

## Tracing the Irish in Scotland (Chris Paton)

### Civil registration

- BMD Civil Registration commenced in Ireland Apr 1845/Jan 1864
- In Scotland it commenced January 1855 (Background to its establishment at The Scottish Way of Birth & Death [www.gla.ac.uk/departments/scottishwayofbirthanddeath](http://www.gla.ac.uk/departments/scottishwayofbirthanddeath))

Records available to present day at ScotlandsPeople Centre, Edinburgh ([www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/visit-us/scotlandspeople-centre](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/visit-us/scotlandspeople-centre)), and associated hubs across Scotland

ScotlandsPeople – the website [www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk)

Free Search, £7.50 for 30 credits – vital records & censuses (search free, image 5 credits), 10 credits for testaments

Births            Images 1855 - 1919  
Marriages        Images 1855 - 1944  
Deaths            Images 1855 - 1969  
& relevant Registers of Corrected Entries

All BMD records are indexed online from 1855 – 2019  
Images not online can be ordered as official extracts (£12 +p&p)

### Special note:

- Scottish BMD records post-1855 name both parents (Only the case with Irish births; Irish marriage records name fathers only, most death records nothing)
- All records from the year 1855 contain more information – a birth registered in 1855, for example, will note where in Ireland the parents came from
- Most birth records will also note where in Ireland the parents married, and when, if they did so prior to migrating to Scotland

Be wary of how registrars may have recorded Irish names – e.g. Eoin (Eóin) as John, Owen, Yohan or Iain.

NB: Scottish birth records may provide clues for children born in Ireland to couples during the civil registration gap, after 1845 and prior to 1864, when civil registration started in Ireland. This is particularly useful if pre-1864 Irish baptismal records have not survived. Search for families with the same surname in Scottish areas where your ancestors settled, you may find a match e.g. if their death record names parents matching your ancestral family.

### Censuses

These exist from 1841-1911 on ScotlandsPeople. Records from 1841-1901 exist in incomplete transcript form on FindmyPast and Ancestry, but they are best to access on microfilm at libraries, or via ScotlandsPeople.

If an entry simply states 'Born Ireland', search for siblings and extended family. Irish people often arrived via chain migration, so clusters of family members may exist in an area – check all entries for a possible place of birth.

Original household schedules from 1901 and 1911 for the censuses in Scotland have not survived, (unlike Ireland), only enumerators returns.

If by 1911 you can't find a place of origin, & your ancestor was Protestant, try Ulster Covenant from 1912 ([www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni)). Signatories in Scotland usually gave their Irish parish of origin and/or county, instead of their Scottish address.

1939 National Identity Register may list a date of birth for an Irish person based in Scotland if not found in records in Ireland itself – application via [www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/nhs-central-register/about-the-register/1939-national-identity-register-and-how-to-order-an-official-extract](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/nhs-central-register/about-the-register/1939-national-identity-register-and-how-to-order-an-official-extract)

### **Irish pension applications**

Information sourced from 1841 and 1851 census in Ireland was used to prove age after 1908 for a state pension application. There were many Irish applicants based in Scotland – see <http://censussearchforms.nationalarchives.ie/search/cs/home.jsp>. (Additional census search forms held at PRONI are not available online.)

### **Church Records**

ScotlandsPeople hosts the following:

- **OPRs** (Old Parish Registers – Church of Scotland, 1553-1854)
- **CPRs** (Catholic Parish Registers – Roman Catholic Church)
- **Other Churches** (dissenting Presbyterian denominations)

Guides on the records available for each parish/church are available on ScotlandsPeople.

#### OPR records:

These are available at libraries on microfilm, or via ScotlandsPeople. No standardised means of recording entries. Kirk session records are also available in digitised format via [www.scottishdocuments.com](http://www.scottishdocuments.com), but only at select archives across the country; also via Virtual Volumes at the National Records of Scotland, Edinburgh.

#### CPR records\*:

Births & Baptisms	1703–1992	Banns & Marriages	1736–1934
Deaths & Burials	1742–1955	Other events	1742–1909

\*Including Bishopric of the Forces records sourced from Aldershot. A million entries, but FindmyPast now has considerably more Scottish Catholic records, over 2 million.

NB: From 1834, dissenting and nonconformist marriages had to have banns proclaimed first through the established Church of Scotland. This means that in some cases you may even find Roman Catholic marriages recorded in both the OPR and CPR registers – the first for the banns payment, the second for the marriage entry.

### **FamilySearch**

**www.familysearch.org**

Parish baptisms & marriages indexes 1553-1854 (mainly Church of Scotland; no Roman Catholic parish records included). Civil birth and marriage indexes 1855-1875; no death indexes.

Many Glasgow burial registers are also available at

**<https://bit.ly/GlasgowCemeteryRecords>**

### **Wills and testaments**

Unlike Ireland, probate (known as 'confirmation' in Scotland) has been handled by the civil courts since 1562. Court records here have slightly different names:

- Testament testamentar – if deceased was testate (Irish equivalent is a 'grant of probate').
- Testament dative – if the deceased was intestate (Irish equivalent is 'letters of administration' or 'admons'). All confirmed records up to 1925 are available on ScotlandsPeople.

Note that in Scotland prior to 1868, land could not be left in a will, only moveable assets, unlike in Ireland. Land and property (heritable assets) had to be inherited through a separate process which first involved the recognition of the right of the heir to inherit (via the 'Services of Heirs' or by issue of a 'precept of clare constat').

Calendar summaries are available on Ancestry's *Scotland, National Probate Index (Calendar of Confirmations and Inventories), 1876-1936* collection. Additional published calendars are available up to 1955 in select libraries and at the NRS in Edinburgh; later wills are indexed in microform and computerised formats at NRS. (Testaments from the last ten years will still be at the Sheriff Court where confirmed).

### **Poor law records**

- 1845 – Poor Law (Scotland) Amendment Act (c.f. 1838 in Ireland)
- Poorhouses established in parishes, or in 'combinations' of parishes
- Run by Parochial Boards responsible to Board of Supervision in Edinburgh. Inspectors of the Poor decided on poorhouse admission or outdoor relief

### **Poor Law deportations from Scotland to Ireland**

Check *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers* via the National Library of Scotland's Licensed Digital Collections (**www.nls.uk**); some examples on Raymond's County Down website at **www.raymondscountydownwebsite.com** (from 1867, 1869, 1875-1878)

### **Newspapers**

British Library 19th Century Newspaper Collection, via **www.nls.uk**:

- Glasgow Herald (1820-1900)
- Caledonian Mercury (1800-1867)
- Aberdeen Journal (1800-1900)

- Dundee Courier (1844-1900)

British Newspaper Archive ([www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk))

NB: If you have Orange Order or RBP based ancestry, check the weekly Scottish reports from lodge meetings sent over from Scotland to the *Belfast Weekly News*.

- Edinburgh Gazette [www.thegazette.co.uk](http://www.thegazette.co.uk)
- Glasgow Herald (1820-1980s) / Glasgow's Evening Times (1951-1990)  
<https://news.google.com/newspapers>
- The Scotsman Archive (1817-1950) <http://archive.scotsman.com>

### Archives & FHSs:

National Records of Scotland	<a href="http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk">www.nrscotland.gov.uk</a>
Scottish Archive Network	<a href="http://www.scan.org.uk">www.scan.org.uk</a>
SAFHS	<a href="http://www.safhs.org.uk">www.safhs.org.uk</a>

### Easter Rising, War of Independence and Irish Civil War

Some members of the republican forces based in Scotland at the time and later claimed a military pension from the Irish government – see [www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/military-service-pensions-collection-1916-1923](http://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/military-service-pensions-collection-1916-1923).

### Gaining Irish Citizenship and Passports

If interested in Irish passports, visit [www.dfa.ie/irish-consulate/edinburgh/](http://www.dfa.ie/irish-consulate/edinburgh/). Information on pre-requisites for Irish citizenship are available via [www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving\\_country/irish\\_citizenship/irish\\_citizenship\\_through\\_birth\\_or\\_descent.html](http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving_country/irish_citizenship/irish_citizenship_through_birth_or_descent.html)

### Books

Further collections are discussed in several of my books, which can be purchased in paperback or ebook editions – details are available at [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/Chris-Paton/a/1799](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/Chris-Paton/a/1799):

- Tracing Your Family History on the Internet (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) (2019)
- Tracing Your Scottish Family History on the Internet (2020)
- Tracing Your Scottish Ancestry Through Church and State Records (2019)
- Sharing Your Family History Online (2021)
- Tracing Your Irish Ancestors Through Land Records (2021)

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Scotland's Greatest Story family history research  
[www.ScotlandsGreatestStory.co.uk](http://www.ScotlandsGreatestStory.co.uk)  
Scottish GENES Blog (GEnalogy News and EventS)  
<https://ScottishGENES.blogspot.com>  
[@genesblog](https://www.facebook.com/TheGENESBlog) [www.facebook.com/TheGENESBlog](https://www.facebook.com/TheGENESBlog)