



An Chartlann Náisiúnta  
National Archives

# Sources for family history





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# 1 Introduction

This guide is a general introduction to the rich sources of information that are available in the National Archives for those beginning research into family history. It provides a description of these archives as well as information on potential sources of relevance held in other repositories.

This guide is not exhaustive but if read in conjunction with the information on our website at [www.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.nationalarchives.ie), the National Archives Reading Room staff and the professional genealogists in our free Genealogy Advisory Service will be better placed to handle individual enquiries and research queries.



## 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 (PROI), 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 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, although several date back as far as the 13<sup>th</sup> 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 1820s or 1830s (see section 4)
- Primary Valuation and valuation records for a person living in the 1840s, 1850s or 1860s (see section 4)
- 1901 and 1911 census returns for a person living in the early 20<sup>th</sup> 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 → PROI, Mills' album



## 2 Beginning a search

If you know the 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:

- The Tithe Applotment Books can be searched and accessed online at [www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.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.
- The 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 searches of the 1901 and 1911 census returns and surviving censuses for 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851, as well as census search forms available at [www.census.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie).
- Various indexes available in our Reading Room which allow searches to be made by surname, subject matter and placename, such as indexes to marriage licence bonds (see section 7), to genealogical abstracts and to surviving pre-20<sup>th</sup>-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 the 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 Censuses of 1821–1851

Almost all census returns for the years 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851 were destroyed in the former PROI fire in 1922. However, there are some surviving returns for 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851 and these cover parts of the following counties and census years:

| County                 | Year                  |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Antrim                 | 1851                  |
| Cavan                  | 1821 and 1841         |
| Cork                   | 1841                  |
| Fermanagh              | 1821, 1841 and 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 19<sup>th</sup>-century census returns in the Reading Room).

Surviving census returns are fully searchable online at [www.census.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.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 Censuses 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 Censuses of 1901 and 1911

Almost all the original manuscript returns for each household survive for the 32 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)
- 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

The 1901 and 1911 census returns are fully searchable online across all categories of information recorded on the original census forms at [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 the 1911 census, 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)

FOR

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.                                   |
|---------|---|----------|--|---|--|--|
|         | Christian Name.   | Surname. |  |   |  |  |
|         | <small>No Persons ABSENT on the night of Sunday, March 31st, to be entered here: EXCEPT those (not enumerated elsewhere) who may be out at WORK or TRAVELLING, &amp;c., during that Night, and who RETURN HOME ON MONDAY, APRIL 1st.</small><br><small>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, &amp;c.</small> |          | <small>State whether "Head of Family," or "Wife," "Son," "Daughter," or other relative; "Visitor," "Boarder," "Servant," &amp;c.</small> | <small>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.)</small> | <small>State here whether he or she can "Read and Write," can "Read" only, or "Cannot Read."</small> | <small>Years on last Birthday.</small> |
| 1       | Mary Anne   | Collins  | Head of Fam.   | R. Catholic   | Read & Write   | 45                                     |
| 2       | Margaret Mary   | Collins  | Daughter   | Roman Catholic  | Read & Write   | 23                                     |
| 3       | John  | Collins  | Son  | Roman Catholic  | Read & Write   | 22                                     |
| 4       | Helena  | Collins  | Daughter   | Roman Catholic  | Read & Write   | 17                                     |
| 5       | Patrick   | Collins  | Son  | Roman Catholic  | Read & Write   | 15                                     |
| 6       | Katie J.  | Collins  | Daughter   | Roman Catholic  | Read & Write   | 13                                     |
| 7       | Michael   | Collins  | Son  | Roman Catholic  | Read & Write   | 10                                     |
| 8       |   |          |  |   |  |  |
| 9       |   |          |  |   |  |  |
| 10      |   |          |  |   |  |  |
| 11      |   |          |  |   |  |  |
| 12      |   |          |  |   |  |  |
| 13      |   |          |  |   |  |  |
| 14      |   |          |  |   |  |  |
| 15      |   |          |  |   |  |  |

I hereby certify, as required by the Act 63 Vic., cap. 6, s. 6 (1), that the foregoing Return is correct, according to the best of my knowledge and belief.

*Cornelius C. Ward* (Signature of Enumerator)

*this Table are given on the other side.)*

M. A.

&c., who slept or abode in this House on the night of **SUNDAY**, the 31st of **MARCH**, 1901.

[illegible]

I believe the foregoing to be a true Return.

Mary Anne Collins (Signature of Head of Family).

## 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 PROI or others prior to this date have survived. A list of 19<sup>th</sup>-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 digitised and searchable on our family history website at [www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.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 censuses 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.

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

No. on Form B. 8

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 31st of MARCH, 1901.

1901 census return for the family of James Joyce living in 8.1, Royal Terrace, Clontarf West, Dublin ↑  
NAI, 1901 census, Dublin, DED Clontarf West, 28/16

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 their 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). The census search forms are available online and are searchable for free at [www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie).

### 3 Official census returns and census substitutes

#### 3.4.3 Agricultural Census

The Agricultural Census comprises two separate documents: one is 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 c1800–1816. 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 the Chief Secretary of 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 nonetheless 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 at [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, county Dublin, c1650**

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 Tithe 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 at [www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.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 (Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry (Derry) and Tyrone) 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 the names of the heads of household in a particular geographic area. They do 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 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 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 at [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 1990s.

#### 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 available to search online free of charge at [www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie).

Valuation Office House Book from 1849 for the townland of Monavanshere, Donaghmore, county Cork →  
NAI, OL /5/703

## Houses in Townland of Monaghan

| No.                         | Name and Description.       | Quality Letter. | Length. | Breadth. | Height. | Number of Measures. | Rate per Measure. | Amount.                              |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|---------|----------|---------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                             |                             |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   | £ s. d.                              |
| <del>61<sup>1/2</sup></del> | <del>Michael Reay</del>     |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   |                                      |
| 1.0.0                       | Unoccupied House            | 3C+             | 27.0    | 15.0     | 5.0     | 40                  | 3                 | " 10. 0 ✓                            |
| <del>18<sup>1/2</sup></del> | <del>Edmond</del>           |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   |                                      |
| <del>80</del>               | <del>Michael Murphy</del>   |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   |                                      |
| 1.5.0                       | House                       | 3C+             | 32.0    | 16.6     | 5.6     | 52                  | 3 1/4             | " 14. 1                              |
|                             | Cow House                   | 3C+             | 12.6    | 20.0     | 5.0     | 25                  | 1 3/4             | 3 7                                  |
|                             |                             |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   | " 17. 8 ✓                            |
| <del>13</del>               | <del>Dennis Reaher</del>    |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   |                                      |
| 0.15.0                      | down House                  | 3C              | 21.0    | 14.0     | 5.6     | 29                  | 2 1/2             | <del>6. 0</del><br><del>3. 7</del> ✓ |
| <del>7</del>                | <del>Henry Reay</del>       |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   |                                      |
| 1.5.0                       | House                       | 3C+             | 28.0    | 18.0     | 6.0     | 68                  | 3 1/2             | " 19. 10<br>down ✓                   |
| <del>114</del>              | <del>Daniel Sullivan</del>  |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   |                                      |
| 0.10.0                      | House                       | 3C              | 13.6    | 12.6     | 5.0     | 16                  | 2 1/4             | " 3. 6<br>down ✓                     |
| <del>112</del>              | <del>Thomas Reay</del>      |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   |                                      |
| 1.12.9                      | Unsec. House                | 3C+             | 43.6    | 16.6     | 6.0     | 71                  | 3 1/2             | 11 0 8                               |
|                             | Cow House & Cart Shed       | 3C+             | 24.0    | 12.0     | 6.0     | 28                  | 2                 | " 4. 8                               |
|                             |                             |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   | 11 5. 4 ✓                            |
| <del>113</del>              | <del>Dennis Murphy</del>    |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   |                                      |
| 0.15.0                      | Unsec. House                | 3C+             | 20.0    | 13.0     | 5.6     | 26                  | 3 1/4             | " 7. 0 ✓                             |
| <del>115</del>              | <del>Michael Sullivan</del> |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   |                                      |
| 1.0.0                       | down House                  | 3C              | 24.0    | 14.6     | 6.0     | 34                  | 2 1/2             | " 7. 1 ✓                             |
| <del>119</del>              | <del>Dennis Sullivan</del>  |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   |                                      |
| 1.5.0                       | House                       | 3C              | 29.0    | 14.6     | 6.0     | 42                  | 2 1/2             | " 8. 0 ✓<br>down                     |
|                             | Thos. McKeegan              |                 |         |          |         |                     |                   | Tell. kept 24. 69                    |

## 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 indexes have been published. Of these, the most important are *Vicar's Index to the Prerogative Wills of Ireland, 1536–1810*, the *Indexes to Dublin Grant Books and Wills, 1270–1800* and the *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 or a copy obtained for a fee by completing the Testamentary Copy Order form available on our website and in the Reading Room.**

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 the Reading Room have been digitised and can be searched online for the years 1858–1920 at [www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie) and for 1922–1982 at [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’. It 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, type 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 however, this may return multiple entries 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 in the Legal records section. Indexes covering 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).

## 5 Wills and administrations

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

### 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.

### 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 the 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 and 1834), some diocesan courts, Connor (1818–1820 and 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 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 and 1839) and some diocesan courts including Cashel (1840–1845), Connor (1818–1820 and 1853–1858), Down (1850–1858), Derry and Raphoe (1812–1851) and Ossory (1848–1858).

#### 5.5 **Betham's Abstracts**

Betham's Abstracts include 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 to the Prerogative Wills of Ireland, 1536–1810*, the *Indexes to Dublin Grant Books and Wills, 1270–1800* and the 'Index to Wills of the Diocese of Kildare' reprinted from the Journal of the Kildare Archaeological Society (IV, no 6, 1905)). Betham's Abstracts also include 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 for the years 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.

she may in the exercise of her discretion have disposed of whether to my children or one of them or otherwise or for the proceeds thereof and on her death I DEVISE AND BEQUEATH such of the same property as may remain undisposed of at the time of her death or the proceeds thereof to my two children in such shares or otherwise as my wife may appoint or direct by Deed or Will and if she should make no such direction and appointment then in equal shares but so nevertheless that all family possessions inherited by me shall go and belong to my son William Michael Butler Yeats absolutely IN WITNESS whereof I have hereunto signed my name this *Twenty eighth* day of *November* One thousand nine hundred and thirty-four.

SIGNED by the Testator )  
 William Butler Yeats as :  
 and for his last Will )  
 and Testament in the :  
 presence of us who in )  
 his presence and at his :  
 request in presence of )  
 each other have hereunto :  
 signed our names as )  
 witnesses. :

*W. B. Yeats*

*W. B. Yeats*  
*Solo*  
*46 Kildare St*  
*Dublin.*

*Edwin Doyle*  
*46 Kildare St Dublin*  
*Solo Assistant*

## 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 (ie 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 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 (ie 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 20<sup>th</sup> century.

PRONI holds copies of all surviving Church of Ireland registers for the dioceses of Armagh, Clogher, Connor, Derry, Dromore, Down, Kilmore and Raphoe. As well as covering the counties of Northern Ireland, these dioceses also cover counties Cavan, Donegal, Louth, Monaghan and part of county Leitrim 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 c1908–1922 but mainly c1915–1922, 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).

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’s *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 at [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 17<sup>th</sup> 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 ffearry-Smyrl, *Dictionary of Dublin Dissent: Dublin's Protestant Dissenting Meeting Houses, 1660–1920* (Dublin, 2009).

of my will have full power and lawfull authority to renew any lease or  
 Leases by me heretofore 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 leaving issue 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 <sup>(Co. 19)</sup> Signed Sealed and published the day &  
 year first above written in the presence of us Edw<sup>d</sup> Overend  
 John Hart Bryan Rodgers

Ex

Probata et approbata in communi forma a dignis Curia Regie  
 Baronia de insinuata fuerit testamentum et fideiussus procedit  
 Meredith Workman nuper de Mahan in Comitatu Amachano  
 Arm<sup>o</sup> d<sup>o</sup> (P<sup>o</sup>entis) necnon onus executionis eundem et admo  
 Bonorum et d<sup>o</sup> defuncti concepta fuerit sunt per Rosm<sup>o</sup> p<sup>o</sup>ahem  
 Hugonem de necnon iudicem et Meredith Workman Arm<sup>o</sup>  
 filio mat<sup>o</sup> et Arm<sup>o</sup> d<sup>o</sup> defuncti Henrico Corke Generoso Genero d<sup>o</sup>  
 d<sup>o</sup> et Valentinio Jones Arm<sup>o</sup> tribus Eorum in d<sup>o</sup> test<sup>o</sup> d<sup>o</sup> d<sup>o</sup>  
 nominat<sup>o</sup> huius ad laudam Dei Evang<sup>o</sup> Virtute Communiat<sup>o</sup> (Salvo iure  
 Maria Workman Vidua et Melita d<sup>o</sup> d<sup>o</sup> necnon al<sup>o</sup> Coris in d<sup>o</sup>  
 test<sup>o</sup> d<sup>o</sup> d<sup>o</sup> nominat<sup>o</sup> cum venia idempetit<sup>o</sup> necnon Salvo iure  
 et) Dat<sup>o</sup> secundo die mensis Februarij Anno Dni 1726<sup>o</sup> Et habet  
 pro Invenit in vel ultra ultimum diem mensis Augusti prod<sup>o</sup> factum

In the Name of God  
 Amen Daniel Magenis of Calkwillan in the County of Down Esq<sup>r</sup>  
 who 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 m<sup>o</sup>is 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 sin<sup>s</sup> and life eternall Secondly

my

my will is that 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 Gen 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 uncle in Maghenz with  
with a stone as aforesaid to be put over my grave my farther will <sup>that</sup> in case  
I dye in either of those places or in that country that my Executors nor y<sup>e</sup>  
Clergy do not suffer any howling or Rhyning 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 between the Roman Catholique Clergy of the two dioceses of Down and  
Dromore 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<sup>r</sup> Ann Mageniz and the said father James Mc  
Donnell shall judge fitt Item I bequeath and leave unto my most deare  
wife the said Ann Mageniz 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 Mageniz  
<sup>my best friend of the whole</sup> and to my son Daniel Mageniz my sword my son Daniel Mageniz my best horse  
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  
vest 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 enjoin my said son Arthur  
Mageniz 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 Mageniz shall have paid her fifty pounds  
sterling to maintain her till her jointure becomes due and that likewise  
my dear daughter Mary Mageniz 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 at [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 at [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 contain the Outrage Reports series or in newspapers held in the National Library of Ireland at [www.nli.ie](http://www.nli.ie).

June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1825  
Dear Sir and Children I have had opportunity to forward  
to you to let you know that I am in good health and  
am well thanks to God for all the mercies heaping  
down on me and my children in the same  
I write four times to you and receive answer  
which makes me very happy to know that we are  
so far from each other. But I hope that  
 Providence will bring us nearer to each other  
 together and if not in this world in the world to  
 come which I will do now to make myself  
 now keep us together I have nothing to tell of  
 any importance but this is a fine country for man  
 to make a garden in that comes not a prisoner for  
 a prisoner has to give his time some to himself  
 his liberty I have to serve eight years before  
 he can get a ticket of liberty and I have not  
 good conduct. Except his wife or children comes  
 to this country and then he is free in the world  
 I have for fourteen years served six years and  
 seven for seven years served four years  
 with good behavior. I am still with the same  
 man have not seen him for a year and my reason  
 which is eight quarters of wheat and seven pounds  
 of mutton or beef in the week or four pounds  
 of pork my business is to watch sheep by night  
 and day. By day and I am a good hand for  
 and when I am not at work I am more than  
 nine shillings worth of work in it. I thought you  
 from my answer for my wages and another  
 for the price of my wheat which that we could  
 have all in hopes of you coming to this place  
 as I would see your place from the prisoners to make  
 a living in you would get fifty acres of land  
 every child in with out any rent for ever  
 there is no want of grain here at all times

this is the second time I have to this man who applied  
 for to get you here so if I had got a second answer  
 for you and I might be ordered to the other side  
 so the Lord be what it may to get us so met. The  
 for of the sea from each other of course for good is as  
 well to save you in sea also and I hope you will  
 be able to live without your hands and I will  
 to move all present day. I am your  
 loving husband and father  
 Reminded me to  
 All inquiries  
 Providence  
 20<sup>th</sup> September 1825  
 Your letter of the 15<sup>th</sup>  
 Christ having been submitted to the General  
 I have been honored with this instruction  
 that the application which it professes that  
 the wife and children of David Gordon  
 by the Earl of Bessborough may be sent for  
 will be attended to  
 I am  
 Yours obedient servant  
 John Gordon  
 After that I shall send  
 and when you write  
 I will be sure to have  
 of James Gordon of Portmarnock  
 I must be happy to the hands of the  
 England in small out come to...

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 ↑  
NAI, CSO/RP/1826/522

## 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 Advisory Service is intended primarily for first-time researchers and visitors but more experienced researchers may find it of value in assisting with research matters. Information on hours of opening are available in the Visit us section of the National Archives website at [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 our website at [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 counties of Northern Ireland 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 at [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 Ó 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.welfare.ie/en/Pages/GRO\\_Research.aspx](http://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/GRO_Research.aspx)

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**National Library of Ireland**

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

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**General Register Office for Northern Ireland**

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

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**Irish Genealogy Research Society**

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

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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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## An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

National Archives,  
Bishop Street, Dublin 8,  
D08 DF85, Ireland.

Phone: + 353 (0)1 407 2300

Lo Call: + 353 1890 252424

Fax: + 353 (0)1 407 2333

Email: [query@nationalarchives.ie](mailto:query@nationalarchives.ie)