Family History Research at the National Library of Ireland
**Getting started**

**Beginning the search**

Your research begins with you and your immediate family. Ask questions of family members you think might know something of your family history. Consult old photographs on which names and dates may be noted, newspaper clippings, old letters, family bibles and family gravestones. Try to establish approximate dates (of births, marriages and deaths) as well as names (forenames and related family names) and places of residence. This information will point the way to relevant records. Religious denomination is also important in determining which records are relevant to your research.
Concrete Ball Alley & Hard Tennis Court at Marlborough Hall, Haswens, Dublin, 29-7-29.

Ireland's Eye, off Howth, 10-8-29.

Evelyn on Ireland's Eye, 10-8-29.

Mr. Jackson & Alfie at Howth, 6-9-30.
CENSUS RECORDS

Although a census of the Irish population was taken every ten years from 1821 to 1911, the earliest complete surviving census is for 1901.

The 1901 and 1911 Censuses are both fully searchable online, free of charge at www.census.nationalarchives.ie.

What information does the census contain?

The basic topographical divisions for the census are: County; District Electoral Division; Townland or Street. The household return was filled in and signed by the head of the household on Census night (31 March 1901 and 2 April 1911). There is one record for every household in the country. The information sought was:

- Name
- Age
- Sex
- Relationship to the head of the household
- Religion
- Occupation
- Marital status
- County or country of birth
- Ability to read and write
- Knowledge of the Irish language
- If “Deaf and Dumb; Dumb only; Blind; Imbecile or Idiot; or Lunatic”

In 1911 a significant additional question was asked: married women were required to state the number of years they had been married, the number of their children born alive and the number still living.
Pre-1901 Census fragments
A number of fragments for the 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851 Censuses survive and are also available at www.census.nationalarchives.ie.

Research tip
Use the ages of persons recorded in the Census to narrow the range of years to be searched in earlier birth and baptism records. Information about the number of years married should help locate a marriage record. The number of children born and still living in 1911 may help indicate children living away from home or point to death or emigration records.
CIVIL RECORDS

State registration of all non-Catholic marriages in Ireland commenced in 1845. In 1864, civil registration of all births, marriages and deaths commenced. These records are held at the General Register Office (GRO) in Dublin.

The free website www.irishgenealogy.ie provides access to the following civil registration records index and certificate images:

- **Births** index and images: 1864-1916
- **Marriages** index: 1845-1941, images 1870-1941. (Note: Non-Catholic marriages from 1845, Catholic marriages from 1864)
- **Deaths** index: 1864-1966, images 1878-1966

The records are arranged by civil registration districts, which follow the same boundaries as Poor Law Unions. To locate the correct Poor Law Union for a townland, use the free websites: http://swilson.info and www.thecore.com/seanruad. More recent certificates can be obtained from the GRO, www.birthsdeathsmarriages.ie.

Information provided on a birth certificate:
- Name of the child, date and location of birth
- Names of the parents, their address and mother’s maiden name
- Occupation of father
- Name of the person who registered the birth, their address and the date

Information provided on a marriage certificate:
- Names of the bride and groom, their ages (note: full age denotes over 21) and their addresses at the time of the marriage
- Date and location of the marriage, and date of registration
- The occupations of the bride and groom
- Names of both fathers, and their occupations
- Names of the witnesses to the marriage

Information provided on a death certificates:
- Name of the deceased, sex, age, occupation and marital status
- Date and place of death, and registration date
- Cause of death
- Name and address of the informant (person who registered the death)
Certificates of births, marriages and deaths registered in Northern Ireland from 1922 onwards are available at the General Register Office for Northern Ireland in Belfast. You can search registrations and order certificates at https://geni.nidirect.gov.uk.

Useful addresses:
GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE
Werburgh St., Dublin 2, DO8 E277.
Email: gro@groireland.ie
Tel: 090 663 2900

GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND
NISRA, Colby House, Stranmillis Court, Belfast BT9 5RR.
Email: gro_nisra@finance-ni.gov.uk
Tel: 048 9151 3101
PARISH REGISTERS

For most family history researchers, parish registers provide the earliest direct source of family information. Unlike many other records, parish registers provide evidence of direct links between one generation and the next (via baptismal registers) and one family and another (via marriage registers).

Catholic records

Catholic parish registers are an essential source for tracing most Irish families. They are often the only record of the existence of the majority of the Irish population during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Before the 1740s few registers survive. The political turmoil in Ireland during the 17th century and introduction of the Penal Laws in the early 18th century restricted the political rights of Catholics and practice of their religion, and the administration by priests of their parochial duties was severely curtailed. In addition, the wealth of parishioners was a contributing factor in the maintenance of registers. Wealthier Catholic merchants in cities and large towns were in a position to support the clergy and build churches during the mid-1700s, while in rural areas, poor farmers and labourers could not afford to do so until the mid-1800s. In general record keeping in parishes in Leinster and Munster was better than those of Ulster and Connaught.
The NLI holds copies of mostly baptism and marriage registers from 1086 Roman Catholic parishes in Ireland, including the counties of Northern Ireland (approximately 95% of all parishes). Digital images of these registers are available to view on the free website Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI, http://registers.nli.ie.

The registers, which are arranged by parish, have varying start dates. The earliest available registers are for the parish of Wexford and begin in 1671, while most city parishes in Dublin, Cork, Galway and Limerick begin in the 1740/50s. Registers in counties Kildare, Waterford, Wexford and Kilkenny generally start in the 1780/90s. Many of the parishes in counties on the western seaboard do not begin until the 1850s/1860s. The cut-off date for the majority of registers on the Catholic Parish Register website is 1880/1881, although a few later registers are available. For records beyond this date, you will need to contact the parish directly.
What kind of information is contained in the registers?

The quality of information in the registers varies from parish to parish. Latin was used in many registers, but neither surnames nor placenames were translated. Pro forma registers were generally in use from the 1860s.

In general, baptismal registers contain the following information:
- Date of the baptism
- Child’s name
- Parent’s names (and sometimes mother’s maiden name)
- Names of godparents (sponsors)
- Sometimes the place of residence is also included

Information contained in marriage registers includes:
- Date of marriage
- Names of bride and groom
- Names of witnesses
- Sometimes of the names of the parents and their place of residence is also recorded

Did you know?
Indexes to Catholic parish registers are available on www.findmypast.ie (free), www.ancestry.co.uk (subscription) and www.rootsireland.ie (subscription).

Research tip
If the information you are searching for relates to a later date than the foundation date of a particular parish, check the surrounding parishes for earlier registers.

Allow for variants of spelling and known dates.
Other denominations

Church of Ireland (Anglican) records
These records are housed in a number of different locations. Some original registers are held in the National Archives, others are held in the Representative Church Body Library, and some are retained in individual parishes. The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) also holds many original and copy registers. A list of all Church of Ireland registers, showing their locations and providing details of copies, transcripts and online indexes is available on the website of the Representative Church Body Library.

A free index to Church of Ireland registers in Kerry, Dublin city and Carlow is available at www.irishgenealogy.ie.

Presbyterian records
These records are held in three main locations: in local custody, in the Presbyterian Historical Society and in PRONI.

Methodist records
Records of Methodist births, marriages and deaths which took place prior to about 1820 are found in Church of Ireland registers. For details of surviving records after this date, contact the Methodist church in the area closest to your area of research. PRONI holds a county-by-county listing of surviving registers for Northern Ireland.

Quaker records
These records are held in two main repositories: Libraries of the Society of Friends in Dublin and Lisburn. An extensive number of Irish Quaker records, including birth, marriage and death records, and records of congregational meetings, have been digitised and are available on www.findmypast.ie.

Jewish records
Enquiries about Jewish records should be addressed to the Irish Jewish Museum.
Useful websites:
http://registers.nli.ie.
www.irishgenealogy.ie
www.ancestry.co.uk
www.findmypast.ie
www.ireland.anglican.org
www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni
www.presbyterianhistoryireland.com/
https://quakers-in-ireland.ie/
www.rootsireland.ie

Common Latin words and names
The list below includes Latin words commonly used in Catholic parish registers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin Word</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baptizatus</td>
<td>Baptised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognomina</td>
<td>Surname</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunxti</td>
<td>Joined together in marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coram</td>
<td>Witnesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Die mensis</td>
<td>Day of month</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eorum residentia</td>
<td>Place of residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filius</td>
<td>Son of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filia</td>
<td>Daughter of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matrimonium</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natus</td>
<td>Born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nomen parenti</td>
<td>Names of parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrini/Patrinorum</td>
<td>Sponsor(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A special dispensation was required to allow the marriage of two cousins. The degree of relation will be explained in the dispensation, for example Consanguinati en tertio grado indicates second cousins.
The list below indicates commonly used Latin names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andreas</td>
<td>Andrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>Ann(e)/Nancy/Hanna/Hanora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernardus</td>
<td>Bernard/Barney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigida</td>
<td>Bridget/Brigid/Biddy/Cordelia/Dilly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolus</td>
<td>Charles/Cormac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demetrius</td>
<td>Jeremiah/Jerome/Dermot/Darby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dionysius</td>
<td>Denis/Donogh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorothea</td>
<td>Dorothy/Dora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eduardus</td>
<td>Edward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleanora</td>
<td>Eleanor/Nora/Eileen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eugenius</td>
<td>Eugene/Owen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guelielmus</td>
<td>William</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helena</td>
<td>Helen/Ellen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honoria</td>
<td>Hannah/Nora/Ann(e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacobus</td>
<td>James</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johanna</td>
<td>Jane/Joan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joannes</td>
<td>John/Jack</td>
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<tr>
<td>Josephus</td>
<td>Joseph</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margarita</td>
<td>Margaret/Maggie/Peg/Polly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>Mary/Maureen/Marie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricius</td>
<td>Patrick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paulus</td>
<td>Paul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Petrus</td>
<td>Peter/Pierce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardus</td>
<td>Richard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robertus</td>
<td>Robert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephenus</td>
<td>Stephen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susana</td>
<td>Susan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A complete listing of Christian names and their associated variants, nicknames and Latin equivalents can be found in “A rose by any other name: a guide to Christian names” by Judith Eccles Wright which is available at [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org).
PROPERTY RECORDS

Records of place can provide useful information about where your ancestors lived. The main sources are Griffith’s Valuation, the Tithe Applotment Books, estate papers and maps.

Start with Griffith’s Valuation

The Primary Valuation of Ireland or Griffith’s Valuation — published county-by-county between 1847 and 1864 — provides detailed information on where people lived in mid-19th century Ireland and the property they possessed.

Griffith’s Valuation was a valuation of property holdings carried out to determine liability to pay taxes. It is arranged by county and, within counties, by Poor Law Union. Each Poor Law Union is broken down into civil parishes and townlands.

What kind of information is contained in Griffith’s Valuation?

Griffith’s Valuation contains the following information for each townland or street:

- Map reference number (which corresponds to the location of the holding on the first edition six-inch Ordnance Survey maps)
- Names of occupiers of holdings (tenants, head of households)
- Names of immediate lessors (the person from whom the holding was leased, the landlord)
- Description of the tenement or holding
- Area (in acres, roods and perches) of each holding
- Valuation of buildings, land, etc. and the total annual valuation of each holding

Griffith’s Valuation is fully searchable online, free of charge at www.askaboutireland.ie.

The original source material for the publication of Griffith’s Valuation, the Valuation Office books, can provide more detailed information about households and landholdings. These records can be searched online at www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie.
The Valuation Revision Books provide details of all changes in holdings from the time of the original valuation to the present day. The Revision Books covering the six counties of Northern Ireland between the years 1864 and 1933, have been digitised and are freely available on the PRONI website. The Revision Books for the 26-counties of Ireland are available at the Valuation Office in Dublin. These records can be extremely helpful to researchers looking to calculate significant dates in their family’s history, such as dates of death and emigration, or to help find living descendants.

**Tithe Applotment Books**

The Tithe Applotment Books were compiled between 1823 and 1837 as a survey of land in each civil parish to determine the payment of tithes (a religious tax). Unlike *Griffith’s Valuation* they do not cover cities or towns.

**What kind of information is contained in the Tithe Applotment Books?**

The Tithe Books contain the following information:

- Name of occupier
- Name of townland
- Acreage
- Classification of land
- Amount of tithe due

The Tithe Applotment Books for the 26 counties of Ireland are available online at [www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie). Those for the 6 counties of Northern Ireland are available on microfilm at the NLI.

**Estate papers**

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the vast majority of the Irish population lived as tenant farmers on landed estates. The administration of these estates produced large quantities of records such as leases and deeds, rentals and account books, maps and correspondence. During the 20th century many of these estates were broken up and sold off under various land purchase acts, and many estate collections found their way into public repositories such as the NLI.
### Did you know?

The Landed Estates Court was set up in 1849 to sell off estates bankrupted by the Famine. The sale catalogues for these estates, called Landed Estate Court Rentals, detailing the tenants’ holdings are available at www.findmypast.ie.

### What kind of information is contained in estate papers?

Estate records provide circumstantial evidence about the people who lived and worked on an estate. The information available in these records depends on the type of document. The most useful documents for family history research include rentals containing a list of tenants’ names, the location of the tenants’ land holdings and the amount of rent payable; leases or agreements containing information on property to be rented by a tenant from a landlord; correspondence from land agents about particular tenants and events on an estate; household and farm accounts showing the names of tenants and their families who were employed in the landlord’s house and on the estate farm; and papers relating to Encumbered estates, the Land Commission and Congested Districts Board.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>DENOMINATIONS</th>
<th>TENANTS</th>
<th>Arrears due and outstanding at 1 May 1838</th>
<th>One and Two Years Rent due at 1 May 1839</th>
<th>Total Rent and Arrears due at 1 May 1839</th>
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<td>64 15 62</td>
<td>5/0 17 9</td>
<td>9/2 18 52</td>
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Locating estate records

In order to search for collections of estate papers, the first step is to find out the name of the landlord. A search of *Griffith’s Valuation* will indicate the name of the landlord of a particular townland in mid-19th century Ireland. The published *Landowners in Ireland: Return of owners of land of one area and upwards* (1876), available on [www.failteromhat.com](http://www.failteromhat.com) contains names and addresses of landlords. Another useful website is [www.landedestates.ie](http://www.landedestates.ie) which provides detailed information on estates and landowning families in Connacht and Munster.

In order to determine if records belonging to a particular estate are located in the NLI, search our [Catalogue and Sources](http://catalogue.nli.ie/) database at [www.nli.ie](http://www.nli.ie).

Maps

Many collections of estate papers contain detailed maps of parts of the estate. In addition, the NLI holds a large number of maps created by individual surveyors, such as the Longfield Map collection. Maps can contain a wealth of information on the topography of a particular location as well as on landholdings of individual tenants. Search our [Catalogue and Sources](http://catalogue.nli.ie/) database at [www.nli.ie](http://www.nli.ie) to locate maps for a particular county or estate. The free website [www.osi.ie](http://www.osi.ie) also allows users to search for the historic Ordnance Survey maps.

Useful websites:
- [http://catalogue.nli.ie/](http://catalogue.nli.ie/)
- [http://sources.nli.ie/](http://sources.nli.ie/)
- [www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie)
- [www.askaboutireland.ie](http://www.askaboutireland.ie)
- [www.landedestates.ie](http://www.landedestates.ie)
- [www.failteromhat.com](http://www.failteromhat.com)
- [www.findmypast.ie](http://www.findmypast.ie)
- [www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni)
- [www.osi.ie](http://www.osi.ie)
- [www.valoff.ie](http://www.valoff.ie)
- [www.thecore.ie/seanruad](http://www.thecore.ie/seanruad)
- [http://swilson.info](http://swilson.info)
- [www.townlands.ie](http://www.townlands.ie)
- [http://maps.openstreetmap.ie](http://maps.openstreetmap.ie)
EMIGRATION RECORDS
Information about emigrants was usually gathered at the port of destination rather than the place of departure.

USA and Canada
Prior to 1820 very few sources for immigration to the US exist. The National Archives, Washington DC holds immigration records for arrivals in the US from foreign ports between approximately 1820 and 1982. These records usually contain information on the emigrant’s nationality, age, profession, previous place of residence and the name and address of relatives in the US, in addition to the name of the ship and place of entry to the US. Some of these records have been digitised, for example Records for Passengers who arrived at the Port of New York during the Irish Famine, 1846-1851. Visit www.archives.gov for more information.

From 1855 to 1890, Castle Garden was the official immigration centre in the US. The Castle Garden website www.castlegarden.org, has a free online searchable database of 11 million immigrants from 1830 to 1892, the year Ellis Island opened.

The Ellis Island website, http://libertyellisfoundation.org, contains a free online database recording the 22.5 million arrivals to New York between 1892 and 1924.

The subscription website www.ancestry.com also holds records of emigrants who arrived at the port of New York from 1820-1957.

A useful published source is Passenger and Immigration Lists Index: a guide to published arrival records of... passengers who came to the United States and Canada in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, ed. P. William Filby (various dates).
Until Canada became a nation state in 1865 (prior to this Canada was known as British North America), there was no official requirement to make or keep information about immigrants from the British Isles. Information about records for emigrants to Canada from 1865 onwards is available in the Library and Archives Canada, see [www.bac-lac.gc.ca](http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca).

An extensive collection of Canadian immigration records is available on [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com).

### Australia and New Zealand

Immigration has been a central part of Australian history and many records exist for both those transported and free settlers.

Penal transportation from Ireland to Australia and Tasmania (Van Diemen’s Land) took place between 1791 and 1853 and more than a third of convicts sent to Australia were from Ireland. The records of the Chief Secretary’s Office, held in the National Archives of Ireland, are a major source for information on those transported and include documents such as transcription register entries, prisoner petitions and convict reference files. A database of surnames, the Ireland-Australia Transportation database, is available on the National Archives website, [www.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.nationalarchives.ie). A useful published resource is David Hawking’s *Bound for Australia: a guide to the records of transported convicts and early settlers* (2012).

The National Archives of Australia ([www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au)) holds records of immigration after 1923 when immigration became a Commonwealth Government responsibility. Pre-1923 immigration records are held in relevant state archives and libraries:

- State Library of Western Australia [https://slwa.wa.gov.au](https://slwa.wa.gov.au)

Records to look for include assisted and unassisted passenger lists, census and muster records, and naturalisation records.
The first non-Māori settlers arrived in New Zealand in about 1792 and formal migration began in 1840 with the establishment of the New Zealand Company Settlements. Archives New Zealand (http://archives.govt.nz) holds records of government-assisted immigrants, ships passenger lists and naturalisation records.

Research tip

Census records provide very useful information for tracing immigrants to the US and Canada. The 1900 US census and 1911 Canadian census sought for the first time information on the year of immigration, number of years residence and citizenship status of each person recorded.

Other useful sources include naturalization records, military records, passport applications, local newspapers and gravestone inscriptions, as well as parish and vital records (birth, marriage and death). All of these records can point to a location in Ireland, or other relatives, which are important for searching Irish records.

Useful websites:
www.ancestry.com
www.archives.gov
www.bac-lac.gc.ca
www.castlegarden.org
www.familysearch.org
www.findmypast.com.au
www.irelandxo.com
http://libertyellisfoundation.org
www.naa.gov.au
www.nationalarchives.ie
OTHER SOURCES

Newspapers

In addition to providing a contemporary commentary on the major occasions in the political, religious, sporting and cultural life of the nation, newspapers are also a major source of information on everyday life — advertisements, reports of social events, accidents, court proceedings and inquests — all of the exciting and mundane details that made up the daily life of Irish people over the years. The NLI holds the largest collection of national and regional newspapers in Ireland, covering over 1,770 individual titles from the 17th-century to the present day. We also collect titles of Irish interest published abroad. You can find out which titles were published in a particular county or town by checking our Newspaper Database at www.nli.ie. While some titles are only available on microfilm or in hardcopy, a large number of national and local newspapers are available to search and view online at www.irishnewsarchive.com and www.findmypast.ie.

Directories

Directories are useful for researching the gentry as well as the professional, merchant and trading classes. They can provide circumstantial evidence of growing or declining prosperity, emigration or death. You can search our Catalogue at www.nli.ie for directories relating to your area. A large number of directories have been digitised and are available online at www.findmypast.ie. Street directories for Belfast and the principal towns in Ulster covering the years 1819-1900 are freely available on the PRONI website, www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni.
Army records

Records of Irishmen who served in the British Army (including Irish regiments) are held in The National Archives in Kew, London. A guide to these records is available at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk. An extensive collection documenting those who fought in the First World War has been digitised and is available on www.ancestry.co.uk. Wills of Irish soldiers who died during the Great War are available on www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie while the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website www.cwg.org, provides free access to cemetery and memorial records of Irish soldiers who died in both world wars.

Records about men and women who fought during the Revolutionary period in Ireland from 1916-1921, including military service pensions and medal applications are available in the Irish Military Archives www.militaryarchives.ie. Useful collections also include the Bureau of Military History Witness Statements which are available online and cover the period 1913-1921.

Wills

Wills and testamentary records are useful for family history research as evidence of the date of a person’s death and for other information concerning their family, place of residence and property. Almost all original wills from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries were destroyed in 1922. However, copies and abstracts of wills proved in District Registries from 1858 onwards survive in Will Registers and Will Calendars. Those for the Republic of Ireland from 1858 onwards are available at www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie, while those for Northern Ireland from 1858 onwards (the District Registries of Armagh, Belfast and Londonderry) are available at www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni. A small number of pre-1858 Will Books survive and are available on the National Archives of Ireland and PRONI websites.
Court & Prison records
Records from the Petty Session Courts c. 1850-1924, which dealt with petty crime and civil disputes are available online at www.findmypast.ie. A collection of prison registers 1790-1924 are also available on www.findmypast.ie.

Gravestone inscriptions
Gravestone and memorial inscriptions can detail several generations of a family, dates of birth and death, and even place of residence. In general however, only more prosperous families erected gravestones in the 18th and 19th centuries. One useful resource for graveyards in South County Dublin, Wicklow, Wexford, Galway and Mayo is Cantwell’s Memorials of the Dead which is available on www.findmypast.ie. Other useful websites include www.glasnevintrust.ie, www.interment.net, www.irishgraveyards.ie and http://historicgraves.com. The NLI holds a large number of published sources for researching gravestone and memorial inscriptions, see our Catalogue at www.nli.ie.

Surnames
Useful websites for tracing the history of a surname includes www.irishancestors.com and The Oxford Dictionary of Family Names in Britain and Ireland at www.oxfordreference.com. Recommended published sources include The Surnames of Ireland (various editions) and Irish Families: their names, arms and origins (various editions) both by Edward MacLysaght, and A Dictionary of Surnames (1988) by Patrick Hanks and Flavia Hodges.
Roots Ireland

www.rootsireland.ie provides local knowledge to a global audience seeking their Irish roots or ancestors, through a website and supported by 34 rural centres, located north and south of the border, on the island of Ireland.

What we do

Our County genealogy centres are a vital link in the chain of genealogical enquiry and genealogical tourism on the island of Ireland. We have transcribed the majority of the Catholic parish records from the original registers, as well as other religious denominations, many civil births, deaths and marriages; Griffith’s Valuation; Tithe Applotment Books; 1901 and 1911 census records; gravestone inscriptions, and miscellaneous other sources.

The main advantage of using a Roots Ireland centre or our database when conducting your family history research is the personal nature of the service offered, combined with our local knowledge, understanding and connections. Nothing compares with local knowledge in Ireland when it comes to working out an unusual surname or townlands (every townland and graveyard is known to the staff in the centre) and hopefully, making connections to family in the area. We have an excellent knowledge of each county in terms of its topography, geography, history, genealogical and historical sources and tourist facilities.

There are over 20 million records on www.rootsireland.ie, with many of the Catholic parish records linked to the images of the microfilmed registers on the National Library of Ireland website. Our site also contains transcripts from registers (in whole or in part) that have not been microfilmed, and extend into the twentieth century.

It is regularly updated with new records and a current list of sources for each county genealogy centre can be found on the website. Our enquiries@rootsireland.ie email address allows users to ask questions or get expert advice or tips on their family history at any stage of their research.
Contact and visit a county genealogy centre

Our centres welcome visitors from at home and overseas who are seeking to trace their roots and would like to have access to the local knowledge and expertise we have built up over more than thirty years of assisting people with their family history research. For those who do not use the internet the county genealogy centres offer a fully comprehensive research service which can be tailored to suit the needs and requirements of individual clients.

Many of the county centres are situated in heritage buildings and are also tourist information points. Contact details of each centre can be found on our website.

The county genealogy centres are based in local communities, working with volunteers, local historical societies, clergy, local authorities, county libraries and government agencies to build and maintain databases of genealogical records for their county. By using our website and services you are supporting that work and the communities from which your ancestors originated. The IFHF is a not for profit organisation; many of our member centres have charitable status.

Contact Details

Roots Ireland
Email: enquiries@rootsireland.ie
Twitter @rootsireland.ie
Facebook rootsireland.ie
Web Site: www.rootsireland.ie
GENEALOGY ADVISORY SERVICE
The NLI’s free Genealogy Advisory Services is an ideal starting point for those beginning their Irish family history research. No appointment is necessary.

OPENING HOURS
Monday – Wednesday: 9.30am – 5pm
Thursday – Friday: 9.30am – 4.45pm

You can also email: genealogy@nli.ie, or tel: +353 1 603 0256.

The Genealogy Advisory Service also provides free onsite access to a wide range of subscription websites including:

Ancestry (world access)
Findmypast (world access)
Irish Ancestors
American Ancestors
Irish News Archive
Irish Times Newspaper Archive
The Times Digital Archive
Dictionary of Irish Biography
Oxford Dictionary of Family Names in Britain & Ireland

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