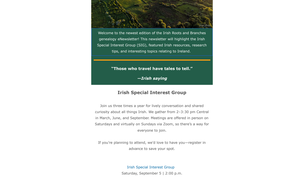
Irish Roots and Branches
August 2026



Welcome to the newest edition of the Irish Roots and Branches genealogy eNewsletter! This newsletter will highlight the Irish Special Interest Group (SIG), featured Irish resources, research tips, and interesting topics relating to Ireland.

"Those who travel have tales to tell."
—*Irish saying*

Irish Special Interest Group

Join us three times a year for lively conversation and shared curiosity about all things Irish. We gather from 2-3:30 pm Central in March, June, and September. Meetings are offered in person on Saturdays and virtually on Sundays via Zoom, so there's a way for everyone to join.

If you're planning to attend, we'd love to have you—register in advance to save your spot.

Irish Special Interest Group
Saturday, September 5 | 2:00 p.m.

Irish Special Interest Group (Zoom)
Sunday, September 6 | 2:00 p.m.

REGISTER

The Search for Evidence of My 11x Great Grandmother

Mary Cogan was born in Church or Gunsmeal England in 1604. She was my 11x great grandmother. I traced one branch of my family to her when I was in graduate school about 1985. Back then there was no internet and, to be honest, I was not as good at documenting sources, but I had the resources of the special collections at Wichita State University, and I have always been confident of the tree I found. With the rise of Internet research, my path to her has been confirmed by many others.

Mary has always fascinated me because once she married my 11x great grandfather, Roger Ludlow, I have not found her name anywhere until she died in Dublin in 1664. Historians assume she accompanied him to the Bay Colony on the ship *Mary and John* in 1630, but she isn't on the passenger list or that ship or any other. She was in the colonies because my 10x great grandmother, Sarah, was born in Connecticut, and both accompanied him when he left the colonies and settled in Dublin.

Several sources, including *Find a Grave*, list Mary as being buried at St. Michan's church in Dublin. Four years ago, we were planning a trip to Ireland, I set out to find if that was true and go to her grave. My first bit of luck was finding a website for St. Michan's church which had a list of burials. She was on it! I could not find her actual grave because the old stones are stele about headstones but much to read, but it was special to stand in that churchyard. Some things I learned about Irish research while looking for Mary Cogan Ludlow might help others.

Tip #1: Check to see if the individual church or parish has a website. Check for denominations. The Church of Ireland and Catholic Church are not the same. Affiliation may have changed over time.

Check for the diocese and where their records are housed.

Check the diocese website or their history to determine if they do have records and look for a burial section. If part of the website, contact the church and ask where their records for the time you need are housed.

Tip #2: If you know a town but not a church name, search for the local library. Many town or county libraries have local history sections and may be able to help you find records.

Debra F.

Featured Resources

Planning a Genealogy Research Trip to Ireland: The Research Trail in Dublin's Both Bair

This book is designed to help family historians navigate the record repositories in Dublin. To make physical research more efficient, it follows a "trail" through the archives. Many original records are fragile, so arriving with a targeted itinerary is most effective.

Bair covers such topics as history of Ireland, basic research techniques, the General Register Office, National Archives of Ireland, National Library of Ireland, Manuscripts Reading room in the Genealogical Office building, Church of Ireland, Registry of Deeds, Land Registry, Valuation Office, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Genealogical Society of Ireland, Trinity College Library, and much more. She lists addresses, hours of operation, maps to get to each place, and what you may find there.

CHECK OUT!

Irish Genealogy DVDs from our Catalog

Irish Genealogy - Suzanne McSkelly, certified genealogist, summarizes the basics of doing Irish genealogical research.

Getting Started in Irish Genealogy - Marie E. Daly, Irish expert at the New England Historic Genealogical Society, takes you through the steps of researching in America to identify your ancestor's exact place of origin in Ireland.

EXPLORE

Recent Records and Updates Online

- Ancestry - *County Antrim, Ireland, Householder's Index, 1851, 1857*
- *FamilySearch - Ireland, Civil Registration Indexes, 1845-1958*
- *MyHeritage - Ireland, Catholic Parish Births and Baptisms, 1740-1909*
- *FindMyPast - Ireland, Directories and Almanacs 1844-1928*
- *PRONI - Derry Londonderry War Memorial Records*
- *Virtual Record Treasury of Ireland - The Registry of Deeds (18th Century property records)*

Research Tips

The 1926 Irish Census was released in April

If your ancestors left in the 1800s, you might assume a 1926 census has nothing to do with them. The 1926 census can help you find the extended branches of the family that stayed behind.

The 1926 Census of the Irish Free State offers several benefits for those tracing Irish roots. These include:

- Tracing a family that left in the 1850s or 1880s is easier when you find those names, nephews, or siblings who stayed.
- Locating a specific townland in the 1850s is difficult as finding the family's location and exact address in 1926 gives you a fixed point to work backward.
- Cross-checking the exact land acreage, employers, and unemployment.
- Captures Irish households a few years after the War of Independence and the Civil War.

You can search the Irish census at the National Archives of Ireland for free, Ancestry (£), and Find My Past (£).

- Sheri V.

Some online resources include:

- National Archives of Ireland – *Search the Census 1926*
- FindMyPast - *Ireland Census 1926*
- Ancestry - *Ireland, 1926 Census of the Irish Free State*

Irish History and Culture

Irish Food

Traditional Irish cuisine is rooted in the agricultural heritage and coastal geography. Centered around comfort foods, the cuisine relies heavily on potatoes, dairy, and grains, fresh seafood and pasture-raised meats.

- Potatoes are a cornerstone of Irish cooking since the 18th century.
- Butter and cheese.
- Salmon, oysters, mussels, and cod.
- Irish Stew is a slow-cooked stew made with lamb/mutton, potatoes, onions, and carrots.
- Soda Bread is a traditional bread made with sodium bicarbonate, not yeast, and baked dark brown.
- Fish and Chips wrapped in paper from a local stand.
- Guinness is a dry Irish stout.
- Irish Whiskey, known for its smooth, triple-distilled character.

Did You Know?

- The ancient tomb of Newgrange in County Meath was built around 3200 BC, making it older than Stonehenge and the Great Pyramid of Giza.
- Ireland boasts over 30,000 castles and castle ruins.
- According to legend, St. Patrick banished all snakes from the island. Nature did the job as the rising sea levels after the last ice age isolated the island before snakes could migrate there.

Irish in World War 1

During World War I, Ireland was part of the United Kingdom. Around 200,000 to 300,000 Irishmen voluntarily joined the British. While many fought for political/economic reasons, the 1916 Easter Rising and the 1918 Conscription Crisis shifted public opinion, sparking a push for independence.

Because conscription was never enforced in Ireland, everyone who fought did so voluntarily. Troops served across several distinct units, including the 10th (Irish), 16th (Irish), and 36th (Ulster) Divisions, fighting in major battles at the Somme, Gallipoli, and Passchendaele.

While soldiers were fighting, Irish republicans staged an armed rebellion (1916) against British rule in Dublin. Initially unpopular among the Irish public, sentiment shifted after the British executed the rising's leaders.

When the British government tried to impose conscription (1918) to replenish troops late in the war, it triggered country-wide strikes and resistance across all factions.

The separatist party Sinn Fein subsequently won a landslide victory in the 1918 general election, replacing the moderate Irish Parliamentary Party which open the way for the Irish War of Independence. Veterans returned noting their service to the British military was controversial.

You can explore detailed casualty lists, division histories, and soldier records at the **National Army Museum** or read deeper into the overarching historical narratives through the **Imperial War Museums** database.

Places to Visit

Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland

Derry is the only remaining city in Ireland/Northern Ireland with intact city walls. The walls are the largest monument in Northern Ireland and stand as the most complete. The Walls were built in 1613–1619 as defenses for early 17th-century settlers from England and Scotland. They are completely intact and form a walkway around the inner city.

Derry was part of the new County Donegal up until 1610. In that year, the west bank of the city combined with County Coleraine, part of County Antrim and a large portion of County Tyrone to form County Londonderry. Planters organized by London's livery companies arrived in the 17th century as part of the Plantation of Ulster (see Irish History and Culture above). Derry was granted to the Irish Society, their chartered. The aim was to settle Ulster with a population supportive of the Crown. It was then renamed "Londonderry".

The city is the north-west's foremost shopping district, housing two large shopping centers along with numerous shop-packed streets serving much of the greater county, as well as Tyrone and Donegal.

The city center has two main shopping centers: the Quayside Shopping Centre, which has 45 stores, and the Richmond Centre, which has 30 stores. The Quayside Shopping Centre serves the city side and Lisnagelvin Shopping Centre on the Waterside. These centers, as well as local run businesses, feature fashion, national and international stores.

There are many museums and sites of interest in and around the city, including the Tower Museum, Guildhall, the Ark Open Air Children's Centre And Wildlife Sanctuary, Bishops Cemetery, Derry Craft Village, Free Derry Corner, O'Doherty Tower, the Harbour Museum, the Museum of Free Derry, Chapter House Museum, the Workhouse Museum, St. Columb's Park and Lecues Centre, Creggan Country Park, The Millennium Forum, and the Foyle and Craigavon bridges.

Thanks for Reading!

"May love and laughter light your days."
— Irish saying

Thank you for reading the debut Irish Roots and Branches newsletter. Stay tuned for the next issue in February.

- Sheri V.

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