 1888/432/73, page 25.]

David Clark Russell was a rivet catcher on the Forth Bridge construction. David would have been stationed near the joints to be riveted where a furnace would have been set up. A rivet warmer would have heated up the rivets until they were more malleable and then removed them with tongs and thrown them to the catcher who would catch them in an ash lined leather or wooden bucket.

Sadly, David died age thirteen during the course of his employment on the bridge and appears to be the youngest casualty of the 73 men known to have died. David died on 13 September 1888 on part of the Forth Bridge on the Island of Inchgarvie, Dunfermline. His cause of death is given: fracture of base of skull and of spinal column. Fracture of both legs. Death instantaneous.

SLIDE 16: Register of Corrected Entries

[Entry for David Clark Russell's death in the statutory Register of Corrected Entries, 24 September 1888. Crown copyright, NRS, 1888/000/001, page 149.]

The Register of Corrected Entries (or RCE) records additional authorised information about the death following registration. This usually means further details about cause of death in cases of sudden, accidental and violent deaths. An RCE reference is inserted beside the original entry in the statutory register of deaths.

Linked to David's death entry is an RCE which gives more details regarding his death. He fell from staging a on the Forth Bridge construction, a distance of about 180 ft. and was killed instantly.

SLIDE 17: Unusual names

[Birth entry Equator Thunderbolt, statutory register births, 1897. Crown copyright, NRS, 644/9/600, page 200.]

On a lighter note, you can find some unusual names registered in the records including this birth entry for Equator Thunderbolt who was born on 12 April 1897 at 158 Woodlands Road, Glasgow. Her parents were Edward and Lily Thunderbolt who were married in Melbourne Australia on 21 February 1896. Edward was an engineer which seems an appropriate occupation for his surname!

SLIDE 18: Census returns

An official census of the Scottish population has been taken every ten years since 1801 with the exception of 1941 during the Second World War. However, little information about individuals has survived for 1801 to 1831.

From 1841 to 1911, enumerators prepared transcript books after the collection of household schedules from the head of every dwelling, institution and vessel. Census returns are lists of people living at each address, giving ages, places of birth and other information about them.

SLIDE 19: 1901 census return Charles Rennie Mackintosh

[Detail from 1901 census return for Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Crown copyright, NRS, 1901/644-7/23, page 28.]

In 1901 Charles R Mackintosh, 32, architect and employer, was at 120 Maine Street with his wife Margaret, artist, who worked from home. The census return for the district of Blythswood in Glasgow shows that the household included a visitor, Harry C Marillier, metal worker, who was born in the Cape of Good Hope and a servant, Maggie Macdonald, who spoke Gaelic and English (G and E). The property had seven rooms with one or more windows.

SLIDE 20: Church registers

On ScotlandsPeople you can search the registers of the Church of Scotland, some other Presbyterian churches as well as the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland.

The Old Parish Registers (or OPRs) comprise the records of births and baptisms, banns and marriages and deaths and burials kept by the individual parishes of the Established Church (Church of Scotland) before the introduction of civil registration in 1855.

The parish minister or session clerk normally assumed responsibility for maintaining these registers, but since there was no standard format employed, record keeping varied enormously from parish to parish and also from year to year. As a result the information may be sparse, unreliable and difficult to read.

In the Dunning OPR, in 1764 it is noted: 'Any person that wants a child's name in any of the three preceding pages may scarcely expect to find it in the proper place. They being wrote by Mr King, late schoolmaster depute here without any regularity or order.'

And, in different handwriting and ink: 'The above ill natured ungentlemanlike observation was written by Mr James Whyte and stands as one mark of his own distinguished Idiotism.' (Dunning, 1764; OPR 350/1, page 119).

SLIDE 21: Our oldest register on ScotlandsPeople

Baptism record for Christane Hay, 27 December 1553. Crown copyright, NRS, 351/10, page 3.)

The oldest register dates from 1553 (baptisms and banns from Errol, Perthshire) and the earliest record is for Christane (or Christine) Hay who was baptised on 27 December 1553.

Although there was a requirement from 1552 that parishes record baptisms and marriages, many did not commence until much later, and some more remote areas only have registers from the early 19th century. Some registers have been lost or destroyed and the condition of the surviving 3500 is variable.

SLIDE 22: Example of poor record keeping

[Baptism entry for George ?, 9 April 1704. Crown copyright, NRS, 609/10, page 367.]

In this example the minister cannot recall all the details for a child who was baptised in Ochiltree: 'Something George Something lawful son to What-ye-call-him in Mains of Barskimming was baptised April 9th 1704.'

SLIDE 23: Baptism for James Clerk Maxwell

[Baptism entry for James Clerk Maxwell in the OPR for Edinburgh, 29 July 1831. Crown copyright, NRS, OPR 685-1/56, page 341.]

Thankfully, other entries are more illuminating such as the baptismal record for James Clerk Maxwell, one of the nineteenth century's greatest scientists.

SLIDE 24: Unusual marriage record

[Entry for Patrick Cheyne, OPR Marriages, 25 June 1720. Crown copyright, NRS, 222/10, page 219.]

You can also find unusual records in the registers as in this example relating to a couple in Midmar, Aberdeenshire in 1720, where the path of true love did not run smoothly.

It states that 'Patrick Cheyne and Sophia Garioch were contracted in order to Marriage but by the mutual consent of both Parties' and then in a different hand it notes: 'the match was broke off ha ha ha ha ha! he he he!'

SLIDE 25: Spellings of forenames and surnames

[Sample extracts from ScotlandsPeople, Crown copyright NRS.]

The spellings of forenames and surnames in the records on ScotlandsPeople may not be as you expect, particularly in the older records due to transcription errors, misspellings, phonetic spellings, deliberate or accidental variations by informants as well as variations of the names.

In the case of this woman, she was baptised Jean in 1835, married as Jane in 1866 and died Jeanie in 1900!

SLIDE 26: OPR search 1700/1720 Exact surname search Ferguson

If you are unsure of the spelling of a name or you suspect it may have been recorded differently, you can use the search options to the right hand side of the Surname and

Forename search boxes to improve your search. The options are: Exact names only, fuzzy matching, wild cards, names that begin with, name variants and phonetic matching.

In this example we have searched the surname 'Ferguson' using the exact surname search option in the OPR marriage registers from 1700-1720. 422 results have been returned.

SLIDE 27: OPR search 1700/1720 Surnames names variants search Ferguson

Whereas in this example, we have searched the surname 'Ferguson' using the names variants search option in the same record set and time period and returned 872 results.

Further guidance about using the search options to improve your search results can be found in the forenames and surnames guides on ScotlandsPeople.

SLIDE 28: Valuation rolls

Valuation rolls are records of property ownership compiled for the collecting tax man. From 1855 they record properties (apart from those with a very low rental value), listing annually the names of the proprietor, tenant and principal occupier and the annual rateable value of the property listed.

These records can sometimes be a useful aid to finding a family if they are not readily found in the census because the indexed entries cover inter-census years and beyond. You can also use them to search the history of buildings such as shops and businesses of all kinds, churches, schools, hospitals, railway stations and even lighthouses.

SLIDE 29: Valuation roll example

[Detail from Glasgow Burgh valuation roll, 1925-1926. Crown copyright, NRS, VR102/1370, page 61.]

This example is from the Glasgow Burgh valuation roll for 1925-1926. It lists properties in Garscube Road and Stewart Street in the east end of Glasgow and provides information on the owners, tenants and their occupations. One such tenant is Prince Vallar, a tattooer, working from a flat at 63 Stewart Street. His flat was modest with a rateable value of £11 15s.

SLIDE 30: Legal records

Legal records available on this site include wills and testaments, soldiers' and airmen's wills, the records of First World War Military Service Appeals Tribunals and Coats of Arms.

Wills and testaments can be found in the records of the commissary and sheriff courts and are very useful for family historians. Wills can often provide a wealth of detail about family relationships, and a vivid snapshot into the past about how people lived. You may find names of family members, their relationships and details of everyday possessions, as well as details of the debts that they owed at the time of their death. You can search over 611,000 wills and testaments on ScotlandsPeople covering the period 1513 to 1925.

SLIDE 31: Inventory of Andrew Carnegie

[Detail from the inventory of Andrew Carnegie's estate in Scotland, 11 August 1919. Crown copyright, NRS, SC70/1/654, page 464.]

Andrew Carnegie, manufacturer and philanthropist, gave away over \$350,000,000 (approximately \$4.3 billion in today's money) during his lifetime. After his death a further \$30 million was donated to institutions, charities and pensioners. The inventory of his estate in Scotland was presented at Edinburgh on 21 October 1920. It was modest compared to that recorded in New York with a value of £67,541, 8 shillings (s) and 2 pence (d) which would be in the region of £1.96 million today). The introductory clause records that Andrew Carnegie, late of the County of New York, USA died at Lenox in the State of Massachusetts on 11 August 1919.

SLIDE 32: Kirk session and other church court records

On ScotlandsPeople you can also search for records that are not indexed by personal name, most notably the church court records using the virtual volumes search. You can navigate to this page by clicking on the 'NEW – Search for kirk session and other church court records' featured block on the home page or via the 'Search our records' page.

SLIDE 33: Virtual Volumes search

<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/virtual-volumes>

In Virtual Volumes there are more than a million pages from around 6,000 volumes from the courts of the Church of Scotland. If you are registered with the website, you can search the records and then browse through the images on the site at no charge. If you wish to save or download a copy, each image costs 2 credits (£0.50).

SLIDE 34: Church court records

<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/guides/church-court-records>

[Detail of first page of Borthwick kirk session, 1690. NRS, CH2/38/1, page 1.]

A new system was introduced to run church affairs, education and poor relief following the Scottish Reformation in 1560: the General Assembly, synods, presbyteries, and kirk sessions.

A kirk session is the lowest court in the Church of Scotland, comprising the minister and elders of an individual parish or congregation. In the course of kirk session business, these courts—and in particular the elder appointed to the office of session clerk—produced records documenting their meetings, decisions and transactions.

The differences in extent and jurisdiction between these courts are explained in the Church courts records guide on ScotlandsPeople.

SLIDE 35: Why are they important?

[Extract from Duddingston kirk session minutes, June 1795. NRS, CH2/125/1, page 101.]

Church court records comprise a major source of information for researching many aspects of Scottish history from the mid-16th century onwards.

The records created by church courts are very useful for family and local history research. They contain details of key events in communities across Scotland, mostly

in the form of evidence in church court cases, offering a vivid snapshot into the everyday lives of ordinary Scots. In this period, cases could involve paternity of children and irregular marriages, and the church also carried out many functions later taken over by local government.

These included school education and poor relief, registering births, deaths and marriages, and disciplining parishioners for what would now be termed anti-social behaviour such as drunkenness, cursing or breaking the Sabbath.

The records also show that in an age of private health care, the ministers and sessions sometimes paid medical bills for the poor. There are also accounts of exceptional events, such as witchcraft trials, outbreaks of epidemics, crop failures, extreme weather events and the Civil Wars.

SLIDE 36: Why are they interesting and helpful for research?

[Extract from Drainie kirk session minutes, 1711. NRS, CH2/384/2, page 100.]

For family historians these records are often the first step away from sources (such as registers of births and census returns) which are not indexed intensively by personal names.

The records can give details of births, marriages, burials and the movement of people from one part of Scotland to another. Evidence given in kirk session and presbytery cases can give fascinating details of how our ancestors lived, worked and worshipped.

SLIDE 37: Add foliage to your tree

[Image source: <http://getdrawings.com/tree-silhouette-free-vector#tree-silhouette-free-vector-25.jpg>]

If you're lucky, the kirk session records could be a valuable aid to help add foliage to your family tree. If you've reached a dead end in your research, the kirk session records may contain helpful details to find out more about your ancestors. You might find evidence of them, for example:

- If your ancestor required financial support from the church,
- if they were admonished for what the church then saw as antisocial behaviour or
- information relating to baptisms, marriages and burials not included in the Old Parish Registers, as well as communion rolls and other lists of names.

Unlike statutory registers and OPRs, kirk session records are unindexed. To trace mentions of your ancestors, you first need to know which parish they belonged to and then find out whether its records have survived.

SLIDE 38: Searching kirk session records by place

<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/place-search>

Virtual Volumes gives you three different options to search the records: by volume, record creator (the kirk session, presbytery or other court or institution) or by place. We will focus on the place search.

If you know where your ancestor lived, you can use 'place search' to look for records relating to a civil parish, county, city, burgh, island or legal jurisdiction. Examples of

valid searches are 'Aberdeen', 'Kilmarnock' and 'Lanark County'. For this example we have chosen 'Glasgow'.

If you want to know which kirk sessions produced records for a parish, but do not know the name of the specific kirk session, it is better to search for the name of the parish using the 'place search'.

SLIDE 39: Place search results page

You can filter your results by different types of places on the results page. You can also browse a list of places that are included in the place search gazetteer.

<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/browse-places>

On the results page, select the place of interest, for example, 'Glasgow City'.

SLIDE 40: Records for Glasgow City

On the results page for Glasgow City, then select the records of interest, for example, 'Glasgow – Cathcart kirk session'.

SLIDE 41: Glasgow – Cathcart kirk session

On the results page for Glasgow – Cathcart kirk session, then select the records you would like to view, for example, the minutes for 1701-1751.

SLIDE 42: Image viewer

The Virtual Volumes image viewer is different from the image viewer for indexed records on ScotlandsPeople, in that you can view images free of charge within the image viewer and then, if you decide you want a copy for personal research, you can purchase and download this (as long as you have first purchased credits in the normal way).

The contents list on the right-hand side of the image viewer is a rough list of contents in the volume, similar to chapter marks. This allows you to jump into a volume at a relevant point.

Within the image viewer there are a number of functions to help you navigate your way through the volume and to manipulate the image within the viewer.

SLIDE 43: Saved volumes

When you decide to save a copy of an image for personal research, you can use the purchase button to buy a copy of the image which will be saved to the 'Saved volumes' area of your account and also download a high quality jpeg of the image to your own device.

SLIDE 44: Anti-social behaviour

[Extract from Lanark kirk session minutes, 1724. NRS, CH2/1529/1/3, page 1].

Of most interest for genealogists and local historians are the minutes of the kirk sessions, which typically contain a detailed and often colourful record of the discipline the minister and kirk elders handed out to errant parishioners for offences such as drunkenness, swearing, breaking the Sabbath, quarrelling and sexual misdemeanours.

This is an example of a discipline case brought before Lanark kirk session in December 1724. James Weir and Helen Hastie, 'both single persons, were found together under Cloud of Night, in an outer Coalhouse in the Ministers close', and it

was 'suspected they have been guiltie of unsuitable Behaviour with each other'. William Rob, was also 'suspected to be concerned in that Wickedness'.

All three were summoned before the kirk session to account for their 'unsuitable behaviour'. James and Helen claimed that they wrestling for an apple in the coalhouse and William said that he was waiting outside for James to come out.

They were solemnly rebuked by the session for their 'uncircumspect Behaviour' and were dismissed 'with a grave Admonition leaving Room for further process, if any Thing shall be discovered by the providence of God' and 'their Absolution from this Scandal' was delayed 'till they see, whether anything be discovered in providence or not.'

SLIDE 45: Lists of names

[Detail from Killin kirk session minutes, 1835. NRS, CH2/1246/8, pages 36-37.]

Additional records of interest include communion rolls and other lists of names. Communion rolls vary in the amount of detail they supply, but the most detailed give the communicant's place of residence, occupation, date of admission to the congregation and where he/she had come from. The general remarks column can provide further useful information.

In addition to communion rolls and registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, kirk sessions habitually produced other lists of parishioners, such as male heads of household, rolls of adherents or parish population surveys.

This example from Killin kirk session minutes, is a roll of male heads of families in 1835, who are members of the congregation and in full communion with the church. It is useful to researchers as an early list of names before the 1841 census.

SLIDE 46: List of population of parish

[Dallas kirk session – List of population of parish, June 1811. NRS, CH2/1129/2, page 25.]

The kirk sessions may also provide information about the inhabitants of the parish. For example, the kirk session minutes for Dallas, Morayshire, includes a list of the population of the parish from June 1811. It is very unusual for early census records to include children making the 1811 census of Dallas one of the best of the known surviving records. Each entry includes address, name, rank (this can be occupation, marital status, lodger) and age.

SLIDE 47: Poor relief

[Extract from Drainie kirk session minutes detailing money distributed to the poor, 2 February 1688. NRS, CH2/384/1, page 33.]

The kirk session was the primary body that provided poor relief to members of the parish. It also sought to determine who the fathers of children born outside marriage were, in order to confirm whether the parish was financially responsible for supporting the mother and child, if the father could not be identified.

SLIDE 48: Jemima Boyd's birth entry

[Jemima Boyd, birth entry, 4 July 1857, Crieff, Perthshire. NRS, Crown copyright, 342/76, page 26.]

Ann Boyd, a domestic servant, had a daughter, Jemima, who was born on 20 August 1856 but was not registered until the following year. Her father's name is not given in the birth entry.

SLIDE 49: Crieff kirk session

[Extract from Crieff kirk session minutes, 9 March 1857. NRS, CH2/545/6, page 322.]

Ann appeared before Crieff kirk session, as that was where her daughter was born. It states that 'Ann Boyd... named Peter Kemp as the father of her child'. She also

appeared before the kirk session in Madderty where 'she resided when the guilt was contracted'.

Peter refused the charge against him. It was recorded in the Crieff minutes on 8 June 1857 that, following a declaration that her statement was true, Ann was 'solemnly admonished of her sin and expected to lead a virtuous life... [and] was restored to the privileges of the church'.

Jemima died in 1931 and her father's name is not included in her death entry, suggesting that Peter did not take responsibility for his child or that they never formed a relationship during her lifetime.

It is always worthwhile searching the corresponding records for the parish where you know a family lived; you might be surprised what you find!

SLIDE 50: Handwriting

[Extract from a witchcraft confession, Stirling Presbytery minutes, 1590. NRS, CH2/722/2, page 23.]

If you are new to research using original records prior to the late eighteenth century, you can find help in our guide on reading older handwriting, the Scottish Handwriting website and a glossary of abbreviations, words and phrases.

- www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/guides/reading-older-handwriting
- www.scottishhandwriting.com/
- www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/glossary

SLIDE 51: Dictionary of Scots language

The Dictionary of the Scots language is a culmination of two major dictionaries of the Scots language in a searchable format for tracking down the meaning and historical origin of Scots words such as 'Glaikit'.

SLIDE 52: The Scottish Register of Tartans

www.tartanregister.gov.uk

[Image: The Scottish Register of Tartan's Tartan. Crown copyright, NRS, SRT1000.]

The Scottish Register of Tartans was launched on 5 February 2009 and is a single, independent Scottish register of tartans which promotes and preserves information about historic and contemporary tartans from Scotland and throughout the world.

Prior to the establishment of the Register, tartans were recorded by the Scottish Tartans Society, the Scottish Tartans World Register and the Scottish Tartans Authority.

The Register is administered by NRS with advice from the Court of the Lord Lyon and representatives of the Scottish tartan industry. The Keeper of the Records of Scotland and Registrar General for Scotland is also the Keeper of the Scottish Register of Tartans.

This image is of The Scottish Register of Tartan's tartan. The colours were inspired by the volumes of the Register of Sasines (property registers) held by NRS: brown for the leather bindings, red and gold for the labels, and black for the shelving.

SLIDE 53: Tracing your Scottish ancestors

This official guide to the records made available via ScotlandsPeople and NRS is indispensable for family historians, historians and biographers. The seventh edition is packed with up-to-date information about how to trace Scottish genealogy in the unique treasure trove of Scotland's national archives. Available for the first time in both paperback and e-book versions. You can purchase a copy online via the publisher Birlinn and other online retailers.

SLIDE 54: Keep up-to-date

The records of kirk sessions and of higher church courts, are the first in a series of digitised record sets NRS will make available via ScotlandsPeople throughout 2021 and beyond.

You can find out more about family and historical research at the ScotlandsPeople website and you can keep up-to-date with news and events by subscribing to our newsletter and following ScotlandsPeople on Facebook and Twitter.

SLIDE 55: Thank you for listening and contact details

Thank you for listening to this talk, we hope you have found it useful for your research. If you have any questions, please get in touch with us at www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/contact-us