

Genealogy Starter Guide for Overseas Members



Hibernian Golf Club have compiled some information that overseas members or visitors will find useful when setting out to discover your own ancestry. You simply start by working back from yourself, generation by generation linking each person through documentation. Start with family papers and family stories. Write, or better yet, record older family members - oral tradition is a valuable source of information. Family papers and photographs are the foundation on which to build your research.

Follow the paper trail

- Work back from yourself, generation by generation linking each person through documentation where possible. Start with family papers and family stories. Write, or better yet, record older family members - oral tradition is a valuable source of information. Family papers and photographs are the foundation on which to build your research. While family stories and traditions can be a useful source of information you should try and confirm the veracity of the stories through reference to official records or other independent sources.
- Having gathered information from family sources, the next step is to locate public documents referring to your ancestor. These may include birth, marriage or death certificates which are completed by the civil authorities and which record details of these events and other related information.
- Wills, newspaper obituaries, local histories, pension and military records are all potential sources of information which can help provide information to assist in your search. This information is also of value in itself, of course, insofar as it can give background and colour to your ancestor.
- Where your ancestor emigrated from Ireland, there may be passenger arrival or naturalization records which could provide vital pieces of information to help you narrow your search as you go back through the decades.
- Census returns can often provide vital information also and for users seeking census records in Ireland, attention is drawn to the National Archives of Ireland which has computerised the 1901 & 1911 Census of Population returns and have made these available online free of charge.

What do you need to know to begin your search

At least some of the following information would be essential in order to facilitate a successful search:

- The name of the ancestor whose details may be contained in the record sources in Ireland.
- Their approximate date of birth
- The names of your ancestor's parents or spouse
- The county of your ancestor's origin – there are 32 counties in Ireland, 6 of which are in Northern Ireland. Within each county there are various sub-divisions – one of the most commonly used is the parish, which can incorporate a number of townlands. If you have information on the parish or townland your ancestor came from, it would greatly assist in your search
- Their religious denomination
- Details of their trade or employment can be of assistance

Family Trees

Building the family tree is the best way of organising the data you have uncovered from the first stage of your work, and is essentially a map of your roots. You can see at a glance how people in your family are related to one another, and even more importantly it will indicate uncertain or unknown areas that you'll have to investigate further.

It is a good idea to regularly update your tree, especially after you have made a trip to the archives or obtained some information online – make sure you date the new version, and keep the old ones handy just in case you've made an error in your research. It is also advisable to take sections of your tree into the archives with you, as it can help you focus on the task in hand.

Various computer programmes are available to create family trees and assist you in organizing your research results. Remember to cite the sources you have checked and record on paper or in a computer programme.

What you can find in Dublin within walking from the City Centre

National Archives of Ireland

Has a wide range of archives, including census returns. They also provide a free 'Ask the genealogist' service.

National Library of Ireland

Contains many Roman Catholic registers.

General Register Office

Contains civil registers of births, marriages and deaths.

Registry of Deeds

Contains details of property transactions

Representative Church Body Library

Contains records of the Church of Ireland

Religious Society of Friends Library

Contains Quaker records

Irish Jewish Museum

Contains records of the Jewish community in Ireland

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