

A PLACENAME: **THE KEY TO UNLOCKING IRISH RECORDS**

LOCATE THE PLACENAME BEFORE YOU TRY TO SEARCH IN IRELAND

Although Ireland is small, it was densely populated at the time of the Great Famine and the number of Surnames was, and is, limited. In order to locate the right records you must collect this essential information before beginning your search in Ireland:

*Immigrant's name and Birthdate (or approximate), Events
Parents' names including mother's maiden name, of possible
Location: County, Civil (and/or church) Parish, Townland or village
Also Helpful: Relatives' and associate's names, children's names*

As you are seeking this information, you must watch for the Irish Placename in all records. If you are unsuccessful in finding a placename connected to YOUR immigrant ancestor, trace every sibling, relative, and associate and watch for it in their records.

Your essential information might be found in the U.S. in official records such as State death indexes and certificates, County birth and marriage and death indexes and certificates, Wills and Probates, Cemetery records and gravestones, Funeral home, Military and Pension, naturalization, Passenger lists, Church records and histories, Census and Land records and City and County Directories. Biographical information on your immigrant family can also be found in Obituaries, Newspaper articles, general local histories, County histories, and historical societies' collections.

In order to locate that elusive Irish Placename, you may need to trace every living relative and all descendants of those immigrant ancestors. Gather data on all of your ancestor's siblings and associates using oral family Tradition, Bibles, Letters, Genealogies, and all written family information and documents.

WHEN YOU HAVE FOUND THE PLACE NAME, WHAT DO YOU DO NOW?

*******Don't go to Ireland YET*******

USE OVERSEAS RECORDS AT HOME to expand your information base.

It is important to understand Administrative Districts in Ireland. Read this excellent article first: "Administrative Districts in Ireland" by James G. Ryan. Go to www.ancestry.com, Select *Learning Center*, then type "Administrative" in the Search box. This article will come up first.

Irish records are organized and stored according to these districts:

CIVIL: (4 Provinces, 32 Counties, 273 Baronies, many Poor Law Unions
[PLUs], 2500 civil parishes, 64,000 townlands)

CHURCH: Mainly Catholic and Church of Ireland Dioceses and Ecclesiastical
parishes <http://irelandgenealogyprojects.rootsweb.com/Admin/sitemap.htm>

While each county falls within a specific Province, many of the other districts cross county lines. Once you find a PLACENAME (whether it is a civil parish, townland or village), it is important to note each of the other districts within which it falls.

(For example, an individual who lived in the townland of Cloonteen, in the civil parish of Doon, in County Limerick, was also in the Poor Law Union [PLU] of Tipperary, and Barony of Ownybeg. Their children were baptized and married in the church in the nearby village of Cappamore, in the church diocese of Cashel and Emly which covers parts of both Co. Limerick and Co. Tipperary. Knowledge of each administrative district is necessary in order to locate ALL the available records.)

Read this article about Placenames <http://www.irelandseye.com/aarticles/features/tracing2.shtm>

Search for a Placename at <http://scripts.ireland.com/ancestor/placenames/index.cfm> . If the placename is a common word (eg. *Doon* meaning *fort*), there may be many, and you will need more information to narrow it down. Click on the parish name to see all townlands in that parish, with a summary of the records which are available.

Also: IreAtlas Townland database: <http://www.seanruad.com/> It was last updated in 1999, but is still useful, although incomplete.

Understand your Ancestor's place of origin by studying Maps:

Search via Google: "map <placename>"

Regional: http://www.irishgenealogical.org/bookstore/store_maps.htm

Townlands: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~fianna/guide/towns.html>

Good information and many links to Irish records:

From-Ireland: (Dr. Jane Lyons): <http://www.from-ireland.net/gene/genealogy.htm>

I recommend that you explore this well-organized site thoroughly, bookmark it and return frequently as you discover more about your family. Expect to find new information and links as the owner adds links to the site.

It is important to remember that **Civil Registration** did not begin in Ireland until 1864. Before that, church records are the primary source for birth, marriage and death records.

U.S. Catholic Records

A. Once you know a County and a Placename:

1. Subscribe to Rootsweb Mailing Lists:
<http://lists.rootsweb.com/index/intl/IRL/>
2. Choose the County. Subscribe. I recommend you use Digests, or set up a separate email address just for genealogy lists.
3. Ireland GenWeb Project <http://www.irelandgenweb.com/>
3. CMC Project (christening, marriage, and cemetery records)
<http://www.cmcpr.net/>

B. Further Research here

1. Family History Library/ Family History Centers (microfilms)
www.familysearch.org Choose *Library*, then *Family History Library Catalog*, then *Place Search*. Discover what microfilmed records are available for you to order to view locally at your nearby FHC.
2. If you want to jump start your research, consider hiring a professional such as Jane Lyons, Ph.D, Dublin, Ireland (see website reference above)
<http://www.from-ireland.net/research/research.htm>
3. Order research from County Heritage Centres in Ireland (Fees vary) Irish Family History Foundation <http://www.irishroots.net/> Follow links to counties.

C. Books that help:

1. John Grenham, "Tracing your Irish Ancestors"
2. James Ryan's books on Irish research
3. Brian Mitchell, "A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland"
4. Edward MacLysacht, "The Surnames of Ireland"
5. "Dictionary of Irish Placenames", Adrian Room
6. "U.S. Catholic Sources: A Diocesan Research Guide by Virginia Hemling.
Learn where the records are kept
7. "Discovering your Irish Ancestors" by Dwight A Radford & Kyle J. Betit.
8. "The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland" by John P. Prendergast

GENERAL WEBSITES FOR IRISH RESEARCH at home and abroad

- A. Cyndi's List, Ireland and Northern Ireland: <http://www.cyndislist.com/ireland.htm>
- B. Irish Genealogy on the Web by IGSI- <http://rootsweb.com/~irish/index.html>
- C. Irish Genealogy (Irish site) <http://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- D. Irish Genealogy -<http://www.irishgenealogy.com/>
Georgeanne Malowney's U.S.site, under reconstruction, see archives
- E. Irish Genealogical Society Int'l <http://www.irishgenealogical.org/>
- F. Ulster Historical Foundation <http://www.ancestryireland.co.uk/>
- G. Tipperary Family History Research (was THU): <http://www.tfhr.org>
- H. Irish Family History & Genealogy <http://www.historicalresearchireland.com/>
- I. IRISH Phonebook Home Page: <http://www.goldenpages.ie/>
- J. Irish Genealogical Foundation (O'Lochlainn's) <http://www.irishroots.com/>
- K. Ellis Island 1892-1924: www.ellislandrecords.org
Recommend Steve Morse's site for extra help: <http://stevemorse.org/>
- L. NARA Famine Immigrants database: http://aad.archives.gov/aad/title_list.jsp
Scroll down alphabetically to Title: Famine Irish Data Files, 1977 ? - 1989 ?
- M. 1901 Irish Census Online www.leitrim-roscommon.com
- N. Local Catholic and Family History Research: http://home.att.net/~Local_Catholic/
- O. Emigrant Savings Bank records <http://www.genexchange.org/esb/index.php>
Search engine currently disabled, but check back. (Also see Ancestry)

WHEN YOU ARE READY TO CONTINUE YOUR RESEARCH OVERSEAS

- A. Take copies of most essential data in light report folders
- B. Bring close-up Ordnance Survey (Discovery) maps of the region
<http://www.globecorner.com/s/209.html>
- C. Visit Heritage Center, buy books and maps of village/parish if available
- D. Visit the county, city and /or university libraries:
 In Local History section: Parish Histories, speak to Research Librarian

- E. Go to the Parish Town
 - 1. Visit Public library branch: check local history shelf and librarian,
 - 2. Historical Society/local historian(s), mail carrier, Cemeteries, genealogists
 - 3. Local histories - buy them!
 - 4. Find the Townland, home place, neighbors, talk to people in pub

- F. Dublin resources
 - 1. National Library of Ireland <http://www.nli.ie/> - Kildare Street
(censuses, church records)
 - 2. Genealogical Office (in National Library) (link from NL home page, above)
 Consultation, genealogy packet, State Heraldic Museum
 - 3. Land Valuation Office – Irish Life Centre, Lower Abbey Street
 Griffith's Valuation maps and Cancelled Land books (Revisions)
<http://www.valoff.ie/>
 - 4. National Archives - Bishop St. <http://www.nationalarchives.ie/>
 Censuses 1901, 1911; Griffith's Valuation Originals
 Tithes Applotment Books 1823-37, Wills and Administrations
 Church of Ireland Parish records to 1870
 - 5. General Register Office (Joyce House) 8-11 Lombard St.
<http://www.groireland.ie/>
 Birth, Marriage, Death Registrations since 1864
 Church of Ireland marriages from 1845
 - 6. General Register Office, Northern Ireland - Belfast.
 Now processing birth marriage and death certificate online
<http://www.groni.gov.uk/>
 - 7. Registry of Deeds- Henrietta Street, Dublin
<http://www.landregistry.ie/>
 - 9. Heraldic Artists, 3 Nassau St., Dublin
<http://www.heraldicartists.com/>

NEW RECORDS COME ONLINE WEEKLY

BOOKMARK YOUR FAVORITE SITES AND REVISIT THEM FREQUENTLY

GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR SEARCH FOR YOUR IRISH ANCESTORS