

Your Family Tree Series: 9



Street Directories



Sample page from a street directory

There are a number of printed sources available on the shelves of the Search Room which can be of use to anyone interested in tracing their family tree. Of particular value to genealogists are the Street Directories that contain a great deal of information particularly on the gentry, the professional classes, merchants, manufacturers etc. These directories include information on even the smallest of market towns and ports in Ireland. Each directory usually begins with a description of the town and surrounding countryside followed by the names and addresses of

the various traders, nobility and gentry. There is often a listing by trade and by street. The names and addresses of officials such as magistrates, Poor Law guardians, town commissioners, ministers of religion are usually given as well as the names and location of churches, schools and other public buildings in the towns. Excluded from the directories are small tenant farmers, landless labourers and servants.

The principal country-wide directories which can be found on the shelves of the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland are:

Pigot's Commercial Directory of Ireland, 1824 - the towns of Ireland are listed alphabetically, supplying the names of the nobility etc, and dividing the traders of each town according to their trade.

Slater's Directory of Ireland, 1846, 1856 and 1870 - arranged by province. Trade lists for each town and village within the provinces are included as well as lists of nobility, gentry and clergy. However, the principal farmers are not included. The main cities - Belfast, Cork, Dublin and Limerick - have alphabetical indexes to their lists of traders, nobility, etc.

Thom's Official Directory of Great Britain and Ireland, 1845-1958 - most comprehensive for Dublin and Co Dublin. There is an alphabetical listing of the nobility, gentry, merchants and traders for Dublin as well as a listing by street. For the counties and municipal towns including Belfast there is a general description followed by a list of officials.

A series of provincial directories is also available on the shelves of the Public Search Room. During the nineteenth century, a great many local directories were produced particularly for important commercial centres such as Belfast, Derry, and Newry, although the quality of these varies considerably from locality to locality. The following street directories which are available in PRONI and which will be of particular interest to anyone interested in tracing their family tree are:

Thomas Bradshaw's General Directory of Newry, Armagh, Dungannon, Portadown, Tandragee, Lurgan, Waringstown, Banbridge, Warrenpoint, Rosstrevor, Kilkeel and Rathfryland, 1820, which includes an alphabetical list of traders but does not include local gentry.

Matier's Belfast Directory, 1835-36, which includes an alphabetical list of gentry, merchants and traders residing in Belfast and its neighbourhood as well as a listing by professions and trades.

Martin's Belfast Directory, 1839 and 1841-42, which includes an alphabetical list of gentry, merchants and traders living in Belfast and also a street-by-street listing of the principal streets.

Henderson's Belfast Directory and Northern Repository, 1843-44, 1846-47 and 1852, which includes a street-by-street listing and an alphabetical list of the 'principal inhabitants'.

Belfast and Province of Ulster/Northern Ireland Directory which runs from 1852 to 1996. It includes an alphabetical and a street listing of the inhabitants of Belfast as well as a listing by trade and profession. This is followed by a county directory listing the officials in each county and then a provincial town's directory for the principal towns and villages of Ulster providing details of officials, the nobility and gentry and traders and manufacturers.

Slater's Directory of Ulster, 1894, which lists the nobility, gentry, clergy and traders for the provincial towns. For Belfast the arrangement is by street and by trade/profession as well as an alphabetical listing.

The Local History Panel of the Library and Information Services Council (NI) has compiled a Guide to Ulster Street Directories listing what is available and where they can be accessed.

