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Family History Research In Co. Waterford

Getting Started - Work from the known to the unknown. Speak to as many living elderly relatives as you can. Record all of the information that they give you in a detailed and organised manner.

What You Need To Know - Ideally if you are trying to research an ancestor you need to know their approximate dates of birth, marriage and death, and the county or preferably the parish or townland that they came from, their occupation and finally the approximate year of emigration. If you don't have all of this information don't worry, it may still be possible to trace their origins. Having this information does make finding records much easier.

Recording Your Information - Record the information you discover (and the source) in a methodical manner. You can do this on paper or you can use one of the many excellent software packages that are now on the market to help you record your research.

Ask For Help - Lastly ask for help. Many members of our museum are doing their own research and would be delighted to advise you on how to go about your own research. Our members and staff do not have the time to do the research for you but they will help you do your own research. There are also many on-line message boards and mailing lists whose members are only too happy to help you with your queries.

Doing Your Own Research

The best place to start if you live locally is the records office at St. Joseph's Hospital, Dungarvan. It has all of the Civil births, marriages and deaths information for Co. Waterford. Your visit has to be booked in advance and there is a nominal fee.

Using A Professional Researcher

The main research centre in Waterford is the Waterford Heritage Centre. They have all of the Civil and Church records for Waterford. If you contact them they will give you an estimate of the fee and the likelihood of success.

Waterford Heritage Genealogy Centre
Address: Jenkins Lane, Waterford City
Web: www.waterford-heritage.ie
Phone: +353 (0)51 876123
Email: mnoc@iol.ie

Mailing Lists And Message Boards

Ancestry.com offers a world-wide Internet system to connect people in order to share genealogical research, hunt for long-lost family, and to help each other to do it. The most popular part of Ancestry is called Rootsweb and here is the best and easiest way to begin. Do you want to see who else is researching your own family Surname. Rootsweb has over one million surname entries on its database. Check out the Rootsweb Surname List found here: <http://rsl.rootsweb.ancestry.com/>

There are message boards where you can post a notice just like you might do on the bulletin boards in the shops. They are found here: <http://boards.rootsweb.com/> You can even request free web space to put up your own family's genealogy, and many more things. Go to Rootsweb's home page <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/> to see what is offered:

Message lists are the most fun and informative of all. There is a message list for Co. Waterford people, both those currently living here and those whose families emigrated long ago who are searching for their extended families. This is the place where you can send a simple e-mail to the list and your message will be delivered to hundreds of 'Co. Waterford people' across the world. It is easy to subscribe and easy to unsubscribe and easy to send messages. The General List Information page is located here: <http://lists.rootsweb.ancestry.com/index/intl/IRL/WATERFORD.html>

From this page you can search the message archives for this list for your surname or townland or topic, or you can browse the archives of the list. Here also you can subscribe to get messages, and after subscription you can send your messages to Waterford@rootsweb.com just as you would send an e-mail to a friend.

Military & Naval Ancestors

IRA Records

Pension and medal applications for almost 40,000 IRA members are held by the Department Of Defence. To access the records you need the person's name, where he was living at the time of the pension application (normally the early 1940's), proof that you are next of kin to the person. The wait for these records is almost one year from the date of application but they contain much interesting detail on what the applicant was up to during the war. Contact the Veteran's Allowance Section, Department of Defence, (DOD) Renmore, Galway .

Over 1,700 witness statements by prominent IRA, Cumann na mBan members etc. as recorded by the Bureau of Military History, are now accessible at Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin. An appointment is needed to access the records. Copies of many of the Waterford witness statements are held in Waterford County Museum. These statements are generally very detailed.

The British Army And Navy

Many Irishmen and women have served in the British army. Their service records and pension records are available via the National Archives (formerly the Public Records Office) in Kew, London. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk If you wish to look up records more recent than the late 1920's you will need proof that you are next of kin. The most important information you will require to trace your army ancestor is the Regiment that they were attached to. This is particularly important if you are researching a common name such as John Smith. The Medal Rolls for WW1 are a very useful way of determining which unit your ancestor served with. You can search them at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline/medals.asp>

You should also consider using a professional military researcher. Members of the museum have previously used the services of Richard Moles www.richardmoles.com and found him to be most efficient and trustworthy.

Merchant Seamen

The records for merchant seamen that exist are patchy and difficult to access as they are held in a number of different locations in the United Kingdom. They can be worth trying to trace as they can contain a photo and detailed information on the seaman's career. It is very useful to know the name of the ship and the date your ancestor served on it if you wish to find an individual's records.

Archives & Museums

Waterford County Museum

Web: www.waterfordmuseum.ie and www.waterfordcountyimages.org

Address: St. Augustine Street, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford

Email: history@waterfordmuseum.ie

Phone: +353 (0)58 45960

Our museum has many holdings that may be of interest to family historians researching their Co. Waterford Ancestors. We have a selection of maps, commercial documents, photos and papers that may contain information on your family. A simple name search on our image archive may turn up a photo of your ancestor or the street that they lived on.

National Archives Of Ireland

www.nationalarchives.ie

The National Archives holds a wide variety of records, many of which are relevant to Irish genealogy and local history. The most exciting and useful of their databases on-line is the Census of Ireland 1911. These records are free to access, and easy to use

National Archives (UK)

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

One of the leading archive websites in the world. Much of the archive is searchable and they are constantly adding new material. The site contains a host of information relating to: Military Records, Births, marriages and deaths, Census records, Citizenship and naturalisation, Divorce, Passenger lists, Wills, Merchant seamen.

Learn About Archives

www.learnaboutarchives.ie

This website is hosted by the Society of Archivists Ireland in order to provide a practical and interesting on-line information service for the general public (but more especially educators and their students) on archival material and archive services in Ireland. It has contact details for most of the major archives in Ireland and gives advice on how to go about your research.

Waterford County Archives Service

Address: Dungarvan Library, Davitt's Quay, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford

Email: archivist@waterfordcoco.ie

Phone: +353 (0)58 23673

Details of holdings of interest to family historians can be found at

<http://www.waterfordcoco.ie/en/services/archives/>. Most records are organised by townland name so it is very important that you would have an accurate idea of the townland that your ancestor originates from.

Useful Websites

Ancestry.co.uk

www.ancestry.co.uk

There are currently over 4 billion records available to search. From historical censuses and parish records, to military records and passenger lists. The biggest and probably the best of the commercial websites. Fees are reasonable and run from about €7 to €20 per month depending on the plan you purchase. You can join for a month or you can take out an annual subscription.

Irish Ancestors At The Irish Times

www.irishtimes.com/ancestor/

According to the Irish Times this is the internet's most comprehensive Irish genealogy resource. It is a commercial service. You purchase a number of credits and spend them as you view documents. Different types of document cost different amounts of credits.

Your Archives

<http://yourarchives.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

These pages allow the general public to upload information on how to use archival sources held by The National Archives and by other archives throughout the UK. The information is very detailed and on a broad range of topics.

Ellis Island

www.ellisland.org

If your ancestor emigrated to America between 1892 and 1924 it may be worth looking for them on the Ellis Island database. Passengers on all the ships that entered the Port of New York from 1892-1924 are recorded. The web site is free to use.

The Ships List

www.theshipslist.com

The Ships List website will help you find your ancestors on ships' passenger lists. They also have immigration reports, newspaper records, shipwreck information, ship pictures, ship descriptions, shipping-line fleet lists and more; as well as hundreds of passenger lists to Canada, USA, Australia and even some for South Africa.

Placenames Database of Ireland

www.logainm.ie

A useful website for trying to track down the place your ancestor may have originated.

Ordnance Survey Ireland

www.osi.ie

Access modern and historic maps on this web site.

Family Search

<http://pilot.familysearch.org>

A pilot project from Family Search. Free searches of multiple millions of births, deaths and marriages. The database is being added to all of the time.