

Making the Irish Genealogical Connection from Massachusetts

by R. Andrew Pierce

Finding an Irish immigrant ancestor's exact place of origin, and establishing the lineage back in Ireland, can involve many steps and sources. Even before searching Irish records, it is essential to exhaust records back in the U.S. Vital, church, census, naturalization, tombstone, city directory, military, and newspaper records can build the immigrant's "extended family" to insure more success.

SOURCES IN MASSACHUSETTS

A. Vital Records(city, county & state)

Best sites:

Massachusetts, U.S., Birth Records, 1840-1915

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5062/>

Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2495/>

B. Census Records(State & Federal)

Best sites:

“U.S. Federal Census Collection”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/categories/usfedcen/>

“Massachusetts, U.S., State Census, 1855”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/4472/>

“Massachusetts, U.S., State Census, 1865”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/9203/>

C. Church Records

Best sites:

“Massachusetts, U.S., Boston Archdiocese Roman Catholic Sacramental Records, 1789-1920”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61585/>

“Massachusetts: Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Records, 1789-1920”

<https://www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/2726/massachusetts-roman-catholic-archdiocese-of-boston-records-1789-1920>

D. Naturalization Records

Best sites:

“Massachusetts, U.S., State and Federal Naturalization Records, 1798-1950”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2361/>

And records for individual counties at www.familysearch.org

E. Cemetery Records

Best site:

www.findagrave.com

<https://www.findagrave.com/>

F. Newspapers

Best sites:

newspapers.com

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

Can also access through ancestry.com

GenealogyBank

<https://www.genealogybank.com/>

“Searching for Missing Friends: Irish Immigrant Advertisements Placed in “The Boston Pilot,” 1831-1920”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5060/>

G. Military Records

Best sites:

“Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines in the Civil War, Vols I-VII”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/29987/>

“U.S., Civil War Soldiers, 1861-1865”

[https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1138/?](https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1138/?name=john+_murphy&count=50&name_x=1_1)

[name=john+_murphy&count=50&name_x=1_1](https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1138/?name=john+_murphy&count=50&name_x=1_1)

“U.S., Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/4654/>

“1890 Veterans Schedules of the U.S. Federal Census”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8667/>

H. Passenger Lists

Best sites:

“Massachusetts, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1820-1963”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8745/>

“New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7488/>

“U.S., Atlantic Ports Arriving and Departing Passenger and Crew Lists, 1820-1959”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8758/>

I. Probate and Land Records

Best sites:

“Massachusetts, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1635-1991”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/9069/>

**And records for individual counties at
www.familysearch.org**

J. City Directories

Best site:

“U.S., City Directories, 1822-1995”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2469/>

SOURCES IN IRELAND

A. Vital Records

Best sites:

“Ireland, Civil Registration Marriages Index, 1845-1958”

“Ireland, Civil Registration Marriages Index, 1845-1958”

“Ireland, Civil Registration Births Index, 1864-1958”

On ancestry.com

rootsireland.ie

<https://www.rootsireland.ie/>

irishgenealogy.ie

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

B. Church Records

Best sites:

“Ireland, Catholic Parish Registers, 1655-1915”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61039/>

rootsireland.ie

<https://www.rootsireland.ie/>

irishgenealogy.ie

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

C. Census Sources(including Tithe and Valuation Records)

Best sites:

“Ireland, Tithe Applotment Books, 1805-1837”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1270/>

“The Tithe Applotment Books, 1823-37”

<http://titheapplotmentbooks.nationalarchives.ie/search/tab/home.jsp>

“Ireland, Valuation Records, 1824-1856”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/62024/>

“Ireland, Griffith’s Valuation, 1847-1864”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1269/>

“Irish Flax Growers, 1796”

<https://www.failteromhat.com/flax1796.php>

D. Tombstone Inscriptions

Individual parish and county sites

E. Land and Estate Records

Best sites:

“Sources: A National Library of Ireland database for Irish research contains over 180,000 catalogue records for Irish manuscripts.

<https://www.nli.ie/en/sources-database.aspx>

“Landed Estates: A database of landed estates and historic houses in Connacht and Munster, c.1700 - 1914”

<https://landedestates.ie/>

“Search PRONI's eCatalogue”

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/search-pronis-ecatalogue>

“Registry of Deeds Index Project Ireland”
<https://irishdeedsindex.net/>

“Transcripts of memorials of deeds, conveyances and wills, 1708-1929. Ireland, Registry of Deeds
[https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/185720?availability=Family History Library](https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/185720?availability=Family+History+Library)

F. Court Records

Best site:

“Ireland, Petty Session Court Registers, 1818-1919”

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61938/>

G. Newspaper Records

Best sites:

“The British Newspaper Archive”

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

“Irish Newspaper Archives”

<https://www.irishnewsarchive.com/>

RESEARCH TOOLS & STRATEGIES

A. Civil & Church Jurisdictions

B. Maps(atlases, Google maps, mapcarta, O.S. Discovery

C. Libraries in Ireland

National Library of Ireland

National Archives of Ireland

**Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
(PRONI)**

Individual county library and archives sites

D. Naming Patterns

F. Spelling of Names(And “Wild Card” Searches)

