

Useful Information

Irish Genealogy

www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/

Irish Genealogy Toolkit

www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com

National Archives of Ireland

www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie/

Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)

www.proni.gov.uk

General Records Office (GRONI)

www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/ordering-life-event-certificates

National Library of Ireland

www.nli.ie/family-history

Ancestry.co.uk - Irish records

www.ancestry.co.uk/cs/uk/ireland

Rootsireland.ie

www.rootsireland.ie

Ulster Historical Foundation

www.ulsterhistoricalfoundation.com/

Ask about Ireland

www.rootsireland.ie/

Irish Ancestors

www.johngrenham.com/

Family search – Irish records

www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1584963

Townland Maps

www.townlands.ie



For more Research Guides:
mlfhs.uk/research/getting-help/research-guides

Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society

3rd Floor, Manchester Central Library

St Peter's Square, Manchester M2 5PD

Email: office@mlfhs.org.uk

Archives +



Researching Irish Ancestors

Many people believe that it is impossible to trace Irish Ancestry having, heard that all Irish records were lost during a fire at the Four Courts building in Dublin. In fact, this loss occurred during the Irish Civil War in 1922 when the Irish Public Record office, which was located at the rear of the Four Courts building, was burned to the ground. The fire destroyed Ireland's 19th-century census returns, two thirds of the parish registers of the Church of Ireland and all the wills probated in Ireland. However, there are other methods, records, substitutes and resources that the family historian can use in order to trace their Irish Ancestors.

Tracing back to Ireland - How do I Start?

As you live outside of Ireland your first step will be to start your search for your Irish ancestor using the same resources available as for your English and Welsh ancestors. For most family researchers the hardest part will be to discover exactly where in Ireland their ancestor originated.

Ask Questions

The first thing you will need to do is to ask questions of as many relatives and friends of the family as possible. Given the gaps in records, family information can be more important in Irish research. Do not leave this task too long as it might be too late. Remember to ask about names, dates and places and keep notes of all the information you gain as since, although this might not seem relevant at the time, it might be just the thing which confirms something else you find. Not all the stories you will be told will necessarily be correct. Some might have the years or even the generations muddled up but there will probably be some truth in there somewhere.

Census

Check ALL the available censuses on which your people appear, especially those coming from Ireland. The census only required people to put 'Ireland' as their birthplace but sometimes they included the county or town. Check all the siblings who came from Ireland, one might give more information than your own ancestor. They might even have a parent or other family member with them. Check civil and church records in England for all the

people who came from Ireland. Check around the area in which your ancestors lived in England. Most tended to come to places where there were already family or friends. Perhaps make a list of any Irish places named in the census around where your people were living. If all else fails, start with this information.

Marriage and baptismal records may name other members of the family as witnesses and these people should also be checked on the census. Besides searching birth, marriages and death records in the parish registers also check in newspapers for obituaries, gravestones for any extra information and for any Wills which may have been left and could provide further clues.

Family Names

Never forget that the surname you now know might not be the surname or the spelling which started out. The "O" or "Mc" prefix might have been dropped. Your people possibly could not read or write so whatever the census taker, church minister, registrar etc. thought that they heard would be the name they registered. Christian names can be just as difficult.

Other records

Records of anyone who entered the Police, Military or Post Office should be checked as these might give birth dates, places and possibly other family details.

Making the leap to Ireland

It is essential to collect as much information as possible about your family before moving onto records in Ireland. It is vital to know the following pieces of information:

- The name of the family
- The parish or townland in which they lived
- The approximate date of birth, marriage or death that occurred in Ireland

Civil Registration in Ireland

Look for your family in Irish Civil Registration documents. Civil Registration in Ireland started on:

- 1 April 1845 for non-Catholic marriages
- 1 January 1864 for all birth, marriages and deaths.

Note: Before this date church records must be consulted, therefore knowing the religion of your Irish ancestors is essential.

All records for Northern Ireland from 1922 onwards are with the Registrar General of Northern Ireland (GRONI). Historic civil records for the Republic of Ireland can now be viewed online (irishgenealogy.ie). Available are births over 100 years, marriages over 75 years and deaths over 50 years. Currently the years covered are: Births 1864-1923, Marriages 1845*-1948 and Deaths 1871-1973. **non-Roman Catholic Marriages are recorded from 1845, Roman Catholic Marriages are recorded from 1864.*

Census, Land and Substitutes

There are a multitude of records that can still be consulted in order to find further information on your Irish ancestors:

- Griffith's Valuation - a mid-19th century survey of Irish land and occupants. (Online)
- Tithe Applotment Books - In old Ireland 1/10th of everyone's annual produce was given to the Church of Ireland. This survey was made over the course of 15 years up to 1838 when the payment of tithes in produce was replaced by cash payments.
- Census - A census was taken in Ireland every ten years from 1821 onwards. However, the returns for 1861 and 1871 were destroyed shortly after the census was completed, and those for 1881-1891 were pulped by the British Government during WW1 because of the paper shortage. Those for 1821 to 1851 were destroyed in the Four Court Fire in 1922. Census records for 1901 and 1911 do survive and can be accessed online.
- Parish registers, Occupational records, Military records, Deeds Registry, Estate records, Irish Land Commission records, Religious Census of 1766, Shipping lists and newspapers to name but a few further resources that are available and can be consulted.

Immigration to the UK and beyond.

No official immigration records to the UK were kept as from 1800-1922 Ireland was part of the United Kingdom. But do, consider that many Irish immigrants passed through Britain from Ireland on their way to other destinations and therefore immigration may have been a two-stage process for your ancestor or members of their family.