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Your records and how to preserve them

1901.

AN INFORMATION LEAFLET PRODUCED BY IRISH MANUSCRIPTS COMMISSION/ COIMISIÚN LÁMHSCRÍBHINNÍ na hÉIREANN

AS PART OF ITS PRESERVATION AND ACCESS AWARE-NESS REMIT www.irishmanuscripts.ie



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 photograph, a school roll book, a registration document, a birth certificate, a pension record, KING'S HAL

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/COMMUNITY 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

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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.

Digital copies of photographs work well as surrogates but do not replace the original which should still be cared for as described above.

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 audiovisual 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 a national or regional 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.

REGIONAL ARCHIVES

This list is not exhaustive

Abbey Theatre Archive Alexandra College An Post Ardagh and Clonmacnoise Diocese Armagh County Museum Armagh Observatory Armagh Robinson Library **Belfast Central Library Belfast Linenhall Birr** Castle **Blackrock College Bolton Library** Church Archives - a comprehensive directory of diocesan/religious archives can be found here:

Capuchin Provincial Archives Carlow County Library Cashel and Emly Diocesan Archive **Cavan County Library** Central Bank of Ireland Archive **Chester Beatty Library Christ Church Cathedral** CIT Cork School of Music Special Collections **Clare County Library and Archives Clogher Diocesan Archives Clonfert Diocesan Archives Contemporary Music Centre Ireland** Cork City and County Archives Cork Public Museum Crawford Art Gallery

https://churcharchives.ie/archives-directory



Delany Archive Derry Diocesan Archive Derry City and Strabane Archives **Dominican Provincial Archives Donegal County Archives** Down and Connor Diocesan Archives Down County Museum **Dromore Diocesan Archives Dublin City Library and Archives Dublin City University Dublin Diocesan Archives Dublin Port Company** Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown **County Council Archives Elphin Diocesan Archives** Enniskillen Castle Museums **Erasmus Smith Schools Archive ESB** Archives Ferns Diocesan Archives **Fingal County Council Archives** Friends Historical Library Dublin **GAA** Archive Galway County Council Archives **Galway Diocesan Archives** Guinness Archive, Diageo Ireland Historic Environment Record of Northern Ireland Irish Film Archive Irish Architectural Archive Irish Archives Resource Irish Baptist Historical Society Irish Jesuit Archives Irish Jewish Museum Irish Traditional Music Archive Kerry Diocesan Archives Kerry Library Local History and Archives **Kildare County Archive Kilkenny Archives Killala Diocesan Archives Killaloe** Diocesan Archives **Kilmore Diocesan Archives** Laois County Archives Leitrim County Library and Local Studies Limerick City Archives Limerick Diocesan Archives Longford County Archives and Local Studies Loreto Sisters in Ireland Louth County Archives Marsh's Library Mayo County Library and Local **Studies**

Maynooth University Library, Special **Collections and Archives** Meath County Archive and Local Studies Meath Diocesan Archives Methodist Historical Society of Ireland **Military Archives** National Archives of Ireland National Folklore Collection National Gallery of Ireland Library and Archive National Irish Visual Arts Library National Library of Ireland National Museum of Ireland National University of Ireland, Galway Newry and Mourne Museum Archives **Offaly County Archives** Ó Fiach Memorial Library and Archive Oireachtas Library and Research Service **Ossory Diocesan Archives** Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland Library and Archive **Presentation Sisters Archive** Public Record Office of Northern Ireland Queens University Belfast, Special Collections Raphoe Diocesan Archive, Donegal RCB Library (incl. the Irish Huguenot Archive) **Registry of Deeds** Representative Church Body Library (including the Irish Huguenot Archive) **Royal Dublin Society Archives** Royal Irish Academy Library Royal Society of Antiquaries Ireland Royal College of Physicians of Ireland Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland **RTÉ** Archives Society of the Sacred Heart, Irish Scottish Province Provincial Archives Strokestown Famine Archive Trinity College Dublin Library and Archives **Tipperary County Archives** University College Cork University College Dublin Archives University of Limerick Waterford City and County Archives Wexford County Archive Wicklow County Archives

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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

