

GETTING TO KNOW FINDMYPAST: YOUR SOURCE FOR BRITISH AND IRISH GENEALOGY

Jen Baldwin | Data Acquisition Manager, North America
findmypast.com | jbaldwin@findmypast.com | [@findmypastUS](https://www.instagram.com/findmypastUS)

Findmypast currently holds a variety of resources that are invaluable for your U.S. research, and to bridge the connection to your English and Irish heritage. Utilizing these unique collections can add a great deal of depth and background to your family history.

➤ **PERSI: The Periodical Source Index**

“PERSI” is an acronym, used to describe the PERiodical Source Index. Created by the Allen County Public Library, the index has been an ongoing project for over twenty years. The subject index lists genealogy, family history, and history related articles available in small publications, typically produced by genealogy and family history societies around the world. PERSI provides a searchable indexed so that researchers can identify relevant material that is published on a smaller scale.

The Genealogy Center at the Allen County Public Library (ACPL) holds the largest English-language genealogy and local history periodical collection in the world with more than 6,200 current subscriptions and more than 10,000 titles. PERSI has been compiled from this growing collection and is updated on a frequent basis.

What’s new about PERSI on Findmypast?

As the new home of PERSI, Findmypast is linking thousands of individual genealogical periodicals and resources. This will allow the original content to be accessed and connected digitally for the first time in the history of PERSI. Findmypast continues to digitize publications to include PERSI, building a central access point for periodicals to reach a global family history community. You can access the index for free via the Newspapers & Periodicals subheading in the menu bar. Images of some periodicals are behind the subscription wall, and at the present time, Findmypast adds new images to the collection every month.

The future of PERSI

Findmypast posts periodic updates through the blog (<http://blog.findmypast.com>) including the latest titles added to the collection. Currently engaged in the process of

working one-on-one with societies around the United States and Canada, Findmypast is seeking permission to use their material. The majority of these collections are still protected by copyright, and Findmypast takes that protection very seriously. Each organization deserves attention and recognition throughout this project, and Findmypast will continue to hold onto that commitment as they move through this process. It will take some time, and although many are anxious to see the collection of digital images grow, Findmypast is taking steps to be careful and methodical in the process. This continues to ensure a high quality product being provided to Findmypast customers around the world.

For more about the digitization efforts of the PERSI collection, please contact us at persi@findmypast.com.

➤ **Newspapers**

Findmypast is home to a massive collection of newspapers, especially from England Ireland. Our partnership with the British Newspaper Archive (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>) has added more than 11 million pages of newspaper images to the Findmypast site, and the goal is to digitize up to 40 million pages from the vast collection at the British Library. For most of these papers, this is the first time they have been made available online.

You may discover news articles, family notices, letters, obituaries, and advertisements that relate to your family story, and the material is easily searched via findmypast.com. The collection contains UK material beginning in the early 1700s and continues into the 1950s; the bulk of the collection begins in the 1830s, and will eventually include content from England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Our U.S. newspaper collection includes nearly 120 million pages from publications in all 50 states, Washington D.C., Panama, and the Virgin Islands. Regional as well as national titles are featured, including the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

➤ **Irish Hidden Gems**

Findmypast is proud to have become the largest holder of Irish material online, and our collection only continues to grow. Irish research can be extremely difficult, but with census substitutes, creative resources, and social history, the possibilities for discovery improve. With a bit of creative thinking, these collections can greatly expand your understanding of your Irish roots.

Consider, for just a moment, the Irish Petty Sessions Court Registers. Perhaps your ancestor was involved in a neighborhood dispute, or witnessed a crime – this is the court in which they would have been called to. The collection contains everything from petty pick pockets and drunken disorderly charges to assault and murder.

Be sure to investigate all of our unique Irish material for clues to your family. Here is a small sampling:

- Irish Petty Sessions Court Registers, 1828-1912
- Workhouse Admission and Discharge Registers, 1840-1919
- Poor Law Unions Board of Guardians Minute Books
- Irish Census from 1821-1851, 1910, 1911, and regional and military census records.
- The most complete online version of Griffith's Valuation, including the survey maps and plans, 1847 – 1864.
- Ireland Dog License Registers
- Irish Prison Registers 1790-1924

➤ **English Hidden Gems**

Although not as traditionally difficult as Irish research, there can be some challenges in stretching across the Atlantic Ocean to England. The territories of the United Kingdom have stretched far throughout history, and you may find that your British ancestor spent time in India, on Caribbean Islands, or in Australia during his lifetime.

There are certain elements of English research that are essential “need to know” pieces in order to put this puzzle together. For example, the Civil Registration Districts and the County borders do not match up; so to find the records you are looking for, you may need to move around to several counties.

With a complete UK census collection, and the highly anticipated 1939 Register coming online in 2015, the materials at Findmypast are essential in English research. Parish records that date as far back as 1538 in some cases, but include over 40 million baptisms, marriages, and burials from across England and Wales. The British Army Collection that ranges from 1760-1915 and includes records from British India; all together, Findmypast has accumulated one billion records from the British Isles.

Explore collections such as:

- County Apprentices, 1710-1808
- Scotland Marriages, 1561-1910
- National School Admission Registers & Log-Books, 1870-1914
- England & Wales Merchant Navy Crew Lists, 1861-1913
- Royal Household Staff, 1526-1924
- East India Company & Civil Service Pensions
- Great Western Railway Shareholders, 1835-1932

➤ **Early American Hidden Gems**

Within our United States collection you can find a great deal of early American history, once again getting you closer to that objective of bridging the gap between the U.S. and the origin country. In early 2015, we loaded over sixty new titles that focus on state records, state censuses, and passenger lists from several significant ports.

You may look for your military ancestor in the Revolutionary War Pension files, which include full images of priceless documents. Or perhaps an ancestor was held as a prisoner of war during the War of 1812 – you may find him in the “Prisoners of War 1715-1945” collection, especially if he was transported back to England during his captivity.

You will find depth to add to your family story in the social history collection, including titles such as “The Irishman in Canada,” the “Illustrated History of Montana” published in 1894, and “The Scotch-Irish of Kentucky.”

We are incredibly pleased to partner with societies large and small across North America to bring new and fascinating material online. Some of these exclusive collections include material from Bexar County, Texas and the San Antonio Genealogical and Historical Society; various titles from the New York Genealogical & Biographical Society, and the pages of *Norfolklore*, a publication from the Norfolk Historical Society in Norfolk, Ontario, Canada.

- To learn more about Findmypast, please visit us at www.findmypast.com.
- Questions regarding our free trial your or account can be addressed to: support@findmypast.com.
- For more information on our society digitization programs, please email us at societies@findmypast.com.
- You can reach us on Facebook and Twitter!