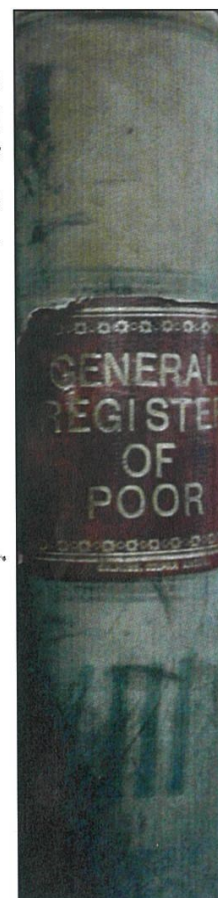


- ♦ **What are they?** The records of those applying for poor relief. The Poor Law Amendment (Scotland) Act of 1845 established Parochial Boards (later Parish Councils) in each parish to administer funds for the poor (gradually removing the responsibility from the church). Those who were unable to support themselves were eligible to apply for help - this included the elderly, the young and those with a mental or physical disability (including pregnancy). Records include **Applications for Relief, Parochial Board Minute Books** and **General Registers of Poor**.
- ♦ **What dates do they cover?** Dates vary for each parish depending on what records (if any) have survived but where complete sets of records survive they can date from 1845-1930 (when the Parish Councils were abolished). We hold the complete set for Caithness.
- ♦ **What can I use them for?** To trace someone in the Highlands shown on a death certificate or census as 'pauper'; to understand provision for the poor in the past; to learn about the development of the welfare state; to find an ancestor whose death certificate shows Caithness as place of death (the Poorhouse); to look for an illegitimate child (single mothers often claimed for help).
- ♦ **What will they tell me?** **Applications for Relief** record requests for assistance and include details of the applicant such as Name, Age, Marital Status, Occupation, Nature of Disability and the result of the application. The **Parochial Board Minute Books** detail the debate about whether relief should be granted. The **General Register of Poor** lists people whose applications were successful either for In Relief (in the Poorhouse) or Out Relief (money given in their own home). The **General Register** contains detailed information about the applicant, lists all help given and records the nature of settlement (the person's entitlement to claim relief from that particular parish) - entitlement could be claimed through birth, marriage or long-term residency in a parish.

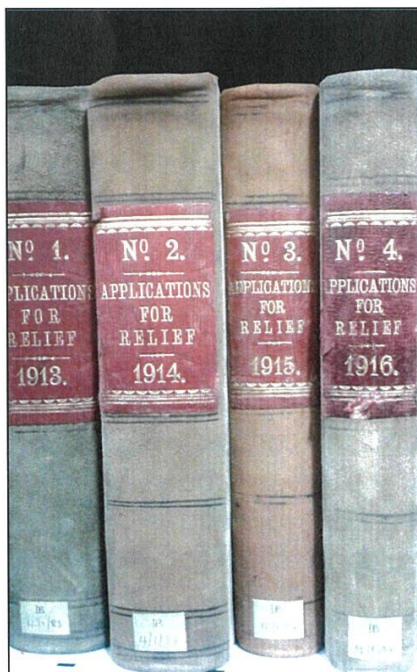


- ♦ **Will there definitely be useful information in there?** If you're researching a person described as a 'pauper' you are likely to find them in the Parochial Board/Parish Council records (providing the records have survived). If you're trying to find details of an illegitimate child there is no guarantee that the child will appear in the records but they are an essential place to try. If you're researching Highland welfare provision these records will provide you with useful information and an insight into the Poor Law system.

76 GENERAL REGISTER OF POOR BELONGING			
Name	<i>Christy Mary Kennedy</i>		
Residence	<i>Thomacarronach</i>	Earnings, Means, and Resources, besides Parochial Relief	<i>Nothing</i>
Age	<i>63</i>	Nature of Settlement	<i>Birth</i>
Date of Minute of Parochial Board or Committee admitting Liability and authorizing Relief	<i>1888 Aug. 4th</i>	Name and Age of Wife, Child, or Children living in Family	—
Amount and Description of Relief authorized	<i>9^s a week in Cash</i>	Name, Age, and Weekly Earnings of Husband, Wife, Child or Children not living in Family and their Circumstances	—
Country and Place of Birth, and, if in Scotland, Parish of Birth	<i>Locheanon</i>	Other Information not stated above	—
Religious Denomination, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic	<i>Protestant</i>		
Condition—If Adult, whether Married or Single, Widow or Widower	<i>Widow</i>		
If Child, whether Orphan, Deserted, or separated from Parent	—		
Trade or Occupation	<i>Labourer</i>		
Wholly or Partially Disabled	<i>Partially</i>		
Description of Disablement	<i>Bad health</i>		
Wholly or Partially Destitute	<i>Partially</i>		

- ♦ **Do I need to know anything first?** If you're researching a person any information you have will be useful in finding him/her. If you're researching a particular subject it's up to you where you start!

- ♦ **Are there any viewing restrictions?** Yes - due to the sensitive information contained within **Poor Law records they are closed for 100 years.**



- ♦ **Can I have photocopies?** Yes. The charges are listed at the desk.
- ♦ **Can I take photographs?** Yes. The charges are listed at the desk.
- ♦ **Where can I find out what you hold?** The holdings for each Parochial Board/Parish Council are listed in the black folders.
- ♦ **Where do I go next?** If you find a person who was admitted to a Poorhouse we also hold the records of some Poorhouses.

