

Researching Your Irish Family History

September 2026 – Glamorgan Archives / Cadw Open Doors / Glamorgan Family History Society

Places and names

Townlands/places – <https://www.townlands.ie>

John Grenham's website (lots of useful information, including places – 5 free page views per day) – <https://www.johngrenham.com>

First Name Variants from Irish Genealogy Records (RootsIreland) – <https://www.rootsireland.ie/help/first-names/>

Irish Surname Variant Explorer – <https://familyhistory.ie/surname-explorer/>

Surname Distribution – <https://app.irishroots.ie/surnames>

Civil Registration (births, marriages, deaths)

Irish Genealogy – <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie>

- 1st April 1845 onwards – non-Catholic Christian, Jewish and civil marriages
- 1st January 1864 onwards – full civil registration of births, marriages and deaths
- Births (1864-1925), Marriages (1845-1950) and Deaths (1871-1975) available to view online (free of charge) – deaths 1864-1870 may eventually be added!

GRO (Ireland) – <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-social-protection/services/birth-death-marriage-and-other-certificates/>

GRO (Northern Ireland) – <https://geni.nidirect.gov.uk/>

Census records

Browse census records (includes surviving returns from 1821 to 1891) – <https://nationalarchives.ie/collections/search-the-census/browse/>

1901 & 1911 censuses – <https://nationalarchives.ie/collections/search-the-census/>

1926 census – <https://nationalarchives.ie/collections/search-the-1926-census/>

Newspapers

Irish News Archive – <https://irishnewsarchive.com/> (best overall coverage for Ireland)

British Newspaper Archive – <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>

FindMyPast – <https://www.findmypast.co.uk> (same collection as British Newspaper Archive)

Newspapers.com – <https://www.newspapers.com>

Church of Ireland Gazette – <https://esearch.informa.ie/>

Church records

Catholic

- National Library of Ireland (unindexed) – <https://registers.nli.ie/>
- Also available via FamilySearch and various subscription websites (indexed)
- RootsIreland (transcriptions), includes some registers that haven't been microfilmed, plus Griffiths valuation, passenger lists, memorial inscriptions, census substitutes, etc. – <https://www.rootsireland.ie/>

Dispensations for marriage (Catholic)

- Second degree – first cousins – shared grandparents
- Third degree – second cousins – shared great-grandparents
- Fourth degree – third cousins – shared great-great grandparents

Church of Ireland

- Irish Genealogy (baptisms) – <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie>
- Representative Church Body Library/Anglican Records Project – <https://www.churchofireland.org/about/rcb-library/online-parish-records>

Other

- Jewish – <https://irishjewishroots.com>
- Methodist – <https://methodisthistoryireland.org/family-history-genealogy/>
- Presbyterian – <https://presbyterianhistoryireland.com>
- Quaker – FindMyPast: births, marriages, deaths, congregational records, etc.

Northern Ireland

- PRONI guide to church records – <https://www.proni.gov.uk/publications/proni-guide-church-records>

Wills and testamentary records

National Archives (Ireland): How to find a will

<https://nationalarchives.ie/help-with-research/types-of-research/how-to-find-a-will/>

Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine: Irish wills

<https://www.whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com/tutorials/overseas/irish-wills>

Many wills were lost in the Public Record Office fire in 1922, but some do survive (including copies)

Other records

Griffiths Valuation – Ask About Ireland – <https://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/index.xml>
(also available on some subscription websites)

Ulster Covenant – <https://www.proni.gov.uk/ulster-covenant-signatures>

General genealogy websites

FamilySearch – <https://www.familysearch.com> (free)
Ancestry – <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> (subscription required)
FindMyPast – <https://www.findmypast.co.uk> (subscription required)
MyHeritage – <https://www.myheritage.com> (subscription required)
The Genealogist – <https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk> (subscription required)

Search card catalogues / broad search for 'Ireland' / filter to records for Ireland

Records include, for example: land records, court records, prison registers, directories, dog licences, merchant navy, Royal Irish Constabulary, school records, poverty relief loans – and lots more!

Other useful websites

National Archives Ireland – genealogy microsites currently offline (August 2026), but expected to be updated eventually on a new platform

<https://nationalarchives.ie/collections/genealogy-website/>

National Folklore Collection UCD Digitisation Project

<https://www.duchas.ie/en>

Virtual Treasury Record of Ireland (VTRI)

<https://virtualtreasury.ie/>

Irish Genealogy Resources at the Virtual Treasury (RootsTech – Claire Bradley)

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/session/irish-genealogy-resources-at-the-virtual-treasury>

RootsTech (search for 'Ireland')

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/search>

RIP.ie

<https://rip.ie/>

- Google search for, e.g., site:RIP.ie Paughanstown

Irish Geneaography

<https://www.irish-geneaography.com/>

Ireland Genealogy Projects

<https://www.igp-web.com/>

PRONI – Family and Local History Archives (Northern Ireland)

<https://www.proni.gov.uk/family-and-local-history-archives>

Cyndi's List

<https://www.cyndislist.com/uk/irl>

Books

Tracing Your Irish Ancestors – John Grenham
The Surnames of Ireland – Edward MacLysaght
How To Trace Your Irish Ancestors – Ian Maxwell
Researching Ancestral Crisis in Ireland – Chris Paton
Tracing Your Belfast Ancestors – Chris Paton
Tracing Your Irish Ancestors Through Land Records – Chris Paton
Tracing Your Irish Family History on the Internet – Chris Paton
The Family Tree Irish Genealogy Guide – Claire Santry

Professional Genealogists

Register of Qualified Genealogists – <https://www.qualifiedgenealogists.org/>
Accredited Genealogists Ireland – <https://accreditedgenealogists.ie/>

Kayleigh Bealin
<https://www.theirishgenealogist.com>

Natalie Bodie
<https://www.rootsrevealed.co.uk>

Claire Bradley
<https://cbgenealogy.ie>

Ciara Chivers
<https://shamrockroots.com>

Hilary McDonagh
<https://www.ancestorsolutions.ie>

Fergus Murphy
<https://yourancestorstories.com>

David Ryan
<https://ryangenealogicalresearch.com>

Some of the genealogists listed above also have blogs and/or newsletters that are worth following.