Researching Urban Ancestors in Scotland

Alison Spring, QG

A quick list of resources referred to in this presentation.

Geographical Resources

GENUKI Scotland. An essential reference guide for many aspects of genealogical research: https://www.genuki.org.uk/big/sct

Registration Districts of Scotland, including links to lists of old and new parish and registration districts: https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/learning-and-events/research-guides/statutory-registers-of-births-deaths-and-marriages/?section=registration-districts

NLS County Maps: https://maps.nls.uk/counties/

NLS Boundaries Viewer: https://maps.nls.uk/geo/boundaries/

Local government area boundaries in Scotland: 1974 to 1996
An information paper giving the history and details of changes in Scottish county boundaries, listing current local councils and the historical counties they cover, as well as the old regional areas such as Strathclyde.
https://www.boundaries.scot/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Local_government_Scotland_1974_1996.pdf

Alphabetical List of Coterminous Parishes – ScotlandsPeople:
https://web.archive.org/web/20101221083552/http://scotlandspeoplehub.gov.uk/pdf/coterminous-parishes.pdf

The Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers. Ancestry.co.uk.
https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/8830/

Regarding these lists and maps, it's best to use them as tools and not see the boundaries they show as hard and fast, especially where it isn't clear what time period they cover.

Counties, Cities and Burghs: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/help-and-support/guides/counties-cities-and-burghs

© Alison Spring, 2026

Directories
Directories. National Library of Scotland guide.
https://www.nls.uk/family-history/directories/

Scottish Post Office Directories
https://digital.nls.uk/directories/

Record Sources
Burgess & Guild Brethren Index – listed near the end of the screen
https://www.findmypast.co.uk/discover/education-and-work/guild-and-trade-associations/scotland-burgess-and-guild-brethren-index

NLS Moving Image Archive
https://www.nls.uk/collections/moving-image-archive/

Trove (Scotland)
https://www.trove.scot

Newspapers
Google Newspaper Archives
https://news.google.com/newspapers

National Library of Scotland eResources
https://auth.nls.uk/eresources/browse/category/99

British Newspaper Archive/FindMyPast
https://britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk

Further Reading

National Records of Scotland. The case of Oscar Slater.
https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/learning-and-events/all-features-and-articles/the-case-of-oscar-slater/

Paton, Chris. *Sharing Your Family History Online*. ISBN: 9781526780294.
https://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/Sharing-Your-Family-History-Online-Paperback/p/18718

© Alison Spring, 2026