

LIST OF ARCHIVES / REPOSITORIES

- Clare County Archives Service
- Clare County Library
- Cork City and County Archives
- Donegal County Archives Service
- Dublin City Archives
- Dublin City Public Libraries
- Fingal County Archives
- Galway City and County Library
- Kerry County Library
- Limerick City Archives
- Limerick County Archives and County Library
- Longford County Library and Archives
- Louth County Archives Service
- Mayo County Library
- Roscommon County Library
- South Tipperary County Archives
- Waterford City Archives
- Waterford County Archives Service
- Westmeath County Library and Archives
- Belfast Linen Hall Library
- Chester Beatty Library
- Christ Church Cathedral Dublin Library and Archives
- Church of Ireland Representative Church Body Library
- CultureNorthernIreland – online cultural atlas
- Garda Síochána Museum and Archives
- Irish Architectural Archive
- Irish Archives Resource (IAR)
- Irish Film Archive
- Irish Manuscripts Commission
- Irish Traditional Music Archive
- Marsh's Library
- Military Archives Cathal Brugha Barracks
- National Library of Ireland including the National Photographic Archive and Office of the Chief Herald (Genealogical Office)

- National Museum of Ireland
- NUI Galway – special collection and archives
- NUI Maynooth Library
- Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
- Royal Irish Academy Library
- Trinity College Library Dublin and map library
- University College Cork - Archives
- UCD Archives, University College Dublin



The Irish Manuscripts Commission
Coimisiún Lámhscríbhinní na hÉireann
was founded in 1928.

The IMC/CLÉ motto is:
'Trebar cach conoi a fintid oigi foric'

which means

**'Prudent is he who
maintains his inheritance
entire as he finds it'**

From the seventh century Irish law tract
Córus Béscnai, one of the books of the
Senchas Már



Your records and how to preserve them

AN INFORMATION LEAFLET
PRODUCED BY

**IRISH MANUSCRIPTS COMMISSION/
COIMISIÚN LÁMHSCRÍBHINNÍ
na hÉIREANN**

AS PART OF ITS PRESERVATION
AND ACCESS AWARENESS REMIT

WHAT IS A RECORD?

A record is any item that tells a story about a person, a place, a time or an institution. For example, a school roll book, a registration document, a birth certificate, a pension record, examination certificates, personal or business correspondence, an institutional register and so on.

HOW DO I KNOW I HAVE A RECORD?

If you have any items such as those listed above or similar documents, either as stand alone items or part of a series of similar documents/objects, you have an historical record.

HOW DO I PRESERVE MY FAMILY RECORDS IN GOOD CONDITION?

Paper preservation requires proper storage and safe handling practices. Your family documents will last longer if they are stored in a stable environment, similar to that which we find comfortable for ourselves: 15–20°C (60–70°F); 40–50% relative humidity (RH); with clean air and good circulation. High heat and moisture accelerate the chemical processes that result in the paper becoming brittle and discoloured. Damp environments may also result in mould growth and/or be conducive to pests that might use the documents for food or nesting material.

Therefore, the central part of your home provides a safer storage environment than a hot attic or damp basement.

Light is also damaging to paper, especially light that contains high proportions of ultra violet, i.e., fluorescent and natural day light. The effects of light exposure are cumulative and irreversible; they promote chemical degradation in the paper and fade inks. It is not recommended to permanently display valuable documents for this reason.

Colour photocopies or photographs work well as surrogates (substitutes) which can be viewed without damaging the original.

Family papers should be stored in appropriate sized enclosures, such as a folder, box, portfolio, etc., that will provide physical protection as well as protection from light and dust. The enclosure itself should be made of stable permanent quality materials that will not contribute to the document's deterioration.

WHAT DO I DO WITH RECORDS I DO NOT WANT TO KEEP?

If you have a body of records that you would like to donate to an archive for posterity, you should contact an appropriate repository that collects similar kinds of records. For example, a traditional music archive for musical scores or folk tunes, a film archive for cine footage or other audio-visual material or indeed your local county archive may be the perfect location for your records/collection.

DONATING YOUR PERSONAL RECORDS

If you decide to donate your personal records to and archive the one you choose may depend on the material you are donating. You should check out your chosen archives' collecting policy in the first instance. For example, some archives place an emphasis on unique personal writing and collections in contrast to printed/published material which is usually available in other libraries and archives. They might also prefer to have unedited material written at the time, and not re-written later, for example, diaries, personal letters, scrap books, photo albums etc. It is advisable to contact the archive in advance to discuss the suitability of your material and the process of donating.

Typically family records are of little or no financial value but the information that can be extracted from them by historians or students of all branches of history is of massive historical value and can add hugely to our understanding of an event, a person, a place or a given moment in time.

USEFUL RESOURCES

National Library of Ireland – Caring for family resources (<http://www.nli.ie/en/faq/caring-for-familypapers.aspx>)

Public Record Office of Northern Ireland – Looking after your records – (http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/your_records/looking_after_your_records.htm)

and details about the kind of records PRONI accepts – (http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/your_records/depositing_your_records_with_proni.htm)

