

Guide to the Records held in the Orkney Archives

CO Records of the Orkney County Council, later Orkney Islands Council

CO1 Commissioners of Supply

1	Minutes	1660 - 1678, 1781 - 1929
2	Register of Commissioners	1879 - 1927
3	Cash Book	1886 - 1898

CO2 Highway Authorities

1	Orkney Road Trustees	1857 - 1890
2	Mainland District Roads Committee	1858 - 1883
3	Stronsay Roads Committee	1873 - 1890
4	County Road Board	1890 - 1931

CO3 County Clerk's Department

1	County/Island Council Minutes	1890 - 1993
2	Mainland District Committee	1890 - 1930
3	North Isles District Committee	1890 - 1930
4	South Ronaldsay District Committee	1890 - 1930
5	Walls District Committee	1899 - 1930
6	Standing Joint (Police) Committee	1890 - 1928
7	Local Authority Executive Committee	1900 - 1929
8	Orkney Insurance Committee	1912 - 1948
9	Local Pension Committee	1908 - 1931
10	Emergency Committee	1939 - 1945
11	County Licensing Committee	1876 - 1894
12-14	Not Allocated	
15	County Clerk's Letter Books	1904 - 1957
16-21	Not Allocated	
22	A.R.P. Files	1939 - 1945
23	Miscellaneous Files	1932 - 1952

CO4 Accounting and Rating Records

1	General Ledger	1890 - 1930
2	Abstracts of Accounts	1890/91 - 1992/93
3	Assessment/Valuation Rolls (County)	1855/56 - 1883/84 1905/06 - 1988/89
	[From 1989/90 commercial properties only]	
4	Assessment/Valuation Rolls (Kirkwall Burgh) [Thereafter in County rolls]	1855/56 - 1933/34
5	Electoral Registers	1919 - 2001/02
6	Revenue Estimates etc.	1990 - 1995
7	Miscellaneous	1855
8	Valuation Lists	1993/94 - 2002/03
9	Special Register of Electors [European Union Citizens]	1994 - 1995
10	Orkney & Shetland Joint Valuation Committee	1974 - 1994

CO5 Education Records

1	Education Authority/Committee Minutes	1919 - 1975
2	Education Authority/Committee Files, misc.	1919 - 1984
3	Secondary Education Committee	1893 - 1919
4-29	School Boards/Management Committees	1873 - 1975
30-37	Educational Trusts	1829 - 1934
38	Youth Service Inter County Sports Committee	1947 - 1967
39	Orkney Educational Trust	1934 - 1975

40	Not Allocated	
41	Annual Reports of the School Medical Officer	1920 - 1967
42-99	Individual School Records (see CO5/106-110)	1873 - 1999
100	The Orkney Library	1815 - 1868
101	Kirkwall News Room	1852 - 1891
102	Kirkwall Free Library	1890 - 1943
103	Annual Reports of the County Librarian	1946/47 - 1988/89
104	Orkney County Library	1923 - 1999
105	Stromness Public Library	1906 - 1954
106-110	Individual School Records (see CO5/42-99)	1897 - 2001
111-119	Not Allocated	
120	Community Education	1994
CO6 Public Assistance		
1-21	Parochial Board/Parish Council Records	1845 - 1930
22	Orkney Combination Poorhouse	1880 - 1939
23	Orkney District Lunacy Board	1860 - 1930
24	Public Assistance Sub-Committee	1931 - 1948
25	Application Registers	1867 - 1969
26	P.A.C. Letter Books	1930 - 1967
CO7 Public Health and Housing		
1	Annual Reports of the Medical Officer of Health	1891 - 1971
2	Housing (Rural Workers) [Scotland] Scheme	1926 - 1938
3-5	Housing Reports and Surveys	1931 - 1938, 1991
6	Council Housing Plans	1936 - 1937
7	Hospital Plans	1900 - 1928
8	Tuberculosis Order, 1925: Register	1925 - 1937
9	Slaughter of Animals Act, 1928: Register	1929 - 1931
10	Reports by Public Analyst	1901 - 1914
11	Housing Acts	1935 - 1938
12	House Condition Survey	1991
13	Rents Tribunal	1943 - 1973
CO8 Motor Taxation		
1	Register of Licences	1904 - 1930
2	Register of Motor Cars	1904 - 1973
3	Register of Heavy Motor Cars	1909 - 1922
4	Register of Re-Assignment	1957 - 1961
5	Vehicle Record Files (Samples Only)	1921 - 1962
CO9 District Councils		
1	Eday District Council	1930 - 1975
2	Not Allocated	
3	Mainland District Council	1930 - 1975
4	Sanday District Council	1930 - 1975
5	North Ronaldsay District Council	1930 - 1975
6	Westray and Papa Westray District Council	1930 - 1975
7	Hoy and Walls District Council	1930 - 1975
8	Shapinsay District Council	1931 - 1975
9	South Ronaldsay and Burray District Council	1930 - 1975
10	Stronsay District Council	1930 - 1975
11	Rousay District Council	1931 - 1975
CO10 Miscellaneous		
1	Prince of Wales National Relief Fund	1914 - 1918

2	Lord Lieutenant's Orkney Relief Fund	1952
3	Lord Mayor's National Flood & Tempest Distress Fund	1953 - 1954
4	Local Defence Volunteers	1940
5	Short Sea Crossing	1992
6	Orkney - Manitoba Agreement	1999
7	Orkney - Saskatchewan	1999
CO11 Orkney Harbours Commissioners		
1	Minute/Cash/Ledger books	1873 - 1964
2	Abstracts of Accounts	1933 - 1957
3	Miscellaneous Papers	1872 - 1951
4	Mortgage Debentures	1888 - 1940
CO12 Justice of the Peace Licensing Court		
1	Licensing Court	1845 - 1962
CO13 Department of Engineering and Technical Services		
1-12	Plans	1940 - 1968
CO14 Community Councils		
1	Stromness Community Council	1976 - 1989
CO15 Trading Standards Department		
1	Miscellaneous Papers	1753 - 1944
2	Indentures	1831 - 1963
CO16 Economic Development Department		
1	Miscellaneous Reports	1973 - 1992
2	Planning/Heritage	1990
<u>K Records of Kirkwall Town Council</u>		
1/1	Minutes	1669 - 1975
1/2	Commissioners of Police	1838 - 1893
1/3	Bignold Park Committee	1909 - 1954
1/4	Bills, Fiscal, Town Hall, Cathedral, Public Library, Slaughterhouse and Other Committees	1903 - 1932
1/5	Cleansing and Public Health Committee	1903 - 1933
1/6	Electricity Committee	1923 - 1933
1/7	Finance Committee	1903 - 1934
1/8	General Purposes, Lighting and Works Committee	1903 - 1935
1/9	Housing Committee	1919 - 1924
1/10	Water Committee	1903 - 1921
1/11	Kirkwall Gas Commissioners	1922 - 1946
1/12-13	Not Allocated	
1/14	Burgh certificate of matriculation of Arms and Bearings	1886
1/15	Chartularies	1812 - 1963
1/16	Charters	1536 - 1671
1/17	Burgess Roll	1911 - 1975
1/18	Miscellaneous Registers	1853 - 1923
1/19	Press Cutting Books	1902 - 1919
1/20	Licensing Court	1828 - 1896
1/21	Not Allocated	
1/22	Burgh Police Court	1867 - 1941
1/23	Burgh Register of Sasines (First Series)	1638 - 1809
1/24	Burgh Register of Sasines (Second Series)	1809 - 1867

1/25	Dean of Guild Court	1672 - 1703, 1899 - 1935
1/26	Dean of Guild Court - Plans	1910 - 1964
1/27-29	Not Allocated	
1/30	Town Council Letter Books - Outgoing	1819 - 1965
1/31-49	Not Allocated	
1/50	Kirkwall Town Band	1945 - 1952
2/1	Abstract of Accounts	1909/02 - 1974/75
2/2	Treasurers Accounts	1808 - 1834
2/3	Register of Mortgages	1867 - 1908
2/4	Kirkwall Valuation Rolls	1855 - 1952
2/5-6	Not Allocated	
2/7	McEwan Bequest	1940 - 1959
3	Not Allocated	
4	Kirkwall Harbour Commissioners/Trustees	1808 - 1906
5	Miscellaneous Files	1978 - 1980
6/1	Electoral Rolls, Burgh of Kirkwall	1832 - 1835, 1900 - 1931
8	Kirkwall - Plans	1851 - 1973
10	Thoms Bequest (for restoration of Cathedral)	1733 - 1965

S Records of Stromness Town Council

1	Minutes	1817 - 1975
2	Bailie Court	1817 - 1863
3	Stromness Public Library	1900 - 1975
4	Charter	1817
5	Town Council Letter Books	1926 - 1959
6-8	Not Allocated	
9	Slaughter House	1966 - 1979
10	Abstracts of Accounts	1901/02 - 1974/75
11	Town Council Ledgers	1893 - 1953
12	Cash Book (Police Commissioners)	1857 - 1869
13	Assessment Books	1875/76 - 1891/92
14	Stromness Gas Company/Undertaking	1875 - 1949
15	Committee anent separate parochial establishment	1821 - 1837
16	J.P. Court and Sheriff Small Debt Circuit Court	1820 - 1868
17	Stromness Harbour Commissioners	1877 - 1963
18	Dean of Guild Court	1894 - 1962
19	Housing	1919 - 1975
20	Water and Sewerage	1898 - 1959
21	Electricity Supply	1930 - 1975
22	Local Pensions Committee	1908
23	Miscellaneous	1789 - 1975
24	Miscellaneous Plans	1933 - 1973
25	Ross & Beaton Trust Fund	1882 - 1946

D Gifts and Deposits

1	Miscellaneous Small Gifts and Deposits	
2	Balfour of Balfour and Trenabie	c.1570 - 1886
3	Watt of Breckness and Skail	c.1720 - 1850
4	Highland Park Distillery	1876 - 1983
5	Sutherland-Graeme of Graemeshall	c.1600 - 1938
6	Samuel Baikie & Son, Timber Merchants, Kirkwall	1803 - 1933
7	Drever & Heddle, Solicitors, Kirkwall	1822 - 1942
8	Misc. Papers found in Orkney County Library	1488 - 1964
9	Taylor Papers	1789 - 1853
10	James Tait Papers	1750 - 1870

11	Omond Papers	c.1775 - 1860
12	Admiralty Survey of Orkney and Shetland	1817 - 1853
13	Earldom of Orkney (Dundas)	1766 - 1880
14	Traill-Dennison Papers	1630 - 1880
15	Halcro-Johnston Papers	1706 - 1904
16	William Spence Papers	c.1591 - 1900
17	Henry Leask of Boardhouse	c.1730 - 1890
18	Mrs. Hutchison of Doune	1594 - 1869
19	Trumland House, Rousay	1840 - 1913
20	George Reid, Kirkwall	c.1630 - 1939
21	Alfred W. Johnston	1871 - 1910
22	Bremner & Co., ship-owners, Stromness	1919 - 1960
23	J. Storer Clouston Papers	c.1540 - 1957
24	Baikie of Tankerness	c.1550 - 1850
25	Orkney Steam Navigation Company	1867 - 1962
26	Stanley Cursiter Papers	1908 - 1970
27	Robert Rendall Papers	c.1914-1969
28	John Elphinstone Fyffe Papers	1679 - 1973
29	Hugh Marwick Papers	c.1653 - 1965
30	Mary Robertson Sinclair Papers	1874 - 1960
31	Ernest Walker Marwick Papers	c.1770 - 1977
32	Magnus Spence, F.E.I.S.	1874 - 1926
33	Gray of Roeberry	1642 - 1953
34	Macrae & Robertson, Solicitors, Kirkwall	c.1580 - 1963
35	Kirkwall Incorporated Trades	1673 - 1932
36	R.P. Fereday Papers	1970 - 1978
37	A.M. Morgan & Son, Kirkwall	1871 - 1933
38	Earldom of Orkney (Morton)	1536 - 1767
39	Orkney Arts Society	1972 - 1987
40	Clouston of Nisthouse	1601 - 1924
41	Orkney Field Club	1959 - 1986
42	Orkney Golf Club	1891 - 1991
43	Stronsay Mill	1897 - 1956
44	Kirkwall Arts Club	1944 - 1983
45	St. Olaf's Episcopal Church, Kirkwall	1875 - 1973
46	Orkney Record and Antiquarian Society	1614 - 1956
47	The Orkney Club, Kirkwall	1882 - 1976
48	William Towrie Cutt, Author, Canada	1904 - 1980
49	John Mooney	1770 - 1950
50	Educational Institute of Scotland, Orkney Branch	1918 - 1987
51	Weather Observation Records	1890 - 1932
52	A. Gordon Nichol, C.C.E. (construction of Churchill Barriers)	1940 - 1963
53	Orkney Youth Theatre	1983 - 1992
54	North of Scotland Archaeological Services	c.1978 - 1982
55	Kirkwall Amateur Operatic Society	1924 - 1994
56	Mary Bosdet Papers (Edwin & Willa Muir)	1949 - 1982
57	Edwin Eunson (records of the businesses of Nicol Spence, Kirkwall and Magnus Russell, Shapinsay)	1867 - 1960
58	Gregor Lamb Collection	c.1970 - 1993
59	Civil Aviation Authority [Kirkwall Airport]	1958 - 1986
60	Moar Diaries, Birsay [closed]	
61	Dounreay Inquiry	1986
62	Orkney Inquiry	1991 - 1992
63	David Scott Papers	1842 - 1903
64	Staigs & Staigymen	c.1990
65	Colin Rendall, Orkney Music	

66	Albert Thomson Collection (St. Magnus Cathedral)	
67	National & Local Government Officers Association, Orkney Branch 1938 - 1993	
68	Professor Ronald Miller	1937 - 1979
69	Bessie Skea, Sanday	
70	Orkney Heritage Society (Fereday Prize)	1993 - 1999
71	Rousay SWRI	1937 - 1979
72	Dr Sarah Tarlow (graveyard recording sheets)	1992
73	Italian Chapel Visitor Books	1954 - 1996
74	Deerness Coastguard	1938 - 1979
75	James Kirkness, Grocer & Merchant, Kirkwall	1912 - 1932
76	Hebden Papers	
77	Stromness Golf Club	
78	Laura Grimond Collection	1996
79	Orkney Heritage Society	
80	Palace Players Collection	
81	National Independent Order of Oddfellows, Orkney Division	
82	Orkney Egg Producers	
83	Harray SWRI	1936 - 1982
84	Orkney Civil Defence Corps.	
85	Traill of Woodwick	
86	Police Records	1917 - 1985
87	Post Office Records	1895 - 1947
88	Roddie Hibbert Collection	1732 - 1986
89	NE Lighthouses Letter, Account, Inventory, Postage Book etc.	
90	Marjorie Linklater Collection	1958 - 1994
91	Duncan McLean Collection	
92	Orkney Football Association	1937 - 1985
93	East Mainland Young Farmers' Club	1937 - 1992
94	Cromarty Family, Stove Sanday	1860 - 1948
95	Orkney Girl Guides Association	
96	David Ferguson Collection	
97	Margaret Tait	
98	The Minervian Library	1865 - 1868
99	Robertson Family of Buttquoy	1799 - 1881
100	East Mainland Training Group	
101	Wallace Manuscript Collection	1693-2003
102	Fursbreck Pottery	
103	Melsetter Estate Title Deeds	circa 19th & 20th centuries

Records Held Under the Charge and Superintendence of the Keeper of the Records of Scotland

SC11 Orkney Sheriff Court

1	Diet, Acts books etc.	1784 - 1949
2	Roll Books (not received)	1953 - 1978
3	Registers of Ordinary Actions ('A' Register)	1899 - 1921
4	Registers of Summary Actions ('B' Register)	1922 - 1964
5	Processes	1561 - 1956
6	Processes- Adoptions (not received)	1951 - 1970
7	Fatal Accident Inquiries	1900 - 1963
8	Service of Heirs	1642 - 1891
9	Extract Decree Books	1732 - 1961
10	Process Borrowing Books	1788 - 1886
11	Process Transmission Books	1839 - 1902
12	Register of Sequestrations	1840 - 1909
13	Register of Sequestrations for Rent	1867 - 1905

14	Register of Sequestrated and Poinded Effects	1870 - 1932
15	Reports of Poinding and Sale	1885 - 1937
16	Register of Consignations	1894 - 1944
17	Roll of Law Agents	1838 - 1873
18	Roll of Sheriff Officers	1846 - 1911
19	Rolls of Procurators Certificates	1828 - 1902
20	Fiars' Court Registers	1784 - 1938
21	Fiars' Court Processes	1780 - 1960
22	Avizandum Book	1843 - 1848
23	Poor Law Applications	c.1877 - 1900

Workmen's Compensation

26	W.C.A. Special Register	1907 - 1927
28	W.C.A. Memoranda of Agreement	1914 - 1926

Small Debt Court

31	Diet/Roll Books	1825 - 1964
32	Circuit Court Diet Books	1838 - 1918
33	Procedure Books	1881 - 1904
34	Registers of Poindings and Sales	1832 - 1890

Debts Recovery Court

35	Diet Books	1867 - 1907
36	Circuit Court Diet Books	1888 - 1907

Commissary

38	Register of Inventories and Settlements	1831 - 1980
39	Minute Book of Inventories	1934 - 1977
40	Indexes to Inventories	1858 - 1933
41	Record of Confirmations	1824 - 1967
42	Executry Bonds of Caution	1860 - 1981

Criminal, Summary and Juvenile Courts

43	Criminal Diet Books	1840 - 1931
44	Criminal and Quasi-Criminal Roll Book	1922 - 1952
46	Criminal Indictments	1838 - 1855
47	Summary Complaints	1951 - 1956
48	Bail Bonds/Bonds of Caution etc.	1764 - 1951

Registers of Deeds, Protests etc.

50	Registers of Deeds (First Series)	1615 - 1775
51	Registers of Deeds (Second Series)	1809 - 1965
52	Register of Protests	1809 - 1932
53	Minute Book of Deeds and Protests	1707 - 1932
54	Recorded Deeds	1641 - 1965
55	Recorded Protests	1785 - 1901
56	Register of Hornings and Expired Charges etc.	1869 - 1949
57	Minute Book of Hornings and Expired Charges	1819 - 1898

Plans

58	Parliamentary Deposits and Plans	1834 - 1873
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Miscellaneous

59	Freeholders - Records of Proceedings	1734 - 1831
60	Baron and Bailie Court - Processes etc.	c.1734 - 1800
61	Admiralty Court: Diet Books	1815 - 1893

62	Admiralty Court: Processes	c.1606 - 1853
64	Entailed Estimated Improvements Register	1848 - 1850
65	Valuation Rolls	1595 - 1841
66	Stewart Endowment- Statement of Accounts	1883 - 1951
67	Piers and Harbours- Abstracts of Accounts	1888 - 1953
68	Orkney County Council- Abstracts of Accounts	1893-95 & 1904-28
69	Parliamentary Elections- Returns	1715 - 1950
70	Parliamentary Bills etc.	19 th - 20 th C
71	Oaths of Allegiance, Proclamations etc.	19 th - 20 th C
72	Register of Sheep Marks	1813
73	Ledger - Thomson, Merchant	1863 - 1869
74	Graemeshall Estate: Factors' Accounts	1795 - 1862
75	Heddle of Melsetter Curatory	1842 - 1849
76	Rendall Mutual Improvement Society	1888 - 1897
77	Tait's Trust- Account Book and Inventory	1853 - 1887
78	Shipping Accounts (misc.)	1835 - 1933
79	Transcripts of documents deposited in H.M. Register House by G.H.M. Thoms, Sheriff of Orkney and Shetland	c.1900
80	Protocol Books	1624 - 1833
81	General Register of Sasines, Orkney & Shetland, Minutes	1830-1844
82	Law Agents Account Book	1671 - 1675
83	St. Ola, Walls, Sandwick and Stromness Parishes Rent Collection Book	1849 - 1860
84	List of Papers re. Clouston Family (1665 - 1834) in Kirkwall Sheriff Court	c.1920
85	Extract Decree of Reduction. William Rendall of Breck V John Covingtrie of Newark in respect of the latter's election as Provost and Dean of Guild of Kirkwall	1730
86	Miscellaneous Papers	1564 - 1904
87	Commonty of St. Ola- Decree of Division	1846, 1854

Administrative Papers

101	Jury Books	1825 - 1930
102	Style Books	17 th C
103	Instructions of Sheriff Clerk (Reform Act)	1832
104	Report by Sheriff Substitute on State of Sheriff Court Records	1817
105	Sheriff Clerk's Returns, Inventories, Accounts, Correspondence etc.	19 th - 20 th C

JP34 Justice of the Peace Court

1	Commissions of the Peace, Registers, Lists of Justices, Oaths	1811 - 1867
2	Minute Books and Records of Quarter Sessions	1663 - 1883
3	Records of Licensing Courts	
4	Court Books	1806 - 1828
5	Miscellanea	c.1707 - 1842

CE55 Kirkwall Customs and Excise Outport Records

1	Collector to Board	1799 - 1950
2	Board to Collector	1823 - 1940
3	General Letter Books	1929 - 1953
4	Miscellanea	c.1825 - 1975
10	Material Originating in Subordinate Excise Stations, Including Records of Surveyors at Distilleries	1872 - 1965
11	Shipping Registers	1844 - 1988
12	Miscellaneous Maps and Plans	1882 - 1965

OCR Orkney Church Records

[The records of the Established Churches and the Free Churches. They include records of the Synod and Presbyteries as well as individual churches]

Microfilm Material

The Orcadian	1854 - to date
Orkney Today	2003 – to date
The Orkney Herald	1860 – 1961
The Orkney Blast (forces newspaper)	1941 - 1944
Orkney and Shetland American	1887 - 1895
Orkney and Zetland Chronicle	1824 - 1826
The Shetland Journal	1836 - 1837
John O' Groats Journal	1836 - 1855
Saturday Herald	1871 - 1874
The Northman	1875 - 1895
Orkney Census	1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901
[also 1821 for some parishes]	
Old Parish Registers for Orkney, (Baptisms, Marriages, Deaths), prior to 1854	
International Genealogical Index (IGI) for Scotland	1988 edition
Valuation Rolls	1855 – 1904
Hudson Bay Company Contracts	
RCAHMS Name-books for Orkney	

Other Records

Census transcripts from the Orkney History Society for all available years.
Also on searchable computer database, please ask a member of staff.

Sasine abridgements, 1781 - 1937.

Surveys of some graveyards in Orkney. Many indexed or computerised.

Sound and Video Archive consisting of approximately 2,000 recordings. Includes deposits from Radio Orkney, School of Scottish Studies and our own collection.

Photographic Archive. Contains approximately 50,000 photographs as well as reproduction facilities. Notable collections from professional photographers Tom Kent, William Hourston, David Horne, William Wood, Wilfred Marr, Phoenix Photos, Robert H. Robertson and Sandy Wylie. Also contains many copies from private collections.