

NOTES AND LINKS FOR IRISH FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH

Irish family history research hinges greatly on two things – Land and Religion. Understanding the geographic locations associated with your ancestor is paramount. Roman Catholic families were very tied to their Church parish, which differed to the official Civil Parish, and often went by a different name. Roman Catholic (the vast majority of the population was Roman Catholic) parish names have changed over the years, so caution needs to be used in locating the exact place of origin.

When Roman Catholics arrived in North America they had a tendency to give either the name of their Church parish or nearby town as their place of origin. This can be very confusing for us researchers, but keeping it in mind and learning the local geography will be helpful.

Distances is another stumbling block – five miles on foot was a long way.

These websites are great guides to the names of localities.

Placenames and surnames – John Grenham - <https://www.johngrenham.com/>

Placenames Database of All Ireland – <http://www.logainm.ie/en/>

Northern Irish Placenames Database - <http://www.placenamesni.org/>

MAPS – Ordnance Survey of Ireland – Interactive historical and modern maps - <http://www.osi.ie/>

The value of local maps cannot be over emphasised. These are a crucial tool for the location of your townland of origin. Every researcher needs to compile a collection of maps relevant to their locality.

ESSENTIAL TOOL – *A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland – 2nd Edition*, Brian Mitchell. (2002) Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore.

Additionally, the Townland maps for 23 of the 32 counties are available on microfiche from the Family History Library. Most large Family History Centres have them onsite.

<https://familysearch.org/search/catalog/402231?availability=Family%20History%20Library>

There are other ways of finding maps of the townlands, but the above are basic.

Landed Estates Databases - <http://www.landedestates.ie/>

The Landed Estates Database provides a comprehensive and integrated resource guide to landed estates and historic houses in Connacht and Munster, c. 1700-1914. The aim of this guide is to assist and support researchers working on the social, economic, political and cultural history of Connacht and Munster from c.1700 to 1914.

The Landed Estates site is a great resource, but again, caution needs to be exercised. When it states “John Smith owned the property at the time of Griffith’s Valuation” it may actually mean that John Smith was the tenant and had a “fee simple” lease. Establishing true ownership of Land in Ireland in the early years is complex as there are two streams to follow – the line of tenancy, and the line of ownership. The line of ownership can be very, very convoluted as properties were mortgaged and re-mortgaged over the years. Marriages impacted property ownership as did inheritance. It was not uncommon for a nephew to be instructed to change his last name to that of his benefactor.

FACEBOOK PAGES – over 10,000 pages related to family history. This link is for some of the Irish ones. Every county in Ireland, and every interest group has at least one page.

This link for a pdf file of compiled FB pages is a good starting point. <https://socialmediagenealogy.com/genealogy-on-facebook-list/>

LINKS

Irish Genealogy Toolkit – <http://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/index.html>

Explanation of the records and how to access them, guide to successful research methods.

Directory of Irish Genealogy – <http://homepage.eircom.net/~seanjmurphy/dir/index.htm>

Free download of an excellent 77- page *Primer of Irish Genealogy*. Read *Introduction* for interesting inside information. Sean J. Murphy, Editor, is Professor of Genealogical Studies at National University of Ireland, Dublin. He is a contributing author to several genealogical publications, both in print and online.

National Library of Ireland - www.nli.ie 3 online catalogues here.

1 Main Catalogue deals with all the books in the National Library reading rooms

2 Sources Catalogue is a listing of the manuscripts available in the Manuscripts reading location at 2 Kildare Street, Dublin. This is one I use frequently as it is cross-referenced to other source that I might not be aware of.

3 Newspaper Catalogue

Even if you are not planning a trip to Dublin, these catalogues contain valuable information about resources available. There are several options for you to obtain a print-out from a book or manuscript.

National Archives of Ireland - <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie>

A large number of databases including the 1901 & 1911 Census' for all Ireland, fully searchable, with images. Free. Wills Calendars, Soldier's Will, Land Valuation etc.

Leitrim-Roscommon website - www.leitrim-roscommon.com

A reprint of **must read** article by James Reilly, published in the Journal of "The Irish At Home and Abroad", *Is There More in Griffith's Valuation Than Just Names?* is available here. Understanding the column headings, notations, abc's, terminology in the Valuation lists is essential to your research. Just because your ancestor is listed as the "Immediate Lessor" does not mean he *owned* the land.

Ire-Atlas database - <http://www.seanruad.com/>

A fully searchable database of ALL the Towns and Townlands in Ireland as used for the 1851 census, detailing the County, Barony, Civil Parish, Poor Law Union and Province for each Townland.

Irish Family History Foundation - <http://www.rootsireland.ie/>

Transcription of Church and Civil registrations for Birth / Baptism, Marriage, Death / Burial records. Most counties of Ireland. A transcription of the records is fee based, searches are free.

The Ulster Historical Foundation - <http://www.ancestryireland.com/>

This foundation is a long-established, highly reputable research and publishing agency. It offers extensive knowledge on the sources available for tracing Irish and Scots-Irish ancestors. Services include online databases of over 2 million records, genealogy and history books, and personal ancestral research.

Ask About Ireland – <http://www.askaboutireland.ie/>

Ask About Ireland and the Cultural Heritage Project are an initiative of public libraries together with local museums and archives in the digitization, and online publication, of the original, the unusual and the unique materials from their local studies' collections, to create a national Internet resource for culture.

Griffith's Primary Valuation and maps available free. CAUTION: The original maps are on the subscription website Findmypast.ie and these maps are the "revision" maps. They can be up to 30 years after Griffith's Valuation and property tenants might not be the same as the original.

Landed Estates of Connaught - <http://www.landedestates.ie/>

A searchable, online database of all Landed Estates in Connaught, maintained by the Moore Institute for Research in the Humanities and Social Studies, National University of Ireland, Galway. Even though it is Connaught-based, it documents the other holdings of a family in all parts of Ireland.

Births, Marriages and Deaths PLUS Church records – www.irishgenealogy.ie

Church records, guides, Central Signposting Index to other sites with databases online. Roman Catholic Church and Church of Ireland records for Kerry, Cork and Dublin among the new databases. Sponsored by **Ministry of Arts, Sports and Tourism** this is the official Government website for BMD's. Currently available images are Births 1864-1915, Marriages 1882-1940, Deaths 1891-1965.

Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) <http://www.proni.gov.uk/index.htm>

Online information about a variety of research topics. Databases include Ulster Covenant, Freeholders records, and a fully searchable index to the Will calendar entries for the three District Probate Registries of Armagh, Belfast and Londonderry, for the period 1858-1919 and 1922-1943.

National Archives United Kingdom - <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

Chelsea Pension Records now online. These are the records of the soldiers that were "discharged to pension" from the British army. This includes the soldiers from Ireland, who were discharged from Kilmainham Hospital, Dublin. Large portion of British Army were Irish born or resident. Many "IRISH" records are still held by the Government in England. Check out the catalogs of resources.

Census Finder - <http://www.censusfinder.com/ireland.htm>

Links to transcriptions, databases etc. Incomplete, but a great resource if your ancestor is listed.

The Irish Genealogical Research Society - <http://www.irishancestors.ie/>

Founded in 1936 in London, England, this Society is dedicated to the preservation and publication of early Irish genealogical records. They have some very unique resources online and have Indexes to early Irish births, marriages and deaths drawn from a variety of sources.

Registry of Deeds – Genweb project

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~registryofdeeds/index.html>

This on-going project to Index all the names that appear in the memorial books at the Registry of Deeds, located in Henrietta Street, Dublin. The Indexes to People and Places, as well as the Memorials have been filmed by the Family History Library, but this is a good place to start. Research at this level is best conducted in Salt Lake City or Dublin.

Representative Church Body – Church of Ireland

<https://www.ireland.anglican.org/cmsfiles/pdf/AboutUs/library/registers/ParishRegistersTable.pdf>

Read Claire Santry's Genealogical Toolkit for information on this resource. The List is an essential tool for learning if the Registers for a particular parish still exist. Updated in 2016, it is the definitive guide to Church of Ireland registers. Their website have a very small number of parish registers online. Free.

Claire Santry also has a **blog** of recent releases and activities – <http://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/>

Irish Newspaper Archive - <https://www.irishnewsarchive.com/>

Carefully check to see exactly which newspaper they have for your particular county. There is some cross-over with the *British Newspaper Archive* available on Find My Past.

Royal Irish Constabulary Forum - <http://irishconstabulary.com/>

Ireland Reaching Out - <http://www.irelandxo.com/>