

FamilySearch full text search and the Registry of Deeds

Nick Reddan

Irish Special Interest Group

10 May 2025



Registry of Deeds as a family history source

- I have talked many times about the usefulness of the Registry of Deeds
- People, places and dates
- The legislation required the compilation of a grantors index and a land index
- Both were available for public consultation at the Registry
- I have found many gems in these records



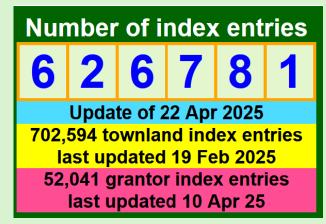
Background

- Prior to about the 1960s the record were only accessible at the Registry of Deeds
- Familysearch microfilmed almost all the records
- Upto a few years ago these microfilms were available through Familysearch affiliate libraries
- This was a slow process relying on mailing the films back and forth
- More recently these films were digitised and made available through the familysearch.org website



Finding things

- The traditional finding pathways were to use the Registry's own indexes
- They both have limitations
- To address these limitations, I started the Registry of Deeds index project in 2007
- This has grown into a substantial resource including a names index and database versions of the townland and grantors indexes





Treminology

- Grantor
- Grantee
- Memorial
- Transcription book
- How to refer to a memorial so other people can find it



Recent deveopments

- Earlier his year Familysearch introduces a full text search on the Registry of Deeds images
- It is essentially OCR for handwriting and is based on Al
- In addition, the AI classifies some words as names and other words as places
- This is a good development but like all tools there are some issues



The site

- https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/full-text/collection/M9J1-ZYL
- [We then had a bit of a browse around the site testing various search combinations]