



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
National Archives

Sources for family history



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1 Introduction

This booklet is a general introduction to sources of information that are available in the National Archives for those who are beginning research into family history. It aims to provide a description of these archives, but also information on possible sources of relevance in other repositories. If you read it carefully, the National Archives Reading Room staff and the professional genealogists in its Genealogy Advisory Service will be better able to deal with individual enquiries and research problems.

As a general introduction, this booklet it is not exhaustive and describes only those sources of relevance to people in general. The National Archives holds other archives with information specific to categories of people, such as individuals engaged in particular occupations.

A photograph of Fenian Daniel Buckley. →

Reference: NAI, CSO/ICR/16/37



2 Beginning a Search

Before beginning research into your family history, it is essential to collect as much information as possible about the family. In order to have a reasonable chance of success, and of correctly identifying an ancestor in archives or other sources of information, it is generally advisable to know at least three things:

- the name of the family;
- the parish or townland in which they lived;
- the approximate period of time in which they lived.

Did you know?

Almost all the archives held in the Public Record Office of Ireland, the predecessor institution to the National Archives, were destroyed by fire and explosion at the beginning of the Civil War in June 1922. Consequently, the archives now held by the National Archives date mainly from the 19th and 20th centuries, although several date back as far as the 13th century. Abstracts and transcripts of some original archives destroyed in 1922 may be available.

2.1 If you know a name, a place and an approximate time period, the principal archives available to research are:

- Tithe Applotment records for a person living in the 1820's or 1830's (see section 4);
- Primary Valuation and valuation records for a person living in the 1840's, 1850's or 1860's (see section 4); and
- 1901 and 1911 census returns for a person living in the early 20th century (see section 3).

The interior of the repository of the PROI taken in 1914 prior to its destruction during the Civil War in 1922.->



2 Beginning a Search

If you know a date of a birth, marriage or death of an ancestor, further details may be sought in records of births, deaths, marriages, baptisms and burials as described in section 6, or in testamentary records as described in section 5.

While there are many family history websites with digital resources and search facilities that permit surname searches, it is important to remember that to focus your searches and assess the relevance of search results, it is useful to have additional information on the parish or townland in which your ancestor lived and the approximate time period.

Did you know?

Searches in surname indexes are generally of value only if the surname is fairly unusual as they can yield a long list of people with the same surname, but with no way of knowing which, if any, are connected with the family being investigated.

2.2 If you do not know the parish or townland in which an ancestor lived, the following online searches and indexes may be used in order to help focus searching to a particular geographic area:

- Tithe Applotment Books can be searched and accessed online at

genealogy.nationalarchives.ie

Basic surname searches of this website will yield results identifying the townland, parish and county in which the name appears in the Tithe Applotment Books.

- Primary Valuation can be searched and accessed online at [www.](http://www.askaboutireland.ie)

[askaboutireland.ie](http://www.askaboutireland.ie).

Basic surname searches of this website will yield results identifying the county, parish and townland in which the name appears in the Primary Valuation, as well as other territorial divisions, such as barony and union.

- Online search of 1901 and 1911 census returns and surviving census for 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851, as well as census search forms available at census.nationalarchives.ie.
- Various indexes available in the Reading Room, which allow searches to be made by surname, subject matter and place name, such as indexes to marriage licence bonds (see section 7), to genealogical abstracts and to surviving pre-20th century testamentary records and other archives.

Did you know?

Both the National Archives and the National Library of Ireland hold a series of volumes titled “Indexes of Surnames in the Primary Valuation and Tithe Applotment Books”, which are available in their respective reading rooms.

3 Official Census Returns and Census Substitutes

A systematic government census of the Irish population was taken every 10 years from 1821 until 1911. No census was taken in 1921, but the work of taking census resumed in 1926. All census returns from 1926 onwards are closed to the public for 100 years in accordance with section 35 of the Statistics Act, 1993. The 1926 census will be released to researchers after 100 years.

3.1 Census of 1821–1851

Almost all census returns for the years 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851 were destroyed in the former Public Record Office of Ireland (PROI) in 1922. There are some surviving returns for 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851, however. These cover parts of the following counties and census years:

County	Year
Antrim	1851
Cavan	1821, 1841
Cork	1841
Fermanagh	1821, 1841, 1851
Galway	1821
King's County (Offaly)	1821
Londonderry (Derry)	1831, (1834 revisions)
Meath	1821
Waterford	1841

In addition, there are lists of names of heads of household taken from the returns of 1851 for part of Belfast City and for Dublin City (see list of 19th century census returns in the Reading Room of the National Archives). Surviving census returns are now fully searchable online at census.nationalarchives.ie. Searching is free of charge.

Did you know?

The only surviving records of the 1831 census for Londonderry (Derry) consist of volumes created in 1834 by census enumerators who were requested to summarise information about religious affiliation. These records survive for some parishes only.

3.2 Census of 1861-1891

No census returns of individual households survive for the years 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891. Census returns for 1861 and 1871 were destroyed in 1877 after census data was analysed and the census reports published. The returns for 1881 and 1891 were destroyed in 1918.

3.3 Census of 1901 and 1911

Almost all the original manuscript returns for each household survive for the thirty-two counties of Ireland for 1901 and 1911. The returns are arranged by county, district electoral division (DED) and townland or, in urban areas, by street. The returns for each townland or street in 1901 and 1911 consist of:

- forms titled Form A, filled in by the head of each household, giving the names of all people in that household on census night and their age, occupation, religion and county or city of birth (or country of birth if born outside Ireland); and
- forms (titled Forms N, B1 and B2) filled in by the census enumerator official taking the census, summarising the returns for that townland or street.

1901 and 1911 census returns are now fully searchable online across all categories of information recorded on the original census forms.

See www.census.nationalarchives.ie. Searching is free of charge. As well as surname searches, the returns may be searched by religion, occupation, relationship to head of family, literacy status, county or country of origin, Irish language proficiency, specified illnesses and, in the case of 1911, child mortality. This is possible by clicking on the 'More search options' tab. There are no maps corresponding to the 1901 and 1911 census returns.

CENSUS OF IRELAND

Two Examples of the mode of filling up

FORM

RETURN of the MEMBERS of this FAMILY and their VISITORS, BOARDERS, SERVANTS,

Number.	NAME AND SURNAME.		RELATION to Head of Family.	RELIGIOUS PROFESSION.	EDUCATION.	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX.					
	No Persons ABSENT on the Night of Sunday, April 2nd, to be entered here; EXCEPT those (not enumerated elsewhere) who may be out at WORK or TRAVELLING, &c., during that Night, and who RETURN HOME ON MONDAY, APRIL 3RD.					Insert Age opposite each name:—the Ages of Males in column 6, and the Ages of Females in column 7.					
	Subject to the above instruction, the Name of the Head of the Family should be written first; then the names of his Wife, Children, and other Relatives; then those of Visitors, Boarders, Servants, &c.					State whether "Head of Family," or "Wife," "Son," "Daughter," or other Relative; "Visitor," "Boarder," "Servant," &c.		State here the particular Religion, or Religious Denomination, to which each person belongs. [Members of Protestant Denominations are requested not to describe themselves by the vague term "Protestant," but to enter the name of the Particular Church, Denomination, or Body to which they belong.]		For Infants under one year state the age in months, as "under 1 month," "1 month," "2 months," &c.	
	Christian Name.	Surname.				Ages of Males.	Ages of Females.				
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.				
1	Bridger	Cattigan	Head of Family	Roman Catholic	Cannot read	—	86				
2	Owen	Cattigan	Son	DO DO	Read & Write	54	—				
3	Margret	Cattigan	Daughter in Law	DO DO	DO DO	—	45				
4	Michael	Cattigan	Grandson	DO DO	DO DO	22	—				
5	Catherine	Cattigan	Granddaughter	DO DO	DO DO	—	19				
6	Hugh	Cattigan	Grandson	DO DO	DO DO	17	—				
7	Owen	Cattigan	Grandson	DO DO	DO DO	9	—				
8	Maggie	Cattigan	Granddaughter	DO DO	Cannot read	—	3				
9											
10											
11											
12											
13											
14											
15											

I hereby certify, as required by the Act 10 Edw. VII., and 1 Geo. V., cap. 11, that the foregoing Return is correct, according to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Robert M. Arthur *Robert* Signature of Enumerator.

A 1911 census household return for the Cattigan family of Cloghmore, Achill, County Mayo ↑
Reference NAI, 1911 Census Mayo 124/4

IRELAND, 1911.

this Table are given on the other side.

M A.

No. on Form B. 17

&c., who slept or abode in this House on the night of SUNDAY, the 2nd of APRIL, 1911.

RANK, PROFESSION, OR OCCUPATION.	PARTICULARS AS TO MARRIAGE.				WHERE BORN.	IRISH LANGUAGE.	If Deaf and Dumb; Dumb only; Blind; Imbecile or Idiot; or Lunatic.
<p>State the particular Rank, Profession, Trade, or other Employment of each person. Children or young persons attending a School, or receiving regular instruction at home, should be returned as <i>Scholars</i>. [No entry should be made in the case of wives, daughters, or other female relatives solely engaged in domestic duties at home.]</p> <p>Before filling this column you are requested to read the instructions on the other side.</p>	<p>Whether "Married," "Widower," "Widow," or "Single."</p>	<p>State for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule the number of:—</p>			<p>If in Ireland, state in what County or City; if elsewhere, state the name of the Country.</p>	<p>Write the word "Irish" in this column opposite the name of each person who speaks Irish only, and the words "IRISH & ENGLISH" opposite the names of those who can speak both languages. In other cases no entry should be made in this column.</p>	<p>Write the respective infirmities opposite the name of the afflicted person.</p>
		<p>Completed years the present Marriage has lasted. If less than one year, write "under one."</p>	<p>Children born alive to present Marriage. If no children born alive, write "None" in column 11.</p>	<p>Total Children born alive.</p>			
8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
—	Widow	—	—	—	Cormack	Irish English	
Farmer	married	—	—	—	Do Do	Do Do	
—	married	23	5	5	Do Do	Do Do	
Farmer's Son	Single	—	—	—	Do Do	Do Do	
Farmer's Daughter	Single	—	—	—	Do Do	Do Do	
Farmer's Son	Single	—	—	—	Do Do	Do Do	
Scholar	single	—	—	—	Do Do	Do Do	
—	Single	—	—	—	Do Do	—	

I believe the foregoing to be a true Return.

Head
Bridger Cattigan signature of Head of Family.
mark

3 Official Census Returns and Census Substitutes

3.4 Census substitutes

3.4.1 Official copy census records

Although almost all original census returns for the years 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851 were destroyed in 1922 (see section 3.2), official copies of a small number of individual returns made by staff of the former PROI, or others, prior to this date have survived. A list of 19th century copies and certified copies is available for consultation in the Reading Room. There are some surviving returns for 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851. These are all now digitised and searchable on our family history website genealogy.nationalarchives.ie.

3.4.2 Census Search forms

Census search forms contain information provided by people to enable a search to be made in the original 1841 and 1851 census for proof of age in connection with claiming an old age pension.

The Old Age Pensions Act, 1908 introduced a non-contributory pension for eligible people aged 70 and over. It was implemented from January 1909 in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. To be eligible, applicants had to be 70 years old and have an income of less than £31.10.00 per annum.

Proof of age had to be provided with an application, but as civil registration of births did not begin in Ireland until 1864, some applicants had difficulty in providing documentary evidence of age. To overcome this, searches of the 1841 and 1851 census returns, still in the PROI at this time, as well as church registers of baptism were deemed acceptable documentary evidence of an applicant's age. The applicant had to provide their parents' names and place of residence in March 1841 or 1851. They also had to state the age they believed themselves to have been in the appropriate year.

CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1911.
Form N.—Enumerator's Abstract for a Townland or Street.

County Mayo Parliamentary Division West Mayo Poor Law Union West Mayo District Electoral Division Omoga Townland or Street Abbington
 Constabulary District West Mayo Parliamentary Borough _____ City, Urban District, Town or Village _____ Barony Barony of Omoga
 Sub-District West Mayo Parish Abbington

ABSTRACT showing the Number of Dwelling-houses, Families, and Persons in the above-named Townland or Street, also the Religious Profession (so far as ascertained), of the People enumerated by 110,920 on 24.4.11.

Note.—This Abstract should be carefully filled by the Enumerator, and attached in front of the File of the several Forms for the persons enumerated in the Townland or Street to which it relates.

When a Townland or Street is situated in two Parliamentary Divisions, or in more than one District Electoral Division or Parish, or is partly within and partly without a Parliamentary Borough, City, Urban District, Town or Village, a separate Abstract should be made for each portion.

Approved: J. B. DOUGHERTY, Registrar-General, Dublin Castle, 29th December, 1910. WILLIAM J. THOMPSON, Registrar-General, EDWARD O'NEILL, Commissioner, DANIEL S. DOLY, Commissioner.

These Sheets will be filed up in the Census Office.

No. of Dwelling-house	DWELLING HOUSES.			FAMILIES.			PERSONS.			RELIGIOUS PROFESSION.																		
	Number on Form B	Occupied	Unoccupied	Number in main Street	Males	Females	Total Number of Persons	Roman Catholics		Protestant Episcopalian (not Free)		Presbyterian		Methodists		Independents		Baptists		Society of Friends (Quakers)		Jews		All other Professions		Information refused		
								Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
1	1	-	-	1	4	8	12	4	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	1	-	-	1	5	5	10	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	1	-	-	1	2	3	5	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	1	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	1	-	-	1	5	1	6	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	1	-	-	1	2	5	7	4	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	1	-	-	1	2	3	5	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	1	-	-	1	5	3	8	5	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	1	-	-	1	4	2	6	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	1	-	-	1	4	1	5	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	1	-	-	1	1	4	5	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	11	-	-	11	40	36	76	40	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note.—The designation "Protestant Episcopalian" includes, besides the members of the "Church of Ireland" or "Irish Church," the members of the Church of England, the Episcopal Church of Scotland, and any other Protestant Episcopal Church.

An extract from the 1766 Religious Census for the parish of Abbington ↗

Forms containing this information were sent to the PROI where searches were carried out in the 1841 and 1851 original census. When a search could not find reference to the applicant, the form was annotated with 'not found' or 'no trace' written on it. Even in the case of negative searches, the census search form will provide the applicant's version of his family members' names and location in 1841 or 1851. Many searches were successful, and these can often provide the names and ages of every person living in the claimant's household at the time of the relevant census.

The census search forms are organised within each county, by barony, parish, townland or urban street and name of the applicant (including maiden name, where applicable). Census search forms are now available online and are searchable for free at genealogy.nationalarchives.ie.

3 Official Census Returns and Census Substitutes

3.4.3 Agricultural Census

The agricultural census comprises two separate documents: one a return of livestock in County Antrim in 1803–1804, the other an account of corn in the possession of the inhabitants of County Louth, c.1800–1816. The agricultural census was taken when the country was in a vulnerable state in the aftermath of the rebellions of 1798 and 1803. Both returns form part of the archives of the Office of Chief Secretary for Ireland held in the National Archives under reference CSO/OP/153/103 and CSO/OPMA/163, respectively. The documents provide details of live and dead stock as well as corn and implements, together with the names and addresses of the owner inhabitants of the areas for which the returns were compiled.

3.4.4 Religious Census, 1766

Not strictly a census, but none-the-less of genealogical importance, is the Religious Census of 1766. This census was authorised by a resolution of the Irish House of Lords and consists of returns of Protestant and Roman Catholic (Papist) heads of households, listing names in each parish. Sometimes only statistical information on the numbers of Protestants and Roman Catholics in a parish is recorded, however. The returns survive in original or transcript form. A guide to surviving material is found on the website of the National Archives, www.nationalarchives.ie.

3.4.5 Elphin Census, 1749

This census was taken under the direction of Edward Synge, Bishop of Elphin as it is recorded that he was anxious to know the proportion of Protestants to ‘Papists’ in the Church of Ireland diocese of Elphin, which covers most of County Roscommon, as well as portions of County Galway and County Sligo. The original Elphin Census is held in the National Archives under reference M 2464 and has been published by the Irish Manuscripts Commission as *The Elphin Census, 1749* (edited by Marie-Louise Legg, IMC, 2004).

3.4.6 **Some Inhabitants of the Baronies of Newcastle and Uppercross, Co. Dublin, c.1650**

Held in the National Archives under reference M 2467, this lists householders and servants organised according to parishes and townlands; the fullest entries include name, age, stature, face, hair, occupation and disability. About 4,000 names are returned.

This has been published in *The Irish Genealogist*, vols 7–8, 1989–1993 (edited by Richard Flatman).

4 Tithe Applotment and Valuation Records

4.1 Tithe Applotment records

4.1.1 Title Applotment Books

A tithe was one tenth of the produce of agricultural land levied for the support of the official, state-established Church of Ireland and its clergymen. Under the Tithe Composition (Ireland) Act, 1823, this was converted into a monetary tax and the Tithe Applotment Books were compiled at various dates between 1823 and 1837 for the purpose of assessing the amount of this tax that occupiers of agricultural holdings above one acre should pay in tithes to the Church of Ireland. There is a manuscript book for almost every parish in the country, giving the names of occupiers, the amount of land held, and the sums to be paid in tithes.

The original books are held in the National Archives and can be consulted on microfilm only in the Reading Room, or can be searched free of charge on our family history website genealogy.nationalarchives.ie. Basic surname searches of the website will yield results identifying the townland, parish and county in which the name appears in the Tithe Applotment Books.

A list of the Tithe Applotment books, arranged by Church of Ireland parish, is available in the Reading Room. The books for the six counties of Northern Ireland are held in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) in Belfast, but microfilm copies are held in the National Archives.

4.1.2 Tithe Defaulters lists

Tithes were a tax levied on all occupiers of agricultural land regardless of their religious affiliation. Payment of tithes was bitterly resented, particularly by the Roman Catholic population, which also had to support their own priests. In the years 1831 to 1832, many people began to refuse to pay tithes and so began the 'Tithe War', which was fiercest in Leinster and Munster.

Did you know?

Tithe Applotment and valuation records are essentially land taxation records. Although not copies or transcripts of original census records, or based on information contained in census records, or returns of people, Tithe Applotment and valuation records can nonetheless serve as partial substitutes for destroyed census records as they list names of heads of household in a particular geographic area. They will not contain information on other members of the household.

The Clergy Relief Fund was established in 1832 under the Recovery of Tithes (Ireland) Act, 1832 to assist affected Church of Ireland clergy affected by the non-payment of tithes. The clergy made returns to government of the names of people who refused to pay tithes in order to receive compensation for unpaid tithes. Some of these returns survive in the form of schedules of recording the names of approximately 29,000 tithe defaulters and form part of the archives of the Office of the Chief Secretary. The schedules list the defaulter's address and the sum due. Some also list the defaulter's landholding and occupation. Details of clergy who applied for financial relief under the fund can be found in *'The Clergy Relief Fund, 1831: tithe defaulters'* by Suzanne C Hartwick in *The Irish Genealogist*, vol. 8, 1990. The original schedules of defaulters are held in the National Archives under reference CSO/OPMA/165/2/32-37.

4 Tithe Applotment and Valuation Records

4.2 Valuation Records

4.2.1 Primary Valuation

The Primary Valuation, also known as Griffith's Valuation, was the first, full-scale valuation of property in Ireland and details of property with valuations were published between 1847 and 1864. There is a printed valuation book for each barony or poor law union in the country, showing the names of occupiers of land and buildings, the names of those from whom these were leased, and the amount and value of the property held. A list of the Primary Valuation books arranged by civil parish is available in the Reading Room, but the printed valuation can only be consulted on microform in the National Archives. The printed valuation is also available to search free of charge on www.askaboutireland.ie.

Did you know?

The Cancelled Land Books and current land books available in the Valuation Office give details of all changes in holdings from the time of the first valuation until the early 1990's.

4.2.2 Valuation records

The National Archives also holds many manuscript records compiled in connection with the Primary Valuation, including Field Books, House Books, Mill Books, Quarto Books and Tenure Books. A list of the records arranged by type of book, county, barony and civil parish is available in the Reading Room. Some of these books, along with detailed guides to the records, are now available to search online free of charge at genealogy.nationalarchives.ie.

Caption: A Valuation Office house book dating from 1849 for the townland of Bunkilla, Donaghmore, County Cork →

Houses in Townland of Monavannahere

No.	Name and Description.	Quality Letter.	Length.	Breadth.	Height.	Number of Measures.	Rate per Measure.	Amount.
								£ s. d.
6 1/2	Michael Dwyer							
1.0.0	Unoccupied House	30+	27.0	15.0	5.0	40	3	" 10. 0 ✓
13	Edmond							
1.5.0	House	30+	32.0	16.6	5.6	52	3 1/4	" 14. 1
	Cow House	30+	12.6	20.0	5.0	25	1 3/4	3 7
								" 17. 8 ✓
13	Dennis Ketcher							
0.15.0	down House	30	21.0	14.0	5.6	29	2 1/2	" 6. 0 3. 7 ✓
7	Henry Ruby							
1.5.0	House	30+	38.0	18.0	6.0	68	3 1/2	" 19. 10 down ✓
11 1/2	Daniel Sullivan							
0.10.0	House	30	13.6	12.6	5.0	16	2 1/4	" 3. 6 down ✓
14 1/2	Thomas Dealy							
1.12.0	Unsec. House	30+	45.6	16.6	6.0	71	3 1/2	" 11. 0 8
	Cow House & Cart Shed	30+	24.0	12.0	6.0	28	2	" 4. 8
								" 11. 5. 4 ✓
7 1/2	Dennis Murphy							
0.15.0	Unsec. House	30+	20.0	13.0	5.6	26	3 1/4	" 7. 0 ✓
15	Michael Sullivan							
1.0.0	down House	30	24.0	14.6	6.0	34	2 1/2	" 7. 1 ✓
19	Dennis Sullivan							
1.5.0	House	30	29.0	14.6	6.0	42	2 1/2	" 8. 9 ✓

Thos. Madigan Telf. Oct 14/49

5 Wills and Administrations

To ensure the legality of a will of a deceased person, a grant of probate must be made by the courts. As part of this process, the original will is lodged with the courts. If someone dies intestate, without having made a will, the courts can grant letters of administration for the disposal of the estate.

Before 1858, grants of probate and administration were made by the courts of the Church of Ireland, which was the established State church. These courts were the Prerogative Court and the various diocesan or consistorial courts. There are separate indexes of wills and administrations for each court available to search on microfilm in the Reading Room. Some of these indices have been published. Of these, the most important are *Vicar's Index to Prerogative Wills, 1536–1810* and the *Indexes to Dublin Grant Books and Wills, 1270–1800*, *Index of Wills and Marriage Licenses for Dublin Diocese up to 1800* and *1800–1858*.

Did you know?

Wills and administrations are of use to genealogists as evidence of the date of a person's death, and for other information that they may contain concerning the deceased person's family, occupation, place of residence and property.

From 1858, grants of probate and administration were made by the civil courts: the Principal and District Registries of the Probate Court before 1877 and of the High Court from 1877. These grants are indexed in the annual Calendars of Wills and Administrations, which cover the period 1858–1982 and are available in the Reading Room.

It is possible to search the calendars (indexes) online. **The original documents cannot be accessed online but can be viewed in the Reading Room of the National Archives, or a copy obtained for a fee by completing the Testamentary Copy Order form.**

From 1858 to 1917, the calendars cover the whole of Ireland. After 1918, the calendars cover the 26 counties in the Republic while indexes covering the six counties of Northern Ireland are available in PRONI.

The testamentary calendars available in our Reading Room have been digitised and can be searched online for the years 1858–1920 on genealogy.nationalarchives.ie and 1922–1982 on www.nationalarchives.ie.

For the years 1922–1982, the easiest way to access the calendar is to search the online catalogue. If using a 'Simple Search' type in Calendar of Wills and the year, for example, Calendar of Wills 1962 will return a link to a pdf of the calendar for the year 1962.

If you wish to view all calendars from 1922 to 1982, the easiest way to search is to use the 'Advanced Search' function. Using the 'Reference Code' field, place the series reference code CS/HC/PO/4 in the search box. There are 135 calendars dating from 1858–1982.

It is possible to search by the name of the deceased individual in the online catalogue for the years 1923–1951 and for 1983–1991. For common names, this may return multiple entries, however, and it may be more useful to search individual calendars where the date of grant or the date of death is known.

A guide to searching our online resources for wills and administrations is available on our website under Legal Records. Indexes covering the six counties now in Northern Ireland, as well as a further set of post-1858 indexes, are in PRONI. See www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni.

The records of wills and administrations now in the National Archives include the following:

5 Wills and Administrations

5.1 Original wills and administration papers

Original wills and administration papers lodged in the Principal Registry since 1904, and in district registries since 1900 (indexed in the annual calendars). Wills and administration papers lodged in the district registries at Armagh, Belfast and Londonderry (Derry) are in PRONI. Grants issued at Drogheda, a sub-office of Armagh, between 1900 and 1922, are held in the National Archives. Original wills and administration papers, proved by the Probate Office, must be transferred to the National Archives once the grant has been 30 years issued. All district registries are up-to-date with the exception of Kilkenny, which has transferred grants up to 1985. Grants up to 1991 issued in Dublin have been transferred to the National Archives.

5.2 Schedules of assets

Schedules of assets (or Estate Duty Affidavits) are copies of forms completed in connection with the levying of death duties in the estate of a deceased person. In most cases, these copy forms are filed with the original wills and administration papers. In the case of probates issuing from the Principal Registry (known as the Probate Office since 1963) the schedules are bound separately, and from 1924 onwards they are complete. Some schedules of assets from the Principal Registry survive for the years 1873, 1877, 1885 and 1890.

5.3 Will books

Will books are bound volumes into which transcriptions were written of most wills proved in district registries since 1858, and of some wills proved in the Principal Registry in 1874, 1878, 1891 and 1896. These relate to all of Republic of Ireland only and exclude the District Registries of Armagh, Belfast and Londonderry (Derry), which are available in PRONI. All of these wills can be searched in the annual calendars in the Reading Room or online as described above.

For the pre-1858 ecclesiastical courts, there are earlier will books for the Prerogative Court (1664–1684, 1706–1708, 1726–1728, 1728–1729, 1777, 1813, 1834) and some diocesan courts, Connor (1818–1820, 1853–1858) and Down (1850–1858).

Will books are available on microfilm in the Reading Room.

5.4 **Grant books**

Grant books contain copies of grants made in the Principal Registry since 1922 (known as the Probate Office from 1963) and in 1878, 1883 and 1891 and of most grants made in the civil district registries since 1858, all of which can be searched in the annual calendars in the Reading Room or online as described above. The grant books for the district registries at Armagh and Belfast up to 1885 are in the National Archives, but later grant books for Armagh, Belfast and Londonderry (Derry) are in PRONI.

For the pre-1858 ecclesiastical courts, there are earlier grant books for the Prerogative Court (1684–1688, 1748–1751, 1839) and some Diocesan Courts, including Cashel (1840–1845), Connor (1818–1820, 1853–1858), Down (1850–1858), Derry and Raphoe (1812–1851) and Ossory (1848–1858).

5.5 **Betham's abstracts**

Betham's are abstracts of wills proved in the Prerogative Court before 1800, of administrations granted in the Prerogative Court before 1802, and of wills proved in the Kildare Diocesan Court before 1827 (indexed in Vicar's Index, the Indexes to Dublin Grants, and the 'Index to Wills of the Diocese of Kildare' reprinted from the Journal of the Kildare Archaeological Society, (IV, no. 6, 1905)). Also an index to Tuam diocesan wills from 1652–1809. These abstracts are available on microfilm in the Reading Room.

5 Wills and Administrations

5.6 Original wills and administration papers

Inland Revenue registers of wills and administrations containing abstracts of wills and administrations for 1828–1839 (indexed in separate volumes, which cover the period 1828–1879; for the years 1840–1857 these indexes give details that do not appear in the diocesan and prerogative indexes referred to above). These abstracts are available on microfilm in the Reading Room.

5.7 Charitable donations and bequests

Charitable donations and bequests will extract books contain extracts of wills that included charitable bequests, 1800–1961 (there is a separate card index for the period 1800–1858 in the Reading Room).

5.8 Grant books indexes

Grant books indexes in eight volumes for the years 1811–1834 and 1835–1858 (held by the National Archives, accession 999/611), originally compiled for a Dublin legal firm.

5.9 Other copies and abstracts

Other copies and abstracts of wills and administrations for the period both before and after 1858 (indexed in the main Testamentary card index in the Reading Room).

There are also abstracts of wills and other testamentary records made by genealogists (including the Crosslé, Jennings and Thrift genealogical abstracts), which should be consulted by researchers, as well as transcripts and copies. Researchers should consult the various indexes and catalogues in the Reading Room.

Grant of Administration of Michael Collins, Commander-in-Chief of the National Army, who was killed during the Civil War in 1922. →



Administration (Intestate) Bond.

High Court of Justice, Ireland.

KING'S BENCH DIVISION.—(PROBATE)

THE PRINCIPAL REGISTRY

(a) Names, residences, and descriptions of the Administrator and the Sureties.

KNOW ALL MEN by these Presents that We (a) John Collins of 89 Botanic Road D in the County of the City of Dublin Gentleman and William Callanan of 2 St James's Place in the County of the City of Dublin Manufacturer and in the County of

(b) Double the Gross amount of Assets without any deduction for debts, &c. See endorsement at back.

are jointly and severally bound unto THE RIGHT HONORABLE William St Dodd the Judge of the King's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice in Ireland, to whom the disposal of the Probate and Matrimonial business of the said High Court (other than trials) has been duly assigned, in the sum of (b) Three thousand nine hundred and one Pounds, to be paid to the Judge to whom the disposal of the business aforesaid shall for the time being stand assigned, pursuant to the statute in that behalf, for which payment to be made we bind ourselves, and each of us, for the whole, our Heirs, Executors and Administrators, by these Presents.

Sealed with our Seals.

Dated the 21st day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and twenty two

(c) Administrator's name and relationship, if any, to deceased.

The condition of this obligation is such, that if the above bounden (c) John Collins the lawful brother

(d) Name, residence and description of deceased.

of (d) Michael Collins late of Upper Merrion Street the City of Dublin Commander in Chief of the National Army

(e) If the grant is de bonis non, insert "unadministered."

the intended Administrator of the (e) Personal Estate of the said deceased, do well and truly administer according to Law (that is to say) do pay the debts which he did owe at his decease. And further do make, or cause to be made, a true account of said Administration whenever required by Law so to do; and all the rest and residue of the said Personal Estate and effects do deliver and pay unto such Person or Persons as shall be entitled thereto, under the statutes in such case made and provided. And if it shall hereafter appear that any last Will was made by the said Deceased, and the Executor or Executors, or other persons therein named do exhibit the same unto the said Division, making request to have it allowed and approved accordingly, if the said John Collins being thereunto required do render and deliver the said Letters of Administration granted to him (being thereunto required do render and deliver the said Letters of Administration granted to him) (being first had and made) in the said Division, then this obligation to be void and of none effect, or else to remain in full force and virtue.

Signed, Sealed and delivered

(f) Repeat here the names of all the parties to the bond.

by the said (f) John Collins and William Callanan in the presence of John Collins and William Callanan



6 Records of Birth, Marriage and Death

6.1 Church and Congregational Registers of Baptism, Marriage and Burial

For the period before the commencement of civil registration of births, marriages and deaths in 1864, church records provide the only record of most births, marriages and deaths in the form of registers of baptisms, marriages and burials. Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Jewish marriages have been civilly registered since 1845.

6.2 Roman Catholic

Original parochial registers (i.e. baptisms, marriages and burials) of the Roman Catholic Church remain with the relevant parishes. Microfilm copies of original parochial registers are available at the National Library of Ireland for most Roman Catholic parishes in Ireland for the years up to 1880, and in some cases up to 1900. These are now available to view online for free at www.nli.ie. The names and addresses of Roman Catholic clergy are given in the annual Irish Catholic Directory.

6.3 Church of Ireland

Many parochial registers (i.e. baptisms, marriages and burials) of the Church of Ireland (Anglican Church) have been deposited in the Representative Church Body Library and Archive (RCB), while others remain with the relevant parishes. Parochial registers pre-dating 1870 are public records and some were on deposit in the PROI and were destroyed in 1922. Registers survive for about one third of the parishes throughout the country.

For further information on the RCB Library and Archive see www.ireland.anglican.org. The parochial registers may also be available in original, copy or microfilm form at the National Archives. Generally, records held at the National Archives do not post-date 1880, although a small number range into the twentieth century.

PRONI holds copies of all surviving Church of Ireland registers for the Diocese of Armagh, Clogher, Connor, Derry, Dromore, Down, Kilmore and Raphoe. As well as covering all six counties of the present Northern Ireland, these Dioceses also cover Counties Cavan, Donegal, Louth, Monaghan and part of County Leitrim, which are in the Republic. Copies of those parish registers from within the Republic, microfilmed by PRONI, are held by the RCB Library.

A list of all Church of Ireland parish registers, indicating whether they survive and where they are held, is available in the National Archives and also on the website of the RCB Library. The names and addresses of the clergy are given in the annual Church of Ireland Directory. A list and a card index of registers held in the National Archives, as well as lists of transcripts and abstracts, may be consulted in the Reading Room.

Records of marriage licences provide information concerning some Church of Ireland marriages before 1845. People wishing to obtain a licence to marry without having banns called were required to enter into a bond with the bishop of the diocese. The licences and bonds do not survive (in most cases), but the indexes to the bonds lodged in each Diocesan Court and the Prerogative Court are available on microfilm in the Reading Room.

Some of the indexes have been published. Betham's abstracts of Prerogative and Dublin Diocesan marriage licences give further details. Some other records of marriage licences are indexed in the Testamentary card index available in the Reading Room.

6 Records of Birth, Marriage and Death

The Parish Searches consist of thirteen volumes of searches made in Church of Ireland parochial returns (generally baptisms, but sometimes also marriages). The searches were requested in order to ascertain whether the applicant, in the period c.1908–1922, but mainly c.1915–1922, was entitled to an Old Age Pension based on evidence abstracted from the parochial returns then in existence in the PROI. Sometimes, only one search against a specific individual has been recorded from a given parish. Multiple searches against various individuals in city parishes have been recorded in volume thirteen, listed in ‘Parish Registers and related Material’, which is available in the Reading Room.

Transcripts (and some digitised images) of Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland parochial registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, for the pre-1900 period, are available free of charge on www.irishgenealogy.ie. This site is hosted by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Other records, which are not organised on a parochial basis may also be of interest:

Records of the Jewish community in Ireland, including birth records, may be held in the Irish Jewish Museum in Dublin at 3 Walworth Road, Dublin 8. Their website is www.jewishmuseum.ie. An Irish Jewish family history database is available at www.irishjewishroots.com.

Records of the Methodist Church in Ireland include registers of baptisms and marriages of the Irish Methodist circuits and chapels. Many are held by the Wesley Historical Society in Ireland in Belfast, which also has a small archive collection in Dublin. See www.methodisthistoryireland.org. Many Methodist records have been microfilmed by PRONI. Researchers should consult Steven C. ffearry-Smyrl, *Irish Methodists: where do I start?* (Council of Irish Genealogical Organisations, Dublin, 2000) for a guide to Irish Methodist records.

Records of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland comprise registers of baptisms and marriages. Many are held by the Presbyterian Historical Society in Belfast. See their website for more details: www.presbyterianireland.org. Most Ulster Presbyterian records have been microfilmed by PRONI.

Records of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Ireland contain transcript registers of births, marriages and deaths from the seventeenth century onwards. These are held by the Religious Society of Friends Historical Library in Dublin or the Religious Society of Friends, Ulster Quarterly Meeting in Lisburn.

Most parochial registers (regardless of denomination) for the northern counties of Ireland are available on microfilm in PRONI.

The best general introduction to church records are by James G. Ryan (editor), *Irish Church Records* (Dublin, 2001) and by Steven C. Smyrl, *Dictionary of Dublin Dissent: Dublin's Protestant dissenting meeting houses, 1660–1920* (Dublin, 2009).

Prerogative Court will of Daniel Magenis, of Castlewillan, County Down, dated 6 October 1714.

Reference: NAI, Prerogative Court Will Book, folios 147-8

→

of my will have full power and lawfull authority to renew any lease or
Leases by me hitherto made and to sell and lett and make leases of
all or any part of the said Lands and premises the mansion house only
excepted for three lives or sixty one years which least longest provided
he my son or they who shall hereafter become seized by virtue of my
Will shall sett the Lands to the best advantage and it is my further intent
and meaning that my said son Meredith or those who shall be
seized under the limitations of my wills shall dye lease w^{ch} ever male
and female then I empower him or them to charge my said lands with
three hundred pounds for each younger Child either by will or deed
In Witnes whereof I have hereunto put my hand and seal the day
and year first above written declaring this to be part of my will
Mere: Workman ^(Co. 19) Signed Sealed and published the day &
year first above written in the presence of us Edw^d Overend
John Hart Bryan Rodgers

Co. 19

Probata et approbata in communi iuris forma a dno Curie Regie
Baroga & instrumata fuit testamentum et fidei commissum
Meredith Workman nuper de Mahan in Comitatu Amachano
Armd^o (rentis) necnon onus executionis eorundem et admo-
nitionum & d^o defuncti concepta fuerunt per Rosm^o p^ohem
Hugonem & necnon iudicem & Meredith Workman Arm^o
filio matris & Arm^o d^o defuncti Henrico Corke Generoso Genero d^o
d^o Valentinio Jones Arm^o tribus eorum in d^o test^o d^o d^o
nominat^o p^oius ad sancta Dei Evang^o Virtute communiat^o (salvo) iure
Maria Workman Vidua & Melita d^o d^o necnon al^o Cori in d^o
test^o d^o d^o nominat^o cum ven^o idempetit^o necnon salvo iure
H) Dat^o secundo die mensis Februarij Anno Dni 1726^o Et habet
pro Invenitio in vel infra ultimum diem mensis Augusti pro d^o factum

In the Name of God
Magenis Daniel Amen Daniel Magen of Calkwillan in the County of Down
tho I bless God of perfect health and sound memory yet considering the un-
certainty of human life and mortality of my frail body think it fitt to
make and publish this my last Will and testament in manner and
form following In my said I bequeath my soul to God my Creator who
gave it me and hope through the merits and precious blood of my most
dear Saviour Jesus full remission of my sinns and life eternall Secondly

my

(140)
my will is that if it should happen I dye in the City of Dublin my body be
interred in the Churchyard of the parish Church of Saint James and that a decent
black stone may be put over my grave and if it please God I dye in the Queen my
paternall estate my will is I be buried in Donaghmore Church with my father
and the like stone as aforesaid may be sett over my grave or if it happen I dye
at Castlewillan my will is to be buried with my uncke in Maghenz with
with a stone as aforesaid to be put over my grave my farther will is ^{that} in case
I dye in either of those places or in that Country that my Executors nor y^e
Clergy do not utter any howling or chyming to be used over my Corps but rather
decent silence and prayers my will likewise is that the expences of my funerall
shall not exceed ten pounds sterling and that ten pounds sterling shall be equally
divided betwixt the Roman Catholique Clergy of the two dioceses of Down and
Downmore to pray for my poor soul according as father James Mc Donnell &
father Patrick Byrn shall think fitt and likewise that ten pounds
sterling more shall be given and distributed to and among the
most needy and shamed faced poor of the said Dioceses according as
my most dear spouse M^{rs} Ann Magenis and the said father James Mc
Donnell shall judge fitt **Item** I bequeath and leave unto my most deare
wife the said Ann Magenis all my goods and chattels plate and all my
house hold stuff and moveables of any kind whereof I am now possessed
Or will at the time of my death **Item** I leave to my eldest son Arthur Magenis
^{my best estate of Castlewillan} and to my son John Magenis my wood my son Daniel Magenis my best horses
saddle and furniture and my will is that my four sons two daughters and
two sons in law shall have each of them a mourning Ring and that
the expences of my said funerall and the said legacies and what hereafter
is to be bequeathed shall be defrayed out of such Rents as shall be and
yet due to me out of my estates of Glenn and Castlewillan at the
house of my death and in case the said Rents may fall short to pay
the said expences and legacies I hereby enjoyne my said son Arthur
Magenis who I hope to succeed me in the said estates to pay & discharge
the same and to see this my will performed my farther will is that my
said most dear wife Ann Magenis shall have paid her fifty pounds
sterling to maintain her till her jointure becomes due and that likewise
my dear daughter Mary Magenis shall have and receive fifty pounds
sterling over and above her portion settled on my said estate of Glenn
and my will farther is that my dear friend said father James Mc Donnell

shall

7 Penal Transportation Records: Ireland to Australia, 1788 - 1868

Although not all records from the Chief Secretary's Office in Dublin Castle survive, especially from the period before 1836, there is sufficient material to make Irish archives a major source for Australians researching Irish convict ancestors. Penal transportation to Australia, and later to Bermuda and Gibraltar, covered the years 1791 until 1853, when the sentence of penal transportation was commuted to a prison sentence in Ireland.

The National Archives holds a wide range of records relating to the transportation of convicts from Ireland to Australia covering the period 1788 to 1868, which are available on a fully searchable database available on our website, www.nationalarchives.ie. In some cases, these include records of members of convicts' families transported as free settlers. While the collection of convict petitions dates from the beginning of transportation from Ireland to Australia in 1791, all transportation registers compiled before 1836 were destroyed in 1922. Therefore, if the person you are researching was convicted before 1836, but was not the subject of a petition, he or she will not appear on this database as the records from which the transportation database was compiled are incomplete. A successful search in the records may produce not just a bald official summary, but perhaps one of the thousands of petitions submitted by, or on behalf, of prisoners. The records relating to transported convicts comprise:

- Transportation Registers, 1836–1857;
- Prisoners' Petitions and Cases, 1788–1836;
- State Prisoners' Petitions, 1798–1799;
- Convict Reference Files, 1836–1856 : 1865–1868;
- Free Settlers' Papers, 1828–1852; (f) Male Convict Register, 1842–1847;
- Register of Convicts on Convict Ships, 1851–1853.

8 **Genealogy Advisory Service**

Before undertaking research in the National Archives, visitors may find it helpful to visit the Genealogy Advisory Service, which is provided free of charge. The Genealogy Service is intended primarily for first-time researchers and visitors, but more experienced researchers may find it of value in assisting with research problems. Information on hours of opening hours are available in the Visit Us section of the National Archives website www.nationalarchives.ie.

9 **Reading Room**

For information on how to apply for a Reader's Ticket and available services see the Visit Us section of the website of the National Archives, www.nationalarchives.ie.

9 General Register Office

All births, marriages and deaths occurring since 1 January 1864 (and Jewish and non-Roman Catholic marriages occurring since 1 April 1845) should be on record in the General Register Office, Werburgh Street, Dublin 2. All written communication for the General Register Office should be addressed to the General Register Office, Government Offices, Convent Road, Roscommon, F42 VX53. The website of the GRO is www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/GRO_Research.aspx.

For the six counties, which comprise Northern Ireland (Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry (Derry) and Tyrone) from 1922 onwards, records of births, marriages and deaths should be held by General Register Office for Northern Ireland, Colby House, Stranmillis Court, Belfast, BT9 5RR. The General Register Office for Northern Ireland also holds all local register books for Northern Ireland from 1864 (for births and deaths) and from 1922 (for marriages). See www.nidirect.gov.uk.

A database of the indexes is available, free of charge, on www.familysearch.org for the period 1845–1958. All of Ireland is covered from 1845 until 1922, and the Republic of Ireland from 1922 onwards.

For a comprehensive guide, researchers should consult Eileen O'Dúill and Steven C. ffearry-Smyrl, *Irish Civil Registration: where do I start?* (Council of Irish Genealogical Organisations, Dublin, 2000).

7 Useful Web Addresses

Ask About Ireland

www.askaboutireland.ie

Irish Genealogy

www.irishgenealogy.ie

General Register Office

www.groireland.ie

National Library of Ireland, Roman Catholic parish registers

www.groireland.ie

National Library of Ireland

registers.nli.ie

Valuation Office

www.valoff.ie

Property Registration Authority of Ireland, including the Registry of Deeds and the Land Registry

www.prai.ie

Representative Church Body Library

www.ireland.anglican.org

Placenames Database of Ireland

www.logainm.ie

Public Record Office of Northern Ireland

www.nidirect.gov.uk

General Register Office for Northern Ireland

www.nidirect.gov.uk

National Records of Scotland

www.nrscotland.gov.uk

The National Archives of the United Kingdom

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

Council of Irish Genealogical Organisations

www.cigo.ie

Family Search

www.familysearch.org

Irish Family History Society

www.ifhs.ie/

Irish Genealogy Research Society

www.irishancestors.ie

12 Further Reading

Begley, Donal (ed.), *Irish Genealogy, a record finder*
(2nd impression, Dublin, 1987)

Caball, Kay, *Finding your ancestors in Kerry*
(Dublin, 2015)

Connell, Gretta, *Tracing your Westmeath ancestors*
(Dublin, 2012)

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