









### 3. DIOCESES (cont)

These divisions were used by both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Ireland until 1834 when the Church of Ireland restructured into two provinces, Armagh and Dublin.

### 4. PROBATE DISTRICTS

From 1536 to 1858 the ecclesiastical courts of the Church of Ireland were responsible for all probate matters in Ireland.

In 1858 a principle registry in Dublin and eleven district registries were established as a result of the passing of the Court of Probate and Letters of Administration Act. The purpose of these registries was to prove wills and to grant letters of administration.

### 5. PARISH

There are two types of parish, Civil and Ecclesiastical, the civil parish is based on the Church of Ireland parishes.

There are 2508 civil parishes some of which are older than the baronies and counties in which they are located. New parishes were created by subdividing larger ones or withdrawing townlands from adjoining parishes. The last parish created was in 1846.

The ecclesiastical parish is the normal unit of local church administration. The reformation in the sixteenth century saw the Roman Catholic church change their administrative structure to one based on towns and villages and usually they now embrace a number of civil parishes

### 6. BARONY

Various sources disagree on the number of Baronies in Ireland and range from 273 to 331. Baronies were established in the seventeenth century to facilitate government land surveys and reflected the holdings of the various Irish Clans.

In ancient **times** the Celts called these divisions Tuath and in a lot of cases the ancient Celtic name has been retained.

Baronies were widely used in the nineteenth century but are now effectively obsolete as they have been superceded by the Poor Law Union.

### 7. POOR LAW UNION

The Poor Law Unions were established by the Poor Relief Act passed in 1838 and by 1850 some 163 unions had been formed. This act required the local rateable inhabitants of the district to be financially responsible for the care of all paupers in their district.

The Poor Law Union was usually centered on a larger market town in which a poor house was built, the union usually covered an area of about a ten mile radius around the town and was administered by an elected group of guardians.

The local Government Act passed in 1898 made the Poor Law Union the basic administrative division of Ireland in place of the civil parish and barony. This act created 829 registration districts and 3751 electoral districts. The townlands of Ireland are now arranged according to these divisions.

This discussion will be continued next month.