

Ireland Land and Property

Land records are valuable genealogical sources, because they may reveal where and when your ancestor lived and where they previously lived; family information, such as the names of children, heirs, spouse, other relatives, and neighbours; the occupation your ancestor pursued; other records that may mention your ancestor; and the progression of estate ownership or tenancy from one generation to another.

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Registry of Deeds

After the accession to the throne of William & Mary control of land ownership by Roman Catholics was tightened. It is important historically to see this in the context of the time such measures were set. Ireland had been in turmoil since the beginning of the Cromwellian period in the 1640s. And although the country was generally much unsettled and there was much public anxiety, land ownership, whether by Protestants or Catholics, was an issue to only a tiny fraction of the population.

A system of registration of deeds began in 1708 and although it was not compulsory, it was generally held that the courts would be more favourable when issuing decrees and judgements where title had been registered. However, for those who were not wealthy enough to ever consider court proceedings the need to register was not an issue particularly as a fee was required. In addition to land deeds, marriage settlements, leases, mortgages, and wills are also found with deed registrations.

Two separate indexes exist: one to grantors (those demising (selling, mortgaging etc.) land); and one for place names town or townland) arranged by county. Streets within cities are indexes separately within the county index. The Registry of Deeds can be found in Henrietta Street, Dublin 1, Ireland.

For an excellent overview of records at the Registry of Deeds, see:

Begley, Donal F., ed. "The Registry of Deeds for Genealogical Purposes." In *Irish Genealogy: A Record Finder*. (FHL book 941.5 D27i.)

Grenham, John. *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors: The Complete Guide*. Dublin, Ireland: Gill and Macmillan, 1992. (FHL book Ref 941.5 D27gj.)

The Family History Library's copies of Irish deeds are listed in the Place Search of the catalog under the following headings:

IRELAND - LAND AND PROPERTY

IRELAND, [COUNTY] - LAND AND PROPERTY

Estate Records

Estate records are another valuable set of property records. Most Irish lived on large estates owned by a minority of the population. Land owners usually hired agents to keep records of transactions involving their families and/or their tenants. Estate records vary in content and

duration and may include deeds, leases, rent rolls, and account books, among other records. A brief explanation of estate records is found in "Land Records" in John Grenham, *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors: The Complete Guide*.

To locate estate records you need to know the name of the estate owner. If you can locate your ancestor in Griffith's Primary Valuation, you may also find the name of the owner of the estate your ancestor lived on.

Estate owners often lived away from their estates. Some lived in England. Many of the records of owners living in England have been deposited in English archives. The following sources identify some estate records and where they are deposited:

Irish Manuscripts Commission. Analecta Hibernica. Dublin: Stationery Office, 1930-. (FHL book 941.5 B2ah.)

Grenham, John. "County Source Lists." In *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors: The Complete Guide*. Dublin, Ireland: Gill and Macmillan, 1992. (FHL book Ref 941.5 D27gj.)

Hayes, Richard J. *Manuscript Sources for 'the History of Irish Civilization.'* (FHL book 941.5 A5h.)

Index to the National Inventory of Documentary Sources in the United Kingdom and Ireland. (FHL fiche 6341118.)

Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Records. Belfast, Ireland: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1924-. (FHL book 941.5 A5rn.)

The Family History Library's copies of estate records are listed in the Place Search of the catalog under the following headings:

IRELAND - LAND AND PROPERTY
IRELAND, [COUNTY] - LAND AND PROPERTY

Valuation Office Revision Books

To start a search for the Valuation Office revision books a person should first know the name of the townland where the ancestor lived. With the name of the townland it is best to use the following steps to find a microfilm number for the revision books. These records are available on microfilm from the Family History Library and family history centres for the Republic of Ireland only. Researchers should note that these records are often mistakenly referred to as 'cancelled books' or 'cancel books'.

Steps for locating Irish revision or cancel books:

1. Determine which townland you will be searching (e.g. Gortnatona).
2. Find the townland in the 1901 edition of *General alphabetical index to the townlands and towns of Ireland* (Family History Library microfilm number 865092) and write down the parish (Kilcummin), county (Kerry), Poor Law Union/ Rural District (Killarney), and District Electoral Division (Kilcummin).
3. Go to www.familysearch.org and search the Family History Library Catalog by doing a Place Search for the county (Kerry) and country (Ireland).
4. On the **Place Details** page select **Ireland, County (Kerry) – Land and Property**.
5. On the **Topic Details** page select the entry for the rural district where your townland was situated, such as: "Valuation Lists for Kerry County, Killarney Rural District, 1859-1946."

6. The **Title Details** page will appear and show publication and other details for the record. Click on the **View Film Notes** button in the upper right portion of the page.
7. A list of microfilms will appear.
8. Select the entry for the District Electoral Division (DED) that your townland was in, such as: v. 18-19 *Electoral division: Kilcummin Kilfelim* is the record that should cover the townland of Gortnatona).

Web Sites

- www.genuki.org.uk/big/irl/#Land
- www.ballybegvillage.com/land_division.html
- <http://scripts.ireland.com/ancestor/browse/records/land/>

FamilySearch: *Free family history research advice for the community, by the community.*

Purpose and Scope.

In conjunction with the mission of FamilySearch, the Research Wiki is a collaborative, shared-knowledge project designed to encourage and eventually enable all people to find their ancestors. The Research Wiki uses collaboration tools to form a community for sharing knowledge from which users may gather needed information to help locate and use records about ancestors. Ancestral research requires extensive knowledge of cultures and historical sources specific to each region, and each ethnic, religious, or political group. Such information is often written in a foreign language. Expertise on those various cultures and historical sources may be widespread and varied. Through collaboration, sharing, open-edit, and forums the community can build enough high-quality knowledge to help more family history researchers.

Free.

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Be bold.

Do not wait for permission to make a change that you feel will be beneficial to those who use the Research Wiki. If you see something that needs to be done, do it. Don't make a suggestion, make a change. However, remember that when making changes don't do anything that would prevent those who disagree with your changes from reverting back to the original version while civil discussion happens to reach an acceptable compromise. Don't let the possibility of disagreement stop you from making the changes. If you feel the change is needed then make it. Don't take edits or changes as a personal affront. Contributors and editors are encouraged to work with the community to make the Research Wiki a superior site for family history research information.

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