

Irish Community Archives Network

Local History: Research, Sources and Methods

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February – March 2022

LECTURE 3



Mac Conmara
Heritage Consulting



**IRISH
COMMUNITY
ARCHIVE
NETWORK**

Lecture 2

Review



Review and discussion



Referencing & Source Citation 2



Understanding Sources



An Image as a Source



Obair Bhaile

Finding
PRIMARY SOURCES
in History



Tuesday, April 12, 12:15 - 1:05

Primary Sources Example

Something that was written, filmed, or recorded during the era you are studying

Letter

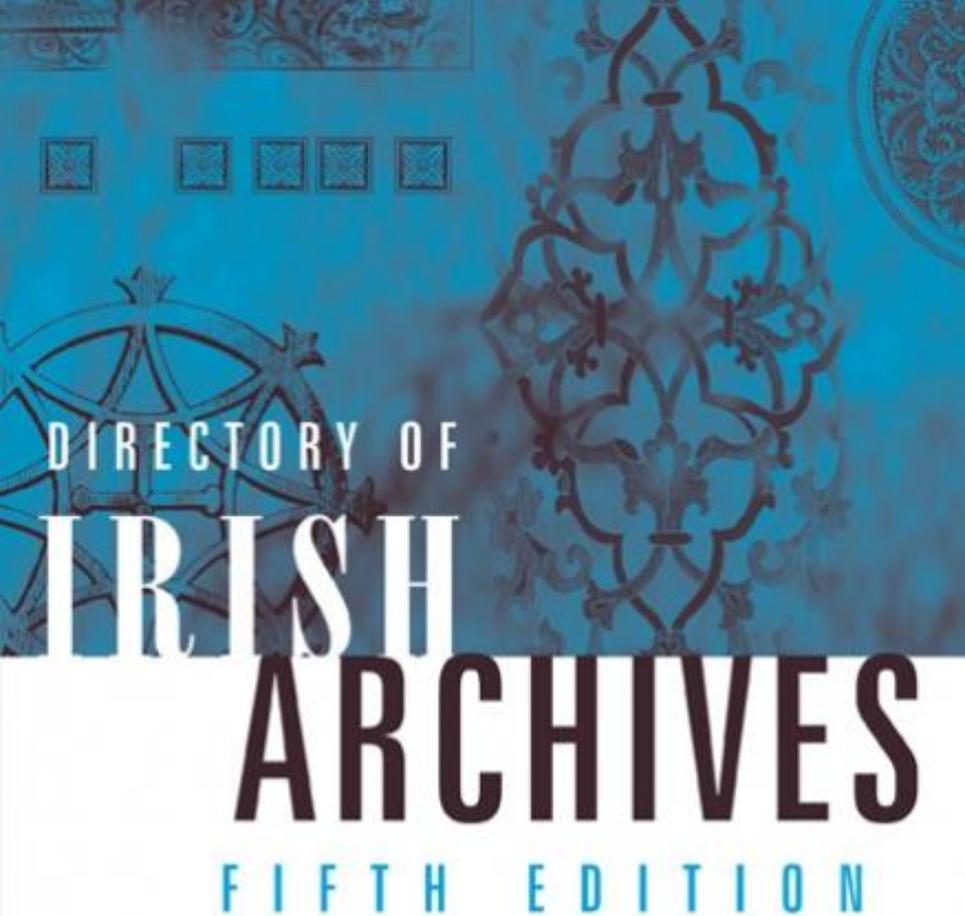
Treaty

Photograph - visual culture and historical evidence (L 3)

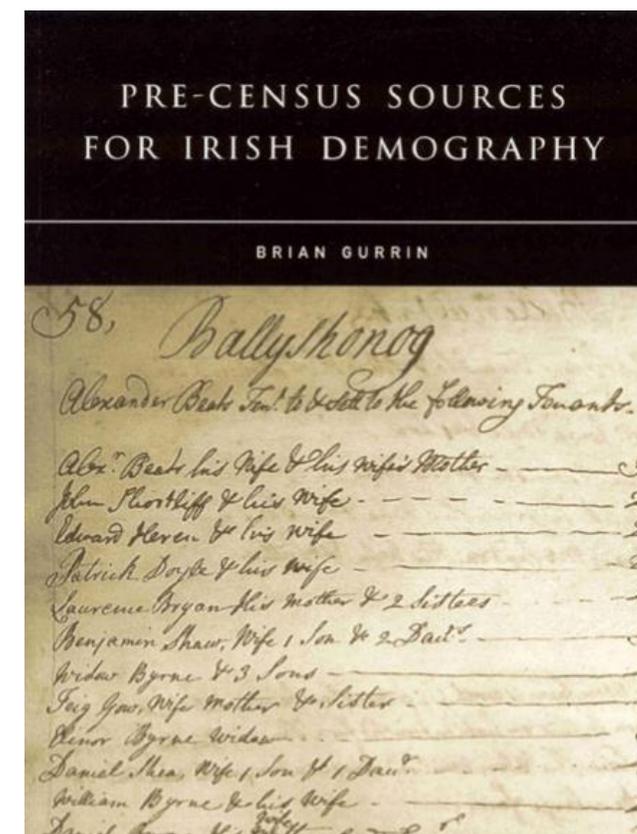
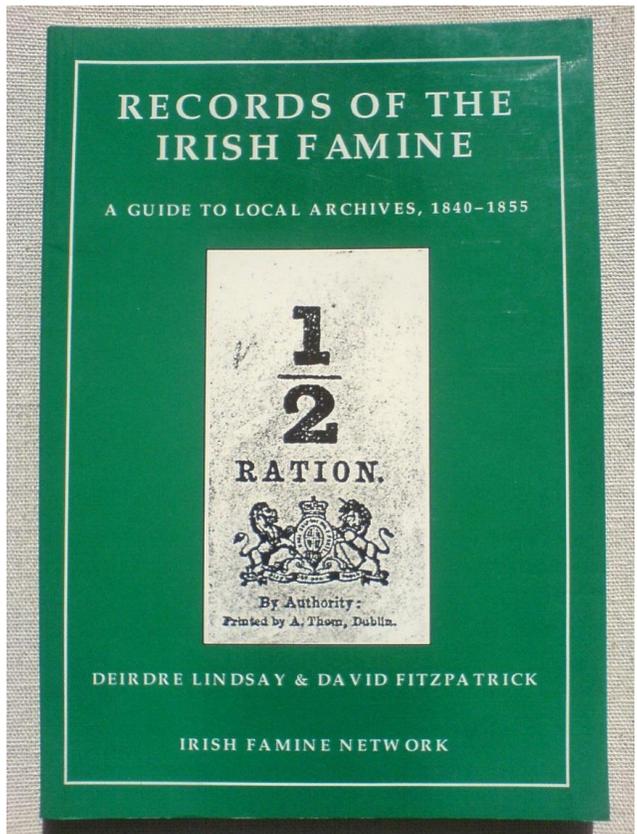
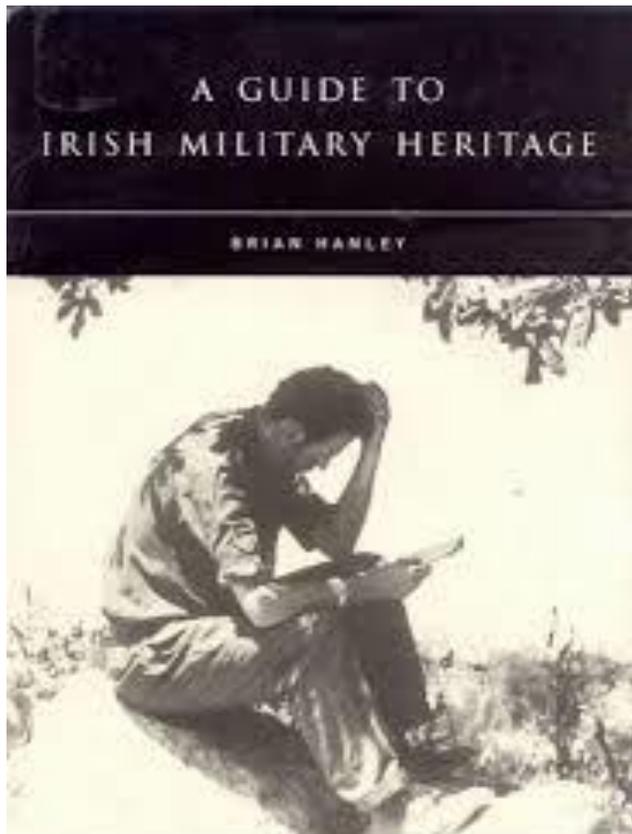
Newspaper article

Government documents

Oral history from someone who lived during the time period.



- S. Helferty and R. Refausse (eds), *Directory of Irish archives* (Dublin, 2004)
- www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archon/ - directory of British, Irish and worldwide archives



Guides to Sources



When examining an image?



Content



Origin



Motive



Analysis



Obair Bhaile

Archival Research: The Basics

Advanced Search
 Enter search terms in at least one of the fields below

Search Clear

Keyword:

Title:

Author:

Narrow your search (optional)

Year: to:
 Return only items published from e.g. 1971 to e.g. 1977

Audience:
 Return only items for the audience Any Audience

Content:
 Return only items with the content Archival material

Format:
 Return only items in the format All Languages

Language:
 Return only items in the language




NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 MUSEUM & LIBRARY

**Guide to the Shirley Hayes Papers
 1948-2001 (Bulk 1952-1979)
 MS 292**

New-York Historical Society
 170 Central Park West
 New York, NY 10024
 Phone: (212) 873-3400

© 2011 New-York Historical Society
 Collection processed by Processed by Jan Hilley and Tiffany Schureman
 This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit on October 25, 2011
 Description is in English.

Descriptive Summary

Title: Shirley Hayes Papers

Dates: 1948-2001 (bulk 1952-1979)

Abstract: Shirley Hayes was a long-time resident of the Washington Square Park area while she lived there she was active in many local community groups. This collection contains information on the activities she was involved in, her political involvement, and her job at WNYC.

Quantity: 9.0 Linear feet

Location note: Manuscript cage

Call Phrase: MS 292



Archives

- An archival collection is a unique body of information, created at a particular time by a particular organization or individual as the result of a particular activity

([Getty](#), Intro to Archival Organization and Description).



Function of An Archive



To preserve historic materials



To make them available for use.



Provide Archival Staff



Maintain visiting hours



limits on the amount of materials you may request or specific request times



Concentration and Discipline

Types of Archives

**College and university
archives**

Corporate archives

Government archives

Historical societies

Museums

Religious archives

**Special
collections (Individuals,
families, and
organizations)**

Types of Materials

Published and unpublished materials in any format.

Manuscripts

Letters

Photographs

Moving image

Sound materials

Artwork

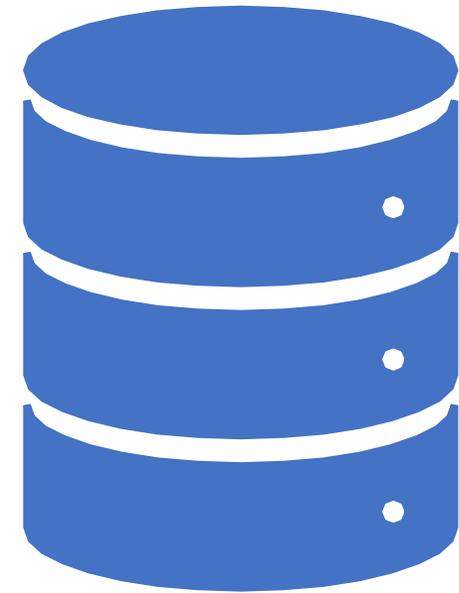
Diaries

Artifacts

Digital equivalents of all of these things

Archival Arrangement

Materials are grouped into **collections**,
according to **provenance**,
and kept in their **original order** when possible.



Remember

No single repository or collection will contain everything there is on a specific individual, organization, or subject.

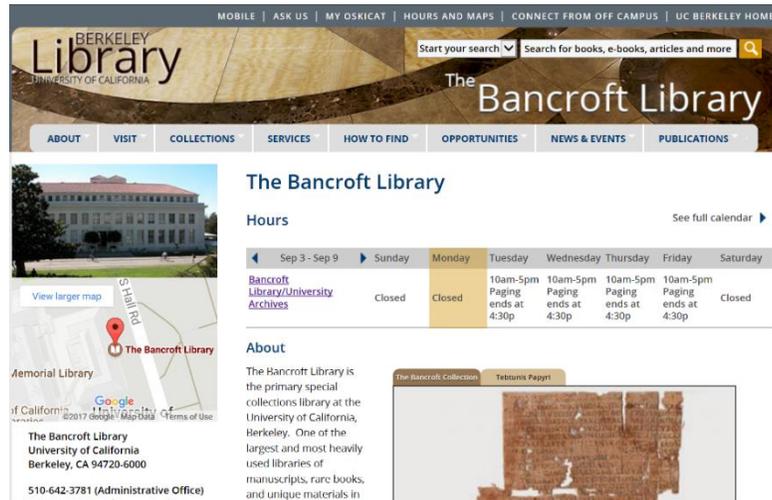
Collections contain only what was **saved** and what has **lasted**.

Finding Collections is a Two-Step Process

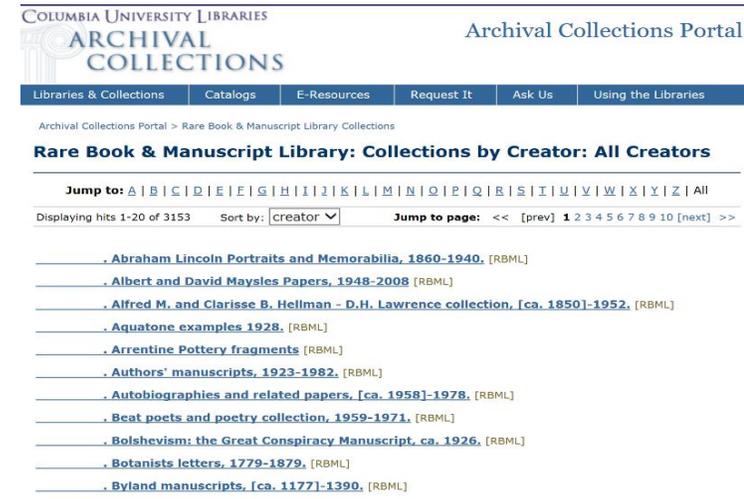
1. Search **catalogues, databases, and secondary sources** to discover collections and find out where they are held.
2. Search at the **repository level** to learn about specific collections



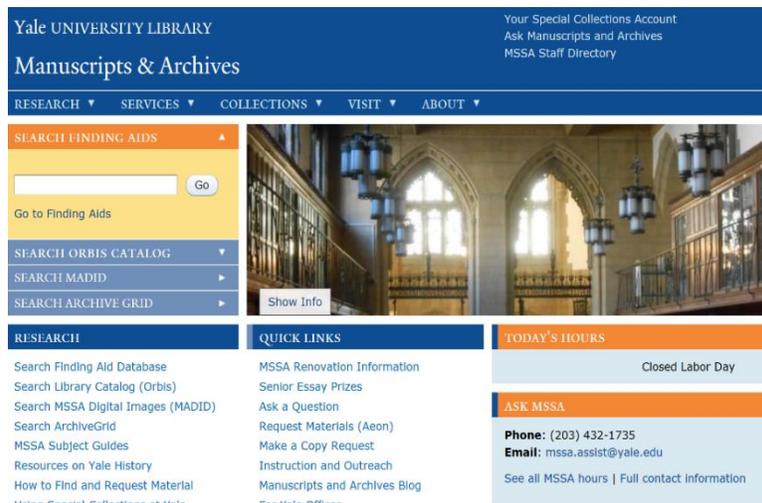
5 Steps for Repository-Level Searching



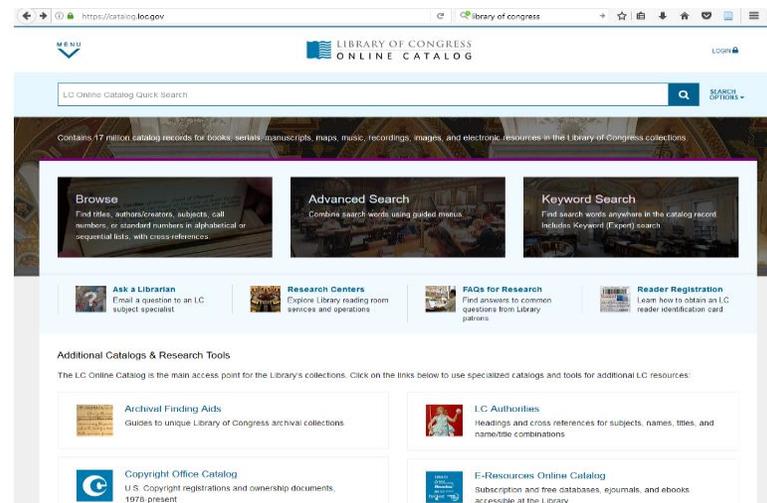
1) Review Repository Website



2) Browse the A-Z Collection List



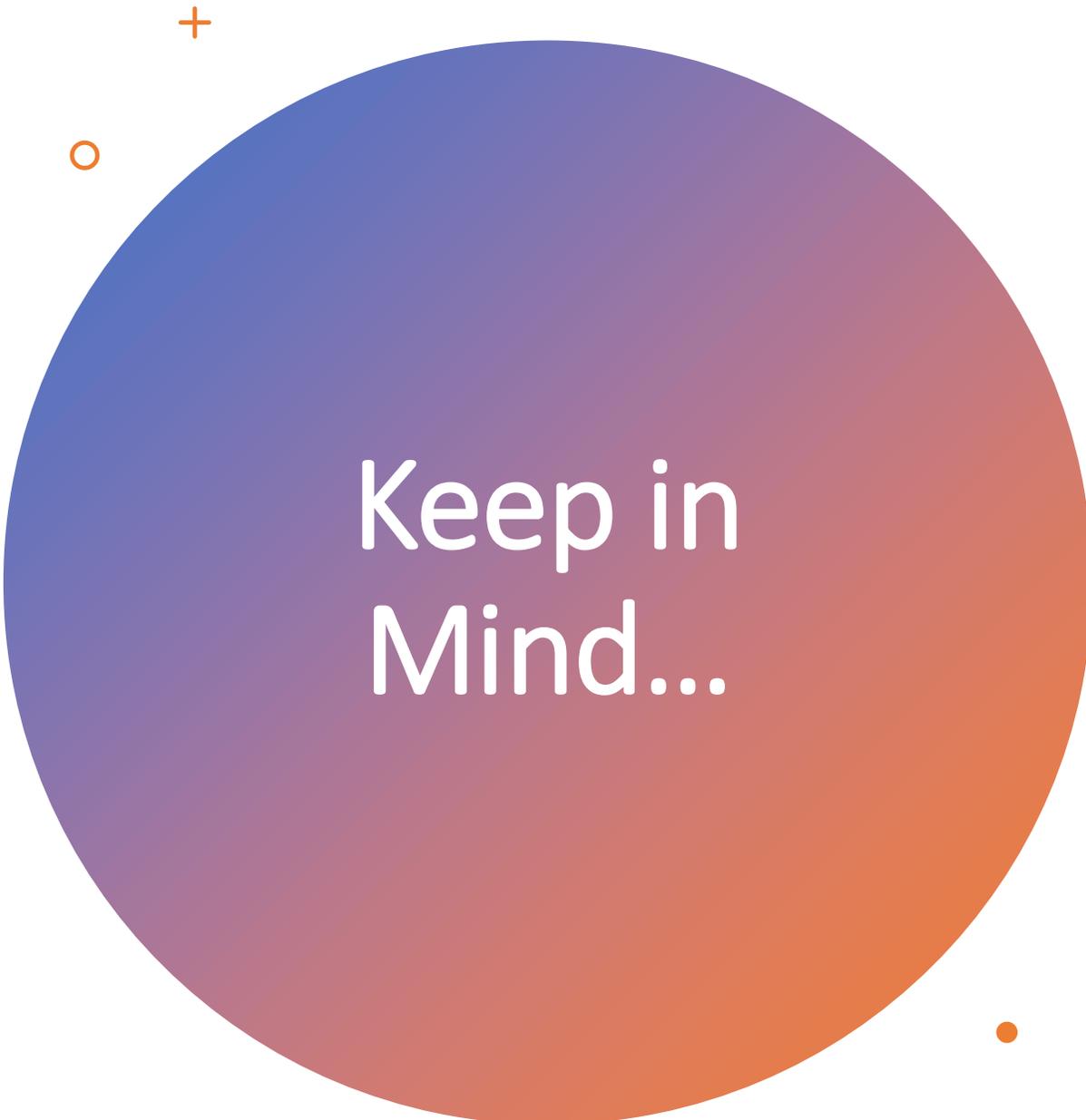
3) Search Across Finding Aids



4) Search the Archive Catalog



5) Contact the Archive Staff



Keep in Mind...

- Some collections will not have finding aids
 - Others may only be described in paper tools at the library
 - Not all libraries have the resources to catalog and/or fully process collections, to write finding aids, or to post them online
 - Access can be uneven within a library
 - Archival research takes time (more time than you may think)
 - Speaking with the library staff will help streamline your efforts
- 

Getting started with archival research

Advice on undertaking research in the National Archives.

Research guide



Research guides & sources

Introductions to some of our most important collections.

Referencing archives

Guide to referencing archives held in the National Archives.

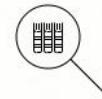
Glossary

Guide to archival terminology.

FAQ

Some answers to frequently asked questions.

Search the online catalogue





What do you do with an archive?

- identify the range of material within collections
- Access relevant documents
- to interpret their contents productively.
- Use increasingly complex search engines
- Access both born-digital records and digital surrogates

A stack of books and papers is shown in the top-left corner. The books have light blue and cream-colored covers. The papers are cream-colored and appear to be part of a folder or binder. The background is a solid blue color with a white, torn-paper-like edge separating it from the text area.

Tips for using an archive

- Start at home
- Look on the archive's website to see if they provide research guidance and to find out how the archive is arranged
- If the archive has an online catalogue, take some time to find out how to use it. Don't expect it to be like Google - a simple keyword search will not always work
- Do some research before you come. Read some published books first for ideas, or talk to relatives if you're doing your family history
- Check different archives and organisations for relevant documents. You might find useful material in a number of different places

In an archive



Bring plenty of patience with you. Researching can take a while and relevant documents may be in a number of different places



Be prepared to use a computer to search for documents or to view digitised records. You might also need to look at documents that are on microfilm and microfiche



Recognise both the limitations and potential of the archive – you may not find exactly what you are looking for, but you could find new sources you didn't know existed



Bring a pencil – ink is not allowed near the records in archives

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smAzznye938>

Watch



Data



Information



Presentation



Knowledge



EpicGraphic.com

