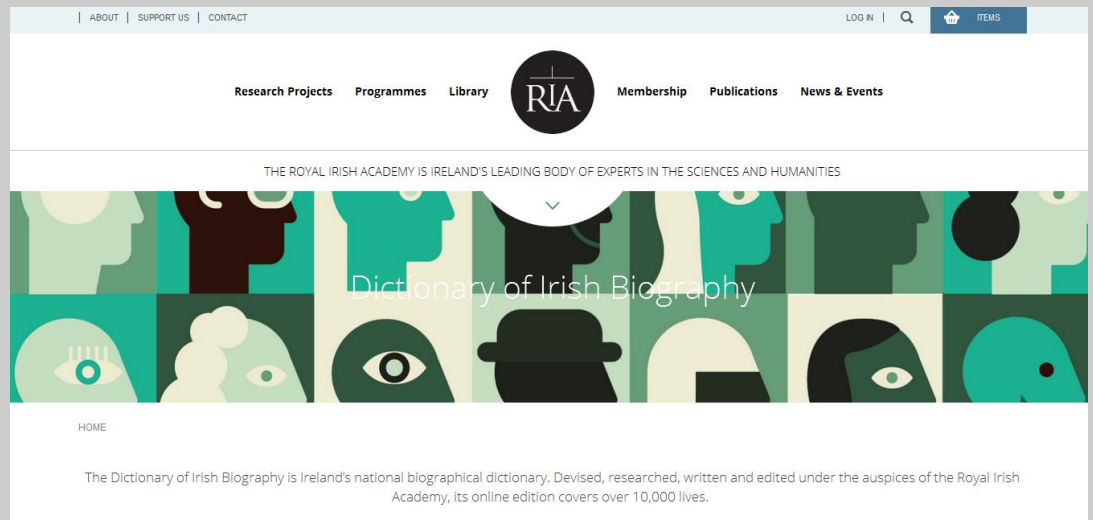


Home Page



Logo



URL

<https://www.ria.ie/research-projects/dictionary-irish-biography>

<http://dib.cambridge.org/>

Subject

Irish-Biography-Dictionaries

Accessibility

On subscription basis

Language

English

Publisher

Published by Cambridge University Press.

Brief History

The Dictionary of Irish Biography, in online version, was published on 18 November 2009 by Cambridge University Press in nine volumes and online.

Scope and Coverage

This biographical dictionary is published simultaneously in print and online, the Dictionary of Irish Biography is the most comprehensive and authoritative biographical reference work for Ireland.

- Biographical subjects include: artists, scientists, lawyers, actors, Musicians, writers in Irish and English, politicians, sporting figures, criminals and saints
- Compiled by 700 expert advisors and contributors
- Articles range from 200 to 15,000 words, from short summaries to detailed assessments

Kind of Information

The format of articles in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* is arranged chronologically. A given article traces a person's life through the sequence of significant events as they occurred from birth to death. Childhood and education are, as a rule, briefly discussed at the outset; then the course of the subject's career is mapped out, with the emphasis on the key achievements and the essential details of private life.

W. B. Yeats

by Terence Brown

Yeats, William Butler (1865–1939), poet and dramatist, was born 13 June 1865 at Georgeville, Sandymount Avenue, Dublin, the eldest child of John Butler Yeats (qv) (1839–1922) and Susan Mary Yeats (née Pollexfen; 1841–1900). The couple had six children: besides William there were two other sons, one of whom died in infancy, and three daughters, one of whom also died in infancy.

Family background and early years Susan Yeats came from Sligo town, where her family had established a notable mercantile and shipping dynasty, while John Butler Yeats had strong Sligo connections, as his grandfather had served as rector of Drumcliff parish church in that county. The marriage was unhappy and John Butler Yeats, who abandoned a career at the Irish bar for the risky avocation of portrait and landscape painter, spent time in England apart from his wife and family during Yeats's childhood. During these separations Susan Yeats lived with her children at her father's house in Sligo, where the poet-to-be was powerfully affected by the western landscape, which he would later celebrate in verse. The family spent happier times together from 1879 to 1881, when they lived at the artists' colony at Bedford Park in London, and from 1881 to 1884 (though without Yeats's brother Jack (qv)) at Howth, Co. Dublin. From 1884 to 1887 the Yeatses resided at 10 Ashfield Terrace, Terenure, in Dublin. Yeats was educated at the Godolphin School, Hammersmith, at the Erasmus Smith High School, Dublin, and at the Metropolitan School of Art, Kildare Street, Dublin.

John Butler Yeats as a young man had forsaken the Church of Ireland orthodoxy of his family tradition and his clergyman father, and taken up positivism in the mould of Auguste Comte, a belief system that his elder son found uncongenial to his imagination. From his late teens Yeats, reacting against Darwinian thought and scientific reductionism, was drawn to religious speculation and was open to heterodox ideas, which formed the basis of a life-long passion for occult knowledge. Friendship with George Russell (qv) (AE), whom he met at art school, brought him among the members of a Dublin branch of the Theosophical Society, whose principal prophet was Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. When the family moved from Dublin to London in 1887 Yeats had the opportunity to join those who looked to her in person for spiritual guidance.

Special Features

- ❖ Links to facebook, twitter, outlook express.



- ❖ Advanced search option presents for quick retrieve.

A screenshot of a web application's 'Advanced Search' page. The page has a white background with a green border. At the top, it says 'Home > Advanced Search' and 'Advanced Search'. Below this are several search filters: 'Name' (text input), 'Gender' (dropdown), 'Birth Date' (date range), 'Death Date' (date range), and 'Flourit Date' (date range). There are also checkboxes for 'Birth' and 'Death' with a note '(selection is required)'. Below these are three dropdown menus for 'Places', 'Religion', and 'Occupation/ Field of Interest'. The 'Places' dropdown shows 'Co. Antrim', 'Co. Armagh', 'Co. Carlow', 'Co. Cavan', and 'Co. Clare'. The 'Religion' dropdown shows 'Anglican', 'Baptist', 'Buddhist', 'Catholic', 'Hindu', and 'Muslim'. The 'Occupation/ Field of Interest' dropdown shows 'Administration and Diplomacy', 'Agriculture', 'Architecture', 'Arts and Crafts', 'Business and Finance', and 'Classics and Languages'. At the bottom, there is a 'Contributor' dropdown.

Arrangement Pattern

In this biographical reference tool, entries are arranged alphabetically by surname.

A screenshot of a web application's 'Browse' page. The page has a white background with a green border. At the top, it says 'Browse'. Below this is a navigation bar with a list of letters 'A · B · C · D · E · F · G · H · I · J · K · L · M · N · O · P · Q · R · S · T · U · V · W · X · Y · Z'. Below the navigation bar is a 'Sort by:' dropdown menu set to 'Name', a 'Reverse order' button with a double-headed arrow, and a 'Results per page:' dropdown menu set to '25'. Below this is a pagination bar with numbers '1', '2', '3', '4', '5' and a 'Next' button. Below the pagination bar is a list of biographical entries, each starting with a name in bold and followed by a brief description. The entries are: 'Abbadie, Jacques (James) (1654?–1727), huguenot dean of Killaloe, preacher, and apologist of the Christian religion, ...', 'Abbán (d. 520?), saint in the Irish tradition, although primarily associated with the churches of ...', 'Abbot, Charles (1757–1829), tourist in Ireland, chief secretary for Ireland (1801–02), speaker of the British ...', 'Abbott, Thomas Kingsmill (1829–1913), scholar and clergyman, was born 26 March 1829 in Dublin, son ...', 'Abell, Abraham (1783–1851), antiquary and public figure at Cork, was born 11 April 1783 in ...', 'Abell, Joshua (1793–1846), philanthropist, was born 15 November 1793 in Cork city into a long ...', and 'Abercrombie, (Leslie) Patrick (1879–1957), architect and town planner, was one of the most influential figures ...'.

Remarks

The **Dictionary of Irish Biography** is a collaborative project between Cambridge University Press and the Royal Irish Academy, available in print and online, involving 700 contributors and spanning over 9,700 lives. The Dictionary is the indispensable reference work for Ireland. It includes the lives of Irish men and women who made a significant contribution in Ireland and abroad.

Comparable Tools

- Australian Dictionary of Biography (<http://adb.anu.edu.au/>)
- Dictionary of Canadian Biography (<http://www.biographi.ca/en/index.php>)
- American National Biography Online (<http://anb.org/login.html?url=%2Farticles%2Fhome.html&ip=112.133.231.175&nocookie=0>)

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