


Royal Irish Academy

RESEARCH





IN 1785 the founding members of the Royal Irish Academy believed that research would bring enlightenment and tolerance; that ‘the increase of useful knowledge’ would create a better society and improve our world. Today, in an age of greater doubt and mistrust, even more value must be placed on rigorous enquiry, reliability of analysis and depth of knowledge.

Research objectives and methods change over time, but some essentials remain. The Royal Irish Academy’s research projects and related infrastructural resources focus attention on vital topics: place, language, international relations, the lives of defining figures, the public history of institutions and ways to share knowledge.

We often speak of Global Ireland, but our country can only be seen as a distinctive entity and a contributor to global society if we, and others, have a well-informed and accurately interpreted sense

of ourselves, achieved through research, constantly updated. The Academy's research projects, along with its library and its publishing house, make a major contribution to this fundamentally important task. Their role is recognised through the support they receive, collectively and individually, from the state through various government departments and institutions.

The Royal Irish Academy encourages and supports researchers throughout Ireland and stimulates debate on research and education-related policy. In the same spirit, its researchers seek to inspire and stimulate enquiry. They share their results and methods widely, through engagement with diverse audiences and through events such as Culture Night and our Research Open Day. The aim of these events is to open windows onto research in action, allowing people to see all of the projects together, to understand how they work and what they and

our library and publishing house contribute to our society. The research described in the following pages involves collaboration with colleagues, partnerships with institutions across the island and overseas, and high-level engagement in international networks and with policy-defining bodies. Taking full advantage of the changes in methods and ways of knowing enabled by the current technological revolution, the research projects and related library and publications infrastructure outlined here are significant elements in the drive to share research results, including by open access means, and to facilitate uptake of new methodologies. The work they do would have astonished and gratified the founders of the Academy.



JANE CONROY, MRIA
Vice-president for Research



FOCLÓIR STAIRIÚIL NA GAEILGE

The Royal Irish Academy has a long tradition of lexicography and of pioneering scholarship in the Irish language, stretching back almost 150 years, through which many leading scholars and antiquarians have been involved in the evolution of a comprehensive dictionary for one of the oldest living languages in Europe.

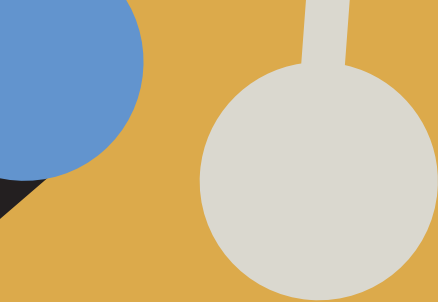
Foclóir Stairiúil na Gaeilge is building an authoritative dictionary for modern Irish, based on material from the period c.1600 to the present day. Our dictionary will outline the meaning and use of Irish words and terms across a broad range of media: from the rich and varied manuscript tradition of the seventeenth to the nineteenth century and the novels and periodicals of the twentieth century, to the spoken-word recordings of Gaeltacht speakers of Irish.

This mammoth task of linguistic and lexicographical research has as its foundation a digital corpus comprising more than 90-million words of text that has been over 20 years in the making. Our editorial team is currently engaged in

reviewing and processing the language harvested from the challenging process of digitisation, with a view to producing from the corpus the first entries for the dictionary proper. This work will continue alongside the production of discrete digital collections, such as the material from *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge/The Gaelic Journal* (1882–1909) and the dictionary of Máirtín Ó Cadhain (1906–1970).

The dictionary for modern Irish will eventually complement the Royal Irish Academy's totemic *DIL* (*Dictionary of the Irish Language based mainly on Old and Middle Irish materials*), completed in 1976, and which itself has recently been digitised, as *eDIL*.

The Royal Irish Academy receives generous funding for Foclóir Stairiúil na Gaeilge from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.



DICTIONARY OF MEDIEVAL LATIN FROM CELTIC SOURCES (DMLCS)

Not everyone realises that, when the formal structures of the western Roman Empire fell apart in the early fifth century, its official language—Latin—continued with undiminished vitality as the everyday spoken tongue of the people across most of its territory. Far from going into a decline, Latin went on developing naturally and in different ways in different places, eventually becoming the separate languages that we know as Spanish, French, Italian, etc.

People didn't stop reading and writing during the millennium and a half that this transition took; indeed, the written Latin output of the period completely dwarfs the amount of material that had been composed during imperial times. Yet standard Latin dictionaries deal

only with the earlier, Classical period, while standard dictionaries of Spanish, French, etc., deal only

with the modern tongues. Only in recent decades has an attempt been made to reckon systematically with the huge amount of documentation from the medieval period that lies between.

In a mosaic-like pattern that reflects the geographical diversification of the language itself, a European scheme is under way by which each scholarly academy participating in the scheme prepares a dictionary of the post-Classical Latin that was written on its specific territory. In the case of the Royal Irish Academy, the territory is that of the Celtic-speaking peoples. Among these the medieval Irish, in particular, were notably inventive in their use of language (what has changed?), so the DMLCS dictionary already contains entries for literally thousands of Latin words that are not known from anywhere else.

Drawing our examples systematically from a computer-searchable database of all the texts involved, the methodology applied by the DMLCS project ensures that our treatment of each item of vocabulary is representative in its selection of examples and reflects each word's full range of meanings.

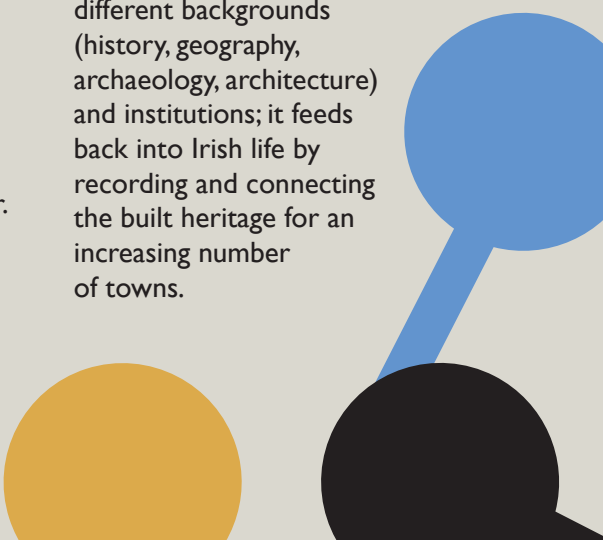
IRISH HISTORIC TOWNS ATLAS (IHTA)

The Irish Historic Towns Atlas project carries out research and cartography with the aim of tracing the topographical development of Irish towns and cities. The results (a combination of maps and texts) are made available in print (IHTA fascicles) and as digital editions (IHTA Online). The output to date ranges from coverage of the larger cities (Belfast and Dublin have been produced in part form), to medium and smaller Irish towns (such as Armagh, Athlone, Bandon, Drogheda, Limerick, Sligo, Trim, Tuam and Youghal), all representing various size categories, regions of the country north and south, and various periods of origin, growth and change. Thirty fascicles have been published in the main series, from an intended list of forty plus. In recent years, the link between town and country has also been explored, most notably through the establishment of the Dublin Suburbs series, in which Clontarf and Rathmines have been published so far.

The IHTA resource is intended as a platform for further research for a variety of users: from citizen to planner, to scholar and teacher, from all levels of education. The remit of

the project ranges from providing access to local source material, to facilitating broader comparisons nationally and internationally. The Irish project is part of a wider European scheme, with over 580 towns covered across nineteen countries, among which the IHTA is considered a model.

Alongside its core work, the project builds on atlas content by producing ancillary publications (for example our *Maps and texts* series, books presenting extracts from historic maps such as *Renaissance Galway*, historical compilations, or pocket maps); developing interactive digital atlases; and running a significant programme of engagement, including an annual seminar. Maps are prepared in association with Ordnance Survey Ireland, and project partners include relevant local authorities, such as Cork City Council and Dublin City Council. The IHTA network, overseen by a board of honorary academic editors, draws together researchers from different backgrounds (history, geography, archaeology, architecture) and institutions; it feeds back into Irish life by recording and connecting the built heritage for an increasing number of towns.



DICTIONARY OF IRISH BIOGRAPHY (DIB)

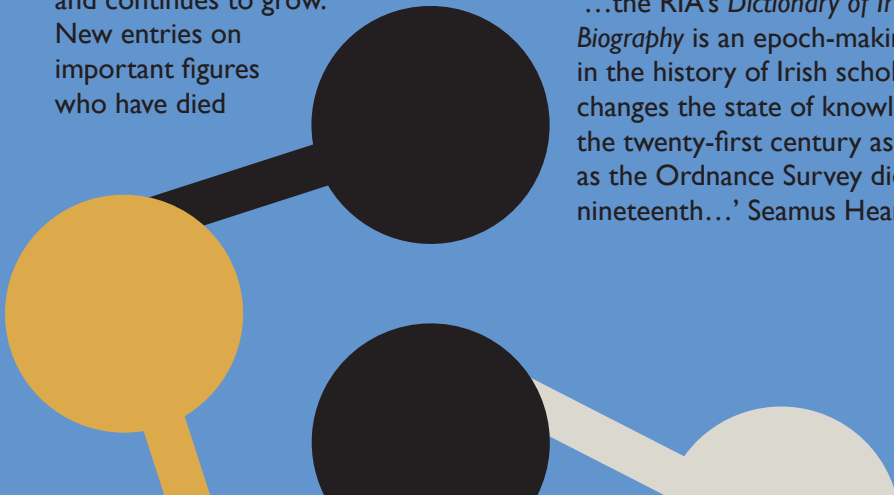
The Dictionary of Irish Biography (DIB) tells the island's life story through the biographies, at home and overseas, of prominent men and women born in Ireland, north and south, and the noteworthy Irish careers of those born outside Ireland. The chronological scope of the DIB project extends from the earliest times to the twenty-first century. The living are not included. Biographies range in length from 200 to 15,000 words and cover diverse figures across a broad range of human activity, from scientists to sportspeople, suffragists to soldiers.

The *DIB*'s online edition (available at dib.ie) was launched in 2009 after many years of research by hundreds of contributors, and it now features nearly 11,000 lives and continues to grow. New entries on important figures who have died

in recent times, and on 'missing persons'—previously overlooked figures deserving fresh interest—are regularly published in the online *DIB*.

As well as this free-to-access online database, the *DIB* is available in print; eleven volumes have been published to date by our publishing partner Cambridge University Press. In recent years we have also published several themed books with Royal Irish Academy Publications; these curate *DIB* entries to give a deeper insight into the lives of the men and women involved in major Irish historical events, movements and migrations. Our most recent themed publications include *1916 portraits and lives* (2016), *Irish lives in America* (2021) and *Irish Sporting lives* (2022).

'...the RIA's *Dictionary of Irish Biography* is an epoch-making event in the history of Irish scholarship. It changes the state of knowledge in the twenty-first century as decidedly as the Ordnance Survey did in the nineteenth...' Seamus Heaney



DOCUMENTS ON IRISH FOREIGN POLICY (DIFP)

Documents on Irish Foreign Policy was established in 1997 as a partnership between the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Royal Irish Academy and the National Archives of Ireland.

DIFP's basic aim is to make available, in an organised and accessible way, to people who may not be in a position easily to consult the National Archives, documents from the files of the Department of Foreign Affairs that are considered important or useful for an understanding of Irish foreign policy.

The *DIFP* series begins at the foundation of the state in 1919 and publishes volumes in chronological order. The basic criterion for the selection of documents for publication is their importance in understanding the evolution of Ireland's foreign policy. The published documents are primarily selected from the records of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of the Taoiseach, all of which are available for inspection in the National Archives at Bishop Street in Dublin. Other material comes from the holdings of other repositories; for example, the

personal papers of many of the key figures who appear in the *DIFP* series are retained in UCD Archives.

The National Archives Act (1986) provides for the transfer of departmental records more than thirty years old to the National Archives of Ireland for inspection by the public, unless they are certified to be in regular use by a department for administrative purposes, or unless they are certified as withheld from public inspection on one of the grounds specified in the act. The Department of Foreign Affairs documents in the National Archives have been made available to researchers since January 1991.

The first *DIFP* volume was published in November 1998. Subsequent volumes, covering discrete periods from 1919 to 1969, have appeared at two-yearly intervals, and to date twelve volumes have been published. Volume XIII will be available in November 2022.

As the series progresses, following an interval after the publication of each volume the documents are made freely available online at difp.ie.



DIGITAL REPOSITORY OF IRELAND (DRI)

The Digital Repository of Ireland is a national digital repository for Ireland's humanities, social sciences and cultural heritage data.

By providing a central internet access point and interactive multimedia tools, the DRI facilitates engagement with contemporary and historical data, allowing the public, students and scholars to research Ireland's cultural heritage and social life in ways never before possible.

As a national digital infrastructure, the DRI is working with a wide range of institutional stakeholders to link together and preserve Ireland's rich and varied humanities and social

science data. We make this data openly available, in line with the FAIR data principles of findability, accessibility, interoperability and reusability. Our aim is to safeguard Ireland's social, cultural, and historical record through active management of digital content over time, to ensure that this content remains accessible to researchers, cultural heritage enthusiasts and members of the public into the future. In addition to our core DRI programme, we are engaged in a rich range of collaborative partner projects.

DRI is funded by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) via the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the Irish Research Council (IRC). The consortium partners are: Royal Irish Academy (lead institute), Maynooth University and Trinity College Dublin.

GRANGEGORMAN HISTORIES

Grangegorman Histories is a public history project of Dublin City Council, Grangegorman Development Agency, the HSE, local communities, the National Archives, the Royal Irish Academy and TU Dublin. The project provides opportunities to contribute to the important work of uncovering, cataloguing and commemorating the eventful history of the Grangegorman area.

In the past 250 years, Grangegorman, on the northside of Dublin city centre, has been the site of a workhouse, a large psychiatric hospital, a prison; now, it is integrating back into the city as a health and education campus for the HSE, TU Dublin and the local community.

The Grangegorman Development Agency Act of 2005 and Grangegorman Strategic Plan of 2011 made provision for the development of historical research into this significant site. The Royal Irish Academy and Grangegorman Development Agency lead this public history project of research and shared discovery. The project's diverse programme of events, publications and learning opportunities is designed to help uncover and share the history of the site and surrounding communities. The Grangegorman Histories Expert

Working Group was appointed in 2019 to realise the programme. The vision for the programme is to stimulate awareness of the multi-faceted histories of the Grangegorman area to benefit local, national and international stakeholders. The Implementation Plan, published in the Grangegorman Histories Foundation Document in June 2020, presents the programme in three learning perspectives: People, Places and Practices.

At the core of the programme is the desire to embrace multiple aspects of the area's history; to acknowledge the complex nature of our past to help to destigmatise mental illness and institutional confinement, while recognising the sometimes-distressing nature of personal stories; and to ensure the accessibility of the programme to inspire and stimulate active research into these histories.

More information on the project is available at grangegormanhistories.ie.



ANALYSING AND RESEARCHING IRELAND NORTH AND SOUTH (ARINS)

The Analysing and Researching Ireland North and South project was established in 2020. A multi-year partnership between the Royal Irish Academy and the University of Notre Dame's Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies, ARINS is a non-partisan, evidence-based research initiative that enables academics, practitioners and policymakers to explore questions and policy options for Ireland's constitutional, economic, social, political and cultural future—north and south.

The goal of ARINS is to extend academic dialogue to all citizens, through research, writing and dialogue. Twenty-five years on from the signing of the Belfast/Good Friday

Agreement of 1998, ARINS examines the political, constitutional, legal, economic, educational, environmental, health, financial, identity and cultural challenges faced across the island of

Ireland. Insights, findings and recommendations generated by the work undertaken by the ARINS project are shared in articles and responses published in the Academy's journal *Irish Studies in International Affairs*.

To date, the ARINS project has explored, researched and published on topics involving public participation in constitutional reform; franchise and the timing of referenda on the future of Irish unity; and the politics of power sharing. In addition, it has considered the disparities in living standards between north and south; the demands of health-care and welfare provision; and cross-border cooperation in the arts. The ARINS podcast series explores these issues further in conversations with article authors and subject experts. The podcasts are complemented by a series of ARINS blogs, and ARINS in-person dialogues, helping to support decision makers and citizens alike to navigate the parameters for change relating to future constitutional, political, social and cultural frameworks to further the successes of the Good Friday Agreement.

The ARINS initiative creates a space to explore questions in these broad areas to help determine how, based on research and informed debate, we might successfully create a shared Ireland and safeguard outcomes for all citizens. The ARINS documents are freely available online: ria.ie/arins



ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY LIBRARY

The Library, at the heart of the Royal Irish Academy, is an important research centre, principally for the scholarship of Irish history, language, society, politics, natural history, archaeology and the history of Irish science. Our significant multidisciplinary collections of archival and published materials—manuscripts, books, pamphlets, maps and drawings—support the work of the Academy and the research community it serves, including the Academy's own research projects featured in this booklet.

We also engage in outreach and communications activities, in national initiatives, in institutional partnerships, in online publishing and in the facilitation of knowledge transfer.

The Library's unique holdings contain the largest collection of Irish language manuscripts in the world, including the oldest extant version of *Lebor na hUidre*, as well as significant manuscripts such as the sixth-century Cathach and the Book of Ballymote. We hold the Books of Survey and Distribution, the deeds of the Guild of St Anne and the invaluable Haliday collection of over 35,000 seventeenth- to nineteenth-

century pamphlets and tracts. In addition to the antiquarian book and periodical libraries of Thomas Moore, Osborn J. Bergin and Henry A.S. Upton, we have over 8,000 drawings of antiquarian interest from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, and the modern manuscript collections of noted individuals such as James Caulfeild, Charles and James Graves, John Windele, Kevin B. Nowlan and W.T. Cosgrave. The Library is also home to the natural history collections of A.G. More, Robert Lloyd Praeger, J.A. Ussher, A.H. Haliday and Cynthia Longfield, among others; to Ordnance Survey maps, memoirs, letters and drawings; and to a variety of genealogical sources for the study of local heritage.

In addition, the Royal Irish Academy Library hosts and manages Irish History Online (IHO), a database that includes bibliographic information on books and pamphlets, articles from journals published in Ireland or internationally, and chapters from books of essays, including *Festschriften* and conference proceedings. IHO is compiled, edited and regularly updated by a team of volunteers and is free to all users.

ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY PUBLICATIONS

The publishing house of the Royal Irish Academy is one of the oldest in Ireland. We began publishing *Transactions* in 1787, recording the debates and lectures that Academy members organised from the institution's earliest days.

Today, we publish the work of hundreds of academics, not just Academy members, in six journals covering subjects such as earth sciences; biology and environmental studies; mathematics; international affairs; history, archaeology and literature; and Irish philology. We are always looking for new writers to contribute research articles in these disciplines. Our journals are all available online, and we are working to find ways to present them in open access formats, so that the scholarship can reach even farther.

Under the Prism imprint, we commission writers, artists and illustrators to make books that bring scholarly work to a broad audience. Titles published to date include *Catching the worm*, *A history of Ireland in 100 words*, *The Handover: Dublin Castle and the British withdrawal from Ireland* and

Ireland 1922: independence, partition, civil war. Many of these books lead to the creation of exhibitions, to features on radio programmes, or to events, talks and podcasts, and they open up opportunities for us to collaborate with, and showcase the work of, cultural institutions, other organisations, libraries, archives, festivals and the media.

The Academy continues to publish landmark series, including the output of most of the research projects featured in this booklet; series on Ireland's cultural heritage such as *Excavations at Knowth*, *New Survey of Clare Island* and *Art and Architecture of Ireland*; and scholarly books such as *Early Medieval Ireland* and *The origins of the Irish Constitution* and, more recently, *Sisters* and *Ireland in the European Eye*.

Our books and journals are peer-reviewed, and are all produced to a high standard of editing and design. Our books have won several Irish Book Awards, for Best Irish-Printed book; Institute of Designers in Ireland awards; and Business-2-Arts awards.



Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann
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