

Your Family Tree: 19

GRAND JURY RECORDS

The Grand Jury was the most important local body in rural Ireland during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century and was empowered to raise money by means of county rates. Its responsibilities included the construction and repair of roads and bridges and the upkeep of local institutions such as lunatic asylums and hospitals. Members of the Grand Jury were selected by the High Sheriff from the leading property owners in the county; the order in which these jurors stood on the list gives a pretty good indication of their social standing.

Grand Jury Presentments are the chief records of the county administration prior to 1898. These and Grand Warrants contain information about work ordered to be done by the Grand Jury on roads, bridges and jails and about constabulary duties in the counties. They are arranged barony by barony within the county and useful genealogical information can be obtained by detailed searching of them. They are not indexed. Although frequently printed, different sets contain manuscript amendments and notes according to who owned and used them. An entry might state 'that it was agreed that £12. 6s. 8d. shall be paid to Joshua Trainor of Ballylack, for repairing the road between Omagh and Strabane, from Peter McMenamin's farm in Breeny to William Crawford's farm at Ballykilbeg'. The most useful records are listed below:

Co. Antrim	
ANT/4/1	Presentments 1711-1840
ANT/4/2	Grand Warrant Books
ANT/4/3	Presentments Books - working copies, 1822-1899
ANT/4/6	Grand Jury Book, 1849-1941
ANT/4/8/1	Booklet listing names of judges and high sheriffs, 1859-1900
ANT/4/8/3	List of magistrates giving names, addresses and dates of appointment, 1873-1923
T1110	Grand Jury lists for Co. Antrim, 1613-1803

Co. Armagh	
ARM/4/1	Presentments 1758-1899
ARM/4/2/1	County Cess Collection Book for the barony of Oneilland West, 1875
T647	Grand Jury List for Co. Armagh, 1735-1797

Co. Down	
DOW/4/2	Presentments, 1778-1899
T684/11	Grand Jury Cess, applotment of parish of Down, 1684

Co. Fermanagh	
FER/4/1-3	Presentments, 1792-1898
FER/4/5	List of Justices of the Peace, 1922-1923

Co. Derry/Londonderry	
LOND/4/1	Presentments, 1788-1899
T1113/1	Grand Jury list for Co. Londonderry, 1614-1819

Co. Tyrone	
TYR/4/1	Presentments, 1799-1897
TYR/4/2	Grand Jury Indictment Books which include the name of the prosecutors, persons indicted and the offence. The names of judges, sheriffs and members of the Grand Jury are also included, 1745-1809, 1814-1899, 1912-1969

Belfast	
BELF/4/1/2	Grand Jury Book listing names of Grand Jurors, 1940-1969

* Many of the Grand Jury records relating to Belfast can be found among the Antrim Grand Jury records.