



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](http://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.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](http://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	41122
Cavan	1821, 1841	45
Cork	1841	4545
Fermanagh	1821, 1841, 1851	
Galway	1821	
King's County (Offaly)	1821	
Londonderry (Derry)	1831, (1834 revisions)	
Meath	1821	
Waterford	1841	
Kerry		

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](http://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](http://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, 1911.

Two Examples of the mode of filling up this Table are given on the other side.

## FORM A.

No. on Form B. 17

RETURN of the MEMBERS of this FAMILY and their VISITORS, BOARDERS, SERVANTS, &c., who slept or abode in this House on the night of SUNDAY, the 2nd of APRIL, 1911.

Number.	NAME AND SURNAME.		RELATION to Head of Family.	RELIGIOUS PROFESSION.	EDUCATION.	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX.		RANK, PROFESSION, OR OCCUPATION.	PARTICULARS AS TO MARRIAGE.				WHERE BORN.	IRISH LANGUAGE.	If Dead and Deaf; Dumb only; Blind; Inebriate or Idiot; or Lunatic.
	Christian Name.	Surname.				Insert Age opposite each name—the Ages of Males in column 6, and the Ages of Females in column 7. For Infants under one year state the age in months, as "under 1 month," "1 month," "2 months," &c.	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.]  Before filling this column you are requested to read the instructions on the other side.	Whether "Married," "Widower," "Widow," or "Single."	State for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule the number of—  Completed years the present Marriage has lasted. If less than one year, write "under one."	Children born alive to present Marriage. If so children born alive, write "None" in column 11.	Total Children born alive.	Children still living.	If in Ireland, state in what County or City; if elsewhere, state the name of the Country.	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.	Write the respective infirmities opposite the name of the affected person.
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
1	Bridget	Cattigan	Head of Family	Roman Catholic	Cannot read	—	86	—	Widow	—	—	—	Cormeau	Irish English	
2	Owen	Cattigan	Son	DO	Read & Write	54	—	Farmer	married	—	—	—	DO DO	DO DO	
3	Margret	Cattigan	Daughter-in-Law	DO	DO	—	45	—	married	23	5	5	DO DO	DO DO	
4	Michael	Cattigan	Grandson	DO	DO	DO	22	Farmer's Son	Single	—	—	—	DO DO	DO DO	
5	Catharine	Cattigan	Granddaughter	DO	DO	DO	19	Farmer's Daughter	Single	—	—	—	DO DO	DO DO	
6	Lugh	Cattigan	Grandson	DO	DO	DO	17	Farmer's Son	Single	—	—	—	DO DO	DO DO	
7	Owen	Cattigan	Grandson	DO	DO	DO	9	Scholar	single	—	—	—	DO DO	DO DO	
8	Maggie	Cattigan	Granddaughter	DO	DO	Cannot read	—	—	Single	—	—	—	DO DO	—	
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.

*Horat Martin Herbert* Signature of Enumerator.

I believe the foregoing to be a true Return.

*Bridget 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](http://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.

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

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](http://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](http://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

#### w 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](http://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](http://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](http://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.
<del>1160</del>	<del>Michael Reay</del>							
1000	Unoccupied House	30	27.0	15.0	5.0	40	3	" 10. 0 ✓
<del>18</del>	<del>Edmond</del>							
1500	House	30	32.0	16.6	5.6	52	3/4	" 14. 1
	Cow House	30	12.6	20.0	5.0	25	1 3/4	" 3 7
								" 17. 8 ✓
<del>13</del>	<del>Daniel</del>							
0150	down House	30	21.0	16.0	5.6	29	2 1/2	" 6. 0 3. 7 ✓
<del>4</del>	<del>Henry</del>							
1500	House	30	38.0	18.0	6.0	68	3 1/2	" 19. 10 down ✓
<del>11</del>	<del>Daniel</del>							
01000	House	30	13.6	12.6	5.0	16	2 1/4	" 3. 6 down ✓
<del>11</del>	<del>Thomas</del>							
1129	Unocc House	30	15.6	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 ✓
<del>7</del>	<del>Daniel</del>							
01500	Unocc House	30	20.0	13.0	5.6	26	3 1/4	" 7. 0 ✓
<del>15</del>	<del>Michael</del>							
1000	down House	30	24.0	14.6	6.0	34	2 1/2	" 7. 1 ✓
<del>19</del>	<del>James</del>							
1000	House	30	29.0	14.6	6.0	42	2 1/2	" 8. 9 ✓ down ✓
	Thos. Madigan							Tell. Oct 4/49

## 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](http://genealogy.nationalarchives.ie) and 1922–1982 on [www.nationalarchives.ie](http://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](http://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

KNOW ALL MEN by these Presents that We (1) *John Collins*  
of *89 Bolans Road B* in the County of *the City of Dublin* *Dublin*  
and *William Callanan* of *28 Jervis Place* in the  
County of *the City of Dublin* *Manufacture* and  
of \_\_\_\_\_ in the County of \_\_\_\_\_  
are jointly and severally bound unto THE RIGHT HONORABLE *William D. 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 (2) *Three thousand one*  
*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 *2<sup>nd</sup>* day of *September* in the year of our Lord one  
thousand nine hundred and *fifty two*

The condition of this obligation is such, that if the above bounden (1) *John Collins*  
the *lawful brother*  
of (2) *Michael Collins*  
*Major-General about*  
*the City of Dublin* *Commander in Chief of the National*  
*Army* *deceased* and  
the intended Administrator of the (3) \_\_\_\_\_ Personal Estate of the said deceased,  
do, when lawfully called upon in that behalf, make or cause to be made, a true inventory of  
the Personal Estate of the said Deceased, which has or shall come to *his hands*  
possession or knowledge, or into the hands and possession of any other Person for *him*  
and the same so made do exhibit, or cause to be exhibited, into the Principal Registry of  
the said Division at Dublin, whenever required by law so to do; and the same Personal  
Estate, and all other the Personal Estate of the said Deceased at the time of *John*  
high at any time after shall come to the hands or possession of the said *John*  
*Collins* or into the hands or possession of any other Person  
or Persons for *him* 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*  
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  
by the said (1) *John Collins and* *William Callanan*  
and *William Callanan*  
in the presence of  
*James J. O'Connell*

if Request have the  
seals of all the par-  
ties to the bond.

SEAL.

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.jewishmuseum.ie). An Irish Jewish family history database is available at [www.irishjewishroots.com](http://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](http://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](http://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 Magen, of Castlewillan, County Down, dated 6 October 1714.

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

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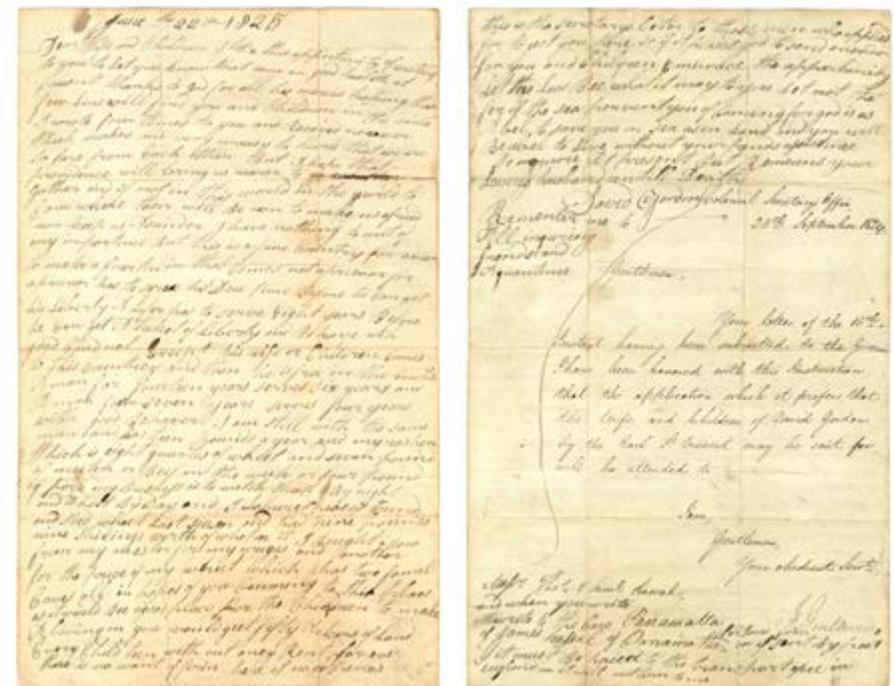
## 7 Penal Transportation Records: Ireland to Australia, 1788 - 1868

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](http://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.

The database index of transportation records is available on the National Archives website, [www.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.nationalarchives.ie). The index is designed to be searched by surname, but may also be searched under place of trial, crime or date. Microfilms containing full copies of the records are available in the Reading Room and the index and microfilms are also available in state libraries in Australia. If the search of the transportation database and the microfilms has been successful there may be enough information to pursue the search in other National Archives' sources, including the Chief Secretary's Office Registered Papers, which includes Outrage Reports, or in newspapers held in the National Library of Ireland, [www.nli.ie](http://www.nli.ie).



A memorial to the Chief Secretary by convict David Gordon, who paints a positive picture of his life in Australia and seeks permission to have his wife and family sent out to meet him. ↑

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk).

A database of the indexes is available, free of charge, on [www.familysearch.org](http://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](http://www.askaboutireland.ie)

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### Irish Genealogy

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

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### General Register Office

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

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### National Library of Ireland, Roman Catholic parish registers

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

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### National Library of Ireland

[registers.nli.ie](http://registers.nli.ie)

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### Valuation Office

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

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

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

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### Representative Church Body Library

[www.ireland.anglican.org](http://www.ireland.anglican.org)

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### Placenames Database of Ireland

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

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### Public Record Office of Northern Ireland

[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

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### General Register Office for Northern Ireland

[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

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### National Records of Scotland

[www.nrscotland.gov.uk](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk)

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### The National Archives of the United Kingdom

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

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### Council of Irish Genealogical Organisations

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

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### Family Search

[www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

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### Irish Family History Society

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

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### Irish Genealogy Research Society

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

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**An Chartlann Náisiúnta**  
**National Archives**

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