

Irish Family History Research: The Essentials
British Interest Group of Wisconsin and Illinois
16 July 2022
Presented by Maureen Brady

- I. **The “Bad” News.**
 - A. **Catholic “repression” (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_emancipation)**
 - 1. **17th century (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penal_Laws)**
 - 2. **Roman Catholic Relief Act 1829**
 - B. **30 June 1922 – The Four Courts Fire.**
 - C. **Language – Irish, English, Nicknames, etc.**
 - D. **Some resources are not online.**

- II. **The “Good” News.**
 - A. **Online indices.**
 - B. **Digitized images.**

- III. **What You Need to Know About Irish Records.**
 - A. **Land Divisions.**
 - 1. **“Ancient” Provinces – Ulster, Connacht, Leinster and Munster.**
 - 2. **County (32).**
 - 3. **Barony (331).**
 - 4. **Civil Parish (2,428).**
 - 5. **Poor Law Union (163 after 1851).**
 - 6. **Townland (60,642).**
 - 7. **Catholic Parish (1,086)**

 - B. **Religious Records**
 - 1. **Roman Catholic. Digital copies on the National Library of Ireland website; indexed at Ancestry, Find My Past and Roots Ireland.**
 - 2. **Church of Ireland (Anglican/Episcopal). About one-half destroyed in Four Courts fire; check the resources of the Ulster Historical Foundation.**
 - 3. **Presbyterian. Many Northern Ireland records now online.**
 - a) **Check the resources of the Ulster Historical Foundation.**
 - b) **FamilySearch has digitized some registers.**

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4.

IV. Finding Your Irish Home.

A. Wide – Wider – Widest.

1. Collateral research is a **MUST**.
2. Locate all records for every individual of Irish birth **AND** their children.

B. Where to Look.

1. Birth, Marriage and Death Records.
2. Cemeteries – Death Notices – Obituaries.
3. Family Bibles.
4. County Histories.
5. Occupational Records.
6. Fraternal and Social Organization Records.
7. The Irish American Heritage Center.
(4626 North Knox Avenue, Chicago, Illinois; (773) 282-7035)

V. Online Resources.

A. FamilySearch Research Wiki ([familysearch.org/wiki/en/Ireland_Genealogy](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Ireland_Genealogy)).

B. “Background”.

1. GENUKI ([genuki.org.uk](https://www.genuki.org.uk)).
2. Cyndi’s List ([cyndislist.com](https://www.cyndislist.com)).

C. “General” Databases.

1. FamilySearch Historical Records ([familysearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) – Search RECORDS & CATALOG).
2. Ancestry ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)).
3. American Ancestors (NEHGS) ([americanancestors.org](https://www.americanancestors.org)).
4. Find My Past ([findmypast.com](https://www.findmypast.com))
5. 19th Century British Library Newspapers (Available at all Family History Centers).

D. “Irish” Databases.

1. Irish Ancestors ([johngrenham.com](https://www.johngrenham.com)). Both fee-based and free.
2. Roots Ireland ([rootsireland.ie](https://www.rootsireland.ie)). Fee based website.
3. National Library of Ireland Catholic registers (registers.nli.ie). Free.
4. National Archives of Ireland (genealogy.nationalarchives.ie). Free.
5. Ulster Historical Foundation ([ancestryireland.com](https://www.ancestryireland.com)). Both fee-based and free.
6. Irish Genealogy ([irishgenealogy.ie](https://www.irishgenealogy.ie)). Free; also a portal to fee based sites.

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Suggested Reference Books

1. Ireland. Registrar General. *General Alphabetical Index to the Townlands and Towns, Parishes and Baronies of Ireland*. Baltimore, Maryland, USA: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2000.
2. Grenham, John. *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors*. Fifth Edition. Baltimore, Maryland, USA: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2019.
3. Lewis, Samuel A. *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*. 2 Volumes. Baltimore, Maryland, USA: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1995. (Digital version available in the BOOKS section of *FamilySearch*.)
4. Maxwell, Ian. *Tracing your Northern Irish ancestors: a guide for family historians*. 2nd edition. Barnsley, South Yorkshire, England: Pen and Sword Books, 2016.
5. Mitchell, Brian. *A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland, 2nd Edition*. Baltimore, Maryland, USA: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2002.
6. Paton, Chris. *Tracing your Irish ancestors through land records; a guide for family historians*. Barnsley, South Yorkshire, England: Pen and Sword Books, 2021.
7. Roulston, William. *Researching farming ancestors in Ireland*. Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2021.
8. Ryan, James G., Ph.D. *Irish records; sources for family and local history*. Provo, Utah, USA: Ancestry.com, 1997. (Digital version available at a Family History Center on the *FamilySearch* website.)