

# Help Notes : Questions You May Wish Answers to

## Overview

These notes are meant to help you obtain the very best results from the information recorded in our Inventory Lists.

The information in our datasets and indices is gleaned from an eclectic assortment of old documents, assorted ephemera, books and other printed material which are privately held. None of these items are for sale unless under exceptional circumstances.

Although every care has been taken to ensure all the information given is accurate, there will, no doubt, be errors of one kind or another in some datasets. If you are uncertain about anything, please contact us and we will be glad to help. Any mistake you find will be corrected once you let us know the details.

Some of the content is replicated in our "Assorted Lists" category, but presented in a slightly different format.

Should you have any questions relating to possible errors or any other aspect of the website, please contact **enquiry@scottishfamilyheritage.co.uk** and we will give your enquiry our best attention.

The main contents of this Help file is in four parts:

- (1) Dataset layout.
- (2) Column headings - description.
- (3) Punctuation marks.
- (4) Digitized images.

## Dataset Layout

The datasets are found within two separate main headings. These are:-

### **Document & Ephemeral Sources** and **Printed Sources**.

These headings are largely self explanatory, but the following is worth noting.

Various forms of printed material are to be found in the Document & Ephemeral Sources, but in general should not contain material which has already been published. For example, these include printed matter such as "Forms" which may or may not be filled in with handwriting.

These datasets are referenced by their ID number, as in 001, 002, 003 etc.

In the main, Printed Sources refer to published books, or surviving parts of books and Newspapers, etc. Some other printed matter is included which probably contains no (MS) handwriting, such as, for example, military Rolls of Honour, postcards & newspapers or periodicals.

These datasets are referenced by their ID numbers, as in 107, 108 or 109B. The information is contained in two separate, but connected datasets. These have the headings **Main** and **Additional**.

The details listed in the **Main** section contain data to identify the person, business or other topic. The **Additional** information contains other details that may be of interest. The headings given in the **Main** section are the same in both the Document & Printed Sources collections.

Please note - There are several headings in the **Document Sources** "Additional" section that differ from those in the **Printed Sources**. This is due to the different overall content of both source types.

Column Headings in both **Main** sections are as follows.

### **Row**

This is a help facility to find any particular entry. The numbers do not form a part of the source content.

### **Name (Business - Personal - Place)**

There are several points to be aware of.

- a) **Personal names**, e.g. John Smith are indexed with surname first, followed by the Christian or forename. This presentation should ensure that any individual surname can be found quickly.
- b) Individuals with titles, in particular those of the nobility, etc., e.g. William, Earl of Dunsmure (no such person), are listed as Dunsmure : William; his title being in another column. This form indicates that the family surname is either uncertain or not known. For example, the above person's name may in fact be "William Jones" who happens to possess the Earldom of Dunsmure. Quite often names such as this indicate the name of the lands or estate possessed by the named individual.
- c) **(ms)** : The use of this abbreviation will only be found in relation to married women. It stands for "Maiden Surname" indicating her surname prior to marriage. This is a term used frequently in Scottish marital nomenclature, and for the purposes of these datasets is applied throughout where appropriate.

- d) Names, either in full or in part that are in brackets ( )s can mean one of two things. If for example a document quotes a name such as (Jas. Brown), the entry may be listed as "Brown, James (Jas.)"
- e) Business, or other non personal entries, often contain abbreviated parts of their names with words such as "Assoc." for Associated, "Co." for Company, or "Ltd" for Limited. These are recorded as found in the source, but are formalized in full under the "**Exact Names**" heading
- f) **The** : It is worth noting that quite a few entries begin with this word as part of the name. In general, these entries are listed thus alphabetically.
- g) Subject matter, such as place names, events, or descriptive details of illustrations, are given either as thought appropriate, or as found in the original source.

### **Exact Names**

- a) The names included here are the same as in the previous category, except that they are in normal name order. Where the cell is blank, this indicates that the exact name is as in the first column.
- b) Some names, particularly in relation to business, or societies, etc., contain a variety of abbreviations. These include items such as "Assoc." for Associated, "Co." for Company, or "Ltd" for Limited. These name parts are given in full, as in "Co." for Company, although it may be inferred that in some cases these were never actually used in reality.

### **Title & Letters After Name**

- a) All entries are given more or less as found in the source material. Thus, for example, Esquire may be given as Esq., or Reverend as Rev. The full words are given elsewhere as in the **Business, Occupation, Profession or Status** column.

Some odd entries occur. For example, items such as ships or stagecoaches are entered here, as in the term "ship" : a steamship

### **Address**

- a) All addresses are given as in the original source material.
- b) Some addresses may refer to a business or work address, although this may not be clear in the original text.
- c) Places given in ( )s are in general an assumption based on the available information.

- d) Care should be taken where the words (at, in, & of) are given.

The word "at", in general, means that the person was perhaps a temporary visitor or occupant of the listed address or place.

The word "in", frequently at least in Scottish terminology tends to mean that the individual lived within, or occupied, the named premises.

The word "of", is a term that particularly in Scottish terminology needs to be interpreted very carefully. In times past, this meant that the person concerned was the legal possessor of land or a named estate, usually a significant area of property. Thus, the fictitious William James McGillicuddy, Esquire of Strathmarion, parish of the same, in Cromartyshire, was the owner of a 7,500 acre estate. He spent most of his life living in London, and the estate was looked after by his Factor, James Shawlands. The equally fictitious Edward Sidearm of Marcatterie, in Dumfries, owned and worked the lands of Marcatterie, a 100 acre Lordship of ancient extent.

Occasionally the word "of" can be confused with the term "in" which from a family history point of view can prove disastrously misleading.

It is important to be aware of spelling variations. Placenames are generally given as found in the original source material. If the source dates to an earlier period, some of these differences may be quite marked, and in these instances, where known, it may be that a more modern spelling is also given, but in brackets ( )s.

## **County / Country**

- a) If entry refers to Scotland, then wherever known, except as listed in (b), the county will be given.

It is important to note that the names of counties are those that existed prior to the re-organisation of local authority which took place in 1975 such as the term "Grampian." County names are largely the old shire designations, such as Aberdeenshire or Haddingtonshire. It is also worth noting that some shire designations had, or have, more than one name, such as Morayshire, was also known as Elginshire, while Midlothian was also called Edinburghshire.

- b) Several county names are not given where these are the same as the city or town they are named after, e.g. Dumfries, Perth or Stirling. In these cases, the designation will simply be entered as "Scotland."

- c) If the place is outside Scotland, then county, province or state names are given, mostly where they exist in the original.

### **Business, Occupation, Profession or Status**

- a) In general, this relates to what the individual did for a living, as in Clerk, Writer to the Signet, Domestic Servant, etc. Individuals who were from the aristocracy are by and large not listed as their status is given in the title column. Some occupations are either now no longer in existence, or are extremely rare, such as Apothecary (now Pharmacist), and those listed are given as found in the original source.
- b) Some designations are generalized such as in the term "Military," or "Clergyman."
- c) Care should be taken when interpreting some entries. For example, in general, the term "Writer" should not be taken to mean an author. In almost all instances this designation will indicate the person (a man) was employed in the capacity as a solicitor, particularly in Scotland.

### **Year**

- a) In the **Document** section this refers to the year in which the document was written. In many instances other years will also be given in ( )s. These represent additional entries mentioned in each document.

In the **Printed** section, the year quoted in general is that in which the item was printed and published. Again, some additional years may be given in ( )s, and these are indicated within the text of the publication where relevant.

Column Headings in both **Additional** sections are as follows.

**Note : In the Printed Sources section, the following column headings found in the "Document" Additional datasets do not appear for obvious reasons.**

- a) Form / Letterhead / MS or other  
b) Text by  
c) Seals & Stamps

### **Row**

This row conforms to the information contained in the **Main** section, and is simply meant as a finding aid.

## **Exact Names**

These are listed in normal name order, and again are only meant as an aid to help you find the entry you are looking for.

## **Comments : Relationships : Subjects**

This contains any relevant information which the editors think appropriate to enhance the usefulness of the entire entry. Where appropriate, it includes things such as family or personal connections, and advice on the possibility of searching other possible associations.

## **Document Type**

Entries list the generalised description of the item. In the **Document** section this can vary from something as simple as a letter, or something more informative, such as for example, a Marriage Contract.

In the **Printed** section, this generally will include items such as Book Advert, Newspaper or Magazine.

## **Form / Letterhead / MS (or other) : Document Section only**

Contents cover additional detail about the individual item. These indicate if the item is a printed form with additional text written in manuscript, or has any form of business or personal Letterhead. Where MS is listed, this shows that the item is entirely handwritten as in manuscript. It is important to note that MS in this instance should not be confused with the symbol (ms) for maiden surname as found in the "**Name**" column.

## **Text by : Document Section only**

Where **Yes** is entered in the relevant entry, this means that some part, or all of the text was written by the named individual. Sometimes this might simply refer to a signature, but frequently a complete document may have been written by this person.

## **Seals & Stamps : Document Section only**

On items such as letters, envelopes (covers), or legal documents, various types of seals or stamps may be found. These include ordinary postage stamps and franks, as well as franks on pre stamp (1841) letters. Also listed are wax seals, sometimes fragmentary, as well as Impressed Duty Stamps as found on many legal documents.

## **Document Numbers**

The numbers listed in this column identify each individual item from every Inventory in the **Document** section. In the **Printed** section, the entries refer

mostly to page numbers, but are only recorded if the relevant page has been digitized.

## **Digitized Image Numbers**

These numbers refer to the Inventory and digitized image numbers. Thus, for example, 001/004 : 001/004a indicates that in Inventory 001 for this particular entry there are two possible images to view or acquire.

## Punctuation Marks

### **Punctuation Marks**

- a) **( )s** The use of brackets ( )s is sometimes used to show that the enclosed is additional information, which may be assumed from other information within the source itself, or from an outside source such as the Internet. In some instances, this information cannot always be vouched for.
- b) **?** The use of a "?" indicates that the information is either unknown or uncertain.
- c) **(ms)** The use of this abbreviation will only be found in relation to married women. It stands for "Maiden Surname" indicating her surname prior to marriage. This is a term used frequently in Scottish marital nomenclature, and for the purposes of these datasets is applied throughout where appropriate.
- d) **—** The use of the punctuation mark — has two distinct meanings. In most cases it indicates that at the time of writing, no information was available, or thought appropriate to insert into the dataset entry.

However, in the **Digitized Image Numbers** column it means specifically that no image is as yet available. For further details please see under the next heading of Digitized Images.

## Digitized Images

Where entries in the **Digitized Image Numbers** column are given, then a copy of the required item(s) can be purchased in the usual manner, i.e., placing an order online.

In the event that there are no current images available for any particular entry, it should be possible in most cases to have them produced by pre-booking an order online. In these instances, upon request, a quotation regarding time and cost to produce the image(s) will be given within as short a time as possible.