

Ireland Land Divisions

- 1. Nation** - Ireland is split into two entities: the *Republic of Ireland* and *Northern Ireland*.
- 2. Provinces** - *Connaught, Leinster, Munster and Ulster*. Oldest of all Irish land divisions and relate approximately to the regions ruled by pre-Norman kings or clans. They have no administrative purpose or official status anymore.
 - ☐ **Connaught** includes counties of Galway, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo.
 - ☐ **Leinster** contains 12 counties: Dublin, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Longford, Louth, Meath, Offaly, Westmeath, Wexford and Wicklow.
 - ☐ **Munster** contains Clare, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford.
 - ☐ **Ulster** in Northern Ireland consisted of Antrim, Armagh, Cavan, Derry/Londonderry, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Monaghan and Tyrone. By 1922 treaty, Donegal, Cavan, and Monaghan became part of Ireland.
- 3. County** - The 32 counties are the most consistent Irish land division used today that replaced Provinces.
- 4. Barony** – Important Irish land divisions when surveys and early censuses were taken. Obsolete since 1898 but still remains important to genealogists. Baronies may span parts of multiple civil parishes and counties.
- 5. Parish** - Two types – ecclesiastical and civil -- and must not be confused. Ecclesiastical is also divided as to Church of Ireland parishes and Roman Catholic parishes. There are about 2,500 civil parishes and an unknown number of ecclesiastical parishes.
- 6. Diocese** - An administrative ecclesiastical unit introduced in the 12th century with much relevance to genealogy.
- 7. City or Town** - Traditional urban land divisions. A city or town may be made up of several townlands or be only one part of a townland.
- 8. Townland** - Smallest and very ancient land division. Groups of farmlands that usually have no administrative entity. Apparently townland was originally based on 'ballyboes', or areas of land deemed sufficient to sustain a cow. By the 1830s, townlands of varying sizes had been established and some townlands were less than one acre and others of several thousand acres.
- 9. Poor Law Unions** – British administrative entities established in 1838, centered at market towns, where workhouses for the destitute poor were also built during famine years. 137 unions were established.
- 10. District Electoral Districts (DEDs)** - British subdivisions of Poor Law Unions that were subsequently subdivided into district electoral divisions (DEDs) for the taking of censuses.
- 11. Superintendent Registrars Districts** - British land divisions set-up in 1845 in Ireland that were created purely for administrative purposes, in particular the civil registration of births, marriages and deaths. Genealogists view them the same as Poor Law Unions.
- 12. Maps** - Maps of these Irish land divisions can be bought from www.osi.ie.
- 13. More about land records** – see <http://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/Ireland-genealogy.html>