

A Castle in Phoenix: How to Trace Your Irish Ancestors without Going to Ireland

Presented by Cindy Patricki
cindy.patricki@azirishlibrary.org
www.azirish.org 602-864-2353

Introduction

The McClelland Library

- Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday 10:00am – 3:00pm
Wednesday 10:00am – 6:00pm
- Frances B. McClelland Genealogy Research Centre
- Special Collections
 - “**The Search for Missing Friends: Irish Immigrant Advertisements Placed in the *Boston Pilot*” – 1831-1876**
 - Free indexes at infowanted.bc.edu, www.ancestry.com and www.americanancestors.org
 - “**O’Kief, Coshe Mang, Slieve Lougher and Upper Blackwater, Ireland**” by Albert E. Casey; contains over 3 million names from counties Kerry and Cork
- McClelland Library Website www.azirish.org
- Subscription Websites
 - Ancestry – www.ancestry.com
 - Find My Past – www.findmypast.com
 - Irish News Archive – www.irishnewsarchive.org
 - The Irish Times – www.irishtimes.com
 - Irish Ancestors – www.johngrenham.com
 - Roots Ireland – www.rootsireland.ie
 - Ancestry Ireland – www.ancestryireland.com
 - American Ancestors – www.americanancestors.org
 - Fold3 – www.fold3.com
- Search book collection online at www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org
 - Select “Irish Cultural Center” as the location using the advanced search option

Facts about Ireland

- Population of Ireland – 6.51 million
 - Republic of Ireland – 4.67 million
 - Northern Ireland – 1.84 million
- Over 62,000 cities, towns and townlands

Three Main Waves of Irish Emigration

Early to Mid-1700s

- Primarily Protestant Scots-Irish farmers who lived on the edge of the frontier and valued their personal and religious freedom

Mid-1800s

- Mainly Roman Catholic families of poor, unskilled laborers who left Ireland to avoid starvation during the potato famine

Late 1800s to Early 1900s

- Many young, single workers who moved to large American cities looking for better jobs

Challenges in Irish Research

Loss of Irish Records

- Invasions – The country has been occupied for most of its history
- 1861 through 1891 census records destroyed by government
- 1821 through 1851 census records destroyed by fire
- 1922 Irish Civil War – Four Courts building burned

Irish Naming Pattern

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 st Son – Father's Father | 1 st Daughter – Mother's Mother |
| 2 nd Son – Mother's Father | 2 nd Daughter – Father's Mother |
| 3 rd Son – Father | 3 rd Daughter – Mother |
| 4 th Son – Father's Oldest Brother | 4 th Daughter – Mother's Oldest Sister |

Irish Names and Dates

- Nicknames
- **“A Rose by any Other Name: A Guide to Irish Christian Names”** by Judith Eccles Wight
- Name spellings varied
- Surname prefixes not used consistently
 - O' indicates “descendant of” – Irish origin
 - Mc or Mac indicates “son of” – Scottish origin
 - Fitz indicates “son of” – Anglo-Norman origin
- Dates and ages not consistent over time

The Irish Place of Origin

Success with Irish research depends on locating the parish or townland an ancestor came from in Ireland before beginning the search in Irish records.

- Family Records
- Obituaries, Death Records and Gravestones
- Birth and Marriage Records
- Church Records
- Newspapers
- Military Records
- Land and Court Records
- Immigration and Naturalization Records
- Associations
- Business and Financial Records
- DNA Testing

Irish Jurisdictions

When the townland or parish is known, determine all other jurisdictions for that place.

Irish Geographical Divisions

- 2 States: Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland
- 4 Provinces: Ulster, Leinster, Munster and Connaught
- 32 Counties: Antrim, Armagh, Carlow, Cavan, Clare, Cork, Donegal, Down, Dublin, Fermanagh, Galway, Kerry, Kildare, Kilkenny, Leitrim, Leix (Queen's) Limerick, Londonderry (Derry), Longford, Louth, Mayo, Meath, Monaghan, Offaly (King's), Roscommon, Sligo, Tipperary, Tyrone, Waterford, Westmeath, Wexford, Wicklow

- 137 Poor Law Unions
- 331 Baronies
- 2,508 Civil Parishes
- Church Parishes – Roman Catholic, Church of Ireland, or Presbyterian Congregations
- 62,000+ Cities, Towns and Townlands

Geographic Finding Aids

- **“General Alphabetical Index to Townlands”**
 - Alphabetical list of baronies, civil parishes and poor law unions for each townland
 - Based on the 1851 Census of Ireland
- Online Townland Databases – give the jurisdictions for Irish townlands
 - Townland Database – www.swilson.info/db/townlanddbs.php
 - IreAtlas Townland Database – www.thecore.com/seanruad
- **“A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland”** by Brian Mitchell (2nd Edition)
 - County, barony, parish and poor law union maps
 - Use to visually locate a parish or poor law union in a specific county

Major Types of Irish Records

Census Returns – only 1901 & 1911 are complete; fragments for 1821-1851

- National Archives of Ireland – www.nationalarchives.ie

Civil Registrations (Vital Records) – marriages for non-Catholics began in 1845;

all other birth, marriage and death registrations started in 1864

- Indexes on www.ancestry.com, <https://familysearch.org>, www.findmypast.com
- Order original records from the General Register Office (GRO)
 - GRO of Ireland (in Dublin and Roscommon)
 - All of Ireland up to 1921; Republic of Ireland records 1922 to present
 - www.welfare.ie/en/pages/general-register-office.aspx
 - GRO of Northern Ireland (in Belfast)
 - All records for 6 counties of Northern Ireland
 - www.nidirect.gov.uk

Church Parish Records – baptisms, marriages and deaths; some going back to the late 1700s

- Catholic Parish Registers at the National Library of Ireland – registers.nli.ie
- Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht – www.irishgenealogy.ie
- County Heritage Centers – www.rootsireland.ie

Gravestone Inscriptions – published and on websites

- Irish Graveyards – www.irishgraveyards.ie
- Historic Graves – historicgraves.com
- Billion Graves – <https://billiongraves.com>
- Find A Grave – www.findagrave.com

Griffith’s Primary Valuation – property tax records 1848-1864

- askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation

Tithe Applotment Books – Church of Ireland tax records 1823-1837

- The National Archives of Ireland
titheapplotmentbooks.nationalarchives.ie/search/tab/home.jsp

Wills & Administrations – most originals destroyed in 1922; some indexes and abstracts still exist

- Will index books at McClelland Library
- Will indexes online
 - www.findmypast.com – 1484-1858
 - www.ancestry.com – 1536-1857
 - <https://familysearch.org> – 1858-1920

- Will calendars, abstracts and indexes
 - www.nationalarchives.ie – 1858-1982
 - www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni – pre-1858-1943

Landed Estate Records – apply to large land owners; tenants may be mentioned

- Free online Landed Estates Database c.1700-1914 for Connaught and Munster
landedestates.nuigalway.ie
- Landed Estate Court Records on www.findmypast.com

Land Commission Records – began in 1881

- National Archives of Ireland www.nationalarchives.ie

Registry of Deeds – Protestant land owners

- Property Registration Authority – www.prai.ie
- Volunteer transcription project for free access to deeds
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~registryofdeeds>

Religious Censuses – partial lists for 1766 and 1749

- <https://familysearch.org>

Hearth Money Rolls – tax on the number of fireplace hearths in each house – 1664-1666

- <https://familysearch.org>

Reference Guides

John Grenham Book – “**Tracing Your Irish Ancestors**” (4th Edition)

- Detailed county-by-county reference guide of available records and where to find them

FamilySearch Wiki – <https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Ireland>

- Explains Irish record types and their locations, with a list of Irish genealogy websites

Irish Genealogy Website – www.IrishGenealogy.ie/en/

- Free online search portal with links and descriptions of various record types
- Online access to church parish record transcriptions for Kerry, Carlow, southern Cork, and Dublin City in the Republic of Ireland

Additional Irish Websites

Irish-Genealogy-Toolkit.com

- Free “how-to” guide to researching Irish Family History, with maps and family history forms
- Blog - www.irishgenealogynews.com

GENUKI.org.uk

- Contains instructional material and many links to the best sites for genealogy in Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man

IrelandGenWeb.com

- Part of WorldGenWeb with website links containing indexes and guides for all 32 counties

IrelandXO.com

- Ireland Reaching Out - “reverse genealogy” program
- Volunteer effort to identify worldwide descendants of Irish people who left Ireland

Griffith’s Valuation Example

- James Parker, Sr. living in the townland of Ballykeel in the mid-1800s
- Ask About Ireland website - askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation