

# Irish Pension Search

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If you have Irish ancestry, you will know of the problems with destroyed census and other records. When old age pensions were introduced, many claimants had been born before civil registration of births had started in 1864. Their eligibility was therefore established by checking the census records for 1841 and 1851. The resulting pension records have now been indexed and are gradually being made available online at [www.pensear.org](http://www.pensear.org).

The Old Age Pension Act was introduced in Ireland in 1908. This meant that people over a certain age were guaranteed a pension from the state. However, because the compulsory registration of births had only begun in 1864, claimants of the pension were unable to provide a birth certificate to prove their age. The government therefore found it necessary to establish a person's age by allowing a search to be made of the 1841 and 1851 census returns.

The claimant of the pension would give the name of the Townland and Parish where he/she was born or resided in at the time of the 1841/51 census, a search would be made of that townland's census returns and the result recorded. In some cases the family would not be found and so only the result "No trace" was entered. However, on many occasions the search was successful. In these cases the additional information could state only the age of applicant at the time of the census, but, in many records the names and ages of every person living there is supplied.

The Irish Pension Records are stored on microfilm, are very difficult to read and are not indexed. Our researchers have worked on these records, transcribing them to compile our database.

At [pensear.org](http://pensear.org) you can search all the records we have transcribed. The search is made using the surname you are researching (for more information on how to search read our step-by-step guide). You are in complete control. You can decide yourself which records look relevant to your search and purchase only these. At only 80p per record the next step in your research needn't break the bank. There is currently over 11,000 records, mainly relating to the northern counties, with more being added on a regular basis.