

## INTRODUCTION

On 1 January 1855, a new system of civil registration of births, deaths and marriages was introduced in Scotland. This is the 150th report by the Registrar General, and marks the anniversary by describing the changes in Scotland's demography over the past century and a half. First, it briefly recounts the history of the Registrar General's department – the General Register Office for Scotland – and of its work on registration and census-taking. Second, it analyses trends in Scotland's population, births, marriages and deaths over the past century and a half. Third, it takes snapshots of Census information to create a panorama of life in Scotland over the period.

## A Short History of the General Register Office for Scotland<sup>1</sup>

### Registration before 1855

A council of the Scottish clergy in 1551 decided that a register of baptisms and marriages (and later burials) should be kept for each parish. The oldest surviving register, for the parish of Errol in Perthshire, dates from only 2 years later. But, although many parishes kept their registers diligently and about 3500 survive, the standard varied considerably from parish to parish and from year to year. For some parishes, the earliest registers date from the early 19th century, while for a very few parishes (9 out of about 900) there are no surviving registers at all. After the Reformation, the registers were kept by the established Church of Scotland and, although registration was open to people of all denominations, members of churches such as the Free Church of Scotland or the Roman Catholic Church were sometimes not recorded at all or maintained their own registers.

The main problem was that social change, especially the growth of the big cities after the Industrial Revolution, swamped the system of parish registration. As a history of Edinburgh published in 1779 notes:-

“The register of burials is kept by people whose faculties are impaired by drinking, who forget today what was done yesterday. ... They enter not into the list of burials any who have died without receiving baptisms; nor those whose relations are so poor as not to be able to pay for the use of a mortcloth; nor those who die in the charity workhouse. .... As for the register of births, it does not deserve the name. True it is, a list is kept in the south side of St Giles' Church, where any person who chooses to go with a piece of money will get the name and birth of a child inserted. But no attention is paid to the observation of this practice, either by the clergy or by parents.”

By 1801, the first national Census found that, out of the 850 parishes in Scotland, not more than 99 had regular registers – the rest having only occasional entries or no register whatever. Some registers were accidentally destroyed. At Penpont in Dumfriesshire, a fire in the manse consumed the pre-1728 records, while the register for Abertarff in Invernesshire was “lost in the act of crossing a rapid stream”.

<sup>1</sup> Information for this section was provided by the Centre for the History of Medicine at the University of Glasgow, where a team funded by the Wellcome Trust is researching the history of civil registration in Scotland.

Although the parochial system was clearly defective, and although registration by the state rather than by the church had been introduced in England and Wales in 1837, a similar change faced a lot of opposition in Scotland. A Bill for Scottish registration came before Parliament in 1829 and several others in subsequent years. But they were all thrown out – for interesting reasons.

The Bills were supported by the medical profession, which realised that improvements in public health depended on knowing death rates and causes of deaths. The insurance companies liked the proposal because profitable life insurance business relied on good information about life expectancy. The legal profession was very keen to see a new system introduced, because it was often difficult to prove who should inherit property, without a birth certificate or proof that parents were married. With so many young babies dying, and no death certificates, many people also worried about the danger of unwanted infants being murdered.

In the other camp were people worried about the expense of registration. Poor people could not be forced to pay for registering unavoidable events like births or deaths. There was also a great dispute about who should keep the new registers. The session clerks and schoolteachers, who often kept the old registers, petitioned against the change because they would lose income from registration fees. But the main problem was marriage. Scotland's marriage law was very informal. Indeed, in 1847, *The Scotsman* newspaper said that:-

“Everybody knows that, by the law of Scotland, the marriage ceremony can be performed with as perfect legal effect by a blacksmith as by a clergyman.”

and the Government wanted to end this practice of regarding any couple as married if they stated as much in front of witnesses. So the Scottish registration Bills were accompanied by Bills to reform the law of marriage. But this was opposed by the Church of Scotland, concerned that the proposed civil weddings would discourage people from getting married in Church.

In the end, the Government dropped the marriage proposal, the existing session clerks were appointed as registrars for the rest of their lives and the Treasury met the cost of the new system. That removed the opposition, allowing the Bill to be passed by Parliament and approved by Queen Victoria on 7 August 1854.

## The new civil registration system

The 1854 Act set up an office to be called the “General Registry Office of Births, Deaths and Marriages” and provided for the appointment of a Registrar General. The Deputy to the Lord Clerk Register (responsible for preserving the records of Scotland) was appointed also as Registrar General. William Pitt Dundas, the first holder of the combined post, held office from September 1854 until April 1880.

Mr Pitt Dundas turned the delay to advantage. He and his staff were able to learn from the experience of England and Wales in the previous 18 years, and draw also on the strengths of the French system which dated from Napoleonic times and which specified exact rules for the informants who could register events, the registrars and the contents of the registers. As a result, a more effective system was introduced in Scotland. Registration of births and deaths was compulsory from the start, whereas compulsory birth registration was only introduced in England and Wales in 1875. In deference to the many poor communities in Scotland, an extract from the birth or death register was provided free. The registers were more detailed. For example, birth

registers provided the place and date of the parents' marriage, facilitating genealogical research. The registers in 1855 were particularly detailed (with entries spread over 2 register pages). Experience proved that it was difficult to collect all the required information so, from 1856, the register entries were confined to a single page. In his first annual report under the new Act, the Registrar General boasted:-

“As Registration was comparatively new to Scotland, it was natural to expect that some deficiencies would occur in the Registers at the first starting of the Act; but so carefully had the Act been drawn, and so many means had been devised to check the exact number of Deaths and Marriages, that from the very commencement of the operation of the Act, it is believed that scarcely one Death or Marriage which occurred from that period has been omitted to be registered. The checks devised for securing the Registration of the Births were not so effectual at first; so that, for the first month during which the Act was in operation there was a deficiency in the Registration of the Births to the extent of one-half, and for the second month to the extent of one-quarter, below what they ought to have been. From that date, however, the system has worked so efficiently, and the people themselves have been so anxious to avail themselves of the benefits arising from the Registration of the Births of their children, that there is good reason for believing that very few Births indeed now escape Registration.”

The Act provided for the previous parish registers to be transmitted for safe keeping to the Registrar General (in the case of the registers up to 1820) or to the local registrar (in the case of the registers for the years 1820-1855, which were to be sent to the Registrar General after 30 years). Parish ministers bemoaned this centralisation – but the result was that parochial registers in Scotland were much better-preserved than in England and Wales, where they were retained locally. The new civil registers were to be kept in duplicate, with one copy being retained by the local registrar and the other sent to the Registrar General.

### **The Census in Scotland**

National Censuses were introduced throughout the United Kingdom in 1801, and carried out decennially. The 1841 and 1851 Censuses in Scotland were overseen by the English Registrar General – a source of annoyance to the first Scottish Registrar General, who complained in his Annual Report for 1855 that:-

“For statistical purposes, the Tables of the last Census of the population are very imperfect, in so far as Scotland is concerned; everything seeming to be sacrificed for the idea, that the only important fact to publish was the occupation of the people. It hence happens that the most important fact of all, viz, the ages of the people in the different districts of the country, was treated as a mere secondary manner; and was published in such a form, that though the ages in quinquennial periods are given for each county, and for all Scotland, we seek in vain for the ages of the Town as contra-distinguished from the Rural population of each County, or the ages of the Insular as distinguished from the Mainland Districts. These circumstances greatly cramped our endeavours to point to its full extent the varying effect of Insular and Mainland and Town localities on the spread, prevalence and fertility of different diseases.”

From the Census in 1861, however, the Scottish Registrar General took on responsibility. Locally, the registrars were responsible for Census-taking, employing enumerators to visit each household. Once the enumerator books had been brought to Edinburgh – a time-consuming task, especially for remoter areas such as the island of St Kilda – a team of temporary clerks (26 in 1881 and 1891) drew out the statistical information, published in a report by the Registrar General.

## The evolving role of the General Register Office

The Registrar General's critical remarks about the publication of the 1851 Census results underline the main driving-force for the demographic work of the Victorian General Registry Office, with its responsibility both for registration and for the Census. There was widespread concern about the health and mortality of the population and demographic statistics were increasingly seen as instruments for social change. Thus, the Registrar General's report for 1855 discusses not only "the specific diseases which are the more immediate gateways (or trap doors) through which our race drops into the grave" but also "other agencies which powerfully modify these diseases, and their action on mankind" – including the state of trade, wages, unemployment, the price and quality of food and the weather. Much energy in the first fifty years was devoted to ensuring that all death certificates recorded the cause of death, so important to epidemiological research.

The Registrar General also helped to reduce mortality by his responsibility for overseeing the vaccination of newborn babies against smallpox. The Vaccination (Scotland) Act 1863 compelled parents to have their babies vaccinated within six months of birth, and to give a certificate of proof to the local registrar. The registrar reported the parents of unvaccinated children to the parish Inspector of Poor, for legal action to be taken against them – though the law was relaxed to allow for "conscientious objection". The Registrar General retained this responsibility until compulsory vaccination was abolished after the Second World War.

To house the General Registry Office, and the centralised registration records, a purpose-built office was designed by Robert Matheson, the Clerk of Works at the Office of Her Majesty's Works in Scotland. The office – New Register House, which is still used for its original purpose – was occupied in 1861. The main feature is a lofty fireproof central repository, the Dome, which contains 5 tiers of ironwork shelving and galleries, over 90 ft high, with 4 miles of shelving as secure fireproof storage.

The first Registrar General, William Pitt Dundas, served until April 1880. His successor, Roger Montgomerie, died 6 months after his appointment and Mr Pitt Dundas resumed office for a year or so until the appointment of Sir Stair Agnew. He was in turn succeeded in 1909 by Sir James Patten McDougall, the last holder of the combined offices of Registrar General and Deputy Lord Clerk Register. The Registrar General (Scotland) Act 1920 provided for the appointment by the Secretary of State for Scotland of a full-time Registrar General. Dr James Crawford Dunlop, who had served as medical superintendent of statistics since 1904, held the office from 1921 to 1930. The 12 subsequent Registrars General were drawn from the civil service in Scotland.

## CHAPTER 2 – 150 YEARS OF CIVIL REGISTRATION

In the meantime, the system of registration was progressively improved. District Examiners were appointed by the Registrar General to inspect the work of the local registrars. The Act of 1854 had allowed the existing session clerks to continue as registrars for their lifetime. In many parishes, they were also the schoolmaster and the District Examiner noted that the registrar of Cadder in Lanarkshire:-

“is also School master, Session Clerk, and Inspector of Poor ... the multiplicity of offices does not seem to interfere with but on the contrary to aid in the performance of his duties as Registrar.”

Other registrars came from a variety of different backgrounds. In 1855, the registrar at Strathmiglo in Fife was a warper and weaver, at Cupar an auctioneer and at Auchterhouse near Dundee, a ploughman. But busy schoolteachers did not always make good registrars, especially in the larger towns. The District Examiner reported that the registrar in Hamilton, Lanarkshire:-

“appears to me to be so engrossed with his duties as Head Teacher and Rector of the Academy and with his private Boarding Establishment, that his duties as Registrar seem to have suffered thereby.”

For the most part, however, the schoolmaster registrar did an excellent job. In 1871, the Registrar General for England sent one of his staff to enquire into the differences between the Scottish and English registration systems. He reported:-

“Registrars in country places are the parochial school masters; men for the most part of excellent education, and so far as I have seen them of a decidedly superior stamp as compared with the generality of country registrars of England.”

### The twentieth century

During the First World War, the registration service faced heavy burdens as younger registrars and members of the headquarters staff volunteered or were conscripted for military service. The Office had 37 staff at the outbreak of war, 24 of whom were of a recruitable age. By April 1916, 12 had joined up and the pressure of work was acute. The Registrar General wrote to the Editor of *The Scotsman*, in response to criticism that all men of military age had not enlisted, that 42 per cent of the normal staff were in service and the rest would go when they were called up. Extra pressure was imposed by the National Registration Act 1915 which provided for a register of all men and women between 15 and 65, in order to address manpower shortages in the first year of the war. The register was compiled by town and county councils under the central authority of the Registrar General. By April 1916, 6 women were employed in the General Registry Office for national registration work, and more were employed later in the war to free men to enlist.

The war years were followed by the major influenza epidemic of 1918-19 – a serious enough episode to justify a supplementary report by the Registrar General. Mortality exceeded not only all previous epidemics of influenza in Scotland, but also all previous epidemics of any infectious diseases. The total number of deaths ascribed to influenza was 17,575, including deaths of which influenza was the sole named cause and deaths of which influenza was one of two or more named causes. The whole of Scotland was affected.



The Registrar General's reports were usually terse, concentrating on statistics rather than social commentary. Divorce was first mentioned in the 1920 report and became a regular feature, mirroring its growing frequency in the population (see page 74 below).

Two important changes in registration law were made in the late 1930s. Stillbirths were first recorded in 1939, following the Registration of Still-Births (Scotland) Act 1938. Prompted largely by inter-war concerns over infant mortality and declining fertility levels, the Act provided for the registration of children who were still-born after the 28th week of pregnancy. As in 1854, Scotland lagged behind England and Wales in introducing stillbirth registration, partly because of concern about invasion of privacy. But, once introduced, the Scottish system was innovatory in requiring the cause of death to be specified. Secondly, a major change in Scottish marriage law was made by the Marriage (Scotland) Act 1939, which came into operation on 1 July 1940. The Act at last abolished the old Scottish form of "irregular marriage" by declaration in the presence of witnesses. In its place, the Act introduced civil marriage, carried out by the registrar, as an alternative to religious marriage.

At the outset of the Second World War, a National Register was taken on 29 September 1939 and used as the basis for the issue of identity cards and food rationing documents, taking the place of the normal decennial Census for 1941. Registration was centrally organised as a result of the lessons learnt from the locally-based system in the First World War. The register was administered by the Registrar General until 1952, when it became the basis for the present National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR) of patients on the lists of Scottish GPs, and responsibility was transferred to the Department of Health for Scotland. In 1964, the NHSCR was transferred back to the Registrar General, because of the key role played by civil registration records in keeping the NHSCR up to date.

The Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Scotland) Act 1965 was the first statute for 27 years to affect registration and the first major statutory change since 1854. The new Act repealed all previous enactments relating to registration, some long outdated. The statutory provisions which were still needed were re-enacted, while new provisions, designed to meet the needs of the time, were introduced. For example, reflecting the creation of large hospitals serving a wide area, births and deaths could be registered in the registration district where the person lived rather than (as previously) only in the district where the event occurred. A parallel modernisation of marriage legislation was introduced by the Marriage (Scotland) Act 1977. The Act widened the scope of religious marriages, hitherto confined to Christian denominations, Jews or Quakers. It allowed for religious marriages to be solemnised by "approved celebrants" including Christian clergy and nominees approved by the Registrar General from a wide range of other religious bodies including the Hindu, Sikh and Islamic faiths. Other changes included a requirement for religious marriages (like civil marriages) to be notified in advance to the local registrar.

### Genealogy

Since the registration system began in 1855, people have used the records held by the Registrar General to trace their family history. This was originally a laborious process. Someone who wanted to view a birth record would be taken to the shelf where the register book was stored, and would be shown only the relevant entry. An official “extract” (commonly called a certificate) could be purchased if necessary.

From the late 1950s, searching was made easier. An alphabetical index to the post-1855 records was created and then microfiched, together progressively with the images of the records themselves. In the 1980s, the national index was transferred to computer, which allowed even better searching. Public use of the records gradually increased. In the 1970s, about 4,700 genealogical searches were carried out in New Register House annually (at a cost of £1 per day). This number doubled to 9,524 in 1984/85. Since April 1993, 100 search places have been available and the number of searches has increased, reaching a peak of 18,393 in 2001/02 (for a daily fee of £17). In 2004/05, the number of searches was 15,990.

The number of family historians who visit New Register House is no longer increasing, because the internet is now widely used for ancestral research. From April 1998, GROS made its computer index available on the web. This allowed customers to order extracts online. In 1998/99, 54,629 extracts were ordered from GROS, 24,495 of which were ordered over the internet. To further assist both visitors and internet users, GROS expanded its programme of making digital images of the records. Now it is possible to view digital images of a wide range of records both at computer terminals in New Register House and on the internet at <http://www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk>. The website has proved immensely popular, with currently just under 300,000 registered customers. That level of interest has been reflected in the continued demand for extracts, with 71,682 ordered in 2004/05. In partnership with the National Archives for Scotland (NAS) and the Court of the Lord Lyon, the website is being developed further and New Register House linked to NAS’s adjacent General Register House to form a unified campus for visitors.

So, over its history, GROS has used, and will continue to use, new technologies to improve access to the records it holds.

## Key Registration Legislation

**Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Scotland) Act 1854.** Introduced civil registration.

**Census (Scotland) Act 1860.** Transferred to Registrar General for Scotland responsibility for the Scottish Census.

**Vaccination (Scotland) Act 1863.** Made smallpox vaccination compulsory for infants.

**National Registration Act 1915.** Set up a wartime register of men and women between 15 and 65.

**Census Act 1920.** Gave permanent authority to hold Censuses.

**Adoption of Children (Scotland) Act 1930.** Provided for the adoption of children in Scotland, and an adopted children register maintained by the Registrar General.

**Registration of Still-Births (Scotland) Act 1938.** Made registration of still-births compulsory.

**Population (Statistics) Act 1938.** Allowed the collection of information not previously included in birth, still-birth and death records.

**Marriage (Scotland) Act 1939.** Introduced civil marriage by authorised registrars and abolished “irregular marriage”.

**National Registration Act 1939.** Set up a wartime register of the population.

**Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Scotland) Act 1965.** Modernised the registration system.

**Marriage (Scotland) Act 1977.** Modernised Scottish marriage legislation.

**Adoption (Scotland) Act 1978.** Consolidated the statutes relating to adoption in Scotland.

**Still-Births (Definition) Act 1992.** Amended the gestation period for a still-birth from 28 to 24 weeks.

**Marriage (Scotland) Act 2003.** Permitted civil marriages at “approved places” as well as at registration offices.

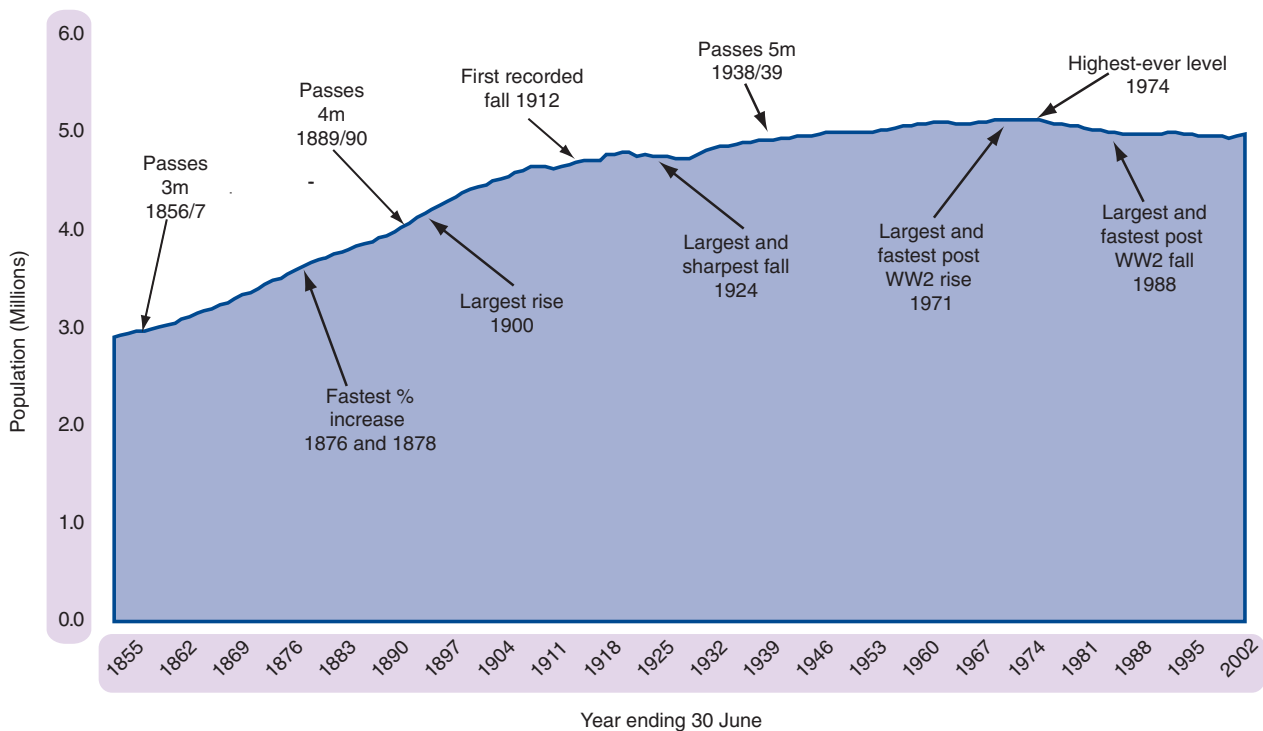


## SCOTLAND'S POPULATION 1855 TO 2004

Since civil registration began, Scotland's population has increased from an estimated total of 2,978,065 in 1855 to 5,078,400 in June 2004. This represents an increase of just over 70 per cent or 2.1 million people. The population peaked in 1974 at 5,240,800. Since then it has fallen, with some fluctuations, by just over 3 per cent.

These changes have not been steady or evenly distributed across the country. Many rural areas and islands have fewer inhabitants than they did in 1855 and, since the 1950's, large parts of urban Scotland have also experienced population decline.

Figure 2.1 Total population, 1855-2004



To try and explain what has been happening to Scotland's population in the last 150 years it is sensible to split the period into four distinct phases.

### 1855 to 1911 – High growth and high out-migration

The period 1855 to 1911 saw a rapid expansion in Scotland's population and an even faster growth of its towns and cities. The rise was fuelled by a large excess of births over deaths. Death rates began to fall as public health measures such as vaccination started to have a positive effect. The year 1900 saw the largest recorded increase in population of 46,400.

In the late 1870's, Scotland's population was rising so fast that it would have doubled in less than 70 years. It did not do so, despite a large in-migration from Ireland, because over 916,000 Scots emigrated over the period. Because many emigrants came from the islands and rural areas, the population of many parts of Scotland actually fell.

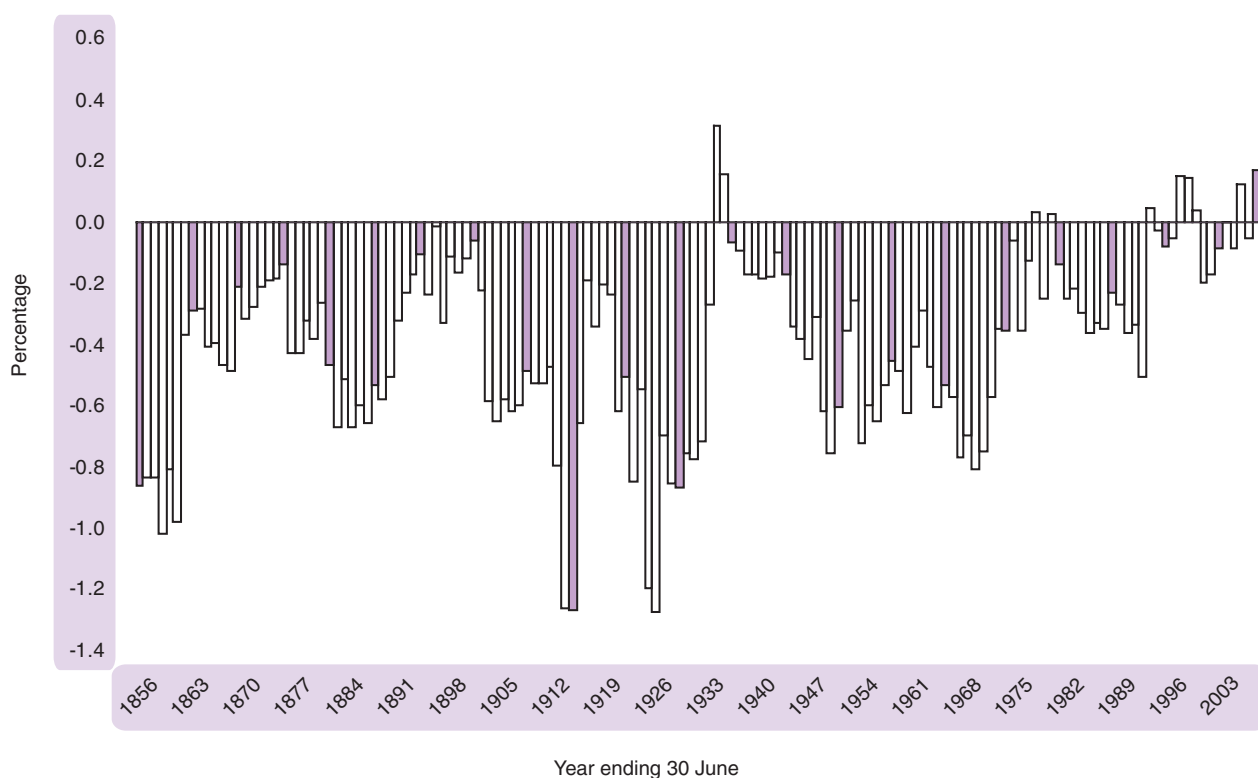
## 1912 to 1947 – Erratic changes and mass out-migration

The year 1912 marked a turning point: it was the first year when official figures recorded a fall in the Scottish population. (It is possible that there were some years before this that the population also declined but was not detected by the official figures.)

The period 1912 to 1947 saw enormous changes in Scottish society, not to mention two World Wars. Births began to fall, from a record 136,546 live births in 1920 to 86,392 live births in 1940.

Meanwhile, emigration increased, culminating in a record net out-migration of over 62,400 in 1924. In just 36 years there was a net out-migration from Scotland of over 861,000. Because births still exceeded deaths, the population continued to increase but at a much slower rate. Scotland's population first passed the 5 million mark in 1939.

Figure 2.2 Net Migration as proportion of population, 1856-2004



## 1948 to 1988 – Baby boom, aftermath and continued out-migration

Although the Second World War ended in 1945, it was not until 1948 that official statistics were able to accurately reflect population trends.<sup>1</sup> The end of the war brought an increase in births – the original “baby boom”, with an annual average of 101,222 births in the 5 years after the war compared to 87,734 births in the 5 years before the war. Death rates were still falling as the nation's health continued to improve.

<sup>1</sup> Migration figures do not include the years 1940 to 1947. Figures were distorted by military conscription.

A second “baby boom” followed in the early 1960’s, when births were running at over 100,000 per year. This peaked at 104,355 live births in 1964 but then fell back in every subsequent year until 1977, when there were only 62,342 live births. Meanwhile Scots continued to leave the country in large numbers. Between 1948 and 1988 Scotland’s net out-migration totalled -864,000.

So, although every year in the period except 1976 saw more births than deaths, there were 7,500 fewer people living in Scotland in 1988 than in 1948. During this period, the population of many of Scotland’s towns and cities began to fall, although some rural areas and islands began to regain people.

## 1989 to present day – Natural decrease but more in-migration

The year 1989 was interesting for two reasons. Firstly, deaths exceeded births – a natural decrease in the population - for only the third year since 1855. Secondly, there was net in-migration, for only the fifth time (excluding war years), of 2,300.

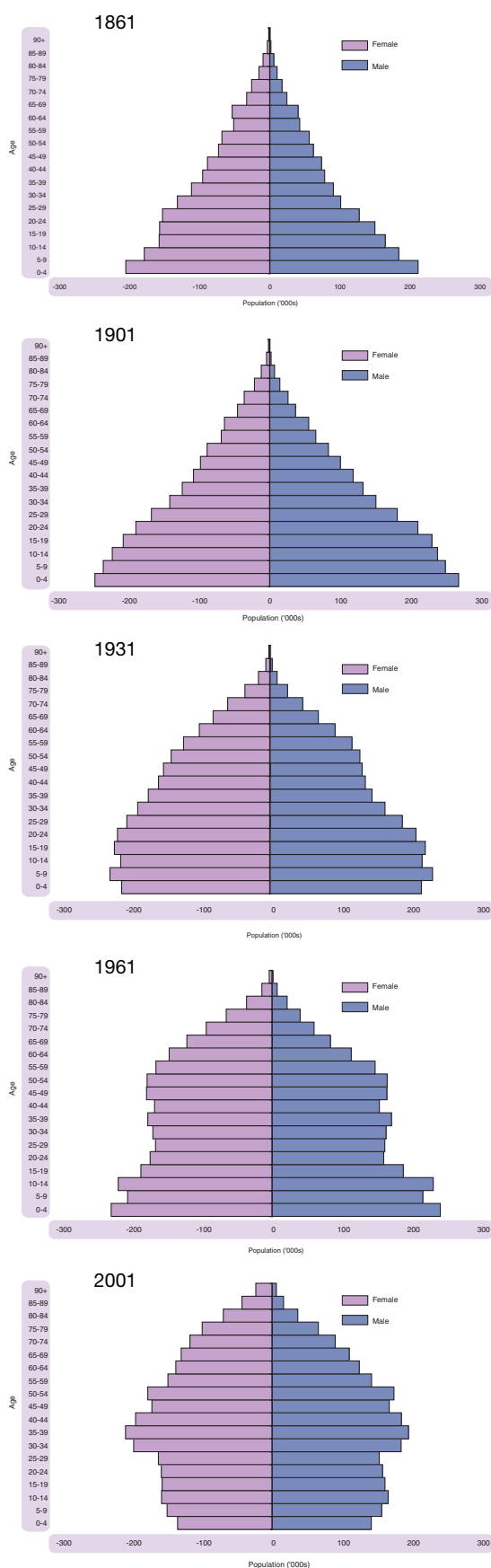
Figure 2.3 Natural Change as a proportion of population, 1856-2004



Natural decrease and net in-migration have been the norm over the last sixteen years. There have only been twelve years since 1855 where Scotland has experienced net in-migration and eight of these have occurred since 1989. Likewise, of the fourteen years when Scotland had an excess of deaths over births, twelve have occurred since 1989. Live births reached a record low of 51,270 in 2002. There has also been a less dramatic fall in the death rate: a record low of 56,187 deaths was recorded in 2004.

But, while the period since 1989 has seen a natural decrease of around 19,900, this has been balanced by a net in-migration of 20,900. Between mid-2003 and mid-2004 alone, there was record net in-migration of around 26,000. So, by 2004, Scotland’s population was at almost the same level as in 1948.

Figure 2.4 Population Pyramid, Scotland by 5 year age groups



## Age and Sex Distribution

Changes in birth and death rates, coupled with migration, had a big effect on the age and sex of Scotland's population. This is best illustrated by the population pyramids in **Figure 2.4**. The base of the pyramid shows the number of recent births while its slope shows the effect of mortality and migration later in people's lives.

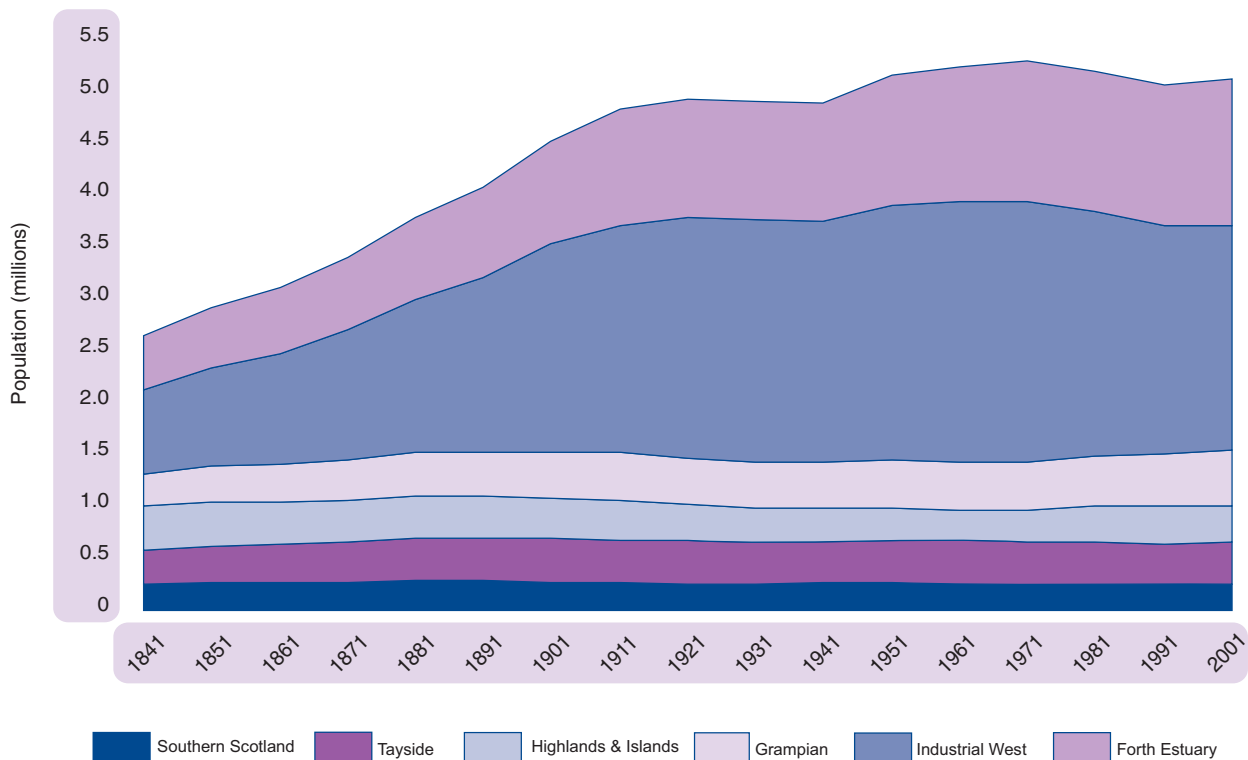
In **1861**, there were fewer men than women aged 20-29 – presumably because of emigration and military service abroad. In **1901**, the pyramid was larger, because the population had grown. In **1931**, the birthrate had levelled-off, with roughly the same number of people in each of the under-30 age groups – and the casualties from the First World War left fewer middle-aged men than women. In **1961**, there were far more elderly women than men (a continuing legacy of the First World War and evidence of differential health improvements) and more younger people as the result of the post Second World War “baby boom” and improvements in child health. In **2001**, many more women than men were still surviving to old age, the “baby boomers” were in their middle age, and the birth rate was progressively declining.

## Regional Distribution

More remarkable than the overall change in Scotland's population since 1855 has been the dramatic regional variation, illustrated in **Figures 2.5** and **2.6**. According to the first Scottish Census in 1861, just under 55 per cent of Scots lived in the Central Belt (the Forth Estuary and Industrial West) – the heartland of Victorian industrial Scotland. By the 2001 Census, this had risen to just over 70 per cent, the population of the Central Belt having more than doubled from 1.68 million to 3.55 million.

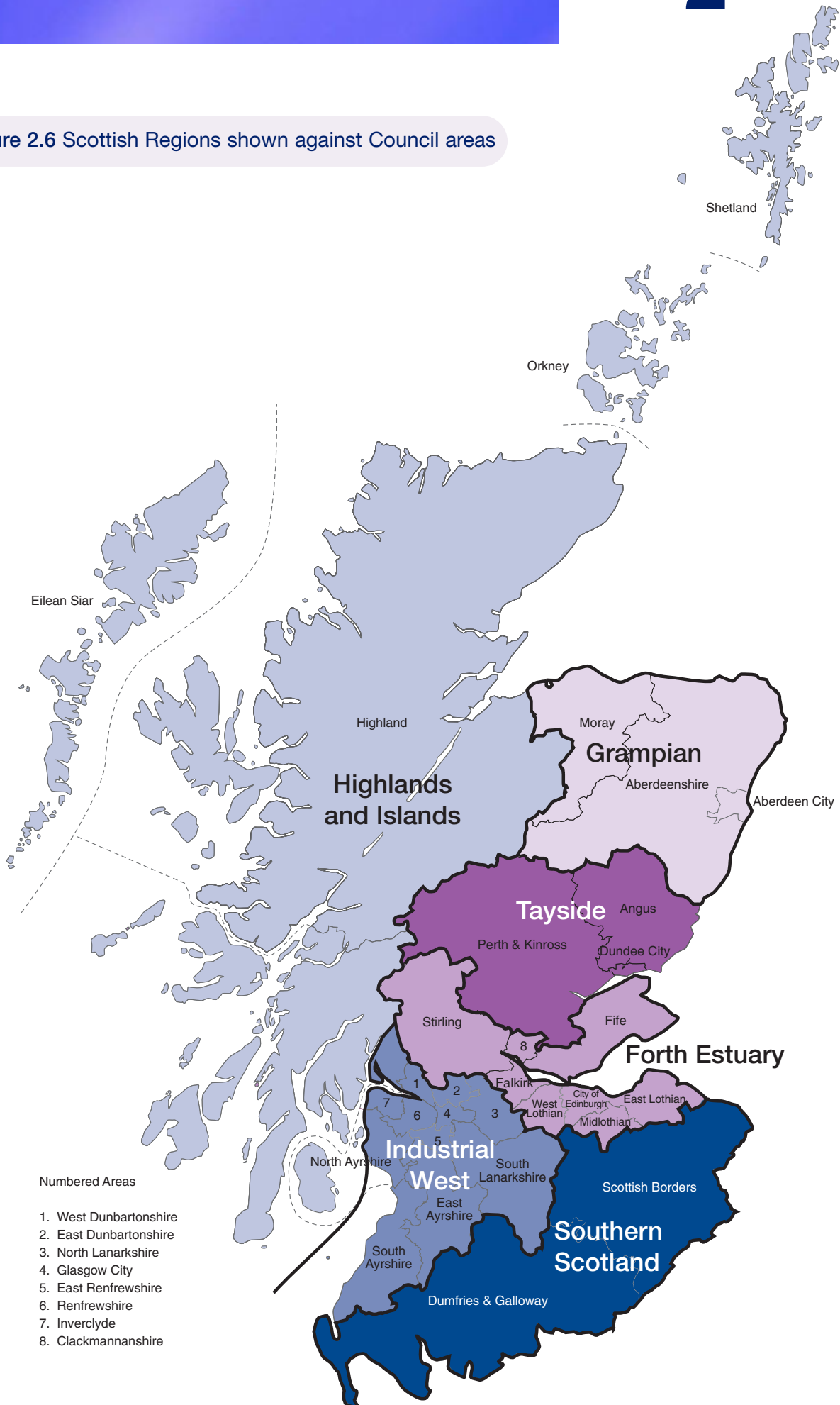
During the same period, the proportion of people living in the north and south of Scotland – with big agricultural areas, affected by the trend to less labour-intensive farming – fell from just over 45 per cent in 1861 to less than 30 per cent in 2001. The population living outside the Central Belt has risen by just 10 per cent (130,000) since 1861. So almost all the increase in Scotland's population since the mid nineteenth century has occurred in the Central Belt, which has accounted for 93.5 per cent of Scotland's population growth since the 1861 Census.

**Figure 2.5** Scottish Population Distribution by region, 1841-2001



Only two regions – the most rural parts of Scotland - have actually lost people since 1861. The Highlands and Islands in the north and west have lost 18 per cent (60,000) of their population. Just under 7 per cent of Scots now live in this area compared to over 13 per cent in the mid nineteenth century.

Figure 2.6 Scottish Regions shown against Council areas





## CHAPTER 2 – 150 YEARS OF CIVIL REGISTRATION

Southern Scotland has also lost people but to a lesser extent. Around 7 per cent (18,000) fewer people live in the South of Scotland now than in 1861. Just over 5 per cent of Scots live in this area now, compared with almost 9 per cent at the time of the first Census in 1861.

However both regions have seen their populations rise since the 1970's. The recent growth has been concentrated in the north around Inverness, and in the south in the Borders. This has helped both regions to increase slightly their share of Scotland's population since the 1971 Census.

In the north east of Scotland, Tayside's population has grown slowly (14 per cent since 1861) while Grampian's growth has been much more rapid (55 per cent).

The population of Tayside – comprising the industrial city of Dundee, and its rural hinterland – peaked at 415,000 in the 1890's. It fell back between the wars, rose again in the 1950's and 60's before going into decline again during 1970's and 80's. Recent years have seen a partial recovery. By the 2001 Census, Tayside's share of Scotland's population was just under 8 per cent. This has remained roughly the same since the 1921 Census but is less than in 1861 when over 11 per cent of Scots lived in Tayside.

The population of Grampian – the city of Aberdeen, the focus of North Sea oil exploration from the early 1970's, with its rural hinterland - followed much the same pattern as Tayside until the 1970's. Its slowly declining share of Scotland's population reached a low point of just under 8.5 per cent in the 1971 Census. In the following thirty years, thanks largely to the oil boom, its population rose by almost 20 per cent. This was the fastest growth of any region at a time when Scotland's overall population has generally declined. By 2001, Grampian's share of the Scottish population had risen back to nearly 10.5 per cent, roughly the same as in the 1880's but less than its 1861 share of almost 12 per cent.

Although the Central Belt has accounted for almost all of Scotland's population growth since civil registration began, this masks large variations between the eastern and western halves of this area.

The growth of the Forth Estuary areas of Fife, Stirling, Falkirk, Edinburgh and the Lothians has been sometimes slow but steady. In contrast, the industrial heartland of Scotland around the River Clyde experienced spectacular growth in Victorian times followed by large declines in population as traditional industries decayed.

The Forth Estuary's share of the Scottish population has risen at every Census since 1861, from just over 20 per cent to almost 28 per cent in 2001. The number of Scots living there more than doubled from 614,000 to 1.41 million. This represents a rise of 140 per cent, more than any other part of Scotland. It also showed the fastest and largest recent increase of any area of Scotland. The population of the Forth Estuary area rose by nearly 5.5 per cent between 1991 and 2001, overtaking the rate of growth in Grampian over the same period (4.4 per cent).

In the century between 1861 and 1961, the Industrial West of Scotland also saw its population more than double from 1.06 million to 2.49 million, a rise of 135 per cent. Its share of the Scottish population rose from less than 35 per cent to over 48 per cent. Most of the growth occurred before the First World War, when the number of people more than doubled in just fifty years (1861-1911). Since the 1960's, however, the number of people living in this area has declined by over 350,000 – a number greater than the entire current population of the Highlands and Islands.

Indeed, if the Industrial West is excluded, the rest of Scotland's population rose by over 6.5 per cent (180,000) between 1971 and 2001. This is actually slightly higher than the average rise in the UK population during the same period (5.6 per cent). Despite its recent decline, over 42 per cent of Scots still live in the Industrial West and the rate of population decline appears to be slowing. The Industrial West lost 1.8 per cent of its population in the 1990's compared to losses of over 6.5 per cent in both the 1970's and the 1980's.

## VITAL EVENTS 1855 TO 2004

This section describes the trends in births, marriages and deaths in Scotland since the introduction of civil registration 150 years ago.

### BIRTHS

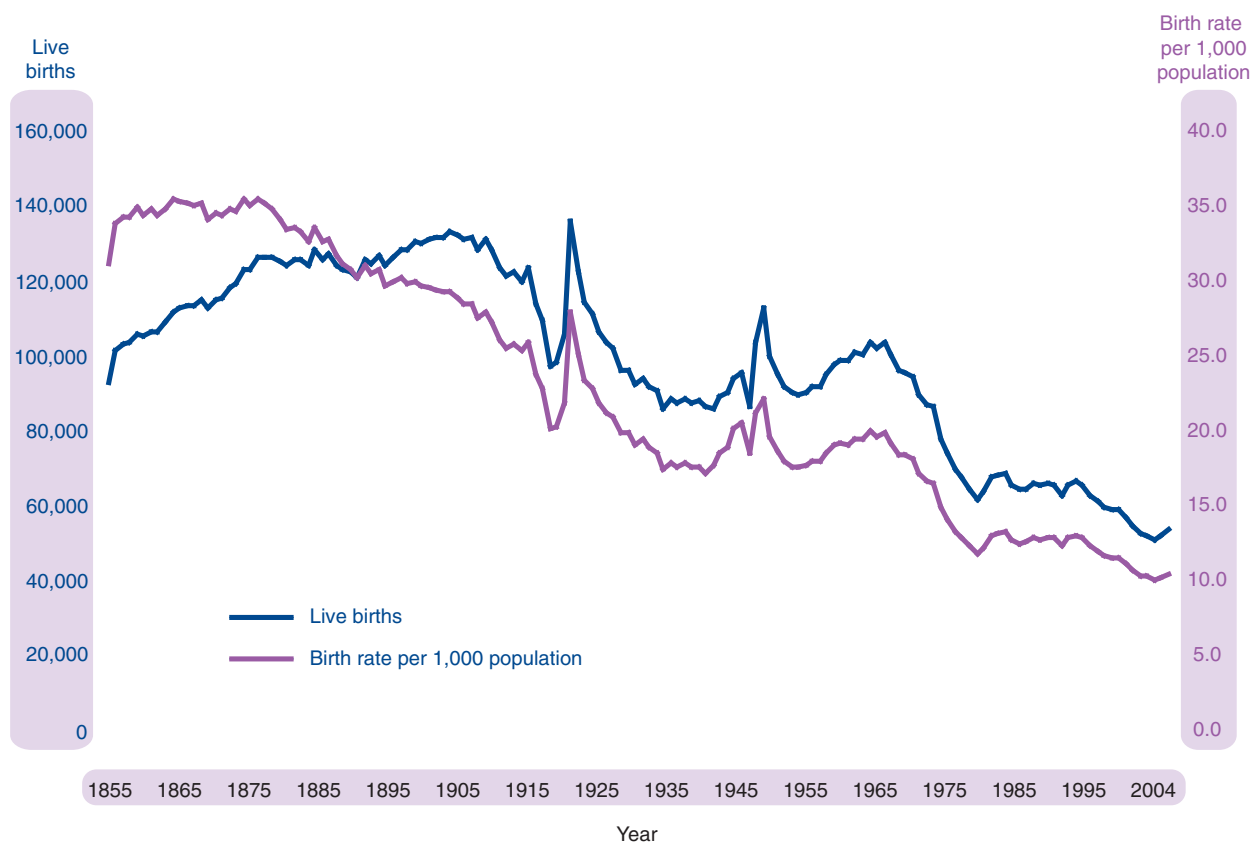
#### Introduction

**Figure 2.7** displays the annual number of births and the crude birth rate for each year since 1855 (as mentioned on page 44 there was some undercounting of births in 1855). After an initial 25 year period where it was stable at around 35 births per 1,000 population, the crude birth rate has generally followed a downward path to its current level of just over 10 births per 1,000 population. There were, however, three marked periods of higher birth rates superimposed on this general pattern – the two sharp post-war peaks and a more sustained increase during the 1960s.

## CHAPTER 2 – 150 YEARS OF CIVIL REGISTRATION

For the first fifty years or so, the trend of the total number of births follows a slightly different course to that of the crude birth rate, reflecting the rapid growth in Scotland's population from around 3 million in the 1850s to over 4.5 million early in the twentieth century. At the start of the twentieth century, the annual total of births was around 130,000 for over a decade, a level that was reached only once subsequently, in the post-war boom year of 1920 which saw the highest annual total ever recorded - 136,546. The peak following the Second World War saw a total of 113,147 births registered in 1947 and the 1960s 'baby boom' saw totals of over 100,000 for a number of years. Since then the total has fallen by around a half to its 2004 level of 53,957.

Figure 2.7 Live births and birth rate, Scotland, 1855-2004

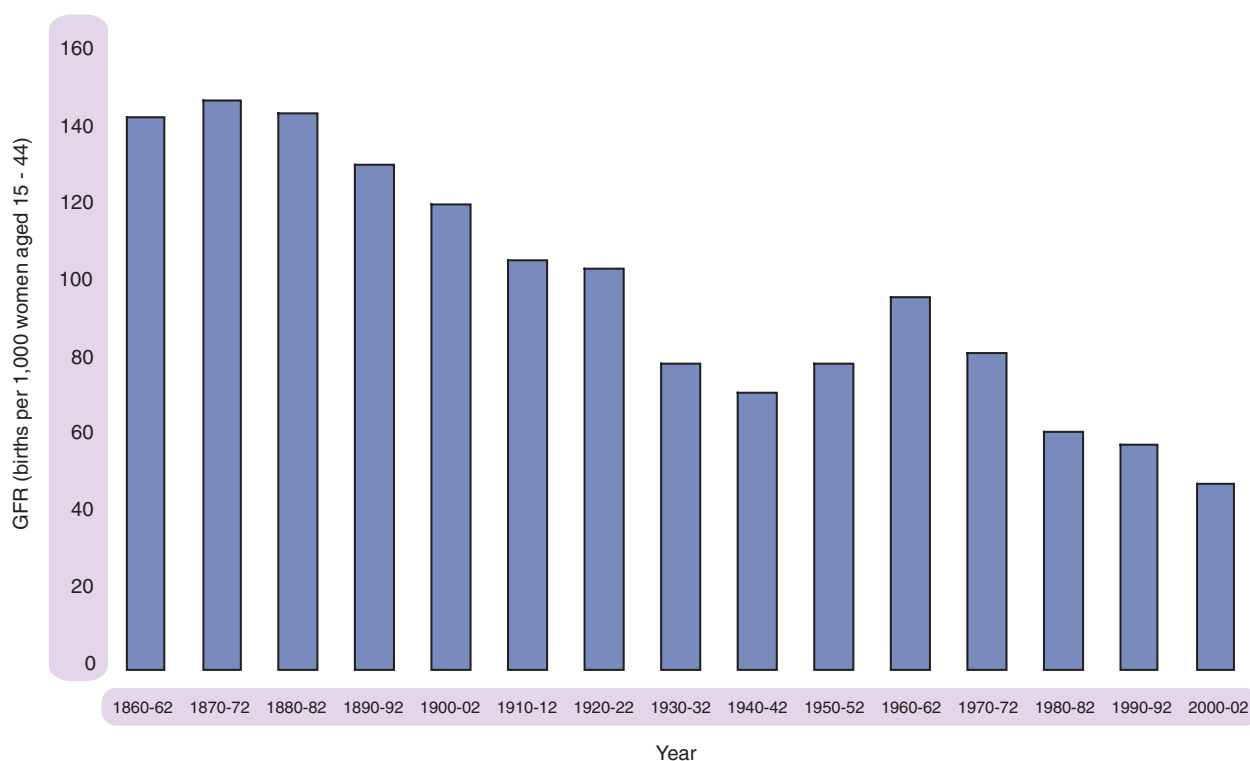


## General Fertility Rate

Whilst the crude birth rate per 1,000 total population gives a general indication of the level of fertility, a more appropriate measure is the *General Fertility Rate (GFR)* which relates the number of births to the number of women of childbearing age (conventionally taken as 15 – 44).

**Figure 2.8** shows how the GFR has varied over last 150 years. The years displayed are centred on census years as population estimates broken down by age were more accurate at these times, particularly in the nineteenth century. Whilst the GFR still shows a general decline over the last 150 years, **Figure 2.8** clearly demonstrates the impact of the 1960s 'baby boom'.

**Figure 2.8** General Fertility Rate, Scotland, 1860-2002



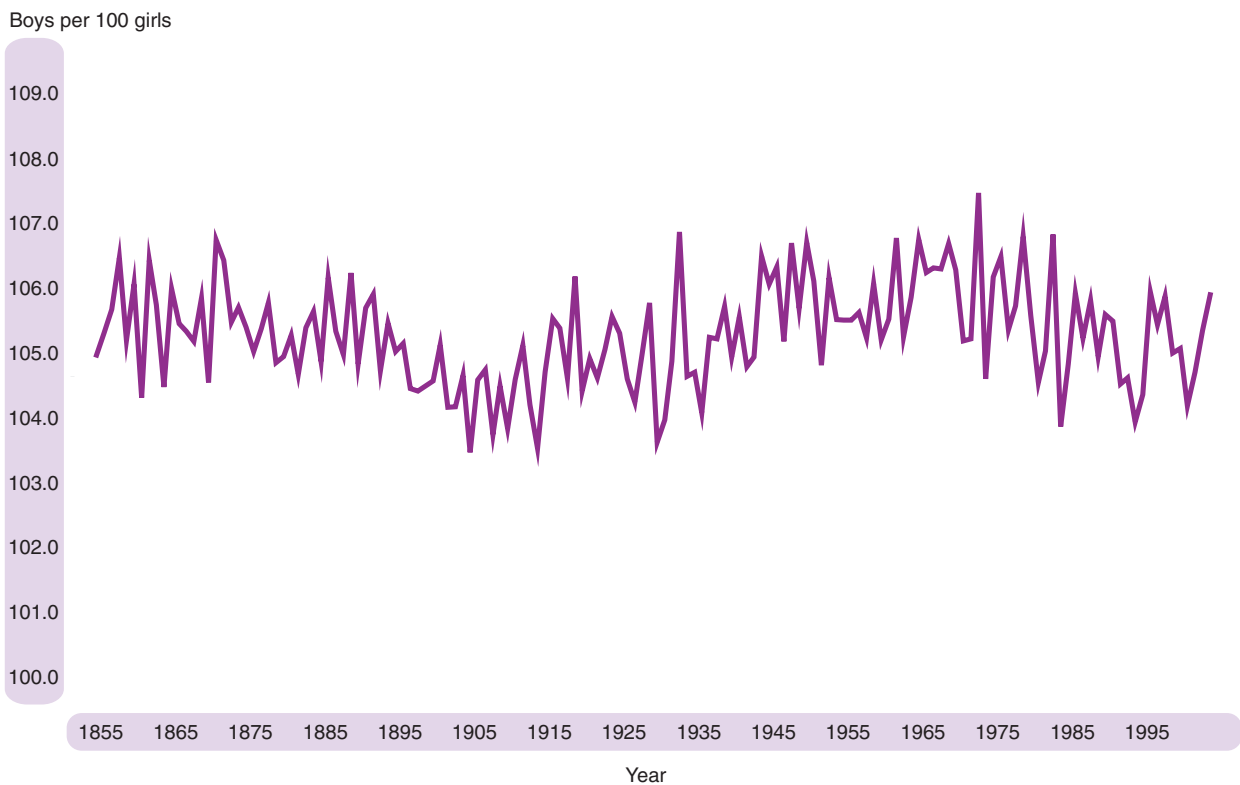
## Age specific birth rates

To better understand trends in fertility it is important to collect, and analyse, information on the age of women having children. This information has been collected, for statistical purposes only, since 1939. Unfortunately, little analysis was carried out during the war years and the available time series start in 1947. **Figures 1.12 – 1.15**, and the associated commentary in **Chapter 1**, give more detailed analyses using this information.

## Sex ratio at birth

It is a well established fact that in virtually all countries and all societies more boys are born than girls. However, though many theories have been advanced, there is no single scientific explanation for this phenomenon. Rather it is believed to be the complex result of a range of different biological factors. The records held by the Registrar General show that, over 150 years of registration, the sex ratio at birth in Scotland has been just over 105 boys for every 100 girls. The lowest ratio recorded was 103.2 in 1905 and the highest was 107.9 in 1973. However, **Figure 2.9** shows that, as well as the expected random year to year fluctuations, there appears to have been a long term period of increase from early in the twentieth century to the mid-1970s since when the ratio has fallen slightly. A similar long term trend was observed in England.

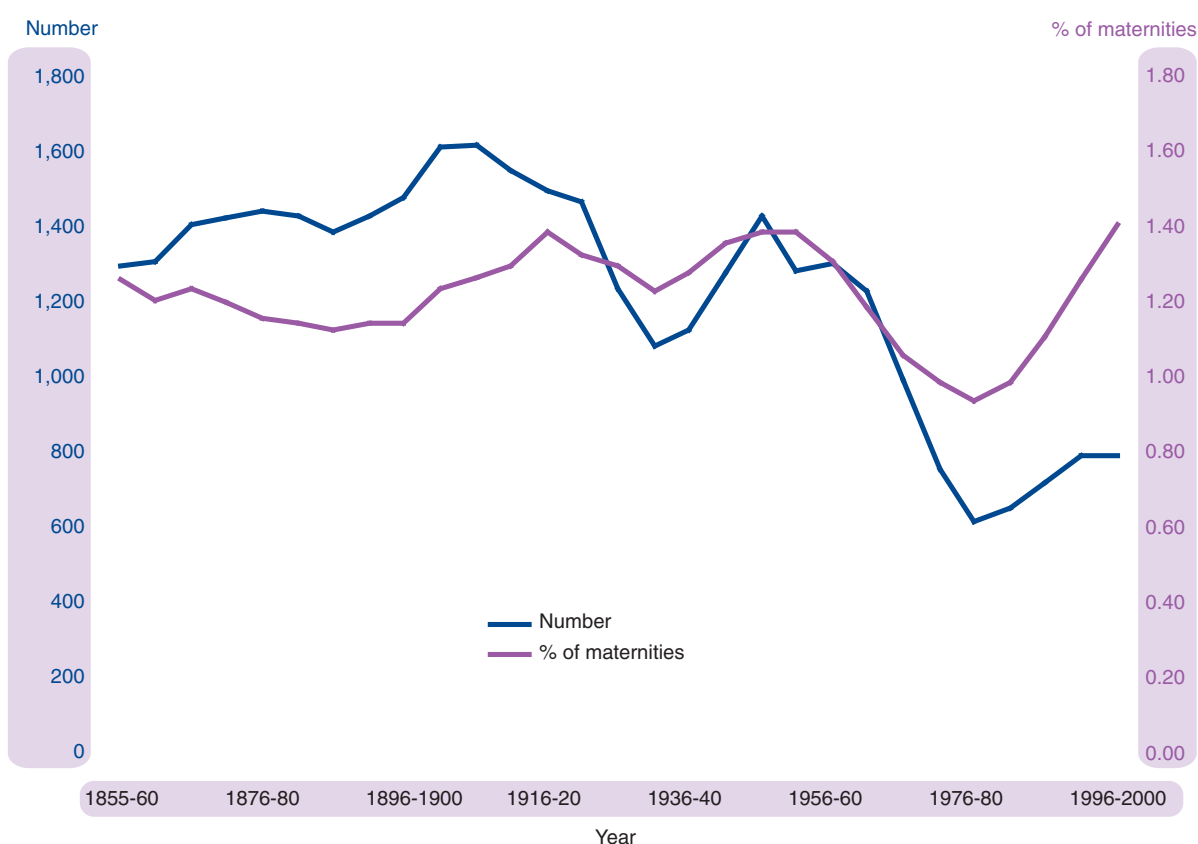
**Figure 2.9** Sex ratio at birth, Scotland, 1855-2004



## Multiple births

The proportion of maternities in Scotland resulting in multiple births has remained relatively constant at just over 1 per cent throughout the last 150 years. Though the five-year average dipped below 1 per cent in the late 1970s, it has subsequently risen to its highest ever level at just over 1.4 per cent, possibly associated with the increasing availability of fertility treatment. On average, just over 1 per cent of multiple births have involved triplets or higher order multiples. The actual numbers of such births peaked in 1995 at 30. Since then the number has fallen back substantially, perhaps because of a more measured use of fertility treatment.

**Figure 2.10** Multiple births, number and percentage of maternities, Scotland, 1855-2000

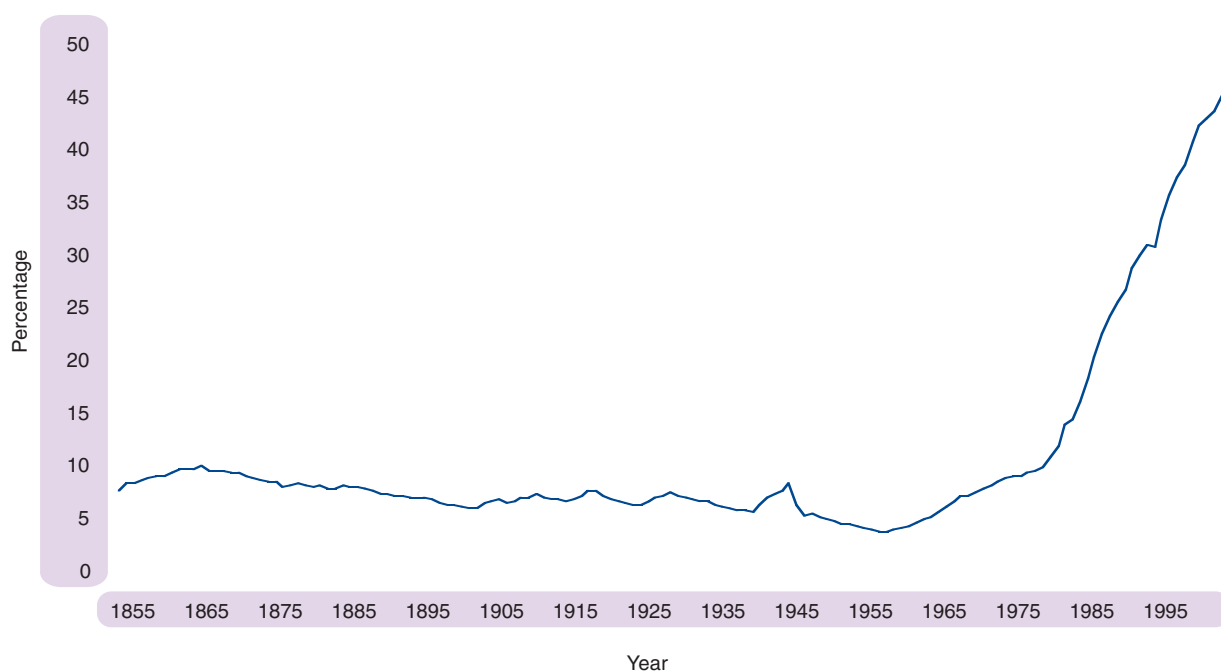




## Marital status of parents

The percentage of children born to unmarried parents from 1855-2004 is shown in **Figure 2.11**. The graph identifies two distinct phases. First, there was a slow, general decline from a figure of around 10 per cent in the 1860s to 4 per cent in the late 1950s, with small increases being observed during both World Wars. The second phase shows an inexorable rise over the last forty to fifty years to the point where almost half of all children are born to unmarried parents, a graphic illustration of the rapidly changing social attitudes to marriage.

**Figure 2.11** Percentage of children born to unmarried parents, Scotland, 1855-2004



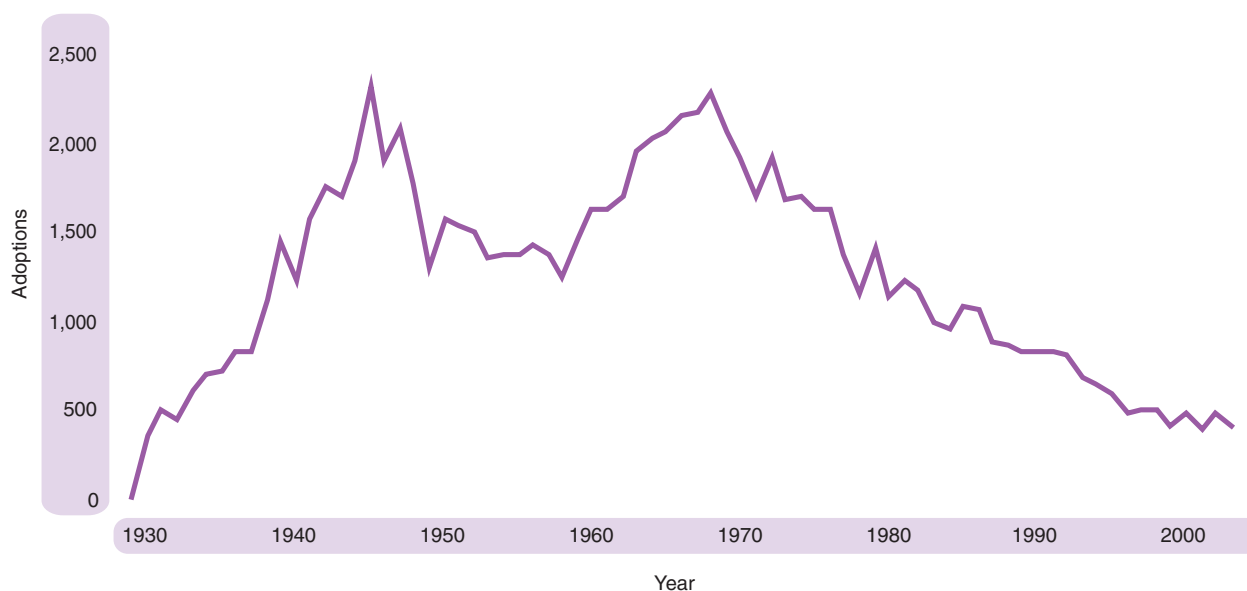
There was much comment on illegitimacy rates in the Registrar General's Annual Reports over the years. Regional variation was a regular topic in the earlier years, some counties having rates that were almost twice the national average. The highest rates were generally found in Fife, the north-east, and the border counties.

Interestingly, the use of term 'illegitimate' was discontinued in the birth registers as long ago as 1919; but its use in the Annual Reports continued until 1985, by which time 19 per cent of births were to unmarried parents.

## Adoptions

The Adoption of Children (Scotland) Act 1930 provided for the registration of adopted children. The number of adoptions recorded each year since 1930 (in which only 3 were recorded) is shown in **Figure 2.12**. Following a steady rise to a post-war peak of 2,298 in 1946, the total number of adoptions fell back to 1,236 in 1959 before peaking again at 2,268 in 1969. Since then, the annual number of adoptions has fallen back steadily to its current level of around 400. Though not all adoptions are of young babies, this decline is partly a reflection of the falling birth rates of the last 35 years.

**Figure 2.12** Adoptions, Scotland, 1930-2004



In 1962, 69 per cent of children adopted were aged under two, 21 per cent were aged 2 – 9, and 10 per cent were aged 10 and over. By contrast, only 18 per cent of children adopted in 2004 were aged under two, 61 per cent were aged 2 – 9, and 22 per cent were aged 10 and over.

## Forenames

As can be seen from **Table 2.1**, there was little change in the choice of forenames given to babies during the second half of the nineteenth century. The table also reveals that the top five names covered 60 per cent and 47 per cent respectively of all boys and girls born in 1855 compared with only 10 per cent for both sexes in 2004. These figures reflect the fact that, although the number of births is lower, a much greater range of names is used nowadays.

Further information on forenames, including more detailed listings, can be found on the GROS website (<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/library/pernames/index.html>)

**Table 2.1** Top ten most popular names registered in Scotland in 1855, 1900, 1950, 1975 and 2004

	1855		1900		1950		1975		2004	
	Name	%	Name	%	Name	%	Name	%	Name	%
<b>Boys</b>										
1	John	17.7	John	13.2	John	10.4	David	5.1	Lewis	2.6
2	James	15.1	James	12.2	James	9.0	John	4.2	Jack	2.5
3	William	13.2	William	11.4	William	7.1	Paul	3.4	James	1.9
4	Alexander	7.0	Robert	6.9	Robert	5.9	James	3.4	Cameron	1.9
5	Robert	6.6	Alexander	5.8	David	5.5	Mark	3.2	Ryan	1.9
6	Thomas	5.3	George	5.1	Thomas	3.8	Scott	3.1	Liam	1.7
7	George	4.7	Thomas	5.1	Alexander	3.4	Andrew	2.9	Jamie	1.7
8	David	4.3	David	4.0	George	3.2	Steven	2.8	Ben	1.7
9	Andrew	2.7	Andrew	2.5	Ian	2.8	Robert	2.4	Kyle	1.7
10	Peter	2.1	Charles	2.2	Brian	2.2	Stephen	2.1	Callum	1.6
<b>Girls</b>										
1	Mary	13.6	Mary	11.7	Margaret	8.1	Nicola	2.8	Emma	2.5
2	Margaret	12.5	Margaret	9.1	Elizabeth	5.9	Karen	2.5	Sophie	2.2
3	Elizabeth	7.3	Elizabeth	7.3	Mary	5.3	Susan	2.1	Ellie	2.2
4	Jane	6.9	Annie	4.8	Catherine	3.2	Claire	2.0	Amy	2.1
5	Janet	6.4	Jane	4.7	Anne	2.7	Fiona	2.0	Chloe	1.8
6	Ann	5.4	Agnes	4.7	Linda	2.6	Angela	1.9	Katie	1.7
7	Agnes	5.1	Isabella	4.4	Helen	2.4	Sharon	1.9	Erin	1.7
8	Isabella	5.0	Catherine	4.3	Patricia	2.2	Gillian	1.7	Emily	1.6
9	Helen	4.0	Janet	3.6	Irene	2.0	Julie	1.7	Lucy	1.5
10	Catherine	3.6	Helen	3.5	Agnes	1.9	Jennifer	1.6	Hannah	1.5

## Surnames

As can be seen from **Table 2.2**, there has been little change in the top surnames over the last century and a half. The main difference, the ranking of Macdonald/Mcdonald, can be explained by methodological differences: for the 1850s, different spellings were grouped together, while for 1901 and 1999-2001 different spellings were counted separately. A combined total for Macdonald/Mcdonald would also have been in second place in 1901 and 1999 – 2001. The fact that Mcdonald was the more popular spelling in the 1901 Census whereas Macdonald was the more popular in the recent survey suggests that spelling of such names was fluid in the past.

GROS has published an Occasional Paper ([http://www.gros-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/library/occpapers/surnames-in-scotland-over-the-last-140-years.html](http://www.gros.scotland.gov.uk/statistics/library/occpapers/surnames-in-scotland-over-the-last-140-years.html)) on Scottish surnames, which presents detailed information on the geographical distribution of surnames within Scotland. Key points to emerge are the greater numbers of clan names in the Highlands and Western Isles, the distinct clusters of names (often of Norse origin) in Orkney and Shetland, and the greater frequency of Irish surnames in west central Scotland, a product of 19th century immigration.

**Table 2.2** Top twenty surnames in Scotland

	(i) 1855,1856 & 1858	(ii) 1901	(iii) 1999-2001
1	Smith	Smith	Smith
2	Macdonald	Brown	Brown
3	Brown	Robertson	Wilson
4	Robertson	Wilson	Campbell
5	Thomson	Campbell	Stewart
6	Stewart	Thomson	Thomson
7	Campbell	Stewart	Robertson
8	Wilson	Anderson	Anderson
9	Anderson	Mcdonald	Macdonald
10	Mackay	Scott	Scott
11	Mackenzie	Reid	Reid
12	Scott	Murray	Murray
13	Johnston	Ross	Taylor
14	Miller	Fraser	Clark
15	Reid	Young	Ross
16	Ross	Clark	Watson
17	Paterson	Taylor	Morrison
18	Fraser	Mitchell	Paterson
19	Murray	Henderson	Young
20	Maclean	Cameron	Mitchell

**Sources:**

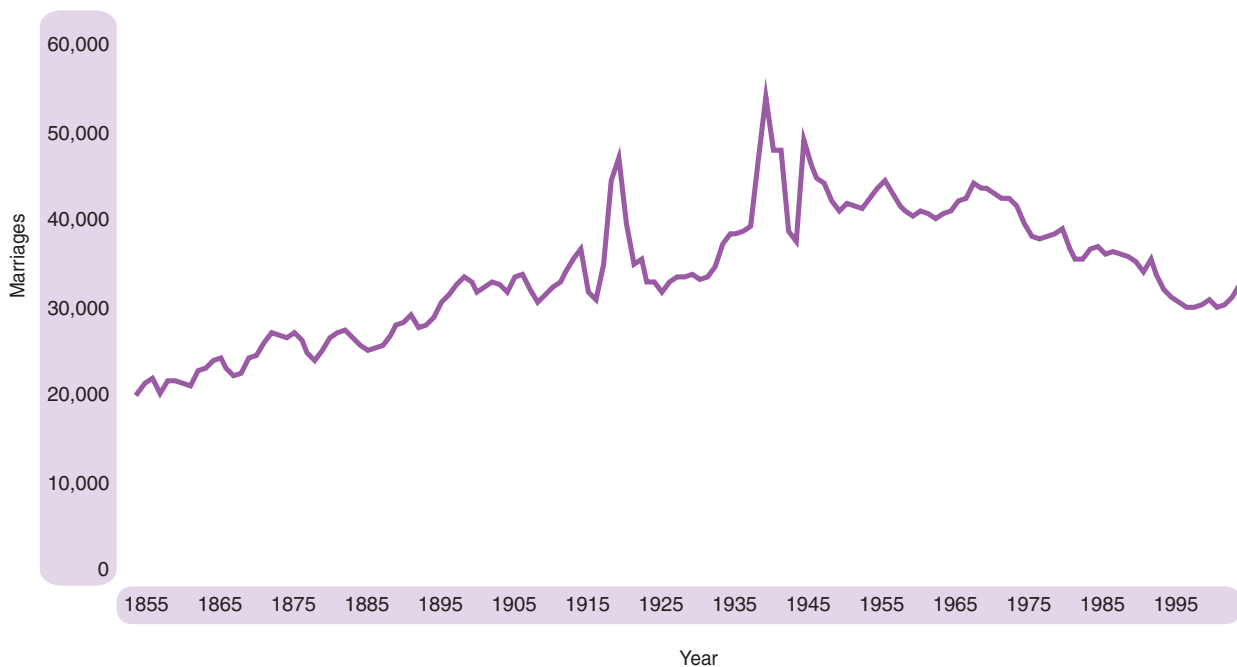
- (i) Birth, marriage and death registers
- (ii) Census indexes
- (iii) Birth and death registers

## MARRIAGES

### Introduction

**Figure 2.13** presents the numbers of marriages registered each year in Scotland since the start of civil registration. The underlying trend shows a steady increase from around 20,000 in 1855 to over 40,000 in the 1950s and 1960s. Superimposed on this trend are peaks associated with the two World Wars with the highest ever annual total, over 53,500, occurring in 1940. Since the 1970s, the annual total has declined to around 30,000.

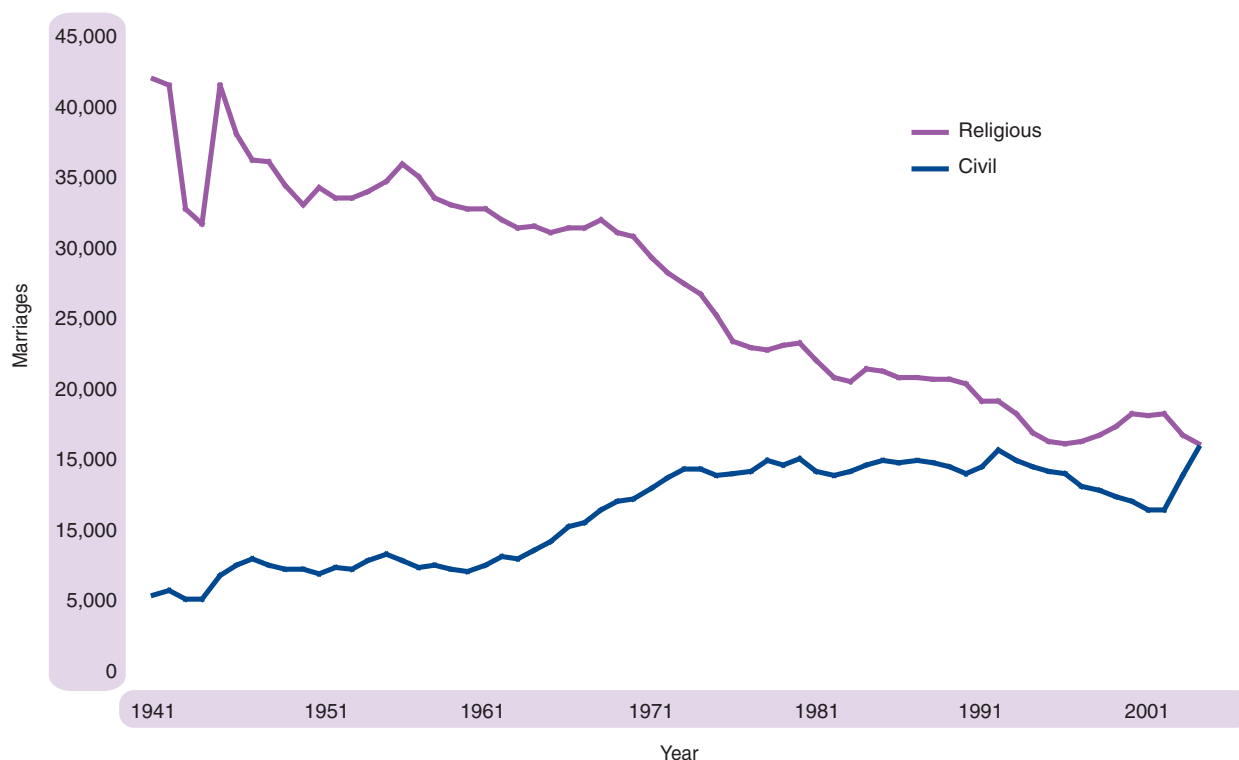
**Figure 2.13** Marriages registered in Scotland, 1855 - 2004



## Method of celebration

Civil marriages were introduced on 1 July 1940. **Figure 2.14** compares the numbers of civil and religious marriages registered each year since 1941, the first full year of operation.

**Figure 2.14** Marriages by method of celebration, Scotland, 1941-2004



The number of religious marriages has reduced by more than half over this period, while the number of civil marriages has almost trebled. Civil ceremonies now account for almost half of all marriages in Scotland. The small rise in religious ceremonies in the late 1990s was almost entirely due to marriages at Gretna. Until 2002, civil marriages could be carried out only in registration offices – so couples wanting a more unusual venue (such as the Blacksmith’s Shop in Gretna) had to opt for a religious marriage. The recent rise in the number of civil marriages, and the associated decrease in the number of religious marriages, is a direct result of legislative changes that now permit civil marriage ceremonies to be held in ‘approved places’ as well as in registration offices.



## Age at marriage

**Figure 2.15** shows the average age at marriage for 1855 to 1860, for ten year periods thereafter to 2000, and for 2004. It shows that the average age of brides at their first marriage was relatively steady during the second half of the nineteenth century at around 25 years. It rose to around 26 years early in the twentieth century before falling steadily to a low point between 22 and 23 years in the 1970s. Since then it has increased steadily to its current level of 29.6 years. Throughout the last 150 years, the average differential between the sexes has been around two years. The trend for men parallels that for women with the lowest figure for grooms, around 24 years, being in the 1970s and the highest, 31.6 years, being reached in 2004.

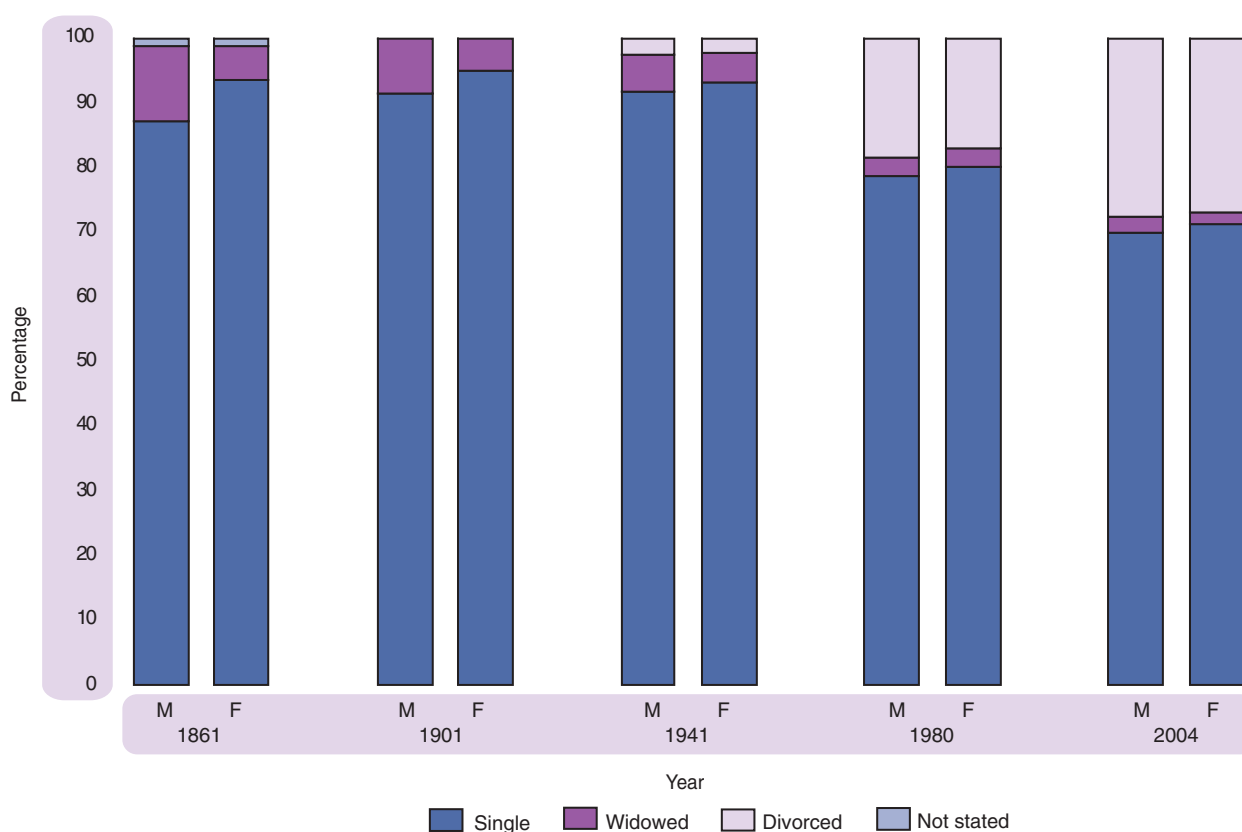
**Figure 2.15** Average age at first marriage, by sex, Scotland, 1855-2004



## Marital status at marriage

**Figure 2.16** shows, for selected years, the marital status of everyone marrying in Scotland. Divorced people constitute an increasing proportion – over a quarter of the men and women marrying in 2004. The other feature is the decline in the proportion who are widowed, from 11 per cent of grooms and 5 per cent of brides in the 1860s to 2 per cent for both sexes in 2004.

**Figure 2.16** Marital status at time of marriage, by sex, Scotland: selected years 1861-2004



## Marriages by month

Figure 2.17 Marriages by month of registration, Scotland: selected years, 1865-2004

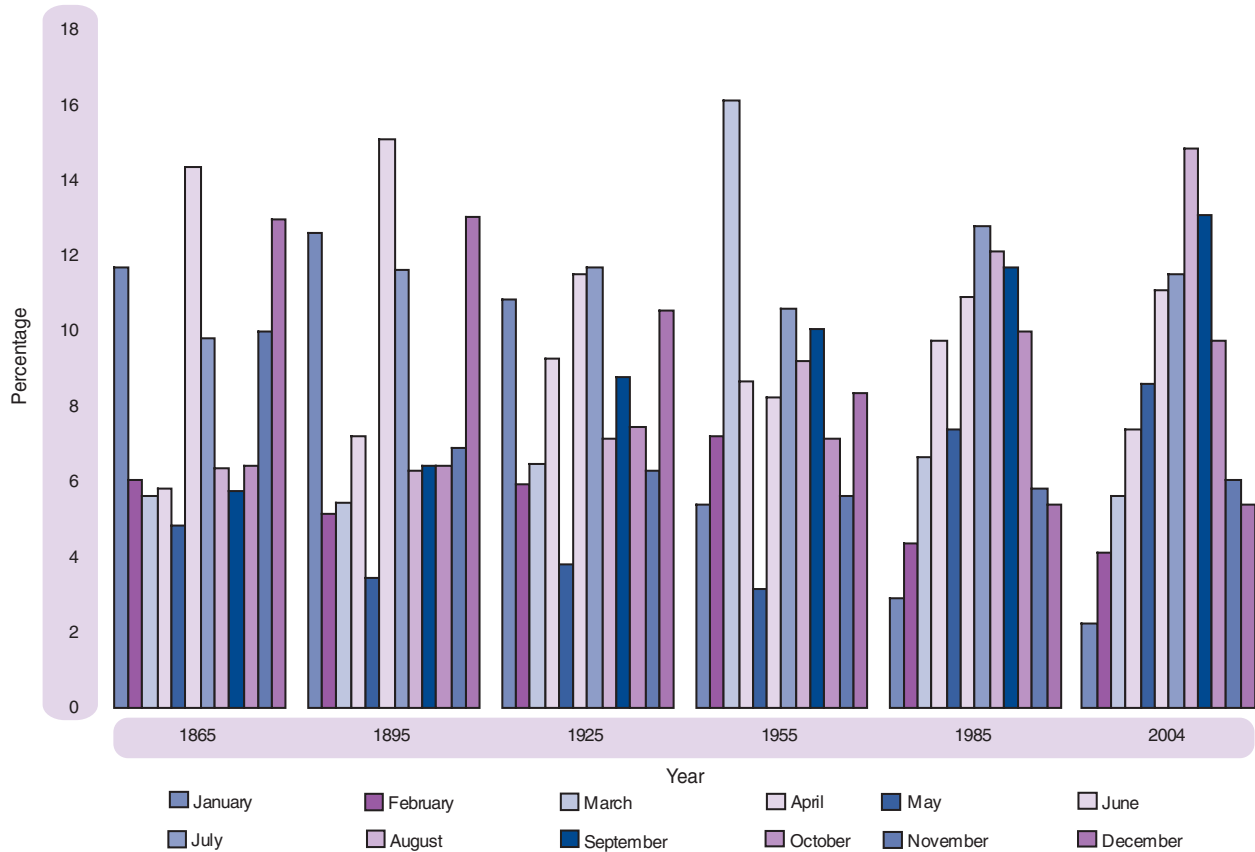


Figure 2.17 shows, for selected years, the proportion of marriages each month. Both 1865 and 1895 show distinct peaks in June/July. However, in nineteenth century Scotland it was also very popular to hold weddings at the end of December. As many of these marriages were not registered until the following January, relatively high proportions of marriage registrations were recorded for both these months. A similar, though less marked, pattern is shown for 1925.

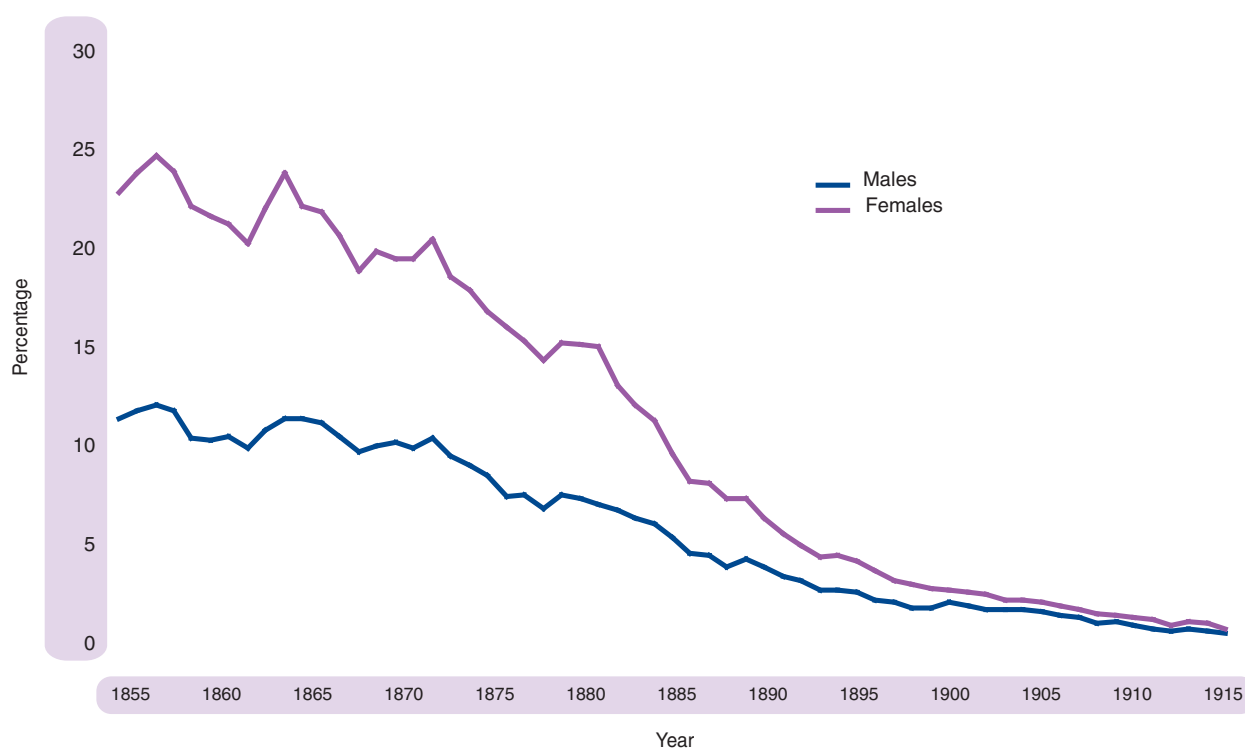
By 1955, a completely different distribution had emerged with a March peak reflecting the financial benefits that could be gained by marrying at the end of the tax year. With the removal of this quirk of the taxation system, a more straightforward seasonal pattern developed. Both 1985 and 2004 show a peak in the summer months and relatively low proportions in the winter months, though 1985 also had a subsidiary peak in April.

## Signing by mark

For almost 90 years the Registrar General's Annual Reports contained detailed information on the numbers of brides and grooms who signed the marriage register 'by mark' rather than with a signature. This information was used as a crude measure of literacy.

**Figure 2.18** shows how the proportions signing by mark declined from over 20 per cent for women and over 10 per cent for men in the 1850s and 1860s to under 1 per cent for both sexes in 1915. By the 1940s, when publication of this information ceased, the proportion signing by mark had fallen to about 0.1 per cent (only a few dozen cases).

**Figure 2.18** Percentages of brides and grooms signing the marriage register by mark, 1855-1915



In the early years, particularly high proportions signed by mark in the counties of Inverness and Ross & Cromarty. Additionally, Glasgow had higher levels than Edinburgh, a fact explained in the following rather unflattering extract from the 1865 Report:

*“The evil effect of the influx of the uneducated Irish on the Scottish population is strikingly exemplified by comparing the proportions of men and of women able to sign their names in Edinburgh and Glasgow.”*

Comparisons were often made with similar figures for England. These generally gave favourable results as the following extract from the 1860 Report shows:

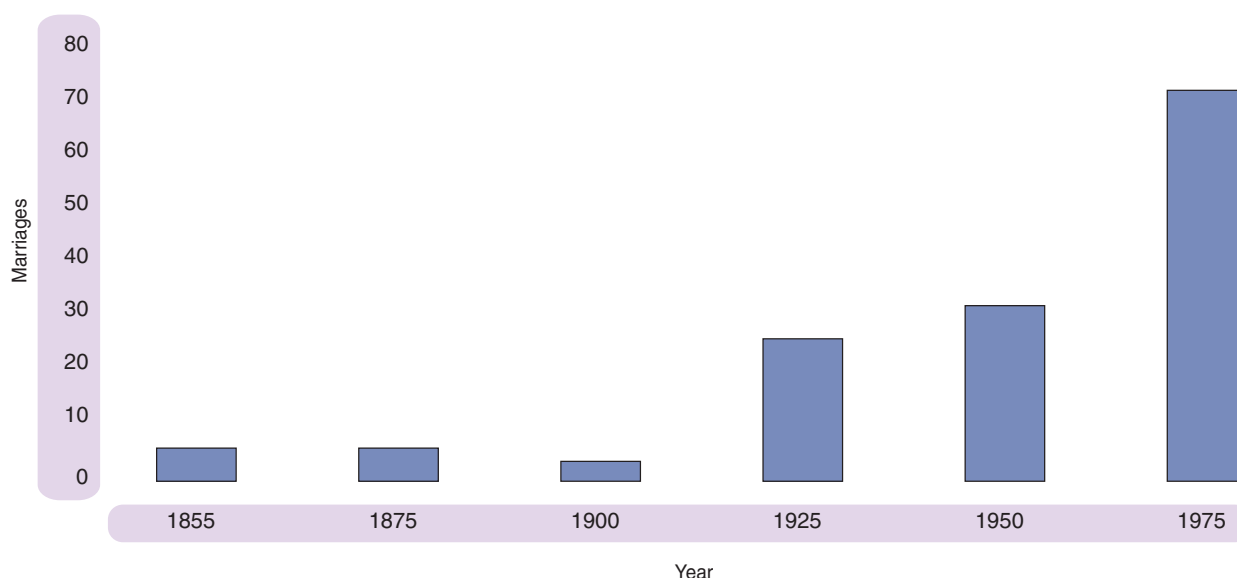
*“Judged by this test it would appear that elementary education is in a much more advanced state in Scotland than in England, seeing that 11 per cent more of the men, and 9 per cent more of the women were able to write their names.”*

## Marriages at Gretna Green

Marriages at Gretna Green have long been a remarkable feature. Gretna’s popularity as a marriage venue dates back to 1754 when Lord Hardwicke’s Marriage Act decreed that parental consent was required if either party to a marriage in England and Wales was aged under 21. The Act did not apply in Scotland, where a valid marriage could be contracted merely by a declaration before two witnesses. So a large number of young couples travelled north and Gretna, being just a few miles over the border on the stagecoach route, became the most popular destination. Any responsible person was able to conduct the marriage, but a tradition was established of the local blacksmith conducting the ceremony ‘over the anvil’.

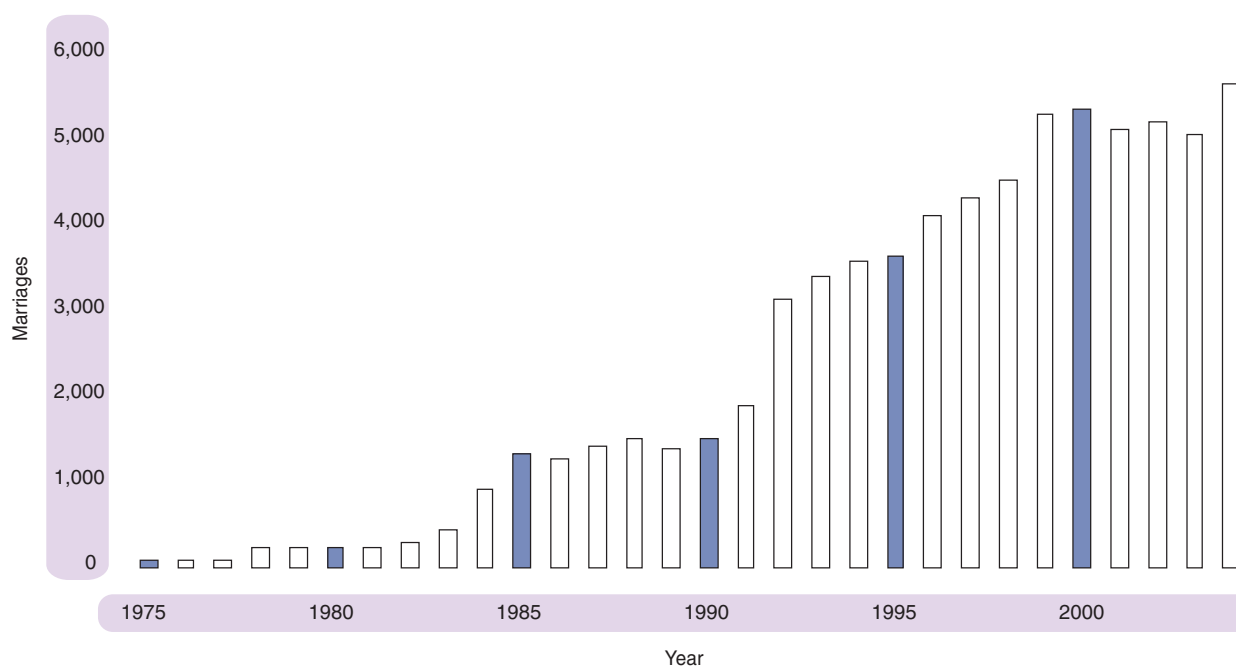
The total number of marriages at Gretna at this time is not known, but over the following 100 years or so it was certainly several tens of thousands.

**Figure 2.19** Marriages registered at Gretna, 1855-1975



The number of marriages registered in Gretna between 1855 and 1975 is shown for selected years in **Figure 2.19**. Originally, the numbers were small. However, there has been a rapid growth since 1975, from under 100 to over 5,500 in 2004.

Figure 2.20 Marriages registered at Gretna, 1975-2004



The recent rise of Gretna's popularity for marriage was examined in some detail in an Occasional Paper published by GROS in 2001 (<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/library/occpapers/marriages-at-gretna-1975-2000.html>).

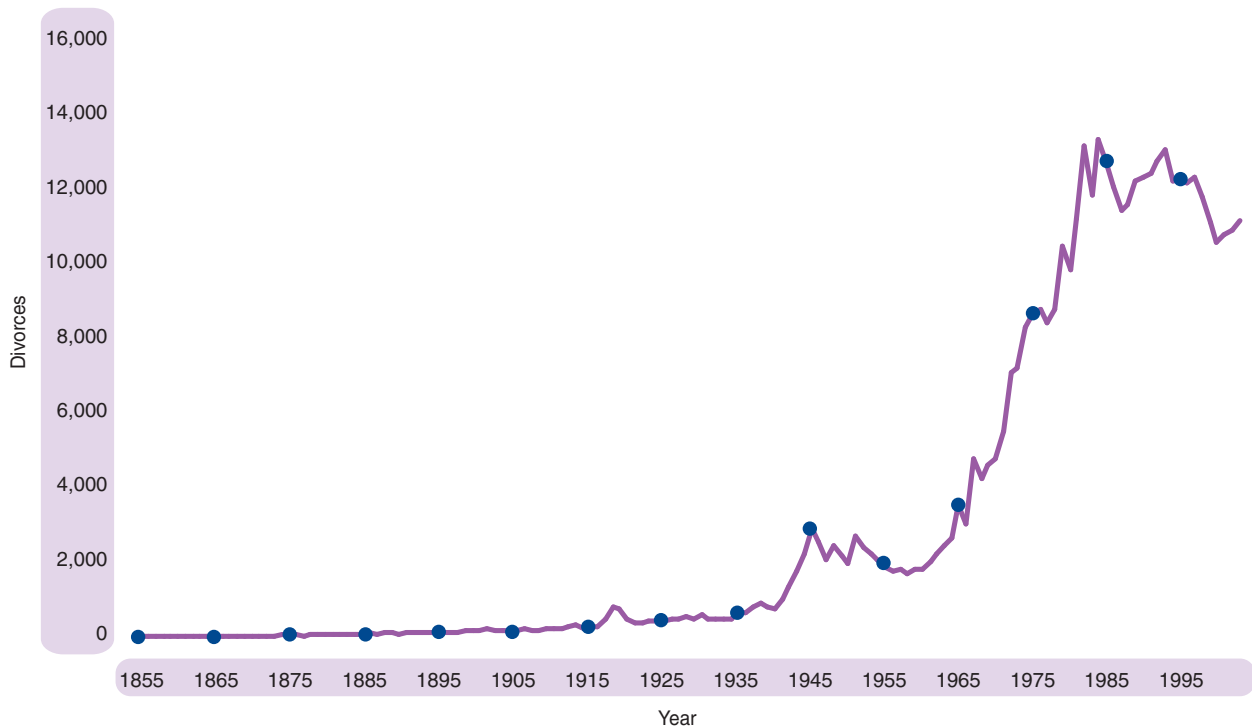
It showed that Gretna now accounts for more than one in six of all marriages in Scotland and that the majority of the couples come from England, (as was the case between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries during Gretna's original period of fame), but they are now more likely to be older than the average for the rest of Scotland rather than eloping teenagers. Gretna has also become an increasingly popular marriage venue for couples from outside the United Kingdom.

## DIVORCES

### Numbers

Although the Registrar General did not keep a divorce register until 1984, data supplied by the courts has been included in the Annual Reports since 1920. In the 1920 Report, a summary table gave annual totals back to 1855. As **Figure 2.21**, shows the number was initially very small, slowly increasing after 1870, with a marked increase following the end of the First World War. There was also a significant peak in the number of divorces following the Second World War.

**Figure 2.21** Divorces, Scotland, 1855-2004



From 1960 to the early 1980s, there was steep increase from under 2,000 a year to over 13,000. Following the peak figure of 13,373 in 1985, the number of divorces held steady at around 12,000 for a decade or so, before reducing slightly to its current level of around 11,000.

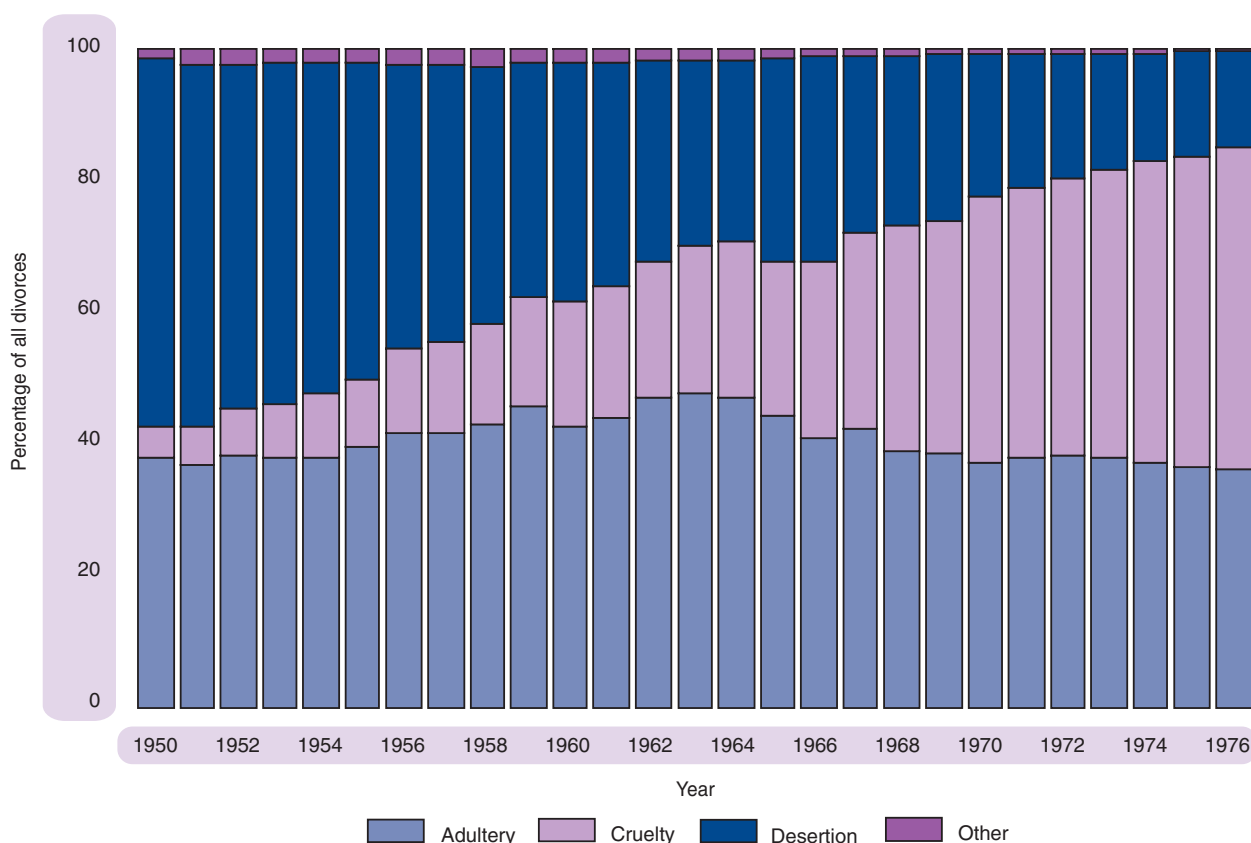
## Duration of marriages that ended in divorce

The median duration of marriages that end in divorce was steady at around 10 years from the early 1960s to the early 1990s. However, since then it has increased steadily, reaching 14 years in 2004.

## Grounds for divorce

**Figure 2.22** displays the proportions of divorces granted over the period 1950-1976 for the three main grounds under the then current legislation. In 1950 the most frequent ground for divorce was desertion (55 per cent of the total). However, by 1976 its share had fallen to only 14 per cent. This fall was mirrored by a rise from 4 to 28 per cent in the proportion granted on the grounds of cruelty. Throughout the period, adultery accounted for the remaining 40 per cent or so of divorces.

**Figure 2.22** Divorces by grounds, Scotland, 1950-1976



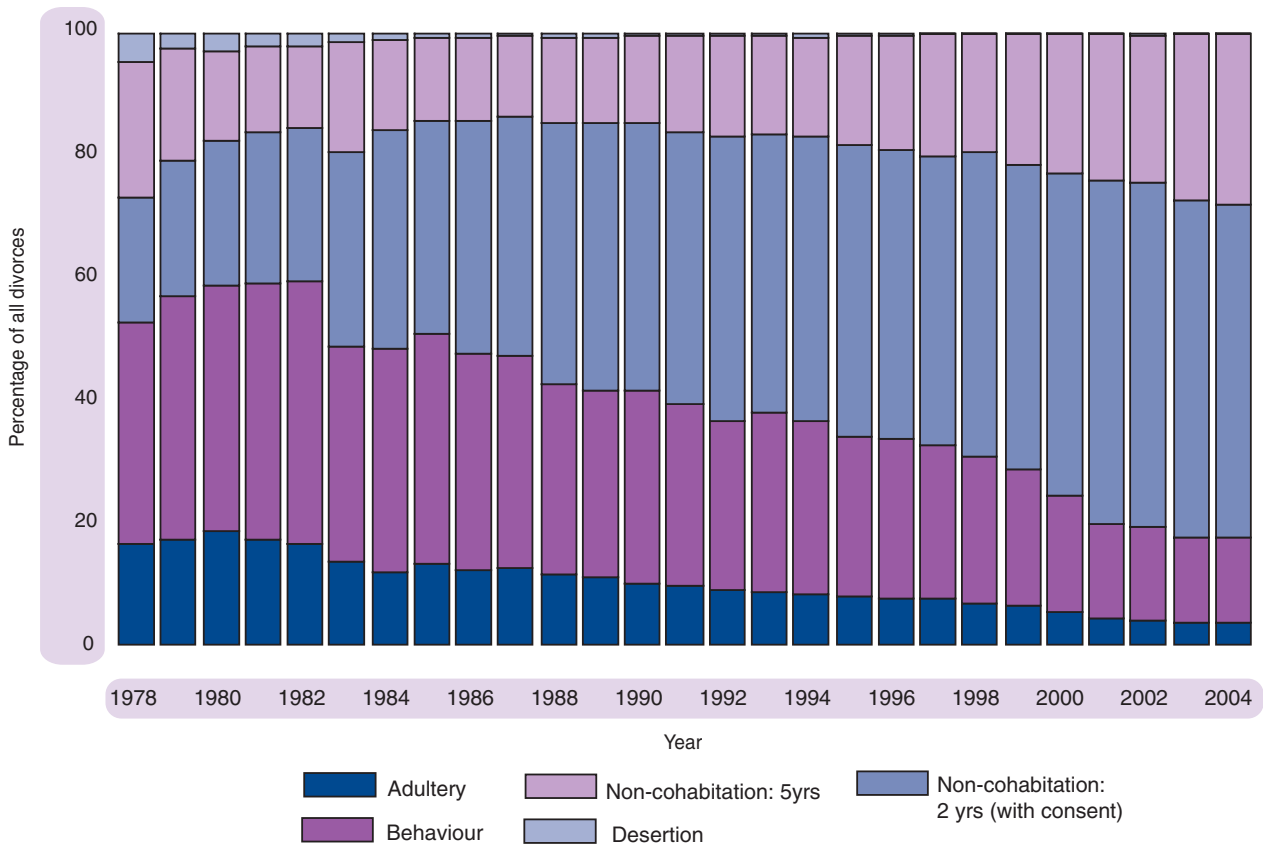
The Divorce (Scotland) Act 1976 introduced new grounds for divorce – principally that couples separated for five years (or two years with consent) could file for divorce on grounds of non-cohabitation. **Figure 2.23** displays the changing proportions since 1978 in the five main categories, which account for some 99 per cent of divorces. (1977 was a year of transition between the different sets of grounds and the small numbers of divorces granted under the old legislation during the period 1978 – 1982 have been excluded from **Figure 2.23**.)



# CHAPTER 2 – 150 YEARS OF CIVIL REGISTRATION

The new grounds of non-cohabitation covered around one-third of divorces in 1978 and this proportion has risen to over four-fifths in recent years. Non-cohabitation with consent now covers some 55 per cent of all divorces granted in Scotland. For the other three grounds shown in the chart, the proportions have all declined significantly. Together they account for less than 10 per cent of the 2004 total, with 'desertion' having all but disappeared.

**Figure 2.23 Divorces, by grounds, Scotland, 1978-2004**

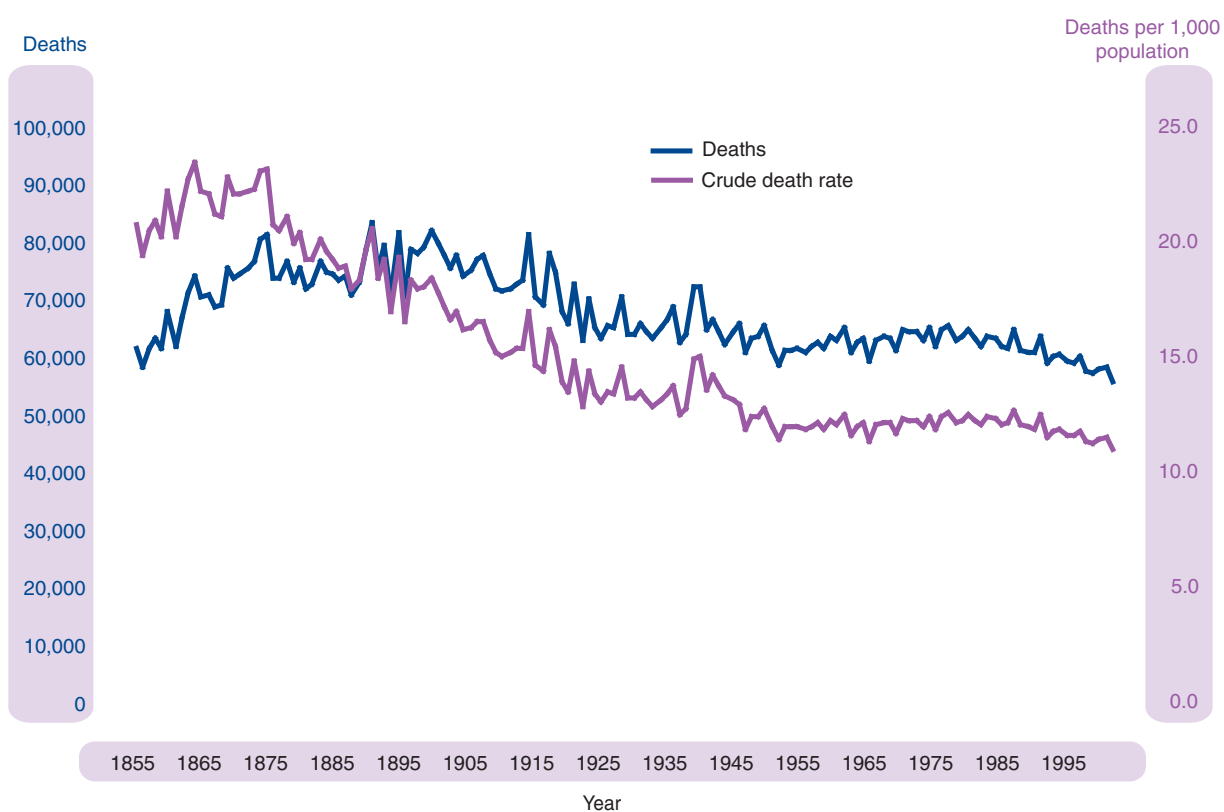


## DEATHS

### Introduction

**Figure 2.24** shows that, for much of the twentieth century, the annual total of deaths registered in Scotland was 60-70,000, though it had been some 10,000 higher at the start of the century and at the end of the nineteenth century. For most of the last decade it has been just under 60,000. Many of the isolated peaks can be linked with major epidemics such as scarlet fever in 1874-75 and influenza in 1918-19.

**Figure 2.24** Deaths and death rates, Scotland, 1855-2004



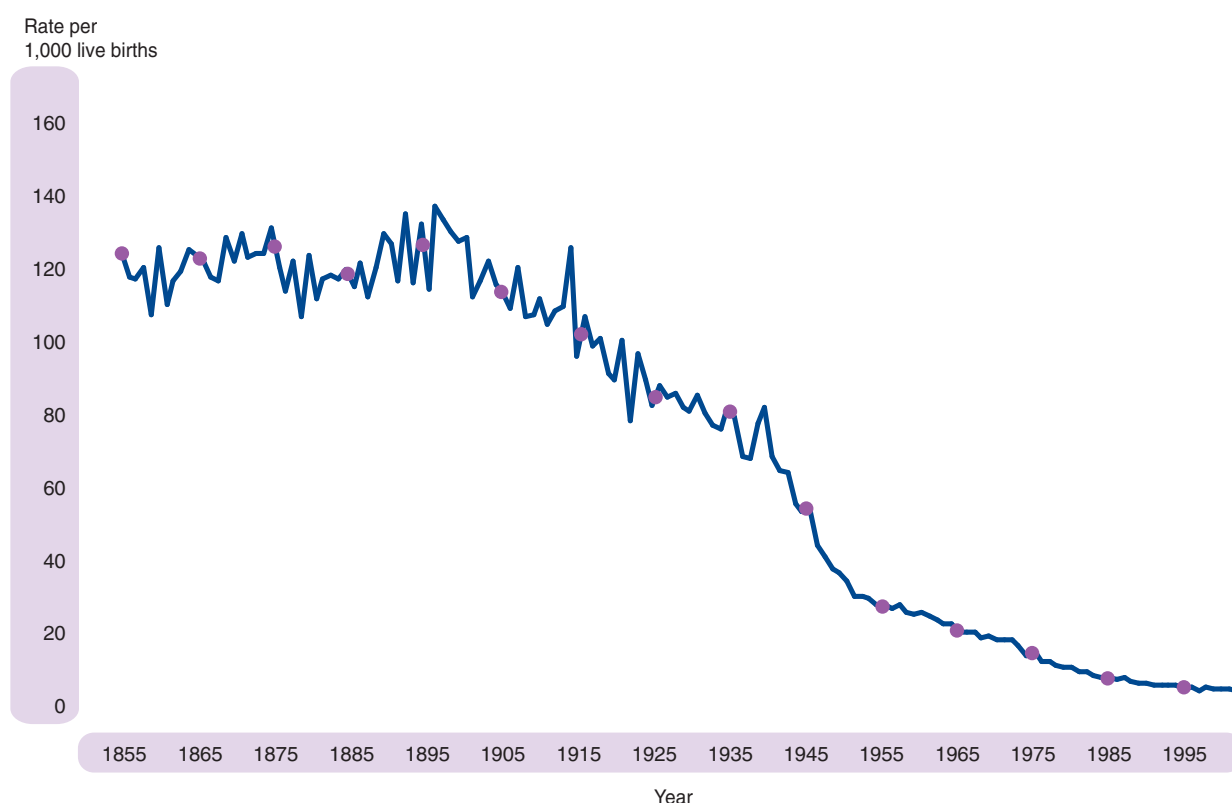
**Figure 2.24** also shows how the crude death rate halved from almost 24 per 1,000 population towards the end of the nineteenth century to around 12 per 1,000 population some 50 years ago, where it has since remained. However, the changing age structure of the population (see **Figure 2.4**) means that this crude rate hides many significant changes that are best illustrated by considering mortality rates by age.

## Infant mortality

**Figure 2.25** illustrates the most dramatic change in mortality rates by age over the last 150 years – the decline in infant mortality (deaths in the first year of life). The infant mortality rate was at a consistently high level during the second half of the nineteenth century, with a peak in 1897 of 138 per 1,000 live births – almost 1 in 7 of all live births. In 1897 there were 17,773 infant deaths. By 2004, the total was just 266, a rate of 4.9 per 1,000 live births.

The main reasons underlying this improvement were the virtual elimination of deaths from most childhood epidemic diseases, the long-term benefits of the public health measures introduced by the Victorians, and the continued medical and healthcare advances of the twentieth century.

**Figure 2.25** Infant mortality rate, Scotland, 1855-2004

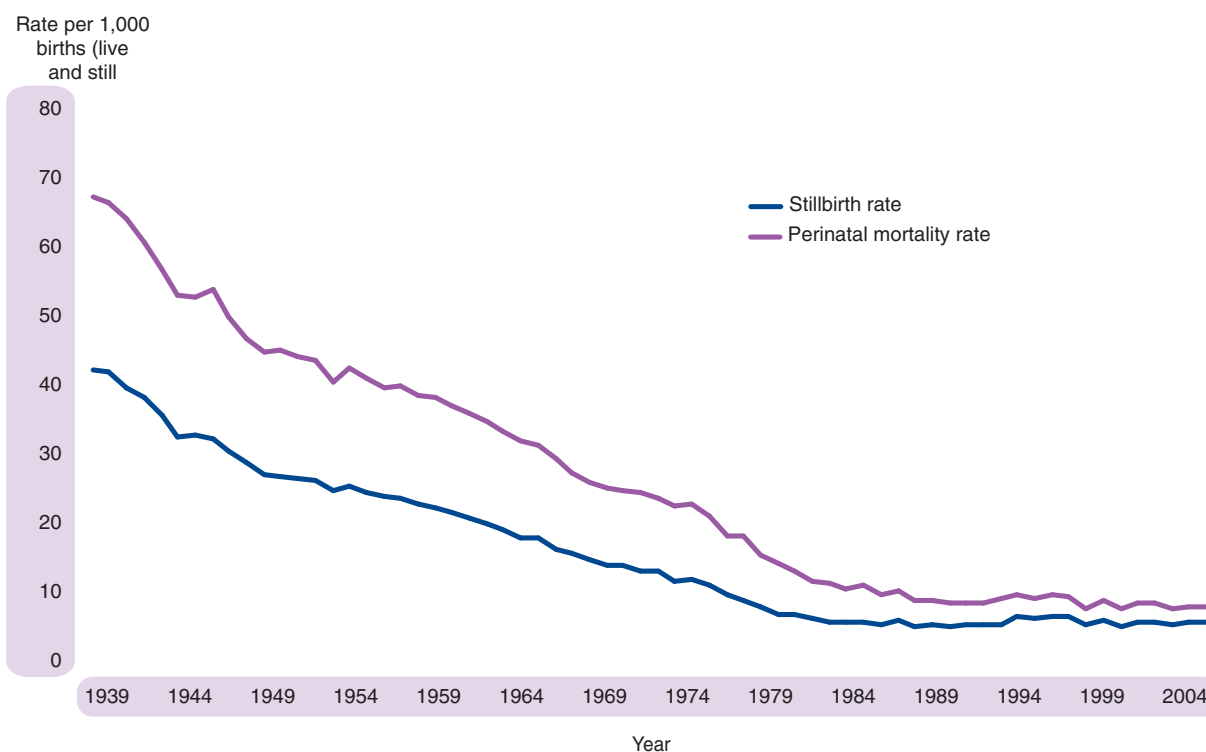


## Stillbirths and perinatal deaths

Stillbirths have been registered in Scotland since 1939. The decline in the stillbirth rate shown in **Figure 2.26** is similar to that for infant mortality shown in **Figure 2.25**. The slight increase in 1992 was the result of a change in legislation which re-defined the definition of stillbirths to include losses between 24 and 27 weeks gestation. Previously the minimum gestation covered had been 28 weeks.

There were 3,832 stillbirths in 1939, a rate of 42 per 1,000 births (live and still). By 2004, the total had fallen to 314 – a rate of 4.9 per 1,000 births (live and still).

Figure 2.26 Stillbirth and perinatal mortality rates, Scotland, 1939-2004

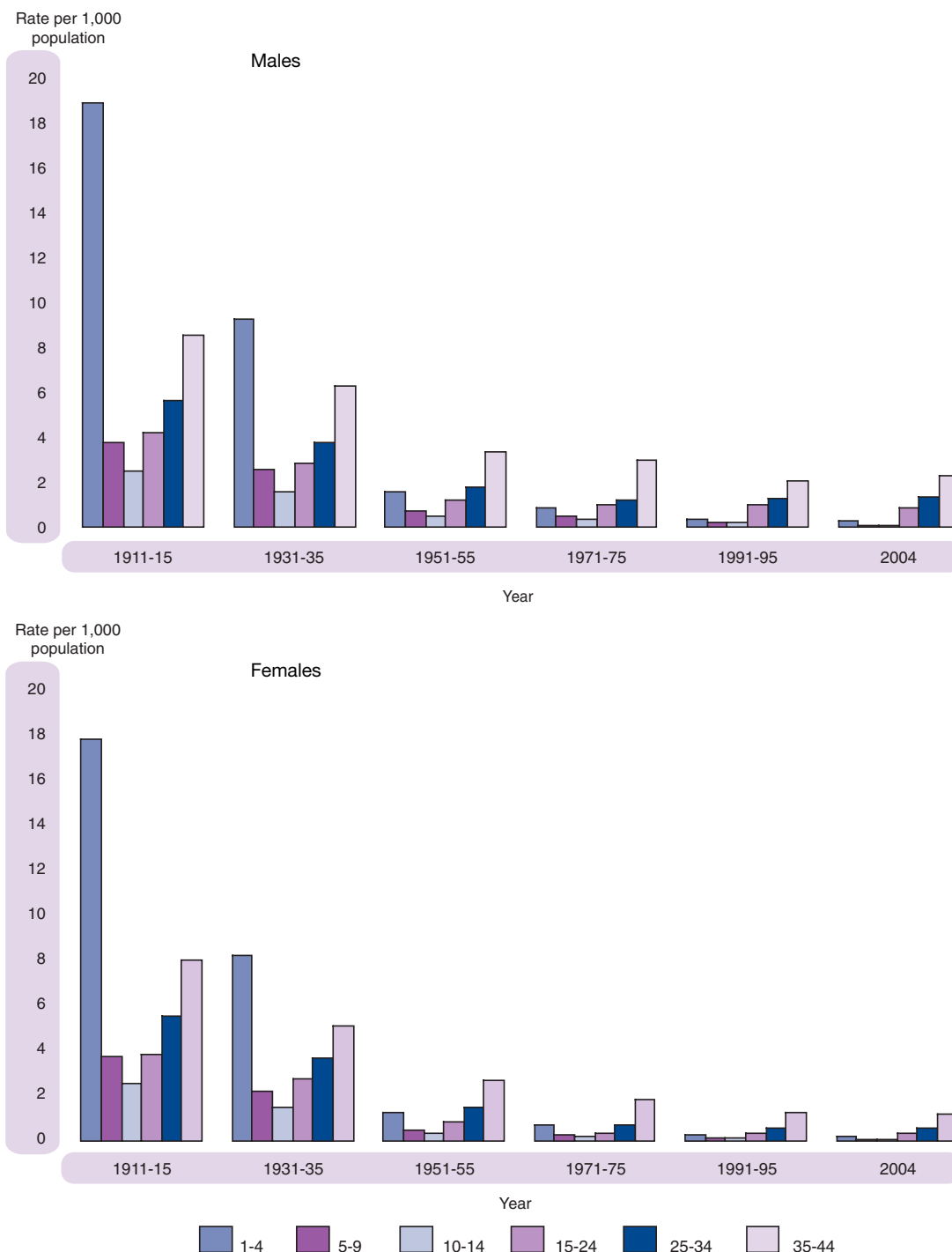


Perinatal deaths are defined as stillbirths plus deaths in the first week of life. Not surprisingly, the trend of the perinatal mortality rate shown in **Figure 2.26** parallels that of the stillbirth rate, falling from 67 per 1,000 births (live and still) in 1939 to 8.0 per 1,000 births (live and still) in 2004.

## Mortality by age

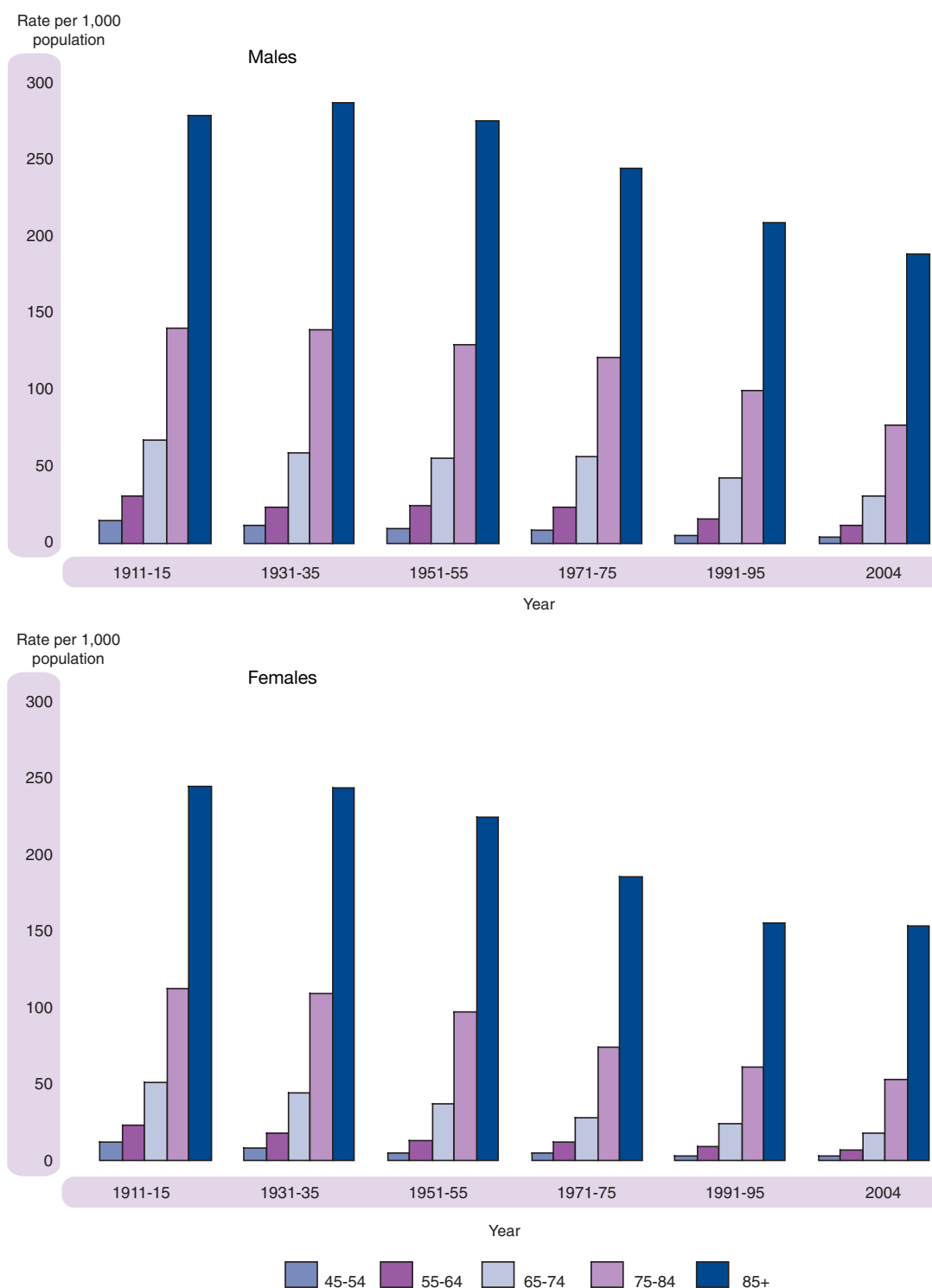
**Figure 2.27** shows how mortality rates for younger age groups have fallen over the last 100 years or so. There were large falls in the first half of the century, with a particularly marked decline for children aged 1 – 4. Over the last 50 years, the reductions have been less marked, and recently there have been some minor increases for men aged 25 - 44. These increases are mainly associated with deaths from drug abuse and suicide. The charts show that, throughout the period, all the rates for males have been higher than those for females.

**Figure 2.27** Death rates for younger age groups, Scotland, 1911-2004



**Figure 2.28** shows how mortality rates for older age groups have fallen over the last 100 years or so. Though less marked than those for the younger age groups, there have been significant improvements. As with the younger age groups, they show that rates for males have been consistently higher than those for females.

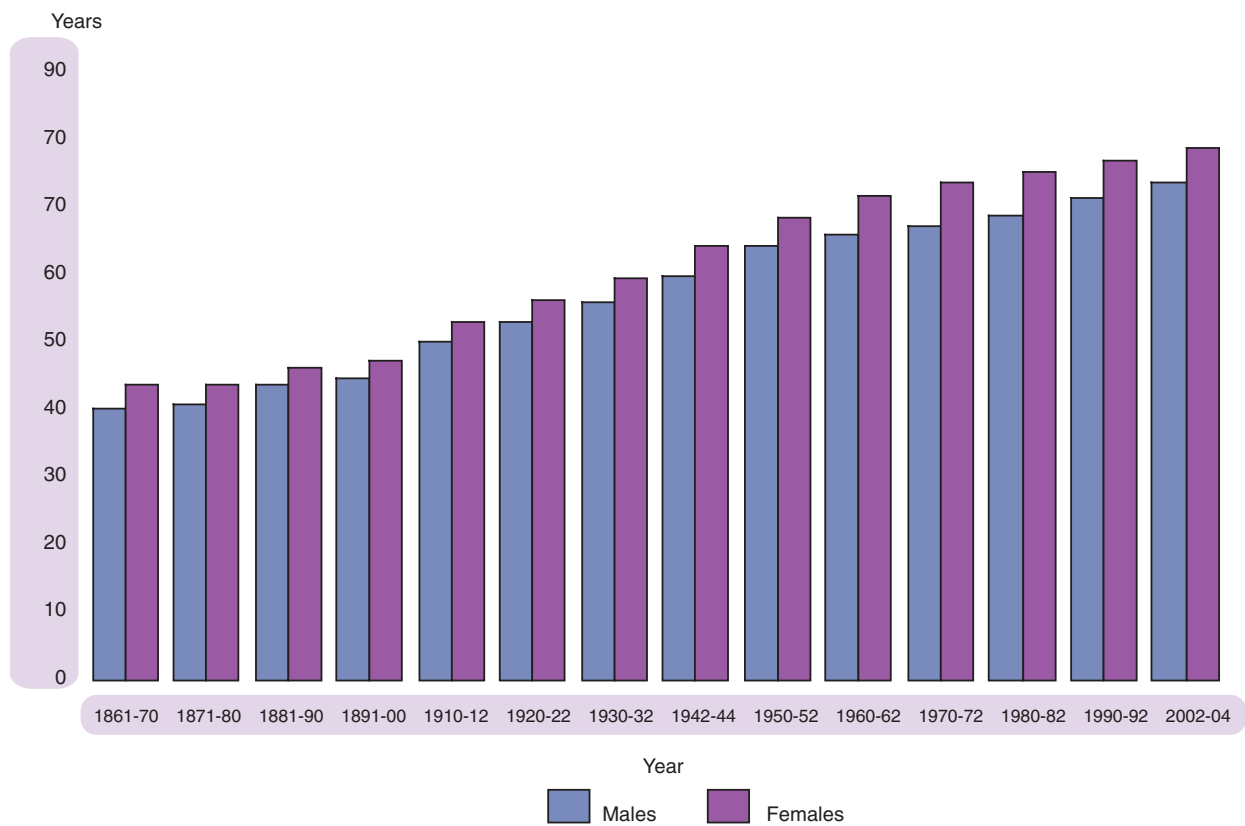
**Figure 2.28** Death rates for older age groups, Scotland, 1911-2004



## Expectation of life

The improvements in the mortality rates described above have resulted in a large increase in the expectation of life at birth. **Figure 2.29** shows that since 1861-70 the expectation of life at birth has risen by 33.5 years for males and by 35.0 years for females, to the current levels of 73.8 and 78.9 respectively. The greatest improvement took place in the first half of the twentieth century, in large part because of the major improvements in infant mortality rates at that time. Between 1891-1900 and 1950-52 the span lengthened by 19.7 years for males and 21.3 for females. Since 1950-52 it has increased by a further 9.4 and 10.2 years respectively. Throughout, the expectation of life for females has been significantly higher than that for males.

**Figure 2.29** Expectation of life at birth, Scotland, 1861-2004

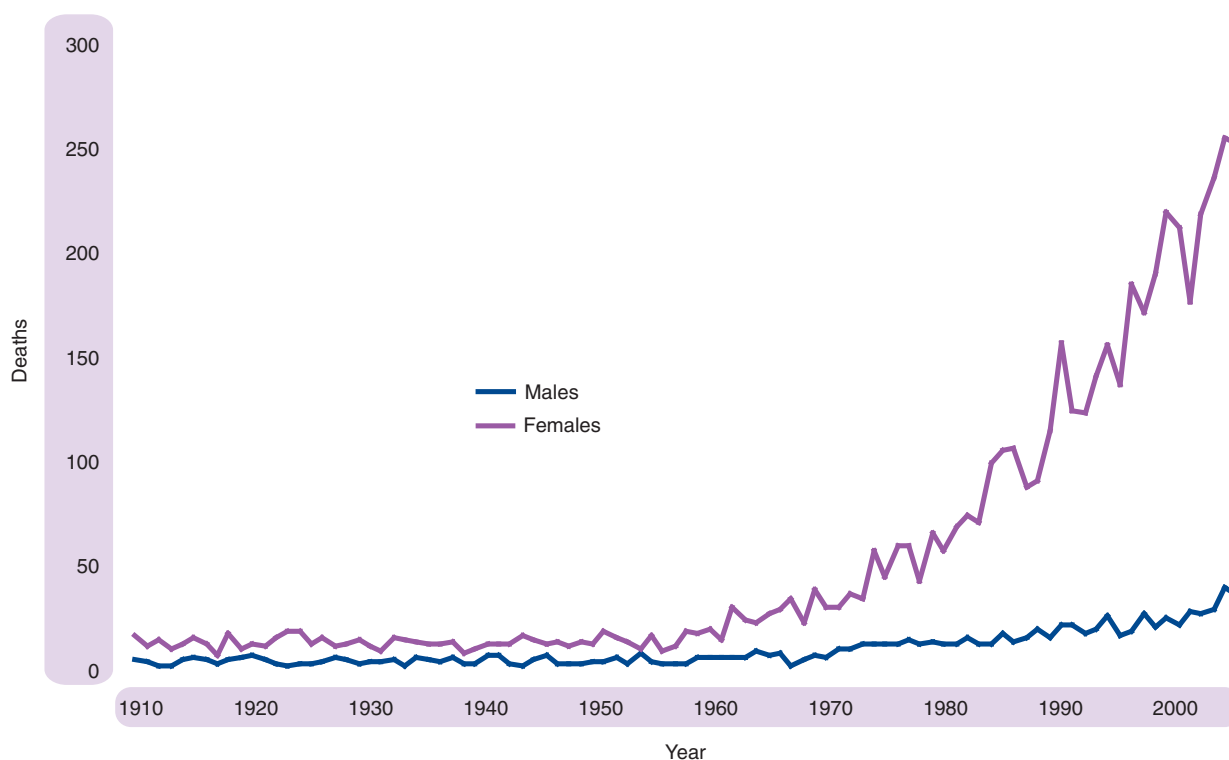


## Centenarians

The number of men and women (reputedly) aged 100 or over when they died are shown in **Figure 2.30** for the period 1910-2004. Despite the steady improvements in mortality rates, the trend shows little change until the 1960s. Since then, there has been an accelerating increase with 289 such deaths recorded in 2004. Throughout the period, the number of women reaching 100 years of age has greatly exceeded the number of men.

Since 1910, GROS has tried to verify the ages of the reputed centenarians by checking birth records. Of the 289 cases in 2004, 238 were verified; 43 of the remaining 51 were known to have been born abroad. The longest living Scot on record was a woman aged 111 years and 101 days who died in 2000.

**Figure 2.30** Deaths of centenarians, by sex, Scotland, 1910-2004



## Cause of death

Since 1855, much information on causes of death has been published in the Registrar General's Annual Reports. Indeed, in some years, the reports contained several hundred pages of detailed statistical tabulations. There have been significant changes. The most remarkable was the decline, over the first 100 years or so, of the major epidemic diseases that were commonplace in the mid-nineteenth century. The greatest impact was on child mortality rates, particularly infant mortality, but lower numbers of deaths from typhoid and other fevers, and tuberculosis, had a major impact on mortality rates amongst adults.



A further major change has been the increasing number of deaths from cancer – in part as result of the changing age structure of the population. Although the 857 deaths from cancer recorded in 1855 is certainly an under-estimate of the true total at that time, the steady increase to the 2004 total of over 15,000 is dramatic.

Throughout the period, circulatory diseases (primarily coronary heart disease and stroke) and respiratory diseases (such as bronchitis and bronchopneumonia) have continued to take their toll.

There have also been many changes of a more statistical nature. Over the years, the proportion of deaths where there is a proper death certificate has risen from under 80 per cent to 100 per cent. And there are now far fewer deaths classified to 'old age' and other ill-defined causes. Scientific and medical advances have also led to more accurate and detailed diagnoses. These factors, and associated changes in terminology, definitions and classifications, make it hard to interpret the long term trends. A detailed review of these trends is planned for the next Annual Report. As well as covering the major changes outlined above, it will also consider the changing patterns of accidental deaths and suicides and emerging trends such as the recent increase in alcohol related diseases.

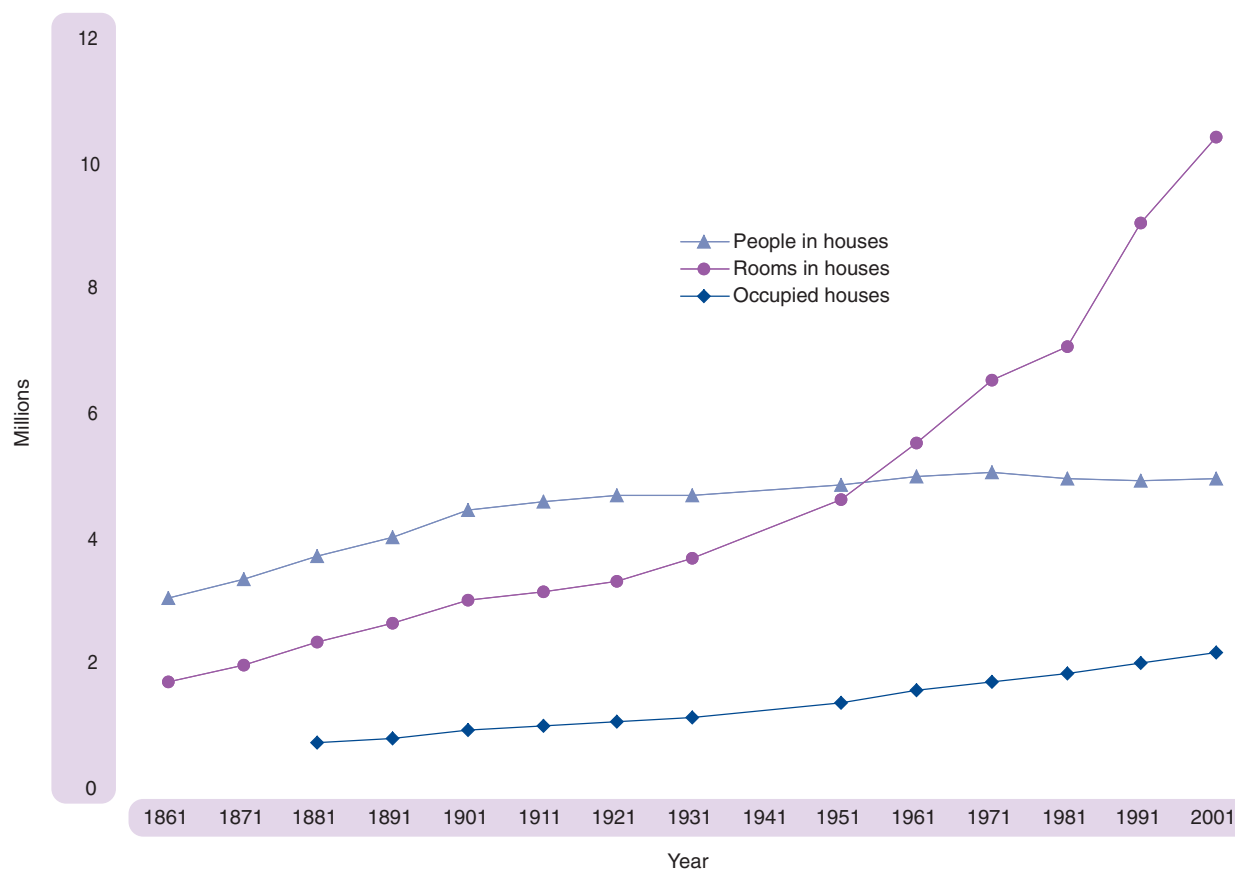
## CENSUS SNAPSHOTS

Successive Censuses give a fascinating snapshot of aspects of Scottish life. This section draws on the information from Censuses (particularly 1861, 1901, 1931, 1961 and 2001) to create a panorama of life in Scotland over the last 150 years.

### Housing

Scots live today in far less crowded conditions than in 1861. As **Figure 2.31** shows, the number of occupied houses almost trebled from 739,000 in 1881 (the start of the consistent data series) to 2,191,000 in 2001. The number of rooms increased more than sixfold, from 1,708,000 in 1861 to 10,418,000 in 2001. Since the number of people living in houses increased by only 62 per cent, houses became much less crowded – from about 5 people per house (1.8 people per room) in 1861, to 2.3 people per house (and less than half a person per room) in 2001.

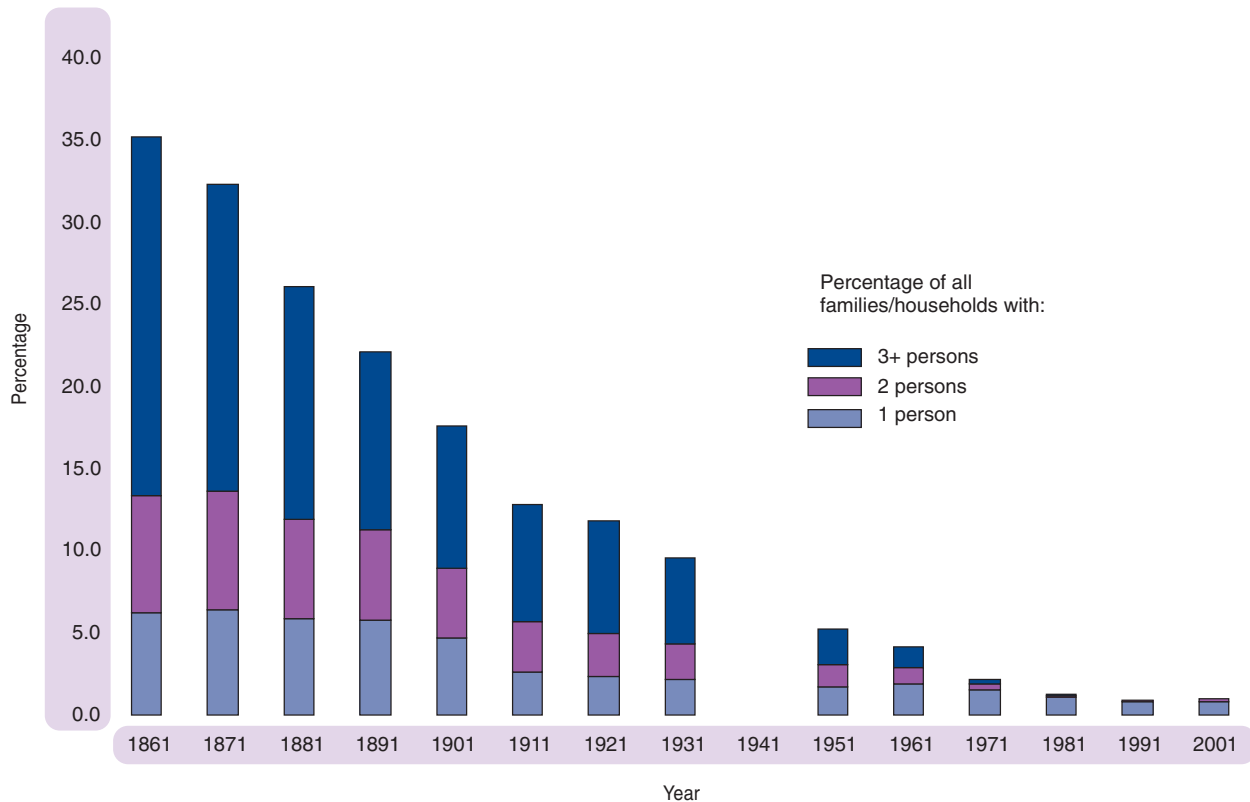
**Figure 2.31** Population, houses and rooms



## CHAPTER 2 – 150 YEARS OF CIVIL REGISTRATION

**Figure 2.32** shows that, in 1861, 35 per cent of families lived in 1 room – and 22 per cent were families of 3 or more. By 1951, only 5 per cent of households lived in a single room and, by 1981, almost all such households had only one member.

**Figure 2.32** Families/households in 1 room



## Occupation

**Table 2.3** shows people's occupation, in categories used for the 2001 Census, with information from earlier Censuses allocated to the most appropriate category.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 2.3** Occupation by gender

Occupation classification from 2001 Census	Males					Females				
	1861	1901	1931	1961	2001	1861	1901	1931	1961	2001
<b>All people with adequately described occupations ('000)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>909</b>	<b>1,391</b>	<b>1,542</b>	<b>1,572</b>	<b>1,275</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>1,113</b>
<b>Percentage in each occupation category:</b>										
Managers and Senior Officials	6	5	6	6	14	5	6	3	3	9
Professional Occupations	3	3	5	6	11	1	3	4	6	10
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	3	3	5	6	13	1	1	3	6	14
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	1	5	5	6	5	0	3	12	25	21
Skilled Agricultural Trades	10	9	6	4	3	15	4	1	1	0
Skilled Metal and Electrical Trades	4	10	7	13	9	0	0	0	1	0
Skilled Construction and Building Trades	8	9	7	7	7	0	0	1	0	0
Textiles, Printing and Other Skilled Trades	12	11	6	5	3	19	22	16	7	2
Personal Service Occupations	4	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	10	12
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	1	1	5	2	5	1	1	12	13	14
Process Operatives	12	8	2	4	2	19	16	4	5	1
Plant and Machine Operatives	9	11	10	8	3	1	2	2	2	0
Assemblers and Routine Operatives	0	0	0	1	2	0	4	3	5	2
Construction Operatives	1	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Transport and Mobile Machine Drivers and Operatives	4	6	7	7	7	0	0	0	0	0
Elementary Agricultural Occupations	12	6	6	3	1	5	3	1	1	0
Elementary Construction, Process Plant and Goods Storage Occupations	6	8	17	14	6	3	2	6	5	1
Elementary Administration and Service Occupations	4	2	4	3	7	28	29	29	12	12
<b>Percentage of population who have an adequately described occupation</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>42</b>

1. "All people with adequately described occupations" consists of:

1861 – All people excluding "persons returned as children, relatives and scholars", "persons of rank or property, not otherwise returned" and "persons supported by the community and of no specified occupation".

1901 – All people aged 10 and over who were "engaged in occupations".

1931 – All people aged 14 and over who were "gainfully occupied".

1961 – All people aged 15 and over who were "economically active", excluding those with "inadequately described occupations".

2001 – All people aged 16-74 who were "economically active", excluding those who were classed as unemployed and who either a) were aged 65-74 or b) were aged 16-64 and had never worked or had last worked before 1996.

<sup>1</sup> More information on the Standard Occupational Classification 2000 can be found at [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/nsbase/methods\\_quality/ns-scc/soc2000.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/nsbase/methods_quality/ns-scc/soc2000.asp)

## CHAPTER 2 – 150 YEARS OF CIVIL REGISTRATION

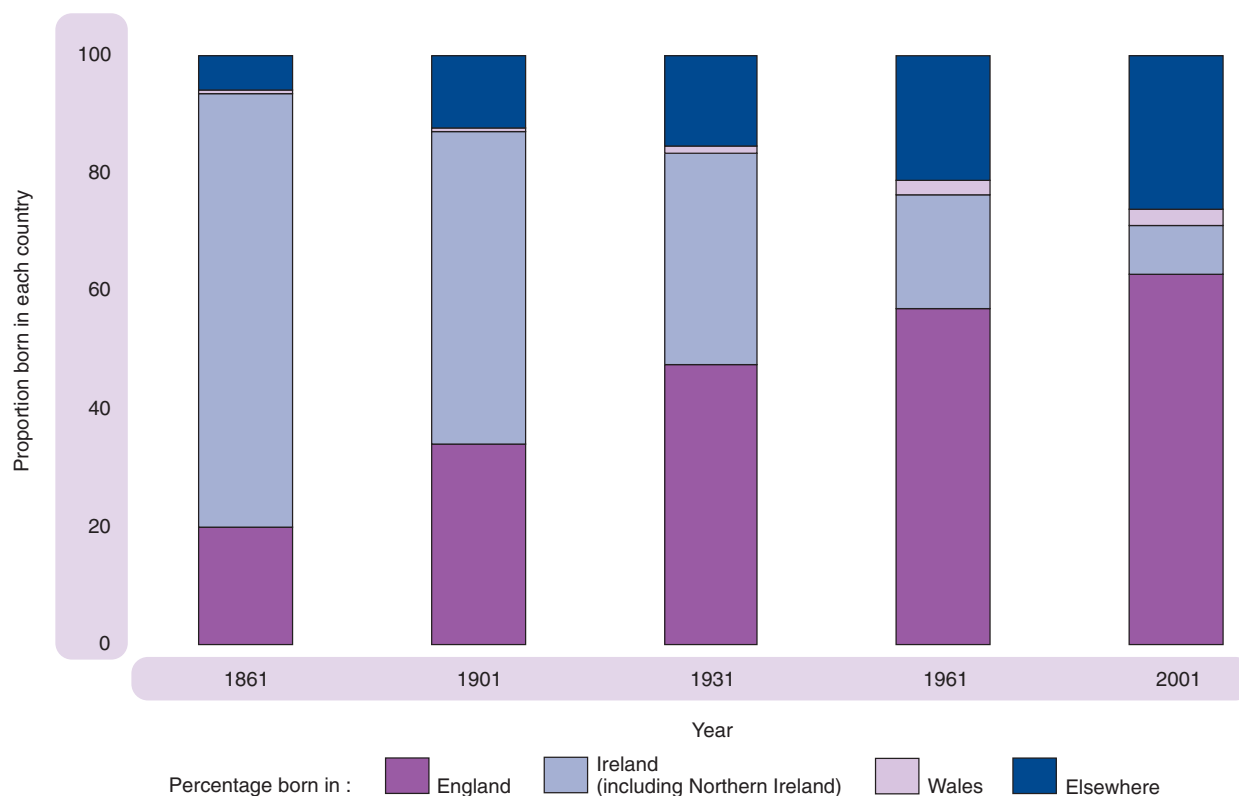
The main points of interest are:-

- The proportion of Managers and Senior Officials remained relatively steady over the 100 years to 1961 but then rose substantially – perhaps partly because the word “manager” appeared in more job titles;
- The percentage in Professional and Associate Professional & Technical Occupations rose steadily between 1861 and 1961 and then rose faster in the next 40 years – again, perhaps partly due to changes in job titles;
- The proportion in Administrative and Secretarial Occupations has risen sharply in the last 140 years – particularly for women, with fewer than 1 in 100 working in this sector in 1861, but 1 in 4 in 1961 and 1 in 5 in 2001;
- The percentage in Skilled Agricultural Trades has fallen sharply since 1861. The large fall for women between 1861 and 1901 is because, in 1861, this category contained a large number of people classified as “farmer’s wife”, “farmer’s daughter”, etc;
- The proportion of men employed in Skilled Metal & Electrical Trades rose from 4 per cent in 1861 to 13 per cent in 1961, before falling to 8 per cent in 2001;
- A number of occupations, such as Transport & Mobile Machine Drivers & Operatives, and Skilled Construction & Building Trades, have always been a male preserve;
- Textiles, Printing and Other Skilled Trades occupied a much smaller proportion of the population in 2001 than in 1861 – particularly women, of whom more than a fifth worked in this area in 1901;
- While the proportion of men in Personal Service Occupations has remained fairly steady since 1861, the proportion of women has risen substantially, particularly since 1931;
- The proportion in Sales and Customer Service Occupations has also risen, particularly between 1901 and 1931 and particularly for women;
- A much lower proportion of both men and women work as Process Operatives (such as Food, Drink & Tobacco Operatives) in 2001 than in 1861;
- The majority of Plant and Machine Operatives (including Coal Mine Operatives and Metal Working Machine Operatives) are men, and the proportion in this category remains steady in the 100 years up to 1961, before falling substantially in the next 40 years;
- The proportion of people working in Elementary Agricultural Occupations has fallen dramatically since 1861;
- There was a rise between 1861 and 1931 in the proportion of people working in Elementary Construction, Process Plant & Goods Storage Occupations, followed by a fall of roughly the same size between 1931 and 2001;
- In 1861, 1901 and 1931, around 30 per cent of working women were in Elementary Administration & Service Occupations (mostly as “domestic servants”) – but this fell sharply to 12 per cent in both 1961 and 2001.

## Country of Birth

In 1861, 91 per cent of Scotland's population was Scots born – rising to 93 per cent in 1931 and falling to 87 per cent in 2001.

Figure 2.33 Country of birth of people not born in Scotland



**Figure 2.33** shows the country of birth of people not born in Scotland. Initially, immigrants were predominantly Irish – almost three quarters in 1861 (204,000) and over half in 1901 (205,000). By 2001, however, 63 per cent of immigrants came from England (409,000), with only 8 per cent (55,000) coming from Ireland/Northern Ireland. The number of people born outside the British Isles increased from 16,000 in 1861 to 171,000 in 2001, when they accounted for just over a quarter of all immigrants.

**Table 2.4** shows the continent of birth for people born outside the British Isles (the UK and Ireland). In 1901, almost half (46 per cent) were born in the rest of Europe and just over a quarter (27 per cent) were born in North or South America. By 2001, these proportions had dropped to 32 and 15 per cent respectively. Over the same period, the proportion born in Asia and Africa rose, from 15 and 4 per cent, respectively, to 33 and 13 per cent. In 1931, among those people born in the rest of Europe, the highest numbers had been born in Italy, Lithuania and Russia. In 2001, more were born in Germany, Italy and France than any other countries.

**Table 2.4** People born outside the British Isles by continent of birth

Continent	1901	1931	2001
Europe	21,250	18,709	54,111
Asia	6,754	11,143	55,369
Africa	1,864	3,912	22,049
America	12,676	14,679	24,413
Oceania	3,198	3,240	11,263
Not stated / born at sea	461	417	937
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,203</b>	<b>52,100</b>	<b>168,142</b>

## Share of UK population

**Table 2.5** shows that Scotland's share of the UK's population fell from 12.5 per cent in 1861 to 8.6 per cent in 2001. Over the same period, England's share increased from 77 to 84 per cent.

**Table 2.5** UK population by constituent country

Country	Thousands				
	1861	1901	1931	1961	2001
England	18,780	30,516	37,358	43,464	49,139
Scotland	3,062	4,472	4,843	5,179	5,062
Wales	1,286	2,012	2,594	2,641	2,903
Northern Ireland	1,397	1,237	1,243	1,425	1,685
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>24,525</b>	<b>38,237</b>	<b>46,038</b>	<b>52,709</b>	<b>58,789</b>

## Gaelic Speakers

As **Table 2.6** shows, the number of Gaelic speakers fell over the twentieth century to only a quarter of its 1901 level, while the population of Scotland increased by 18 per cent.

**Table 2.6** Gaelic speakers aged 3 and over

	Thousands			
	1901	1931	1961	2001
Gaelic speakers	231	136	81	59
Non-Gaelic speakers	3,916	4,453	4,812	4,842
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,147</b>	<b>4,589</b>	<b>4,893</b>	<b>4,900</b>

## Islands, Towns and Cities

The proportion of Scotland's population living on islands fell from 5.4 per cent in 1861 to 2.0 per cent in 1961 – but, since then, the proportion has remained the same.

**Table 2.7** Island dwellers by local authority area

Local authority area (see map on page 8)	1861	1901	1931	1961	2001	Percentage change	
						1861 to 1961	1961 to 2001
Argyll & Bute	35,955	29,754	24,125	18,485	15,889	-49	-14
Eilean Siar	36,319	46,172	38,986	32,607	26,502	-10	-19
Highland	20,948	15,856	11,069	7,989	9,603	-62	20
North Ayrshire	6,798	6,606	6,697	5,359	6,492	-21	21
Orkney	32,346	28,699	22,077	18,747	19,245	-42	3
Shetland	31,579	28,166	21,421	17,814	21,988	-44	23
Rest of Scotland	88	139	87	60	20	-32	-67
<b>Total</b>	<b>164,033</b>	<b>155,392</b>	<b>124,462</b>	<b>101,061</b>	<b>99,739</b>	<b>-38</b>	<b>-1</b>

As **Table 2.7** shows, the fall in island population in the 100 years to 1961 affected each of the main island groups. The smallest fall was in Eilean Siar (10 per cent), with the largest in the islands of Highland (62 per cent). Since 1961, the population of some island groups has continued to reduce (by 19 per cent in Eilean Siar and 14 per cent in the islands of Argyll & Bute) while there were increases of between a fifth and a quarter in the islands of Highland, North Ayrshire and Shetland.



**Table 2.8** Town and city dwellers

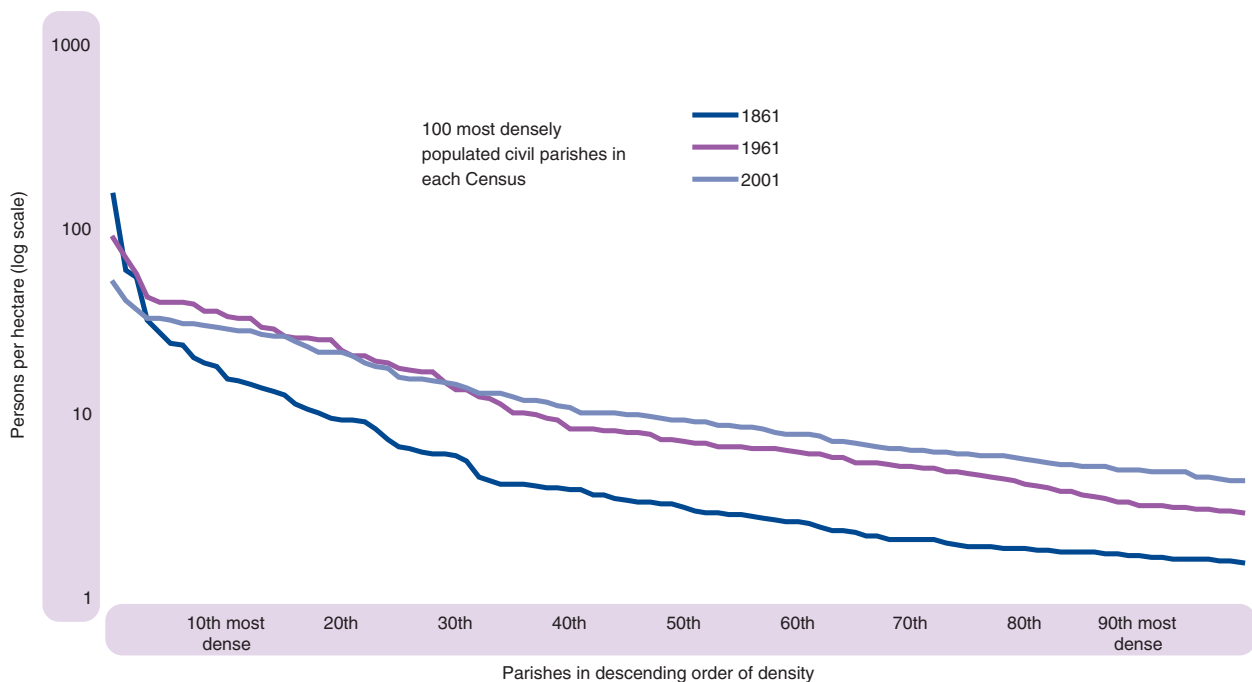
Areas of residence	1861	1901	1931	1961	2001
Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee <sup>1</sup>	798	1,601	1,879	1,892	1,399
Other towns/cities with population of more than 30,000	91	400	588	726	879
Elsewhere in Scotland	2,172	2,471	2,376	2,562	2,784
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,062</b>	<b>4,472</b>	<b>4,843</b>	<b>5,179</b>	<b>5,062</b>

1. All figures for Edinburgh include Leith and all figures for Glasgow include Partick, Govan, Rutherglen and Cambuslang.

By contrast, the population of the 4 largest cities (as constituted at the time of successive Censuses) more than doubled in the 100 years to 1961 and fell by a quarter in the last forty years – as **Table 2.8** shows. The population in other municipalities of more than 30,000 people has increased almost 10 fold from around 90,000 in 1861 to almost 880,000 in 2001. There has been an increase as steady, but less marked, of 28 per cent in the rest of Scotland over the same period.

Scotland's population increased by 65 per cent between 1861 and 2001. The average population density therefore increased. But, as **Figure 2.34** shows, the change was not evenly spread. The 100 most densely populated parishes in each Census (out of over 800 parishes) contained 53 per cent, 73 per cent and 67 per cent (ie the majority) of the population in 1861, 1961 and 2001 respectively. Between 1861 and 1961, there was a general increase in the population density in the 100 most densely populated parishes, reflecting the overall increase in population in the period. Between 1961 and 2001, the population of Scotland fell slightly, and the fall in density in the 29 most densely populated parishes was balanced by an increase in density in the less densely populated parishes. This indicates some dispersal of population over the 40 year period.

**Figure 2.34** Population density



## Marital status

Marriage was more common in 2001 than in 1861. **Table 2.9** shows that 44 per cent of men and women were single in 1861 – but only 34 per cent of men and 28 per cent of women in 2001. 1961 was the Census when the highest percentage of people were married – 68 per cent of men and 60 per cent of women. Divorced people increased from fewer than 4,000 in 1931 to almost 290,000 in 2001.

**Table 2.9** Marital status of adult population

Gender/marital status	1861 <sup>1,2</sup>	1901 <sup>1,2</sup>	1931	1961	2001
<b>Males</b>					
Single	393,160	667,674	656,556	482,575	651,881
Married	447,814	677,378	874,194	1,187,718	1,082,080
Widowed	47,428	72,741	93,668	82,391	80,456
Divorced <sup>2</sup>	..	..	1,484	6,597	119,828
<b>All people</b>	<b>888,402</b>	<b>1,417,793</b>	<b>1,625,902</b>	<b>1,759,281</b>	<b>1,934,245</b>
<b>Females</b>					
Single	474,083	693,424	734,429	515,376	597,574
Married	460,954	690,379	888,479	1,209,162	1,100,697
Widowed	135,684	175,405	203,469	268,049	290,022
Divorced <sup>2</sup>	..	..	2,233	13,529	167,408
<b>All people</b>	<b>1,070,721</b>	<b>1,559,208</b>	<b>1,828,610</b>	<b>2,006,116</b>	<b>2,155,701</b>
<b>All</b>					
Single	867,243	1,361,098	1,390,985	997,951	1,249,455
Married	908,768	1,367,757	1,762,673	2,396,880	2,182,777
Widowed	183,112	248,146	297,137	350,440	370,478
Divorced <sup>2</sup>	..	..	3,717	20,126	287,236
<b>All people</b>	<b>1,959,123</b>	<b>2,977,001</b>	<b>3,454,512</b>	<b>3,765,397</b>	<b>4,089,946</b>

1. Figures for 1861 and 1901 are for people aged 15 and over.

2. Information on number of people who were divorced was not collected in 1861 and 1901.

## CHAPTER 2 – 150 YEARS OF CIVIL REGISTRATION

But, for people in their 20s, the pattern was quite different, as **Table 2.10** shows. In 1861, 32 per cent of men aged 20-29 were married – and in 1961, 49 per cent. But, by 2001, only 14 per cent of men in their 20s were married. The pattern for women in their 20s was similar, though the marriage rate was higher – peaking at 66 per cent in 1961.

**Table 2.10** Marital status of population aged 20-29

Gender/marital status	1861 <sup>1</sup>	1901 <sup>1</sup>	1931	1961	2001
<b>Males</b>					
Single	154,426	283,544	286,771	161,865	266,725
Married	72,938	106,637	104,414	158,018	42,113
Widowed	1,332	1,551	1,056	182	160
Divorced <sup>1</sup>	..	..	97	331	2,230
<b>All people</b>	<b>228,696</b>	<b>391,732</b>	<b>392,338</b>	<b>320,396</b>	<b>311,228</b>
<b>Females</b>					
Single	173,775	264,216	266,567	115,233	247,477
Married	107,314	153,778	149,954	222,865	67,824
Widowed	3,330	2,533	1,552	665	399
Divorced <sup>1</sup>	..	..	199	852	4,762
<b>All people</b>	<b>284,419</b>	<b>420,527</b>	<b>418,272</b>	<b>339,615</b>	<b>320,462</b>
<b>All</b>					
Single	328,201	547,760	553,338	277,098	514,202
Married	180,252	260,415	254,368	380,883	109,937
Widowed	4,662	4,084	2,608	847	559
Divorced <sup>1</sup>	..	..	296	1,183	6,992
<b>All people</b>	<b>513,115</b>	<b>812,259</b>	<b>810,610</b>	<b>660,011</b>	<b>631,690</b>

1. Information on number of people who were divorced was not collected in 1861 and 1901.

## SUMMARY

In the late 1850s, “average Scots”

- were called John Smith or Mary Macdonald
- had a 1 in 7 chance of dying before their first birthday
- lived almost 2 to a room, with a 1 in 3 chance of sharing the room with the whole family
- got married at 27 (John) and 25 (Mary)
- had a 1 in 3 chance of being married in their 20s
- had a life expectancy at birth of 40 (John) and 44 (Mary)

At the end of the 20th Century, “average Scots”

- were called Lewis Smith or Emma Brown
- had a 1 in 200 chance of dying before their first birthday
- each had 2 rooms to live in
- got married at 32 (Lewis) and 29 (Emma)
- had a 1 in 7 chance of being married in their 20s
- had a life expectancy at birth of 74 (Lewis) or 79 (Emma)