START WITH THE BASICS

Approach tracing your Irish ancestors the same way you would approach any other relative. Start with the same information, documents, and techniques you use in all genealogical research:

- Vital Records (birth, marriage, death)
- Federal and State Census
- Personal Records (family bible, wills, letters, etc.)
- Probate/Court Records
- Church Records
- Interview family members

Work your way back to the earliest Irish ancestor in America, then use what you know about that ancestor to figure out how to continue your research with the notoriously complicated Irish records.

GETTING BACK TO IRELAND

Once you’ve found your earliest Irish ancestor in America, look for that individual’s immigration and naturalization records, specifically the passenger list.

A passenger list can tell you a wealth of information about their family members and where in Ireland they came from. For example, the picture below shows the last permanent residence, and the name and complete address of nearest living relative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother, Mrs. Belinda, Upper Bridge Street, Baltimore, C., 19 York, N.</th>
<th>Father, Mrs. John, New York</th>
<th>Husband, Patrick Ryan, Holytown,</th>
<th>Son, John, Watertown,</th>
<th>Daughter, Mary, New York</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

CASS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
GENEALOGY BRANCH

400 EAST MECHANIC ST.
HARRISONVILLE, MISSOURI 64701
(816) 884-6285
askgenealogy@casscolibrary.org

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Monday
10:00am — 6:00pm
[CLOSED 12-1]
Tuesday & Thursday
12:00pm — 6:00pm
Wednesday
12:00pm — 8:00pm
[CLOSED 5-6]
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CONNECT WITH YOUR FAMILY HISTORY!

The Genealogy Branch has tons of resources and experienced genealogists to help you research your family history!

Visit us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/GenealogyCCPL
ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

There are a few things you need to know about your ancestor before starting your research in Irish records:

• **Birth name** — this includes all possible nicknames as they were commonly used in place of given names on many records.
  
  “Delia” for Bridget, “Nellie” for Ellen, “Darby” for Jeremiah or Diarmuid

• **Approximate age** — dates of birth or ages are almost always inaccurate in records. Irish people commonly adjusted their ages on an “as needed” basis.
  
  As a general rule, women wanted to be younger; men wanted to appear older for employment or enlistment.

• **Parents’ full names** — certain given names were common, so knowing the parents’ full names will help distinguish your Thomas or William from another with the same surname.
  
  Knowing your ancestor’s mother’s maiden name is also important; parish records use them.

• **County of birth** — much of Irish genealogical research is done in parish records, which are often kept and indexed by county.

Also, most online databases have searches that are organized by county, parish, or townland and knowing the specific location of life events can help cut down on results for common names.

BASIC RECORDS

In 1922, there was a devastating explosion that destroyed much of the public records office in Dublin, leading to a massive loss of records. However, there are still many resources for genealogical research:

**Civil Records**

Birth, marriage, & death records for all of Ireland began in 1864. These include non-Catholic marriages from 1845 as Catholic records were then kept at the parish level.

**Church Records**

In order to accomplish much of anything with church records, you must know your ancestor’s religious denomination. Parish records of baptisms and marriages are an invaluable resource for locating 18th and 19th century Irish ancestors.

Catholic registers are available at the Irish National Archives, but some denominations keep records locally.

**Land & Property Records**

**Tithe Applotment Books**—1823-1837

2,000 volumes of land records that are a detailed account of the occupiers of land with the extent and value of individual farms. Not exactly comprehensive, some avoided it due to its religious implications.

**The Primary Valuation of Ireland**—1846-1865

Known as “Griffith’s Valuation,” it lists every landowner and householder living on one acre of land or more. Provides occupant’s name, lessor’s name, a description of the property, and its value.

IRISH CENSUS RECORDS

[www.census.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie)

The Irish census records are the best place to start for beginners. The census records for 1901 and 1911 cover all thirty-two counties and search results can be narrowed by religion, marital status, language spoken, and more.

There are partial records for 1851, 1841, 1831, and 1821; however, they are very limited and only include a few counties.

ONLINE RESOURCES

A Primer in Irish Genealogy


Irish Genealogy

**Civil & Church Records**

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

National Archives of Ireland

[www.nationalarchives.ie/genealogy](http://www.nationalarchives.ie/genealogy)

Irish Records Digitization Project

Census, Wills, Land Records, and More

[www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie)