# 1851 Scotland Ancient Counties GIS shapefile documentation

**by Max Satchell**

# filename: 1851ScotCounty.shp

# ArcGIS shapefile of 788 polygons providing boundary and attribute data for the 32 ancient counties of Scotland as given in the 1851 census.[[1]](#footnote-1) As such this represents the counties of Scotland as they were before the boundary changes caused by Inverness and Elgin County Boundaries Act, 1870 (33 & 34 Vict. c. 16) and the Local Government (**Scotland**) Act, 1889 (52 & 53 Vict. c. 50) which eliminated the anomalies caused by the existence of detached portions of counties.

These data were digitized from digital scans of the Ordnance Survey first edition 1:2500 and 1:10560 maps from the Landmark Group distributed by Edina.[[2]](#footnote-2) The boundary data requires no further comment except to note that the coastline was digitised to the high water mark of ordinary spring tides. The initial digitization was carried out by Owen Tucker of the Cartographic Unit of the Department of Geography under the supervision of Max Satchell. Following invaluable input from Corinne Roughley and Michael Anderson - especially the latter's extraordinary knowledge concerning the population geography of Scottish islands - further revisions and edits were the work of Max Satchell and Philip Stickler of the Cartographic Unit. Users should be aware that recent checks have found some discrepancies among the very small islands of this dataset, so it should be regarded as a beta version on which minor corrections remain to be made.

This work was undertaken as part of *The changing occupational structure of nineteenth century Britain* project funded by the E.S.R.C. – RES-000-23-1579 and directed by Leigh Shaw-Taylor and Tony Wrigley. Our thanks go out to Owen, Philip, Corinne and Michael for their help and to the Landmark Group and Edina for supplying the historic Ordnance Survey data. The shapefile comprises the standard ArcGIS .shx, .shp, .sbx, .sbn, .prj and .dbf files. The dbf file is described below.

**Attribute data**

#### 1851ScotlandCounty.dbf

The dbf table contains the following fields.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Field* | *Data type* | *Description* |
| **FID** | Object ID | Unique ID for each row in the table |
| **Shape** | Polygon | Polygon/s for each county as per the 1851 census |
| **COUNTY\_C51** | Text | Name of county |
| **SCE** | Text | Source of boundary data (see below) |

# SCE abbreviations

The SCE field of the table abbreviates the sources of boundary data as follows :-

O6 - Ordinance Survey first edition maps 1:10560 (surveyed 1843-1878)

O25 - Ordinance Survey first edition maps 1:2500 (surveyed 1854-1878)

British Parliamentary Papers, 'Boundary Com Report, Appendix B - 'Report of the Boundary Commissioners for Scotland under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1889. (52 & 53 Vict. cap. 50) with appendices', 1893-4, Vol. XLIV, C.6940

**Co-ordinate system**

British\_National\_Grid

Projection: Transverse\_Mercator

False\_Easting: 400000.000000

False\_Northing: -100000.000000

Central\_Meridian: -2.000000

Scale\_Factor: 0.999601

Latitude\_Of\_Origin: 49.000000

Linear Unit: Meter

GCS\_OSGB\_1936

Datum: D\_OSGB\_1936

**Citation guidelines**

Satchell, M., Shaw-Taylor, L., Wrigley E.A., 1851 Scotland Ancient Counties shapefile (2017). This dataset was created with funding from the ESRC (RES-000-23-1579). A description of the dataset can be found in Satchell, M., 1851 Scotland Ancient Counties GIS shapefile documentation (2017, 2009) available at: http://www.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/occupations/datasets/documentation.html

**Optional extra**

If on a second reference to the dataset you need an abbreviated reference, our suggestion is Satchell *et al*, 1851SACshp stands for 1851 Scotland Ancient Counties shapefile.

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**Errors and further corrections**

The research team led by Leigh Shaw-Taylor have contributed many hours to create this GIS and have struggled to make it as accurate as possible. However, we remain interested in refining it still further. If you spot something that is wrong with the county boundaries, please email details to campop@geog.cam.ac.uk.

1. British Parliamentary Papers, 'Population Tables, 1851, Part I. Number of Inhabitants in 1801, 1811, 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851. Volume II. England and Wales, VIII-XI; Scotland; Appendix', 1852-3, Vol. LXXXVI, C.1632. The term "ancient" is used here in the general sense to indicate the traditional or historic counties of Scotland as they existed prior to the major changes brought about by the Local Government (**Scotland**) Act, 1889 (52 & 53 Vict. c. 50). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Edina is the JISC national academic data centre based at the University of Edinburgh: http://edina.ac.uk/. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)