

3. Pre-1841 Population Listings in Scotland

17th Century. In the 17th century there are various listings of the people who lived in certain parts of Scotland. In many cases these only refer to the Heads of Families, but this can still be a useful guide. In 1638, in 1667 and then at various times right up until 1811, there are lists of the people of Strath Halladale, Strathnaver and Strathy in Sutherland. These are probably the earliest attempts by the authorities, whether Kirk, Civil or Estate records, to formulate any structured lists of inhabitants. In 1681 in the parish of Botriphnie in Banffshire there is a surviving list of the 'Visitations', which occurred when the minister or the kirk elders went around the parish to check on the congregation's religious knowledge. This list appears to identify not just the heads of households, but other residents as well. In Dallas in Moray there is a partial list of the population in 1689, and by 1691 we find the more extensive Hearth Tax records which have survived for parts of Perthshire, Angus and Ayrshire. Poll Tax records for the Tron parish in Edinburgh have survived from 1694, and then in 1695 and 1696 Poll Tax records have been published for Aberdeenshire and for parts of Renfrewshire. **18th**

Century There then seems to be a long period without any formal records. There are some occasional lists of people in various kirk session minutes, maybe the parishioners contributing towards a new bell for the kirk, or to the building of a new bridge in the parish, but these lists cannot in any way be said to constitute a full list of all of the people in the parish. It is true that the Window Tax records were kept from 1753, but these only related to the more wealthy members of society, as do many of the later taxation records. In 1777 there is again a partial list of the inhabitants of Dallas, in Moray, and in 1782 there is a list of the people in Knockando who received aid during the serious food shortages at that time, a list which appears to include most of the people in the parish. In 1792 there is a census of Balmaclellan. For those interested in farmers then the Horse Tax records of 1797 are invaluable, and are available on the Scotland's Places website as well as in NRS. **19th**

Century Very few of the early official censuses have survived, and many of those which have are purely a list of total numbers of males and females and of the number of houses in the parish. The 1801 census lists for Peterhead, Annan and Galston have been published, and the enumerator's journal for Dundee has survived. For 1811 there are censuses for Longforgan, Ladykirk, Dallas, Dalkeith, Galston and Annan. A census for Irvine in 1820 has been published, and for 1821 we again have Dalkeith, Longforgan, Lochrutton, Galston and Annan, together with St Quivox, Lesmahagow, and the Orkney parishes of Orphir, St Andrews, Deerness, South Ronaldsay and Burray, Sandwick and Stromness. Also surviving are the population returns for Golspie and Assynt. The census returns for Moy and Dalarossie have survived in the Old Parish Register. Of the 1831 census the records for Ladykirk, Longforgan, Galston and Annan seem to have survived, along with the county population return for Golspie and Assynt. The census returns for Moy and Dalarossie

have survived in the OPR. There are also population lists for Dalkeith in 1834 and for Knockando in 1835 within the Kirk Session Minutes.

Further information about early census and population record transcripts, etc is available on the ScotlandsPeople Centre website. This also gives a list of the sources for, and the location of this information.

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The most recent list of pre-1841 censuses and other population lists now appears on the SAFHS website at www.safhs.org.uk