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Genealogy.ie Magazine

Emigrating
to England

Genealogy:
A History

Jeanie Johnston

Death Records



Céad Míle Fáilte

Once again “Hundred Thousand Welcomes” from **Genealogy.ie** – **Ireland’s Family History Specialists.**

Our company is now going into its third year. And we have had some interesting commissions like the last year. Like from Sarah, an Irish woman living in China. We created a 140-page family history book for her father, as a gift for a significant birthday.

As in our previous publications, we have brought together a few articles that you might find useful or just interesting.

There are four articles for you to peruse.

The first article tells the story of a 19th Century emigrant from Ireland to England.

The second article explores the history of genealogy; where the word comes from, its early beginnings and later developments.

This is followed by an article about the Jeannie Johnston, a tall ship famous for transporting emigrants to (mainly) Canada during the Great Famine. Why is it famous? You will have to read the article to find out. The neat thing about it is that you can visit its replica in Dublin!

The final article tells you what information you can find in death records from Ireland, USA and Australia.

We hope that these articles might help you with your research. And of course, if you do get stuck: we are there to help.

Jillian

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Emigrating to England, from one desperate situation to another

In 1851, almost 25% of the population of Liverpool noted their birthplace as Ireland. The majority worked in the Cotton Mills or as Dock Labourers. It was an extremely tough life.



Meet Mary who was born around 1830 in Ireland. The photo from 1893 is from her Prestwich Asylum record. We know Mary meets John Keane, a journeyman blacksmith and they have two children Elizabeth born in 1852 and John born in 1855. They are all born in Ireland, and we are working to trace their births. To do this, we have built up a picture of their lives.

Our first record of Mary is in the 1871 England Census. She is widowed and living with her two children in Higher Booths, Lancashire. Her children, Elizabeth (19) and John (16) are working as Cotton Operatives which is a term used to say they are working in a Mill.

In the Census of 1881, the family are still together but now in Lower Booths. Mary's daughter Elizabeth has had two children John Thomas age 8 and newborn Levi. From further research, we found Levi died a few weeks later, and both children did not have a father noted on their birth certificate. Mary is now a dressmaker, and Elizabeth and John continue to work in a cotton mill.

In the Census of 1891, Mary is still living in Lower Booths, with her daughter Elizabeth and grandson John Thomas. Elizabeth is working as a Drawer in the Cotton Mill, and John Thomas is now 18 and working as a warehouseman in a printworks. In February 1892, Elizabeth died of Bronchitis most likely brought on by her work in the cotton mill.



Curiously, on her death certificate under occupation, it says "Cotton Drawer, daughter of John Keane (a blacksmith, journeyman).

In October 1893, Mary Keane was admitted to Prestwich Asylum. Through Manchester Archives we have received a copy of her medical records, her photograph. Her admittance record informs us Mary is a dressmaker, a widow and is aged 64. It states she "Is generally incoherent. Makes wild statements. Is very rough and tries to smash windows." The record goes on to state "She is sorry her son John joined the Salvation Army". She dies in Prestwich Asylum a year later on 29 October 1894 of senile mania and pneumonia.

On Mary's death record, her occupation is Dressmaker, widow of John Keane, Blacksmith journeyman. It must have mattered to Mary and her family for her husband's trade to be known.

Before we end their story, in the 1901 Census, we find Mary's Grandson; John Thomas Keane married with two children. Sadly, in 1907, John Thomas witnesses the death of his uncle, John Keane. John Thomas dies just eight days later at the same address. They both died of Pleuropneumonia, pneumonia complicated with pleurisy.



Be warned!

We found this newspaper clipping from March 1874, in the Kerry Evening Post intriguing. Daniel Foley of Lower Cromane, Killorglin, felt it necessary to give notice and "hereby caution the public against giving any credit to my wife Mary Foley, as I will not be responsible for the same after this date."

NOTICE

I HEREBY Caution the Public against giving any Credit to my Wife MARY FOLEY, as I will not be responsible for same after this date.

DANIEL FOLEY,
Lower Cromane, Killorglin.

March 26th, 1874.

Genealogy: A History

As family history researchers, we delve into the history of our ancestors. In this article – for a change - we have a look into the science (art?) of genealogy itself.

Definitions of "genealogy".

"Family history" and "ancestry" are much easier to pronounce, but we believe the correct name for the study is genealogy. So, where is the word "genealogy" coming from?

Genealogy is from the Greek word γενεαλογία (genealogia) which is derived from two words: γενεά (genea, "generation") and λόγος (logos, "knowledge").

And as to its precise meaning, we looked it up in Merriam-Webster – a dictionary – which gives the following definitions:

1 : an account of the descent of a person, family, or group from an ancestor or from older forms

2 : regular descent of a person, family, or group of organisms from a progenitor or older form

3 : the study of family ancestral lines

4 : an account of the origin and historical development of something

We quite like this description we encountered:

“Genealogy is the establishment and recording of a pedigree by gathering evidence of the connection from one generation to the next. Genealogists use interviews, historical records, genetic analysis and other records to gather information about a family and use logical analyses and reasoning to establish ancestries of its members.

The results are recorded in family trees and/or various types of reports.”

How did genealogy start?

After looking at the name and definition, we will now look at how it all started.

Historically, genealogy was used by political or military rulers, to establish the legitimacy of their claim to wealth and power, by establishing family trees going back to ancient times.

The thinking was that by “proving” that the family in power had always been in power, they were entitled to it. For example, the Imperial House that ruled Ethiopia until 1974 claimed descent from the biblical King Solomon who reigned around 950 BC!



King Solomon, ancestor of the Ethiopian Imperial House?

Of course, many of these claimed noble ancestries were - at least partially – made up. Establishing an accurate picture of the lineage of the family concerned definitively was not of concern. Family trees were made to impress, which is why they were often combined with heraldry.

Thankfully this is different nowadays. To ensure research is reliable, a thorough genealogist will use guidelines such as the "Genealogical Proof Standard".

Genealogy in modern times

Genealogical research in the United States became popular in the early 19th century. Tracing one's genealogy was an attempt by colonists to secure social standing in the British Empire.

After independence the focus moved – for obvious reasons. For those interested in history, the new area of interest was 'antiquarianism,' or study of local history.

John Farmer (1789–1838) build on antiquarianism to develop a new genealogy: pride in one's American ancestors.

John Farmer	
Born	June 12, 1789 Chelmsford, Massachusetts
Died	August 13, 1838
Resting place	Concord, New Hampshire
Parent(s)	John Farmer Lydia Richardson

He became a coordinator, advocate and contributor to the growing movement. In the 1820s, he and fellow antiquarians began to produce genealogical and antiquarian publications, gaining popularity among the American people. Farmer died in 1839, but the movement he started blossomed.

The Genealogical Society of Utah was founded in 1894. It became the Family History Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). It's research facility, the Family History Library, has become the most extensive

genealogical record-gathering program in the world. Established initially to trace family lines for religious ceremonies, it has become a primary source for family historians worldwide. The LDS maintains Family History Centers all over the world, where volunteers assist the public with tracing their ancestors. There is also an excellent online facility.



Thanks to the work of people like John Farmer – creating demand - and organisations such as the Genealogical Society of Utah – providing records – the basis for successful genealogical research was laid.

Growth

The number of people interested in genealogy has risen enormously over time.

There are various reasons for this interest. Some want to prove a link with a celebrity. Others are intrigued by the stories they discover. And of course, people who have been adopted or separated wish to find their parents.

However, the main reason is that people want to know where they come from. This is especially important for families who are living in North America, Australia, New Zealand but know they hail from Europe.

It is this last group that was responsible for the steady growth of the number of people getting involved. The world witnessed an enormous flow of people from Europe to the "New World" in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Now, a few generations later, many of their descendants are attempting to trace their roots.

Records

Like mentioned before, for the study to thrive, there needs to be demand, but there also need to be records, and access to them. And thankfully there is much material available.

Governments began keeping records to keep track of their citizens many centuries ago. In the earliest days, however, the aim was to record taxable wealth. In Ireland, among the oldest records are the Tithe Applotment Books which were used to ensure people paid their taxes. So, only people with wealth were registered, which means most were not.

Staying in Ireland, parish registers were only introduced in most parishes from 1830, keeping track of births, marriages, and deaths. It should be noted however that - especially in the early days - a lot of people were never registered. Only later in the nineteenth

century, we see that official registers are established in Ireland. Thanks to this, genealogists have now material to research and study.

Ireland lost a lot of its records when the central archive was blown up during the civil war in 1922. Not all got lost, however, and there are still many records available.

Apart from a lack of records, another barrier often thwarting the family history researcher is legislation to protect privacy. Records of people who might still be alive are mostly not public. A critical record collection is, for example, the 1926 Census of Ireland, which will not be made public until 2026. (We are supporting a campaign for an earlier release).

It is good to see though that governments have recognised the growing interest in genealogy and have made a lot of records publicly available – often free and often online.

Access

Before the internet, genealogical research was a time consuming and often expensive hobby. It required lots of phone calls, travel, copying, etc. This meant genealogy was only something that time-rich (usually retired) people could engage in.

There were also no good ways of keeping and sharing results. These were often written down and records kept in paper files. Unfortunately, a lot of this research was over time lost again.

The internet has changed all this. There is now a vast amount of material readily available. Records can be accessed and downloaded. But the starting genealogist can also find training material, examples, templates and advice. And the internet allows a lot more co-operation, for instance via forums and message boards.

Things have also improved with respect to record keeping. There are many software programs (online and offline) available to keep records and create charts, reports and trees. Many of these allow files to be exported, down- and uploaded, exchanged and/or shared. An accessible file format for these files is GEDCOM.

Volunteers

Another development has been an explosion of volunteerism in genealogical research. Many genealogists participate in volunteer projects. These projects include: preparing and publishing name indexes for records (these indexes can be used to locate original documents), transcribing or abstracting records, indexing and photographing cemeteries, offering record lookups for particular geographic areas, etc. All of this means that new records, data and information has become and still is becoming available all of the time.

There has never been a better time for genealogists!



Jeannie Johnston, the “coffin ship” that wasn’t

The ship “Jeanie Johnston” began its career quite unremarkably. It was built in 1847 on the banks of the St. Lawrence River in Quebec City, Canada. Its architect was the Scottish-born shipbuilder and master craftsman John Munn.



On the other side of the ocean, in Tralee, Co. Kerry, Ireland, there were four big milling companies. These were owned by the McCowens, Kelliher, Latchfords and Donovans. These four families were known as the Merchant Princes. To keep feeding their mills, wood was imported from Canada. And to this end, the John Donovan & Sons decided to buy their own ship. Thus, the 408-ton cargo ship "Jeannie Johnston" was purchased in Liverpool.

The ships would bring wood from Canada to Ireland but had very little to transport the other way. That changed however because of the famine. We are of course talking about the Great Famine. Ireland has had many famines in its history, but none compared to the one caused by the potato blight.

To understand why the impact was so significant, we must take a step back in history. From about the 1690s to the 1830s Ireland had the so-called "Penal Laws". These laws discriminated to all "dissenters". These were people who did not adhere to the official – state-sponsored – religion, which in Ireland was the Church of Ireland. Only 25% of the population belonged to this church. The dissenters consisted of Presbyterians and – the vast majority – Catholics.

The Penal Laws forbade Catholics to be employed by the state. They ensured Catholics could not vote or be elected. A lot of the laws were to do with property however and were designed to force Catholics to give up their land. Catholics could not purchase land.

They made inheriting land difficult. As a result, within a few generations, 95% of land was in the hands of non-Catholics. Catholics were forced to either rent their land or work on the newly formed large farms. Land holdings had been consolidated in the hands of the minority. These were re-organised and became very efficient, often producing a large amount of cheap grain for export to England.

Catholic land labourers were in most cases allowed to use a small plot of land for their own use. The most nourishing food staple of the time were potatoes, and for many (some estimate up to 3 million out of a population of 8.5 million) potatoes were the ONLY food. It is thought that males ate up to 6.5 kilograms every day.



Of course, emigration was a last resort. People often had already used up their savings, trying to buy food. And the passage was expensive. The Donovans charged just over 3 pounds, which was half a year's salary for many! As a result, the Irish adopted the "chain" method of emigration. Many people from other European countries would emigrate as families, but the Irish did not

Families would put all their money together, to get one of theirs to emigrate. This was often the strongest, the healthiest member of the family who was most likely to survive and get work. This person would send savings home for the next member of the family to come over, etcetera. This is hugely relevant for the genealogy researcher as this is the reason why your family members would have often travelled alone, and several years apart.

For those without money, there were other options. The first port of call for the destitute was the workhouse. This nineteenth-century institution was offering the poor a place to live and food, in return for work. The famine caused the numbers flocking into the workhouses to swell. The substantial cost of maintaining a large number of people for prolonged times caused workhouses to offer to pay the passage for people to emigrate to the USA, Canada, Australia or New Zealand (but not to England).

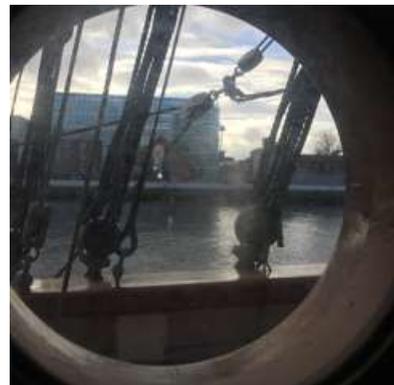
There were also the Australian brides. Australia at that time had an 80% male population. The English government had tried to entice English, Welsh and Scottish women to move to Australia to redress the balance. This had met however with no success. Now, the program was extended to Irish women, who often were in no position to refuse. Many thousands accepted travel to "Down Under".

Despite the expense, demand for travel to the USA and Canada exploded as a result of the famine. Even when the

blight receded, many had lost their land and any means to earn a living. Emigration in large numbers continued for many years as a result.

And this is where we get back to the Jeannie Johnston. The Donovans had found a way to fill their ship on the return journeys to Canada. They did things differently though. Many ship owners were unscrupulous. They only cared about making money, and circumstances on their ships were terrible. Typhoid and dysentery were rife.

On some ships, the crew would lock the passengers below decks if one of them would become sick, thus helping the diseases to spread. It is estimated that 30% of those that departed died before arrival. This is why they were often called "coffin ships".



Not on the Jeannie Johnston though. On the Jeannie Johnston, the Donavans employed a doctor. He would examine anyone before departure and refuse those that displayed any signs of disease. They would insist that passengers would spend 30 minutes on deck every day of the approximately 5-week

journey. On other ships, people often only were allowed up 10-30 minutes once a week. Furthermore, on the Jeannie Johnson passengers were obliged to empty the buckets used as toilets after use and had to bring bedclothes and blanket up every day to get rid of lice.

It is not that things on the Jeannie Johnson were luxurious. Along both sides of the hold – which did not have any portholes as it was a cargo ship – bunks the size of a modern double bed often held 5 people! But thanks to the simple measures they took, the Jeannie Johnson stood out because of the approximately 2,600 people it transported, not even one died!

Life on board of the Jeannie Johnston



The Jeannie Johnston was sold in 1855, to William Johnson of North Shields in England. In 1858, en route to Quebec from Hull with a cargo of timber, she became waterlogged. The crew climbed into the rigging, and after nine days clinging to their slowly sinking ship, they were rescued by a Dutch ship, the Sophie Elizabeth. Even in her loss, she maintained her perfect safety record.

In the 1980s a plan was hatched to build a replica. It would not be until 1993 however that an international group of young people under the guidance of experienced shipwrights started to build a new Jeannie Johnson. It took until 2000 for the ship to be finished and it was christened by the then President of Ireland, Mary McAleese on 7th May 2000.

It is now moored in Dublin and can be visited.



Jim, Ontario, Canada

"After a considerable amount of very frustrating and disappointing time trying to find my Irish ancestors, I contacted Genealogy.ie. Their performance exceeded all my expectations, in both quality and time. Jillian came up with a wealth of information. I will not hesitate to recommend Genealogy.ie to my friends"

Death Records

Where and when your ancestor died can lead to a vast variance of information provided on their death certificate. In this article, we outline what information you can find on Irish, American and Australian certificates.

IRELAND

Irish records provide minimal information. The death certificate gives the persons name, the location and date of their death, their occupation, the cause of death, and if you are lucky, the witness is a family relative. From our experience, the age seems to be more of a guesstimate than an exact science. If the family had some money, sometimes there is a death notice in the newspaper, which may indicate names of relatives or where they were buried. If we can locate their grave, we can then find out who is also interred with them, and from this, we can establish if they are the person we are tracing.

DEATHS Registered in the District of <i>Unsworth</i> in the Union of <i>Unsworth</i> in the County of <i>Lincoln</i>										
No.	Date and Place of Death.	Name and Surname.	Sex.	Condition.	Age last Birth-day.	Rank, Profession, or Occupation.	Certified Cause of Death, and Duration of Illness.	Signature, Qualification, and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.
(1.)	(2.)	(3.)	(4.)	(5.)	(6.)	(7.)	(8.)	(9.)	(10.)	(11.)
65	1863 Second Unsworth Coolbready	Michael Carey	Male	Married	60 yrs	Labourer	Pneumonia 2 or 3 days certified	Sally x Carey his wife present at death Coolbready	Second December 1863	John Registrar

USA

The USA records vary depending on the period concerned, but in the majority of cases, it collects both parents names along with several other clues to help you firmly establish family ties. This photo is of a 1910 Pennsylvania record, clearly stating the deceased full name, his date of birth and date of death, along with his parent's names.

Form V. S. No. 1-10-05

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH.

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS

1. PLACE OF DEATH
County of _____
Township of _____
or Borough of _____
City of _____

Registration District No. _____
Primary Registration Control No. _____
File No. **9716**
Registered No. **1928**

2. FULL NAME, **Robert W. Patrick**

3. SEX **M** 4. COLOR OR RACE **W** 5. SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED **M**

6. DATE OF BIRTH **1 15 1879**

7. AGE **30** 8. LESS THAN 1 day less than 1 day less than 1 day less than

9. OCCUPATION
(a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work
(b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer)

10. NAME OF FATHER **Robt Patrick**

11. BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER **Ire**

12. MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER **Estelle Gray**

13. BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER **Scotland**

14. THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.
Inferment **Wm Patrick**
Address **2322 Tioga St**

15. Filed _____ Local Registrar _____

16. DATE OF DEATH **1 18 1910**

17. I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from **1/14 1910** to **1/18 1910**
that I last saw **R W Patrick** alive on **1/16 1910**
and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at _____
The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:
a propleural **155**

Contributors (Incomes) _____
(Donation) _____
(Signed) **R D Emery** M. D.
Address **1709 N. 4th St**

18. LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (For Hospitals, Institutions, Tourists or Absent Residents)
At place of death _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds. State _____
Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? _____
Former or usual residence _____

19. PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL **Westminster** DATE OF BURIAL **1/21 1910**

20. UNDERTAKER **Wallow & Co** ADDRESS _____

MARGIN RESERVED FOR BINDING.

WRITE PLAINLY, WITH UNFADING INK—THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD.

N. B.—Every item of information should be carefully examined. AGE should be stated EXACTLY. PHYSICIANS should state CAUSE OF DEATH in plain terms, so that it may be entirely understood. Exact statement of OCCUPATION is very important. See instructions in book of certificates.

AUSTRALIA

However, our favourite is the Australian records which can prove a goldmine for family historians. The death certificate below is from New South Wales in 1899. Along with the usual information, it gives us his parents names and occupation, when he married and for how long he was married. This information helped us establish when his wife died. It also tells us when he emigrated to Australia and where he was born. It states his religion and where he was buried. The genius piece is that it also lists the names of his children (who are living) and their ages at the time of his death.

Date and place of death	Name and occupation	Sex and age	Cause of Death Duration of last illness; medical attendant; when he last saw deceased	Name and occupation of father. Name and maiden surname of mother	Informant
1899. 2nd April 452 Kensington Street	Timothy Curley Farmer	male 77 years	(1) Senile Decay (2) _____ (3) Dr. Wynne Hughes Edinburgh (4) 30th March 1899	(1) Lawrence Curley (2) Farmer (3) Mary Maloney	Charles Kelly Grandson Kensington Street

Particulars of Registration	When and where buried; name of undertaker	Name and religion of Minister and names of witnesses of burial	Where born and how long in the Australasian Colonies or States	Place of marriage, age, and to whom	Children of marriage
(1) M. Williams (2) 4th April 1899. (3) SYDNEY.	4th April 1899 Roman Catholic Cemetery Haverley	Parrott Roman Catholic H. H. Kirby Richard Kirby	County Clare, Ireland 18 years in N. S. Wales	County Clare, Ireland (1) 20 years (2) 20 years (3) 17 years Stretch	John 72 Lawrence 67 Katharine 59 Sarah 57 Bridget 55 Lizzie 53 living 1 male 11 females & deceased

This one record opened up many avenues for research, which we did on behalf of our Genealogy.ie client. We love Australian death records.

Why Hire Genealogy.ie?

1. Because we are Irish

First of all, because Genealogy.ie is based in Dublin. We have therefore ready access to all Irish archives and libraries. And of course we have subscriptions to all relevant Irish family history databases.

2. Because we have the expertise and the passion

Jillian van Turnhout, our founder and MD, has over 10 years' experience in tracing Irish family histories. She is passionate about genealogy and understands the richness and fulfillment that goes with finding out about your ancestors and their lives.

3. Because we are recognised specialists in Irish genealogy

We have been published in various genealogical and local history magazines in both Ireland and North America. Our articles are about our research, advice on record collections, research tips, local history, etc. Magazines we have appeared in include the respected "Irish Family History Journal" (Journal of the Irish Family History Society - IFHS), "Your Genealogy Today" and "Internet Genealogy" (both are publications in North America). You can download our articles by following the link below.

4. Because our Irish ancestry research is professional, factual and solid

Before we start any research, we will discuss with you what exactly it is that you hope we find. We will also always agree the cost with you beforehand, so there are no surprises afterwards. We have a clear method of research and adhere rigorously to best practices for genealogical research. You can read more about both in the "Hire us to research your Irish ancestry" section of this website.

5. Because our Irish family history reports are top notch

Another reason is that we will present our findings in a clearly laid out, professional report. Our clients are raving about them - as you can read in our client testimonials. And of course you will get digital copies of all certificates and documents we find.

6. Because assessment of your research question into your Irish roots is FREE

CONTACT US AT INFO@GENEALOGY.IE OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE GENEALOGY.IE