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# National Register of Archives for Scotland

## USEFUL RESOURCES

The National Records of Scotland (NRS)

<http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk>

For information regarding using the NRS, its collections and online catalogues.

The National Archives (TNA), Discovery

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

For information on more than 2,500 archives across the UK, including privately owned collections.

Archives Hub

<http://archiveshub.ac.uk/>

For access to catalogues for papers held in UK universities and colleges.

Scottish Family History

<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>

For online access to sources of genealogical information including births, marriages, deaths, census, wills and valuation rolls.

Scottish Archive Network (SCAN)

<http://www.scan.org.uk/>

For access to collection level catalogues of more than 50 Scottish archives.

Managing Business Archives

<http://www.managingbusinessarchives.co.uk/>

For advice on best practice for managing business archives.

The Scottish Council on Archives' business section

<http://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/businessarchives>

Provides guidance and support for Scottish business archives, including case studies.

British Library, Collection Care

<http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/collectioncare/>

Offers advice on preservation and conservation of papers.

Community Archives and Heritage Group

<http://www.communityarchives.org.uk/>

Supports and promotes community archives in the UK and Ireland.

## THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF ARCHIVES FOR SCOTLAND:

### YOUR ARCHIVES, OUR EXPERTISE

“ We all appreciate what you do to encourage us and to support us. ”

Dr Peter Burman, Honorary Archivist,  
Hopetoun House

“ I greatly appreciate all the work the NRAS has done for me throughout my academic career – the collections have been fantastic. ”

Researcher

All correspondence and enquiries should be sent to:

National Register of Archives for Scotland  
HM General Register House  
Princes Street  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3YY

[www.nrscotland.gov.uk/nras](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/nras)  
[nras@nrscotland.gov.uk](mailto:nras@nrscotland.gov.uk)  
0131 535 1430

NRAS surveys are available electronically via our online register at [www.nrscotland/nras-register](http://www.nrscotland/nras-register)



# Your Archives Our Expertise



## THE REGISTER

The National Register of Archives for Scotland (NRAS) was set up in 1946 to compile a record of collections of private papers in Scotland, to encourage their care, and to make information about them available to researchers and others.

The NRAS does not itself hold any of these private collections.

Over 4,300 lists or 'surveys' have now been added to the Register. These surveys describe papers held by:

- Private individuals and families
- Landed estates
- Clubs and societies
- Businesses
- Law firms

NRAS surveys are available via the online register at [www.nrscotland/nras-register](http://www.nrscotland/nras-register)

The Register also includes surveys of similar papers which have been deposited in the archives and libraries of local authorities and universities.

## NRAS FOR OWNERS:

Many private owners have found that their historical papers have proved invaluable. They can be used as a unique marketing tool or to help with the interpretation of heritage to a wider audience.

The NRAS welcomes contact from owners or custodians who would like advice on their archives.

- The NRAS can provide advice free of charge on all matters relating to the care, storage and listing of collections.
- The NRAS can prepare a basic survey of the collection at no charge to the owner.
- The NRAS can liaise between owners and researchers regarding access to papers.
- The NRAS has produced a free Preservation Guidelines booklet for owners, which is available on request or online via the NRAS website.
- The NRAS can also give independent advice on suitable places of deposit as required.

Whether you are an owner of a substantial estate collection or a private individual with a few everyday items such as diaries, letters or photographs, we would love to hear from you. We also encourage contact from Scottish businesses, legal firms, clubs and societies with historical papers, however large or small the collection. Please get in touch!

## NRAS FOR RESEARCHERS:

Although many private papers have been deposited, a significant number remain in private hands. The NRAS is the first point of contact for researchers wishing to access papers held privately.

- The NRAS liaises between owners and researchers and tries to act in the best interests of both parties in arranging access to papers.
- The NRAS can answer limited and specific enquiries by post or e-mail. Please look at the NRAS website in advance of applying for access and make your application as specific as possible.
- Researchers are advised, however, that access to private papers is a privilege and not a right and it may not be possible for the owner to give access for a variety of reasons.

When writing to the NRAS please make sure to include the following information:

- Details of your research
- The specific references of the documents you would like to consult (including brief descriptions)
- Whether you intend to publish
- Whether you are working to any deadlines
- Your full postal address

The NRAS has assisted researchers in gaining access to privately held papers for a wide range of research purposes. From biography to art history and from genealogy to military history – whatever your research topic, please get in touch.

## PRACTICALITIES AND KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

Where access to privately held papers is granted, some owners are able to accommodate researchers in situ. Please bear in mind that you may need to travel to see papers and that there may be limited times when the owner is able to assist you.

A small number of owners bring their papers to Edinburgh where they are made available to researchers for a limited period of time in the Historical Search Room of the National Records of Scotland before being returned to their owners.

Please remember that owners are not always able to respond to requests quickly or grant access immediately. We recommend that you allow at least two months for the NRAS to liaise with owners on your behalf.

Several of the owners we deal with charge a fee for access to their papers to cover administration and costs.

It is not always possible for owners to provide images or copies of documents. Researchers' requests are considered by owners on a case by case basis. Permission to publish should always be requested and the appropriate acknowledgements included.

Please remember that these papers are privately owned and therefore conditions and arrangements for access vary between owners.