



# The Registry of Deeds Index Project

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# Why are we interested in the Registry of Deeds



- I started looking at the Registry of Deeds nearly 30 years ago
- It has sorted out a number of families for me
- Marriage settlements
- Other deeds
- Family relationships
- Ages



# Why is working on the Registry of Deeds considered hard



- Limited finding aids
- A family historian is interested in all people involved in deeds not just the parties
- An act for the Public Registering of all Deeds, conveyances and wills that shall be made of any Honors, Manors, Lands, tenements or hereditaments — MDCCVII
- Main provisions:
  - Set up office of Registrar & Stated what should be registered
  - Stated how records should be kept on parchment
  - Mandated grantors and land indexes should be maintained



# How I started to use the Registry



- Spreadsheet of grantors index entries so could get the grantees
- To sort out the CROKER family I found all grantors index entries with CROKER as grantor or grantee
- Also looked through the townland index for mentions of CROKER
- This misses many CROKER occurrences in the memorial books
- In 2007 I started the Registry of Deeds Index Project Ireland
- Together with Roz McCutcheon we worked out what fields to include in the database and populated it with our then current collections of abstracts. I had about 500 memorials abstracted.



# How the project developed



- This is a cloud sourced index
- Now we have 360,001 index records from nearly 39,000 memorials of deeds
- We also have about 75,500 townland index entries and just over 36,000 grantors index transcriptions
- Since 2017 we have been developing direct links to images of indexes and the memorial books
- We are a long way off indexing the 1,000,000 memorials that were registered to the 1850s



# Indexing issues -- Memorials



- Names as written
  - Include family names of people referred to by title
  - Corporations given family name [none]
- Family relationships, ages and titles recorded
- Roles
  - Why are they there
- Residences
  - as written can include alternative modern spellings in square brackets
- Lands not a priority to record all lands as in townland index
- Dates as written



# All indexes and transcriptions include errors



- There are mistakes in the memorial books
  - Duplicated and simply wrong memorial numbers
  - Missing lines
  - Names changing from say John to James in a transcription book
  - We have found one memorial that has been copied into two books [158442](#)
  - We have found instances where two different memorials with the same memorial number [204684](#), [329972](#) and [370899](#)



# All indexes and transcriptions include errors



- Some books and particularly the townland indexes are hard to read
  - Colour images may help
  - Pages are getting worse with more wear
  - Some users of the books do not treat them with respect
- The beauty of electronic indexes is that they can be corrected





# Conclusions



- The records on the Registry of Deeds are a wonderful source for family and local history
- They should be used more
- Digitised records do not deteriorate with use
- Digitisation provides both an opportunity for preservation and for improvement of quality of the data
- Having high quality finding aids is essential to any digitisation project