KILTS, CELTS & SCOTS: RESEARCHING YOUR SCOTTISH ANCESTORS ON SCOTLAND'S PEOPLE

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> "Ma great ancestors a nae gone; ye can still find them in ma flesh, ma blood, ma heart, and ma soul."
>
> Old Scottish proverb.

Methodologies

1. Formulating what we know helps visualize what we don't know.

2. Search from most recent to earliest when examining documents.

3. Create a visual tree with what is found.

4. Extrapolate the data.

5. Create a timeline.

6. Cite sources.

7. Keep trying.

8. Remember before & after 1855.

9. Save searches.

10. Remember to search surnames with flexible spellings.

11. Remember 30 credits is only $10

12. Before searching, it is best to know a birthdate, a birthplace, and parents' names.

Census Surname Options ⊗

Exact surnames only will return all entries that contain the whole search name, so a search on the surname **DOUGLAS**, for example, will return all **DOUGLAS** entries. Hyphenated names such as **MONTAGU-DOUGLAS** and **DOUGLAS-HOME** are also returned. Variations in the spelling of the search name and partial matches (where the search name is included in a longer name), e.g. **DOUGLASS** will not be returned.

Surnames that begin with will return all matches which begin with the letters searches, and **DOUGLAS**, for example, will return **DOUGLASS.**

Wildcards allowed will enable wildcard(s). See Wildcards

Traditional soundex will enable soundex. Soundex is a system whereby names are grouped phonetically. It works by converting each name into a code or 'key', and retrieving all entries with the same code as the search name. It does, however, have its limitations and can generate a large number of superfluous results. For further information on using soundex and how to calculate the soundex value of a name, see Soundex

Narrow and broad metaphone - Metaphone is a phonetic algorithm for indexing words by their English pronunciation. The algorithm produces variable length keys as its output, as opposed to Soundex fixed-length keys. Similar sounding words share the same keys.

Fuzzy Matching - compares each word in the name searched for with each word in the names in the index using the Levenshtein distance formula. A score of half the number of letters in the word or greater is considered a match. The Levenshtein distance is a metric for measuring the amount of difference between two sequences (i.e., the so called edit distance).

Surname Variants is a name variants thesaurus based on the NameX library.

Sources:

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