Irish Genealogical Society International™

The Septs

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Volume 44, Number 1

The Septs

JANUARY (EANÁIR) 2023 $10.00



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IRISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Genealogy Library Open

The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2023.

The Hoffman Research Library is a private genealogy research library created for members of the organizations in the MGS Partners' Group. Access to the library materials is free to members of IGSI and other MGS Partner societies. Non-members and the general public are requested to pay a per visit $10 donation for use.

The Hoffman Library will be open only if there are two volunteers available to staff the building. As COVID continues, some volunteers have stepped back from regular schedules, creating a volunteer staff shortage. (Won't you consider becoming a MGC/library volunteer to help ensure research access for all?)

Note: Effective March 1, 2022, masks are recommended for everyone visiting the Hoffman Research Library, but optional for the fully vaccinated. 

Hours of service:

Wednesday	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Irish Saturdays

Stop by the library on the second Saturday of the month between 10 AM and 4 PM for Irish research help from IGSI volunteers.

JANUARY 14, 2023
FEBRUARY 11, 2023
MARCH 11, 2023
APRIL 8, 2023
MAY 13, 2023

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The Septs, the quarterly journal of the Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc., is one of the primary benefits of IGSI membership and is published in January, April, July and October. U.S. and International members receive a print copy of the journal through the mail. Those with Electronic memberships receive the journal electronically.

Contributions and article ideas are welcome. Material intended for publication should be submitted before the 15th of February, May, August and November. Contributors should email articles or materials to the Managing Editors at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or to the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the journal staff.

Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc.

2023

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of *The Septs* has at its core a specific theme with related research articles. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g. family stories submitted by IGSI members.

Research articles on the theme of the issue should be 1500 - 3000 words. If writing on a theme, please contact the Managing Editor of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadline dates to ensure that your article is considered for the proper issue.

Members who wish to share family research stories, articles on genealogy sources and resources, or writings on general Irish culture and history should contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org. The recommended length for articles unrelated to the theme is 750 - 1500 words.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2023 | April | Leinster Province

Researching in the twelve Irish counties of Carlow, Dublin, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Longford, Louth, Meath, Offaly, Westmeath, Wexford, and Wicklow; stories about finding family in Leinster locales are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2023.

2023 | July | Census Substitutes

Making full use of surviving Irish religious, land and tax surveys and records; commercial directories, school registers, and more.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2023.

2023 | October | Tips & Tools

An appraisal and review of various tips and tools for genealogists, considering technology as mind maps, timelines, data correlations, and more.
Deadline for articles: August 15, 2023.

2024 | January | Repositories

Prepare for on-site research in Ireland by planning visits to PRONI, NLI, Irish National Archives, etc., using locality guides and more to learn the where, when, why, and how of local research.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2023.

Cover Photo: *Open Barn in the Snow – Ontario Canada,* by Duncan Rawlinson, is licensed under CC-BY-NC-ND-2.0, *Flickr.*

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Keeping in Touch

From the Co-Presidents, Donna Jones and Ron Zweber

With the New Year fast approaching, changes are happening at IGSI. Our colleague Ann Eccles has served the five-year term limit on the Board of Directors and is leaving the board as our by-laws require. Ann has been a tremendous asset to the Board in past years, serving as president in 2011 and 2012 and then again 2019-2021.

After 16 years, Ann has also decided to step down as editor of *The Septs*. The January 2023 edition of *The Septs* will be the debut of co-editors Mary Stuart and Kim Gehrman White. Welcome, Mary and Kim, and thank you both for assuming this important role. Ann will continue as our Librarian. Thank you, Ann, for your significant contributions to IGSI.

It is a pleasure to announce that two terrific new members will join the Board of Directors on January 1, 2023.



Walt Rothwell is the co-chair of the education committee and a moderator of IGSI's webinars. Walt's term on the Minnesota Genealogical Society's board has expired and his experience will benefit our organization. Walt brings his technical skills and plans on continuing to volunteer in the Hoffman Research Library. He describes himself as "forever in brain-storming mode." He is currently working on several exciting projects that we hope to implement in 2023 and beyond.



Pat Sheehan, our second new Board member, recently retired after 43 years as a manager of more than 100 people at a supermarket chain in St. Louis, Missouri. Pat advises that "I have a great love for all things Irish and I am involved in many Irish organizations in St Louis. Over the years I have taken genealogy courses at the local community college, attended many lectures, Zoom meetings and read just about every Irish history book I could get my hands on." Pat's family is from Kanturk, County Cork, and Athleague, County Roscommon, and he is the family historian. His wife is from Galway and they travel back to Ireland two or three times a year.

Returning Board officers are Ron Zweber and Donna Jones, Co-Presidents, Mike Flynn, Treasurer, and Jeanne Bakken, Secretary. Returning Directors: Sandra Mc Laughlin, Dave Miller, Kay Swanson, and Trish Little Taylor.

Highlights in 2022 included coordination by Mike Flynn and Kay Swanson with Celtic Journeys for a 12-day Irish genealogy tour of Ireland from September 26 to October 8. Trish Little Taylor and Walt Rothwell became Co-Chairs of the Education committee. We successfully launched our *YouTube* channel called "This Month at the IGSI" (https://www.youtube.com/@IrishGenealogyIGSI) which is hosted by genealogist and IGSI member Dave Miller.

Sandra Mc Laughlin became the Research Chair and we now have a team capable of in-depth research. Sandra was also part of a committee that changed the website so that research requests can be paid online.

We are excited about the upcoming year and appreciate our committee and board volunteers. There is the ongoing need for volunteers on the Education and Technical committees. As more people come into our wonderful Hoffman Research Library, we need people to volunteer in the library. There are also opportunities to write articles for *Ginealas* or *The Septs*. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact our volunteer coordinator at volunteers@irishgenealogical.org.

As we start the new year, we want to thank all our members for their support of the Society. Stay tuned for an exciting 2023!



Donna Jones



Ron Zweber

New Year, New Staff, New Opportunities

by Mary Stuart and Kim Gehrman White

Athbhliain Faoi Mhaise Daoibh! Happy New Year!

We at *The Septs* wish everyone a joyous and prosperous 2023, filled with successful research and many crumbling brick walls!

As we forge ahead into a new year full of new possibilities, *The Septs*' editorial staff is likewise embracing change. After providing stellar service for 15+ years, the inimitable Ann Eccles has stepped down from her position as Editor of *The Septs*, though she will continue to serve as Librarian for IGSI. We are grateful for her many years of quality leadership and for her willingness to provide guidance during the transition to our new Editor, Mary Stuart, and our new Associate Editor, Kim Gehrman White.

Mary Stuart



Originally from central Indiana, Mary now resides in southern New Jersey. After receiving a B.A. and an M.A. in English from Indiana State University and Purdue University respectively, Mary taught English both at Purdue and at community colleges. She left full-time teaching to raise a family but continued to tutor writing students part-time for several years.

Mary has always been interested in history and genealogy but became serious about pursuing a career in the field after locating and initiating contact with her birth family ten years ago. With the help of several new siblings, cousins, and DNA, Mary has discovered many Irish ancestors, most of whom hailed from Donegal in Northern Ireland, and whose immigrations date from the Colonial period. In addition to focusing on Irish and British research, Mary spends the majority of her time working with Midwestern records since both her maternal and paternal lines include Indiana pioneers.

Believing that every person "deserves to know their story," Mary has a soft spot for fellow adoptees and views using DNA research skills and her personal experience to help others find their lost history as a way to "pay it forward."

A graduate of Boston University's Genealogy Certificate Program [OL25] and ProGen 48, and a regular attendee at genealogical institutes, Mary has parlayed the skills acquired through these experiences into a job working on military repatriation. More recently, Mary entered her first-ever writing competition, ultimately winning the grand prize in the 2022 Ohio Genealogical Society (OGS) Writing Contest.

Mary is honored to be given this opportunity to serve the IGSI community on *The Septs* staff and is excited to partner with Kim Gehrman White and to work with the rest of the amazing editorial staff.

Kim Gehrman White



A one-time resident of Minnesota, Kim is a 4th generation Californian currently residing in Portland, Oregon. Her personal research interests include Ireland, Portugal, Spain, the Azores and, closer to home, California, Nebraska, Iowa, and Illinois. Kim's Irish roots come from her maternal grandmother, whose father was from County Limerick. Her grandmother's maternal grandparents' nativity is still a work in progress but appears to originate in both County Meath and County Cavan.

Kim received a B.A. in both History and International Relations from Macalester College and earned an M.A. in International Studies from Claremont Graduate University. After a career in advertising and merchandising, Kim began a genealogy education which included obtaining a certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University [OL22] and completing the 14-month-long ProGen 55 in 2022. She has also attended a number of national genealogy conferences and institutes.

Kim's genealogy career is focused on personal research and writing, as well as providing genealogical research for clients. In her writing, she places a particular emphasis on providing historical context to afford an understanding of the choices made by our ancestors, given their particular circumstances of time and place.

Our new Associate Editor looks forward to working with Mary Stuart and the entire editorial and publication team to continue producing the quality publication our members have come to expect from *The Septs.*

The Irish Diaspora and the Catholic Church in St. Marys, Ontario

by David Trudeau

Many emigrants of the Irish diaspora to Canada are difficult to trace at first arrival. No passage lists were kept before 1865 and the overwhelming numbers and staggering deaths from typhus, especially in 1847, led to a state of chaos. Most Famine Irish were poor refugees taken in by both Catholic and Protestant families in both largely French Catholic Canada East (Quebec) and largely Protestant Canada West (Ontario).

In his book *Death or Canada, The Irish Famine Migration to Toronto, 1847* (2009, Novalis) historian Mark G. McGowan traces the immigrant's pathway from Ireland to Canada West. The trek west is marked by common grave memorials found at the immigration reception station at Grosse Île just outside Quebec City, at the Bridge memorial in Montreal, at the KGH memorial in Kingston, Ontario, and at the Toronto Ireland Park Famine Memorial, at London and Hamilton, Ontario. The Irish The Irish Famine refugees were infectious, penniless, and mostly illiterate – hardly desirable neighbors. Those who survived the fever shacks and coffin ships were dispersed through Canada. Some arrived at the far end of the journey up the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario to its far west end at Hamilton, Wentworth County. Then they moved on to adjacent Brandt and Oxford Counties and finally into Perth County, where I found my Irish ancestors.

St. Marys Historian Mary Smith, in a May 19, 2022, article in the St. Marys *Independent* newspaper, describes the 1857 recollections of early settler Frank Butcher: "Hundreds of shanties dotted the valley east of the London Bridge. Here lived the families of the 'navvies' who worked on the construction of the railroad. They were Irish and had large potato patches. Potato planting bees were something to remember…On the 24th of May, they had their celebrations... The local hotels had bars on the Flats on that holiday"– probably to protect their indoor premises from the inevitable brawls, says Mary. The stonemasons employed by the railway were mainly Scots, who were seen as rivals by the Irish.

Catholic Church in St. Marys, Canada

As I followed the trail of my ancestral Irish families in St. Marys, Perth County, Ontario, who came in the 1850s, it is apparent that much of their history is contained in church records. Canada West Roman Catholic church records are well-preserved in the Drouin collection, which is accessible by subscription and can also be found at *Ancestry* and *FamilySearch*. These records were often the first mention I could find of my ancestors. Very poor, these families had babies to baptize before they had property to register or taxes to pay. Church record information about baptisms, marriages, and deaths, and the names of witnesses, parents of the bride and groom, and godparents all give clues to relationships and the fabric of life.

However, in order to interpret the church records, it is necessary to understand the evolution of the Roman Catholic Church in the largely Protestant Canada West. During the mid-nineteenth century, a very undeveloped Catholic Church was pressured to adapt and grow in response to a population surge of Irish Catholic immigrants. Places where baptisms or marriages were recorded in early Canada West were not necessarily where they were performed, as mission or satellite churches sprang up, served by the very few priests available. While infant baptisms were frequently done the day after birth in French Catholic Canada East, there were often delays of weeks or months in Canada West, especially for families living away from large cities.

The story of the Irish Catholic laborers coming to St. Marys is very much the story of the Catholic Church developing there. St. Marys village in the 1851 census was Protestant; the population was composed of Irish, Scottish, and English settlers from the United Kingdom. One account suggests that the name was jotted down for some nearby falls by an early land surveyor in honor of his wife, rather than having any religious significance.

I could count only four Catholics in the 1851 census of Blanshard Township, which contained the then-nascent village of St. Marys. This finding is confirmed in an 1886 article in St. Marys' *Argus* newspaper, which cites the first visit of a Catholic prelate in 1852 to administer last rites to a Mr. George Horner, "one of only five Catholics in the village." The Dean of the then Toronto Diocese, Fr. Kirwin, made that visit. Father Kirwin was "one of only two Catholic priests in Canada West residing west of Ontario County."[1]

A number of articles in St. Marys' newspapers over the years chronicle the Catholic Church there. By 1853 a small log chapel was constructed by the few Catholics settled in the surrounding townships, but it was too small. The first Mass was celebrated

in Patrick Whelihan's store in 1854 by Fr. Kirwin, who "came on horseback from London … crossed Fish Creek by means of a log, which with much labor he placed in position, leading his horse with one hand and carrying his vestments in a carpet satchel in the other."[2] Patrick Whelihan and his growing family joined the other few Catholics in the village of St. Marys in an effort to have a church presence. At first a merchant, Whelihan later became the registrar for south Perth County and, as a rare Irish Catholic of some means, was a pillar of the Catholic Church.

A year later, in 1855, the Grand Trunk Railway began construction of the railroad and its massive stone trestles and called for laborers; immigrants flocked to the village. Almost all were Irish-born, laborers, Roman Catholic, and living in shanties in small enclaves on "squatted land." They were first enumerated in the 1861 St. Marys' census, where I counted 687 Catholics, about a quarter of the total population of the village. In the mid-1850s local laborers built a 40 x 80 primitive log building that served for Mass when a priest could come from Stratford, about ten miles away. "It was neither stylish nor very comfortable, and in the winter it was often found necessary to shovel out the heaps of drifted snow before the congregation gathered."[3] Fr. Canney and Fr. Crinnon occasionally traveled from Stratford to say Mass and dispense the sacraments. Construction was started on a more substantial stone church that opened by 1861, with a solemn high Mass by the Bishop of London, Ontario, and a choir. This "large stone structure with a high peaked roof and windows on each side in Gothic style," had a wooden bell tower. It served Catholics in St. Marys for many years until the present-day larger church opened in 1894.[4]

Though it had a large congregation and a suitable building in 1861, the Holy Name of Mary parish was not organized and made independent till 1865. Prior to 1865 all of the baptisms were recorded at St. Joseph Church in Stratford, but likely done in St. Marys by visiting priests. By January 1866 Fr. Boubat replaced Fr. Hammett, the first pastor. On the 8th of July 1866, the 7th Sunday after Pentecost, Fr. Boubat recorded in Latin in the parish book the names of 74 children who were first communicants. He set to work building the present-day rectory, which was first used as a school, until additional buildings could go up.

By the 1871 Canadian census, life had changed in St. Marys. The number of Irish-born Catholics had diminished by about a fifth, and all but one family were living in conventional housing as opposed to shanties. My research shows that my ancestral families all owned property and could obtain mortgages to build homes by that time. As I followed them along with



Looking north from Trout Creek circa 1895: the Presbyterian Church (built 1880) left, Catholic Church (built 1892) right. Photo courtesy of the St. Marys Museum and Archives, St. Marys, Ontario.

census, property, and other records, the second generation became middle class, with careers and businesses, whereas most were listed simply as "laborer" in 1861.

By 1894, under Father Brennan's leadership, the Catholics had built a massive high-steepled structure for their church. It was as grand as any church in St. Marys, if not grander. It dominated the North Ward skyline and was located just six blocks east of the Presbyterian church the Scottish stone masons had erected a decade before. In an 1895 photograph, it appears to my eyes that the Catholic steeple rises another story higher. Both are a testament to the prowess and dedication of the Irish Catholic and Scottish Presbyterian workers first called in the 1850s to build the massive railroad trestles. I like to think of the steeple contest as a more genteel statement of their strong sense of rivalry, that in 1857 was described only as "drunken fights after work."



Father Boubat at doorway to the rectory/school 1867, with staff and students. Photo courtesy of the St. Marys Museum and Archives, St. Marys, Ontario.

Patrick Whelihan, in whose store the first Mass was said, died in 1903 and was buried from the imposing church that started as a simple, drafty log cabin. Father Brennan, usually very terse, made an extraordinarily long entry into the church record of burials:

> December 3 1903. On this day was interred … Patrick Whelihan, Registrar of South Perth, after receiving all Rites of Our Holy Mother the Church. A large concourse of people of all creeds from the town and the country, also from London, Woodstock, Stratford, Mitchell and Biddulph, filled the church to overflowing. The remains were carried by the five sons and … a nephew. Solemn High Mass was offered up by the pastor as Celebrant and Father Egan, a native of the parish as deacon, and Father Rouselle of Stratford as sub-deacon. Father McInemin of Biddulph preached the funeral sermon, after which the pastor referred in the most feeling terms, to the edifying life of this old patriarch, who had for over forty years been a leader of and an example to the parish. The remains were followed to their last resting place by one of the largest processions ever seen in the town. R.I.P. P. Brennan.[5]

A photo from the St. Marys Museum collection shows Father Boubat at the doorway of the 1867 rectory still in use today. At first it also functioned as the school. The teachers are dressed in the finery of the day and the school children are arrayed in neat rows, the smallest in the front. They are all lovingly dressed in their best. A photo in this day and age was a big event, I am sure. No doubt there are McDonald and Doyle and O'Dea and Collins kids in this photo, but I have no way of telling which ones they are. My great-grandparents Michael McDonald and Ellen Doyle were both in school on the census reports later in 1871; I imagine they would walk the six blocks there together. They lived in homes on the same block in the laborer neighborhood in the north ward of St. Marys, known as "Skunk's Hollow," stretching east of the London trestle.

I appreciate how my Irish Catholic immigrant ancestors who came through Canada held to their Irishness in their religious expression. Knowing more about how the church evolved in Ontario to meet their needs helps solve some genealogical

riddles. Knowing the cultural specifics of their Irish Catholic origins helps explain their identity and attachments. Admittedly the point of this paper is not cultural commentary on Irish Catholicism, but it is clear the Catholic church presence was absolutely essential to the Irish Catholics who came to largely Protestant Canada West. The story of Irish Catholic Famine immigrants cannot be told apart from the story of the Catholic Church. Catholic churches, schools, social welfare, and health care facilities were both created and relied on by Irish immigrants everywhere they settled through the 19th and 20th centuries.

Today in the North Ward of St. Marys, Ontario, one cannot miss two distinctive features: the massive stone bridges crossing the rivers and the steeples of the Catholic and Presbyterian Churches dominating the skyline. The same laborers who built the bridges built the churches from the same limestone blocks they cut from the quarries and lifted in place. The bridges and steeples are enduring monuments to the Famine immigrants who survived and endured in 19th century Canada West.

St. Marys today is a small city of stately limestone buildings created from the local quarries that also yielded the material for the imposing railway trestles. Newspaper ads in 1855 to 1857 called for laborers to come to St. Marys to construct a series of bridges that were necessary to complete the Grand Trunk Railway that traversed Ontario from Kingston, at the east end of Lake Ontario, to Sarnia, just north of Detroit. Irish laborers and Scottish stone-masons came from nearby counties and set to work cutting the stone and erecting 90-foot-high piers for the two main trestle bridges, the London and the Sarnia.

My immigrant families found their way to St. Marys, Perth County, Ontario, on the Thames River and near the cities of London and Stratford. My families of interest are the Patrick Doyle and Mary Burns family, the family of Michael Collins and Margaret Monagan, and the families of Margaret's daughters, Mary Collins and her husband Simon McDonald and Bridget Collins and her husband Michael O'Dea.

Mary Burns and Patrick Doyle

Mary Burns' 1927 obituary says she came to Canada at age 12, but I am so far unsuccessful finding records of her or her family before 1853. The first mention I have is her marriage record recorded at St. Joseph's church in the village of Ingersol, Oxford County, Canada West, in 1853. From her baptism at Borris, County Carlow, Ireland, in 1827, which named her parents as James Byrne and Sally Regney, to her marriage in 1853, I have a gap.

An 1851 Canadian census names a Patrick Doyle, age 31, along with five other single men — all laborers — boarding with the Muir family in a two-story brick home in Burford Township, Brant County, Ontario. The other men are Michael, James, and Thomas Reed, and Daniel Ross — all born in Ireland, and Hector McKensie from Scotland. It was common for homeless people from the Irish Famine diaspora to be taken in by families in Canada West after they were quarantined and passed through to the weeklong boat transports up the St. Lawrence River and across Lake Ontario. Burford Township, Brandt County, is adjacent to East Oxford Township, Oxford County, where Pat and Mary wed.

The marriage records of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, found in the Drouin Collection, state:

> Were married (once proclaimed on the 30th of January 1853) Patrick Doyle to Mary Burns, both living in East Oxford, the former is son of Michael Doyle and Nancy McCan, the latter is daughter of James Burns and Sara Rickeney, witnesses Michael Doyle and Bridget Burns. By me, A. Carayon, priest.[6]

Pat and Mary had two children in East Oxford Township in 1854 and 1855, both baptized at Ingersol. They likely moved to St. Marys in Perth County (about 45 miles away) about 1856. I found a baptism record in Stratford at St. Joseph Catholic Church for the first of their four children born in St. Marys in 1857. At first I thought the Doyles took their infants ten miles to Stratford for baptism; however, the baptisms were likely done in St. Marys by visiting priests.

Wedded at Sacred Heart in Ingersoll 30 January 1853, Patrick and Mary Burns Doyle's children's baptismal records show the evolution of the church in St. Marys. Their first two baptized children were recorded there: Sarah Ann on 28 March 1854 and James Edward on 17 November 1855. Baptisms of their next four children are recorded at St. Joseph in Stafford: Ellen on 21 September 1857 (Fr. Canney), Marie on 1 September 1858 (Fr. Murphy), Michael on 1 May 1860 (Fr. Crinnon), and John on 17 April 1864 (priest not named).

It seems likely that the Doyles moved to St. Marys sometime in 1856. Real estate and census records document them living in St. Marys in both 1864 and 1861. The names of the sponsors for these Doyle baptisms recorded in Stratford can be found in the 1861 and 1871 censuses as living in St. Marys. This supports my thesis that the priests travelled the ten miles from Stratford to St. Marys, recording sacraments in the Stratford



A track gang before the London Trestle in St. Marys, Ontario, about 1875. Photo courtesy of the St. Marys Museum and Archives, St. Marys, Ontario.

books until Holy Name of Mary parish was officially formed. Baptismal records cannot be found for Bridget, thought to be born in October 1865 in either St. Joseph, Stratford, or Holy Name of Mary, St. Marys, registers. There seems to be a gap in the earliest Holy Name of Mary parish records. The baptisms of the remaining Doyle children are recorded in St. Marys' Holy Name of Mary parish: Catherine on 6 May 1867 (Fr. Boubat), Margaret on 28 July 1869 (Fr. Kilroy), and Patrick on 31 June 1872 (Fr. Kilroy). Father Kilroy was succeeded by Father Oulette, who was succeeded by Father Brennan, who built the new church.

Mike McDonnell/McDonald

Records show Mike McDonnell arriving in Quebec in July 1865 on the steamer St. George from Dublin with his family. They planned to join the family of Mike's mother, Mary Collins in St. Marys, Ontario. The Collins are found in St. Marys in an Irish shanty enclave on the 1861 census as part of the 1857 Irish-born Catholic laborer surge and in later census reports they give their year of arrival as 1852. After disembarking in Quebec City, the McDonnells likely traveled by steamship up the St. Lawrence and across Lake Ontario. Neither of Mike's parents could read or write English and Mike himself likely had no schooling in Ireland. In the 1901 Irish Census, nearly everyone in his area of West Clare spoke both English and Gaelic. Canadian census records indicate that Mike was in school in St. Marys in 1871, at age 14, likely at Holy Name of Mary with Father Boubat and company. Mike reported he had a total of 4 years of school on the 1940 U.S. census. At 15 he went to work on a railroad track gang in St. Marys and can be seen third from left standing in the photo of the work gang posed before the London trestle. One can still appreciate the enormity of the piers, which were erected by Irishmen and horses and cranes and completed about 1860. These 90-foot piers stand today, as pictured in 1875; this particular trestle is still in use with daily train crossings. Using facial recognition

technology, I can identify the young man with a spike holder over his shoulder as my great-grandfather Mike McDonnell (they spelled it McDonald in Canada). He spent the rest of his life laying and maintaining railroad track or supervising someone else doing it. (I also suspect that Mike's father, Simon McDonald, is in the photo, as well as Mike's uncles, Pat and Mike Collins.)

Mike and Ellen moved to Dennison, Minnesota, about 1884, where Mike began work with the Chicago Great Western Railway (CGW) and stayed with them until he retired in 1940. They had a large family and lived in South St. Paul from 1890 until his death in 1942. He left a will with a modest estate of property and money going to his children and grandchildren. After becoming a CGW roadmaster by 1920, which involved supervising track gangs and being responsible for large runs of track, Mike needed to write letters and memos. His granddaughter, Eileen Curry Connolly Searle, told me that as a schoolgirl she helped him write the letters he needed to write to his foremen because he felt insecure with his language skills. He always signed as "Boss Mike."

The thing I remember most about Mike and Ellen McDonnell's modest home were two framed prints on the wall of the small parlor — one of the Sacred Heart and the other of the Sorrowful Mother. These simply-framed images were the only decorations. They were nearly identical to those I saw above the mantle in a re-creation of a one room renter's cottage in Clare on a trip to Ireland years later, icons of Irish Catholicism. Mike's home was in South St. Paul on 5th Avenue, across from the St. Augustine's Church, where his 1942 funeral Mass was said by pastor Jeremiah O'Callahan. Mike was buried at Calvary Catholic Cemetery in St. Paul. His children and his grandchildren were mostly born in Catholic hospitals, and many were educated in Catholic schools. Back in Canada, one of Mike's McDonald cousins became a priest, while two others became nuns. Mike's entire life was immersed in Roman Catholicism of an Irish bent.

My experience tracing my Irish-born ancestors to Canada West (now Ontario) has been very rewarding due to the abundance of Canadian records. Once the émigrés settled, a paper trail emerged. I have found online real estate records at FamilySearch and historic Ontario land records (ONLAND), enabling me to learn more about how my ancestors acquired transferable wealth through real estate transactions and probate equivalents. Since this was the first time most had the opportunity to own property, they signed with an "X". I also have been able to infer their lifestyles by studying their neighborhoods and demographic trends through Canadian census records, which offer a great deal of information about land, gardens, livestock, and demographics. For a detailed discussion of the demographics study, including methods and findings, see my 14 February 2022 article "St. Marys Ontario and the Irish Diaspora — Demographics 1851 to 1871." For details of findings and methods of property searches for my families of interest, see my 17 February 2022 article "Ontario Land and Property Records Tell the Stories of Irish Immigrants." Both studies are posted at the St. Marys Museum website.[7]

End Notes

[1] Reprinted article from St. Marys' *Argus*, March 4, 1886, St. Marys Museum Archives.

[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Eckert, Bill, "History of Holy Name of Mary Parish." St. Marys' *Journal-Argus*, Oct 2, 1991. Reprinted in St. Marys Museum Archives.

[4] Diocese of London (Ontario); London, Ontario. Ontario, Canada, Roman Catholic Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1760-1923; Baptism, Marriage, Burial, Confirmation, Family Head List; St. Marys; 1865-1911, p 228 of 251, December 3, 1903. ancestry.com

[5] Diocese of London (Ontario); London, Ontario. Ontario, Canada, Roman Catholic Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1760-1923; Ingersol, 1850-1910, 1853 p 48. familysearch.org

[6] Both are found at the St. Marys Museum 2022 Virtual Heritage Fair (https://stmarysheritagefair2022.wordpress.com/2022/02/15/tracing-my-roots-irish-immigrants-in-st-marys/).

David Trudeau is a retired physician and researcher interested in genealogy. He is a member of the Canadian Interest Group of the Minnesota Genealogical Society. He has published a genealogy book and several articles for the Association des Truteau d'Amérique *and an article for* The Septs. *He is interested in DNA studies, and in researching the life events of his ancestors.*



Websites for Canadian Genealogical Research

by Gigi Hickey

Regardless of where you reside now, you likely have Canadian family history! During the Great Migration of Canada, which occurred from 1815-1850, over 800,000 people emigrated from the British Isles: England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. In the early twentieth century, record numbers of immigrants arrived as Canada promoted settlement in its western territories. More than 400,000 immigrants were admitted in 1913 alone.[1]

Even before Canada became a nation in 1867, migrants from the United States moved north, including exiled Loyalists, fugitive African-American slaves, Klondike Gold Rush prospectors, Midwest farmers starting over in the prairie provinces and others who migrated for political reasons.

Countless websites are available for researching your Canadian family history. Subscription resources such as *Ancestry* and its Canadian sister site, *Ancestry.ca*, offer excellent records. I endeavor to point you to several other resources, most of which are free. Keep in mind the list is in no way exhaustive.

FamilySearch

Canada Genealogy Research Wiki

An excellent place to start may be a website with which you're already familiar, *FamilySearch*. The *FamilySearch* "Research Wiki" is an excellent resource for planning your Canadian research.

For example, from the Wiki homepage, enter "Canada" into the search box and choose from the drop-down menu, Canada Genealogy.[2] On the Canada Genealogy page, click on the blue button titled "Canada Online Genealogical Records," and you will find a high-level summary of free and subscription websites. Otherwise, there is a list of Record Types on the right side which will provide a filtered list according to type.

Canadian records of births, marriages and deaths – called "civil registration" in Canada – are maintained at the provincial or territorial level, similar to vital records found at the county level in the United States.

Alternatively, if you know the province or territory of interest, use the interactive Canada Clickable Map or scroll down to the Provinces and Territories list. These will result in the same lists of records and the resources they reside in. The amount of material available varies from province to province.

Passenger Lists and Border Crossings

Of particular interest to those who have Irish immigrants who sailed to Canada as a means to reach the United States, the *FamilySearch* Research Wiki provides links to resources – free and subscription – with digitized passenger lists for various Canadian ports as well as border crossing records (also valid for other migrant groups). As an example, here are two free lists available on *FamilySearch*:

Canada Passenger Lists 1881-1922 – Index and images of ships' passenger lists (also known as ships' manifests or seaport records of entry). Contains records for the ports of Quebec City, 1900-1921; Halifax, 1881-1922; Saint John, 1900-1912; North Sydney, 1906-1912; Vancouver, 1905-1912; Victoria, 1905-1912; New York, 1906-1912;



Interactive Canadian Provincial Map available in FamilySearch *Research Wiki*

and Eastern US Ports, 1905-1912. The lists for United States ports include only those names of passengers with intentions of proceeding directly to Canada."[3]

Vermont, St. Albans Canadian Border Crossings, 1895-1954 — This collection contains an index to Canadian border entries through the St. Albans, Vermont, District, 1895-1954.[4] Despite the collection's name, the manifests were actually from seaports and railroad stations all over Canada and the northern United States, not just Vermont. While the St. Albans Lists can be confusing and misunderstood, they are often a treasure trove of surprises.

Canadiana: Héritage

The digitized content at *Canadiana* and the "Héritage" collection chronicles the history of Canada from the 1600s to the mid-1900s. Its roughly forty million pages of primary-source documents are contained in five collections: Genealogy, Aboriginal History, Government Documents, Military History and Landmark Papers. The collected works in Héritage are "digital versions of microfilm collections held at Library and Archives Canada (LAC)." Visit the website and experience the navigation tools available.[5]

Library and Archives Canada

The Library and Archives Canada (LAC) allows the researcher to search over 26 databases from one point. Immediately below the Collection Search box are two tools aiding in the efficient use of the search functions, "Learn more about Collection Search," or "try our other search tools."[6]

Census Search

An extensive collection of Canadian census records available in one place is convenient for the researcher. Starting in 1851, most census records included every resident's name, country or province of birth, age and many other details.



1921 Canada Census image, household of Edgar Morrison

A new tool for searching was launched in November 2022. This Beta tool is a "one-stop-shop to search more than 44 million census records all at once rather than searching 17 databases individually. It includes pre-Confederation and Canadian census records from 1825 to 1926."[7]

Results are more meaningful when the query originates in one's family tree. My prior research indicated my great-grandfather's sister, Mahala Frances (Stahl) Morrison, moved from Iowa to settle in Saskatchewan with her husband, Edgar, and their children in the early 1900s. Mahala Frances generally went by "Frances M." Various records indicated the family lived near Robsart, a tiny burg near Maple Creek, which helped me locate the correct Morrison family.[8]

So many questions were posed in the 1921 census! One entry indicates Frances and her family arrived in Canada in 1910 and were naturalized in 1913. Surprisingly her answer in the "Racial or tribal origin" was: "Scotch." Really? Frances was born in Iowa in 1851; the family members I've been able to trace on that line were U.S.-born going back to the 1730s. How fascinating that Frances still considered "Scotch" her tribe of origin! (What am I missing?)[9]

British Home Children

Between 1869 and 1932, British churches and philanthropic organizations placed over 100,000 children with families in rural Canada through assisted juvenile emigration. The orphaned, abandoned or pauper children were referred to as "home children." The Library and Archives Canada (LAC) holds extensive records about these children, searchable by name.[10]

The Canadian County Atlas Digital Program

The County Atlas project resides in the McGill Library collection. It is a searchable database of property owners' names appearing on township maps in historic county atlases of Ontario Province.[11]

The atlases, published between 1874 and 1881, cover 40 Ontario counties. Take, for example, a search for Ontario County, Ontario province. An image of a map of the county appears. Click on any part of the map to see the various townships within the county. And once the township map pops up, each section/lot on the map reflects the names of the property owners and/or residents. Atlases were sold by subscription, with prominent residents paying an additional sum to have biographical sketches, portraits, or views of their residences or businesses included. One can search the atlases by "People" or by "Maps."



Uxbridge Township, 1877

I searched this database and queried a friend's ancestors, the Mordens, who were Loyalists during the Revolutionary War. After one of their members was hung for treason in Pennsylvania, the extended Morden family settled in Ontario, where the King offered them land grants. Previous research indicated they settled in Uxbridge Township, part of Ontario County from 1852-1973.

Using the County Atlas database, I quickly identified four Mordens in the 1877 Uxbridge Township Atlas.[12] Among them were William Morden, whom we believe was her 2x great-grandfather (1839-1916), and Jacob Morden (1806-1892), her 3x great-grandfather. Seeing the names of their close neighbors on a map could provide helpful FAN (Family-Associates-Neighbors) Club leads.

Hudson's Bay Company Archival Records @ Archives of Manitoba

Housed at the Archives of Manitoba, the Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA) is an excellent resource for finding early Manitoban people. HBCA has digitized 1,052 reels of microfilm, encompassing over 10,000 volumes of the pre-1870 records kept in nearly 500 Hudson's Bay Company posts.[13]

Archives of Manitoba

Besides the Hudson's Bay Company archives, the other holdings are a valuable resource housing Manitoba's documented past. The primary search tool is the Keystone Archives Descriptive Database. The database is growing, and the website states it will be updated regularly. Other resources include Biographical Information Sheets, Post Maps, Name Indexes, Ships' Histories, etc. As an example, one Name Index is "Servants' Contracts (1776-ca. 1926)" and includes employee names, parish/post names, ages, contract lengths, terms of service, positions to be held, and wages.[14]

For more in-depth research needs, the Archives encourages clients to hire a researcher.

MyHeritage

Newspapers are a valuable resource for genealogy and family history research. Obituaries, as well as birth, marriage, and death notices, may substitute for missing vital records.

MyHeritage has a particularly robust collection of newspapers published in towns and cities across Canada.[15] To search, select "Newspapers" from the Research tab. Then on the right, either "Canada, 1757-2007" for English-language newspapers or "Canada, French 1807-2007" for newspapers in French. Most of the French papers are from Quebec, with some from Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Prince Edward Island.

Searching the collections on *MyHeritage* is free; to view more than a brief summary of the newspaper entry or to save these records, you'll need a subscription.

Conclusion

The websites mentioned in this article barely scratch the surface regarding genealogical resources in Canada. Don't forget to look for blogs, podcasts and other social network sources that mention your ancestors' location/religion/occupation/surnames.

If you find your research is stalled out, consider a reboot by reviewing *FamilySearch*'s "Canada Research Tips and Strategies."

Endnotes

Websites cited in this article were viewed on 29 November 2022.

[1] *Statistics Canada*, (https://www150.statcan.gc.ca), "150 Years of Immigration in Canada," rev. 17 May 2022.

[2] *FamilySearch Wiki*, (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main_Page), "Canada Genealogy," rev. 12:38, 12 August 2022.

[3] "Canada Passenger Lists, 1881-1922," database with images, *FamilySearch* (http://FamilySearch.org); citing Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

[4] "Vermont, St. Albans Canadian Border Crossings, 1895-1954," database with images, *FamilySearch* (http://FamilySearch.org); citing National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) microfilm publications M1461, M1463, M1464, and M1465, Washington, D.C.

[5] *Canadiana*: Heritage, (https://www.crkn-rcdr.ca/en/heritage-content).

[6] "Censuses." Library and Archives Canada, (https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/Pages/census.aspx).

[7] *Library and Archives Canada*, (https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/corporate/news/2022/pages/launch-of-census-search.aspx), "Launch of Census Search: New Tool Makes it Easier to Find Family Roots in Canada," rev. 16 November 2022.

[8] "1921 Census of Canada," database with images, *Library and Archives Canada* (https://www.recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca), entry for Frances E. Morrison (70), in household of Edgar Morrison (71), Maple Creek, Saskatchewan; citing district 220, subdistrict 22, p. 9, family 123, microfilm reel number T-26021.

[9] Note: the 1921 Census of Canada can be searched and viewed at *LAC* and *Ancestry.ca*. Indices of Canadian Censuses can also be found at *FamilySearch* and *Automated Genealogy.com*. *Automated Genealogy* shows alternative ways of spelling surnames, which may be helpful if you can't find a name in the census.

[10] "Home Children, 1869-1932," databases, *Library and Archives Canada* (https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca).

[11] "In Search of Your Canadian Past," The Canadian County Atlas Digital Project, (https://digital.library.mcgill.ca/county-atlas/default.htm).

[12] "The Canadian County Atlas Digital Project," database with images, *McGill University Library* (http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/CountyAtlas/), entry for William Morden, Uxbridge township, Ontario county, 1877, concession I, lot 6.

[13] "Hudson's Bay Company Archives," Archives of Manitoba, *Province of Manitoba Website*, (https://www.gov.mb.ca).

[14] "Search Keystone," database of holdings, Archives of Manitoba, Manitoba.ca > Archives of Manitoba > Keystone Archives Descriptive Database (http://pam.minisisinc.com/pam/search.htm).

[15] "Newspapers," database and index, *MyHeritage* (https://www.myheritage.com/research), Home > All Collections > Newspapers > Canada Newspapers, 1752-2007.

Gigi Hickey has twice served on the IGSI board and, since 2011, as IGSI blog editor. After co-chairing the Celtic Connections Conference 2020, she became one of the co-Managing Editors of The Septs. *In addition to genealogy research, she enjoys quilting and piano-duets and her DAR chapter.*



IGSI has a *YouTube* Channel!

Check out our monthly podcast on the IGSI *YouTube* Channel. The program is called "This Month at the IGSI" and is hosted by genealogist and IGSI member Dave Miller. The podcasts provide the latest information regarding the Irish Genealogical Society International and what activities are planned for the upcoming month.

On the next "This month at the IGSI" we will be talking about the first webinar of 2023, which will feature Fiona Fitzsimons. Fiona will be discussing 'Irish Church Records: Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland.' She will be talking about using the records of the Catholic Church and the Church of Ireland, what records were made and what survives, as well as where and how to access them. The first Irish Saturday for 2023 will be held on January 14th. We also will be talking about the past IGSI-sponsored trip to Ireland and some of the interesting events that happened during the trip. These stories and previous episodes can be found on the YouTube IGSI channel or the "Our Podcasts" page on the IGSI website https://irishgenealogical.org/cpage.php?pt=174.

Link for *YouTube* Channel: https://www.youtube.com/@IrishGenealogyIGSI.

Canadian Genealogy Books

IGSI Co-President Donna Jones suggests her favorite Canada-related genealogy books. IGSI owns all of the titles listed in our research collection, sometimes in an earlier edition. If we have an earlier edition, an asterisk (*) follows the copyright year.

Baxter, Agnus. *In Search of Your Canadian Roots*. 3rd edition. Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 2008.

Baxter, one of Canada's leading genealogists, discusses the great migrations of numerous nationalities (including Scots and Irish) to Canada. He describes the holdings of the national archives in Ottawa, the LDS Church relating to Canada, and both census records and church registers.

Bennett, Carol. *Peter Robinson's Settlers*. Global Heritage Press, Ottawa, Canada, 2011.*

Information on both the 1823 and 1825 groups brought to Upper Canada under the leadership of the Hon. Peter Robinson, MPP, to settle in the District of Bathurst in the Ottawa Valley and in the Newcastle District in the Peterborough area. The book includes details of each family, plus stories of the settlers and of prominent descendants.

Bennett-McCuaig, Carol. *The Kerry Chain – The Limerick Link*. Global Heritage Press, Ottawa, Canada, 2022.*

This book documents the chain migration of many families from County Kerry and County Limerick that arrived in Renfrew County, Ontario between 1823 and 1875. Many of the immigrants had first settled in the region of Lanark and Carleton to the south.

Crowder, Norman K. *Early Ontario Settlers: A Source Book*. Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 2019.*

This source book contains official records of the early settlers of Upper Canada, or Ontario, for the years 1783 to 1789, including population returns, provisioning lists, settlers' location lists, and lists of immigrant arrivals.

Elliott, Bruce S. *Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach*. 2nd edition. McGill-Queens University Press, Montreal, Canada, 2004.*

The author traces the genealogies, movements, landholding strategies, and economic lives of 775 families of Irish immigrants who came to Canada between 1815 and 1855 from County Tipperary, Ireland. Elliott follows his subjects from Ireland to Canada and then within North America. His work unveils nineteenth-century society in Ireland, Canada, and the United States.

Irvine, Shirley and David Obee. *Finding Your Canadian Ancestors: A Beginners Guide*. *Ancestry*, Lehi, Utah, 2007.

This book introduces Canadian genealogical records, first by record type and then according to province. Learn about government and ecclesiastical records, as well as records related to special groups, e.g. Aboriginals, Acadians, and Loyalists. Online resources, including the extensive holdings of Library and Archives of Canada, are discussed.

Laxton, Edward. *The Famine Ships: The Irish Exodus to America*. Global Heritage Press, Ottawa, Canada, 1998.

More than a million people died of starvation and disease during the Potato Famine; another million left their homeland to board ships bound for the United States and Canada. This book tells the stories of some of the brave and determined immigrants who traveled on the famine ships.

Merriman, Brenda Dougall. *Genealogy in Ontario: Search the Records*. 5th edition. Ontario Genealogical Society, Toronto, Canada, 2012.*

This book, which gives an excellent overview of the different types of records and how to find them in Ontario, should be requisite reading for researchers of Ontario ancestors. The appendices provide contact information on repositories; each chapter includes references and suggested readings.

Punch, Terence M. *Erin's Sons: Irish Arrival in Atlantic Canada, 1761 – 1853*. Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 2008.

From the start of the earliest European colonies, there were Irish settlers in the four provinces of Atlantic Canada:

Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. While the first Irish arrivals came to Newfoundland as seasonal fishermen, a sizable number from Waterford, Kilkenny, Wexford, Tipperary, and east Cork settled there between 1785 and 1835 to work in the fishing industry.

Punch, Terence M. *Erin's Sons: Irish Arrival in Atlantic Canada, 1761 – 1853*. Volume II. Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 2009.

The second volume of *Erin's Sons* covers the same time period and geographic area as the first. However, the second volume delves into hard-to-find sources such as church records of marriages and burials, cemetery records, headstone inscriptions, military description books, newspapers, poor house records, and passenger lists.

Punch, Terence M. *Erin's Sons: Irish Arrival in Atlantic Canada, 1751 – 1858*. Volume III. Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 2009.

Volume III of *Erin's Sons* extends the period of coverage by 15 years and lists additional Irish-born residents of Atlantic Canada. Like the other volumes in the series, it is based on a wide variety of genealogical sources.

Punch, Terence M. *Erin's Sons: Irish Arrival in Atlantic Canada to 1863*. Volume IV. Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 2010.

The fourth volume of *Erin's Sons* expands the time search by another five years yet continues to offer a wealth of data records in which immigrants to Atlantic Canada are named.

Punch, Terence M. *Erin's Sons: Irish Arrival in Atlantic Canada*. 4 Volume eBook series. Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 2010.

This e-book includes all the information from the four volumes of Mr. Punch's work on Irish immigration to Canada between 1751 and 1863, yet saves the space of physically keeping them.

Reid, William D. *The Loyalists in Ontario: The Sons and Daughters of the American Loyalists of Upper Canada*. Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 1973.

Did you know that the children of the Loyalists who settled in Ontario were eligible for land grants free of fees as they came of age or married? Following the close of the American Revolutionary War, there was a special provision for that. This work takes thousands of references to these land grants made to these sons and daughters and arranges them under the names of their Loyalist parents.

Please note that books in IGSI's research collection, housed at the Hoffman Research Library at the Minnesota Genealogy Center, are listed in the library's catalog at https://mngs.org/Collection. Hoffman Research Library items are not available for interlibrary loan. If you are not able to access these books on-site, perhaps consider initiating an interlibrary loan request at your local public library, which may be able to locate them elsewhere.

The Hoffman Research Library's collection is included in WorldCat. IGSI's materials, along with those of the Minnesota Genealogical Society and its affiliates, are listed in WorldCat as belonging to the Minnesota Genealogical Society.

Or, if the information you seek is a simple fact-check, email Librarian@irishgenealogical.org or call the library at (651) 330-9312 on an Irish Saturday to ask for a look-up. A volunteer can find the volume and read short pieces of information to you via telephone or make copies of up to three pages to send to you via mail or email.

Do you want to buy your own copy? Donna says "Many of my books are from the following publishers. Global Genealogy https://globalgenealogy.com from Toronto. Their list of publications is extensive and many of the titles can be purchased as a pdf download. There is a list of titles for each of the Canadian provinces. Like the U.S., some of my allied lines moved across Canada with the expansion of the Canadian West. The other publisher of a good list is Genealogical Publishing Company https://genealogical.com/store/?gpc_search=1&pa_region=world-canada-canadian from Baltimore."

The Peter Robinson Settlers: Ireland to Upper Canada

by Kathleen Strickland

In 1823 and 1825, the Government of Great Britain financed the emigration of 2,592 dispossessed tenant farmers and their families to Upper Canada (Ontario) — the Peter Robinson settlers. The success of this assisted emigration rested on several circumstances coming together around the same time to meet the goal of settling homeless Irish Roman Catholics on forest land in the Canadian backwoods.

Push: Irish People Willing to Leave Ireland

In 1820s Ireland, the population was growing quickly thanks to the availability of cheap potatoes. Agriculture had been profitable during the Napoleonic wars, but an economic turndown came with the end of the wars in 1815. The British government passed the Corn Laws, which blocked the importation of cheaper corn (any cereal grain) from other countries. The Corn Laws kept the cost of British corn artificially high, which favored the finances of landowners but caused hardships for the common people of Britain and Ireland.

Landlords began to view tenant farmers as an obstacle to their financial standing. They turned out many poor farmers from their houses and farms to make way for grazing land and the more profitable cattle trade and also to avoid supporting tenants.

Another blow came in 1821 when the potato crop failed and famine struck the island. Life was a struggle for many impoverished Irish, who were turned out of their homes and had to try to find food. Riots and protests erupted in parts of Ireland.

Pull: A Plan to Relieve the Irish "Reduced Farmers"

When Robert John Wilmot-Horton became the new British Undersecretary of State for the colonies, he worked on a plan to give destitute Irish an opportunity for more hopeful and productive lives by obtaining government funding to outfit ships for passage to Upper Canada and arranging to give the dispossessed families he gathered both land and support to begin life in their new homes. He hoped this would relieve pressure and discontent in Ireland while helping to populate the colony of Upper Canada, increase taxable land through settlement, and strengthen it against possible aggression from the United States.

Wilmot-Horton secured government funding to move poor, Roman Catholic Irish out of Ireland and send them to Upper Canada, where they would receive assistance to start farms. The British government agreed to fund this plan on an experimental basis. For the program to succeed, Wilmot-Horton needed a hands-on manager to execute each stage of emigration.

Peter Robinson, Canadian

Wilmot-Horton's friend John Robinson — the Attorney General of Upper Canada at the time — had a brother Peter, who was born and raised in Canada, and was familiar with the land, the living conditions, and the local inhabitants. He knew what the settlers would need to establish themselves there successfully, and he could guide them from their port in Quebec to the backwoods of Ontario, where land would be set aside for them. John suggested the challenge to Peter, and they traveled together to England to explore the possibilities. Peter accepted Wilmot-Horton's proposal to become superintendent of the project and began attending to the many and varied details involved in sending 568 settlers to Upper Canada in 1823, to be followed by a later group of 2,024 settlers in 1825.[1]

Wilmot-Horton looked to the Blackwater Valley in County Cork for his settlers. This area was being torn apart by violent uprisings against landowners, including destruction of their property and their cattle. Wilmot-Horton hoped his emigration plan might remove some of the agitators from the area and provide land to help replace what they had lost. An article in the May 13, 2020 edition of the *Peterborough Examiner*, "Expedition Peterborough," notes "Wilmot-Horton firmly believed it was cheaper to pay for the removal of poor tenant farmers to the New World than it would be to keep them, and have to support them with local taxes."

Executing the Plan

The emigration plan provided passage, food and necessities, and a doctor (surgeon) aboard each ship to care for the settlers. Besides being responsible for the health of passengers, doctors were asked to keep notes about the personalities of the men on the voyage in an effort to spot troublemakers. Peter Robinson led a group from ships arriving in Quebec to Upper Canada. Each adult male would receive 70 acres of land with a clearing and a small cabin, plus an additional 30 acres later. Robinson noted in 1827:

> Each family setting off for their new home received a cow, axes, an augur, a handsaw, a hammer, 100 nails, two gimlets, three hoes, a kettle, a fry-pan, an iron pot, three bushels of seed

potatoes and one peck of seed corn. One pound of salt pork and one pound of flour per day were given to all settlers over the age of 14 for the next 18 months with half rations for those between 5 and 14 and quarter rations for those under 5 years. All this was, of course, supplied by the government as part of the settlement agreement.[2]

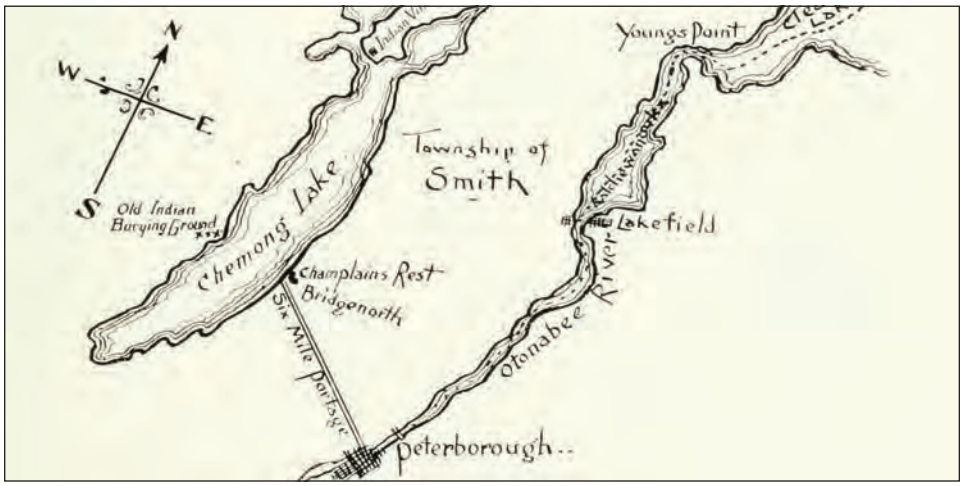
Wilmot-Horton created a memorandum advertising the assisted emigration program and distributed it throughout southern Ireland, particularly in the County Cork towns of Fermoy, Mitchelstown, Doneraile, Charleville, Kanturk, Mallow, Newmarket, and other surrounding villages.

The Emigrants

Most of those chosen were poor Roman Catholic men with families, called "reduced farmers," who had been turned off their lands. Young families with children were preferred, although a few people in their forties were included to season the group with more mature personalities.

Fifty thousand people from all over Ireland, but particularly the Blackwater valley of County Cork, applied for the opportunity to emigrate. Robinson, along with landowners and magistrates, chose those who would be granted a place in the emigration to Canada. Most of the chosen came from northern County Cork and southeastern Limerick, with a few from other areas.

Robinson wrote in his report to the Bathurst District of Upper Canada, "I confined myself strictly to the selection of persons of no capital whatever, and who might more properly be called paupers… Moreover, it was judged expedient by the Gentlemen under whose guidance I acted, to take them out of a troubled District that some of the more fiery spirits might be disposed of and consequently those left behind would find more steady employment and be induced to live in greater tranquility…"



Map showing Peterborough, Canada, from Ontario Sessional Papers, 1918, No. 17-20. Contributing Library: Robarts – University of Toronto. No known copyright restrictions.

1823 Settlers

In 1823 Robinson left Cork with 568 people on board two ships, the *Hebe* and the *Stakesby*, on a voyage to Quebec. The group would move on to settlements in the Bathurst District of Upper Canada.

Robinson and his emigrants sailed from Cork to Quebec, a two-month sea voyage, then faced a challenging trek to their ultimate destination. In his report to the Bathurst District, he writes:

> We arrived in Quebec in the *Stakesby* on the 2nd of September after a passage of eight weeks, the *Hebe* had been in port two days—I shipped the people from the transports on board the steamboats without landing them, and proceeded to Montreal on the 4th having been detained only two days…provisions and transport as far as Prescott in Upper Canada a distance of about 320 miles.
>
> We reached Montreal on the 6th and finding the means of transport ready I forwarded the emigrants by land immediately without stopping in Montreal to LaChine distant ten miles. There we remained two days and then set out in boats to Prescott…a commissary had preceded us with one months provisions…
>
> The two Surgeons Mr Hamilton and Mr Dixon…volunteered their services from Quebec to Prescott a distance of more than three hundred miles, and were of great service in preserving the health of the emigrants while passing up the River in boats, which was the most difficult and tedious part of the journey…
>
> On the 18th I left Prescott and proceeded across the Country in Waggons to [Ramsay Township], a distance of about fifty miles and arrived on the 22nd.

Robinson located families in Ramsay Township, Pakenham, Bathurst, Lanark, Beckwith, Goulbourn, Darling, and Huntly. He had 20' x 12' log cabins built in clearings for the settlers by November 1.

1825 Settlers

The government, judging the 1823 assisted emigration to be a success, sent Robinson in 1825 with a group of 2,024 emigrants traveling to Quebec on nine ships. They arrived on June 19 and continued to Montréal by steamship. After walking from there to Lachine, they rowed bateaux to Kingston. They left Kingston in groups of 500, traveling by steamship to Coburg. There they spent ten days working to make the road to Rice Lake passable before they could travel there. Robinson writes in 1827, "The first thing I did was to repair the road…I received…fifty pounds from the district funds, and this Sum, together with the labour of our people, enabled me to improve the road in ten days so much, that our provisions and baggage could be sent across with ease and three large boats were transported on Wheels, from Lake Ontario, to the Rice Lake."[3]

After reaching Rice Lake they journeyed up the Otonabee River to Scott's Plains (later Peterborough), their journey's end. The trip was aggravated by an unusually hot summer that contributed to contraction of Malaria and other diseases. Along the way, some of the emigrants left the group to join relatives and friends who had come with Robinson in 1823. This 1825 group of Irish emigrants settled on land given to them in the Newcastle District, including Emily, Otonabee, Ennismore, Douro, Ottawa, Marmora, and Asphodel Townships.

Adjusting to life in Canada proved a hardship for the settlers. The article "A Community Takes Shape," from May 13, 2020 *Peterborough Examiner*, describes what awaited the emigrants:

> The first months of 1826 were a harsh introduction to the Canadian winter, with the intensity of snow and cold unfamiliar to the Irish…Loneliness and isolation, too, played a role in the shock of adjustment to life in the woods of Canada. At home, many of the Irish were used to living in small village settings, with neighbours close at hand. Here, even the nearest neighbour's shanty [cabin] could not be seen through the dense forests, and the scarcely existent roads were clogged with mud, snow or a combination of both.

In addition to the items in "References," I discovered a few more research resources for the Peterborough settlers of 1823 and 1825. Below is a short selection:

Bennett, Carol. *Peter Robinson's Settlers*. Milton (now Ottawa): Global Heritage Press, 2011.

Kawartha Ancestral Research Association: https://kawarthagenealogy.ca/robinson-settler-descendants/

Information about who settled in which areas as well as news of the upcoming 200-year anniversary of the Peter Robinson settlements.

Olive Tree Genealogy. Passenger lists as well as the Surgeon-Superintendent reports of the surgeons traveling with the emigrants. http://www.olivetreegenealogy.com/ships/canada/PeterRobinson.shtml

Peter Robinson Settlers in Canada. Facebook Group. https://www.facebook.com/groups/585781828107292/

TheShipsList: Passenger lists for the Peter Robinson settlers. https://www.theshipslist.com/ships/passengerlists/peterrobinsonindex.shtml

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End of the Experiment

Even though the Robinson experiment showed that government-assisted emigration could be successful, after the Robinson relocations "Parliament decided [that] it was better to let emigrants and their families pay for their travel as the chances of succeeding in Canada, Australia and South Africa were so good that government support was unneeded," according to the article "Expedition Peterborough."

Ultimately, the area settled by 1823 and 1825 Irish emigrants was cleared, farmed, and became prosperous. Many of these families remained in the area for generations. Like New World emigrants across

the continent, some went farther west into Ontario, into the prairie provinces, and into the United States, particularly Michigan, the Dakotas, and Minnesota. For anyone interested in exploring this group of Irish emigrants and their descendants, there is an abundance of material available in libraries and online.

In 2025, Peterborough is planning a 200th anniversary celebration of Peter Robinson's Settlers. No doubt even more stories and information will come to light then.

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A Tragedy Beyond Measure

Immigrants to Grosse Île Faced Famine, an Epidemic, and Loss

by Jane Kennedy

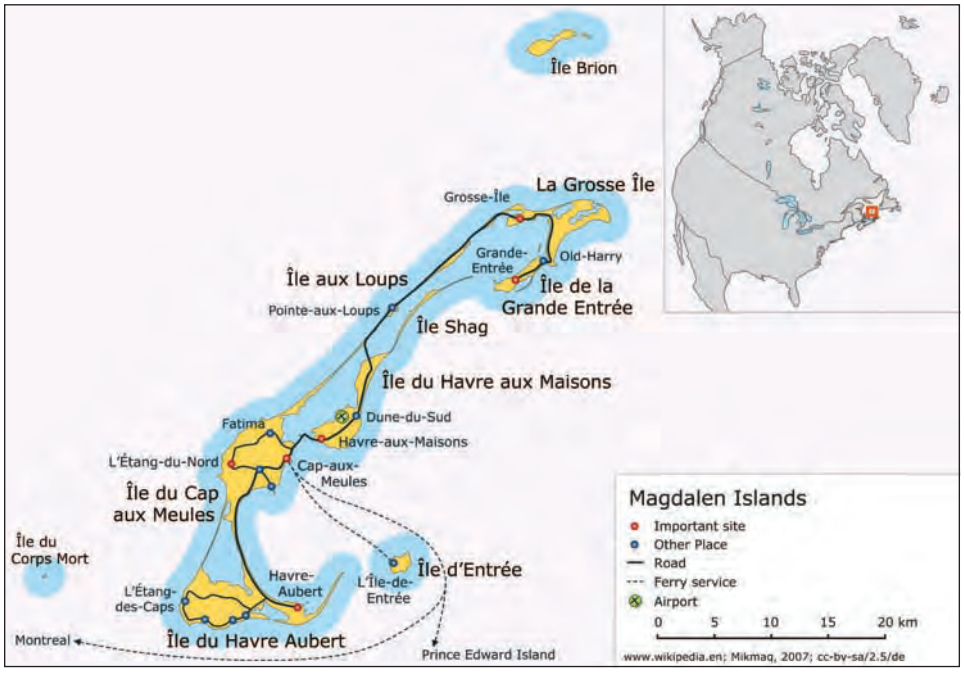
"Whether you knew them or not, they were your relatives," observed Mike McCormack, national historian, and a member of the United States Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), while visiting the cemetery and memorials at Grosse Île.[1]

The largest famine cemetery outside of Ireland lies on an island in Canada's St. Lawrence River. Grosse Île, pronounced "gross eel," is one of the twenty-one islands that comprise the Isle-aux-Grues archipelago. The name is French for "big island," but it's also called "island graveyard."

The history of Grosse Île, located near Quebec City in the Quebec province, belies the island's small size. The Canadian government selected Grosse Île as a quarantine station in 1832 when Europe faced a sweeping cholera epidemic. The island was considered a roadblock to letting disease into Canada.

At that time, many people were immigrating. Ship owners found transporting people from the British Isles and Ireland to be a steady business and ship owners were reluctant to limit travel but, by 1833 and 1834, cholera had become so widespread that no immigrants were allowed into Canada. This quiet time should have been an opportunity for the administrators at Grosse Île quarantine station to concentrate on getting procedures in place and shelters prepared for a potential future epidemic; rather, the shelter staff eased up on their work and did little to prepare for a second round of the disease. The follow-up came in 1847, arriving with a vengeance.

"The year 1847 was the high-water mark of mass migration to Canada," explained Dr. Mark G. McGowan, professor of History and Celtic Studies at the University of Toronto. In 1847, 52% of the immigrants coming into Canada via Grosse Île were Irish, yet there were also immigrants from forty-two other nations. The 1847 sailing season encompassed over 90,000 emigrants exiting British and Irish ports to head to Quebec.[2]



Map of the Magdalen Islands, photo credit: "Magdalen Islands" by Klaus Mueller, licensed under CC BY-SA-2.5, *Wikimedia Commons.* No known copyright restrictions.

A Brisk Timber Trade

In general, nearly all Canada-bound immigrants were from Ireland and the British Isles during the first half of the 19th century. There were several reasons for this. First, the timber trade was a significant business during these decades and, while many ships left Canada to go to Liverpool and other British ports, the ships didn't return empty. Instead, each return voyage was filled with immigrants who were eager to leave the Famine — no matter how deplorable the transportation vessel — and travel to a new home. Next, only ships of British registry were allowed to enter the St. Lawrence River during this free-trade period. Finally, traveling from Great Britain to Canada was less expensive than from Great Britain to the United States. Also, Canada had no anti-immigration laws.

Timber ships were the most popular form of transportation for immigrants arriving in Grosse Île during and around 1847. Other old, retrofitted ships also were used, giving immigrants another option for travel. Unfortunately, these reconfigured ships — often referred to as "coffin ships" — were barely seaworthy, partly because new navigation laws were enacted around this time. Many passengers never completed their journey to Canada alive, having died on the voyage and been given a sea burial.

Around 1847, it's estimated that approximately 398 ships full of passengers ill

from typhus, also known as "ship's fever," were detained at Grosse Île.[3] The disease, carried by lice, spread rapidly through vessels given the close quarters, unsanitary ship conditions, and large number of people on board. Because quarantine stations were filled with sick people, healthy immigrants were forced to remain on their respective ships until the ill were processed into quarantine sheds. In some cases, people were stranded on the ships for several months due to the large volume of ships arriving weekly.

Doctors at Grosse Île couldn't keep up with the thousands of people arriving at the town's beaches. Because there were no piers or docks on the island in those days, passengers were required to climb off the ships and into waiting rowboats. These crude debarkation conditions required parents to cling to their young children and all their possessions as they scaled down flimsy ship ladders with the river flowing below.

Homes for Orphans

Historians estimate that for every one adult who made it to Grosse Île, there were 50 children that survived.[4] The *Quebec Morning Chronicle* of June 1, 1847, stated, "The steamer *St. George* arrived here yesterday, from Red Island. She called in at the Quarantine Station on her way up, by which we learn that there are 1300 sick on the island…We learn with much sorrow that the number of orphans on the island is now double what we last mentioned; it being now stated that there are at least one hundred."[5]

The orphans were greeted by Catholic and Anglican priests, mainly from Quebec City, who initially cared for the children and appealed to church parishioners to give the orphans a welcoming home.

In addition to immigrants coming to Grosse Île, another 17,000 were tranported to Partridge Island off the coast of Saint John, New Brunswick. While many survivors moved on to New England, over 600 immigrants were buried in a mass grave on this island.[6]

Although 1847 is considered a year of record high of mass migration to Canada, the numbers dropped to a little over 30,000 immigrants by the following year.[7] One reason is Great Britain no longer wanted to compensate the Canadian government for the costs of taking in immigrants. Also, Canada began to impose sanctions and fines on boat captains who were attempting to bring in people with disease.

In the end, close to 6,000 immigrants were buried at Grosse Île. While buried in mass graves, each person was laid to rest in a coffin because of the island's shallow soil levels.

Historian McGowan noted that immi–gration to Canada during the early years of the Great Famine is also an American story because most migrants didn't stay in Canada. They moved inland on the St. Lawrence River, with many going to Quebec City and Montréal. From Montréal, immigrants scattered west to Ontario, north up the Ottawa River, or down St. John River Valley to Lake Champlain, where they had access to New York. Many immigrants already had family living in New York who had left Ireland prior to the Famine.

Those who moved further west to places like Kingston, Toronto, and Niagara Falls crossed the Niagara River to upstate New York and then moved on to Pennsylvania or Ohio or took boats across Lake Erie to Michigan. Irish canal workers employed in Canada were lured by advertisements to obtain similar work in the United States. This was a time when there were no strict border laws.

Searching for Family

Even though many Irish and British immigrants' journey to Canada eventually took them to the United States, Canada still offers many resources for those looking to find their family history. "Shipping manifests until 1865 are spotty," explains McGowan.

The Ships List contains some passenger lists, ship descriptions, a sizeable fleet list, and more. McGowan recommends starting with Library and Archives Canada, which opened its new preservation storage facility in late November 2022. Its website contains a large quantity of information, including a vast archival collection with items such as correspondence, diaries, government records, photographs, and military service files. While the website also features resources like books, magazines, and newspapers, the archival section maintains unpublished materials that are not generally shared with the public.

The Library and Archives Canada's main campus is located in Ottawa (site of the most extensive collection) for those who want to research their Grosse Île genealogy in person, but there are also branches in Winnipeg, Halifax, and Vancouver.

It's worth noting that before 1867, Canada was constituted of individual colonies. In 1867, a federation of colonies in British North America — New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec, and Ontario — joined

together to become the Dominion of Canada on July 1.

Canadian censuses are online and free. In 1906, Canada began taking a census every five years, in years ending in "1" and "6," unlike the United States' "0" years. In addition, Canada includes religious affiliations on its census because there is no separation of church and state. Religion designations can be particularly meaningful for those looking to determine if Irish family members were Catholic or Protestant.

According to McGowan, the 1851 Canadian census is incomplete. Some essential parts have been lost, including sections dealing with Toronto and parts of Montréal. In addition, for people looking for their relative's year of immigration, it was not until 1901 that this information was consistently included in the census. However, this was covered in some 19th century censuses when immigration information was known.

Grosse Île Today

Over the 50 years after immigrants reached the island and either died there or moved on, the cemetery fell into disrepair after being largely abandoned by those who remained on Grosse Île. Not a single marker commemorated the thousands of immigrants buried there between 1847-1848. However, in 1897, a group of Quebec City members of the AOH raised money from Irish Canadians, Americans, and others to build a Celtic cross erected in 1909 on Grosse Île. Today it stands as one of the tallest Celtic crosses in the world. The top section of the cross is made of Irish granite, while the cross's lower section is constructed from Quebec granite.



The Celtic Cross, Grosse Île_1, by Seán Ó Domhnaill, is licensed under CC-BY-NC-ND-2.0, *Flickr.*

The four panels at the base of the cross feature inscriptions in Gaelic, French and English. The fourth panel consists of names of priests who worked at the Grosse Île quarantine station.

The story of what happened at Grosse Île in the mid-19th century lives on today:

"As late as July 2016, Irish visitors to Grosse Île were overheard to exclaim that their desire to go there had finally come to fruition; one gentleman wept openly at the site of Grosse Île's Celtic cross; he revealed that he was fulfilling a lifetime dream to commemorate those lost during An Gorta Mór." [8]

Tourists can take a forty-minute boat ride to reach the island, which has been maintained by Parks Canada since 1988.

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Getting Out of the Archives and Into the Pubs to Trace Your Irish Ancestry *(Part One of a Three-Part Series)*

by Eliza Watson

A kind Irish gentleman in a village cemetery once escorted me to a remote graveyard in a sheep field. I didn't discover any family tombstones there, but learned the man's last name was Gavaghan. My ancestor, Patrick Coffey, had a sister who married a Gavaghan in that rural community in County Westmeath. You never know where you might encounter a distant relation. Ireland's pubs, restaurants, post offices, and graveyards are the perfect places to search for living relatives and local historians.

Successful genealogy research often entails what I've termed "how-do-you-do" research, rather than "how-to" research. Tracing your ancestry sometimes requires getting out of the archives and into the pubs to meet the patrons. Many of Ireland's historical records have been destroyed through the centuries by government orders or devastating fires. These lost documents include over half of the Church of Ireland's (Protestant) parish registers, wills, and all pre-1901 censuses—excluding a few fragments. Catholic records have survived but the availability of baptismal and marriage records varies greatly depending on the county and parish. I'd never have traced several of my Irish lines back to the early 1700s if it hadn't been for the help of newfound Irish relations and friendly locals.

My parents and I took our first trip to Ireland in 2007. We visited Kilbeggan, County Westmeath, the hometown of my mother's immigrant great-grandfather P.J. (Patrick James) Daly. After traipsing through cemeteries and locating P.J.'s brother Michael's grave, I was overcome with curiosity and inspired to find living relations. Having no idea how to trace Michael Daly's family forward, I hired genealogist Jane Daly. We aren't related, and choosing a researcher based primarily on a shared family surname is probably not best. However, Jane turned out to be a brilliant genealogist, mentor, and dear friend. She located newspaper articles about Michael's married daughter, Emily, who was buried without her husband in the family plot. She'd been struck and killed by a truck in 1960. The articles didn't mention Emily's husband or any children. Thankfully, Emily's brother-in-law, D. Swan from County Carlow, provided evidence during the inquest into her death.[1]

I searched online for Swans in Carlow and came across a man mentioned on a Lions Club website. It was a long shot, but I emailed a board member with what little information I had from nearly fifty years ago. The nice man contacted that Swan member, who ended up being unrelated to my Dalys. However, that man reached out to another possible relative, who reached out to another, and so on. After three months and the help of several gracious people, I located Michael Daly's grand-daughter, Annie.

I recall the thrill, anticipation, and anxiety of writing that first letter to an Irish relation. I typed up several drafts on the computer, worried that if I didn't word it just right she might not respond. I sent Annie a final handwritten letter, and she replied within a month. She provided details on her immediate family, but knew little about her mother's Daly line. I was disheartened, yet still excited about making contact with an Irish relation, thanks to those wonderful Lions Club members. I sent the men "thank you" gifts—sweatshirts from the Wisconsin Lions Club.



The Daly homestead in Kilbeggan, County Westmeath

While I was searching for Swans, Jane compiled birth, marriage, and death notices for another one of Michael's married daughters. Only one of her three children was still living—her daughter Joyce, who'd married a Presbyterian minister. An online newsletter for their church parish in Northern Ireland contained a photo of Joyce and her husband—my first photo of a Daly relative in my ancestor's homeland. I immediately wrote another letter. Unfortunately, I learned Joyce's mother likewise had never shared her Daly background with her family. Joyce's niece Charlotte, however, recently located both the original Daly homestead and a cousin, Josephine, who knew some family history.

According to Josephine, Michael and P.J.'s mother, Sarah Collentine, was a Huguenot. During the 17th and 18th centuries, members of this French Protestant group fled religious

persecution in France; about 10,000 settled in Ireland.[2] This intriguing tidbit may help me trace the Collentine line further back and perhaps locate family graves in one of Ireland's Huguenot cemeteries. Josephine's family's folklore included a story about her grandfather Michael and my second great-grandfather P.J. immigrating to southwestern Wisconsin to live with their maternal uncles. Michael returned to Ireland to assist his parents with their voyage to America, but his mother refused to leave despite her entire family having moved to Wisconsin. Michael remained with his parents in Ireland while P.J. settled in America, never to see his brother or parents again.

I hadn't ever heard that sad story. It sounded more factual than the tales about my adventurous ancestor, P.J., having been a stowaway on a potato boat sailing from Ireland to America and able to walk barefooted across a bed of nails...or maybe it was hot coals. Thanks to Charlotte, I uncovered family history and priceless photos I would never have found on a genealogy site or in the archives.

Since the Daly research was a tremendous success, I began tracing my Coffey line. John Coffey married P.J. Daly's daughter, Sadie, and lived in southwestern Wisconsin. On our Coffey side, my mother only knew details going back to her grandfather, John Coffey. In the end, it was a good thing I'd started with our Daly line, since the Coffey research would prove much more difficult, and I might have otherwise given up.

It took me three years, thousands of research hours online and at archives, and hundreds of documents to learn my mother's second great-grandfather Patrick Coffey had emigrated from Collinstown, County Westmeath, in 1851. Out-of-town guests mentioned in Patrick's wife's obituary led to the discovery of Patrick's brother, Michael, who'd lived in Iowa.[3] A descendant of Michael's knew his hometown, which helped me locate his baptismal record in Ireland.[4] The document identified his parents as James Coffey and Mary Flanagan. Finding Michael was a critical clue since I still haven't unearthed Patrick's baptismal record. I was on a short-lived genealogy high when I hit another brick wall. My newfound Daly relation, Charlotte, would soon help me solve my Coffey family mystery.



Cemetery tour with Matthew Coffey in County Westmeath

On a 2010 trip to Ireland, my mom, our cousin, and I met Charlotte and her husband, Peter. Our picture was taken where my genealogy journey had begun three years earlier, next to Charlotte's great-grandfather Michael Daly's grave in Kilbeggan. (My travel albums include more photos of cemeteries than tourist attractions.) Next, we visited our Daly family home. The three-room stone cottage's weathered wooden door now hung crooked on rusted hinges. Overcome with emotion, I imagined P.J. having walked out that door in 1875, unknowingly saying his last goodbye to his parents before sailing to America. The door was blocked from the inside, so we climbed through the deserted dwelling's glassless windows. We explored the home, where wooden floors had rotted into the earth and green moss covered the faded, whitewashed walls.

Michael raised his four daughters in his childhood home. The eldest, Agnes, had lived there without indoor plumbing or electricity until her death in 1973. Josephine, who provided the family history, had adored her aunt Agnes unlike a neighbor, who recalled his parents threatening to drop him off at Agnes Daly's whenever he misbehaved. Nothing brings an ancestor's past to life like hearing family stories, walking across the fields he and his father plowed, and standing in front of the fireplace where his mother spun wool while singing a song to keep time with the rhythm of her task.

The last stop on that day's fascinating tour was a cemetery located ten miles from my Coffeys' hometown. Charlotte's mother-in-law worked with a Matthew Coffey whose family historian knew of a cemetery with several old Coffey graves. When we arrived at a nearby pub to meet Matthew, the only man there was dressed in jeans and a T-shirt and unloading a truck. Charlotte asked if he was Mr. Coffey and he nodded with a smile, continuing to work. While we waited for him to finish, an elderly gentleman arrived decked out in a suit, tie, and dress shoes. He introduced himself as Matthew Coffey. Coffey is the 156th most common surname[5] in Ireland, and I'd just met my first two at a rural pub.

Matthew led us down a one-lane road to an abandoned medieval church surrounded

by ivy- and moss-covered tombstones and Celtic crosses erected on uneven ground. (The breathtaking setting has inspired several cemeteries in my fiction novels.) After deciphering dozens of weathered inscriptions, we discovered a Coffey family plot. Three headstones were enclosed within a dilapidated iron fence, while two stood stoically outside it. The sun had to hit the stones at just the right angle to be able to read the inscriptions. Luck was on our side and the weather cooperated.

The five tombstones recorded the family's history back to the early 1700s, including the mothers' maiden names and children—a gold mine of information I'd never have obtained from documents in the archives. A "Christopher Coffey" played a lead role in the Irish Rebellion of 1798. An "Elizabeth Darcy" brought to mind Jane Austen's famous character in *Pride and Prejudice.* As an author, I took this as a positive sign. However, a James and Poley—the name Polly misspelled—were the closest match to our James and Mary Coffey. I was disheartened, yet I hoped we were somehow connected to this impressive family plot and our lovely cemetery guide. We celebrated that unforgettable day back in the pub with Matthew Coffey.

Our trip ended with a family gathering at Charlotte's mum's house in County Wicklow, where we met Charlotte's aunt Joyce, her cousin, uncle, and in-laws. Coincidentally, Charlotte's father-in-law, Franz, had relations who'd immigrated to southwestern Wisconsin and nearby Galena, Illinois. Familiar with conducting research in that area, I offered to help him. I bid a sad farewell to my newfound "rellies." However, unlike my ancestor P.J. Daly, I knew I'd return to Ireland one day.

After I arrived home, Matthew's brother, the family historian living in London, phoned me. He was disappointed I hadn't found my Coffey graves and provided me with additional cemeteries to visit on my next Ireland trip. Franz put me in touch with a local historian, Michael Conlon, now deceased. The man's list of Coffey baptisms from the area included a James Coffey and Mary Flanagan's eight children and a James Coffey and Polly Flanagan's two children.[6] It appeared that Coffey cousins had married Flanagan sisters. The name Polly jumped out at me from the five-stone family plot I'd transcribed.

A few months later, the historian contacted me to say his previous information hadn't noted that two of the families recorded were actually one family. Mary and Polly Flanagan were one and the same person. I hadn't a clue Polly was a nickname for Mary. I'd now learned the importance of researching nicknames and surname variations. I was descended from those in that magnificent Coffey cemetery plot and had my family traced back to the early 1700s. I was off to research Christopher Coffey's role in the Irish Rebellion of 1798!

I hadn't realized I was conducting what genealogists call "reverse genealogy"—tracing an ancestor's descendants forward to find living relations. I'm surprised at the number of family historians who spend years researching their trees back several generations but never trace them forward. My story shows the vital role newfound Irish relations and acquaintances can play in ancestry research. Next, I would trace my Coffey line forward to find living relatives and the family homestead. Yet, how could I ever top the most memorable trip of my life? I would soon discover not one but three ancestral homes, including a sprawling country estate and a castle.

My ancestry journey had merely just begun.

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[4] Collinstown Parish, (Collinstown, County Westmeath, Ireland), Diocese of Meath, "Baptisms, Mar. 1821-Nov. 1843," unnumbered pages, unnumbered entries in chronological order, "Michael Coffey" baptism, 2 September 1832; digital images, National Library of Ireland, *Catholic Parish Registers* (https://www/registers.nli.ie), microfilm 04169 / 01.

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[6] Transcription of Coffey baptismal records in Collinstown, County Westmeath, Ireland, privately held by historian Michael Conlon.

Eliza Watson is a USA Today bestselling author. Eliza's genealogy adventures inspired her nonfiction book, Genealogy Tips & Quips, and two fiction series set in Ireland, Scotland, and England. In 2013, she fulfilled her dream of owning a home in Ireland when she and her husband bought a renovated 1887 schoolhouse in her Coffey ancestors' townland.



Genetic Genealogy in 2022–2023: Looking Back, Looking Forward

by Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D.

January is named after the Roman god Janus, ruler of beginnings, transitions, and endings. For our January issue, it seems appropriate to look backward and forward, summing up significant 2022 developments in genetic genealogy and looking forward to what's coming in 2023.

Looking Backward

2022 developments included continued growth in genetic genealogy databases, evolving genetic genealogy toolkits, a cornucopia of educational opportunities, and development of standards for investigative genetic genealogy.

Growing Databases

While database growth was slower in 2022 than it was in earlier years, trendlines continue upward. At press time, the most recent database sizes available showed *23andMe* with 12.8 million testers, Family Tree DNA with 1.2 million, AncestryDNA with 21 million, and *MyHeritage* with 6 million.[1]

Evolving Tools

Ancestry SideView and chromosome painter

Throughout the summer and fall of 2022, AncestryDNA rolled out several new tools. One, the chromosome painter, assigns testers' ethnicity estimates to specific chromosome segments.[2] While *23andMe* and *FTDNA* offer similar tools, AncestryDNA's chromosome painter is the first time the company has provided results showing specific chromosome segments.

The chromosome painter goes hand in hand with AncestryDNA's new SideView™ tool. SideView™ was first announced in April and rolled out for ethnicity estimates in the summer of 2022; implementation for match lists followed in the fall. SideView™ separates testers' DNA into parental sides. For ethnicity estimates, SideView™ shows the proportions of a tester's ethnicity inherited from each parent, whom it calls Parent 1 and Parent 2. Unless a tester's parent has also tested, the technology can't tell whether Parent 1 is the tester's mother or father, but users are able to assign parental identity manually.[3]

FTDNA's new Y-DNA tools

In 2022 FamilyTreeDNA introduced FamilyTreeDNA Discover™, a new platform for paternal-line DNA testing. Discover™ includes new report formats, haplogroup maps, and migration maps. Fun features include connections between testers and famous ancient and modern figures.[4]

DNAPainter's expanding tool suite

DNAPainter's prolific creator Jonny Perl has continued to introduce new tools at a rapid rate. In February 2022 he released a tool called the Shared cM Investigator that enables kit managers who have siblings tested to estimate how much DNA the siblings' parents might have shared with a DNA match.[5] In April came the Bucketing tools designed to filter segments based on match or segment lists of DNA cousins.[6] The following month Perl introduced the Library of Matches, a tool developed by Cody Ely that shows shared segments for different known matches.[7] After AncestryDNA introduced its chromosome painter, Perl launched a tool allowing DNAPainter users to paint population information from AncestryDNA's chromosome painter in their DNAPainter chromosome maps.[8] Finally, in collaboration with Paul Woodbury and Leah LaPerle Larkin, Perl introduced a DNA Coverage Tool based on the work of Paul Woodbury that estimates the DNA coverage for an ancestor provided by available or potential testers.[9]

Expanding Educational Opportunities

In 2022 genetic genealogists continued to seek education at all levels of their field, and providers responded. Major conferences such as the National Genealogical Society Family History Conference and the Southern California Genealogical Society Jamboree continued to run tracks, workshops, and DNA days, while a new DNA-only multi-day conference, the East Coast Genetic Genealogy Conference, made its debut. All the major genealogy institutes—the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research, and the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh — offered multiple week-long genetic genealogy courses. Individual providers, such as Diahan Southard and Leah LaPerle Larkin, offered multi-session DNA courses either through their

own virtual academies or through virtual academies run by others.[10]

Investigative Genetic Genealogy Standards

Following the 2021 move to regulate investigative genetic genealogy (also known as forensic genetic genealogy)[11] by the state of Maryland, a group of genetic genealogists including a law professor, the co-founder of the DNA Doe Project, employees of Parabon NanoLabs, and other genetic genealogists published a paper announcing the formation of a Board for Certification of Investigative Genetic Genealogy.[12]

Looking Forward

What's in store for genetic genealogy in 2023?

More Testing, Bigger Databases

It seems likely that the number of testers will continue to increase, as will database sizes.

Better Tools and Workflows

It also seems likely that developers and their collaborators will continue to create more sophisticated tools and workflows. Likely areas for development are tools for better predicting relationships and tools for working with multiple kits, as well as methods and tools for reconstructing ancestors addressing endogamy.

Endnotes

[1] "Autosomal DNA Testing Comparison Chart," *International Society of Genetic Genealogy Wiki* (https://isogg.org/wiki/Autosomal_DNA_testing_comparison_chart). Data compiled by Tim Janzen as of 18 October 2022. All URLs were viewed 29 November 2022.

[2] See our last issue, "Basic DNA Tools, Part 1: Visualizing Your Chromosomes," for a description and comparison of the AncestryDNA tool with other chromosome painters. See also AncestryDNA's support article "Chromosome Painter," *AncestrySupport* (https://isogg.org/wiki/Autosomal_DNA_testing_comparison_chart).

[3] "SideViewTM unlocks new insights by identifying DNA inheritance by parent," 13 April 2022, "Press Releases," *Ancestry Corporate* (https://www.ancestry.com/corporate/newsroom/press-releases/ancestry-introduces-sideview-first-its-kind-technology-gives-individuals). More detail is provided in the support article "How SideViewTM Technology Splits Your DNA Results by Parent," *AncestrySupport* (https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/SideView-Technology?language=en_US).

[4] See "Introducing FamilyTreeDNA DiscoverTM," *FamilyTreeDNA Blog* (https://blog.familytreedna.com/introducing-familytreedna-discover/). See also Roberta Estes, "FamilyTreeDNA DiscoverTM Launches — Including Y DNA Haplogroup Ages," 30 June 2022," *DNAeXplained* (https://dna-explained.com/2022/06/30/familytreedna-discover-launches-including-y-dna-haplogroup-ages/).

[5] Jonny Perl, "Put your sibling tests to work with the Shared cM Investigator," 15 February 2022, *DNAPainter Blog* (https://blog.dnapainter.com/blog/put-your-sibling-tests-to-work-with-the-shared-cm-investigator/).

[6] Jonny Perl, "It's Bucketing at DNAPainter…," 28 April 2022, *DNAPainter Blog* (https://blog.dnapainter.com/blog/bucketing-tool-at-dna-painter/).

[7] Jonny Perl, "Introducing the Library of Matches," 12 May 2022, *DNAPainter Blog* (https://blog.dnapainter.com/blog/introducing-the-library-of-matches/).

[8] Jonny Perl, "New: AncestryDNA Chromosome Painter Segments," 27 July 2022, *DNAPainter Blog* (https://blog.dnapainter.com/blog/new-ancestrydna-chromosome-painter-segments/).

[9] Jonny Perl, "How to use the new DNA Coverage Tool," 17 October 2022, *DNAPainter Blog* (https://blog.dnapainter.com/blog/how-to-use-the-new-dna-coverage-tool/). See also "Enhancements to the DNA coverage tool," 1 November 2022, *DNAPainter Blog* (https://blog.dnapainter.com/blog/enhancements-to-the-dna-coverage-tool/). For an explanation of the coverage concept, see Paul Woodbury, "Covering Your Bases: Introduction to Autosomal DNA Coverage," *Legacy Tree Genealogists* (https://www.legacytree.com/blog/introduction-autosomal-dna-coverage).

[10] Diahan Southard's Your DNA Guide Academy offers courses in DNA Skills (autosomal), Y-DNA, and endogamy. Leah LaPerle Larkin has offered several courses through Cathie Sherwood's Family History Academy. Full disclosure: the author has taken Southard's Y-DNA course and several courses from Larkin and Thomas W. Jones at Family History Academy, in addition to genetic genealogy courses at SLIG and GRIP.

[11] Investigative or forensic genetic genealogy is the technology used to identify the Golden State Killer and other alleged criminals.

[12] David Gurney, Margaret Press, CeCe Moore, Carol I. Rolnick, Andrew Hochreiter, and Bonnie L. Bossert, "The need for standards and certification for investigative genetic genealogy, and a notice of action," *Forensic Science International* 341 (December 2022), 11495. An abstract of the paper is available at *ScienceDirect* (https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/

abs/pii/S0379073822003255?dgcid=coauthorhttps://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0379073822003255?dgcid=coauthor). For more information and discussion, see Leah LaPerle Larkin, "A Board of Certification for Investigative Genetic Genealogy Is Announced," 19 October 2022, *The DNA Geek* (https://thednageek.com/a-board-for-certification-of-investigative-genetic-genealogy-is-announced/).

Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D., is a professional genealogist focusing on American and English research. She has three degrees in history and has studied at major genealogical institutes. She writes for Minnesota Genealogist *and is the 2013 winner of the Minnesota Genealogical Society's Founders Award for visionary leadership.*



DNA-Based Educational Opportunities in 2023

SLIG, January 2023, Virtual:

- Course 10: Introduction to Genetic Genealogy.
- Course 11: DNA Dreamers — Integrating DNA Evidence to Resolve Complex Cases.
- Check for course availability at: https://slig.ugagenealogy.org/cpage.php?pt=524

SLIG, February 9 – April 28, 2023, Virtual Academy:

- Course 1: DNA Dreamers in Action — Writing Proof Arguments.
- Course 2: Fundamentals of Forensic Genealogy.
- Check for course availability at: https://slig.ugagenealogy.org/cpage.php?pt=630

GRIP, June 2023, Virtual:

- Advanced DNA Evidence, https://www.gripitt.org/courses/advanced-dna-evidence/

GRIP, July 2023, in-person:

- Practical Genetic Genealogy, https://www.gripitt.org/courses/practical-genetic-genealogy/
- Forensic Genealogy Workshop — Beyond Fundamentals, https://www.gripitt.org/courses/beyond-fundamentals-hands-on-forensic-genealogy/

IGHR, July 23-28, 2023, Virtual:

- Genetics for Genealogists: Beginning DNA
- DNA as Genealogical Evidence
- Registration opens March 2023; classes are subject to change, https://ighr.gagensociety.org
- Institute For Genetic Genealogy (I4GG), In-Person & Virtual, March 11 & 12, 2023, registration open: https://i4gg.org

IGSI Webinars for 2023

Add these New Year's resolutions to your list:

Learn more about my Irish ancestors

Keep learning genealogy skills with IGSI

The IGSI Education Committee has invited a slate of exciting speakers for the New Year. Why not consider "a gift of learning" for you or a research partner by registering for an upcoming webinar?

Registration is now open for the January — March online webinars, which are typically held on Saturday mornings. All you need to "attend"/watch our live programs is an Internet-connected device with audio capabilities. Even better, registrants for the class will get access to a copy of the recorded session and the handout…even if they are not able to join the live program!

For event details and registration, click on the Activities tab on the IGSI website: irishgenealogical.org

Our webinars for the first half of 2023 are listed on page 31. Watch the IGSI website, our *Facebook* page, *Ginealas*, or your e-mail in-box for details and further announcements.

IGSI members receive discounted registration fees and have exclusive access to recordings of past webinars. Are you new to IGSI? Check out these recordings from the past year: Fiona Fitzsimons' "Irish Research — Searching High & Low," or Maurice Gleeson's "Combining DNA and Traditional Genealogy Techniques." Other favorite presenters from the past year include Fintan Mullan, David Ouimette, Jen Baldwin, Chris Paton, John Grenham, and James Ryan. For more information, log in as an IGSI member and click on Past Webinars.

We hope to "see" you soon!

Upcoming IGSI Webinars

January 21, 10:30am – Noon CST | *Irish Church Records: Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland* | Fiona Fitzsimons

Church records offer some of the earliest evidence we have for Irish family history. Using the records of the Catholic Church and the Church of Ireland, this talk explores what records were made, what survives, and where and how to access them. Irish church records are an indispensable source for social history and allow us to trace a rapidly-changing Irish society.

February 18, 10:30am – 12:30pm CST | *Irish Chain Migration to North America* | Pamela Guye Holland

Our Irish ancestors did not immigrate on a whim. They often followed in the footsteps of other family members or their neighbors and friends. Learn about the history of chain migration, including well-known routes from specific Irish locations to cities and regions in North America. Discover strategies for recognizing and exploring chain migration in your family. This program is presented by IGSI in partnership with the Yankee Genealogical Society (https://www.yankeegs.org).

March 25, 10:30am – Noon CDT | *Using Google Earth Pro, Griffith's Valuation, and Irish Townlands to Map the Land of Your Ancestors* | Joe Hunter

The creative use of online databases, coupled with free software, affords researchers the opportunity to pinpoint townlands and locations where distant ancestors actually lived and worked. The ability to see the actual location can provide important research insight, and even uncover stories.

If you have questions about any of our webinars or classes, contact Trish and Walt, IGSI Education Co-Chairs, at Education@IrishGenealogical.org.

Renew Your Membership in the Irish Genealogical Society International

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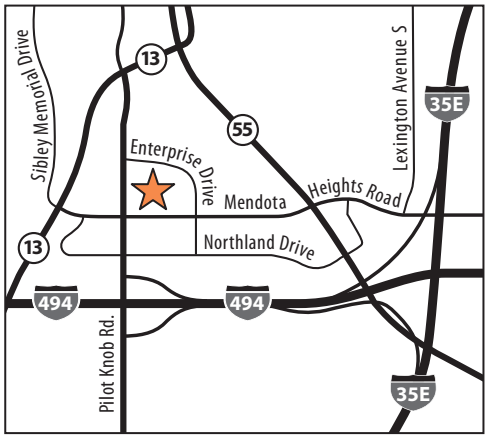
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Mendota Heights, MN 55120
651-330-9312

During severe weather, or if traveling a long distance, please call before coming to the library to check if open.

The library is a self-supporting research library staffed by volunteers. If you are a member of the IGSI and are coming from out of town, contact Librarian@IrishGenealogical.org so we can have an Irish researcher available to meet you.

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The Septs

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IRISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Genealogy Library Open

The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2023.

The Hoffman Research Library is a private genealogy research library created for members of the organizations in the MGS Partners' Group. Access to the library materials is free to members of IGSI and other MGS Partner societies. Non-members and the general public are requested to pay a per visit $10 donation for use.

The Hoffman Library will be open only if there are two volunteers available to staff the building. As COVID continues, some volunteers have stepped back from regular schedules, creating a volunteer staff shortage. (Won't you consider becoming a MGC/library volunteer to help ensure research access for all?)

Hours of service:

Wednesday	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Irish Saturdays

Stop by the library on the second Saturday of the month between 10 AM and 4 PM for Irish research help from IGSI volunteers.

MAY 13, 2023
JUNE 10, 2023
JULY 8, 2023
AUGUST 12, 2023
SEPTEMBER 9, 2023
OCTOBER 14, 2023

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The Septs, the quarterly journal of the Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc., is one of the primary benefits of IGSI membership and is published in January, April, July, and October. U.S. and International members receive a print copy of the journal through the mail. Those with Electronic memberships receive the journal electronically.

Contributions and article ideas are welcome. Material intended for publication should be submitted before the 15th of February, May, August, and November. Contributors should email articles or materials to the Managing Editors at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or to the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the journal staff.

Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc.

2023

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of *The Septs* has at its core a specific theme with related research articles. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g., family stories submitted by IGSI members.

Research articles on the theme of the issue should be 1500 - 3000 words. If writing on a theme, please contact the Managing Editor of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadline dates to ensure that your article is considered for the proper issue.

Members who wish to share family research stories, articles on genealogy sources and resources, or writings on general Irish culture and history should contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org. The recommended length for articles unrelated to the theme is 750 - 1500 words.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2023 | July | Census Substitutes

Making full use of surviving Irish religious, land and tax surveys and records; commercial directories, school registers, and more.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2023.

2023 | October | Tips & Tools

An appraisal and review of various tips and tools for genealogists, including considering technology as mind maps, timelines, data correlations, and more.
Deadline for articles: August 15, 2023.

2024 | January | Repositories

Prepare for on-site research in Ireland by planning visits to PRONI, NLI, Irish National Archives, etc., using locality guides and more to learn the where, when, why, and how of local research.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2023.

2024 | April | Connacht Province

Researching in the five Irish counties of Galway, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon, and Sligo; stories about finding family in Connacht locales are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2024.

Cover Photo: *Phoenix Park, Dublin, Ireland.*
Photo courtesy of Roberto Tadedeo @ Flickr.com.

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Happy Spring

From the Co-Presidents, Donna Jones and Ron Zweber

Earrach Sona! Happy Spring!

Depending on which part of the county or country in which you may reside, spring may have been around for a while or may be just arriving now. Spring is always such wonderful season with warmer temperatures encouraging a return to gardening and being outdoors.

Many of you are probably making travel plans for the rest of the year. We hope you can include some Irish-related events, as well some genealogical conferences and trips to libraries or archives. While we are all focused on our screens during our research, there are important resources not available online, as many of our webinar speakers have reminded us.

Our personal travels this spring include Donna attending the International German Genealogy Partnership in Fort Wayne, IN, in June and Ron attending the National Genealogical Society's annual conference in Richmond, VA, in late May. We are excited to be in an audience again with so many people focused on personal genealogy and listening to many great speakers.

We typically highlight our volunteers whenever possible, but would like to give an especially large shout-out to them all during April's National Volunteer Recognition month. IGSI has an almost 45-year history of being completely volunteer-led. Being volunteer-led has its challenges and while it is possible we may explore some paid part-time positions in the future, volunteers will always be core to achieving the mission of our organization.

The Board is working to grow our community. As a result, we are looking for help with marketing our organization. Our ability to increase educational content in *The Septs*, *Ginealas*, webinars, and on our website, blog, *Facebook,* and *Twitter* is dependent on members volunteering.

In addition to formally volunteering with IGSI, there are other ways you can help us achieve our mission:

- Have you discovered an interesting new record set? You can write some information about it and include a link. This should be sent to Blog@IrishGenealogical.org.
- Do you have a success story about finding an ancestor? Please share your story in *Ginealas*. It should be sent to enewsletter@IrishGenealogical.org.
- You can help us increase membership. Perhaps consider letting your Irish research friends know that the Learn section of the website is accessible to members and non-members alike.
- Help increase viewership on our *YouTube* channel at https://www.youtube.com/@IrishGenealogyIGSI. If you have not subscribed to the channel or "Liked" an episode, please do so.



Deer Park - Dublin - Ireland, Céline Harrand@Flickr.com

After retiring from Oxford University Press, Donna Jones finally has more time to research her heritage and ancestry. She is passionate about genealogy education and is a member of the IGSI Education committee and the Board of Directors. IGSI provides her the opportunity to learn more about Irish research as she continues to search for where in Ireland her great, great grandparents lived.



Ron Zweber is a native Minnesotan who lives in Saint Paul. He has been a member of IGSI for over 35 years and served as IGSI treasurer in 2021. All eight of his Irish 2nd great-grandparents (from Counties Cork, Tipperary, Clare and Mayo) immigrated to the U.S. during the height of the Famine or shortly thereafter.



Spotlight on Leinster Province

by Gigi Hickey

Last year *The Septs* began "visiting" Ireland with an annual rotation of its four provinces as issue themes. Munster Province was featured first. This issue of *The Septs* treats our readers to several articles about family history research in Leinster Province.

Despite being the second smallest of the provinces by land area, Leinster is the most populous — largely because it's home to Ireland's capital, Dublin City. Leinster's twelve counties (Carlow, Dublin, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Longford, Louth, Meath, Offaly, Westmeath, Wexford, and Wicklow) constitute the largest collection of any province.

Patricia Coleman writes about searching for the birthplace of her great-grandfather, Thomas Barry, in County Kilkenny. By building out family trees and analyzing DNA matches, she's identified various levels of cousins. Patricia reports her second cousin is the only Barry from County Kilkenny in the Barry DNA Project, making her story segue nicely into the information submitted by Matthew Barry (no relation). Jim, Matt and Ned Barry share their article about FamilyTreeDNA projects based on Y-DNA testing, specifically about the Irish surname projects organized around the Barry surname.

Walter Rothwell, a co-chair of IGSI's Education Committee, recounts his family celebrating German cultural events when he was young, believing their surname was German in origin. A combination of research and good fortune enabled Walter and his wife to visit where his Rothwell ancestors had lived along the Wexford-Carlow county border.

In Part Two of her three-part story, Eliza Watson continues the account of her research into the Coffeys of County Westmeath. Her successes in finding people and places were frequently the result of contacts with Irish locals. The title of her series, "Getting Out of the Archives and Into the Pubs to Trace Your Irish Ancestry," carries good advice for researchers.

Rounding out articles about finding distant relatives and traveling to meet them is a story by Margie Moore, who has been researching her maternal grandmother's Carlin connections in County Mayo.

Ann Eccles, Editor Emeritus of *The Septs*, has again donned her IGSI Librarian hat. In this issue she provides a small sampling of the 300+ titles in the Irish collection which hold information on the counties of Leinster.

A guide to County Westmeath resources, reprinted by permission from *Ireland Reaching Out* (irelandxo.com), includes a listing of County Westmeath's top ten surnames in the 19th century.

The popular DNA column by Lois Mackin returns with "Basic DNA Tools, Part 2," in which she digs deeper into finding and using shared autosomal DNA matches. Her explanations and examples may help you fill in branches on your family tree.

As usual, *The Septs* also updates members with important news about IGSI and its activities. Mary Wickersham, wearing her second hat as Web Editor, shares advice to help members ensure they receive timely emails from IGSI. In this issue you'll also find reminders about Dave Miller's entertaining monthly podcasts and the 2023 Family History writing Competition sponsored by the Minnesota Genealogical Society.

April is National Volunteer Recognition month, and you may see your name among the volunteers and donors who contributed their time and money during 2022 — thank you! In her letter, Co-President Donna Jones points out IGSI's almost-45-year history of being volunteer-led and suggests ways you might assist, either as a formal or informal volunteer.

We can't speak about IGSI's history without Co-President Ron Zweber's tribute to Beth Mullinax, who passed away on February 10, 2023. Beth was among the founders of IGSI and a long-time leader in our organization. I recall her good advice about researching my husband Bill's ancestry before and during an IGSI tour of Ireland; it was our first trip but probably her 16th or 17th. Beth created a family history legacy at IGSI — and helped many of us work on ours.



Gigi Hickey has twice served on the IGSI board and, since 2011, as IGSI blog editor. After co-chairing the Celtic Connections Conference 2020, she became one of the co-Managing Editors of The Septs. *In addition to genealogy research, she enjoys quilting and piano-duets and her DAR chapter.*

Thomas Barry in Kilkenny, Ireland and Evans, New York

by Patricia B. Coleman, PhD

I've often wondered "Where in County Kilkenny was Thomas Barry, my great-grandfather, born?" Two independent family stories say he was born in the Village of Ballyhale, Derrynahinch Civil Parish.[1] My dad, Tom, and his first cousin, Fred, passed down this story from their Grandfather Edward. Even though Fred and Tom were first cousins, it's unlikely they ever met or discussed their immigrant family's origins because Fred lived in New York and was nineteen years older than Tom, who lived in Virginia. Their grandfather died when Tom was only six.

Thomas Barry and Mary Aide were living in Moanroe Commons, County Kilkenny, when son Edward, born in 1840, and daughter Mary, born in 1843, were baptized at Ballyhale Catholic Church.[2] Shortly before these births, the Valuation Office started initial work for its primary survey in the 1830s. Its House Books recorded the occupier and the buildings for each property.[3] In the 1845 House Book, Thomas was listed as living in Moanroe Commons; however, he was no longer there in the 1848 House Book.[4]

Although no passenger list for their immigration to the U.S. has been found, Thomas Barry, wife Mary, son Edward (age fourteen), and daughter Mary (age eleven), appear in the 1855 New York State Census residing in Evans, Erie County, New York, where they had been living for five years.[5] The names of these parents and children, as well as the children's ages, are consistent with the family living in Moanroe Commons in 1840 and 1843. Thomas applied for citizenship in October 1856 and was naturalized 27 October 1860.[6] He died in Evans, New York, in 1875, at age sixty-three.[7]

The Ballyhale Catholic Church was built in 1804; however, baptismal records only survive from 1823.[8] If Thomas was born in Ballyhale, there would not be a baptismal record for him.

My research involves both looking for Thomas in neighboring parishes and using DNA matching, including building out match family trees to look for connections. I have a DNA match who descended from the Barry family currently living in Sugarstown, Kilfane, County Kilkenny.[9] Kilfane civil parish is in the Thomastown Catholic parish. Unlike Ballyhale, baptismal records at Thomastown have survived since 1782.[10]

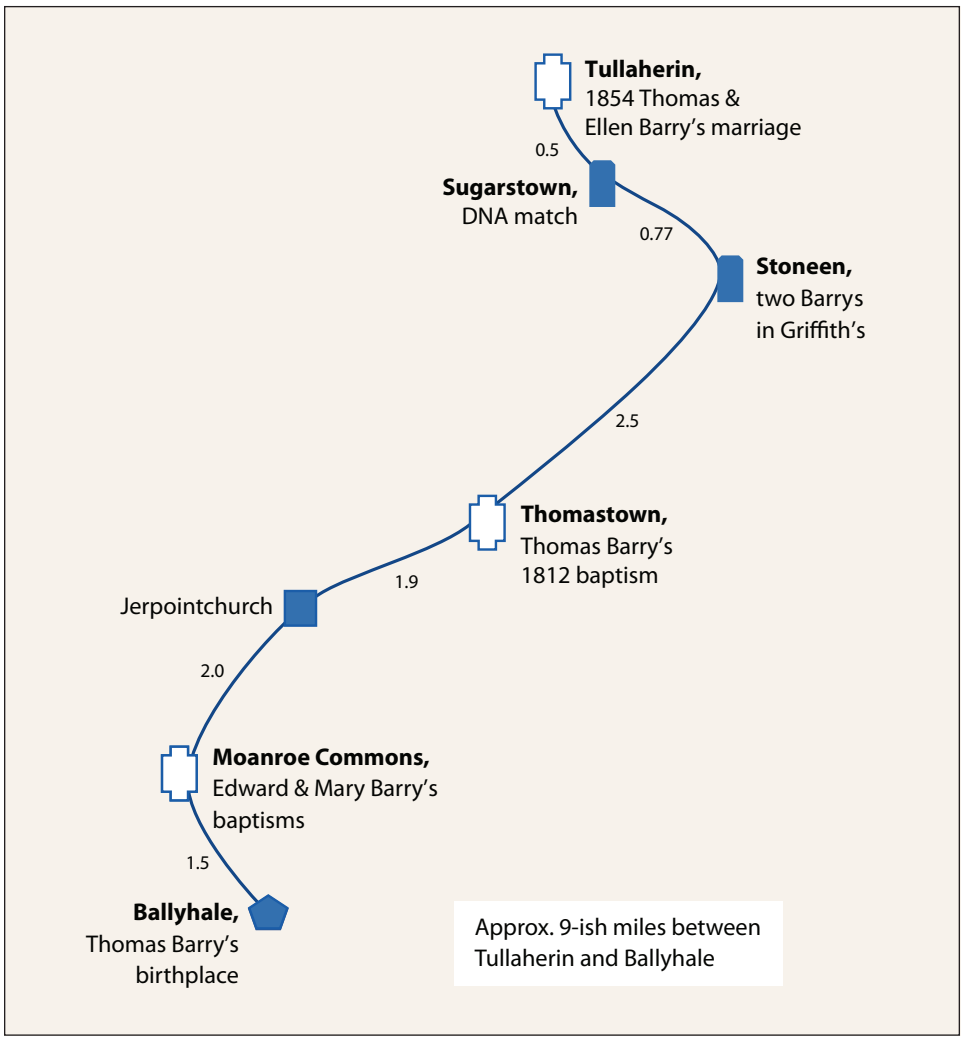
A Thomas Barry, son of J[ohn] Barry and Ellen Shea, was baptized 19 November 1812 at Thomastown Catholic Church. One of the sponsors was James Comerford.[11] Sponsors at baptisms and marriage witnesses are usually family or close friends, making them part of the Family, Associates, and Neighbors (FAN) Club. My aforementioned DNA match shared his family tree with me. When Mary Barry, the sister of my match's 2nd great-grandfather, was married in 1840, James Comerford was one of the witnesses. This suggests a connection between this Thomas Barry's family and my DNA match's.[12]

John and Ellen had four other children: Alexander (1807), Paul (1810), Margaret (1815), and Judith (1818).[13] On Alexander's and Judith's baptismal record, the residence is given as Oldtown. There are four Oldtowns listed in County Kilkenny, but the only one located in Jerpointchurch civil parish is also in the Thomastown Catholic parish. This Oldtown is not on a modern map, but was located 3.5 km (2 miles) between Moanroe Commons and Jerpointchurch.[14]

John Barry is listed in 1833 Tithe Applotment Books as owning seven acres in Oldtown, Jerpointchurch.[15] As would be expected, his eldest son Alexander inherited that land and was still shown in the 1850 Griffith's Valuation to be living in Oldtown, Jerpointchurch.[16] Catholic records uncovered only one Alexander Barry.[17] He married Anastasia Cantwell in 1848; they had six children: John (1849), Mary (1853), Thomas (1856), Paul (1858), James (1860), and Cecilia (1865).[18] Building out Alexander's family tree showed that his grandson Richard emigrated to New York before 1918. Expanding the tree further showed that additional family members also had trees on Ancestry. My potential fourth cousin took a DNA test, but we did not end up sharing DNA.[19] With a fourth cousin, there's about a forty-five percent probability of not sharing any DNA.[20] Perhaps someone else in that family would be a match for me.

John and Ellen's son, Paul, never married. He worked as a porter at the Thomastown Workhouse and died in 1877.[21] There were several marriages for a Margaret Barry and a Judith Barry, so it was harder to build out their trees to be certain I had the right families.

Can I prove that the Thomas Barry baptized in 1812 at Thomastown Catholic parish is my second great-grandfather? One way to prove that hypothesis is to show that none of the other Thomas Barrys in the area could possibly be the



OpenStreetMap contributors, interactive map citing distance from Moanroe Commons to Jerpointchurch, OpenStreetMap *(https://www.openstreetmap.org : accessed 2 April 2023). OpenStreetMap® is open data, licensed under the Open Data Commons Open Database License (ODbL), Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.*

one baptized in 1812 in Thomastown. I began by searching Griffith's Valuation in these areas for civil parishes connected to Thomastown Catholic parish.

Griffith's Valuation for Stoneen, Kilfane, lists both a Thomas Barry (Thomas #1) and an Andrew Barry.[22] Perhaps Thomas #1 and Andrew were likely related. Thomas #1 married Betty Mulloy on 15 August 1836 at Thomastown parish. They had a dispensation for third degree and fourth degree on their marriage record.[23] Third degree meant they were second cousins, while fourth degree meant third cousins. Likely Thomas's great-grandparents were Betty's second great-grandparents. Elizabeth Molloy, daughter of Edmund Molloy and Margaret Kealy of Stoneen, was baptized 21 July 1813 in Thomastown Catholic Church, and was likely the bride in this listing.[24] I didn't find a baptism for Thomas #1, which makes me wonder if he's the Thomas Barry baptized in 1812 in Thomastown. Had he been from some other Catholic parish, I'd have expected to see a note on his marriage record about receiving a certificate from another parish indicating he'd been baptized there. If he were baptized in 1812, he would have been about the same age as Betty when they married.

Thomas #1 and Betty had five daughters: Ellen (1836), Elizabeth (1839), Anastasia (1840), Mary (1842), and Rose (1846).[25] No marriage records were found for any of the daughters, nor were civil death records found for them or for Thomas and Betty.[26] Either the family all died prior to 1864, possibly in the Famine, or perhaps they emigrated from Ireland.

Andrew Barry, who appeared in the Griffith's Valuation for Stoneen, was the son of John Barry and Mary Barron, and was baptized at Thomastown Catholic Church in 1814. The family residence was given as Stoneen. Other children of this family were Laurence (1818), Thomas #2 (1823), and Margaret (1827).[27]

Thomas #2 married Ellen Ryan at Tullaherin Catholic Church on 30 August 1854.[28] Thomas and Ellen's children were Patrick (1855), Mary (1857), Judith (1860), Andrew (1866), Bridget (1867), Margaret (1870), Ellen (1873), and Joanna (1876).[29] Thomas #2, a laborer, died 17 February 1898, at age 75, which supports his being born in 1823. The informant on his death certficate was Ellen Barry, who was likely his wife or perhaps his daughter Ellen. Thomas was buried in the Kilfane Cemetery with a stone that his wife Ellen had erected. A transcript of headstone inscriptions shows members of both the Barry family from Oldtown and this family from Stoneen present in the cemetery.[30]

Just recently I received an email from one of Thomas #2's second great-granddaughters. She is the great-granddaughter of Thomas and Ellen's daughter, Joanna, who married Walter Walsh. She still lives in Stoneen and passes the Kilfane cemetery every day on her way to work. From what she's told me, there was a "falling out" years ago between the Oldtown Barrys and the Stoneen Barrys over who should be using the family burial plot in Kilfane.[31] That makes me think that farther back there's a common ancestor linking these two Barry branches. Thomas #2's second great-granddaughter is currently awaiting DNA test results, but since her great-grandfather, Thomas Barry, and my second great-grandfather, also named Thomas Barry, are not the same person, the closest she and I could be is fifth cousins. I have found DNA matches to some other fifth cousins, but here the paper trail runs out on my second great-grandparents, and her third great-grandparents. It's unlikely we will prove to be a DNA match and, even if we do, we probably won't have sufficient evidence to prove it.

Recently Fred's son, my Barry second cousin, took a Big-Y 700 test to help with the search for answers. He found a few close matches and is so far the only County Kilkenny Barry in the Barry Surname Project at FamilyTreeDNA. Although I have yet to determine where my second great-grandfather Thomas Barry was born, I continue to hope DNA testing will help. To that end, I am looking for both a male Barry descendant currently living in Sugarstown and a male descendant of Alexander Barry who would be willing to take a Y-DNA test to help expand our family tree enough to possibly solve the mystery of my great-grandfather's origins.

Endnotes

[1] For Fred: Curt Barry7404598, "Barry Family Tree,' user-contributed tree, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/tree/34442107 : accessed 4 July 2022), "Edward Francis Barry," gallery, image titled "Edward Francis Barry notes from Elizabeth Haskell Barry." For Tom: Thomas Barry, family tree and notes, privately held by Coleman.

[2] For Edward: Ballyhale Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Ned [Barry] baptism, 11 February 1840, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/0970 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Mary: Ballyhale Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Mary [Barry] baptism, 2 May 1843, *National Library of Ireland*.

[3] "Valuation Office Books 1842-1856," *National Archives of Ireland* (http://census.nationalarchives.ie/ : accessed 2 June 2022.

[4] For 1845 House Book: "Valuation Office House Books, Volume 2876," database with images, FamilySearch.org (https://www.familysearch.org/search/ark:/61903/1:1:QVMG-9TLF : accessed 2 June 2002), "Commons of Moonaore," page 55. For 1848 House Book: "Valuation Office House Book, Oct 1848," *National Archives of Ireland*, (http://census.nationalarchives.ie/ : accessed 2 June 2022), pages 22-24, Moanroe Commons.

[5] 1855 New York State Census, Erie County, Evans, Electoral District 2, population schedule, p. 8 (penned), dwelling 62, family 66, Thomas Barry; image, FamilySearch.org (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GB53-9D1J?i=4&cc=1937366&personaUrl=%2Fark%3A%2F61903%2F1%3A1%3AK63T-D2D : accessed 1 Jun 2022).

[6] Erie County, New York, "Naturalization Records, 1831-1906," FamilySearch.org (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSMV-F3NZ-Z?i=225&cat=321898 : accessed 23 February 2022), entry for Thomas Barry of Ireland, 1860; citing Final Petition for Naturalization.

[7] 1875 New York State Census, Erie County, Evans, Electoral District 2, death schedule, p 46 (penned), line 1, Thomas Barry; image, FamilySearch.org (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-XXH7-DT7?i=570&cc=1918735&cat=839373 : accessed 1 June 2022).

[8] For church: "Catholic Church of Saint Martin of Tours, Ballyhale, Kilkenny," *National Inventory of Architectural Heritage* (https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/buildings-search/building/12322003/catholic-church-of-saint-martin-of-tours-ballyhale-ballyhale-kilkenny : accessed 31 May 2022). For baptismal records: Ballyhale Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/0970 : accessed 31 May 2022).

[9] Thomas Hughes died 18 June 2021. Thomas Hughes, [address private], to Patricia Coleman [address private], email, 1 August 2018, "Family Tree," New Cousins email folder, privately held by Coleman.

[10] Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022).

[11] Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Thomas [Barry] baptism, 19 November 1812, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022).

[12] Thomas Hughes, [address private], to Patricia Coleman [address private], email 1 August 2018, "Family Tree," New Cousins email folder, privately held by Coleman.

[13] For Alexander: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Alexander Barry baptism, 13 October 1807, *National Library of Ireland*. For Paul:

Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Paul [Barry] baptism, 26 April 1810, *National Library of Ireland*. For Margaret: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Margaret [Barry] baptism, 19 February 1815, *National Library of Ireland*. For Judith: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Judith [Barry] baptism, 14 April 1818, *National Library of Ireland*.

[14] OpenStreetMap contributors, interactive map citing distance from Moanroe Commons to Jerpointchurch, *OpenStreet Map* (https://www.openstreetmap.org : accessed 29 March 2023). OpenStreetMap® is *open data*, licensed under the Open Data Commons Open Database License (ODbL) by the OpenStreetMap Foundation (OSMF).

[15] "Ireland Tithe Applotment Books, 1823 -1837," *National Archives of Ireland* (http://titheapplotmentbooks.nationalarchives.ie/ : accessed 10 February 2021), Kilkenny > Jerpointchurch > Oldtown, Estate of Chief Justice Bush, John Barry.

[16] "Primary Valuation of Tenants, County of Kilkenny, Barony of Knocktopher, Union of Carrick-on-Suir, Callan, Kilkenny, Newross, and Waterford," p. 21, for Alexander Barry, occupier, Oldtown, Jerpointchuch, "Griffith's Valuation 1847 – 2864"; database with images, *FindMyPast* (https://search.findmypast.com/ : accessed 20 February 2021).

[17] Searched for Alexander Barry marriage in Kilkenny at RootsIreland.ie and FindMyPast.com.

[18] For marriage: Callan Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/0973 : accessed 3 February 2020). For John: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, John [Barry] baptism, 3 February 1849, *National Library of Ireland*. For Paul: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Mary [Barry] baptism, 24 February 1853, *National Library of Ireland*. For Thomas: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Thomas [Barry] baptism, 22 November 1856, *National Library of Ireland*. For Paul: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Paul [Barry] baptism, 19 September 1858, *National Library of Ireland*. For James: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, James [Barry] baptism, 29 July 1860, *National Library of Ireland*. For Cecilia: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Cecilia [Barry] baptism, 23 December 1865, *National Library of Ireland*.

[19] Stuart Schreiber to Patricia Coleman, Ancestry message, 23 December 2020.

[20] "DNA Relatives: Detecting Relatives and Predicting Relationships," 23andMe.com (https://customercare.23andme.com/ : accessed 2 February 2023)

[21] Civil Records (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/ : accessed 3 Jul 2022), database entry for Paul Barry, d. 18 January 1877, Workhouse Thomastown.

[22] "Primary Valuation of Tenants, County of Kilkenny, Barony of Gowan, Kilkenny, and Newross Unions," p. 81, for Thomas Barry, occupier, Stoneen, Kilfane, "Griffith's Valuation 1847 – 2864"; database with images, *FindMyPast* (https://search.findmypast.com/ : accessed 20 February 2021).

[23] Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Thomas Barry & Betty Mulloy marriage, 15 August 1836, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022).

[24] Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Elizabeth [Mulloy] baptism, 21 July 1813, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022).

[25] For Ellen: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Ellen Barry baptism, 23 August 1836, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Elizabeth: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Betty Barry baptism, 4 February 1839, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Anastasia: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Anty Barry baptism, 15 February 1840, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Mary: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Mary Barry baptism, 29 March 1842, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Rose: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Rose Barry baptism, 10 April 1846, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022).

[26] Searched for marriage records in Kilkenny at RootsIreland.ie and Find MyPast.com. Searched for death records at Civil Records.Irishgenealogy.ie

[27] For Andrew: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Andrew Barry baptism, 6 July 1814, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Laurence: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Laurence Barry baptism, 14 November 1818, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Thomas: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Thomas Barry baptism, 21 December 1823, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/

parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Margaret: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Margaret Barry baptism, 26 September 1827, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022).

[28] For Andrew: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Andrew Barry baptism, 6 July 1814, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Laurence: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Laurence Barry baptism, 14 November 1818, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Thomas: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Thomas Barry baptism, 21 December 1823, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Margaret: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Margaret Barry baptism, 26 September 1827, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022).

[29] For Patrick: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Patrick Barry baptism, 30 June 1855, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Mary: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Mary Barry baptism, 8 October 1857, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Judith: Thomastown Parish, Diocese of Ossory, County of Kilkenny, Judith Barry baptism, 14 April 1860, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/1032 : accessed 31 May 2022). For Andrew: Civil Records (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/ : accessed 31 May 2022), database entry for Andrew Barry, b. 13 January 1866, Stoneen. For Bridget: Civil Records (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/ : accessed 31 May 2022), database entry for Bridget Barry, b. 27 April 1867, Stoneen. For Margaret: Civil Records (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/ : accessed 31 May 2022), database entry for Margaret Barry, b. 4 March 1870, Stoneen. For Ellen: Civil Records (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/ : accessed 31 May 2022), database entry for Ellen Barry, b. 8 June 1873, Stoneen. For Joanna: Civil Records (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/ : accessed 31 May 2022), database entry for Joanna Barry, b. 20 May 1876, Stoneen.

[30] Bernie Kirwan, [address private], to Patricia Coleman [address private], email, 4 February 2021, "Barrys Sugartown Thomastown," Barry email folder, privately held by Coleman.

[31] Sighle Aylars, [address private], to Patricia Coleman [address private], email, 14 March 2023, "[Patricia Coleman Genealogy] Contact Me," Barry email folder, privately held by Coleman.

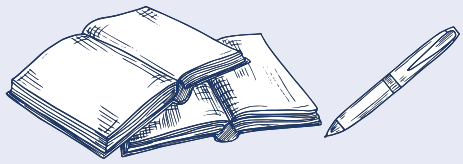
Patricia Coleman is a genealogist who uses DNA software tools combined with online Irish records to research most recent common ancestors. She has a PhD in Chemistry from University of California, Davis and is a graduate of ProGen58. She is a moderator for Facebook *user groups for DNA Painter and for Genetic Affairs, and she writes a blog at https://patriciacolemangenealogy.com/.*



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Getting Out of the Archives and Into the Pubs to Trace Your Irish Ancestry *(Part Two of a Three-Part Series)*

by Eliza Watson

In Part One of this series, I showed how networking with Irish locals played a critical role in researching my ancestry. My newfound Daly relation, Charlotte, and her in-laws and acquaintances helped trace my ancestor Patrick Coffey's family back to the early 1700s in County Westmeath. After meeting my cousin and visiting our Daly ancestors' home during a 2010 trip to Ireland, I was inspired to locate living Coffey relations.

Out of Patrick Coffey's seven known siblings, I successfully traced five of them forward. Three immigrated to America, while two remained in Ireland. Patrick's youngest brother, Andrew, raised his children in their hometown, Collinstown, where several were wed. His daughter Catherine's uncommon married surname, Houston, made their family easier to trace.[1] My genealogist friend, Jane Daly (no relation), located records for family members, including Catherine's daughter Marcella's marriage.[2] I found birth records for two of Marcella's sons.

Ireland's online phonebook and "people search" sites listed several possible candidates with those men's names. I sent letters to them and, luckily, one was Marcella's son. Although he had no interest in family history, he kindly forwarded my letter to his brother, Bernard. The only detail Bernard knew about his grandma Catherine was her maiden name, Coffey. I shared my extensive family research, and he shared a lovely photo of his grandma's family circa 1900 — my first vintage photo of relations in Ireland. Anxious to meet Bernard, I began planning my next trip, determined to locate our Coffey ancestors' childhood home.

The Griffith's Valuation — a mid-19th century survey of land and property for tax purposes — pinpointed the Coffey house's approximate location on the record's map. Jane Daly reviewed the home's land records from 1862 until 2002. The leased property transferred from the Coffey family in 1884 to two other families before transferring to the Doyles, the current owners, in 1905.[3]

Charlotte's father-in-law, Franz — who had helped solve my initial Coffey family mystery — visited the Doyles, who were interested in meeting me on my upcoming trip. Franz sent me a photo of Patrick's childhood home, which was much larger than the Dalys' cottage in Kilbeggan. However, both families had merely leased the properties from English landlords. A series of Land Acts in the late 1800s and early 1900s allowed the Irish to purchase the land their families had farmed for generations. At the time of Patrick's death in 1873, he owned 140 acres of land in Wisconsin, valued at $720.[4] When his father James died in 1876 in Collinstown, he still leased 30 acres, never having owned the land he'd worked so hard on his entire life. James had nothing to pass on to his children except for personal belongings, livestock, and farm equipment.

It's too bad that Andrew Coffey hadn't lived to see his son James inherit a 350-acre estate valued at nearly a million euros in today's dollars from a maternal Byrne uncle in Balrath, County Meath. When James died a bachelor in 1947, notices were placed in Irish and Australian newspapers searching for James's half-brother, Michael, the heir to the estate.[5] After it was determined that James's brother died in Australia in 1921, the estate went into probate. Eventually, Bernard's mother and other relations inherited the property. Bernard vaguely recalled visiting the estate — an impressive Georgian-style house with steps leading up to the entrance — as a young lad.

I located *nine* Balraths in Counties Meath and Westmeath. It's important to remember that duplicate town or townland names may exist even within the same county. Just because you find one town/location name that matches the one you're researching in Ireland you shouldn't assume it's the place where your ancestor originated. In the 1901 census, James Coffey lived with his Byrne relations in Balrath, enabling me to determine the correct residence.[6]

Franz attended a local genealogy meeting in search of Coffeys. A member gave him an old newsletter featuring a story about the Coffeys of Newcastle, located a half-hour southeast of Collinstown. Historically, the Coffeys in Westmeath were prominent Gaelic poets who chronicled the exploits of the ruling classes and special events in the life of the local chieftain, including births, marriages, battles fought, etc. Their writings preserved Gaelic culture and historical family trees. Interestingly, it appears I come from a long line of genealogists.

During the Cromwellian Confiscations in 1660, the Coffeys lost their extensive landholdings between Collinstown and Newcastle, and family members dispersed from the area.[7] Although I haven't confirmed a connection between the Coffeys of Collinstown and Newcastle, their proximity (and similar family naming pattern) leads me to believe they were related.

The newsletter also included a photo of a Coffey coat of arms stained-glass window in a Newcastle-area church. I added the church and Newcastle House — the Coffeys' residence until the late 1800s — to my final trip itinerary for the fall of 2012.

Even more important than visiting our Coffey landmarks, I wanted to thank in person the man who'd helped me break down my Coffey brick wall, historian Michael Conlon of Castlepollard, County Westmeath. In Part One, I discussed the kind man's instrumental role in linking my Coffeys of Collinstown with a nearby five-stone family cemetery plot that enabled me to trace our line back to the early 1700s. Michael owned an impressive collection of history and genealogy books, including an incredible hardback on Castlepollard that's filled with photos. My Coffeys had lived merely a few miles from this small town. I could now picture their lives throughout history. The gracious historian gave me a copy of the book, which is one of my most treasured souvenirs from Ireland. May you rest in peace, Michael Conlon.

I couldn't fit a trip to Newcastle into the busy agenda planned for our day with Bernard and his wife Nuala, so my mom and I took our own road trip there to locate the church with the coat of arms and the Coffeys' former stately home.[8] Unable to find the church, we stopped at another one in a nearby village and asked two maintenance men for directions. These quirky characters reminded us of Quigley's workers from the television series set in Ireland, *Ballykissangel*. They were great craic and very knowledgeable about the area. One drew us a map to the church next to Coffey Castle. Coffey Castle? The newsletter had mentioned the Coffeys' residence as Newcastle House, a stately home…not a castle.

We eventually found the quaint rural church with the Coffey coat of arms stained-glass window. After taking photos of the colorful work of art and the building's interior, we toured the church's cemetery, then peered around the surrounding area for Coffey Castle. How difficult could it be to find a castle? We hopped in the car and drove through the countryside for an hour without a castle-sighting. When we got back on the main highway heading toward our B&B, we spotted what appeared to be a partial-stone round tower in a distant field. I would later learn from the newsletter that Coffey's Newcastle House was built on top of a 13th century castle.[9] Even though the Coffeys hadn't exactly lived in a castle, they had indeed owned the ruins of one.

The following day, we met Bernard and Nuala at the same rural pub where we'd met our tour guide, Matthew Coffey, on our previous trip. We started our journey where it all began: at an abandoned medieval church surrounded by ivy-and-moss-covered tombstones, including our magnificent Coffey family plot, with three headstones enclosed within a dilapidated iron fence and two outside it.

As an event planner, I couldn't believe I forgot the *Google* map with directions to James Coffey's estate in Balrath. We drove aimlessly, searching for the house Bernard had recalled visiting in his youth. After an hour of cruising down numerous narrow country roads, we found ourselves following a mailman. Who better to know the local homes than a mailman? He suggested two possibilities when Bernard described the home, which included Balrath House. What an impressive-sounding name for the large 350-acre estate.

We arrived at the Balrath House filled with anticipation as we drove through an open gate and down a long, tree-lined drive. We rounded a bend and gasped upon seeing a deserted stately home with steps leading up to the entrance, just as Bernard had described. The original stone outbuildings stood alongside a newer metal structure that housed a feed mill. The current business owner approached our car [to question us], and we explained that our relative had likely once owned the property. The man recalled the previous occupiers listed on the land records included one James Coffey. Not having offered up our relative's name,



James Coffey's Estate, Balrath House, in County Meath. Photo by author.



Our Coffey ancestors' family home in Collinstown, County Westmeath. Photo by author.

Bernard and I teared up. If the owner hadn't been there that day, he said the locked gate would have prevented us from discovering the home. He wasn't aware that I'd scaled numerous fences and climbed through windows into deserted dwellings while conducting genealogical research.

Afterwards, we met Franz at Lough Lene Inn, a pub in Collinstown. Coincidentally, in the 1911 Ireland Census, James Coffey lived in the residential section of this Inn, where his uncle John Byrne managed the pub.[10] Franz escorted us to the former Coffey family home now owned by a Doyle. Standing in the same living room as our ancestors had nearly two hundred years ago was an emotional experience for us all. The owner's brother invited us next door to their home for tea. The "tea" turned out to be a four-course meal spanning two hours of lively conversation about our ancestors and the home's background. I've learned over the years that "tea" can refer to a hot golden beverage and biscuits, a pint and crisps, or a complete meal. When someone invites you over for tea, it's best to go on an empty stomach.

Since then, I've enjoyed afternoon tea at a fancy Dublin hotel with Bernard and his wife, Nuala. My husband and I recently celebrated Christmas with Bernard's entire family. Still, nothing will beat the memories of that day Bernard and I spent exploring our Coffey ancestors' homeland.

How could I top another extraordinary trip to Ireland? In 2013, my husband and I bought a renovated schoolhouse a few miles from my ancestor Patrick Coffey's childhood home!

Endnotes

1 Delvin, County Westmeath, Marriages, , Huston-Coffey, Jan-Mar 1887, Vol 3, p. 147, General Registrar Office, Dublin, Ireland, photocopy, 2011.

2 Dublin, County Dublin, Marriages, Bolger-Houston, Oct-Dec 1938, Vol 2, p. 493, General Registrar Office, Dublin, Ireland, photocopy, 2011.

3 Cancelled Land Books, County Westmeath, Ranaghan in the Parish of St. Feighan's. Volumes unknown. Valuation Office, Irish Life Centre, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1. Photocopy 2011.

4 1872 Tax records for Iowa County, Wisconsin, towns of Moscow and Waldwick. Southwest Wisconsin Room, Archives and Arc, University of Wisconsin-Platteville, 1 University Plaza Stop 1, Platteville, Wisconsin. Photocopy 2009.

5 "Searching for Irish Heir: £24,000 Share Awaits Michael Coffey," *The Courier-Mail*, Brisbane, Australia, 11 Nov 1950.

6 1901 Census of Ireland, County Meath, District Electoral Division (DED) Grennanstown, unpaginated, James Coffy, household no. 2, line 3; digital image, National Archives of Ireland, *Census of Ireland 1901/1911* (http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie : accessed 2011); original manuscript not cited.

7 Dunne, Danny. "The Coffeys of Newcastle," *Blessing and Rededication of the Church of The Sacred Heart of Meedin* (Westmeath, Ireland: *Westmeath Examiner*, 1983).

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 1911 Census of Ireland, County Westmeath, District Electoral Division (DED) Collinstown, unpaginated, James Coffey, household no. 8, line 1; digital image, National Archives of Ireland, *Census of Ireland 1901/1911* (http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie: accessed 2011); original manuscript not cited.

Eliza Watson is a USA Today bestselling author. Eliza's genealogy adventures inspired her nonfiction book, Genealogy Tips & Quips, and two fiction series set in Ireland, Scotland, and England. In 2013, she fulfilled her dream of owning a home in Ireland when she and her husband bought a renovated 1887 schoolhouse in her Coffey ancestors' townland.



The Carlins of Belderrig

by Margie Hoban Moore

About 15 years ago, I started researching my maternal grandmother's family. Working from a clue I received from my great-grandfather, Terrance, who claimed he was from a town in County Mayo called Innisfail, I searched for days but never found a town by that name — it was my first genealogy brick wall.

Like most family historians, I found bits and pieces about my great-grandparents' home, clues which sent me to Canada, specifically Lac La Blanche, to begin my search. Lac La Blanche is in the Outaouais (a region of Western Quebec), across the Ottawa River from the capital city and where Terrance Carlin/Carling became a homesteader, beginning around 1860.

In 2006, a random person named Lois Martin contacted me about a reunion of Irish settlers at Lac La Blanche, so I booked my first trip to the Carlin farm. My daughter Meggins accompanied me and did all the driving there. We started our journey in Montréal, where we saw the St. Lawrence River, via which the Carlins are supposed to have arrived in the 1830s.

After the reunion, I met more and more cousins via the Internet, particularly *Facebook*, many of whom helped me learn more about our shared ancestors. Later, a cousin contacted me using the IGSI Surname Interests Database and said he was also looking for Carlin family. We compared notes and found that my grandmother, Mary, and his great-grandfather, David, were siblings.

An *Ancestry* record named my great-great-grandmother, Margaret (David [*sic*]) Carlin, but had her death indexed as a birth record. My cousin figured out that *Ancestry* error and determined she died of a Polaris [ischemic] stroke in 1856. Margaret (Davitt) Carlin appears in the 1851 Canadian Census as age 80. Most of these records are in French, so I treated myself to a pocket French language dictionary, which has proven very helpful.

My research shows that Terrance Carlin married Catherine Nealon and had 10 children; my grandmother, Mary, was their third child. This branch of the Carlins now goes by "Carling," but we are all part of the same family. Terrance was the son of James Carlin and Mary Doherty, who settled near Pine Hill, Quebec, about twelve miles north of Grenville. James and Mary had nine children, the last two of whom were twins Martin and Thomas. One of the twins, Thomas, eventually inherited the homestead; passing it on to his son Thomas Jr., after his death in 1912.

I visited Montréal in 2016 after a Holland America cruise up the East Coast ended there. So now I have visited Montréal twice. During that trip I met several more cousins descended from the previous generation of my James Carlin tree.



Grenville homestead of James Carlin. Photo by author.



In front of Cousin Georgia's house at Brackloon South. Photo by author.

In 2018, a cousin gave me a twenty-three-page document about the Carlins of Belderrig [Béal Deirg], County Mayo. This account included tales about my great-great-grandmother, Margaret Davitt, who married Anthony Carlin, and her sisters Kathleen (aka "Kitty" Flannery) and Sarah, wife of Anthony McAndrew. Many of my family's surnames were represented in the narrative: Davitt, Carlin, McAndrew, Flannery, and Doherty.

On my dad's side, I have a cousin named Georgia, who is also interested in genealogy. In 2019, she invited me to spend three weeks with her at her ancestral home in Brackloon South, County Mayo, and offered to drive me to the town of Belderrig, which is on the Atlantic Coast near Ballycastle. Belderrig is a very small community with rolling hills of heather and more sheep than people.

While in Belderrig, I visited nearby Downpatrick Head, a very large rock sitting in the sea apart from Ireland's shore. I learned that the translation of "Innisfail" comes from "Innis," or "Island" and "Fail," or "rock," so "Innisfail" means "island rock." It's quite a beautiful spot.

Georgia and I stayed overnight in the Yellow Rose B&B in Geevraun, Ballina, County Mayo, which is run by Stephen and Eileen McHale. In the morning, Stephen showed me all the homes I read about in my cousin's twenty-three-page story. Georgia and I had quite a nice evening with Stephen's friend Padraig, who was also familiar with all our family's surnames. On the flight to Ireland, I'd picked up a cold, so our evening included a serving of Irish Whiskey, which hit the spot!

On our way out of Ballina, Georgia and I came upon Doonfeney Graveyard, which boasts a 12th century standing stone. Although many of the headstones in the graveyard are too weathered to be read, I would like to believe my ancestors are resting there. Anthony Carlin and Anthony McAndrew are reputed to have both died in 1818 of typhus, but no one seems to have any records about their deaths. From Doonfeney Graveyard, you can see both Downpatrick Head and the Cíede Fields.



Belderrig, County Mayo, landscape. Photo by author.



View of Downpatrick Head taken from Doonfeeny Graveyard. Photo by author.

Because both sides of my family come from County Mayo, my trip there was full of graveyard visits, fun, and food. I particularly enjoyed two great places to eat: Val's Bar and Bistro in Ballyhaunis, and Café le Chéile at the Knock Museum. If you ever get a chance to go there, I highly recommend both!

While in County Mayo, I also visited Knock Basilica, which has a beautiful mosaic, originally constructed in Italy. Seeing it is worth the side trip. Chapel Knock is on the same grounds and is reputed to have seen an apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph, and Saint John the Evangelist, appear in 1879. The mosaic depicts this

vision, which was seen by 15 people. It was donated by a single individual and contains more than 1.5 million pieces of glass. Knock Shrine is also a Marian shrine, so many pilgrims visit yearly.

Although many of my questions about my great-grandparents have been answered with the help of several cousins, I would still like to locate them in civil or parish records.

Erin Go Bragh!

Endnotes

[1] "Canadian Headstones Index," database, *FindMyPast* (https://www.findmypast.com/transcript : accessed 27 March 2023), Terrance Carling, Outaouais – Papineau, Quebec, Canada; citing CanadianHeadstones.com; inscription reads: "IN MEMORY OF\nTERRANCE CARLING \nMAY 5, 1908\nAGED 81 YRS\n NATIVE OF CO. MAYO,\nIRELAND\n\ nCARLING."

[2] "1881 Census of Canada," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 4 April 2023), entries for Mary Carlin (b. 1866), and David Carlin (b. 1876), in the Terance Carlin household, Mulgrave and Derry, Ottawa, Quebec; population schedule, enumeration district (ED)97, p. 3, family no. 8; citing Library and Archives Canada microfilm C13224.

[3] Notre Dame Des Sept Douleurs, (Grenville Paroisse, Québec, Canada), Parish Register, 1854-1875, unnumbered page, B.S. 14, Marguerite David Anne De Antonie Cartin, [1856], *Drouin Collection*; "Quebec, Canada, Vital and Church Records, 1621-1968," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 4 April 2023); the record is indexed incorrectly as a Baptism.

[4] "1851 Census of Canada East, Canada West, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 4 April 2023), entry for Margaret Carlin (b. 1771) in the James Carlin household, Grenville Township, Deux Montagnes, Quebec; population schedule, enumeration district (15), p. 45, line 19; citing Library and Archives Canada microfilm C-1147.

[5] "Quebec, Canada, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1968," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 4 April 2023), M. 23, Terence Carelon [sic] and Catherine Neillon [sic], 8 September 1861, (page not indexed correctly on *Ancestry*); citing *Drouin Collection*; Ancestry>Quebec, Canada, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1968>B>Buckingham>St-Gregoire-de-Naziance>1855-1863, left-hand page, third entry down.

[6] "1871 Census of Canada," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 4 April 2023), Mary Casland [sic] in the France Casland [Terrance Carlin], household, Mulgrave, Ottawa East, Quebec; population schedule, enumeration district (ED) 95, p. 8, line 18; citing Library and Archives Canada microfilm C-10028.

[7] "1851 Census of Canada East, Canada West, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 4 April 2023), James Carlin household, Grenville Township, Deux Montagnes, Quebec; population schedule, enumeration district (ED) 15, p. 45, lines 17, 18, 20-28; citing Library and Archives Canada microfilm C-1147.

[8] Notre Dame Des Sept Douleurs, (Grenville Paroisse, Québec, Canada), Parish Register, 1912, unnumbered page, S. 17, Thomas Carling, [14 July], *Drouin Collection*; "Quebec, Canada, Vital and Church Records, 1621-1968," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 4 April 2023).

[9] Document is unnamed and unsourced, and is in personal possession of the author.

[10] "Doonfeeny Church and Standing Stone," *Mayo North, Ballina Tourist Office*, 3 March 2023 (https://www.northmayo.ie/doonfeeny-church-and-standing-stone/ : accessed 4 April 2023).

[11] "Doonfeeny Graveyard Headstones," Christina Golden and David Gallagher, *Family History in North County Mayo*, Ireland, (https://www.goldenlangan.com : accessed 4 April 2023), Headstones in North County Mayo>Map 27 Doonfeeny, 2007-2022.

[12] *Wikipedia* (http://www.wikipedia.org : accessed 4 April 2023), "Sanctuary of Our Lady of Knock," aka Knock Shrine, rev. 13:33, 12 November 2022.

[13] Catholic church records are sparse at the beginning of the 19th century. Doonfeeny falls within the Catholic parish of Ballycastle. The baptism registers began in August 1864, and the marriage registers began in 1869. "Ballycastle," parish, Catholic Parish Registers, *National Library of Ireland* (https://www.registers.nli.ie : accessed 4 April 2023).

Margie Moore, a Washington State native, worked in bookkeeping before settling down and raising her family. She enjoys knitting, gardening, and spending time with her grandchildren. Margie also enjoys dabbling in genealogy; a particular highlight was a trip to Ireland to stay with family and learn more about her ancestors. She encourages us all to ask family members questions about our shared history, follow the clues provided, and then write about what we discover.



Are You Receiving Email from IGSI?

by Mary Wickersham, IGSI Web Editor

In mid-January 2023, many messages IGSI sent to members started "bouncing" back to us as delayed or not delivered. We notified our website service company, *EasyNetSites*, of the problem. The issue was apparently caused by a change made by Verizon and has been fixed.

If your email account address is from AOL, Verizon or Yahoo, you may not have received all messages from IGSI from mid-January to mid-February. These include:

- membership expiration notices
- membership renewal reminders
- webinar announcements
- delivery of the February issue of our eNewsletter, *Ginealas*
- delivery of the electronic copy of the January issue of *The Septs*
- announcement of the availability of IGSI podcasts

Think You May Have Missed Something?

- Check your membership expiration date by logging in, selecting Profile (below the Login item on the menu), and viewing the Membership Dues and Renewals section. If you have a General membership, check the address label on your mailed copy of *The Septs*.
- Visit the IGSI website regularly. Information about webinars and podcasts is posted on the main page of our website. Login to view past issues of *Ginealas* and *The Septs*.

Make Sure You Include IrishGenealogical.org in Your Email's Safe Senders list.

- Check your email's Junk/Spam folder and, if you find a message from us there, move it to your normal inbox.
- Indicate to your email service provider that IGSI is a trusted contact by adding webeditor@irishgenealogical.org and education@irishgenealogical.org to your Safe Senders list. (Some companies refer to the list as an "Allow List" or "Whitelist," so when using search engines to locate how-to steps, be sure to look for those terms too. Adding webeditor@ and education@irishgenealogical.org emails to your address book may also help.)
- Use a search engine with "add sender to safe senders list with [email service provider name here]" to find procedures for your email provider.

IGSI's Email Schedule:

- ***The Septs*** – early January, April, July, October
- eNewsletter ***Ginealas*** – early in even-numbered months
- **Education announcements** – third or fourth week of each month
- **Podcast** availability – last week of each month

Please contact me at webeditor@irishgenealogical.org with comments and questions.



Mary Wickersham has served IGSI in several board positions and twice co-chaired the Celtic Connections Conference. A member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, Mary gives genealogy talks on research tools and techniques. She became IGSI Web Editor in 2018 and one of The Septs *co-Managing Editors in 2021.*

It Began with a Churchyard

by Walter Rothwell

My father, Walter "Jack" Rothwell, was born in Denver, Colorado, in 1924 and had a lifelong interest in our family history. I inherited from him a vast trove of family documents, photos, and mementos. While I am not a genealogy professional, my research education continues in earnest with my family archive at home.

During my elementary school and scouting era, occasional projects would arise relating to our heritage. I recall Jack telling us that our surname is German in origin (*rotes Feld* = "red field"), and we would celebrate German cultural events. Since you know that Irish heritage is forthcoming, my story may remind you of an *Ancestry* commercial.

Jack was a gregarious man who traveled extensively. It was his habit in a new destination to open the phone directory, aka the "White Pages," in his hotel room to look for entries with our surname. He would often call numbers for the various Rothwells he found, comparing stories with them to discover new family members. During one such visit to Toronto, Canada, Jack chatted with Jim, who proved to be his second cousin, once-removed. Jack and Jim became fast friends and partners, and their efforts in research and storytelling formed my foundation for understanding our family history.

Jim is an "old school" researcher, paper-based, with no use for technology. He has spent countless hours in Canadian archives yielding numerous land, probate, tax, census, and related records all compiled in a type-written document. Jack was more tech-oriented, but they made a good team and together prepared a (currently unpublished) manuscript on the family.

I don't know just when my father became aware of our Irish origins but Jim certainly opened his eyes to our family's rich heritage in Leinster province. Jim documented the first Rothwell emigrant traveling from the Wexford-Carlow county border region to a new Military Settlement in Perth, Ontario, in 1816, via the ship *John*.[1]

Surnames

I was surprised to learn from Jim that the surname "Rathwell" is most closely associated with our family's Irish ancestors. However, Rothwell with an "o" is more common, with its locative name first found in the county of Lincolnshire in England. Many other surname variants appear in North American and European sources: Radwell, Redwell, Riddall, Ridell, Rodwell, and Ruddell, to name a few.[2] In 2019, during my one chance to visit with living relatives in Ireland, they did not attribute any particular meaning to the different variations.

Ireland Geography and Leinster Jurisdictions

My ancestral townland is Bunclody, County Wexford, which is located roughly equidistant between Dublin and Waterford. The market town sits on the border of Counties Carlow and Wexford, with the boundary formed by meandering rivers. Once known as "Newtownbarry," Bunclody was created from over 20 townlands, including the former Bunclody, into one parish on 3 May 1776. The parish church of St. Mary's was erected on an



St. Mary's Church [of Ireland] and adjoining churchyard in Bunclody, County Wexford, Ireland. From *Facebook*, used with permission, 7 February 2021.



In Loving Memory
of
John Rothwell, Kilbranish
who died Nov. 14th 1878
aged 45 years
and his wife Maria Rothwell
died Dec. 5th 1921, aged 79 years
Also his daughter
Lizzie Rothwell who died
Feb 19th 1882, aged 17 years
Also his daughter
Maryanne Rothwell who died
Nov 16th 1882, aged 17 years
and his son John Rothwell who
died July 1876, aged 2 months

"Thy Will Be Done"

This grave marker stands in the churchyard of St. Mary's church Bunclody, County Wexford. John Rothwell of Kilbranish (1833-1878) is a second cousin, twice removed to both Jack and Jim. He married Maria Dixon (1842-1921 on 4 June 1861, in Clonegal, Country Carlow. They had nine children, including a son named John, who died before his father, and two daughters who died within a few years of their brother. None of the family emigrated from Ireland. Photo by author.

acre of land donated by the Honorable Barry Barry in the mid-1770s.[3] The name of the town changed back to Bunclody following Irish independence, but wasn't made official until 1952,[4] making me wonder, "Do I search for Newtownbarry or for Bunclody records?" These regional boundaries and often overlapping jurisdictions have been a great challenge for me to grasp as a researcher. In some instances, placenames can only be pinned down with insight from local residents rather than via available references.

When preparing for my first visit to Leinster in 2019, I'm sorry to admit that my grasp of local geography was lacking, so I chose to focus on the known churchyard where many of my ancestors rest: St Mary's Church in Bunclody, County Wexford. I planned to visit at least the churchyard to see the actual gravesites and headstones. I contacted the regional church office in advance and was told that there would be no access either to see their records or to enter the church grounds at the time of my visit. But "the luck of the Irish" was with me that day in Bunclody.

My wife and I had booked a comprehensive tour of the Irish coastline, starting in Dublin and ending in Kilkenny, only about an hour's drive from Bunclody. I chose not to rent a car, instead attempting to drive myself, so I contacted our hotel destination and hired a local driver for the single day I would have following the completion of the tour. I did not know what living relatives might be in the area, so I had not contacted any family or local residents before the trip.

Our Magical Day in Bunclody

We had a delightful morning journey with our driver, with our hopes for the visit greatly hinging on his talents! Upon our arrival at St Mary's Church, we found the gate to be locked but located a path opening onto the property. I asked my wife to walk from headstone to headstone, taking a photo of each recognizable ancestor with her smartphone (to record the GPS coordinates). She was then able to direct me to the same markers to record them with my better camera. We accomplished this task in about an hour.

Unbeknownst to us, our driver was busy with "detective work" on our behalf during this time. He spoke with a local resident on the church grounds, who contacted a Rothwell family member in town; soon, we were joined at the church by David, a leader of this very congregation. David kindly opened the church to us so we could see and photograph the interior. I asked him about our family lore of the "Rothwell pew," and he confirmed that, in days past, member families had access to specific pews.

I asked David if the Rothwells were originally Irish. He replied that the family origin was English and that they came to Leinster in the 17th century during the Cromwell era. David and his parents (James and Betty) still own and work on the Rothwell farm in nearby Barnahask, County Carlow. David called his father that day and made it possible for us to drive to the Rothwell farm, where we were treated to a lovely lunch in their kitchen. David's parents

allowed me to take several pictures on the property, replacing the grainy greyscale images previously available to me.

Rent records indicate that family members first started renting nearby property by 1811 and, subsequently, the farm has remained in the family for more than 165 years.[5] Rothwells appear in the Levy List, compiled in 1861-65,[6] as well as in Griffith's 1854 valuation of Barnahask as occupiers and lessors.[7]

Emigration from Ireland

Benjamin "Big Ben" Rothwell (1785-1860), aged approximately thirty, and his eldest son Thomas, aged about eight, were the first of my Irish Rothwells to sail across the Atlantic. They arrived in Ontario, Canada, in September of 1816, where Benjamin received a grant of excellent farmland on the condition that he cleared the land and built structures on it.[8] Ben's second younger son Edward stayed in Ireland under the care of relatives, but eventually appeared in Ontario by the time he was 50.[9] Family researchers in Ontario believe Ben's wife Mary did not arrive in Canada with her husband, possibly because she died or was incapacitated before his sailing. However, David Dobson's Irish Emigrants in North America suggests otherwise, so it is currently unclear if she died in Ireland or sailed with Ben and perhaps died soon after arrival.[10]

In addition to farming, Ben aided the development of the local settlement and civil facilities, becoming a lay preacher in the Methodist church and serving in the local militia. Ben remarried at age 65 and had 3 additional children.[11]

As with Ben's family, there has been a long history of chain migration to Canada by a host of Rathwell/Rothwell families. I continue to analyze records to tease out my various family lines and the trails they traveled. The Canadian Rathwells/Rothwells made their way south over time to Michigan, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, and beyond. I am blessed with a rich heritage that will keep me busy researching for years to come.

In Truth, It was More Than "the Luck of the Irish"

When I called our driver to pick us up at the farm, he asked if he should buy a gift in town for us to offer to James and Betty in gratitude. What a fantastic suggestion. We gave them our humble thanks and then had a few final words with author Ben Rothwell, who had joined us during the visit. He asked if we would like to visit a nearby landmark that he recommended.

After we got into our car, our driver followed Ben up a road which climbed nearby Mount Leinster. With rain clouds overhead, we stopped at a clearing overlooking the stunning landscape of local farms. On the ridge, we saw nine stone markers in a crude line, clearly ancient in the era of Stonehenge. Ben told us that "The Nine Stones" were thought to be a tribute to an ancient group of shepherds who perished during a storm. It was a truly stunning end to an incredible day for us!

I am indebted to my father Jack and our friend Jim for providing the roots of my understanding this ancestry. I was blessed in Ireland to meet Ben Rothwell, who has done extensive research there and who has expansive local knowledge of the families in Leinster. His publication regarding our family is referenced below. James and Betty Rothwell were unbelievably kind to the American strangers who appeared unannounced on their doorstep. David made it all possible for us to see the church and farm in living color, giving us such a moving experience.

I want to point out several great resources that continue to be very helpful in my research and analysis:

DNA collaboration groups:

Rothwells and Rathwells of Ireland/ Great Britain and Their Descendants, a private Facebook group administered by Bill Rothwell (Katy, Texas) and William Rothwell (Houston, Texas) https://www.facebook.com/groups/WexfordRothwells/



The "Nine Stones" memorial and overlook on the Leinster Province countryside from near the top of Mount Leinster (www.irishstones.org/place.aspx?p=46 and www.myshalldrumphea.com/nine-stones.htm : accessed 29 January 2023).

Rothwell, Rathwell & Variants, a Family Tree DNA Project administered by Shirley Monkhouse https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/rothwell/links

Historical sites of interest:

- A History of Bunclody http://www.bunclody.net/Bun_his.htm

Ireland Genealogy Project:

- Carlow Records www.igp-web.com/IGPArchives/ire/carlow/index.htm
- Wexford Records www.igp-web.com/IGPArchives/ire/wexford/index.htm
- *Wikipedia* en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bunclody

The Irish Genealogical Society International and their generous and expert counsel:

- IGSI Website irishgenealogical.org/
- IGSI Podcast youtube.com/@IrishGenealogyIGSI
- IGSI Social Media facebook.com/le8afhd

Endnotes

[1] "Ontario Local Records," database with images, *Library and Archives Canada* (https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocilhm.lac_reel_c4651 : accessed 24 March 2023), p. 76 (penned) "Upper Canada … Settler," taken between 1st – 24th September 1816, entry no. 133 for Benjamin Rathwill [sic] household, 1 adult male, 1 adult female, and 1 male under 12, arrived on the ship *John* from Ireland on 19 September 1816; citing Ontario Local Records, "Perth Military Settlement, 1816-1822," lac reel C-4651.

[2] *House of Names* (https://houseofnames.com : accessed 24 March 2023), "Rothwell History, Family Crest & Coats of Arms." Note: Even after the printing press's influence on standardized spelling, people continued to record their names phonetically rather than by spelling.

[3] "The registers of Newtownbarry (Bunclody) Union transcribed and indexed by the Anglican Record Project now online," Archive of the Month, *Church of Ireland* (https://ireland.anglican.org : accessed 24 March 2023), 1 January 2013, "blog" entry.

[4] "Bunclody or Newtownbarry?" compiled information on town website (https://www.bunclody.net : accessed 24 March 2023).

[5] Benjamin Rothwell, *A History of the Rothwells of Bunclody and Their Descendents from 1780 to 2000 AD, One of Which Became a World Champion Boxer: With References to the Deacons Jacobs Poers Mccutcheons Moultons and Levingstones* (Place of publication not identified, 2004?).

[6] Personal correspondence with Jim Rothwell of Ontario, Canada.

[7] "Griffith's Valuation, 1847-1864," database, *FindmyPast* (https://www.findmypast.com : accessed 24 March 2023), transcribed "details" for John Rothwell, occupier, Barnahask (townland), Barragh (civil parish), County Carlow; citing "Primary Valuation of Tenements, Parish of Barragh, page 274."

[8] Upper Canada Land Petitions 1763-1865, RG 1 L3, vol. 420, pp. 11k-11l, Perth Military Settlement, Drummond, petition no. 11, Benjn Rathwell, *Library and Archives Canada* (https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Home/Record?q=benjn%20rathwell&app=lanpetuppcan&IdNumber=76069 : accessed 26 March 2023); for digital image, see also *Lanark County Tourism* (http://lanarkcountytourism.com/ : accessed 24 March 2023), land ownership certificate for Benjn Wrathwell [Rathwell], 5 May 1820, Drummond Con 4, Lot 15 – SW ½; *Lanark County Tourism* > Things to Do > Find Your Ancestor > Search for "Rathwell."

[9] "1861 Census of Canada," database, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/797546966:1570 : accessed 27 March 2023), Enumeration District (ED) 2, Hope Township, Durham County, Canada West, p. 28 [penned], line 29, entry for Edward Rothwell (age 52), image 528 of 893; citing Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; Census Returns for 1861, Microfilm Roll C-1016-1017.

[10] David Dobson, *Irish Emigrants in North America: Part Four and Part Five* (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1998), part 5 for Benjamin Ruthwell [sic], p. 22. AND, "Irish Emigrants in North America, 1775-1825," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 23 March 2023), image 31 of 39.

[11] Personal correspondence with Jim Rothwell of Ontario, Canada.

Walt Rothwell is an IGSI board member and co-chair of the Education Committee. He is also affiliated with the Yankee Genealogical Society and the Canadian Interest Group of the Minnesota Genealogical Society. He is endlessly researching family lines across North America, Ireland, and England.



Focus on Westmeath
Have a Kelly, Murray, Farrell, or Daly in your family tree?

(Adapted with permission from Ireland Reaching Out [IrelandXO]; original posting dated 13 December 2022.)

Below, we look at County Westmeath, the geographical center of Ireland, and the homeplace of Athlone Castle. Naming expert Colin Shelley explores the top ten surnames there during the 19th century while we [IrelandXO] list some of the top genealogy resources for anyone doing research in the county.

Co. Westmeath, or *An Iarmhí* in Irish, is located in the midlands region of Ireland. It is home to Athlone Castle which, after a multi-million euro renovation, reopened in 2012 as a state-of-the-art, multi-sensory visitor experience. With 12 baronies, 64 civil parishes, 106 electoral divisions and 1,349 townlands there to sift through, this link to IrelandXO's handy guide on how to narrow down your parish will prove helpful. https://www.irelandxo.com/ireland-xo/news/how-locate-parish-origin.

Top Surnames in County Westmeath During the 19th Century

Colin Shelley, a genealogist who specializes in the origin and development of surnames from various sources in the English-speaking world, takes us through the top ten surnames in County Westmeath during the 19th century. His website, http://www.selectsurnames.com, covers more than 1,000 of these surnames.



Ireland Reaching Out [IrelandXO] is a charity organization led by volunteers looking to help anyone of Irish descent connect with their roots in Ireland. They offer a message board that gives free genealogical advice, a FREE ancestor repository, and a meet and greet program where the visiting diaspora can meet with a local in their parish of origin during their visit. To find out more visit https://www.irelandxo.com/

Kelly - Kelly is both a given name and surname. Etymologically, it originated as a patronymic surname, with the prefix Ó and the suffix *Ceallach* ("strife" or "contention"); the Old Gaelic clan name of *Ó Ceallaigh* was anglicized as O'Kelly. Kelly has been adapted to mean "brave warrior" in many English-speaking armies.

Murray - Murray is usually considered Scottish, from the clan of that name that originated along the Moray Firth coastline. But it is also Irish. The *Siol Muiredhaigh* (pronounced Sheel Murray) was the territorial and dynastic name for clans descended from Muireadhach Muilleathan (Murray the long-headed), who died around the year 700. The name *Muiredhaigh*, meaning "lord" or "master," was a fairly common personal name in *The Annals of the Four Masters*.

Farrell - The roots stem from the Old Gaelic name *Fearghail* are *fear*, meaning "man," and *gal*, meaning "valor," hence "man of valor." The original *Fearghail* from whom the *O'Fearghails* have claimed descent was slain by the Danes at the Battle of Clontarf in 1014. His great-grandfather Anghaile gave his name to the territory that they possessed, Annaly in County Longford. It was not until later that *O'Fearghail* was anglicized to O'Farrell and later Farrell.

Daly - The O'Dálaigh was a bardic sept which came to prominence early in the 12th century, with Cui Connacht O'Dalaigh,

the first person recorded by that name, in Westmeath. O'Dalaigh means "descendant of *Dálach*." It is thought that the name came from the same root as *dáil*, meaning "assembly." *Dálach* therefore probably meant "assemblyman" or "councillor." The name later became O'Daly and Daly. In America it is also Daley and Dailey.

Reilly - O'Reilly is derived from the Gaelic *O'Raghailligh*, meaning descendant of Raghaillach (from *ragh*, a "race," and *ceallach* meaning "gregarious"). The story goes that Raghaillach was killed at the Battle of Clontarf in 1014 while fighting alongside Brian Boru. His descendants, the O'Reilly sept, followed Celtic traditions with their chief being inaugurated at an ancient stone circle on Seantomon Hill outside of Cavan town. Today it is O'Reilly more inside Ireland, and Reilly more outside Ireland.

Fagan - Fagan is thought possibly to be a Norman-Irish surname, originally brought to Ireland by the Normans. The Gaelic form was *O'Faodhagáin*.

Lynch - Lynch has two probable derivations. The first is Anglo-Norman, from the de Lench family which was said to have arrived with or after Strongbow. A branch established itself in Galway, where they became one of the strongest of the famous "Tribes of Galway." More numerous perhaps in numbers, although less in prominence, were the Lynchs that came from the Gaelic *O'Loingsigh*, grandson of *loingseach*, meaning "seaman."

McCormack - The surname McCormick or McCormack is an anglicized form of the Old Gaelic patronymic *MacCormaigor* or "son of Cormac," Cormac being a personal name from the Celtic *corbmac*, meaning "charioteer." McCormack is more common in Ireland, McCormick elsewhere.

Moran - Moran is the anglicized form of two distinct Gaelic sept names — O'Morain and O'Moghrain — in Connacht. The root here is the personal byname Morain or Morann, from *mor* meaning "great" or "large." The first Morann appeared at a very early stage in Irish history.

Smyth - Smith is an occupational name for a worker in metal, deriving from the Anglo-Saxon word *smitan*, or "to strike." Smyth was the early surname spelling. The Gaelic name *MacGabhann* (from the Gaelic word *gobha*) was often anglicized, as in Scotland, to Smyth or Smith.

Don't forget, you can also jump on our [IrelandXO's] Local Volunteer Message Board for help making sense of Irish names, old and new.

Find Out More About Your Westmeath Roots

Whatever stage you are at with researching your Westmeath ancestry, IrelandXO has the resources to help you find out more. Here are some pages to help you on your genealogy journey:

- If you're not sure where exactly in Westmeath your Ancestors lived, CLICK HERE for information on how to Find Your Westmeath Parish.
- If you want to know how the Famine affected Westmeath, CLICK HERE to read our [IrelandXO's] handy guide.
- In 1837, the Lewis' Topographical Survey was published. This provides detailed snapshots of life in each Civil Parish just before the Famine. CLICK HERE for more information on Westmeath.



River Brosna at Kilbeggan Distillery, County Westmeath, AlanGrantPhoto@Flickr.com

- Cemetery Records - This database is searchable by individual name and address using drone imagery in the background to provide a detailed map imagery of the plot locations. Phase 1 includes Ballyglass; Phase 2 will include Coosan, Cornamagh, Kilcleagh and Dunegan.
- The Archives Department at Westmeath County Library holds a wealth of information; for more information, CLICK HERE.
- The Westmeath Ireland Genealogy site is a free repository of information provided by volunteers for genealogical research, CLICK HERE.

Editor's note: For those with print editions of *The Septs*, the "CLICK HERE" links at the end of this article can be accessed online at https://www.irelandxo.com/ireland/westmeath/news/county-focus-westmeath.

Exploring Irish History With FamilyTreeDNA Group Projects

by Jim Barry[1], Matt Barry, Ned Barry

Direct paternal line discovery using Y chromosome DNA (Y-DNA) testing has proven to be a powerful tool for Irish genealogists. Joining one of the many Y-DNA group projects can provide additional information and connect testers to a broad community of researchers with common interests, deep expertise, and years of experience.

There are presently over 11,400 group projects available through the major Y-DNA testing company, FamilyTreeDNA (FTDNA). Among the interesting projects using either Y-DNA or mtDNA (mitochondrial DNA) for Irish genealogy research are the Ireland yDNA project with over 10,000 members; the Ireland Heritage project with over 10,000 members; the Ulster Heritage project with over 6,100 members; Ireland mtDNA Project with over 3,300 members; the Scots-Irish project with over 4,000 members; the Sons of Aodh project with over 1,300 members; the RL21 466 & South Irish project with over 1,700 members; the Irish Mapping Project with over 1,700 members; and focused projects for most Irish surnames. By using DNA results, the group project administrators are often able to identify ways for members to connect their genealogies to various lineages, to deep ancestry or immigration groups, or to assign them to matching clusters having signatures related to particular Irish surnames.

Group project administrators are free to define the scope of their project, such as by a particular surname (with spelling variants), haplotree branch, or geographic location. Those interested in joining a project must meet the qualifications set forth by the group project administrator. Typical qualifications might require a minimum threshold of DNA testing such as a Y-67 test result; a documentation trail to the most distant known ancestor; or mere interest in following along and joining the discussion.

Anyone having a FamilyTreeDNA account of his or her own, or managing a DNA test for someone else, can apply to create a group project. While there is reasonable leeway allowed in their specification, new group projects must not duplicate or overlap the theme or focus of an existing group project. Once approved, the group project administrators initialize the group project and begin accepting members. Membership in group projects is free and anyone having a FamilyTreeDNA test kit can request to join. Group project administrators must adhere to the company's Group Project Administrator's Terms and Policies. Upon accepting these terms and policies, FamilyTreeDNA offers free Internet hosting services and project administration tools for the project. Hosting services include a public-facing Internet address, project web pages visible to the public and to search engines, and private web pages visible only to project members. The private web pages include such information as DNA results, haplogroups, STR (short tandem repeat) statistics, and MRCA (most recent common ancestor) names and places, as well as an internal discussion forum for members of the project. These private pages deliver most of the value to the members and provide a convenient way to seek assistance with their DNA research. Group project administrators have access to a set of tools FamilyTreeDNA provides for managing the DNA results, observing test kit order and laboratory processing flow, allocating project funds, and updating the public web pages. Project members can control how much of their personal information the project administrators are able to view.

As a brief case study for an Irish surname project, consider the Barry DNA Project. The project today has over 500 members. Because this family was among the 12th century Cambro-Norman invaders of Ireland, the lineage is relatively well-documented to the present day. With the help of Y-DNA results, the authors have learned that users of the Barry surname around the world today typically belong genetically to one of five distinct groups. The first group – the largest proportion in the project – is affiliated with the original Cambro-Norman family. We reached this conclusion with high confidence because of recent DNA sampling done on the 19th century remains of men descended from the Earls of Barrymore, which yielded a haplogroup of R1b>Y11179.[2] This haplogroup is downstream of R-U152 and is associated with cis-Alpine ancestors; while this branch of the Barry family was historically labeled "Norman," it would not today match a Norman definition, having haplogroup I1 rather than R1b. There is a U-152 group project with over 3,000 members and a Norman group project with 1,600 members further developing the phylogenies.

We are less confident in identifying the other groups but believe that our assessments are reasonable. The second Barry surname group is associated with those Barry families of Santry and Dundullerick, County Cork. These men share an

I1>FGC17580 haplogroup signature with common ancestors in the 15th century, but which is very different genetically from the Cambro-Norman group. A third surname group of Barrys in South Africa has a long tradition of affiliation with the Barrymore group but is genetically distinct, having haplogroup R1b>ZP112, and thus is more closely-related to families using surname Berry in southern England. A fourth surname group having haplogroup I2a2>P37 is a group using the names Barry, Barrivane, or Driscoll, and traced to the Corcu Loigde kingdom of western Cork with common ancestors in the 14th century. The fifth distinct group with haplogroup R1b>L159.2 we attribute to the O'Beargha sept of Co. Limerick which may have adopted the Barry surname in more recent times. A recent technical publication[3] further describes these findings. As more men join the project the group administrators will further refine these group signatures, trace lineages and ancestry, associate families with documentation, estimate times to most recent common ancestors, and publish the results.

Over the past several years, group project managers have used Y-DNA results effectively to create haplogroup signatures for many Irish kingdoms, clans, and septs. Interestingly, these results reveal that medieval documentation was perhaps not as fanciful as had long been imagined. Contributing Y-DNA results on behalf of your family can help toward revealing these connections and can help identify your Irish ancestry.

Endnotes

[1] Jim Barry of Reston, Virginia, is the administrator of the Barry *FamilyTree* DNA Project. Matt Barry of Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania, and Ned Barry of Rathcormac, Co. Cork, are the project's co-administrators.

[2] Gapert, René, and James Barry, "Decrypting the Dead," in *Archaeology Ireland*, Vol. 12 No. 123, Spring 2018, pp. 44-48. Also found at *JSTOR*.

[3] Barry, James, "Barrymore DNA: The Genetic Records of the Barrys of County Cork and Beyond," at Academia.edu.

All web site links retrieved 31 October 2022.

Matt Barry is current co-administrator of the Barry DNA Project and the Flanagan DNA Project and is founder and administrator of the Peter Robinson's Settlers DNA Project, all hosted at FamilyTreeDNA. *A contributor to several genealogical societies in the USA, Canada, and Ireland, Matt lives and works near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.*



Podcast Promo for April 2023

by David Miller

Check out our monthly podcast on the IGSI *YouTube* channel. The program is called "This Month at the IGSI" and is hosted by genealogist and IGSI member Dave Miller. The podcasts provide the latest information regarding the Irish Genealogical Society International and what activities are planned in the upcoming months.

Past episodes have included visiting Irish Fairs during the summer and a story on the art of Sean-nós dancing. Dave also recently interviewed IGSI member Mike Flynn about his trip to Ireland last year and a story he discovered regarding a great-uncle. Link to the *YouTube* Channel: https://www.youtube.com/@IrishGenealogyIGSI

MackinBasic DNA Tools,
Part 2: Shared/In Common With Matches

by Lois Abromitis Mackin, PhD

In our July 2022 issue (vol. 43, no. 3), we looked at a process for working with your autosomal DNA match lists. The process steps were:

- Learn your testing company's match list format (including the information given about each match and how the testing company arranges it)
- Understand the tools your testing company provides (shared/in common with matches, chromosome browsers, searching, sorting, and filtering)
- Analyze your matches
  - Examine the list
  - Identify any matches you already know
  - Identify matches you don't know, starting with the larger ones
  - Send messages to matches of interest

In this issue we'll dive more deeply into how to use shared matches. There are two major reasons for focusing here. First, all the testing companies identify shared matches and, second, shared matches are arguably the most powerful method for analyzing other matches. It's the tool experienced genetic genealogists use first in working with new or unidentified matches. Why? Shared matches can point to the part of your tree that contains the ancestors you share with those new or unknown matches![1]

What is a Shared Match?

A shared match is simply a match that appears both on your match list and on the match list of a match whom you are trying to identify. Today we are working with an autosomal tester named Jere Mackin.[2] Jere has a list of matches, part of which is shown on the left side of the table below. Jere's match list includes a match we want to identify, which we will call Unknown. Unknown has his or her own list of matches, shown on the right side of the table. For the sake of our illustration, Unknown has not attached a tree to their DNA test kit.

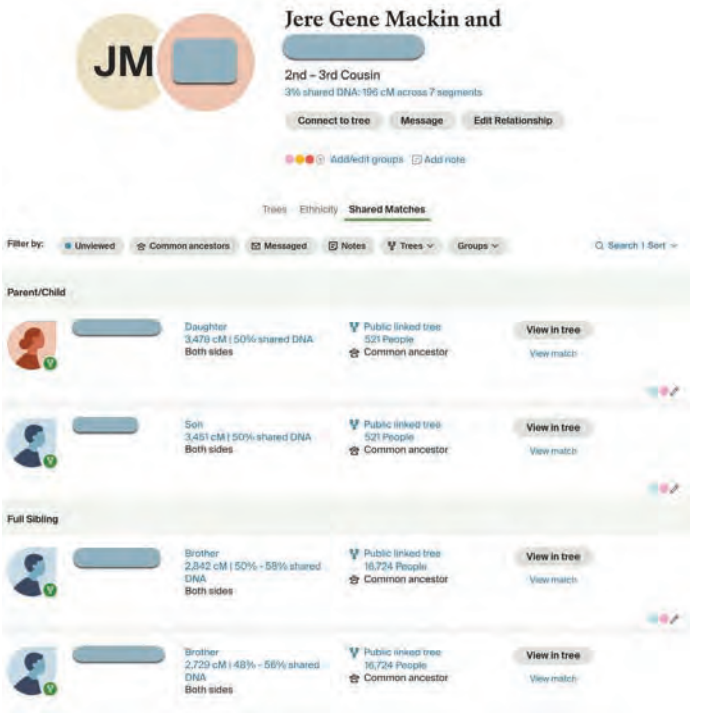
Jere's match list	Unknown's match list
Pat M.	Mary K.
Joann M.	**Pat M.**
Dick M.	Sharon P.
Eileen S.	**Eileen S.**
bob1234	**bob1234**

In this case, several matches appear both on Jere's match list and on Unknown's. The matches Jere and Unknown have in common, Pat M., Eileen S., and bob1234, appear in bold type. They are Jere and Unknown's shared matches.

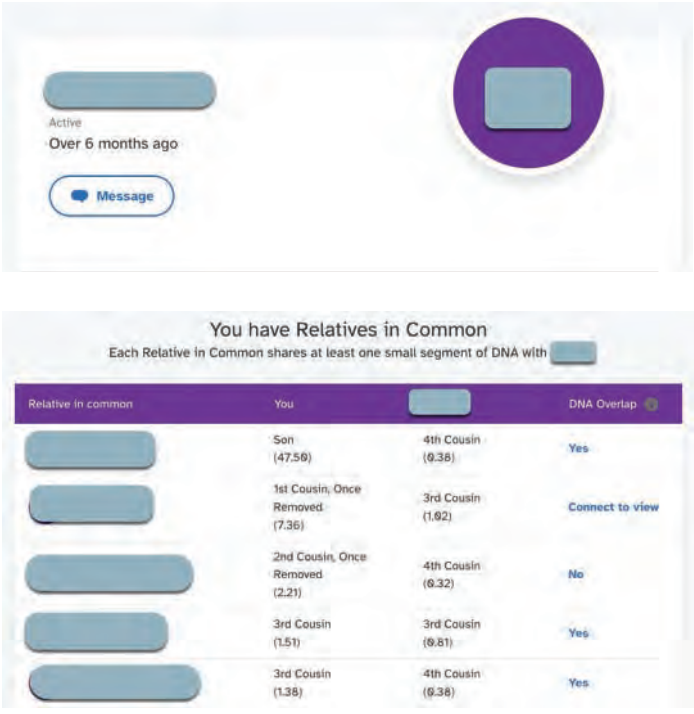
Finding Shared Matches on the Major Testing Sites

At **Ancestry**, each match on the match list has its own page, which you reach by clicking the match name on your match list. On the match page, click the Shared Matches tab to see the matches you share with this match. ("Shared Matches" is one of the three tabs located directly under the summary information.) By default, the Shared Matches list is arranged in categories by the closeness of the match (parent/child, full sibling, close family, extended family). At the top of the list are filtering, searching, and sorting tools. These are the same tools that appear at the top of your match list as a whole. From the mystery match's page, though, you can only apply these tools to the matches you and your mystery match share. From the Shared Matches list, you can go to each shared match's match page, view any shared matches you have added to your tree, see and edit any groups you may have assigned to the shared matches, and read or add notes to the shared matches.

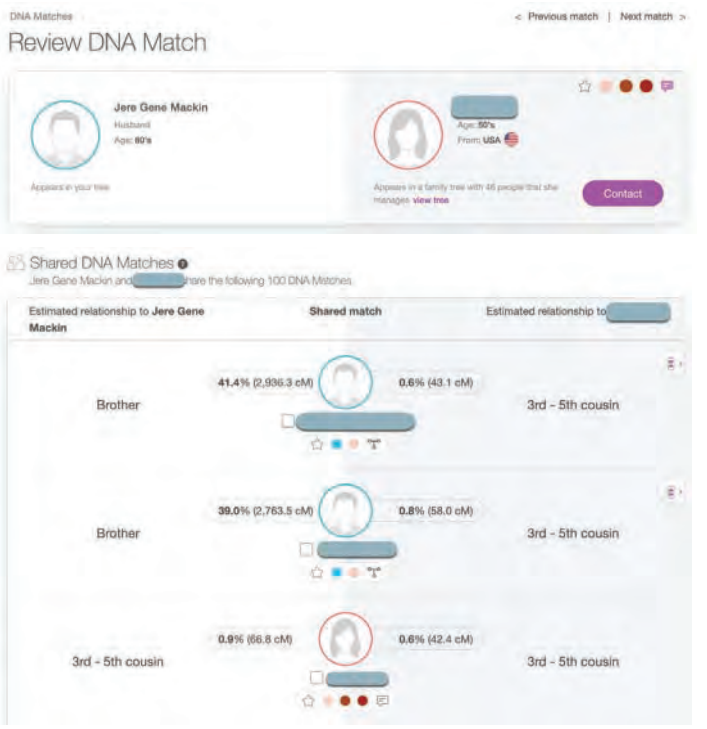
23andMe also has a separate page for each match on your match list. As at Ancestry, this is where shared matches are displayed. On the page that opens when you click a match name, scroll all the way to the bottom. The next to the last item is a header that says, "You have Relatives in Common." Just below the header is a blue button labeled "Find Relatives in Common." Clicking this button opens the shared matches list, which has four columns. The first column lists the names of the shared matches. The second column shows the amount of DNA you share with each shared match, expressed as a percentage. The third column shows the amount of DNA your match shares with each shared match. (This is a great feature you don't get from Ancestry!) The fourth column shows whether you, the match whose page you are viewing, and the shared match share at least one segment of DNA in the same location on the same pair of chromosomes. If the entry in this column is "Connect to view," the match you are viewing has chosen not to display the locations of their shared DNA segments. Although you cannot sort the Relatives in Common list, you can navigate to the match pages for the shared matches by clicking their names, and you can search for the shared matches' names using your browser's search function.



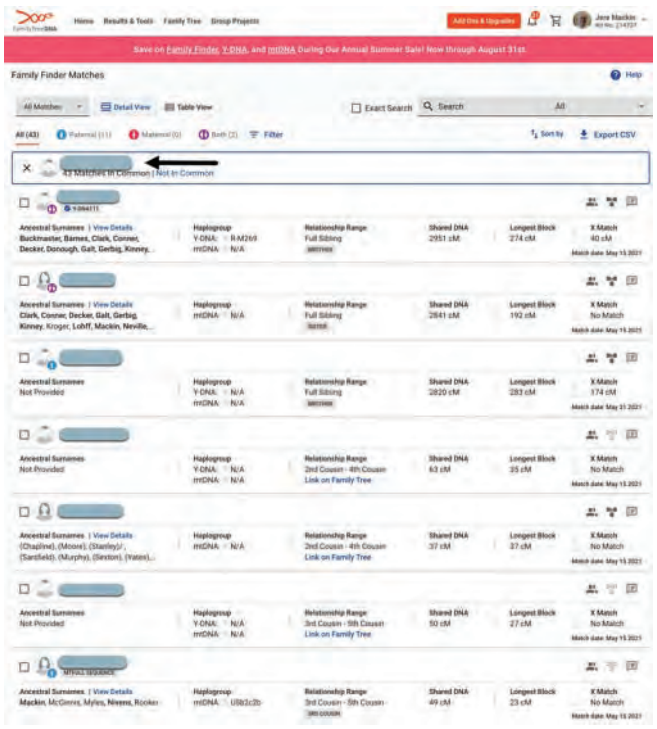
Ancestry shared match list



23andMe shared match list



MyHeritage shared match list



FTDNA shared match list

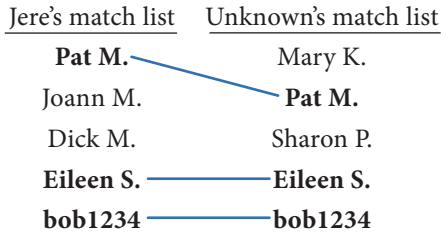
Like *Ancestry* and *23andMe*, **MyHeritage** displays shared matches on a special page for each match in your match list. To open a match's page, click the magenta Review DNA Match button on the match list. Scroll down to the Shared DNA Matches section of the page. You will see a line item for each shared match. As at 23andMe, on the left you will see the predicted relationship and amount of DNA you share with the shared match (both as a percentage and in cM), and on the right you will see the predicted relationship of the shared match with the match whose page you are on, along with the percentage and cM amount of DNA they share. Under each shared match's name, you will see any labels you have applied to the shared match, along with any notes you have entered and whether the match has a tree, and you can click the shared match to view their match page. *MyHeritage* indicates the presence of triangulated segments[3] with a special symbol on the upper right part of the shared match's line; you can see this symbol in the figure on the first two matches in the shared matches list.

Finding shared matches on **FTDNA** is a multi-step process. First, find the match you want to examine in your match list. Next, check the checkbox to the left of the match name, click the In Common With/Not In Common With icon on the right side of the match information (This looks like two overlapping sets of heads and shoulders.), and select In Common With from the dropdown. A new version of the match list appears, showing just the matches you share with the match you initially selected. (The name of this match appears at the top of the new list inside a box; in the figure, the match's name is marked with an arrow.) For any of the shared matches on the list, you can view everything you can view in the match list view — surnames, haplogroups, relationship ranges, amount of shared autosomal and X-DNA, shared match trees, and notes you have entered. You can also search within the shared match list, sort, filter, or export the list as a CSV file.

Using Shared Matches

Now that you can easily find the list of matches you share with a match of interest on the four major testing websites, what do you do with the shared matches? As we said at the outset, you use them to narrow down to the parts of your tree where you might find the ancestors you share with your unknown match!

Let's go back to the list of matches our tester Jere shares with his match Unknown.[4]



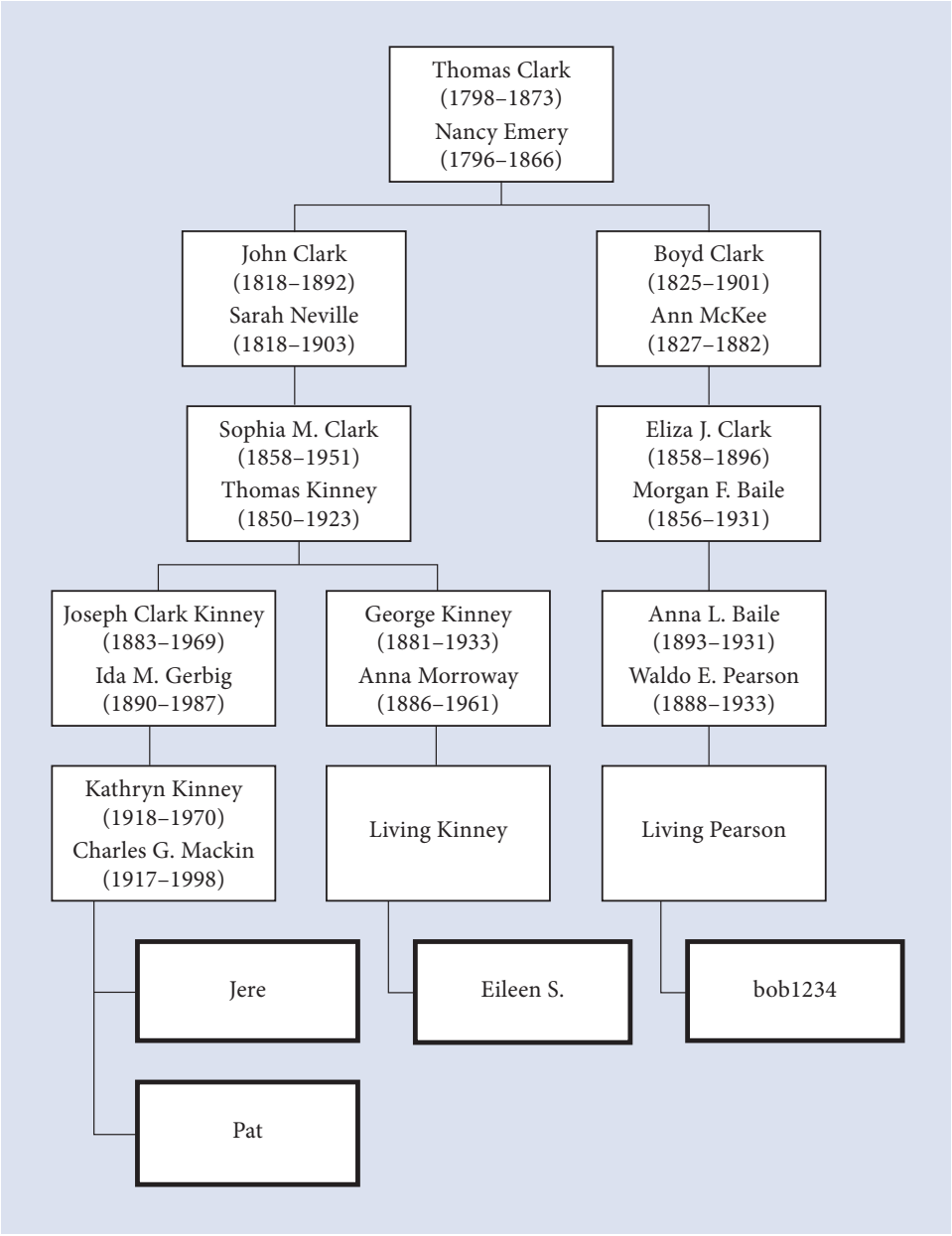
Their first shared match, Pat M., is Jere's full brother. Pat shares DNA from both parents with Jere. We can't tell whether the DNA Unknown shares with Jere and Pat comes from the paternal or maternal part of their tree. Jere and Unknown's shared match with Pat doesn't help us identify which part of Jere's tree contains the ancestral pair he shares with Unknown.

The second shared match, Eileen S., does help. Eileen S. is a known second cousin to Jere. She and Jere are both descended from Jere's maternal great-grandparents Thomas Kinney and Sophia Clark. Although Jere had never met her, he recognized her name. Eileen's tree did not include her common ancestors with Jere, but we were able easily to build it out far enough to find the connection. Since Unknown also shares DNA with Eileen S., we have a pretty good hint that the DNA shared between Jere and Unknown comes from somewhere in Jere's Kinney or Clark families. For the moment, we can set aside the family branches of Jere's other great-grandparents and hypothesize that Unknown is a maternal match for him and Pat, likely sharing DNA through their Kinney-Clark great-grandparents.[5]

Our third shared match, bob1234, helps us further narrow the hunt for the connection point. Bob1234 is a fourth cousin to Jere. He and Jere share descent from Thomas Clark and Nancy Emery, the grandparents of Sophia Clark, and Jere's great-great-great-grandparents. Bob1234 had an extensive, well sourced tree that shows his second great-grandparents Boyd Clark and Ann McKee. From our research into the Clark family, we know that Boyd is the brother of Jere's second great-grandfather John Clark and that his parents were Thomas Clark and Nancy Emery, even though bob1234 does not provide this information in his tree. The shared match with bob1234 provides a strong hint that we were correct in hypothesizing that Jere and Pat's match with Unknown is maternal and that it comes through their Kinney-Clark ancestors. Now we can add to our hypothesis that the match between Jere and Unknown is likely from the Clark family, going back to the Clarks' earliest known Clark and Emery ancestors.

At this point, please note that we do not have a conclusion, just a hypothesis! We need to do further work:

1. Ensure that our research on the Clark branch of Jere's tree is soundly researched and fully documented, and that the generational links are clear.



2. Solidly document the paper trail linking Jere and Pat with the shared matches Eileen S. and bob1234.

3. Verify that the connections between Jere and Pat and Eileen S. and bob1234 can only come from the hypothesized branch of Jere and Pat's tree.

4. Examine other shared matches between Jere and Unknown to see whether they verify or overturn our hypothesis.

Next Steps

Up to now we've looked strictly at Jere's shared matches with Unknown, focusing on Eileen S. and bob1234. In the real world, we would also have been looking at Unknown's tree, if they have one, while working with the shared matches. In this fictious case, sadly, Unknown does not have a tree.

What can we do in the case where Unknown has no tree, but we have a hypothesis based on shared matches? Here are some ideas:

1. Add a note to Unknown's profile documenting our findings and reasoning. My note would say something like: "Likely a maternal match, based on shared matches. Kinney-Clark > Clark-Emery." I would also put this note into the entry for Unknown in Jere's brother Pat's kit, which I also manage.

2. If the match is on *Ancestry* or *MyHeritage* and I am using the colored dots available on those sites, I would assign the appropriate color dots to Unknown.

3. Go to Unknown's profile (accessible on *Ancestry* by clicking their username). See whether they have included information about themself, perhaps even a link to a tree outside *Ancestry* or an email address.

4. If your kit is on more than one testing site (Jere's is on *Ancestry*, *23andMe*, *MyHeritage*, and *FTDNA*, plus *LivingDNA* and *GEDmatch*), check the other testing sites. Perhaps Unknown's kit is also on another side, and perhaps they have a tree at that site. If you find them on the *FTDNA* or *GEDmatch* websites, know that you will get their email address.

5. Contact Unknown, introduce yourself, describe the problem you are working on, and ask whether they have a tree you can view.

6. Update the notes for Unknown based on what you find in steps 2–5.

Endnotes

[1] A caveat: shared matches are most powerful when your tree is free of endogamy or pedigree collapse and the branches do not overlap. If the branches do overlap (say, an ancestral couple appears on both sides of your tree as ancestors of both your parents), things become less clear. For an explanation of endogamy and pedigree collapse, see the ISOGG wiki articles "Endogamy," https://isogg.org/wiki/Endogamy and "Pedigree Collapse," https://isogg.org/wiki/Pedigree_collapse.

[2] Jere's name and DNA match lists are used with Jere's permission. The names of Jere's matches have been masked and anonymized.

[3] Triangulated segments are segments of DNA on the same chromosome pair where you, your match, and the shared match all match each other. (That is, you match your match, your match matches the shared match, and the shared match also matches you.) For more on segment triangulation, see the portion of the ISOGG wiki's "Triangulation" article dealing with autosomal segment triangulation at https://isogg.org/wiki/Triangulation.

[4] Except for Pat, Joann, and Dick, the matches listed are fictitious, invented for the sake of our illustration.

[5] Remember, Jere has a fairly simple tree, with no known endogamy and little pedigree collapse.

Lois Abromitis Mackin, PhD, is a professional genealogist focusing on American and English research. She has three degrees in history and has studied at major genealogical institutes. She writes for Minnesota Genealogist *and is the 2013 winner of the Minnesota Genealogical Society's Founders Award for visionary leadership.*



With the death of Beth Mullinax, 90, who passed away in Minnesota Friday, February 10, 2023, IGSI has lost a longtime friend. Beth was the heart and soul of IGSI during her 26 years with the leadership team and was always willing to encourage and help people with their genealogical research.

Beth was part of the small group of people who founded our organization in 1979, serving as president from 1993-1995 and was vital in expanding our extensive library collection. Additionally, Beth's obituary in the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* mentioned that she had been to Ireland eighteen times, several of which were trips with IGSI. Some of these trips enabled Beth to make excellent connections which resulted in collaborating with Riobard O'Dwyer on the creation of an index to his works, and on the publication of the Estate Records Index for IGSI.

Beth was so highly regarded that, in 2007, IGSI established the Beth Mullinax Award, which is given to IGSI members who have shown outstanding service to our organization and has also been honored locally for her contributions to Minnesota Irish life and culture.



Beth Mullinax, 1932-2023

~ *In Memoriam* ~

Longtime IGSI member, Kay Swanson, shared the following thoughts about Beth:

"Even on an Alaskan cruise and land trip, while overlooking Mount McKinley, Beth got into a conversation about genealogy with a woman and gave her the IGSI business card she had. Beth, of course, offered to help her with any questions she might have had. Also, years ago, Beth picked up at the airport an IGSI member who flew in to do research at our genealogy library. When Beth resigned from her position as librarian at IGSI, the Minnesota Genealogical Society librarian was so sad to see her go because when she finished with her IGSI work, she would help him with his projects."

We wish to extend our sympathy to Beth's son Robert and his wife Roslie, and her other relatives and many friends.

Explore Leinster Resources in the IGSI Collection

by Ann Eccles, IGSI Librarian

The province of Leinster, located in the central region of Ireland, includes twelve counties: Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois (Queen's), Longford, Louth, Meath, Offaly (King's), Westmeath, Wexford, Wicklow, and Dublin. This article will share some of the 300 or so titles related to the history of these counties (except Dublin) that can be found in the IGSI research collection at the Hoffman Research Library (HRL).

Since Dublin has many Irish national and county-related genealogical resources of its own available (more than 370 titles in the HRL catalog), I am omitting mention of Dublin resources in this article.

Looking for books on these counties in the library catalog reveals a variety of materials! The IGSI research collection began as a volunteer effort with many IGSI members donating books they had purchased for their own Irish family research. Eventually, funds helped add depth to the collection. As a result, the materials are varied in scope and specialty.

For those just starting to research, consider a book on your county of interest:

IR J073 Farrell, Noel. *Carlow Town Family Roots: Exploring Family Roots in Carlow Town*. This short (48-page) book is a good start to investigating County Carlow roots.

IR J187 Kiely, Karel, Mario Corrigan, and James Durney. *A Guide to Tracing Your Kildare Ancestors*.

IR J184 Connell, Gretta. *Tracing Your Westmeath Ancestors*.

IR J031 Farrell, Noel. *Exploring Family Roots in New Ross Town: Wexford County*. This short (48-page) book is a good start to investigating County Wexford roots.

You can also learn more information about a particular county, county area, or time period in Irish history within a county. Just type in the county as the search term in the library catalog. Here is a sample of items you might find:

IR H131 O'Toole, Jimmy. *Carlow Gentry: What Will the Neighbors Say!*

IR H658 Lyons, Mary Ann. *Church and Society in County Kildare, c.1470-1547*. Explores ecclesiastical (monastic) and cultural changes in the 15th century.

IR H569 Chambers, Liam. *Rebellion in Kildare, 1790-1803*.

IR H661 Laffan, Kathleen. *The History of Kilmacow: a South Kilkenny Parish*.

IR H356 Lane, Padraig G. and William Nolan. *Laois History & Society*. Twenty-six essays from distinguished authors on the history of County Laois.

IR C058 Baxter, Luke. *From Page and Stone: Ancestral Records of Moydow, Co. Longford*. Cemetery records of Moydow.

IR G065 Rymsza, Guy. *County Longford Residents Prior to the Famine*. Includes history of the Tithe Applotment, transcription, index, and maps for County Longford.

IR H149 O'Neill, Padraig. *History of Knockbridge*. A history of one civil parish of County Louth.

IR H250 Ó Meachair, Donnchadh. *A Short History of County Meath*. Published in 1928 in Ireland.

IR H567 Connell, Peter. *The Land and People of County Meath, 1750-1850*. The impact of farming, the industrial revolution, and The Famine on the county.

IR D014 Wright, John. *Offaly One Hundred Years Ago*. The 364-page reprint of the 1890 King's County Directory.

IR H177 Abbott, Vincent. *A Parish Called Kilbeggan*. Written by a local County Westmeath farmer with an interest in history; information continues into 20th century.

IR H092 Browne, Elizabeth and Tom Wickham. *Lewis's Wexford: County Wexford Prior to 1837*. A contemporary look at early 19th c. County Wexford.

IR H086 *The Last County: the Emergence of Wicklow as a County, 1606-1845*. A short introduction to the history of County Wicklow.

That's the advantage of the Irish research collection: it provides materials to help you better understand the times, culture, and the history of the area of one's ancestors in Ireland. The library has maps for almost every Leinster county, including the Ordnance Survey maps; early editions of Slater's (or another business) Directory to list businesses and owners in the mid-1800s; and transcripts of headstones from early church cemeteries. The above list is a small sampling of 300+ titles available to explore for information on the Leinster counties.

If you would like to explore one of these books or another title in the IGSI collection, stop in at the library during open hours or send a note to librarian@irishgenealogical.org .

Ann Eccles has held various positions with IGSI, serving on the Board of Directors as president, and as editor of The Septs. *She is currently the librarian for IGSI's collection at the Hoffman Research Library in Mendota Heights, MN.*



TheGenealogist adds 1831 Irish Tithe Defaulters and more Irish Parish Registers

TheGenealogist has today released 371,400 Kildare Catholic Parish Registers covering 323,923 records of baptisms, 46,914 marriages and 563 burials to make it easier for its Diamond subscribers to discover their Irish ancestors from this eastern part of Ireland.

Also released at this time are more than 29,000 individuals recorded as Irish Tithe Defaulters. These records from 1831 can be a useful stand-in for the 1831 Irish census, which was almost completely destroyed in 1922.

Tithes were levied on all occupiers of agricultural land, no matter what their religion was, and the Roman Catholic population of Ireland particularly resented paying these tithes to the Church of Ireland (the Established Church) on top of often supporting their own priests. Refusal to pay the tithes came to a head in the years 1831 to 1832, beginning what is known as the 'Tithe War' in Ireland.

To alleviate the Church of Ireland's shortfall, The Clergy Relief Fund was established in 1832 by the Recovery of Tithes (Ireland) Act 1832. This provided the affected clergy compensation in return for providing the government with the names of the defaulters.

Many of the non-payers named were ordinary folk such as labourers, farmers, and widows who would most likely have been Roman Catholics and so not part of the congregation at their local Church of Ireland parish church but, surprisingly, there are also Magistrates, Peers of the Realm, and even Knights.

These new releases, now available to all Gold and Diamond subscribers of *TheGenealogist*, will be a welcome resource for those family historians wanting to research their Irish ancestry.

Read *TheGenealogist's* featured article: "Can't Pay or Won't Pay – The Tithe Defaulters".

About *TheGenealogist*

TheGenealogist is an award-winning online family history website putting a wealth of information at the fingertips of family historians. Their approach is to bring hard-to-use physical records to life online with easy-to-use interfaces such as their Tithe and newly-released Lloyd George Domesday collections.

TheGenealogist's innovative SmartSearch technology links records together to help you find your ancestors more easily. *TheGenealogist* is one of the leading providers of online family history records. Along with the standard Birth, Marriage, Death, and Census records, they also have significant collections of Parish and Nonconformist records, PCC Will Records, Irish Records, Military records, Occupations, and Newspaper record collections, among many others.

13 January 2023 Press Release *(reprinted with permission).*

Go Raibh Maith Agat!

Thank you to all the donors who helped IGSI exceed its 2022 donation goal. Donations are an important part of our financial budget and we think they are a reflection of the value that members place on the benefits the organization provides. We appreciate this vote of confidence!

Many donations were made when memberships were renewed. Other donations were bestowed during our "Give to the Max" event in November, and many of you contributed to our year-end appeal.

We are very fortunate to have many members donate each year and truly prize donations in any dollar amount.



Your contributions are greatly appreciated.

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Thank You to All Volunteers

by Jeanne Bakken, Volunteer Coordinator

Because April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, we want to thank all members who volunteered their time in 2022. As you know, our organization is totally dependent on our volunteers; IGSI simply could not manage without you. We sincerely appreciate each and every one of you. This list of volunteers and the committees on which they served represents over 2,400 hours of time donated to IGSI!

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Educational Opportunities, 2nd Quarter 2023

Saturday, April 22
"Ancestors Who Called Canada and the U.S.A. Home"
with Annette Burke Lyttle
GoToWebinar
Register at IGSI

Saturday, May 13
"Finding Ancestors Under the Southern Cross"
with Susan O'Connor
GoToWebinar
Register at IGSI

Saturday, June 17
"Challenges in Irish Family Research: Brick Wall Panel Discussion w/IGSI research authorities"
GoToWebinar
Register at IGSI

Legacy Family Tree Webinars

Friday, April 14th, 2023: 5:00 AM PDT
"Unearthing the Treasures in the Irish Registry of Deeds"
Speaker: Natalie Bodle (Northern Ireland-based)
Legacy Family Tree Webinars – *members only*

As of 22 February 2023

Legacy Family Tree Webinars currently has a library of 49 webinars on the topic of Irish genealogy. Courses cover a wide variety of topics such as historical records, DNA testing, using Irish newspapers, planning an Irish research trip, and so much more.

The annual membership fee is $49.95.
Members can save 5% on all Legacy Family Tree software & book purchases.

If you have questions about any of our webinars or classes, contact Trish and Walt, IGSI Education Co-Chairs, at Education@IrishGenealogical.org.

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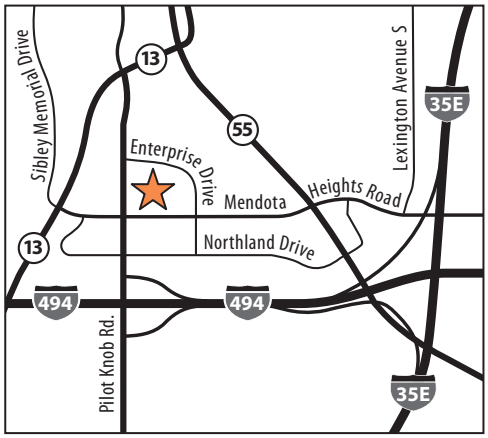
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Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc. (IGSI)

Library and Offices located at the Minnesota Genealogy Center





Library Hours

Wednesday: 10:00 am to 4:00 pm
Thursday: 10:00 am to 8:00 pm
Saturday: 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Closed

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, & Friday

Hoffman Research Library

★ 1385 Mendota Heights Road, Suite 100,
Mendota Heights, MN 55120
651-330-9312

During severe weather, or if traveling a long distance, please call before coming to the library to check if open.

The library is a self-supporting research library staffed by volunteers. If you are a member of the IGSI and are coming from out of town, contact Librarian@IrishGenealogical.org so we can have an Irish researcher available to meet you.

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The Septs

JULY (IÚIL) 2023 $10.00



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IRISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Genealogy Library Open

The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2023.

The Hoffman Research Library is a private genealogy research library created for members of the organizations in the MGS Partners' Group. Access to the library materials is free to members of IGSI and other MGS Partner societies. Non-members and the general public are requested to pay a per visit $10 donation for use.

The Hoffman Library will be open only if there are two volunteers available to staff the building. (Won't you consider becoming a MGC/library volunteer to help ensure research access for all?)

Hours of service:

Wednesday	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Irish Saturdays

Stop by the library on the second Saturday of the month between 10 AM and 4 PM for Irish research help from IGSI volunteers.

AUGUST 12, 2023
SEPTEMBER 9, 2023
OCTOBER 14, 2023
NOVEMBER 11, 2023
DECEMBER 9, 2023
JANUARY 13, 2024

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The Septs, the quarterly journal of the Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc., is one of the primary benefits of IGSI membership and is published in January, April, July, and October. U.S. and International members receive a print copy of the journal through the mail. Those with Electronic memberships receive the journal electronically.

Contributions and article ideas are welcome. Material intended for publication should be submitted before the 15th of February, May, August, and November. Contributors should email articles or materials to the Managing Editors at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or to the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the journal staff.

Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc.

2023

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of *The Septs* has at its core a specific theme with related research articles. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g., family stories submitted by IGSI members.

Research articles on the theme of the issue should be 1500 - 3000 words. If writing on a theme, please contact the Managing Editor of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadline dates to ensure that your article is considered for the proper issue.

Members who wish to share family research stories, articles on genealogy sources and resources, or writings on general Irish culture and history should contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org. The recommended length for articles unrelated to the theme is 750 - 1500 words.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2023 | October | Tips & Tools

An appraisal and review of various tips and tools for genealogists, including considering technology as mind maps, timelines, data correlations, and more.
Deadline for articles: August 15, 2023.

2024 | January | Repositories

Prepare for on-site research in Ireland by planning visits to PRONI, NLI, Irish National Archives, etc., using locality guides and more to learn the where, when, why, and how of local research.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2023.

2024 | April | Connacht Province

Researching in the five Irish counties of Galway, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon, and Sligo; stories about finding family in Connacht locales are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2024.

2024 | July | Penal Colonies & Criminal Law

Explore "black sheep" ancestors in Australian, New Zealand, and Caribbean penal colonies, as well as court proceedings that include criminal and settlement records.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2024.

Cover Photo: *A gentleman standing in the ruins of part of the Four Courts.* © University College Dublin, National University of Ireland, Dublin. Creative Commons 4.0.
(Photo was edited to adjust the color.)

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Observations from the NGS' Annual Family History Conference

by Co-President, Ron Zweber

I recently attended the National Genealogical Society's (NGS) Annual Family History Conference in Richmond, VA. Also attending was IGSI's Education Co-Chair, Trish Little Taylor. This was the second NGS conference I have attended. I had also attended the 2019 conference in St. Charles, MO.



Trish Little Taylor and Ron Zweber at the National Genealogical Society's (NGS) Annual Family History Conference

This conference brought together over 1,400 people from throughout the country who are all very interested in the study of genealogy. The 65 speakers provided more than 110 sessions over three and a half days. Michael Brophy, from Boston, presented a very Irish-focused session on Irish Genealogy Databases.

The biggest challenge to the conference was deciding between the eight speaker offerings available in each timeframe. Only 10 sessions were broadcast virtually and made available to attendees to view later. It's not just the topic that creates the conflict. We all have our favorite presenters. I was torn between sessions with Crista Cowan, from *Ancestry.com*, and DNA guru Blaine Bettinger. I chose Crista, whose opening comment was something like "I was expecting a smaller crowd since Blaine is presenting in this same time period!"

The day before the conference began, NGS provided a day of programming related to its Focus program, which brings together representatives from genealogical societies, libraries, archives, etc. to discuss common issues related to these organizations. Many of these organizations are like IGSI in that they are trying to provide quality programing, to adapt to technology changes, and to grow membership while struggling to fill all the volunteer and leadership spots. The Focus program provides a platform for ongoing communication and collaboration among these organizations. Trish gave a great shout-out for IGSI at the luncheon, mentioning several of IGSI's recent initiatives.

To no one's surprise, the largest players in our space, e.g. *Ancestry*, *FamilySearch*, *MyHeritage*, *FamilyTreeDNA*, etc., bring lots of capital and other resources to help them invest in technology and accessing records to make them available to all. Their sponsorship presence was felt, as were the sessions focused on their organizations. You may not like some of the ongoing membership fees of some of these platforms, but it is great to see so much energy going toward making genealogical tools and records available.

Lynn Turner, the lead librarian of the *FamilySearch* Library, gave a wonderful luncheon talk about the changes *FamilySearch* made to their library in Salt Lake City. The staff there took advantage of the pandemic shutdown to move forward on several changes they had been hoping to pursue. Formerly known as The Family History Library, this is an organization that has been with many of us for decades. It pre-dated all the current large genealogical organizations and DNA testing sites. Many of us remember ordering up microfilm rolls at the local LDS Family History Center, and we appreciate all the resources that have gone into moving a significant amount of microfilm material to a digital format.

One big surprise was the openness of several speakers talking about how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is currently being used to advance our access to genealogical resources. A speaker from *FamilySearch* talked about their digitization of the 1950 US Federal Census using AI handwriting recognition technology. He said the error rate between AI digitization and human digitization were both nearly identical and relatively low, causing *FamilySearch* to lean harder into having AI do most of their initial digitization. An *Ancestry* speaker further said that all the matches in your DNA match list are generated by AI.

In 2024, NGS the conference will go back to being virtual, but an in-person conference is being planned for 2025.



Ron Zweber is a native Minnesotan who lives in Saint Paul. He has been a member of IGSI for over 35 years and served as IGSI treasurer in 2021. All eight of his Irish 2nd great-grandparents (from Counties Cork, Tipperary, Clare and Mayo) immigrated to the U.S. during the height of the Famine or shortly thereafter.

Overcoming Record Loss in Irish Research

by Kim Gehrman White

Welcome to the 2023 Census Substitutes issue! If you have been fortunate, your Irish research may reach back to your ancestor's county or townland of nativity. If not, you have likely experienced the alarming reality of having practically no census records available for nearly one hundred years of Irish history. Whether an old hand or new to Irish genealogy, sit down, buckle up, and relish the indispensable material provided by some of Irish genealogy's rock stars.

David E. Rencher is the Chief Genealogical Officer for *FamilySearch* and an Irish research specialist. He is well known for his courses on Irish research with *GRIP*, *IGHR*, and the *British Institute*. We are given a brief overview of why we need census substitutes and what constitutes a substitute. David's article is a thorough treatise on what resources are available and how the information found in each is valuable for conducting a comprehensive search of Irish records.

John Grenham lives in Dublin and has been a professional genealogist since the early '80s. His name is synonymous with Irish genealogy, and his arguably best-known book, *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors*, 5th Ed., is a staple among Irish family history resources. He has permitted us to reprint an introduction to Griffith's Valuation — the only Ireland-wide census substitute from the mid-19th century.

Donna Moughty is a professional genealogist and a member of APG. She specializes in Irish and U.S. Research. She has been active as an instructor, lecturer, and author of *Quick Reference Guides for Irish Research*. Donna has led and organized annual small-group research trips to Ireland for the past 12 years, signing off with her last trip this fall. Donna's *Irish Family Roots* blog should be added to your reading list. The reprint of her blog post, "Irish Census Substitutes," is an excellent complement to the Rencher piece.

Evva B. Housley is accredited in English and Irish family history research. After graduation from BYU, Evva worked in the British Reference section at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City for over a decade. She has graciously permitted us to reprint her article addressing Irish ancestors in English (as well as Scottish or Welsh) records.

In the final installment of "Getting Out of the Archives and Into the Pubs to Trace Your Irish Ancestry," Eliza Watson wraps up her story of research into her Coffey ancestors of County Westmeath and how she made a dream of hers come true in Ireland.

Lois Mackin's DNA column continues her "Basic DNA Tools" series with Part 3. She offers a step-by-step guide to using clusters of your DNA matches, essentially putting them into useful subsets. Creating subsets or genetic clusters with your matches can be a powerful tool for moving research forward on a particular line of your ancestry.

A quick guide to using the popular website *Cyndi's List* is included as a resource for finding sites with relevant information for all family research. We have concentrated on highlighting resources supporting our theme of Irish census substitutes.

Updates and news from IGSI include Jeanne Bakken's details for The Irish Fair of Minnesota, which is just around the corner. If you plan a trip to Minnesota this summer, you might want to add St. Paul to your itinerary to attend the fun family event. Dave Miller's monthly podcast is celebrating its first anniversary. He gives a brief retrospective of the podcasts and information about finding the episodes online. A reference list of years covered in the Tithe Applotment records and Griffith's Valuation comes from IGSI resources. And a handy Irish Genealogy checklist to keep track of your online research.

A fourth-generation Californian, Kim Gehrman White holds a certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University (OL22) and completed ProGen 55 in 2022. She has an M.A. in International Studies and a B.A. in History and International Relations. Her research is focused on Spain, Portugal, and Ireland. She is the current Associate Editor of The Septs and perhaps a little obsessed with spreadsheets in her work.



Find a Grave® Surpasses One Million for Ireland!

In her *Irish Genealogy News* blog, Claire Santry notes on 21 June 2023 that *Ancestry*'s "UK and Ireland Find a Grave® Index" now totals over one million entries for Ireland, representing all 32 counties prior to partition. For more information, see: http://www.irishgenealogynews.com.

Ireland's Census Substitutes

by David E. Rencher, AG®, CG®, FUGA, FIGRS

Introduction

It is well known that Ireland's turbulent history took a significant toll on the people involved and the records they kept. Few countries have suffered the catastrophic loss of an entire century's census enumerations in the same manner as Ireland. Record custodians around the world fear an event like the one that happened on 30 June 1922 when the Public Record Office in Dublin was intentionally set with explosives and destroyed, taking with it seven hundred years' worth of Irish history, including the censuses for the years 1821-1851.

Unfortunately, the census records for the years 1861-1891 had already been pulped due to a miscommunication between the Public Record Office in Ireland and the Public Record Office in England over the definition of "original census records." These records were the copies from which the schedules were prepared. When queried about what the record office in England had done with their "originals," they truthfully responded that they had destroyed them. Following suit, the Public Record Office in Ireland pulped their 1861-1891 records but chose to retain the earlier years because of the significance of recording the population surrounding the years of the Great Famine and the fact that the 1821 census of Ireland was the most complete census within the British Isles.

Census Substitutes Overview

Census substitutes are sets of records, usually lists of names that researchers use in lieu of the decennial censuses. Even when they exist for other countries, these lists of names can significantly augment the snapshots of historical context that the censuses provide. In Ireland, their usefulness was propelled to the forefront of each research plan to create timelines and hypotheses to reconstruct families and lineages.

Obviously, these census substitutes all have limitations. They are all limited by the cohort of why the names appear on the list — the subject's education, religion, economic status, occupation, or service in the military, among other factors. Frequently, the lists do not include the names of females or children.

To effectively analyze these lists, these questions need to be understood.

- Who is included in the cohort?
- Who is excluded from the cohort?
- Why was the list created?
- What is the time period or specific date?
- What is the geographic coverage — parish, poor law union, county, province?

Multiple name lists create the most research value because they allow for comparison between the lists. New names on a later list of the same or similar cohort may account for the emergence of younger generations or instances of migration. Names disappearing on the list may infer death, migration, or even emigration.

Substitutes by Century

The launch of Ireland's *Virtual Record Treasury* (https://virtualtreasury.ie/) in 2022 has created greater access to previously hard-to-examine census substitutes such as the Books of Survey and Distribution and has recreated all known copies, abstracts, and transcripts of the 1766 Religious Census. While it may seem that nothing new is happening in this area of research, significant changes are filling in much-needed gaps in the records.

19th Century

Griffith's Valuation

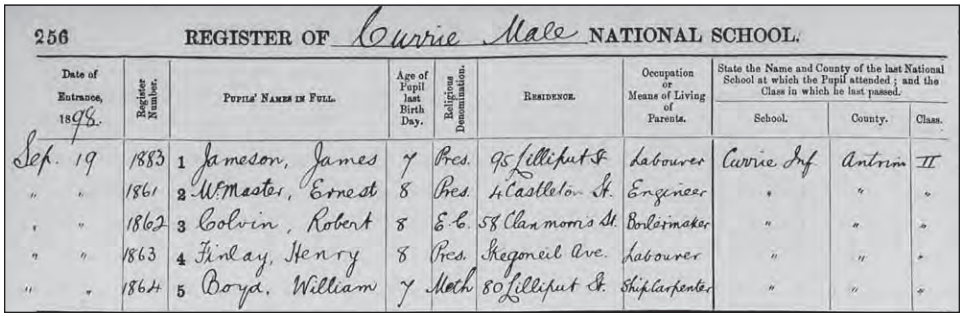
Ireland didn't have a land valuation for nearly three hundred years, and owners and occupiers frequently disagreed with the valuation taxes applied to their properties. Richard Griffith was charged with valuing the land throughout Ireland; his work began in the south of Ireland and worked northwards.

Valuation Revision Books

The Valuation Revision Books continued from where Griffith's valuation began with annual annotations regarding land ownership. They are available well into the 20th century. *FamilySearch* has digitized this collection, but the images are in black and white whereas the originals contain critical changes in color. To find this collection, look in the *FamilySearch* Catalog under the heading "Ireland — (*name of county*) — Land and Property." Copies are also available on *Findmypast*.

School Records

A few Irish school records begin prior to 1850, but they flourish in the period from 1850-1900. They often contain names of the students, ages, gender, residences (townlands), and some observations. Occasionally, you will get parents' names when two students have the same name and are differentiated by the name of a parent or the maiden name of the mother. Of the five school districts in Northern Ireland, three have been imaged by *FamilySearch*. These pro forma registers include the date of entrance, pupil's name, age on last birthday, religious denomi-



256 REGISTER OF Currie Male NATIONAL SCHOOL.

Date of Entrance, 1898.	Register Number.	Pupils' Names in Full.	Age of Pupil last Birth Day.	Religious Denomination.	Residence.	Occupation or Means of Living of Parents.	State the Name and County of the last National School at which the Pupil attended; and the Class in which he last passed. School.	County.	Class.
Sep. 19	1883	1 Jameson, James	7	Pres.	95 Lilliput St	Labourer	Currie Inf	Antrim	II
" "	1861	2 M'Master, Ernest	8	Pres.	4 Castleton St.	Engineer	"	"	"
" "	1862	3 Colvin, Robert	8	E.C.	58 Clanmorris St.	Boilermaker	"	"	"
" "	1863	4 Finlay, Henry	8	Pres.	Skegoneil Ave.	Labourer	"	"	"
" "	1864	5 Boyd, William	7	Meth.	80 Lilliput St.	Shipcarpenter	"	"	"

Register of Currie National School, 1871-1903, FamilySearch *(https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSJJ-TQ4C?i=399&cat=85728), IGN 8100248, image 400.*

nation, residence, occupation or means of living of parents, and the name of the school attended.

1851 Dublin City Census Transcription

Genealogist and historian Sean Murphy discovered a transcript of the heads of household taken from the 1851 census of the city of Dublin. The listing identified 50,000 people by name and was first published by *Eneclann*, which was later purchased by *Findmypast*. It includes the name, street of residence, parish, and county.

Tithe Applotment

The Tithe Applotment records were records of assessment placed on the occupiers and owners of land, taken from 1823-1837. Fifty-five percent of the parishes had been surveyed by 1830. The records list the names of the tenants, townlands, area by acreage, valuation of the property, and the amount of the tithe payable. The Tithe Composition Acts required that payments be made in cash, rather than in-kind. The money collected went to the clergy of the Church of Ireland parish. Indexes to these records are available on *FamilySearch* for the Republic of Ireland, 1814-1855, and Northern Ireland, 1822-1827. See https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1804886.

Tithe Defaulters

Ireland is an agrarian culture, so it stands to reason that the government would focus its tax revenues on those involved in agriculture. Such was the case when a tithe of ten percent was levied on all agricultural households. In 1830 and 1831, the defaulters were so prevalent that the government established the "Clergy Relief Fund 1831." Under this act, the clergy were allowed to collect the defaulted tithes. Each entry contains the defaulter's name, occupation, address, parish, barony, and county. It is available on *Findmypast* as "The 1831 Tithe Defaulters."

O'Connell Census

While not the official name, the "O'Connell Census" was initiated by Daniel O'Connell, M.P., to provide an accurate count of the number of Catholics in Ireland. O'Connell contended that the 1830 census under-represented the Catholic population and asked the Catholic clergy to reexamine the members of their parishes. This effort has produced numerous examples of these lists throughout Ireland. The lists frequently contain the name of the head of the household and, in urban areas, the name of the street on which they were living.

1848 William Smith O'Brien Petition

The petition recorded 81,035 signatures from across Ireland, with the exception of County Offaly. Those signing the petition were in support of sparing the life of William Smith O'Brien, who was convicted of treason for his part in the aborted uprising in Ballingarry, Tipperary. The list is available on *Findmypast*.

18th Century

Spinning Wheel Premium Lists

To increase the production of linen and the linen trade in 1796, Parliament began subsidizing the flax industry by providing spinning wheels and reels to qualified flax growers. The names provided in these lists provide an excellent snapshot of a period known for its lack of records. Records for the counties of Dublin and Wicklow do not appear to have survived. These records are available on *FamilySearch*.

Religious Census 1766

These censuses were taken by the parochial clergy under the direction of The House of Lords to determine religious persuasions and, ultimately, to disarm the Catholics. To provide a unique dataset for the launch of the *Virtual Record Treasury*, the developers focused on creating the most comprehensive index of these records available. By their estimates, they have recreated a name index to over fifty-thousand names from the fifty-nine original items that survived the fire and the additional transcripts and extracts made by antiquarians. To search the index, go to: https://virtualtreasury.ie/gold-seams/1766-religious-census.

Catholic Qualification Rolls

The Catholic Qualification rolls were enumerated from 1775-6 pursuant to "An Act to Enable His Majesty's Subjects

of whatever Persuasion to Testify their Allegiance to Him" (DKR No. 59, p. 52). Many Catholics took the oath in the hope of being able to hold on to their land and property in Ireland. Approximately 1,500 names appear on the rolls, primarily for the provinces of Leinster and Munster. The list is published in the 59th Report of the Deputy Keeper of Ireland. Available on *Findmypast*.

The Convert Rolls

These lists recorded the conversion of Catholics to the Church of Ireland (State Church). While they cover the period from 1703-1836, the majority of the rolls are for the 1760-1790 period. They were printed by the Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2nd edition, eds. Eileen O'Byrne and Anne Chamney, 2005. Available on *Findmypast*.

Directories of Ireland

County and city directories are extremely valuable sources of information for research in Ireland. Even if you are researching a poor Catholic or protestant family, the directories can give you valuable clues to the landholders in the area, leading you to leases for the property on which your ancestors were living. In the cities, they are invaluable for locating tradesmen and other prominent individuals in religion, law, and government. From the 1750s onward, you begin to see directories for the larger cities. The *FamilySearch* Research Wiki has an excellent directories page with links: https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Ireland_Directories.

Religious Census 1740

This is the earlier of the two religious censuses used for genealogical, demographic, and historical research. In some instances, only the number of Catholics was recorded in the 1740 enumeration, whereas the *names* of Protestants were recorded, showing the bias toward Protestantism. This was especially true of the 1740 returns, so try to identify the origin of the surnames in the lists.

Survey Maps

From the mid-1600s onward, there are a number of maps that surveyed the towns and countryside throughout Ireland. Until the Griffith's survey and mapping project, many of these maps for the rural areas were estate maps of the major property owners. A good example of a town map is Ballymoney Town by Archibald Steward, 1734 (ref. PRONI T.2325/1).

Freeholders Lists

These were compiled in the eighteen and nineteenth centuries. A freeholder was the owner of a freehold. A freehold was a tenure of real property inherited in fee simple, fee tail, or for life. Freeholders were entitled to vote, and you will often find detailed leases naming leases for lives, including their residence and specific townland. This townland is vital to sorting out people of the same name.

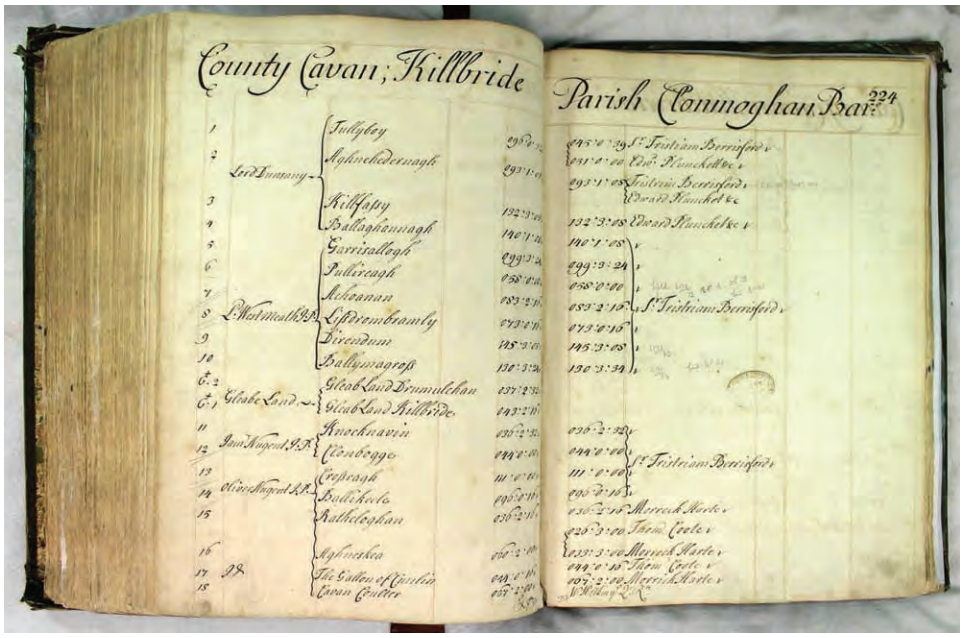
Estate Records

Owners of estates often had complete lists of the tenants on their property. In many instances, maps would accompany these names, showing the proximity of tenants to each other and where they were living. It is not uncommon to see ages and relationships included in these records. Inference of death may sometimes be determined by the striking out of a man's name and the widow's name being inserted in its place. A new *FamilySearch* Research Wiki page was created for these during the pandemic; see "Ireland Estate Records" https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Ireland_Estate_Records.

17th Century

Muster Rolls

These are roll calls of officers and men in each military regiment. They exist for the 17th-20th centuries. For example, a listing for the year 1631 gives 13,092 names of men and officers in the muster rolls. A detailed listing of these records is found in *Tudor and Stuart Muster Rolls, A Directory of Holdings*



Books of Survey and Distribution, County Cavan, Virtual Record Treasury (https://virtualtreasury.ie/item?isadgReferenceCode=NAI%20QRO%201%2F1%2F3%2F3%2F16 : accessed 20 June 2023).

in the British Isles, by Jeremy Gibson and Alan Dell, published by the Federation of Family History Societies, 1989.

Books of Survey and Distribution

These were compiled c.1700 and are an official record of landed proprietors and their estates. They were used to access rents based on acreage called the "Quit Rent." This was payable each year and was based on land granted under the 1662 Act of Settlement and the subsequent 1665 Act of Explanation. These have recently been placed on the *Virtual Record Treasury* website (https://virtualtreasury.ie/); simply type "Books Survey Distribution" into the search box.

Civil Survey

The Civil Survey was taken from 1654 - circa 1660. It was a survey of the holdings of landowners, their titles, and the tenures of their estates. Twenty-seven counties were included in the survey, covering the provinces of Ulster, Leinster, Muster, and a portion of Connaught. The **Strafford Survey** compiled c.1636 is available for the five remaining counties in the province of Connaught and serves as a substitute – see below. The published volumes by the Irish Manuscripts Commission are available for free download under the IMC Digital Editions webpage: https://www.irishmanuscripts.ie/product-category/imc-digital-editions/.

Strafford Survey

The Strafford Survey was the result of an inquisition into the ownership of land in the Province of Connaught. It was overseen and conducted by the Lord Deputy, Thomas Wentworth, who later became the Earl of Stafford. He was commissioned by King Charles I to find the king's title to the Province of Connaught. The landowners in each county made up the juries who were advised to find in favor of the king or lose their lands.

The Pender "Census" of 1659

This "census" was probably taken during Petty's survey between December 1654 and the year 1659. It details the names of the large estate owners and the number of Protestants and Catholics in each parish. The original clan names are also noted with the number of individuals of that name. This record was published in full by the Irish Manuscripts Commission and is available for free download under the IMC Digital Editions webpage: https://www.irishmanuscripts.ie/product-category/imc-digital-editions/.

Hearth Money Rolls

Initiated in 1662, the Hearth Money Rolls were taken into the eighteenth century. They are records relating to the Hearth Money Act of 1662 and additional amending legislation. The rolls usually record the name of the head of the household and the amount of tax levied. If not for the tremendous efforts of Tenison Groves, little of the information and names contained in the rolls would be available today.

Subsidy Rolls

These rolls were the result of levies laid upon the landowners in each county. The collection of the monies was assigned to the sheriff, and the rolls were overseen by the Court of Exchequer. There was a total of twenty-four levies approved between the years 1634-69.

Down Survey

The Down Survey is a mapped record of landownership and selected items of settlement and topography. The survey was basically concerned with lands that were confiscated after the Cromwellian victory. The most important difference between the Civil and Down Surveys is that the Civil Survey areas were estimated by jurors, while the Down Survey was measured by trained surveyors. Trinity College Dublin has placed all of this information online; see *The Down Survey of Ireland*: http://downsurvey.tchpc.tcd.ie/.

Freeman Lists

A freeman was one who was admitted to the freedom of an incorporated city, town, or borough. There were several ways to become a freeman. The most common were by birth (naming the father), service, marriage, or fine.

- Admission by ***Birth*** was granted to sons, and sometimes daughters, of Free Citizens. Several generations of one family could hold the Freedom of an incorporated city at the same time.
- Admission by ***Service*** was granted to those who completed an apprenticeship in one of the trade guilds of the city and paid a fee.
- Admission by ***Marriage*** was granted to sons-in-law of Free Citizens.
- Admission by ***Fine*** was confined to prosperous professional men who were required to pay a substantial sum of money into the city treasury.

Two additional types of admission were also recognized:

- Admission by ***Grace Especial***, also known as *Special Grace*, was equivalent to the modern Honorary Freedom and was reserved for dignitaries and craftsmen who were not in a trade guild.
- Admission by an ***Act of Parliament*** to "Encourage Protestant Strangers to Settle in Ireland" was granted to French Huguenots and Quakers from England.

A number of volumes have been published for the larger cities; some are deposited in local repositories, such as the City of Drogheda (1690-1842), or the Louth County Archives, Dundalk, Ireland.

Sources of Information

John Grenham has produced an excellent list of these resources in the fifth edition of his book, *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors.* The lists are arranged chronologically by county, with numerous references to where they have been published.

An excellent website, Claire Santry's *Irish Genealogy Toolkit*, provides updated information and links to a number of Irish resources. It may be found at: http://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/index.html.

The major genealogy websites, *Ancestry*, *Findmypast*, *MyHeritage*, and *FamilySearch*, continue to publish census substitutes online, although the pace of publication has slowed in recent years. Frequently, these sites make their resources available for free for a few days around St. Patrick's Day (March 17th).

Conclusion

Many resources of this type are yet to be identified because they appear in newspapers and other documents created by private, religious, and government agencies. Watch for additional publications and lists that surface in the new *Virtual Record Treasury* and on major genealogical websites.

David E. Rencher, AG®, CG®, FUGA, FIGRS, is employed as the Chief Genealogical Officer for FamilySearch. *He is one of the rare few who have earned both credentials: Accredited Genealogist® with ICAPGen in Ireland research and Certified Genealogist® with the Board for Certification of Genealogists. He is a past president of the Federation of Genealogical Societies and currently serves as a director on the board of the National Genealogical Society.*



The Minnesota Irish Fair

Harriet Island, August 11-13

The Irish Fair will again be held at Harriet Island in St. Paul from August 11-13, 2023.

Enjoy food, music, dance, children's activities, exhibits, and everything Irish.

IGSI will be part of this annual event, which gives us an opportunity to share the word about IGSI programs and services. Feel free to stop by our booth and say hello.

Please also consider helping out in the IGSI booth. We will need volunteers to staff the booth Friday from 2-6 pm and Sunday from 10 am-6 pm. Shifts will be 4 hours and all volunteers will be given a free pass to enjoy the Fair on the day they volunteer.

If you did not receive the June email asking for volunteers to staff our booth and would like to help or need another copy of the email or additional information, please send an email to volunteers@irishgenealogical.org.

IRISH FAIR OF MINNESOTA

http://www.irishfair.com

For genealogy research in Ireland, Tithe Applotment and Griffith's Valuation are used as census substitutes. Both provide names of renters of property.

The Irish Genealogical Society's website, www.IrishGenealogical.org, has more information.

This list shows the years the records were gathered for each county. Many of the records can be searched online and may help you identify a county or counties in Ireland where your family lived during those times.

Free Searchable Websites

- National Archives of Ireland http://titheapplotmentbooks.nationalarchives.ie/search/tab/home.jsp for Tithe Applotments
- Ask About Ireland http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/ for Griffith's Valuation.

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County	Tithe Applotment Years		Griffith's Valuation Years	
	Start	End	Start	End
Antrim	1824	1834	1861	1862
Armagh	1825	1835	1864	
Carlow	1821	1837	1852	1853
Cavan	1823	1827	1856	1857
Clare	1814	1843	1855	
Cork	1823	1837	1851	1853
Derry	1823	1828	1858	1859
Donegal	1825	1836	1857	
Down	1823	1837	1863	1864
Dublin	1823	1837	1848	1851
Dublin City	---	---	1851	
Fermanagh	1823	1837	1862	
Galway	1824	1844	1855	
Kerry	1823	1837	1852	
Kildare	1823	1837	1851	
Kilkenny	1823	1838	1849	1850
Laois (Queen's, Leix)	1823	1838	1858	1860
Leitrim	1823	1838	1856	
Limerick	1823	1838	1851	1852
Longford	1823	1838	1854	
Louth	1823	1838	1854	
Mayo	1823	1838	1856	1857
Meath	1823	1838	1855	
Monaghan	1823	1838	1858	1860
Offaly (King's)	1823	1838	1864	
Roscommon	1823	1838	1857	1858
Sligo	1823	1837	1858	
Tipperary	1823	1838	1851	
Tyrone	1823	1838	1860	
Waterford	1823	1838	1848	1851
Westmeath	1823	1834	1854	
Wexford	1823	1838	1853	
Wicklow	1824	1837	1852	1853

Did you know IGSI has its own QR code now? Scanning the code with your QR reader will take you directly to IGSI's homepage, where you can remain up to date on upcoming events such as webinars and newly-released podcasts. Try it out today!

Irish Census Substitutes

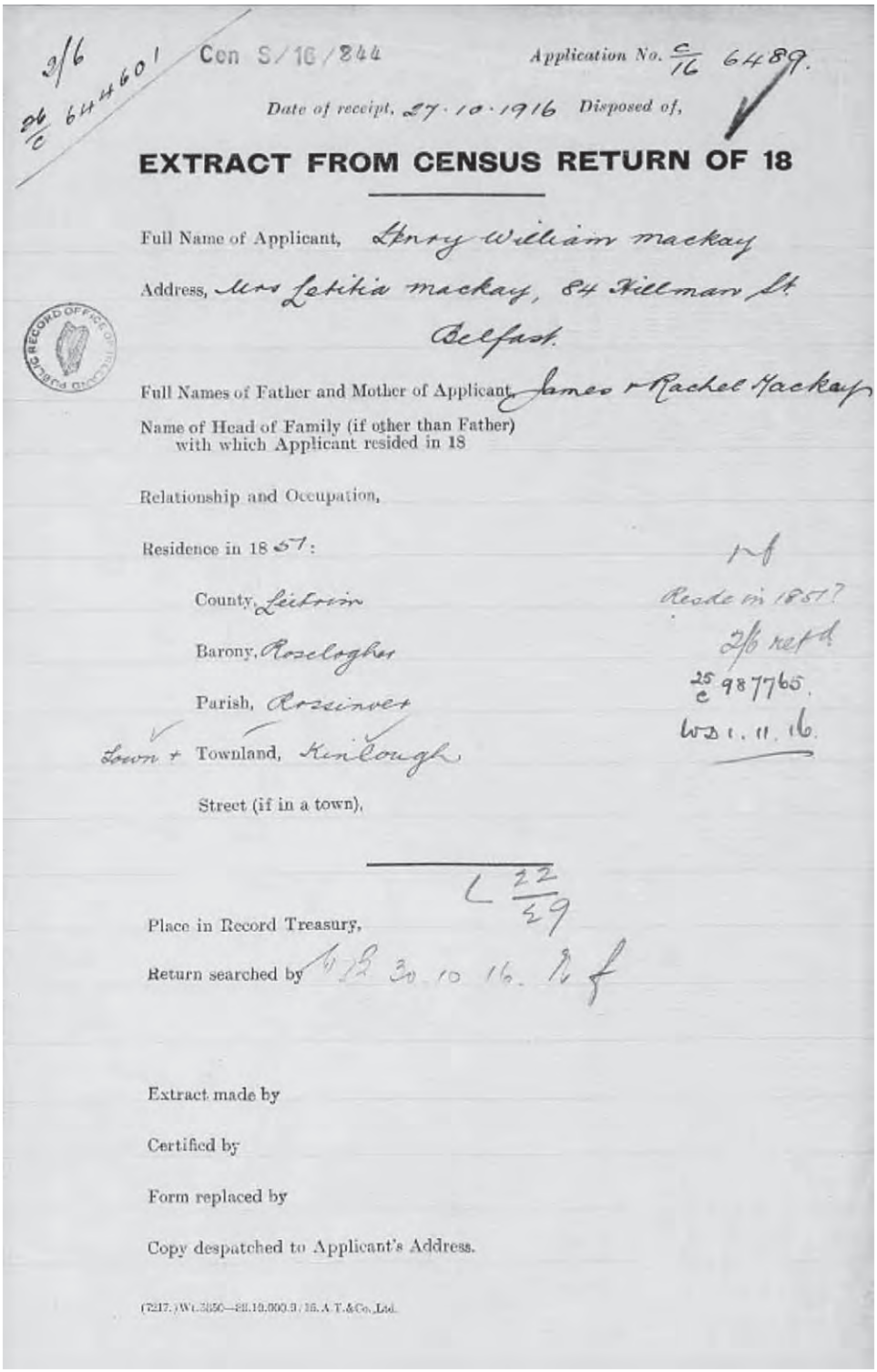
by Donna Moughty

Reprinted with permission from the Irish Family Roots *blog.*

The issues with the Irish censuses are frustrating to say the least! Is there any place you might find your ancestors in the 19th century records? Last week I discussed Dog Licenses which can place your ancestor in a particular place and time. Petty Session records can do the same. The problem is that neither of these provide much in the way of genealogical information. Like most things in Ireland, finding additional records will depend on time and place (and luck). Just like the US 1890 census, there are fragments of the 1821-1851 censuses that survived the Fire. The destruction of the 1861-1891 censuses was done by the government prior to the Fire and it was complete…nothing survives.

The surviving fragments have been indexed and are online at the *National Archives*. If you select the 1821 census, then view the drop-down list of counties, you'll see only those counties listed that have some surviving records. Before you get too excited, the entire county didn't survive, and in some cases a complete parish didn't survive; it may be only one household.

For example, at the *National Archives*, Fermanagh lists the Parishes of Derry-vullan and Aghlurcher (part only) for 1821. There appears to be fairly good survival for these localities. On the other hand, in Mayo the only surviving parish is Shruel (Shrule) and there was only one house (#6) in the townland of Ballycurrin. If you're lucky enough, and your ancestor was in one of the places at that time, you may find a record for them. Using John Grenham's website, in conjunction with his book, *Tracing your Irish Ancestors*,



Con S/16/844 Application No. C/16 6489.

Date of receipt, 27·10·1916 Disposed of,

EXTRACT FROM CENSUS RETURN OF 18

Full Name of Applicant, Henry William mackay

Address, Mrs Letitia mackay, 84 Hillman St Belfast.

Full Names of Father and Mother of Applicant, James & Rachel Mackay

Name of Head of Family (if other than Father) with which Applicant resided in 18

Relationship and Occupation,

Residence in 1851:

County, Leitrim

Barony, Roseclogher

Parish, Rossinver

Town + Townland, Kinlough

Street (if in a town),

Reside in 1851?

2/6 ref'd

25 C 98765.

W.D. 1.11.16.

Place in Record Treasury, L 22/29

Return searched by W.D. 30.10.16.

Extract made by

Certified by

Form replaced by

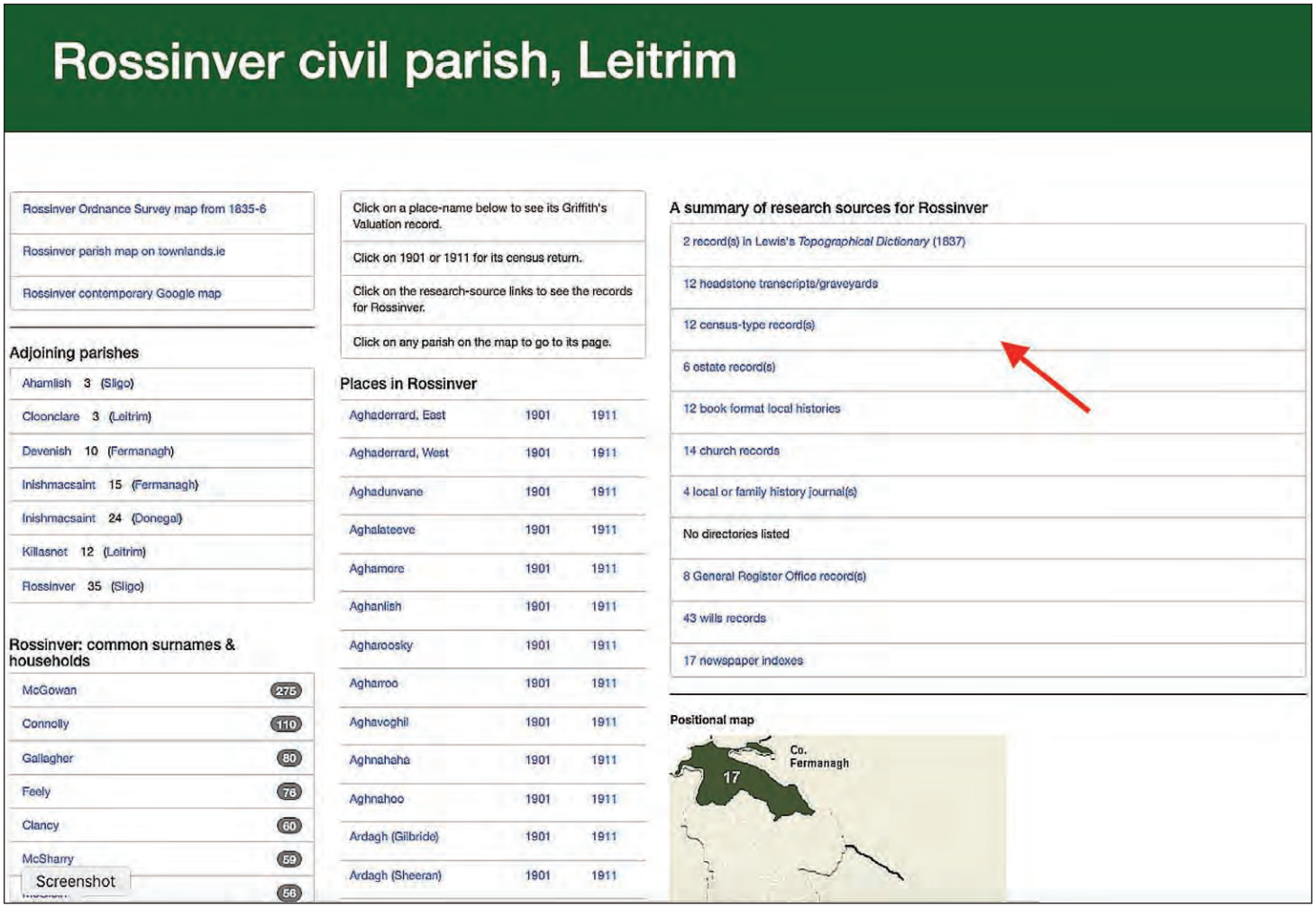
Copy despatched to Applicant's Address.

(7217.) Wt.3656—22.10.000.3/16. A.T.&Co.,Ltd.

Extract from Census Return

will give you an excellent listing of what might be available. On his website, *IrishAncestors*, go to the sitemap, select the county, then the parish, and in the upper right will be a list of sources. I struck out on census fragments…none in the areas of my ancestors.

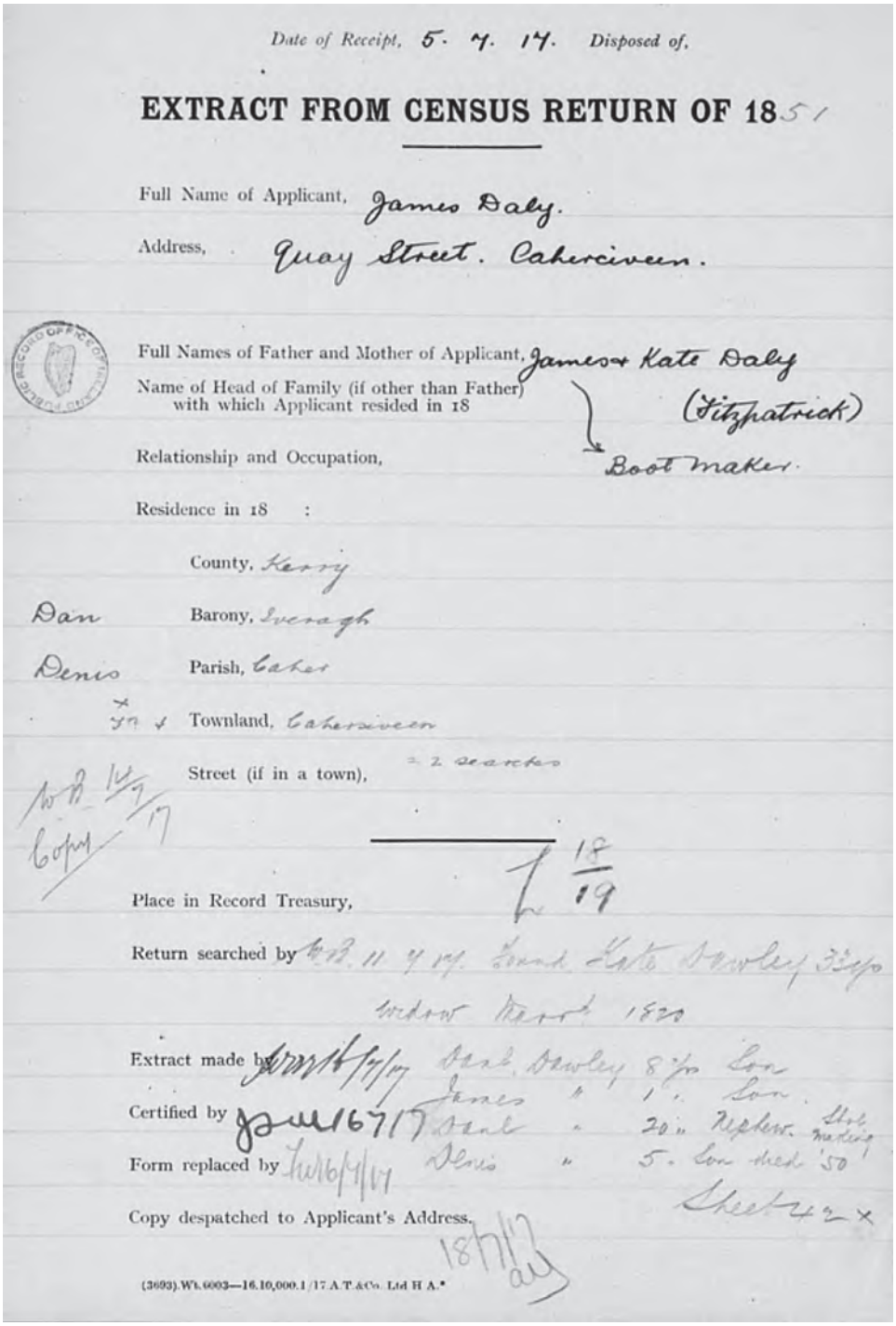
You might notice another listing at the *National Archives*…Census Search Forms 1841-151. (These records are also available at *FindMyPast* and *Ancestry*). Since those censuses were destroyed, what is this? When the Old Age Pension Act was introduced in Ireland in 1908, eligibility was set at 70 years old and applicants had to prove their age. To be eligible, a person would have been born before civil registration began in 1864. How could they prove their age? One way was by being identified in either the 1841 or 1851 census which weren't destroyed until 1922. The applicant would complete a form with their name, residence at the time of the census, their approximate age, and parents' names. The request was sent to the Public Records Office for research. I came across the form at the top of the page for my great-grandmother's brother Henry Mackay/Mackey. I didn't know what had happened to him and he popped up in a search. I know it's the correct person based off the location and names of his parents. Notice on the line "Return searched by" is NF, or "not found." Of course, he wasn't found… the search was in the 1851 census, and he wasn't born until 1867! But I found out that in 1916 he lived in Belfast, was married to Letitia, and with that information was able to find his marriage record, and both Henry and Letitia's death records. I collected all of the records and filed them. When I looked at them again recently and put them in a Timeline, I realized that Henry died in a hospital in Dublin on 18 October 1916 when his wife, Letitia, applied for a pension for him. The form was received on 17 October 1916. Interesting what you might find by using a Timeline.



Rossinver Civil Parish, Leitrim

If the information was found, the entire family was written down (the information was sometimes written on the back of the form, but only the front was imaged… the originals are at the *National Archives*).

On the example below for James Daly, the information was written on the front of the image. This family had been indexed as "Dawley", but James appears as one year old. You also learn that his father was also James, and his mother was Kate (maiden name Fitzpatrick), a widow. James, who died before 1851, was a bootmaker. James (1) had siblings Daniel (8) and Denis (5) [who died in 1850] and a nephew, also Daniel (20), was in the household and was a shoemaker. Quite a bit of information for a record that no longer exists.



Date of Receipt, 5. 7. 14. Disposed of,

EXTRACT FROM CENSUS RETURN OF 1851

Full Name of Applicant, James Daly.

Address, Quay Street. Cahersiveen.

Full Names of Father and Mother of Applicant, James & Kate Daly (Fitzpatrick)

Name of Head of Family (if other than Father) with which Applicant resided in 18

Relationship and Occupation, Boot maker.

Residence in 18 :

County, Kerry

Barony, Iveragh

Parish, Cahir

Townland, Cahersiveen

Street (if in a town),

Place in Record Treasury,

Return searched by … Dawley … Kate Dawley … widow … 1851

Extract made by …

Certified by …

Form replaced by …

Copy despatched to Applicant's Address.

(3693).Wt.6003—16.10,000.1/17.A.T.&Co. Ltd H.A.*

Extract from Census Return

If the individual was not found, at least you have the names of the parents and the location. The records for the six counties of Northern Ireland are on microfilm at the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland; however, they can also be found at *Ancestry*, 1841/1851 Census Abstracts (Northern Ireland). For the six counties the images were taken from a book by Josephine Masterson, and published by Genealogical Publishing Co. in 1999.

Church of Ireland Parish Record Search Forms were another way to prove age, and these are available at *FindMyPast* and *Ancestry*. Since almost two-thirds of the Church of Ireland Registers were destroyed in the 1922 Fire, they can also be an excellent source. An 1845 baptism record for Glasgow Johnston in Rossinver Parish in Leitrim lists his parents as Arthur and Barbara. I did have Arthur's name from Glasgow's marriage record, but Barbara was a new addition. The Rossinver Parish Registers were destroyed in the Fire, and the oldest surviving records date to 1876. I searched by just Rossinver parish…no individual for a list of all the records that survived for the parish (total of 77). The only records were baptisms. The title of the database at *Ancestry* is "Ireland, Church of Ireland Search Forms for Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1731-1870," which has 13,624 records. I searched just on the year 1731 to see what was there and it was only a note stating that the records didn't start until the 1800s. Since the purpose of

this database was to determine a birth year for the Pension after 1908, it's unlikely that there would be someone living in 1908 that was born in the early 1700s! Also, I only found baptismal records, not marriages or burials. The database is also at *FindMyPast* with no dates. It has 20,146 records. If you have access, check both.

So, it is a matter of luck. These records can be a goldmine if your ancestors were in the right place at the right time. Check them out to see what you can find.

Happy Hunting and Stay Safe!

For more information on this or other Irish genealogy topics, you can contact Donna Moughty via her website, *Irish Family Roots*.

Donna Moughty, has been conducting research for over 30 years and is a member of APG, a blogger on topics including Methodology, Internet, Irish research, and technology, the author of the Quick Reference Guides for Irish Research, and has conducted research trips to Dublin and Belfast for the past 12 years. She recently retired from lecturing and private research to focus on her own family and will conduct her final group research trips to Ireland this October. Donna continues to blog at www.irishfamilyroots.com and is on Facebook at www.facebook.com/DonnaMoughtyGenealogy/.



What's New for Summer 2023

Saturday, July 22 | *Using Surprising Databases in Your Family Tree Searches* by Lisa Walsh Doughtery

How can we add details to our family trees? Where did our ancestors work or go to church? Did they join clubs? What everyday activities could give texture to the bare bones of a family tree? We will take an in-depth look at different databases that can give a wealth of information about your family heritage. Lisa will take you through records found in the Emigrant Savings Bank of New York collection, as well as in the Order of Foresters in Massachusetts. While based on the Atlantic coast, these records penetrate deeply into the immigrant communities of Colonial America. It is incredible what family history you can discover through these records and the insights they can shed on the lives of your ancestors.

Saturday, August 19 | *Periodical Source Index (PERSI), the Premier Subject Index for Local History Periodicals* | by Elizabeth Hodges

Have you visited the IGSI Library website and checked out all the periodicals in our collection? How can we locate the hidden gems in these volumes? Elizabeth will describe the Periodical Source Index, or PERSI, which is the largest subject index to genealogy and local history periodical articles in the world. The staff of the Allen County Public Library Foundation and the ACPL's Genealogy Center created indexes of articles in periodicals (including defunct titles) published by thousands of local, state, national and international societies, and organizations. PERSI is organized by surname or location and by basic subject headings. Since PERSI was created at the ACPL, the Genealogy Center has a copy of every periodical issue covered by the index. Elizabeth will demonstrate strategies and techniques to use PERSI more effectively.

Saturday, September 16 | *Finding the Irish in Britain* | by Chris Paton

How often have you located a record that shows a birthplace in England or that the family sailed from Liverpool? If your ancestors were in the military before 1922, where are the records? In this session, Chris Paton will explore the records of the Irish in Britain and show how they can be used to further advance our Irish family history research. Remember, the modern Republic of Ireland was part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland from 1801 to 1922, with Northern Ireland still a member to this day. Various UK repositories contain material that can help to flesh out the stories of those seeking work in Britain, which can plug gaps resulting from records missing in Ireland. These include census substitutes such as the Ulster Covenant, British poor law records and removals back to Ireland, and civil registration records in Britain, as well as censuses and other documentary sources for British-administered territories overseas.

If you have questions about any of our webinars or classes, contact Trish and Walt, IGSI Education Co-Chairs, at Education@IrishGenealogical.org.

Finding Irish Origins in the English (or Scottish or Welsh) Censuses

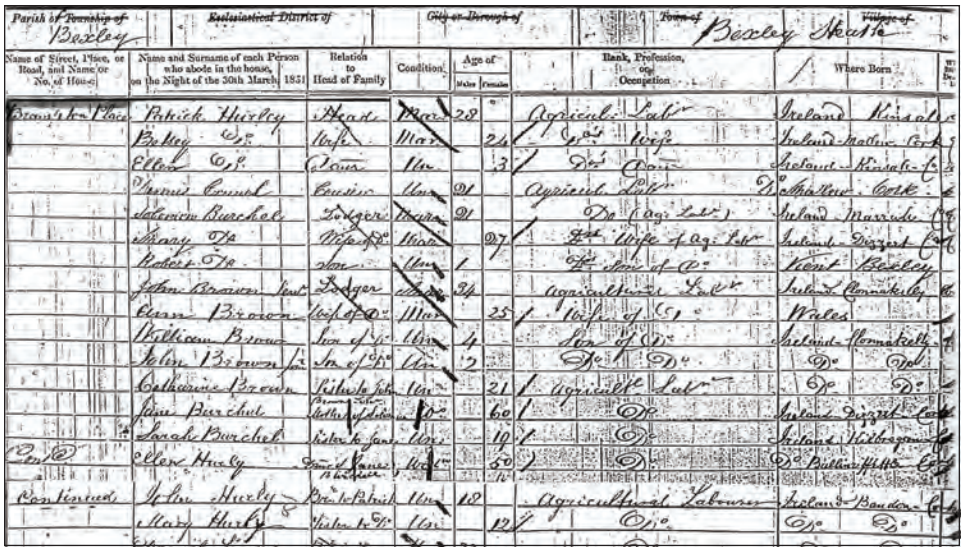
by Evva Benson Housley

Reprinted with permission from The Septs, *Volume 33, Number 1.*

Much to the chagrin of Irish researchers, British (English, Scottish, and Welsh) census enumerators in the 19th century were given the directive to only state the country of origin if the person was born outside the country of residence in the census. Hence, we find the generic "Ireland" as the birthplace of our ancestor in a British census. Discouraging.

But did you know that approximately 15% of census takers did not follow their instructions? That's right, 15% of the time you will find the name of the county or town of birth of an Irish ancestor! This means that you should search EVERY British census that could have included your ancestor. Even search censuses before and after you think they were in England. Each census you search gives you another chance at cashing in on that lucky 15%. Finding every census for a family is a GREAT strategy to learn more about them. In one census, an elderly parent may have come to live with them. In another census, they may live next door to someone with the same surname — a sibling, perhaps.

In 1911, census enumerators were given new instructions: they were to specify the town and county of birth for everyone. So, if you have an Irish ancestor in the 1911 British census, it will tell you their birthplace. Remember, however, that oftentimes people gave the name of a larger town near them and not the little place they were born. Don't give up if at first you don't find their birth record in the place they indicated; instead, expand your search to the surrounding area.



Census 1851 with Irish Origin. Graphic courtesy of Evva Benson Housley.

So, take heart and start searching the British censuses. They are available through many websites, though not always for free:

- *FamilySearch* – www.familysearch.org
- *FreeCEN* (UK census online) – www.freecen.org.uk
- *Ancestry.com* – www.ancestry.com
- *Findmypast* – www.findmypast.com
- *The Genealogist* – www.thegenealogist.co.uk



Evva Housley graduated from Brigham Young University with Bachelor's degrees in family history and economics. She is an Accredited Genealogist in Ireland and England. She worked for FamilySearch *for 11 years prior to her current dream job of being a full-time mother and wife.*

Findmypast Updates Irish Records

Findmypast has recently updated its 1911 census collection, as well as improving its searchability. *Findmypast* has also added two new collections from Ireland's Genealogical Office Manuscripts, one on marriages and the other on wills. For more information, see Claire Santry's 23 June 2023 blog post, "Today's *FindMyPast* Friday upload is a purely Irish affair." (https://www.irishgenealogynews.com/2023/06/todays-findmypast-friday-upload-is.html).

Finding Census Substitutes Using *Cyndi's List*

by Kim Gehrman White

Cyndi's List can be an invaluable tool to add to your genealogy toolbox; think of it as a free, one-stop shop for genealogy. If you are unfamiliar with *Cyndi's List*, you are in for a treat. The website contains over 315,000 links (as of 4 May 2023). Cyndi Ingle has created an index to genealogy databases, websites, and an unfathomable number of genealogy-related resources. The index is categorized and cross-referenced alphabetically for ease of use.

In support of the theme, "Census Substitutes," here are examples from *Cyndi's List* to give you a feel for what may be found on the website. Using the List is akin to opening a Matryoshka doll; main categories give way to many subsets of categories. Upon landing on the Home page, click the "Categories" button and scroll down to "United Kingdom & Ireland." This category index offers several next-step options, such as:

Home > United Kingdom & Ireland > U.K. & Ireland Census >

General Resources >

Irish Census Records: *Online Ireland Census Records & Indexes* >
Online Irish Census Indexes & Records: Ireland Census Records by County — *A Genealogy Guide*

National Archives of Ireland >
Genealogy Records > Our Genealogy website (all free to access)

- Census of Ireland, 1901 & 1911, and pre-1901 survivals
- Census Search Forms, 1841 — 51
- Tithe Applotment Books
- Soldiers' Wills
- Calendars of Wills and Administrations
- Diocesan & Prerogative Wills
- Diocesan & Prerogative Marriage Licence Bonds
- Catholic qualification & convert rolls
- Valuation Office books
- Shipping agreements & crew lists
- Will Registers

Findmypast — Search — Census, Land & Substitutes > Ireland

- Census
  - Ireland Census 1821-1851, surviving remnants
  - Ireland Census Search Forms 1841 & 1851 (used for the old-age pension applications and established in 1909)
- Directories & Almanacs
- Electoral Rolls
- Land & Estates
  - Griffith's Valuation
  - Landed Estate Court Rentals

Census Records Online: Indexes, Extractions & Transcriptions >

- 1831 Census — Dunboe Parish, Co. Londonderry (Ireland) > The Londonderry, Northern IrelandGenWeb Project
- *FamilySearch* — Ireland Census, 1821, surviving remnants
- *FamilySearch* — Ireland Census, 1831, surviving remnants
- Online Census Records for County Donegal [Ireland] > Donegal Genealogy Resources, Online Census Extracts – Co Donegal, Ireland; an index to census transcriptions
- The First Census of The Fews – 1602 (Louth, Ireland) > *McConville*'s: Irish Genealogy
- Townland Index (Meath, Ireland): Census transcriptions for selected townlands >

Ireland & Northern Ireland >

This subcategory has several links relevant to finding census substitute records for Ireland, some of which have already been mentioned. Here are just a few:

- Census
  - *Ancestry*, "Ireland 1766 Religions Census" (the majority of the places covered are in Northern Ireland)
  - *Emerald Ancestors* — Northern Ireland Genealogy & Ulster Ancestry (access to birth, marriage, death, and census records)
- Military
  - *Military Archives*: Defence Forces Ireland
- Voters, Poll Books, Electoral Records
  - Search freeholders' records; images of pre-1840 freeholders' registers and poll books (*Public Record Office of Northern Ireland* — PRONI)

This is not a comprehensive list of links available on *Cyndi's List*. Thank you to Cyndi Ingle for allowing *The Septs* to highlight her generous contribution to family history research.

Cyndi's List

https://www.cyndislist.com

Griffith's Valuation

by John Grenham

From the 1820s to the 1840s a complex process of reform attempted to standardise the basis of local taxation in Ireland. The first steps were to map and fix administrative boundaries through the Ordnance Survey and the associated Boundary Commission. The next step was to assess the productive capacity of all property in the country in a uniform way. Richard Griffith, a geologist based in Dublin, became Boundary Commissioner in 1825 and Commissioner of Valuation in 1827. The results of his great survey, the Primary Valuation of Ireland, were published between 1847 and 1864.[1] Up to mid-1852, the Valuation was arranged by county, subdivided by barony, civil parish, and townland. From mid-1852, "barony" is replaced by "Poor Law Union."

PARISH OF ACHILL.

No. and Letters of Reference to Map.	Names. Townlands and Occupiers.	Names. Immediate Lessor.	Description of Tenement.	Area. A. R. P.	Rateable Annual Valuation. Land. £ s. d.	Rateable Annual Valuation. Buildings. £ s. d.	Total Annual Valuation of Rateable Property. £ s. d.
	KEEL, EAST—con.						
15	Peter M'Namara,	Trus. of Achill Mission,	House and land,			0 10 0	
16	Francis M'Namara,	Same,	House and land,			0 8 0	
17	Thomas M'Namara,	Same,	House and land,			0 6 0	
18	Anthony Lavelle (*Tom*),	Same,	House, office, & land,			0 10 0	4 9 0
19	Patk. Lavelle (*James*),	Same,	House, office, & land,			0 10 0	
20	Martin Lavelle (*Cronin*),	Same,	House, office, & land,			0 6 0	
21	Edwd. Lavelle (*Young*),	Same,	House and land,			0 8 0	
22	Patrick Barrett,	Same,	House and land,			0 6 0	
	Denis M'Cue,	Same,	Land,			—	
23	Thos. Lavelle (*Morgan*),	Same,	House and land,			0 5 0	
24	Michael Lavelle (*Tom*),	Same,	House and land,			0 8 0	2 11 0
25	Michael Farry,	Same,	House and land,			0 2 0	
	James Farry,	Same,	Land,			—	
26	Mary Lavelle,	Same,	House and land,			0 2 0	
27	Anne Lavelle,	Same,	House and land,			0 2 0	
28	Patk. Lavelle (*Margin*),	Same,	House, office, & land,			0 5 0	
	John Lavelle (*Darby*),	Same,	Land,			—	
29	Michl. Lavelle (*Darby*),	Same,	House and land,			0 10 0	
30	Patrick Mangan (*Rake*),	Same,	House and land,			0 2 0	
31	George M'Namara,	Same,	House and land,			0 10 0	
	Edwd. Mangan (*Tailor*),	Same,	Land,			—	3 10 0
	Thos. Lavelle (*Bryan*),	Same,	Land,			—	
32	John Mangan (*Ned*),	Same,	House and land,			0 5 0	
33	John Lavelle (*Trumpet*),	Same,	House and land,			0 4 0	
34	Martin Lavelle (*Baun*),	Same,	House and land,			0 4 0	
35	Michl. Mangan (*Tailor*),	Same,	House and land,	259 3 24	10 0 0	0 5 0	
36	Mary Molloy,	Same,	House, offices, & land,	672 1 4	4 6 0	2 15 0	
	Anthony Lavelle (*Tom*),	Same,	Land,	77 2 27	0 14 0	—	
37	Owen O'Melia,	Same,	House and land,			0 5 0	
	Patk. Lavelle (*James*),	Same,	[redacted]			—	
	Edwd. Lavelle (*Young*),	Same,	Land,			—	4 6 0

Agnomens, Keel East townland, Achill, Co. Mayo

Except for multiple-occupancy tenements in urban slums, the Valuation lists every landholder and every householder in Ireland. Apart from the townland address and householder's name, the particulars given were:

- name of the person from whom the property was leased ('immediate lessor');
- description of the property;
- acreage;
- valuation.

The only directly useful family information supplied is in areas where a surname was particularly common. The surveyors often adopted the traditional Irish practice of using agnomens, especially the father's first name, to distinguish between individuals of the same name, so that 'John Reilly (James)' is the son of James, while 'John Reilly (Michael)' is the son of Michael. For similar reasons, occupations are also sometimes used to tell 'John Ryan (weaver)' from 'John Ryan (farmer)'.

The valuation was never intended as a census substitute and, had the 1851 census survived, the valuation would have had little genealogical significance. As things stand, however, it gives the only detailed guide to where in Ireland people lived in the middle of the nineteenth century and to what property they occupied. In addition, a huge quantity of material was produced both before publication and in subsequent revisions, making it possible, in many cases, to identify occupiers before the publication date and to trace living descendants of those originally listed by Griffith. (See Valuation Office Records[2])

Copies of Griffith's Valuation are widely available in major libraries and record offices, both on microfiche and in their original published form.

Griffith's Valuation Online

In the early 2000s, Eneclann, the National Library of Ireland, and the Origins Network put together the most complete set of Griffith's Valuation ever assembled. They digitally imaged it and an accompanying set of valuation maps, and made a database transcription of all personal names and placenames. In 2009 the Library Council of Ireland acquired a licence for the digital record images and the transcripts (not the maps) from this consortium and made them searchable for free at *AskAboutIreland.ie*. The transcripts were linked to a separate set of Valuation maps created between 1870 and 1883. The full early 2000s set, images, transcripts and maps, is now also on *Findmypast.ie*. *Ancestry.com* has a different transcription, without the accompanying maps.

The placenames used in Griffith's are the name versions standardised earlier by the Ordnance Survey and used in the 1851 census. The civil parish placenames

listing at www.johngrenham.com/places/civil_index.php uses the 1851 Townlands Index to provide click-through access to the *AskAboutIreland* Griffith's listings for each townland.

The major differences between *AskAbout Ireland* and the commercial transcripts lie in the search interface and the maps. Searching on the free site permits only a very weak surname variant option, no wildcards, and no variant option at all for its placenames search. It is not possible, for example, to combine a personal name and townland name search.

The difference in the links to the Ordnance Survey maps accompanying Griffith's on the two sites is more complex. The leftmost column in the printed valuation, headed "No and Letters of Reference to map," corresponds to the Ordnance Survey maps accompanying the Valuation. Each holding within a townland or street is numbered sequentially in order of valuation, not geographical contiguity. Capital letters after the subdivision number (e.g. "2A, B, C") indicate separate parcels of property in the townland held by the same individual. So if John Kelly leased two separate fields in the townland of Ballymore, these would be listed within the townland under his name following each other as 2 A, B. Lower-case letters after the holding number (e.g. "2a, b, c") indicate a house situated within a parcel of property. Where several houses are situated on a parcel held in common by a number of listed occupiers, a large curly bracket ties them together.

In theory, both online versions of Griffith's allow users to go from the printed Valuation to the corresponding OS map and thus precisely identify a particular holding. In practice, this is sometimes difficult. The map set used by *Findmypast* is more or less contemporaneous with the publication of the Valuation and so corresponds more closely to it, but the maps are often badly worn, with black and white images presented awkwardly. The *AskAboutIreland* maps are very clean, full colour, and have been stitched together and overlaid on a contemporary Google map, making them much easier to manipulate and to match to modern roads and villages. However, the map set is at least twenty years older than the printed valuation, resulting in many of subdivision boundaries no longer matching those recorded in Griffith's.

In addition, the *AskAboutIreland* collection can include anything up to eight additional maps, accessible through a drop-down list headed 'Map Version' on the right of the initial map displayed. These come from the Valuation Office and were used in the process of revising the original valuation maps. They relate only to the Republic of Ireland. Unfortunately, in the words of the site itself, "The exact year of revision/publication for each of these versions has not been possible to identify." Without a year, the maps are almost useless. When the VO revision books become available online, it may be possible to match them with these VO maps. The *AskAboutIreland* maps also link to a set of the Ordnance Survey Name Books, which are a large series of studies of local place-lore accumulated by the OS in the process of the standardisation of placenames.

For more on the Griffith's Valuation Office Records, including pre- and post-publication records and estate records, visit John Grenham's *Irish Ancestors* website at http://www.johngrenham.com. Annual subscriptions are $69.99, monthly subscriptions are $9.99, or a full 24-hour access is $5.99. John also offers "five free page views" per 24 hours for pages that return specific information; the browse section does not count towards the free five views.

Endnotes

[1] The Primary Valuation of Ireland is commonly referred to as Griffith's Valuation.

[2] Hyperlink connects to www.johngrenham.com > Griffith's and Tithe Books > Valuation Office Records

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John Grenham was Project Manager with the Irish Genealogical Project from 1991 to 1995 and later went on to develop and market his own genealogical software, 'Grenham's Irish Recordfinder'. In 2005, he was the first Genealogist-in-Residence at Dublin City Library. He was awarded a fellowship of The Irish Genealogical Research Society in 2007 and of the Genealogical Society of Ireland in 2010. He is the author of Tracing your Irish Ancestors



(5th ed., Dublin, Baltimore MD, 2019) the standard reference guide for Irish genealogy, The Atlantic Coast of Ireland (2014), Clans and Families of Ireland (1995), and An Illustrated History of Ireland (1997), among other works. He wrote the "Irish Roots" column in The Irish Times from 2009 to 2016, develops heritage databases, and ran the Irish Ancestors website in conjunction with The Irish Times until 2016. He now runs the successor website.

Reprinted with permission from John Grenham's Irish Ancestors *website.*

Basic DNA Tools, Part 3: Grouping and Clustering

by Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D.

In our April 2023 issue (vol. 44, no. 2), we looked at ways to use your shared/in common with (ICW) matches.

In this issue, we'll take a dive into grouping and clustering your matches, a method that builds on and expands shared match methodologies.

What is "Grouping and Clustering?"

Grouping and clustering are names for the process of separating your match list into subsets, for example, maternal matches, paternal matches, or matches descended from particular ancestral couples. Sometimes we use the term "genetic network" for these match-list subsets.

So What?

What do we gain from grouping and clustering matches? Powerful tools for solving genetic genealogy problems, that's what! We'll look at ways to use these tools at the end of this article.

Methods for Grouping and Clustering

There are lots of different methods for defining and labeling groups or clusters. Several testing companies automatically give us a start by dividing our match lists into paternal and maternal matches. Several allow us to define groups and label matches using colored dots. The Leeds Method shows us how to manually group matches. Finally, there are automated tools that create groups and clusters for us.

Automatic Grouping

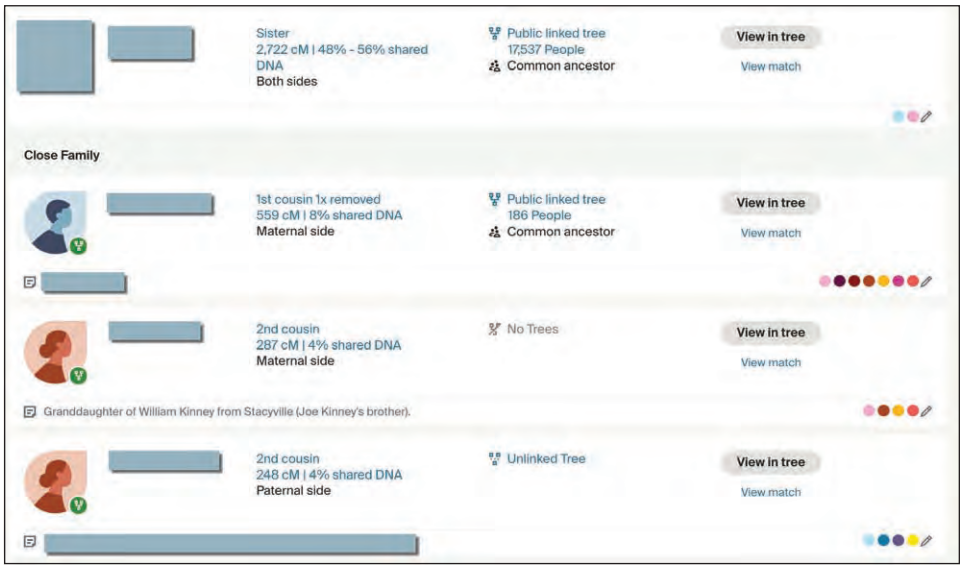
We'll start by looking at automatic grouping. Not all testing companies do this, but several do.

Ancestry released its SideView™ technology in 2022 and 2023. SideView™ divides your match list into matches related to Parent 1, matches related to Parent 2, matches related to both sides, and unassigned matches. If testers can identify which parent is Parent 1 and which is Parent 2, they can change those labels to Paternal and Maternal.

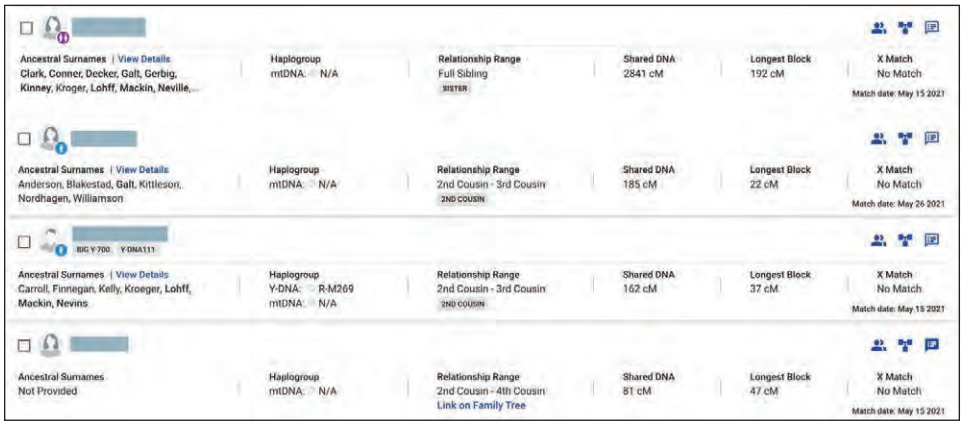
Here is a snippet of Jere Mackin's *Ancestry* match list. The kit manager has changed the default Parent 1 and Parent 2 labels, so Jere's matches in the figure appear as Paternal, Maternal, and, in the case of Jere's full sister, Both Sides.[1]

Ancestry acknowledges that its parental labeling can be wrong and allows testers to change the labels SideView™ has assigned to individual matches. However, the company claims that its parental labels are more than 95% accurate for 9 out of 10 people.[2]

FamilyTreeDNA (FTDNA) is the second company that can separate matches into paternal and maternal lists. At *FTDNA*, this separation does not occur automatically as it does at *Ancestry*. To "activate" paternal/maternal match labeling for a kit, you need to first add a tree to your *Family Finder* kit, then link one or more



Ancestry *SideView™*



FTDNA *match list*

matches to your tree. Once you've done those two things, *FTDNA*'s algorithms assign paternal or maternal designations to many (but not all) of your matches. The figure above shows Jere Mackin's matches to a full sibling, two paternal cousins, and another match *FTDNA* has not designated as maternal or paternal.

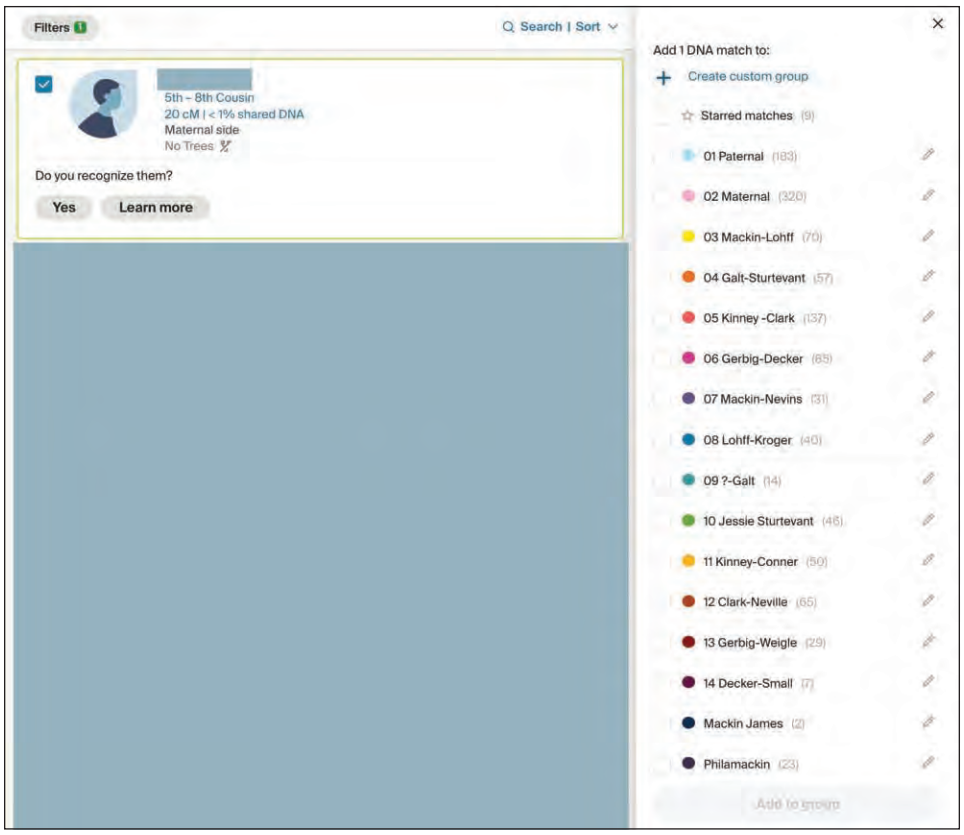
Manual Methods

Let's look at manual methods of grouping and clustering matches next.

Colored Dots (*Ancestry*)

Both *Ancestry* and *MyHeritage* allow you to assign matches to groups that you define. To create a group at *Ancestry*, you click the circled plus sign on the right end of the match's entry in your match list.

This opens a panel on the right side of your screen where you can click "Create custom group."



Assigning Ancestry *group*



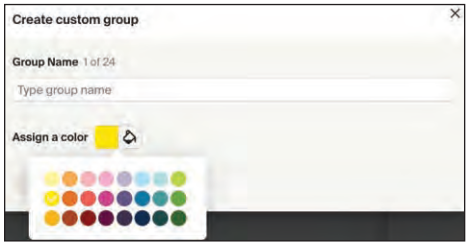
Creating Ancestry *group 1*



Creating Ancestry *group 2*

When you click the Create custom group plus sign, you can type in a name for the group and choose a color for the group.

Once you've created a series of groups, your groups will appear when you click a match's plus sign. To assign the match to one or more existing groups, just click the box(es) next to the group name(s) you want to assign to that match. In the case shown below, the match is fairly small (20 cM), and SideView™ thinks it's a maternal match. Even though the match has no tree, examination of the shared matches shows that this person matches people connected to the family of Jere's maternal grandmother, Ida Gerbig. To label the match, I will check the box labeled "02 Maternal," the one labeled "06 Gerbig-Decker," and the one labeled "13 Gerbig-Weigle." Once I click a group, the "Add to group" button at the bottom of the list becomes active and available to click when I finish assigning groups.



Creating Ancestry *group 3*

Mistakes are reversible. If I click a box without clicking Add to group, I can click again to de-select it. If I click a box and save it by clicking Add to group, I click the

edit pencil next to the group dots, choose "Remove from group," check the boxes for the groups I want to remove, and click Remove from group.

You have probably noticed that I start group names with a two-digit number. Using numbers forces Ancestry to list my groups numerically instead of alphabetically, which I like![3]

Colored Dots (*MyHeritage*)

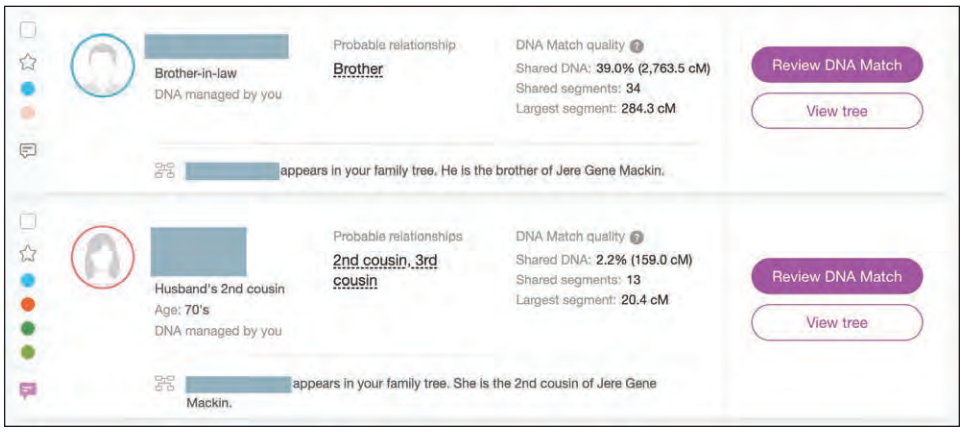
MyHeritage also allows you to create and label groups using colored dots. This snippet of Jere Mackin's match list on *MyHeritage* shows Jere's matches to a full sibling and a paternal cousin.

On *MyHeritage*, the group dots appear on the left side of the match's listing. You create and assign groups on *MyHeritage* by clicking the magenta-colored button, "Review DNA Match," and opening the match's page. On the match page, you click the icon that looks like a ribbon in the upper right corner of the page.

As at *Ancestry*, clicking the icon opens a panel. Here I have already created the same set of groups I created for Jere's DNA kit on *Ancestry*. I can select the ones I want to apply to the match I am working with by checking their boxes. To create a new group, I simply click the plus sign at the bottom of the group list that says "Create new label."

Leeds Method

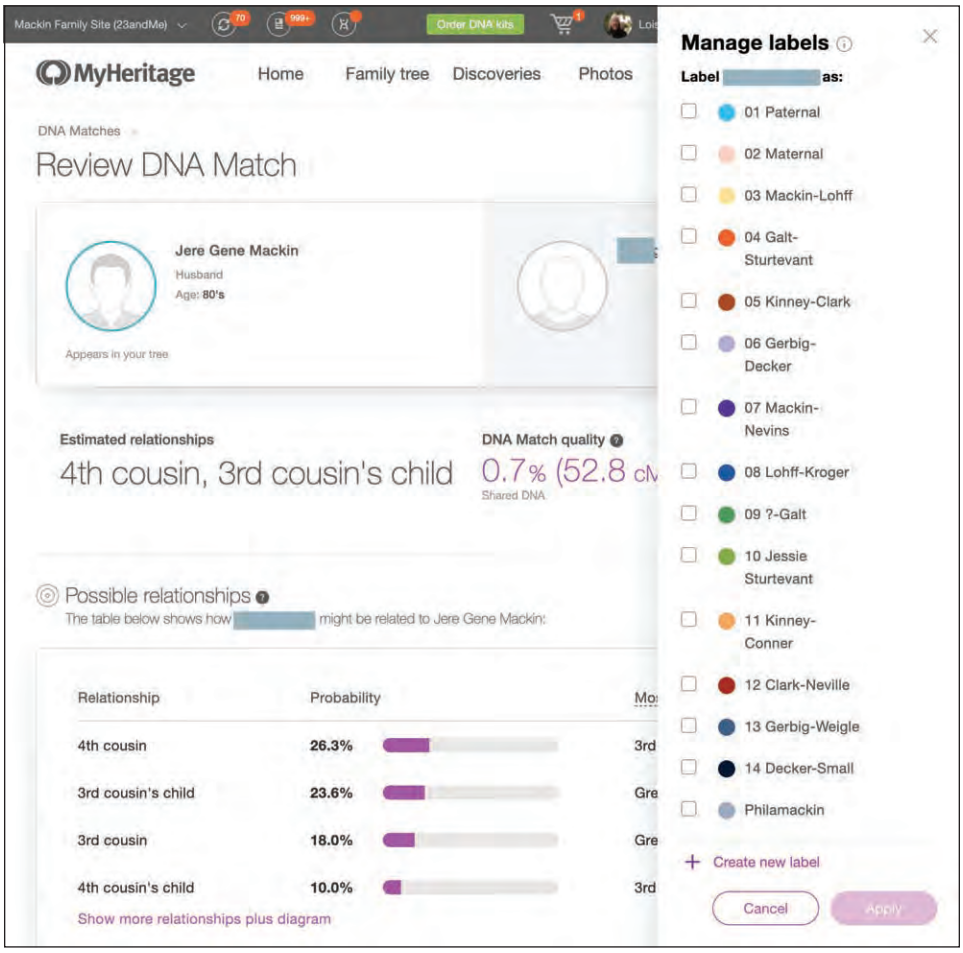
A third manual method for creating groups and clusters is the Leeds Method, created by and named after genetic genealogist Dana Stewart Leeds. The Leeds method uses a spreadsheet and a DNA tester's match list to create color-coded groups or clusters of matches who share DNA because they share ancestors. To learn Dana's method, read her series of



MyHeritage *match list*



Assigning MyHeritage *groups 1*



Assigning MyHeritage *groups 2*

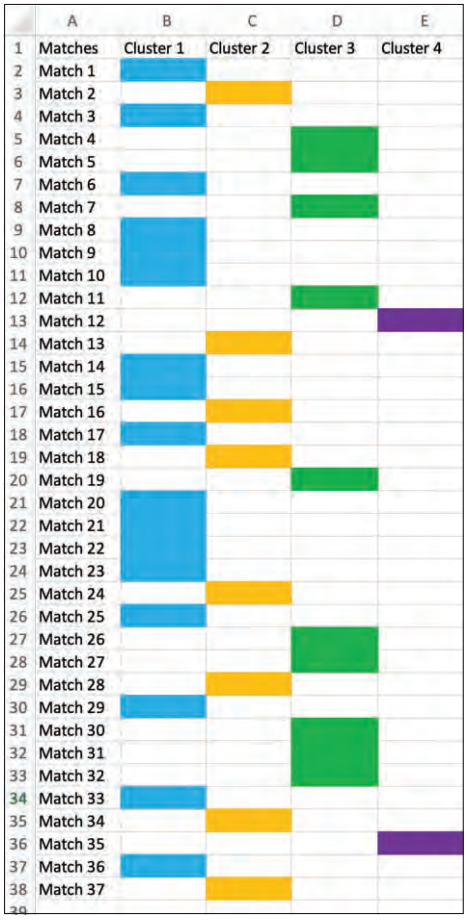
easy-to-follow blog posts.[4] Applying the Leeds Method to a match list often (but not always) results in four groups based on the tester's four grandparent lines.

Dana's method uses second and third cousins, skipping parent/child, sibling, and first-cousin matches and eliminating any other matches over 400 cM. In Jere Mackin's case, we have 37 matches to work with when we eliminate these matches.

Following Dana's "Step-by-Step Guide" blog post,[5] we start our spreadsheet by listing Jere's second and third cousins in the first column (column A). Starting with Match 1, we assign a color to that match by coloring in the cell in column B on Match 1's row. We then open Match 1's shared matches and put the same color in column B for all the shared matches. Continuing with the first person who does not have a color in column B — Match 2 — we assign them a new color in column C. We then open Match 2's shared matches and put the same color in their column C. We repeat this process with the first person who does not have a color in column B or column C (Match 4), assigning them a color in column D, and putting the same color in column D of all Match 4's shared matches. We repeat this process until all the second- and third-cousin matches have at least one color. Using this method, we've sorted Jere's second- and third-cousin matches into four clusters (turquoise, gold, green, and purple), as shown in the figure right.

Dana Leeds writes that breakouts like Jere's, with four distinct clusters and no overlap between the clusters, are likely showing matches to Jere's four sets of great-grandparents. Notice that Jere's gold and purple clusters are smaller than his turquoise and green clusters. *Ancestry* tells us that the matches in the gold and purple clusters are paternal, while the turquoise and green cluster matches are maternal. This makes sense, since the families of Jere's paternal grandparents were smaller and produced fewer descendants than those of his maternal grandparents.

Clustering Jere's matches is just the first step. The next step is to analyze Jere's four clusters using his tree and the tree information provided by the matches in each cluster. This analysis shows that the gold cluster matches are connected to Jere's paternal grandfather Charles George Mackin, the purple cluster matches are connected to Jere's paternal grandmother Hazel Agnes Galt, the turquoise cluster matches are connected to Jere's maternal grandfather Joseph Clark Kinney, and the green cluster matches are connected to Jere's maternal grandmother Ida Margaret Gerbig.



	A	B	C	D	E
1	Matches	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4
2	Match 1				
3	Match 2				
4	Match 3				
5	Match 4				
6	Match 5				
7	Match 6				
8	Match 7				
9	Match 8				
10	Match 9				
11	Match 10				
12	Match 11				
13	Match 12				
14	Match 13				
15	Match 14				
16	Match 15				
17	Match 16				
18	Match 17				
19	Match 18				
20	Match 19				
21	Match 20				
22	Match 21				
23	Match 22				
24	Match 23				
25	Match 24				
26	Match 25				
27	Match 26				
28	Match 27				
29	Match 28				
30	Match 29				
31	Match 30				
32	Match 31				
33	Match 32				
34	Match 33				
35	Match 34				
36	Match 35				
37	Match 36				
38	Match 37				

Leeds Method clusters

Dana Leeds' website provides more blog posts showing you how to add closer matches and your cousins to the clustering. She also provides links to a set of free printable worksheets for those who prefer to work with paper charts rather than spreadsheets and shows how to use the Leeds method with *Ancestry*'s colored dots, another way to skip the spreadsheet.

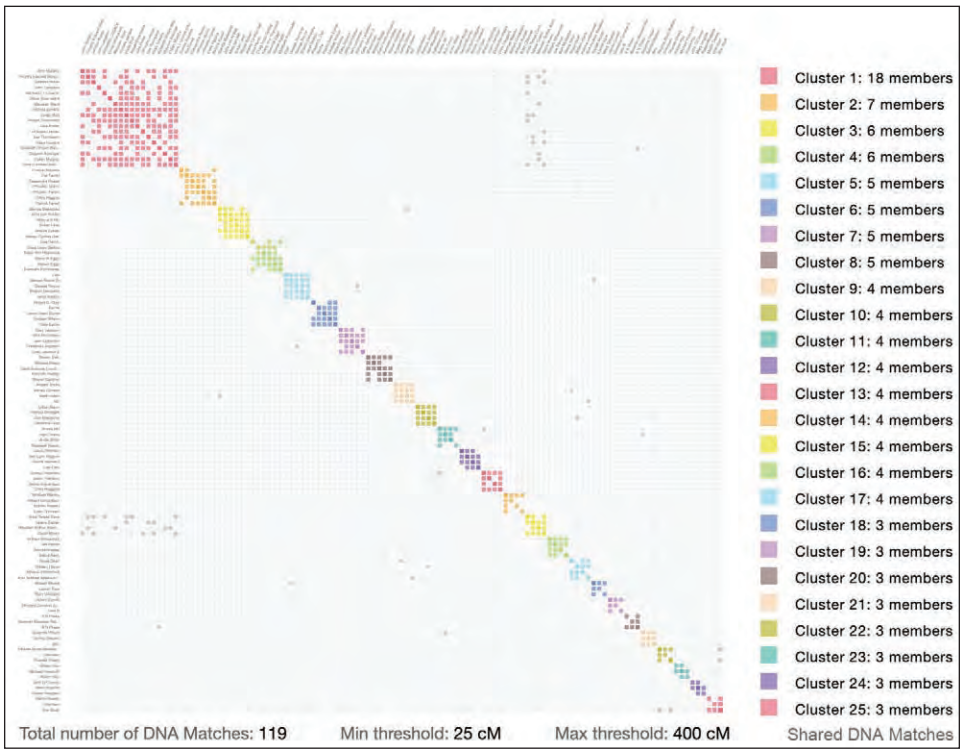
Automated Tools

Manual clustering is an excellent way to learn grouping and clustering techniques. Once you appreciate how clusters work and how they point to lines of descent you share with your matches, you're ready to move on to automated clustering.

MyHeritage AutoClusters

MyHeritage offers an automated clustering tool called "AutoClusters" with their DNA service. To investigate the tool, click the DNA tab in your *MyHeritage* account and select "DNA Tools" from the dropdown menu. Scroll down till you get to AutoClusters, then click "Explore." Select the kit you want to cluster and click "Generate." *MyHeritage* performs the clustering and emails you a zip file. How long this takes depends on how busy the MyHeritage servers are. The zip file you receive contains three files: a CSV file showing the matches that were clustered, an HTML file displaying the resulting clusters on a graph, and a ReadMe file explaining the visual chart and the thresholds used to create the clusters.

The figure below shows AutoClusters for Jere Mackin's *MyHeritage* kit. *MyHeritage* clustered 119 of Jere's matches into 25 clusters, using a minimum match threshold of 25 cM and a maximum threshold of 400 cM. The CSV and HTML files identify the matches assigned to each cluster and link to the entries in Jere's



MyHeritage AutoClusters

match list. The files show the amount of shared DNA, the largest segment, the number of shared segments, whether the match has a tree, and the number of people in the match's tree. They also display any notes you entered on the match's page. The links between the AutoClusters chart and your match list make it easy for you to toggle back and forth, view match trees, and enter additional notes.

As with the clusters you create manually using the Leeds Method, creating an AutoClusters chart is a first step. Your next action is to identify as many as you can of the common ancestors represented by each cluster. This will likely involve building out your matches' trees.

Based on work that I have done with Jere's *MyHeritage* matches, I can identify some (but not all) of Jere's clusters. Cluster 3 (yellow) is connected with Jere's paternal grandmother Hazel Agnes Galt; cluster 4 (green) is connected with Jere's maternal grandmother Ida Margaret Gerbig, and cluster 6 (purplish blue) is connected with Jere's paternal great-grandmother Elesa Lohff. I can identify the families, but not the specific ancestors, associated with another ten clusters.

Genetic Affairs Clustering

Genetic Affairs (https://geneticaffairs.com/) is a subscription website offering a variety of clustering tools you can use with *23andMe*, *FamilyTreeDNA*, and other sites (not including *Ancestry*). The site was created by Evert-Jan Blom, the man who developed *MyHeritage*'s AutoClusters and *GEDmatch*'s cluster tool. It is aimed at relatively advanced users who want to work with match trees and DNA segments across several websites.

Like other clustering tools, *Genetic Affairs*' AutoCluster™ groups your *23andMe* and *FamilyTreeDNA* matches into clusters that likely descend from common ancestors. Because *Genetic Affairs* provides standalone tools and is not integrated with *23andMe* or *FamilyTreeDNA* accounts, to use the tool you must first register your *23andMe* and *FamilyTreeDNA* accounts with *Genetic Affairs*, select the account profile you want to use, and enter the settings you've selected for your AutoCluster™. As with *MyHeritage*, results are emailed to you.

Genetic Affairs also offers several tools for working with match trees, segment-based clustering, and combining segment data from *MyHeritage*, *23andMe*, *FamilyTreeDNA*, and *GEDmatch* into a single analysis. Subscriptions are about $5 a month. A free trial is available, and there is a manual explaining the tools.

GEDmatch Clustering

GEDmatch has included several tools licensed from Evert-Jan Blom in its Tier 1 tool suite. While *GEDmatch*'s basic tools are free, access to Tier 1 tools costs $10 a month. *GEDmatch*'s Tier 1 clustering tool is called "Clusters With AutoTree." As with the tools at *Genetic Affairs*, users should be comfortable with selecting settings and customizing displays. A nice feature of *GEDmatch* clustering is that clusters are generated on the spot, and there is no need to wait for CSV and HTML files to be emailed.

Using Groups and Clusters for Genealogy

I hope that this review of methods and tools for grouping and clustering DNA matches has convinced you that there are tools that fit virtually everyone's level of experience and comfort with technology. You can begin with the simpler tools and work your way up to the more advanced and demanding ones, at your own pace, as determined by the needs of the problems you are working on.

Colored-dot Clusters
You can use the colored dots available at Ancestry and MyHeritage to label and organize matches. It's true that establishing your groups and assigning matches to them takes time. However, once you have grouped your matches, you can easily call up just the matches associated with a particular family line or a problem you want to work on.

Leeds Method
Dana Leeds' method manually divides all or part of your match list into clusters for which you can identify common ancestors using match trees and document-based genealogical research. It is a powerful tool for identifying unknown branches in your tree.

AutoClusters
You can use the automated clustering tools at *MyHeritage*, *Genetic Affairs*, and *GEDmatch* to create clusters of matches on *MyHeritage*, *23andMe*, *FamilyTreeDNA*, and *GEDmatch*. You can even AutoCluster matches across all four of these websites using *Genetic Affairs*' Hybrid AutoSegment tool.

The AutoCluster tool at *MyHeritage* is the simplest to use; it is already integrated with your *MyHeritage* match list, so there is no need to register accounts or download matches, and it uses pre-set thresholds. The *GEDmatch* tool also eliminates the need to register accounts or download matches, but you do need to specify thresholds if you want to change default threshold values.

The *Genetic Affairs* tools, on the other hand, involve multi-step workflows where you set up account profiles or download matches and set thresholds to run analyses. In return for this added complexity, the *Genetic Affairs* tools provide more power and can be integrated with the chromosome mapping tool at *DNAPainter*.

Endnotes

1 Jere Mackin's DNA results are used with permission.

2 At *Ancestry*, the default view of match lists is now by parent, showing the results of the SideView™ grouping. *AncestrySupport* has an article explaining how SideView™ works at https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/DNA-Matches-Split-Up-By-Parent?language=en_US. All URLs were verified as of 31 May 2023.

3 I learned this system for creating groups from my Minnesota colleague Dixie Hansen. Groups 01 and 02 are Paternal and Maternal. Groups 03 through 06 are named by hyphenating the surnames of the parents of the tester's four grandparents. Groups 07 through 014 are named by hyphenating the surnames of the parents of the tester's eight great-grandparents. Un-numbered groups have the names of couples, individuals, and problems I want to solve.

4 Dana Stewart Leeds, "The Leeds Method," *Dana Leeds* (https://www.danaleeds.com/the-leeds-method/).

5 Dana Stewart Leeds, "DNA Color Clustering: The Leeds Method for Easily Visualizing Matches," *Dana Leeds* (https://www.danaleeds.com/dna-color-clustering-the-leeds-method-for-easily-visualizing-matches/).

Lois Abromitis Mackin, PhD, is a professional genealogist focusing on American and English research. She has three degrees in history and has studied at major genealogical institutes. She writes for Minnesota Genealogist *and is the 2013 winner of the Minnesota Genealogical Society's Founders Award for visionary leadership.*



Did You Know?

"The Banshees of Inisherin" was set on a fictional Irish island in 1923 at the end of the Irish Civil War. While actors Colin Farrell, Brendan Gleeson, and Barry Keoghan are mesmerizing to watch in the film, you may also have appreciated their period-perfect jumpers.[1]

Mrs. Delia Barry, an octogenarian Irishwoman native to County Tipperary, has been knitting for over 75 years, having learned to knit in Cahir at age seven.[2] Now a widow, Mrs. Barry was discovered by costume designer Eimer Ni Mhaoldomhnaigh in a knitting cancer support group Barry joined during her husband Paddy's fight with pancreatic cancer.

Mhaoldomhnaigh commissioned four jumpers from the avid knitter. Because Barry only had a week to knit each one, she put her fingers to the fire. Barry received recognition in the film's credits and also generously donated a portion of her earnings to Greystones Cancer Support.[3]

Endnotes

1 An American "sweater" is known in Ireland as a "jumper." "The Irish American Clothing Dictionary," *Irish American Mom* (https://www.irishamericanmom.com/), 27 September 2012.

2 "A Knitwear Sensation at 83," by Lou Stoppard, *New York Times*, (NYT App : viewed March 10, 2023), subscriber access.

3 "A Knitwear Sensation at 83."

Getting Out of the Archives and Into the Pubs to Trace Your Irish Ancestry *(Part Three of a Three-Part Series)*

by Eliza Watson

While I've traveled the world during my 30-year career as an event planner, my first *work* trip to Ireland wasn't until April 2013. This was shortly after Bernard, my new-found Coffey relation, and I visited our ancestor's homestead. After I finished work in Dublin, I rented a car and drove to County Westmeath to visit Charlotte, my Daly cousin, and her husband, Peter, who had just had their first child. During my stay, I had dinner with Peter's parents, Franz and Katrina. This couple played an instrumental role in helping me break down my Coffey brick wall to locate my ancestor Patrick's childhood home.

Katrina's friend was buying a house in the nearby village of Collinstown, which was also Patrick Coffey's hometown. While scrolling through the realty website to show me the house, Katrina came across a quaint white cottage with a green front door and matching iron fence. The rural home was set on nearly an acre of land. Katrina turned to me and said, "You should buy this house."

I'd dreamed of one day retiring in Ireland but never imagined I'd find the perfect spot in my ancestor's hometown. Unfortunately, my retirement was in the distant future, plus I didn't have the funds to purchase a home. Katrina and Franz explained that the housing market was currently down 50% due to the country's 2008 banking crisis. I'd never get a better deal. Katrina snatched up the phone and called the seller. The owner, a master carpenter, had renovated this 1887 two-room schoolhouse into a three-bedroom home. The thought of my ancestors possibly attending school in the building made it even more enticing. The seller could not show us the home before I flew back to the States. Katrina and Franz



Ireland House on the Road. Photo by author.

suggested we at least drive by the house, despite my insistence that I couldn't afford a second home.

We cruised around the countryside the following day, searching for the former schoolhouse. Franz accidentally zipped past the quaint cottage from the realty website and turned around at a crossroads. A sense of déjà vu caused the hairs on the back of my neck to stand up. The previous fall, my mom and I had become lost while searching for Coffey graves and living relations — none of which we had found. We had come upon the same sign directing us to Collinstown. A photo of me standing beside that sign, which also pointed toward the old schoolhouse, currently sits on my living room cocktail table.

Was this a *sign* that I should buy the home?

Once there, we peeked through the cottage's blue-and-white gingham curtains into a yellow kitchen with a small wooden table and chairs. The house came fully furnished. A conservatory with tall windows and an antique dining set provided a view of the sprawling one-acre lawn. Nosey neighbors — cows in the surrounding fields — moseyed over to the fence and mooed "hello." The two closest houses were on the opposite side of the road, a quarter mile away in either direction. At the time, my husband, Mark, and I were living on a quarter-acre lot in a large Milwaukee suburb.

Inspiration seized me. This place would make a perfect writing cottage until we could one day retire there. I envisioned myself sitting at the kitchen table, writing novels set in the historic home and the idyllic surrounding countryside. My head whirled with ideas. After putting my writing on hold a few years earlier to pursue my genealogy passion, I was excited to embark on a new novel.

Perhaps I *could* buy a home in Ireland.

The practical side of me set in while I was boarding the plane home. Even though the house was an incredible deal, how could we afford the upkeep, monthly bills, and unexpected expenses of a second home? Tears trailed down my cheeks and a sympathetic flight attendant asked if I was leaving behind a loved one. I was. I was leaving behind a much-loved dream and a lovely home.

Upon arriving home, I received an email from Franz's lawyer offering to assist with my home purchase in Ireland — a home I hadn't yet mentioned to my husband, Mark, who'd never been to Ireland. A home I hadn't even stepped foot inside. A home I had no money to buy!

Despite my many reservations, I pitched my wild idea to my husband. Needless to say, he was shocked, yet also intrigued. Because I'm frugal, I rarely make spontaneous purchases over a hundred dollars, so we agreed to sleep on it. The following day, I bought a book about purchasing

international property. Ireland was listed as one of the top ten best locations in the world in which to buy. Due to the recession, Irish banks were cautious about lending money, especially to non-citizens. While my husband and I devised creative ways to finance the home, Franz, Katrina, Peter, and Charlotte viewed the house's interior and arranged a home inspection.

We closed on the house in July 2013 from our home in the States. We didn't hop on a plane to Ireland for the closing because I was traveling nonstop for work to pay off short-term loans. That same month, Ireland's property tax came into effect, replacing a former Household Charge. Our friends and "rellies" (relatives) were raging about the new tax. So was I. We hadn't budgeted for this expense. Thankfully, our annual Irish taxes were less than 5% of our US home's tax bill. The following months were a roller coaster ride. Between April and July, the dollar tanked to the euro and we had to pay about seven thousand euros more than we had planned. However, I could never put a price on this new chapter in my life and a much-anticipated book.

Franz met with our new neighbors, Des and Mags, and their son Darragh. Des had mowed the home's lawn for years and asked if we would like to retain his services. I thanked him, but I needed to save every penny to pay off loans and couldn't afford to have the lawn mowed. The following week, Franz contacted me to say Des had hauled the mower over our iron fence and cut the grass so people wouldn't realize the house was unoccupied. I hired him on the spot. These neighbors would quickly become our dearest friends.

In September 2013, Mark and I collected the keys from Franz and Katrina, but forgot to ask them for directions to our new house. Bursting with anticipation, we drove down several wrong narrow roads until we turned a corner and saw the house. My heart raced when I finally opened the front door and stepped inside my dream home.

Within hours of our arrival, Des called in — our first visitor. We had brought him a thank-you bottle of whiskey from the States. He informed us that they drank Jameson in Ireland. Mark assured him that was about to change, at least for him. Over the past ten years, we have introduced Des to dozens of US whiskeys and bourbons while sharing many memorable moments with his family.

The evening before we flew home, the doorbell rang, and I glanced out a window at a tractor parked in front of the house. The farmer next door had been at the pub up the road — the one in my framed photo — where Des had told him I was related to the Coffey family. By this time, no Coffeys were living in the immediate area — or so I had thought. When the man told me his grandmother was Bridget Coffey Nugent, I recognized the name. I had traced both our family lines back to the same ancestral couple in the early 1800s. My newfound rellie gave me a lovely photo of his grandmother.

I soon learned we lived next door not only to one relation, but possibly two. Our neighbor Ita's maiden name was Coffey. She had grown up a few towns away, next door to Matthew Coffey. Remember Matthew? Three years earlier, that kind gentleman introduced me to the magnificent family cemetery plot that helped break down my Coffey brick wall. Matthew's former neighbor, Ita, is now my new neighbor. Both of them are quite likely my relations. Besides sharing a very uncommon Irish surname, our families originated from the area surrounding that fantastic cemetery. I felt truly at home in the homeland of my Coffey family. That sign at the crossroads had indeed been a *sign*.

My genealogy journey in this three-part series shows the importance of what I've termed "how-do-you-do" research, rather than "how-to" research. Tracing your Irish ancestry often requires getting out of the archives and chatting with the locals over a pint in a pub, or striking up a conversation with visitors in a cemetery. You never know who might hold a clue to your ancestor's past.

I never dreamed that my first trip to Ireland in 2007 would eventually lead to locating the Coffey homestead, becoming a genealogist, meeting dozens of Irish rellies, writing a nonfiction genealogy book and two fiction series set in Ireland, and buying an 1887 schoolhouse in my Coffey ancestors' hometown. That trip turned out to be a significant turning point in my life, and I look forward to more exciting chapters to come.

Eliza Watson is a USA Today *bestselling author. Eliza's genealogy adventures inspired her nonfiction book,* Genealogy Tips & Quips, *and two fiction series set in Ireland, Scotland, and England. In 2013, she fulfilled her dream of owning a home in Ireland when she and her husband bought a renovated 1887 schoolhouse in her Coffey ancestors' townland.*



One year of the IGSI Video Podcasts

by Dave Miller

It has now been one year since the first IGSI video podcast launched in June 2022. This inaugural year of the IGSI podcast ended with great success. These podcasts, hosted by genealogist Dave Miller, are called "This month at the IGSI" and are available on *YouTube* at the IGSI Channel. The monthly podcast started out very simply, with each episode mentioning the events that IGSI would be sponsoring throughout the month, such as the dates for each Irish Saturday or upcoming monthly webinars.



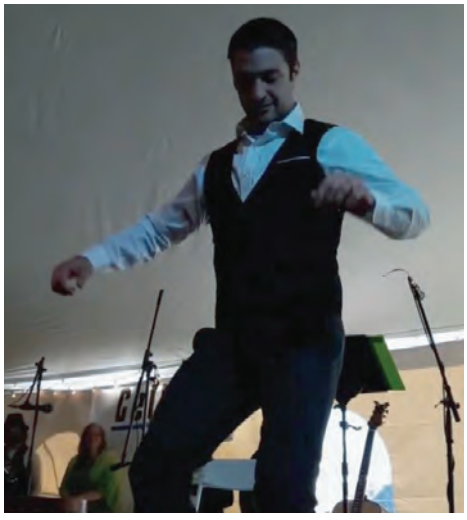
Podcast cover art

By the autumn, Dave had begun interviewing a few of the guest presenters for some of the IGSI webinars. Speakers discussed the webinar they were presenting and what attendees could expect during these online sessions. In addition, Dave had an opportunity to speak with individuals promoting the Irish culture in America. More recent episodes have included stories about our Irish heritage.

Last September found us full of excitement for the Irish Fair of Minnesota and interviewing the Vice Counsel from the Irish Consulate in Chicago. In November we presented a story about an Irish family from county Galway who teach and perform Sean-Nós dancing. One of the siblings now lives in America and performs at various Irish festivals. Dave also shared lots of pictures and music from Irish Festivals throughout the Midwest.

March 2023 brought a story regarding an Irish researcher who discovered new information on an ancestor during a recent trip to the Emerald Isle. The story answered the researcher's question about what happened to his ancestor, although the conclusion was not what he expected.

The April and June episodes of Season One included an interview with the Brick Wall panelists for the June webinar. Dave had a chance to speak with Lois Mackin and Tom Rice before the webinar. Lois



Brian Cunningham performing Sean-Nós dancing during St. Patrick's Day celebration



Interview with Tom Whelan, Chairperson of Irish Fair of Minnesota, August 2022



Jeff Pocat, Irish harpist

and Tom, and Mary Wickersham hosted a panel discussion on ways to get around genealogical brick walls. They also discussed whether it's even fair to refer to the block in your research as "hitting a brick wall."

Also in the June episode, Gaelic Harpist Jeff Pockat, who has been playing for many years, explained how he got started. Turns out this talented harpist never received any formal training. Jeff told us how he was able to pick up playing the harp; he has been playing ever since.

The first episode of our second season begins this July. This episode includes an interview with John Grenham regarding his database, which is now available on three of the computers at the Minnesota Genealogical Center in Mendota Heights, Minnesota. John also discusses how he started the database and his plans for its future.

This episode and other new stories will be available on the IGSI *YouTube* channel, as are all previous podcast episodes. You can also find them on the IGSI website at www.irishgenealogical.org.

Dave Miller has been researching family histories including his own for over 40 years. He holds a bachelor's degree from MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Illinois, a Master of Arts Degree from the University of Illinois in Springfield, and a Professional Learning Certificate in Genealogical Studies from the National Institute for Genealogical Studies from Ontario Canada. He is a member of the Irish Genealogical Society International and currently serves on their board. He conducts research on Irish, English and records from Continental Europe. Dave has written several articles on proving family stories and speaks to groups on genealogy topics including Irish research. His written and video genealogy blogs can be found at his website, www.theancestorguy.com.



Irish Genealogy Checklist

This checklist is not all-inclusive. New record sets may come, and old ones may move. Resources may be used as census substitutes.

DATE of SEARCH	Done	BIRTH, MARRIAGE & DEATH
		Roman Catholic (RC) Parish Records (Baptisms & Marriages)
		Burials (very few RC records prior to 1900)
		Church of Ireland Records (Births, Marriages, Deaths & Vestry Books)
		Protestant Records (Baptisms, Marriages & Deaths)
		Methodist Records (after 1816, Births, Marriages & Burials)
		Jewish Records (irishjewishroots.com)
		Quaker Records (Births, Marriages & Death)
		Civil Births, Deaths & Burials, Marriages & Divorce

DATE of SEARCH	Done	... Parents? Siblings? Other family & friends?
		Wills, Probate, and Administration Records
		Surviving Census Fragments & 20th Century Census Records
		Civil Registration of Births, Marriages, and Deaths
		Census Search Forms, 1841-1851 (1908, Old Age Pensions Act)
		Poor Law & Board of Guardian Records
		Famine Relief Lists
		City, County, and Occupational Directories
		Cemetery Registers (who is buried next to whom?)

		LAND & ESTATE RECORDS (Where did they live?)
		Griffith's Valuation Records
		Tithe Applotment Books
		Estate Auctions
		Register of Deeds
		Ordinanace Survey Maps
		1876 Land Owners
		Lists of Tenants & Evicted Tenants Records

		TAX & VOTERS' RECORDS
		Poll Books & Rate Books
		Subsidy Rolls
		Tithe Defaulters' List (1831)
		Valuation Office Books
		Terms of Leases
		Lists of Freeholders & Freeholders' Certificates
		Voters' Lists & Parliamentary Voters

		COURT RECORDS
		Petty Session Court Registers
		Prison Registers
		Exchequer Court of Equity Bill Books
		Court of Chancery Bill Books
		Court of Claims (Land)
		Grand Jury Lists

		MILITARY & MILITIA RECORDS
		Draft & Enlistment Records
		Militia Lists
		Muster Rolls
		Regimental & Service Records
		Hospital Lists
		Medal Rolls & Honors

		POOR LAW RECORDS
		Admission & Discharge Registers
		Poor Law Union Minute Books
		Board of Guardians Minute Books

		OTHER
		School Registers
		Irish Famine Immigrant Lists
		Passenger Lists, Assisted Passages, Agreement & Crew Lists
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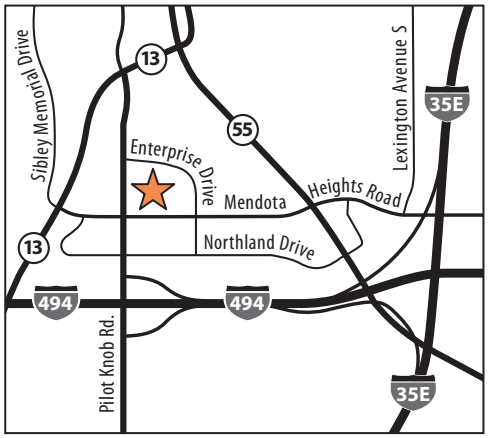
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Volume 44, Number 4

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IRISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Genealogy Library Open

The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2023.

The Hoffman Research Library is a private genealogy research library created for members of the organizations in the MGS Partners' Group. Access to the library materials is free to members of IGSI and other MGS Partner societies. Non-members and the general public are requested to pay a per visit $10 donation for use.

The Hoffman Library will be open only if there are two volunteers available to staff the building. (Won't you consider becoming a MGC/library volunteer to help ensure research access for all?)

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Irish Saturdays

Stop by the library on the second Saturday of the month between 10 AM and 4 PM for Irish research help from IGSI volunteers.

OCTOBER 14, 2023
NOVEMBER 11, 2023
DECEMBER 9, 2023
JANUARY 13, 2024
FEBRUARY 10, 2024
MARCH 9, 2024
APRIL 13, 2024

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Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc.

2023

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of *The Septs* is built around a core theme. Research articles on the theme should be 1500-2500 words in length and include no more than 3-4 images. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g., family stories submitted by IGSI members and others. Articles unrelated to the theme should be 750-1500 words.

If you wish to write on theme or share case studies, family research, or articles on general Irish culture and history and genealogy resources, please contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadlines to ensure your article is considered for the proper issue.

Contributions and ideas are welcome. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the editorial staff.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2024 | January | Repositories

Prepare for on-site research in Ireland by planning visits to PRONI, NLI, Irish National Archives, etc., using locality guides and more to learn the where, when, why, and how of local research.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2023.

2024 | April | Connacht Province

Researching in the five Irish counties of Galway, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon, and Sligo; stories about finding family in Connacht locales are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2024.

2024 | July | Penal Colonies & Criminal Law

Explore "black sheep" ancestors in Australian, New Zealand, and Caribbean penal colonies, as well as court proceedings that include criminal and settlement records.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2024.

2024 | October | Hidden Children

Delve into lost ancestors hidden by adoption, orphan trains, and poorhouses. How do you find them? Resources for locating adoptees, orphans, the indigent, etc. encouraged, as is DNA exploration.
Deadline for articles: August 15, 2024.

Cover Photo: *White Robot Action Figure.*
Photo by Kindel Media on *Pexels.com*.

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Irish Fair of Minnesota!

by Co-Presidents, Ron Zweber and Donna Jones

IGSI doesn't do many in-person events during the year, but one event we look forward to every year is the Irish Fair of Minnesota. This year's event was on the weekend of August 11-13 and was held at Harriet Island in St. Paul. Historically, St. Paul has a long Irish connection, so this event has been a natural location for this annual outdoor event.



Irish Fair of Minnesota 2023

Given our experience at the Irish Fair of Minnesota, we have a very simple model for engaging with attendees. Our tent has two large maps of Ireland on easels. The maps are of two different styles, but both include common names found in every county of Ireland. The first year I worked at the fair, I was amazed by how these maps created such a draw to our booth. We also display several Irish surname books, as that is a common information request from people stopping by.

Many people who stop by have done some level of Irish family research but, for many, they hit a few brick walls and moved onto other things in their lives. It was fun to discuss with these people how to re-start their research and how IGSI can help them in this process, which often involves sharing record sources and strategies unfamiliar to them.

The more-experienced researchers are always fun to engage. One of my favorite conversations was with a 30-something man who had a brick wall with his Westmeath (possibly Meath) ancestors that he was trying to work though. He was stuck in the 1780s with this Catholic family. I opened with a comment I've made several times: "I would love to have records back to 1780 with my Catholic lines!"

The other highlight was meeting a distant cousin (ok, a double third cousin, once removed!) whom I knew of but had never met. An offhand remark by him helped us make the connection.

I hope you all found an Irish-focused event to participate in this past summer.

Ron Zweber, Co-President

From Donna Jones, Co-President:

Here are a few tips for taking advantage of free databases on popular genealogy websites.

FamilySearch – A free website which requires you to create an account before using. Make sure you are signed in to access the records.

Findmypast – A paid website which has a free two-week trial available. A link to its free collections, which include Roman Catholic Parish Baptisms, newspapers, vital records, U.S. and Canadian census records, travel and immigration records, and Irish family history records, is here: *Findmypast* Free Collections. Please note you will need to register for record access.

Ancestry.com – Another paid website, but with an option for a free account or two-week trial. With a free account you can build a tree, use the *Ancestry* messaging service, and attach any free indexes, but you cannot see images or attach them to your tree. The link for a free account is here: Ancestry.com Free Account. An alphabetical list of over 1,000 free index collections is available here: Free Index Collections on Ancestry. Scroll down past the search box to locate the list.

MyHeritage – While this is a paid site too, there is an option for a free two-week trial.



Ron Zweber is a native Minnesotan who lives in Saint Paul. He has been a member of IGSI for over 35 years and served as IGSI treasurer in 2021. All eight of his Irish 2nd great-grandparents (from Counties Cork, Tipperary, Clare and Mayo) immigrated to the U.S. during the height of the Famine or shortly thereafter.



After retiring from Oxford University Press, Donna Jones finally has more time to research her heritage and ancestry. She is passionate about genealogy education and is a member of the IGSI Education committee and the Board of Directors. IGSI provides her the opportunity to learn more about Irish research as she continues to search for where in Ireland her great, great-grandparents lived.

Applying Tips, Tools, and Technology

by Mary Wickersham, co-Managing Editor

This issue's theme, *Tips, Tools, and Technology*, reminds us to think about how to apply methods and technologies to help us research. When I started researching my family history, I thought it would be a "one and done" project—I would identify my ancestors, visit Ireland, write it up, and be done. Little did I know that facts are not always available or that information can be contradictory. What to do? The answer was to be patient, try new approaches, and revisit prior research. Hopefully articles in this issue inspire you to try some new things.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) makes its first appearance in *The Septs* in two articles, hinting at ways AI may help us in the future.

First, we go behind-the-scenes with an AI project. Eileen Reynolds describes a joint research project by New York University and University of Galway to build fully searchable text from digitized pages of *An Gaodhal* newspaper. *An Gaodhal*, starting in 1881 in New York City, was the first-ever Irish newspaper printed in the world. Eileen provides background about the newspaper and the project. She describes the challenges of machine "reading" Gaelic and the Irish newspaper typeface. Project members are "training" computers to read Irish font from digitized images, using an optical character recognition (OCR) machine learning process.

Next I share my brief experiment requesting writing assistance from two of the AI services that have been in recent social media and news reports: *Google*'s "Bard" and ChatGPT. I hope you find the results amusing — and evidence that AI remains a tool under development.

Lois Mackin provides a DNA case study of her husband Jere's ancestors, Ann and Mary Connor. Lois used *Ancestry*'s relationship prediction and SideView tools, *DNAPainter*'s Shared cM Project and What Are the Odds? tools. The McGuire chart Lois built provides an easy-to-read record of shared cMs and relationships, showing observable differences in matches among Jere, his siblings, and their cousins.

Donna Moughty shares her methodology (and impressive patience) in a one-name study: the Johnston family from Rossinver Parish, County Leitrim. Donna uses a detailed map and a detailed list of Johnston marriages to support her research. She also models the patience needed to solve some of our research dilemmas by researching each Johnston family in the area, in Land Valuation and other records, to determine how they are related.

Robt. Flanagan Stieglitz discusses the ethnicity estimates we see from DNA companies. Rob explains that ethnicity estimates reflect DNA going back as far as 1,000 years. Our Scandinavian and other small slices of surprising ethnicity are appearing as the services refine their estimates.

Trish Little-Taylor shows how to locate and use records for your family from among the millions on *Find a Grave®*. Trish used the service to help locate her Little ancestors. You may want to register with the site so you will be able to submit additional information and indicate links between family members.

Kim Gehrman White encourages us not to neglect estate records in our Irish research. Although many of our ancestors did not own significant property and thus had no wills, they may have had relatives who did. Kim provides helpful lists of online resources both pre- and post-1858, when testamentary responsibility moved from the Church of Ireland's ecclesiastical courts to Dublin and other Registry courts.

Ann Eccles reviews William Roulston's 2022 book, *Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors*. Ann highlights both Roulston's excellent short history of Ulster and his many pages of appendices to consult when searching for other resources, such as: papers and document sources, estate collections, archives and libraries, and a comprehensive list of locations.

Trish Little-Taylor provides a list of IGSI's fall webinars by Jill Fuller, Paula Williams, and Jen Baldwin. Registration for them is now open. Members can also purchase a viewing of the recording by visiting IGSI's Past Webinars webpage.

Co-president Ron Zweber writes of IGSI's participation at the 2023 Irish Fair of Minnesota, a good place to meet cousins. Co-President Donna Jones lists several free or free trial opportunities for online database companies.

Be inspired!

Mary Wickersham has served IGSI in several board positions and twice co-chaired the Celtic Connections Conference. A member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, Mary gives genealogy talks on research tools and techniques. She became IGSI Web Editor in 2018 and one of The Septs Co-Managing Editors in 2021.



Bringing Irish-Canadian Ancestors to Life Through Creative Writing

by Craig Kanalley

The only grandparent I never knew was my paternal grandfather, Kenneth Kanalley. He passed away before I was born. I knew he was Irish, and that Kanalley was an Irish surname. I had heard he loved fishing, hunting, and ice hockey. I learned he served in the military. But I didn't know much else.



Paternal Grandparents Ken and Rita Kanalley on their wedding day, June 13, 1954, Buffalo, NY

I asked my grandma, Rita Kanalley, for clues to trace our roots. She said the Kanalley surname had a different spelling further back. She also said the family came to the U.S. from Canada. It was a start.

It was the late 1990s, and genealogical online forums were becoming a thing. I posted what I knew and waited for a reply. I got one. A distant relative in Central New York, who spelled the name "Kanaley," said we were part of the same family. They said Irish immigrants Thomas Kennelly and Rose Flynn had nine children in Cobourg, Ontario, and my great-great-great-grandfather James was one of them, while they were descended through another son, Martin.

This search for my Irish Canadian heritage began my 20+ years in genealogy. Eventually, I branched out into the larger family tree, but the search for my Kanalley roots was the most interesting journey… because it certainly didn't end there.

I had another thing going for me at the time. My great-grandpa's sister, Marlene (Kanalley) Young, was still alive. I corresponded with her, and she shared countless details, confirming her father, James, was from Cobourg, his siblings' names, and details about her mother (Mary Wallace) and maternal grandparents (Andrew Wallace and Catherine Bulger).

Aunt Marlene put me on the right path. Afterwards, I verified the info she shared through other means, like vital records, censuses, military records, and newspapers. Over time, a fascinating family history emerged, including a house fire, a deadly train accident, a forbidden relationship, a cruel aunt and uncle, troublesome in-laws, and a war — so many stories to be told, stories too good not to share.

My interviews with Marlene and my grandfather's cousins and my trips to the Archives of Ontario in Toronto and the Library & Archives of Canada in Ottawa became the foundation for a novel: *Wallace Wounded*.

The story centers around my grandfather's grandparents, James Kanalley and Mary Wallace. James was from a poor family, the son of Irish immigrants. Mary was the daughter of an accomplished painter whose family had deep roots in Canadian history. Mary's father, Andrew Wallace, would not approve of a marriage between them. In those days, that was it — no marriage. But not in this case. James and Mary ran away to the United States and got married anyway.

The first child of this improbable union was my great-grandfather; he was named Wallace for the family name, perhaps in an attempt to bridge the families. Wallace Kanalley was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on 5 January 1902, but the family couldn't quite make it work stateside, so were back in Cobourg, Ontario, a short time later.



The Kanalley family when father James was away at war

Aunt Marlene, Wallace's sister, confirmed these details, which the records supported. As I learned the story, it became too good not to write it all out and share…but the story had a twist and was quite a story on its own. The twist was World War I. James served in the War. I obtained his military records, including day-by-day accounts for his unit, and a record of his being wounded in the War. The War's impact on my family became the second part of the novel. Indeed, James was never the same once he returned home.

Any genealogist or family history enthusiast can do what I did. Start with what you know, ask relatives for their stories and memories, and package it with source documentation to back you up. All that's needed for the final touch is some creativity to fill in the blanks. That's how I wrote *Wallace Wounded*, which I self-published through *Lulu*.

Craig Kanalley is a Buffalo, New York native who has been researching his family history since 1998. In addition to traditional research, he is passionate about DNA analysis. He's lived in Rochester, NY, Chicago, and New York City. He studied journalism in college and worked as a journalist before shifting to roles in social media and digital media.



Did You Know?

Adding details to your family research beyond the who, what, and where of our ancestors' lives provides historical context of time and place to our stories. One resource offering descriptions with plentiful details and exploring every county in Ireland is the *Topographical Dictionary* written by Samuel Lewis. The book was first published in 1837, thus granting us a view of Ireland before the onset of the Great Famine.[1] One of our feature articles, by Craig Kanalley, is an excellent example of how historical context enriches our family history. Although not as creative as Kanalley's writing, here is a sample from a family narrative I wrote using Lewis' *Topographical Dictionary*:

> *Samuel Lewis described traveling from Foynes to Shanagolden as such: "At the village of Foynes, five miles [west] from Askeaton, we reach the road leading to the village of Shanagolden, which lies about a mile to the left."[2] Maurice married Miss Margaret Kennelly 22 August 1857 at the Parish of Askeaton; Maurice had not ventured far from his place of birth at Shanagolden.[3] Askeaton is a small market town on the banks of the River Deel, which flows into the south side of the Shannon estuary. In 1837, the town contained about 260 houses and consisted of rolling hills and some rocky knolls. Access to River Deel provided opportunity for two flour mills to operate. Primary trade comprised grain and flour, which were exported directly to foreign markets.[4]*

Consider adding a little spice to your writing to aid the reader in imagining the place and time of your ancestor's life. Sharp-eyed readers might see the similarities between Craig Kanalley's surname and my 2x great-grandmother, Margaret Kennelly. A connection may someday be found, but we have not yet located a common ancestor that we can definitively claim as ours.

By Kim Gehrman White

Endnotes

1 Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, Comprising the Several Counties, Cities, Boroughs, Market, and Post Towns, Parishes, and Villages, With Historical and Statistical Descriptions; Embellished With Engravings of the Arms of the Cities, Bishoprics, Corporate Towns, and Boroughs; And of the Seals of the Several Municipal Corporations*, (London, England : S. Lewis & Co., 1837); digital images, *Google Books* (https://books.google.com).

2 James Fraser, *A Hand Book for Travellers in Ireland, Descriptive of Its Scenery, Towns, Seats, Antiquities* … (Dublin, Ireland : 1849) page 338; digital images, *Google Books* (https://books.google.com : accessed 21 March 2022).

3 "Catholic Parish Registers," digital image, entry for Mauritius [sic] Langan and Margta [sic] Kennelly, married 22 August 1857.

4 Lewis, Topographical Dictionary of Ireland (London, England : S. Lewis & Co., 1837) pages 80-81; emphasis added by author.

An excerpt from *Wallace Wounded* *(pp. 36-38)*

by Craig Kanalley

"Johnny…her and Johnny, there is something going on," Marty said. "But he won't tell me all the details."

Jim couldn't believe it. Johnny Little was not only one of Marty's best friends (he worked with him at the factory); he also worked part-time at the bakery with Jim. And he lived just down the street from the Kanalleys. But this wasn't making any sense. How would they even know each other? The Littles aren't exactly on the Wallace's radar. Are they?

Cobourg was a small town but this was just bizarre.

Even so, Jim had his first facts. It was a start.

*****

The pub was rocking tonight.

The Bulgers had rented the space out, as they often did to get the whole family together. It was another birthday celebration. There's no shortage of those.

But this one was a special one. This week it was Uncle John Bulger's birthday, and everyone was in town. Even Uncle Jimmy.

Since he had moved out to Chicago years ago, Kate Wallace's brother Jimmy Bulger, 42, rarely had the chance to visit Cobourg. But he was back on this night.

Jimmy's wife Mary and their five children, Teri, Gert, Iggy, Joe, and Tom — ages 5 to 14 — were all there for the occasion. For Joe and Tom, the littlest ones, it was their first time in Cobourg, and their first time meeting their grandparents.

A joyful mood was in the air. And Mary was happy to be here. It was great to see her Uncle Jimmy and her cousins from Chicago. Even though the Wallaces lived in the fall through spring in Minnesota, they never seemed to have the chance to see each other. Her father may have had something to do about that.

Her grandparents were there too, Thomas and Ann Bulger, who were both born in Ireland. They were aging, both 75 years old, but they hadn't lost their spunk, energy, or humor, especially at these family gatherings. The Bulgers knew how to throw a party.

Mary was even more excited that her Aunt Mary and Uncle John had yet to show up. Sometimes it boggled her mind that her Aunt Mary was ever a Bulger — she was so Quinn-like — and she always was the odd one in the family. But they would be here, wouldn't they? She wouldn't miss her brother's big homecoming from Chicago… would she?

The Lavis family made a big arrival. Mary's Aunt Julia Bulger (now Lavis) entered with her husband John and their 10 children! Mary's grandparents beamed at the sight… so proud of the large family the Bulgers had become. Mary joined the greeting line.

Uncle Jim Tunney, who had married Mary's Aunt Ann Bulger, was entertaining everyone with the piano. He was quite a talented player. The Tunney's had a farm out in Grafton — not far, but far enough so they weren't always seen either.

And of course, Uncle John Bulger, the birthday boy, was on hand with his wife Helena. She was from Norway and had a thick accent, and Mary never understood a word she was saying.

John and Helena had lived in Pennsylvania for the past 10 years, but they were back now. Their six children — Bernie, Richard, Annie, Angeline, Thomas, and Brian — were all here with them. Brian was just 14 months old, so to say he got some attention…that would be an understatement.

The Quinns still hadn't arrived and Mary was giddy just thinking about it. Her father wasn't there either, as usual — he typically avoided Bulger gatherings. Of course, Mary didn't mind. This was just perfect. Everyone she wanted to be there was there.

Except…was that true? Just then she thought of the guy who crashed her house a few Mondays ago. She had been trying to get her mind off of him, but every now and then he popped up anyway.

He would fit in with the Bulger's, Mary thought. He could be part of the family and you'd never know the difference. As difficult as it could be to be a daughter of Andrew Wallace, she was so glad to be half a Bulger (her mother Kate's maiden name). And that's what she considered herself too. Sometimes, she felt it was her better half.

Still, as tough as her father could be, and somewhat ironically, she was proud to have the Wallace family name too. She was not ignorant to its benefits. She was well-aware of the weight it carried around town, but also the clan's rich history going back to Sir William Wallace. Her relatives on the Wallace side proudly claimed he was related, and that was why every generation of the family had a William Wallace - it was why Mary had a brother William, an Uncle William, and so on.

When she really thought about it, she could hardly complain about the rest of the Wallace clan. It was really just her father that annoyed her.

Wallace Wounded, by Craig Kanalley

Book Review: William Roulston, *Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors*

by Ann Eccles

William Roulston, Research Director of the Ulster Historical Foundation, provides guidance for researching Irish ancestors with the information found in his second edition of *Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors: The Essential Guide to Early Modern Ulster, 1600-1800*. This updated and greatly expanded publication informs and directs the reader to resources for researching Scots-Irish ancestors in the nine Ulster counties during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Sometimes an excellent genealogy guidebook gets overlooked when first published. Perhaps you, too, missed the arrival of the revised edition of William Roulston's guide to researching Scots-Irish ancestors. But this is not a book to ignore; it's too important for Scots-Irish researchers. Published in the UK in 2018 and in the U.S. in 2022, this excellent manual includes many new resources that update and significantly expand the first edition.

While many of us stop researching our Irish ancestors at about the year 1800, having been told that earlier records are few and difficult to find, Roulston's guide opens the door to another 200 years of potential records about our Scots-Irish ancestors. Note that to continue into the earlier time periods, it is best to know the townland or specific area for the ancestor.

Roulston describes and lists historical resources related to the nine counties of Ulster from the 1600s to about 1800. This new edition is more than 600 pages, but the size shouldn't deter anyone. More than half the book is appendices to consult:

(1) Records relating to the parishes in Ulster – 210 pages of known papers and document sources listed by civil parish

(2) Estate collections — about 100 pages arranged first by county, then alphabetically by the names of some 350 estates with records from the 17th and 18th centuries, and noting the locations of these collections

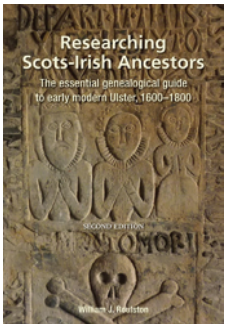
(3) A list of archives and libraries (with websites) that house the genealogy-relevant materials mentioned

(4) A list of 600 locations (e.g., towns and villages) with their Civil parish and county, followed by maps of each county with the civil parishes identified.

The first half of the book holds the gold for researchers! Roulston generously shares his knowledge and experience. The introductory pages provide an excellent short history of Ulster in the 17th and 18th centuries, setting our focus on the time period covered. The "Introduction" pages are just that — introductory notes and commentary about genealogy sources and search methods. It's a great review or introduction to the topics.

The remaining chapters in the book's first half are arranged by time or type of information source. The topics identified include church records and gravestone inscriptions; separate chapters on 17th- and 18th-century records, landed estate records, wills, and testamentary papers; and the Registry of Deeds (located in Dublin). New to this edition are sections on emigration from Ulster; education, charity, and hospital records; diaries, journals, and correspondence; and more. In each chapter, the author cites and includes examples of the materials discussed.

This book is a valuable tool for any genealogy researcher seeking more information on Scots-Irish ancestors and willing to delve into Irish records for the 1600s and 1700s.



Roulston, William. *Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors: The Essential Guide to Early Modern Ulster, 1600-1800*. Genealogical Publishing Co., 2022 (repr.); Ulster Historical Foundation, 2018. xxxiv, 606 pp., index, paper. $34.95 from Genealogical Publishing Company.

Ann Eccles is a longtime member of IGSI. She served a few terms as president of the Society; she was editor of this publication for 16 years. She currently serves as the IGSI librarian. Ann has traced three of her great-grandparents to counties Armagh and Tyrone; another four are from the Republic of Ireland.



Artificial Intelligence for Genealogy

by Mary Wickersham

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been making headlines lately, as many companies adopt AI for various purposes. But how does AI fit with genealogy? If you're a user of *Ancestry.com*, *FindMyPast*, or *My Heritage*, you're already benefiting from AI, which helps index massive quantities of data to make it accessible for us family historians.

AI is a Large Language Model — a computer model trained to generate strings of words based on the prompt it receives. AI anticipates words to use based on the context of your queries. AI does not search for facts or analyze them, so do not rely on it for factual information.

AI has great potential as a tool for genealogists. Some usage examples: to compare images, colorize and date photographs, rewrite text, interpret obituaries, decipher handwritten records, translate records, and provide context around historical events.

These uses are not fully functional in any one program. A newcomer to AI, I tested two free tools: *Open AI*'s ChatGPT and *Google*'s Bard. I found their AI useful for summarizing general historical information (which I fact-check), refining my writing by catching obvious errors, and assisting with endnote formatting.

To get acquainted with AI, view *FindMyPast*'s video, *10 ChatGPT Prompts Every Genealogist Needs to Know*,[1] with genealogist Blaine Bettinger. Next, register for a free AI account with ChatGPT or *Google*'s Bard, then try it.

Bettinger recommends several components to use in a prompt: your background ("I'm a genealogist"), what you're seeking ("check my grammar, punctuation, and spelling"), and the output ("revise") and limitations ("less than 800 words, grade 12 level").

First, I asked both Bard and ChatGPT to check my review of John Grenham's book, *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors*, published in *The Septs* in October 2019, using two excerpts from the original opening:

> Bookshelf space is a precious commodity for family historians. This book deserves your high-priority shelf space, as you may be using it frequently.
>
> Since John Grenham's first edition of *Tracing* in the mid-1990s, the book has expanded in size and content through several editions: from about 300 pages to over 600. None of it is filler or fluff. The 5th Edition of this must-have book has just been published, and contains a wealth of information. This is a book you will refer to each time you encounter a new family line in Ireland.

I asked both AI services to check for spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors, and to fix mistakes.

Bard changed the last sentence of paragraph 1, replacing "you may be using it" with "you may use it." ChatGPT made no changes.

I then asked both to rewrite the review.

Bard refused, stating it didn't have enough information about John Grenham to write an article. I tried to explain to Bard why it could still suggest a rewrite, then gave up.

ChatGPT's writing was eloquent, flowery, and over-the-top:

> For those navigating the labyrinth of family history, bookshelf space is a precious commodity. Amidst this landscape, a deserving occupant demands your attention: "Tracing Your Irish Ancestors" by John Grenham. This indispensable volume is not just a book; it's your guiding star on the journey to uncover your Irish heritage.
>
> Since its inception in the mid-1990s, John Grenham's "Tracing" has expanded, evolving from a slender tome to a comprehensive guide spanning over 600 pages. There's no room for filler or fluff here — every page is a trove of valuable insights. The recently released 5th Edition is a beacon of information, ready to illuminate your path each time you delve into an unexplored Irish family line.

If you find words like "tome" in my writing, please call me on it! I try to be less formal in my writing style.

Next, I submitted an obituary that included family members, asking for a list of people mentioned and their relationship to the deceased. Both services interpreted family relationships fairly accurately.

Finally, I asked each service to format the footnote for Bettinger's video. Bard declined, but ChatGPT provided a format with placeholders for the information I needed to fill in:

> Blaine Bettinger, "Exploring AI for Genealogy," video, *YouTube*, hosted

by *FindMyPast*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbRXzd2SmNM, accessed August 21, 2023.

While not an Elizabeth Shown Mills citation, ChatGPT's version is perhaps better than no citation.

AI has the potential to help us with our research *now*, and will improve over time. It will take effort on our part to learn how to work with it. Most importantly, don't forget to fact-check!

Endnote

[1] Blaine Bettinger and Jen Baldwin, "10 ChatGPT Prompts Every Genealogist Needs to Know," *Findmypast* channel, 10 May 2023; *YouTube* video format, *YouTube* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbRXzd2SmNM : accessed August 21, 2023).

Mary Wickersham has served IGSI in several board positions and twice co-chaired the Celtic Connections Conference. A member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, Mary gives genealogy talks on research tools and techniques. She became IGSI Web Editor in 2018 and one of The Septs *Co-Managing Editors in 2021.*



Save the Date! IGSI Fall Webinars

by Trish Little Taylor

Saturday, October 21 | *Finding Genealogy Collections Everywhere*
by Jill Fuller

Where can you find those elusive family histories or local printed resources? Are there any digital records? Join us in October for American Archives Month to reflect on the goal of "reasonably exhaustive research." Where can we find collections to provide sources for genealogy research? Jill will introduce us to places we may have overlooked in our research efforts and help us to understand the places which hold pieces of our history. Whether online or in private or public repositories, so many available collections may tell a story about the lives of our ancestors. Turning over those rocks might just break down our brick walls.

Saturday, November 18 | *Ethnicity Estimates Aren't Always Useless: Learn What They Are (and Aren't) Telling You*
by Paula Williams

Ethnicity estimates are intriguing, frustrating, and often misunderstood. Learn how to interpret and understand what the results mean and/or can teach us, plus any limitations we should respect. Paula was a speaker at the 2023 National Genealogical Society Conference and also leads a monthly DNA SIG (Special Interest Group) for the Genealogical Research Institute of Virginia (GRIVA).

Saturday, December 16 | *Strategic Searching on* FindMyPast
by Jen Baldwin

This presentation will help you make the most of your valuable time using *FindMyPast* after learning best practices, unusual ways to search, and utilizing the site to your greatest advantage. Learn about new collections being added. Learn about any restrictions placed on the various resources at *FindMyPast*. Discover any gaps in the collections. Discover why the Archdiocese of New York City's records are included but the Diocese of Brooklyn's records are not. Learn better ways of searching when records are in Latin. *FindMyPast*'s newest features will be discussed.

*****

Webinars are presented from 10:30 AM - Noon CST (UTC-6).
The cost is $15 (with discount code) for IGSI members; $25 for non-members.
Discount codes will be sent to members via email and posted on the members-only webpage.

DNA Case Study: Ann and Mary Conner of Oswego, New York

by Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D.

Prologue: The Kinney Family

My husband, Jere Mackin, has several sets of Irish ancestors he shares with readers of *The Septs*. He and his siblings Patrick, Joann, and Richard also allowed us to view their DNA test results. In this issue, I'd like to explore an interesting autosomal DNA match related to an unsolved problem in the Mackins' maternal line, highlighting the tips and tools used.

The Mackins' mother was Kathryn Esther Kinney. Kathryn was born in Stacyville, Iowa, in 1918, and died in Belle Plaine, Iowa, in 1970.[1] The Kinney family goes back through Buchanan County, in central Iowa, to Walworth County, Wisconsin, and Oswego County, New York, where they lived from about 1830, when they arrived from Ireland, to 1846, when they moved west to Wisconsin.[2]

The original Kinney immigrants were Peter Kinney and his wife, Bridget Donagh, who came from County Tipperary.[3] The Kinneys were enumerated in 1840 in the town of Scriba, Oswego County, New York, on the shores of Lake Ontario. Their household contained eleven people, ranging from a boy and girl under five to a man in his fifties and a woman in her forties.[4] Peter and Bridget's children were:

- John Kinney, born 1817, Ireland; married Mary [—?—], died after 1870.
- **Thomas Kinney**, born 7 March 1823, Ireland; married **Ann Conner**; died 28 January 1887, Winthrop, Buchanan Co., Iowa.
- Catharine Kinney, born c. 1827, Ireland; married Seth W. Kelley; died c. 1860 in California.
- Margaret Kinney, born c. 1830, Ireland; married Seth W. Kelley; died after 1905, probably in Buchanan Co., Iowa.
- Jane Kinney, born 1833, New York; married Jacob Rodenbaugh, died 7 May 1897 in Platteville, Grant Co., Wisconsin.
- James H. Kinney, born 1834, New York; married Maria A. Chystal; died 1911, buried in Liberty, Cowley Co., Kansas.
- Helen Kinney, born 24 March 1837, Oswego, Oswego Co., New York; married Peter Gaffney; died 14 April 1913 in Linn, Walworth Co., Wisconsin.
- William Kinney, born 15 November 1838, Oswego, Oswego Co., New York; married Katherine Brady; died 20 August 1917, Carson City, Ormsby Co., Nevada.
- Charlotte Kinney, born June 1842, Oswego, Oswego Co., New York; married (1) Walter H. Snell; (2) Daniel McCarthy; died 27 June 1880, Chicago, Cook Co., Illinois.[5]

Ann Conner

Today's story is about Thomas Kinney's wife, Ann Conner. It's a not-unusual narrative about a woman with an unknown family. Ann was born in 1828 or 1829 in Oswego, New York.[6] Ann married Thomas in Oswego and immediately moved with him to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Of the couple's eight known children, the first five were born in Wisconsin, and the last three were born in Buchanan County, Iowa, where the Kinneys settled in the 1860s. Thomas died in Buchanan County in 1887, and Ann died there in 1895.[7] The only clue to Ann's family of origin beyond her surname comes from the 1880 census: both her parents were born in Ireland.[8]

A DNA Match

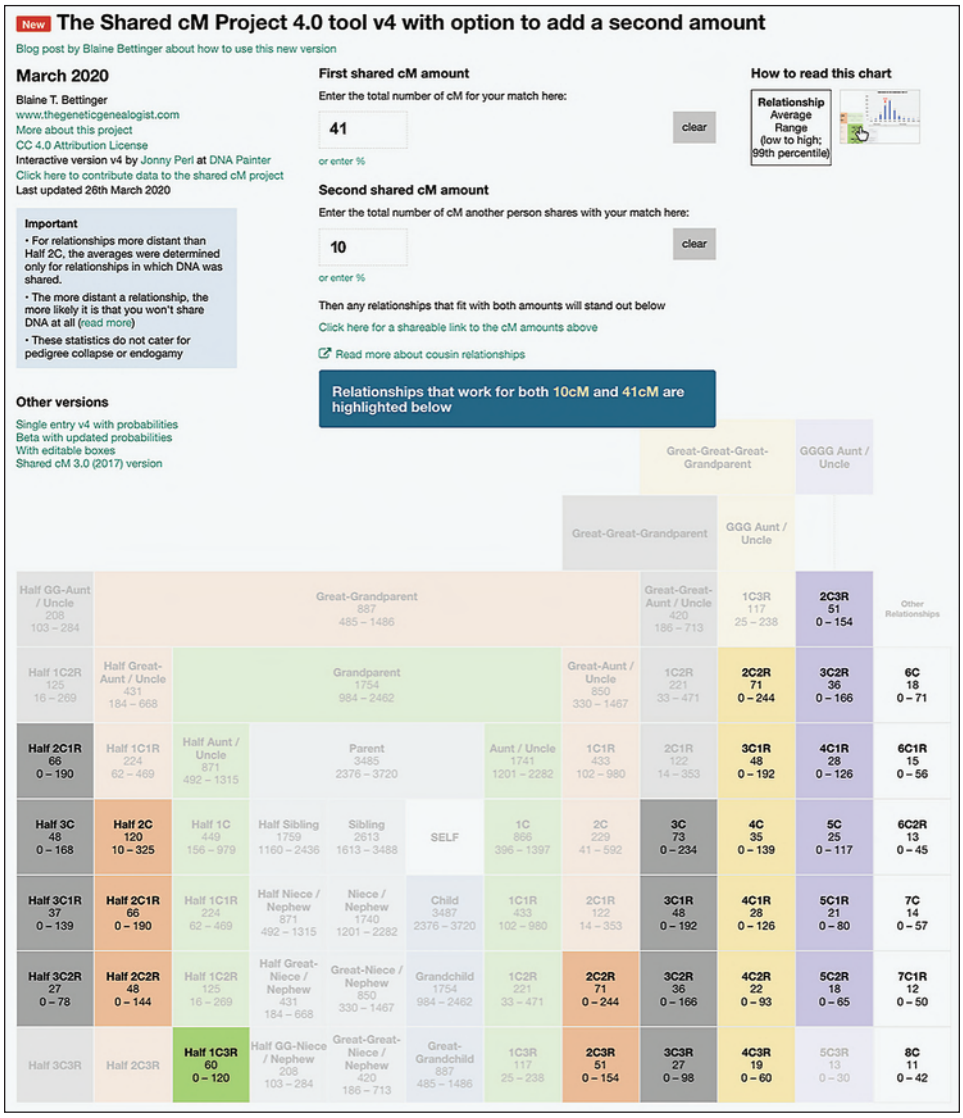
Jere, Patrick, Joann, and Richard Mackin have all taken autosomal DNA tests at *Ancestry*. All four siblings have autosomal DNA matches ranging in size from 10 to 41 centiMorgans (cM) with another tester at *Ancestry* whom I will call "Betty."[9]

Estimating relationship — *Ancestry* relationship prediction and SideView tools

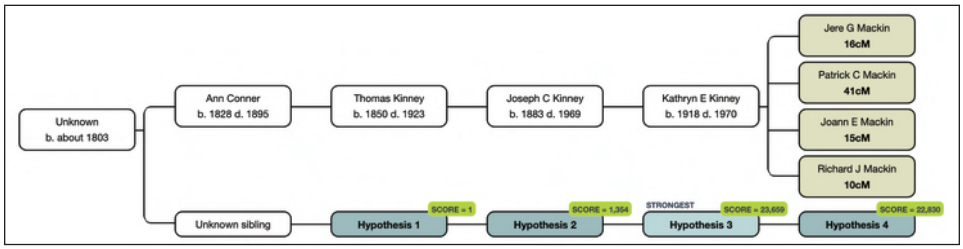
Ancestry thinks Patrick's 41 cM match to "Betty" falls into the 4th–6th cousin range; *Ancestry*'s SideView tool predicts that "Betty" is a Maternal side match for Patrick.[10] Of the four siblings, Richard has the smallest match to "Betty" at 10 cM. *Ancestry* predicts that this, like Joann's 15 cM match and Jere's 16 cM match, is a 5th–8th cousin match on the Maternal side.[11]

Estimating relationship — *DNAPainter*'s Shared cM Project tool

Jonny Perl's *DNAPainter* website has an automated tool based on the data compiled by Blaine T. Bettinger in the Shared cM Project.[12] The *DNAPainter* tool helps users refine testing-company relationship predictions. A recent enhancement to the tool is the option to add a second amount of DNA shared with a target kit.[13] Inserting the largest and smallest amounts of DNA shared by the Mackins with "Betty," the tool's output, shown on the next page, highlights relationships that work for both the 10 cM and 41 cM amounts.[14]



Shared cM tool 10-41 cM



Betty Mackin's WATO v1

Estimating relationship – *DNAPainter*'s WATO tool

DNAPainter has another tool that can be very helpful in estimating relationships. The tool is called What Are The Odds? (WATO). It helps users hypothesize how a mystery DNA match might fit into a known tree based on the amount of DNA they share with people in the tree.[15] There are two versions of the tool: the original tool and the v2 beta tool. Users can switch from one version to the other using a toggle switch on the tool page. The difference between the two tools is that the v2 tool uses an updated set of relationship probabilities from AncestryDNA.[16]

The figure below shows the results provided by the original version of the WATO tool for "Betty" and the Mackin siblings. In the figure, "Betty" is represented by the boxes labeled "Hypothesis." The four hypotheses shown were created by the WATO tool. "Betty's" relationship to Mary Conner (great-great-granddaughter) is known, so Hypothesis 4, which is not ranked as the strongest hypothesis, is the applicable case. Switching to the v2 probabilities in the tool results in the same ordinal ranking of the hypotheses but changes the scores of the individual hypotheses. For both versions of the tool, this notification appears: "You have entered 4 matches with an average of 21 cM shared. WATO will be more helpful if you have an average of more than 40 cM."[17] To obtain better outputs from the WATO tool, it will be necessary to contact tested Kinney descendants, ask how much DNA they share with "Betty," and hope they respond or hope that "Betty" responds to the messages already sent and is willing to share DNA match information.

Identifying the family branch – shared matches

The table on p. 114 shows the fourteen matches shared by "Betty" and the Mackin siblings, along with the amounts of DNA shared and common ancestors identified either by *Ancestry* or by the author. Names of shared matches have been pseudonymized.

Charting shared matches – McGuire chart

The next chart is called a McGuire chart.[18] It displays both the genealogical relationship

and the amount of DNA shared between the Mackin test takers and the matches they share with "Betty."[19] Living generations and recently deceased parents of test takers have been anonymized in the chart. McGuire charts can be created in graphics programs such as LucidChart or in Microsoft Office;[20] this example was created in Excel.

Name of shared match	Shared with Jere	Shared with Patrick	Shared with Joann	Shared with Richard	Common ancestor identified by Ancestry	Common ancestor identified by author
SMThomas-1	287 cM	181 cM	187 cM	313 cM	—	Thomas Kinney - Sophia M. Clark
SMGeorge-2	30 cM	146 cM	140 cM	145 cM	Thomas Kinney-Ann Conner	
SMGeorge-4	94 cM	213 cM	137 cM	144 cM	Thomas Kinney-Ann Conner	
SMUnk-1	196 cM	216 cM	136 cM	137 cM	—	
SMFrancis-1	43 cM	126 cM	118 cM	124 cM	Thomas Kinney-Ann Conner	
SMUnk-2	40 cM	44 cM	106 cM	112 cM	—	
SMGeorge-5	149 cM	155 cM	101 cM	49 cM	Thomas Kinney-Ann Conner	
SMUnk-3	44 cM	123 cM	47 cM	26 cM	—	
SMUnk-4	136 cM	155 cM	39 cM	116 cM	—	
SMCatherine-1	—	62 cM	25 cM	—	—	Thomas Kinney-Ann Conner
SMGeorge-1	31 cM	52 cM	—	20 cM	Thomas Kinney-Ann Conner	
SMGeorge-3	28 cM	36 cM	—	—	Thomas Kinney-Ann Conner	
SMUnk-5	—	29 cM	—	—	—	
SMUnk-6	—	27 cM	—	—	—	

Sources: Author's screenshots of Shared Matches for Jere Mackin and "Betty," Patrick Mackin and "Betty," Joann Mackin and "Betty, and Richard Mackin and "Betty," all dated 8 August 2023, author's files.

"Betty's" and the Mackin Siblings' Shared Matches

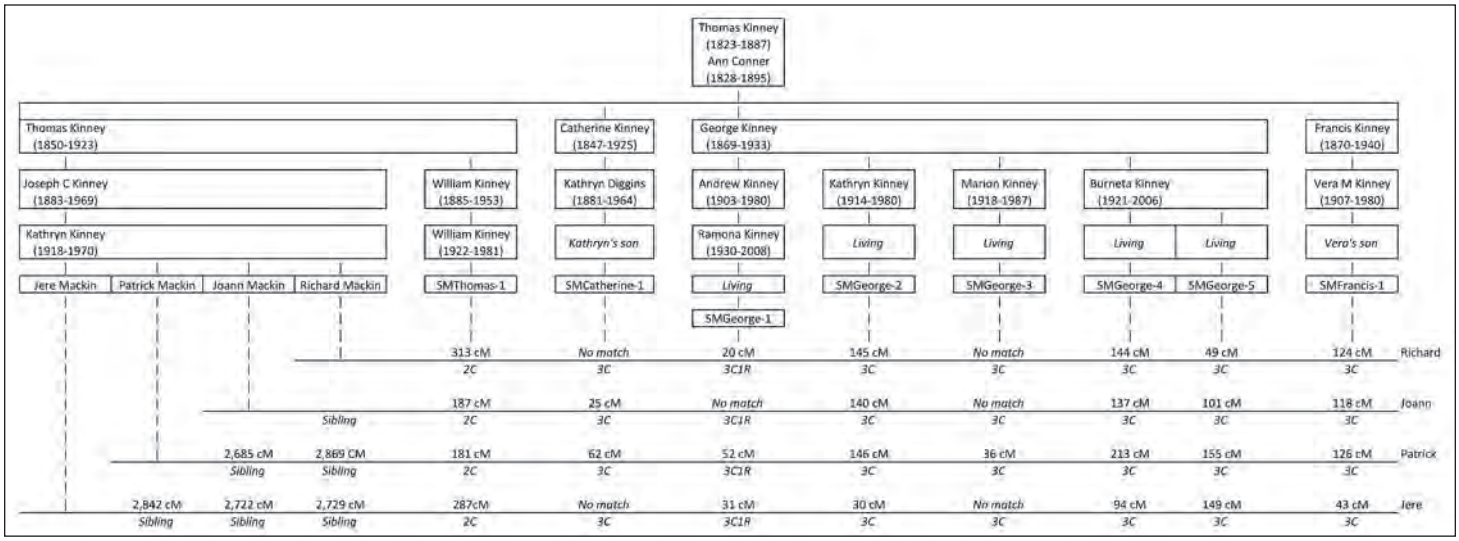
Genealogy of the DNA Match

"Betty's" tree is shown on p. 115.
"Betty's" DNA kit has an attached (expanded) tree shown below the previous tree.

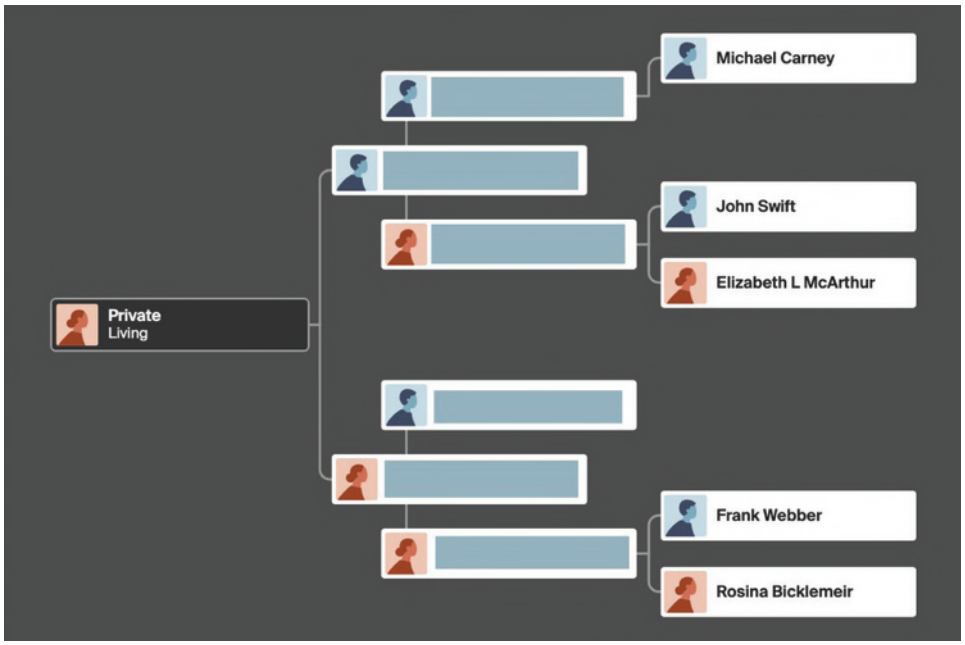
Building out "Betty's" tree

Building on the information that "Betty" included in her tree, I was able to expand her pedigree on all lines. Three of "Betty's" grandparents trace back to English immigrants to Canada, New England settlers, and German immigrants. None of these lines have any commonality with the Mackins' Kinney ancestry, to which the shared matches between the Mackin testers and "Betty" pointed us.

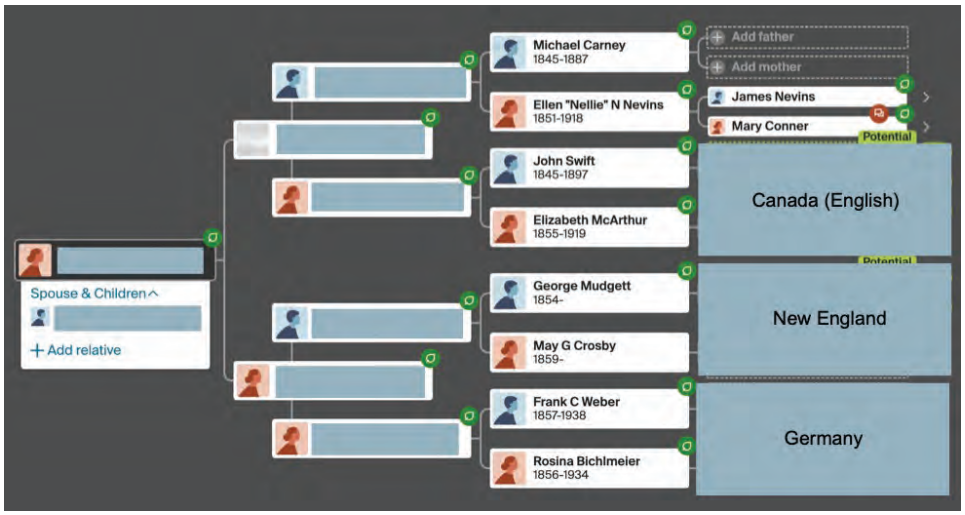
"Betty's" fourth grandparent line, the line of her paternal grandfather, goes back to a Chicago couple named Michael Carney and Ellen "Nellie" Nevins. Nellie was born in Oswego County, New York, 25 September 1851. Her parents were James Nevins and Mary "Canner," both of whom were born in Ireland.[21]



Kinney Betty McGuire SM



Betty's tree



Betty's tree expanded

James Nevins was born circa 1805 in Ireland; according to the 1860 census, he was born in County "Westmard."[22] He is likely the James Nevin who was naturalized 25 September 1833 in Oswego County.[23] He married Mary "Canner," born in Ireland about 1818, according to the 1860 census, in County Longford.[24] The marriage appears to have taken place at about the time of James' naturalization, based on the birth date of the couple's oldest apparent child.[25]

James and Mary apparently resided in Onondaga County between about 1837 and about 1841; they had moved to Oswego County by 1842 or 1843, when James purchased land in the Town of Scriba, just outside the city of Oswego.[26] He purchased property in the city of Owego in 1846.[27]

Mary Conner died 15 September 1860. James continued to live in Oswego until his death in 1872, leaving his remaining property to his daughter Nellie.[28]

Final Thoughts

Were Mary Conner, born in Ireland, possibly County Longford, about 1811, and Ann Conner, born in Oswego, New York, about 1828, sisters? While DNA evidence is suggestive, additional genealogical research is needed.

Endnotes

[1] Mitchell County, Iowa, Record of Births, D: 22, Catherine Esther Kinney; Mitchell County Courthouse, Osage. Iowa Department of Health, death certificate no. 114, Kathryn Esther Mackin; Mitchell County Courthouse, Osage.

[2] See Paul Kinney (1908–1989), "The Kinney Family," manuscript written about 1976, author's files; received from Kinney family archivist Donna Kinney, Winthrop, Iowa, who received it from the late John F. Kinney (1995–2013), Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of St. Cloud, who received it from Paul Kinney. See also Rev. George Kinney, "It's a Long Way to Tipperary… A Search for Kinney Irish Roots," c. 2001, author's files, received from Fr. Kinney. For the date of the Kinneys' arrival in New York, see Paul Kinney, "Kinney Family," 1, and George Kinney, "Long Way," 13. For the date of departure from New York, see Buchanan County Genealogical Society, card file, entry for Ann Kinney, obituary clipping dated 18 December 1895, *Conservative*, Independence, Iowa.

[3] George Kinney, "Long Way," 3–11.

[4] 1840 U.S. census, Oswego Co., New York, population schedule, Scriba, p. 86 (stamped), line 9, Peter Kinney. This and all other census records cited were viewed at *Ancestry*, unless otherwise noted.

[5] This list of children is based on the work of Paul Kinney ("Kinney Family," 1–3) and George Kinney ("Long Way," 25, supplemented by the author's research.
For John Kinney, see Paul Kinney, "Kinney

Family," 1, and George Kinney, "Long Way," 25. Also 1850 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., Geneva, p. 265b (stamped), dwell. 630, fam. 641, John Kinny; 1860 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., Geneva, p. 255 (penned), dwell. 840, fam. 192, John Kinney; 1870 U.S. census, Black Hawk Co., Ia., pop. sch., Waterloo Ward 3, p. 555a (stamped), dwell. 217, fam. 230, John Kinney.

For Thomas Kinney, see Paul Kinney, "Kinney Family," 1, and George Kinney, "Long Way," 25. Also 1850 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., Geneva, p. 258a (stamped), dwell. 505, fam. 515, Thomas Kinny; 1860 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., Geneva, p. 252 (penned), dwell. 820, fam. 170, Thomas Kinney; 1870 U.S. census, Buchanan Co., Ia., pop. sch., Byron twp., p. 377a (stamped), dwell. 120, fam. 223, Thomas Kinney; 1880 U.S. census, Buchanan Co., Ia., pop. sch., enumeration district (ED) 82, Byron twp., p. 404B (stamped), dwell. 81, fam. 83, Thomas Kinney. Also *Find a Grave* memorial 54423846 (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/54423846/thomas-kinney), for Thomas Kinney, Saint Johns Catholic Cemetery, Independence, Buchanan Co., Ia.

Catharine Kinney is not mentioned in the work of Paul or George Kinney. The author believes her to be a child of Peter Kinney and Bridget Donagh based on "Wisconsin, U.S., Marriage Records, 1820–2004," database and images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61484/), Pre-1907 > Vernon (1893–1907)–Walworth (1839–1853), image 1007 of 1632. Although there were other Kinney families in Walworth County, only Peter Kinney's family originated in Ireland, shown by the 1850 census to be the birthplace of Seth Kelley's first wife (1850 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., Geneva, p. 259a, dwell. 522, fam. 532, Catharine Kelly). See also *Find a Grave* memorial 175522062 (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/175522062/katherine-kelley) for Katherine Kinney Kelley, burial details unknown.

For Margaret Kinney, see George Kinney, "Long Way," 25. Also 1860 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., Geneva, p. 252 (penned), dwell. 820, fam. 170, Margaret Kinney; 1870 U.S. census, Buchanan Co., Ia., pop. sch., Washington twp., p. 283b (stamped), dwell. 81, fam. 85, Margaret Kelly; 1880 U.S. census, Buchanan Co., Ia., pop. sch., ED 97, Westburg twp., p. 603D (stamped), dwell. 41, fam. 41, Margaret Kelley. Also 1905 Ia. state census, Buchanan Co., Westburg twp., card 146, Margaret Kelly; imaged in "Iowa State Census, 1905," *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9ZV-69HY-P).

For Jane Kinney, see Donna Kinney, family group sheet, Peter Kinney, author's files, and George Kinney, "Long Way," 25. Also 1850 U.S. census, Kenosha Co., Wi., pop. sch., Wheatland, p. 320b–321a (stamped), dwell., 79, fam. 81, Jane N. Kinney; "Illinois, U.S., Marriage Index, 1860–1920," database, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60984/), entry for Jane Kinney and Jacob Rodenbaugh, Carroll Co., 1855; 1860 U.S. census, Jo Daviess Co., Ill., pop. sch., Hanover twp., p. 855 (penned), dwell. 3808, fam. 2945, Jane Rodenbaugh; 1870 U.S. census, Grant Co., Wi., pop. sch., Platteville, p. 283a (stamped), dwell. 68, fam. 70, Jane Rodenbach; 1880 U.S. census, Grant Co., Wi., pop. sch., ED 122, Platteville, p. 319C (stamped), dwell. 507, fam. 523, Jane Rodenbaugh; 1890 U.S. census, Grant Co., Wi., "Special Schedule: Surviving Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines, and Widows, etc.," Platteville, p. 5 (penned), Jane Rodenbaugh, widow of Rodenbaugh, Jacob; *Find a Grave* memorial 122213564 (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/122213564/jane-rodenbaugh) for Jane Kinny Rodenbaugh, Greenwood Cemetery, Platteville, Grant Co., Wi.

For James H. Kinney, see Paul Kinney, "Kinney Family," 1, and George Kinney, "Long Way," 25. Also 1850 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., Geneva, p. 265b (stamped), dwell. 630, fam. 641, James Kinny; 1870 U.S. census, Lyon Co., Kans., pop. sch., Americus, p. 180a (stamped), dwell. 85, fam. 86, James Kinney; 1880 U.S. census, Cowley Co., Kans., pop. sch., ED 188, Winfield, p. 672C (stamped), dwell. 86, fam. 99, J. H. Kenny; 1900 U.S. census, Cowley Co., Kans., pop. sch., ED 53, Liberty twp., sheet 4A (penned and stamped), dwell. 71, fam.79, James H. Kenny; 1910 U.S. census, Cowley Co., Kans., pop. sch., ED 56, Liberty twp., p. 4B (penned and stamped), dwell. 84, fam. 84, J. H. Kinnie; *Find a Grave* memorial 9338638 (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/9338638/james-h-kinney), for James H. Kinney, Rose Valley Cemetery, Winfield, Cowley Co., Kans. For the maiden name of Maria Chystal, see "New Mexico, U.S., Deaths, 1889–1945," database, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/62171/), entry for James Henry Kinney, 16 May 1927, Otero Co.

For Helen Kinney, see George Kinney, "Long Way," 25. Also "Obituary," *The Lake Geneva (Wisconsin) News*, 24 April 1913, p. 1, col. 1; 1850 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., Geneva, p. 265b (stamped), dwell. 630, fam. 641, Hellen Kinny; 1860 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., Linn twp., p. 352, dwell. 591, fam. 115, Helen Gaffney; 1870 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., Linn twp., p. 186a (stamped), dwell. 120, fam. 119, Helen Gafney; 1880 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., ED 231, Linn twp., p. 162C (stamped), dwell. not numbered, fam. 9, Hellen Gafney; 1900 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., ED 93, Linn twp., sheet 1A (penned and stamped), dwell. 6, fam. 6, Mrs. Helen Gaffney; 1910 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., ED 145, Linn twp., sheet 1A (penned and stamped), dwell. 6, fam. 6, Mrs. Peter Gaffney.

For William Kinney, see Paul Kinney, "Kinney Family," 1, and George Kinney, "Long Way," 25, along with the author's unpublished manuscript, "William Kinney (1838–1917) Research Report: The Two William Kinneys of Wisconsin and Nevada," June 2022, author's files.

For Charlotte Kinney, see George Kinney, "Long Way," 25, along with the author's unpublished manuscript "Charlotte (Kinney) Snell," dated 26 June 2022, author's files, and Craig L. Pfannkuche and Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D., "Railroad Wreck: A Family Comes to Chicago," *Chicago Genealogical Society*, 54: 4 (2022), 143–147.

[6] The earliest census in which Ann appears, the 1850 census of Walworth County, Wisconsin (1850 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wi., pop. sch., Geneva, p. 258a (stamped), dwell. 505, fam. 515, Ann Kinny), gives her age as 21, which produces an estimated birth date of circa 1829. Ann's obituary in the Independence, Iowa Conservative reports that she was aged 67 years, suggesting a birth date of 1828. See Buchanan County Genealogical Society, Independence, Iowa, card file, Ann Kinney. The BCGS card file includes clippings of newspaper articles from county newspapers.

[7] Paul Kinney, "Kinney Family," 1–3, and George Kinney, "Long Way," 12–23, 25. Also Buchanan County Genealogical Society, Independence, Iowa, card file, Ann Kinney. For the birthplaces of Thomas and Ann's children, see footnote 5 above. Thomas's death is documented by the *Find a Grave* memorial cited in footnote 5, and Ann's death is documented by the obituaries in the BCGS card file. Ann's son Frank Kinney obtained a letter of administration from Buchanan County 27 December 1895. See Buchanan County, Administrator Guardian Executor Bonds, 3: 301; imaged in "Iowa, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1757–1997," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/9064/), Buchanan > Bonds, Vol 2–5, 1880–1908 > image 401 of 861.

[8] 1880 U.S. census, Buchanan Co., Ia., pop. sch., Byron twp., ED 82, p. 404B (stamped), dwell. 81, fam. 53, Ann Kinney [indexed by *Ancestry* as Hinney].

[9] "Betty" hasn't responded to *Ancestry* messages, so I've pseudonymized her here. For the size of the DNA matches, see author's screenshots, Jere Mackin and "Betty," Patrick Mackin and "Betty," Joann Mackin and "Betty," and Richard Mackin and Betty, 2 September 2023, author's files.

[10] Author's screenshot, Ancestry DNA match between Patrick Mackin and "Betty," 2 September 2023, author's files.

[11] Author's screenshots, Ancestry DNA match between Richard Mackin and "Betty," Ancestry DNA match between Joann Mackin and "Betty," Ancestry DNA match between Jere Mackin and "Betty," all dated 2 September 2023, author's files.

[12] Jonny Perl, "Introducing the Updated Shared cM Tool," 27 March 2020, *DNAPainter Blog* (https://dnapainter.com/blog/introducing-the-updated-shared-cm-tool/). For information on the Shared cM Project, see "Version 4.0! March 2020 Update to the Shared cM Project!," 27 March 2020, *The Genetic Genealogist* (https://thegeneticgenealogist.com/2020/03/27/version-4-0-march-2020-update-to-the-shared-cm-project/)

[13] See Blaine Bettinger, "Leveraging the Power of Siblings and Cousins to Narrow Relationship Possibilities," 12 November 2022, *The Genetic Genealogist* (https://thegeneticgenealogist.com/2022/11/12/leveraging-the-power-of-siblings-and-cousins-to-narrow-relationship-possibilities/).

[14] "The Shared cM Project 4.0 Tool v4 With Option to Add a Second Amount," *DNAPainter* (https://dnapainter.com/tools/sharedcm-double/41|10), shared cM amounts 41 and 10.

[15] The WATO tool can be found at https://dnapainter.com/tools/probability/258605. Frequently Asked Questions about the tool are at https://dnapainter.com/help/wato-faq.

[16] For an explanation of the beta probabilities, see Leah LaPerle Larkin, "Improving the Odds," 25 May 2020, *The DNA Geek* (https://thednageek.com/improving-the-odds/).

[17] "What Are the Odds?" and "What Are the Odds? v2 beta," *DNAPainter* (https://dnapainter.com/tools/wato/257337), probability tree for Jere Mackin, Patrick, Mackin, Joann Mackin, and Richard Mackin, based on shared DNA amounts with "Betty." Screenshots in author's files.

[18] Common ancestors identified by *Ancestry* for this shared match are John Clark and Joseph Neville — Mary "Polly" Buckmaster. John Clark is the father of Sophia M. Clark, married to Thomas Kinney. Joseph Neville and Mary Buckmaster are Sophia's maternal grandparents.

[19] Blaine Bettinger and Lauren McGuire, "GUEST POST: The McGuire Method — Simplified Visual DNA Comparisons," 19 March 2017, *The Genetic Genealogist* (https://thegeneticgenealogist.com/2017/03/19/guest-post-the-mcguire-method-simplified-visual-dna-comparisons/).

[20] For Thomas Kinney and Ann Conner, see footnote 5 above.

For the Mackin siblings, see footnote 1 above for Kathryn Kinney. For Joseph C. Kinney, see "Iowa, U.S., Births (series) 1880–1904, 1921–1944 and Delayed Births (series), 1856–1940," database and images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61441/), Birth and Stillborn Ledgers > ALL > 1883 > image 724 of 2820, and *Find a Grave* memorial 39468616 (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/

39468616/joseph-clark-kinney). For Thomas Kinney see Iowa Department of Vital Statistics, death certificate 66-285 for Thomas Kinney (1923), imaged in "Iowa, U.S., Death Records, 1880–1972," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61442/), Death Certificates > 1921–1929 > image 13404 of 224914.

For SMThomas-1, the tester identified their father and grandfather via *Ancestry* messaging dated 24 January 2020; screenshot in author's files. For William Kinney (1922–1981), see "U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936–2007," *Ancestry*, (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60901/), entry for William Jerry Kinney, SSN 475-16-9520. For William Kinney (1885–1953), see "Minnesota Deaths, 1887–2001," database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:WFFX-1SN2), entry for William Kinney, 1953.

For SMCatherine-1, the tester's test name appears in "Minnesota, U.S., Birth Index, 1935–2000," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8742/), providing their parents' names. Their father's entry in "U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936–2007," *Ancestry*, links him to his parents. For Kathryn Diggins, see Minnesota, U.S., Death Index, 1908–2017," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7316/), entry for Kathryn Schmitz, certificate number 009788; also Catherine A. Diggins, "Iowa, County Births, 1880–1935," *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XV81-R4L); and Catherine Diggins, "Iowa, County Marriages, 1838–1934," *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XJ62-YTP). For Catherine Kinney, see Iowa Department of Vital Statistics, death certificate 10-1096, Catherine Diggins (1925), imaged in "Iowa, U.S., Death Records, 1880–1972," *Ancestry*, Death Certificates > 1921–1929 > image 19730 of 224914.

For SMGeorge-1, the tree attached to the tester's kit provides their maternal grandparents' names. For Ramona Kinney, see "Iowa, U.S., Births and Christenings Index, 1800–1999," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2547/), entry for Ramona Jacquiline Kinney; "Web: Minnesota, U.S., Marriages from the Minnesota Official Marriage System, 1850–2019," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/70873/), entry for Ramona Kinney; *Find a Grave* memorial 192140186 (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/192140186/ramona-jacquiline-becker), for Ramona Jacquiline Kinney Becker, Mountain Breeze Memorial Garden, Miami, Gila Co., Ariz. For Andrew Kinney, see "Iowa, Marriage Records, 1923–1937," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8823/), 1929 > 1 > image 997 of 4725; *Find a Grave* memorial 192138969 (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/192138969/andrew-f.-kinney), for Andrew F. Kinney, Mountain Breeze Memorial Garden, Miami, Gila Co., Ariz. For George Kinney, see "Iowa, Marriage Records, 1923–1937," *Ancestry*, 1901 > 403 (Adair–Dubuque) > image 165 of 523; *Find a Grave* memorial 54423870 (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/54423870/george-arthur-kinney), for George Arthur Kinney, Saint Johns Catholic Cemetery, Independence, Buchanan Co., Ia.

For SMGeorge-2, the tree attached to the tester's kit identifies their parents and grandparents. For Kathryn Kinney, see "Mrs. Mary M. Byers," *The (Waterloo, Iowa) Courier*, 25 May 1978, p. 5, col. 2; imaged at *Newspapers.com*. Also "Iowa, Marriage Records, 1880–1937," *Ancestry* > 1946 > 1 (Adair County–Cherokee County) > image 2049 of 5010; "Social Security Death Index," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/3693/), entry for Kathryn Smith, SSN 485-03-5960.

For SMGeorge-3, the tree attached to the tester's kit identifies their father and their maternal grandmother Marion Kinney. For Marion Kinney, see "Iowa, U.S., Births and Christenings Index, 1800–1999, *Ancestry*, entry for Marion Jean Kinney.

For SMGeorge-4, the tree attached to the tester's kit identifies their maternal grandmother Burneta Kinney. For Burneta Kinney, see "U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936–2007, *Ancestry*, entry for Helen Burnita Dimbat, SSN 568-02-7531.

For SMGeorge-5, the tree attached to the tester's kit identifies their maternal grandmother, also Burneta Kinney.

For SMFrancis-1, see author's screenshot, Thru-Line for Thomas Kinney (1823–1887), Jere Gene Mackin and SMFrancis-1. For Vera M. Kinney, see "Iowa, U.S., Births and Christenings Index, 1800–1999," *Ancestry*, entry for Vera May Kinney; "California Death Index, 1940–1997," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5180/), entry for Vera Mae Conklin, SSN 484-24-7959. For Francis Kinney, see U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936–2007," *Ancestry*, entry for Frank Kinney, SSN 709-01-8139.

[21] Diana Elder provides a sample McGuire chart created in LucidChart in "Providing an Ancestor with DNA: Benjamin Cox (1791–After 1870)," 30 April 2023, *Family Locket* (https://familylocket.com/proving-an-ancestor-with-dna-benjamin-cox-1791-after-1870/). For a chart similar to McGuire charts created in Microsoft Word, see Debbie Parker Wayne, "One DNA Analysis Chart Process," 30 June 2017, *Deb's Delvings in Genealogy* (https://debsdelvings.blogspot.com/2017/06/one-dna-analysis-chart-process.html).

[22] "Cook County, Illinois, U.S., Marriages Index, 1871–1920," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2556/), entry for Nellie Nevins and Michael Carney.

"Cook County, Illinois, U.S., Deaths Index 1878–1922," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2552/), entry for Nellie Carney (1918). For Nellie's birthplace, see New York, 1855 state census, Oswego Co., Oswego City, Ward 2, ED 1, n.p., dwell. 356, fam. 426, Helen Neven; imaged in "New York, U.S., State Census, 1855," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7181/).

[23] 1860 U.S. census, Oswego Co., N.Y., Oswego Ward 2, p. 791 (penned), dwell. 445, fam. 445, James Navin.

[24] "New York, County Naturalization Records, 1791–1980," *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KFF9-NBG), entry for James Nevin, 1833, Oswego Co., New York.

[25] 1860 U.S. census, Oswego Co., N.Y., Oswego Ward 2, p. 791 (penned), dwell. 445, fam. 445, Mary Navin.

[26] See 1850 U.S. census, Oswego Co., N.Y., Oswego Ward 2, p. 177b (stamped), dwell. 386, fam. 462, Elizabeth Maton.

[27] New York, 1855 state census, Oswego Co., Oswego City, Ward 2, ED 1, n.p., dwell. 356, fam. 426, Christopher, Michael, and James Neven. For the land purchases, see Oswego Co., N.Y., Deeds 38: 183–4; imaged at *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L9WR-646D?i=470&cc=2078654&cat=251264 and https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L9WR-64N5?i=471&cc=2078654&cat=251264). Also Oswego Co., N.Y., Deeds 42:147–8; imaged at *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9WR-NSMW?i=110&cc=2078654&cat=251264 and https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9WR-NSM8?i=111&cc=2078654&cat=251264).

[28] Oswego Co., N.Y., Deeds 46: 476–7; imaged at *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-89WR-VKBM?i=282&cc=2078654&cat=251264).

[29] *Find a Grave* memorials 172723136 and 172723012 (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/172723136/mary-nevins and https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/172723012/james-nevins), for Mary Connor Nevins and James Nevins, Saint Paul Cemetery, Oswego, Oswego Co., N.Y. 1870 U.S. census, Oswego Co., N.Y, Oswego Ward 4, p. 183a (stamped), dwell. 35, fam. 34, James Nevin. Oswego Co., N.Y., Wills K: 392–3; imaged at *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9YCH-9WL4?i=608&cc=1920234&cat=229171).

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Don't Neglect Wills, Probate, and Administration Records in Your Irish Research

by Kim Gehrman White

Wills and those records created after a person's death are essential genealogy documents. Alas, only a tiny proportion of the Irish population — typically the ruling and upper classes, landed gentry, merchants, and farmers — prepared wills. While you may not believe your ancestor made a will in light of the above considerations, reasonably exhaustive research compels us to search existing indexes and record sets to verify our hypotheses.

Probate records are invaluable for how family members are often clearly defined by their relationships. Daniel Gabbett's will of 1852 refers to "my Brothers William Gabbett and The Revd Joseph Gabbett my brother-in-law Gamaliel Magrath FitzGerald and my Cousin Mathew Richard Gabbett to be Executors and Trustees of this my will." The will goes on to mention his wife Susanna, brother Robert Gabbett [deceased]; his late father, Daniel Gabbett, each of his sons Daniel, Wyndham, and William Hampden; his nieces Catherine and Alicia, daughters of his brother John. This is enough information to construct a rudimentary family tree.

From the time of the Reformation in 1536 until the Courts of Probate and Letter of Administration Act in 1857, the Church of Ireland's ecclesiastical courts found in each diocese handled all probate matters, including determining if a will was valid and, in the absence of a will, distributing property. The two governing bodies responsible for probate matters were the Consistorial Court in each diocese and the Prerogative Court of the Archbishop of Armagh (in Dublin).

Pre-1858 Online Resources:

- Ireland, Diocesan and Prerogative Wills & Administrations Indexes, 1595-1858 — *FamilySearch*
- Indexes to Probate Records, 1536-1858, and Surviving Will Books, 1644-1834 — *FamilySearch*
- Ireland, Original Will Registers, 1858-1920 — *FamilySearch*
- Prerogative and Diocesan Copies of Some Wills and Indexes to Others, 1596-1858 — *National Archives of Ireland* (NAI)
- Index to the Prerogative Wills of Ireland, 1536-1810, edited by Sir Arthur Vicars, digitized book — *FamilySearch Digital Library*
- Some Probate Records, 1536-1858, and Surviving Will Books, 1644-1834 — *FamilySearch*
- Indexes to Irish Wills Proved in the Consistory Courts, 1536-1857, for Northern Ireland — *Public Record Office of Northern Ireland* (PRONI)

The Probate Act (1857) removed testamentary authority from the Church of Ireland. The power to consent to probate and the issuance of letters of administration was consigned to the Principal Registry in Dublin and eleven District Registries of the Probate Court (before 1877) or the High Court (after 1877); the Principal Registry took the place of the Prerogative Court.

Post-1858 Online Resources:

- Calendars of Wills and Administrations 1858-1920 — *NAI*
- Will Registers 1858-1900 — *NAI*
- Ireland, Original Will Registers, 1858-1920 — *FamilySearch*
- Wills and Various District Registries, 1865-1881 — *FamilySearch*
- Probate Book, 1892-1900 — *FamilySearch*
- District Probate Registries of Armagh, Belfast, and Londonderry, 1858-1965 — *PRONI*

When researching probate records before modern times, remember that most wills were left by men who owned property. Not all men with property left wills, however; some died "intestate," i.e. before they could record a will. Perhaps your relative did not possess much personally, but maybe a rich uncle left behind something in his will for that relative.

Other Online Resources:

- A list of Quaker wills — https://www.failteromhat.com
- Soldiers' Wills (while serving in the British Army) — http://soldierswills.nationalarchives.ie/search/sw/home.jsp

The resources referenced are but a small subset of what is available online; this focuses on those that are free. Additional information may be found in the following sources:

"Ireland Probate Records – International Institute," wiki page, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Ireland_

Probate_Records_-_International_Institute), last updated on 27 April 2023, at 09:40.

"Ireland Probate Records," wiki page, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Ireland_Probate_Records), last updated on 3 May 2023, at 18:43.

Jeremy Gibson and Stuart Raymond, *Probate Jurisdictions: Where to Look for Wills*, 6th ed. (Bury, United Kingdom: Family History Partnership LLC, 2016).

John Grenham, *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors*, 5th ed. (Dublin, Ireland: Gill Books, 2019).

James G. Ryan, PhD, *Irish Records: Sources for Family and Local History*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Turner Publishing Co., 1997).

Endnotes

[1] County of Limerick, copy of will and codicil of Daniel Gabbett (1852) of Thorn Ville, City of Limerick, Ireland; "Ireland, Wills and Grants of Probate, 1858-1900," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 21 May 2023), The Gabbett document is found in images 35-37 of 710; citing "Limerick District Will Books, 1858-1888," National Archives of Ireland; essentially all original Irish wills in the Public Record Office were destroyed in the Four Courts fire of 1922. Yet, copies of wills proved in District Registers from 1858 to 1900 survive in Will Registers and are an exact replacement for the lost originals.

[2] Brian Mitchell, *A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland*, 2d ed. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2002), 14.

[3] "Calendars of Wills and Administrations 1858-1920," Genealogy Website of NAI, National Archives of Ireland (https://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie : accessed 21 May 2023).

A fourth-generation Californian, Kim Gehrman White is the current Associate Editor of The Septs. *Her research is focused on Spain, Portugal, and Ireland.*



Legal Terms Used During the Probate Process in Ireland

Consistorial Court. "A diocesan ecclesiastical court of the Established church. Until the passage of the Probate Act of 1857 (20 & 21 Vict., c. 8), wills were proved and letters of administration granted in the consistorial court."

Curia Regis. (Med. L., the king's court) "The king's court or council but in Ireland – because the king so rarely appeared – the justiciar's council which functioned from the beginning of the Anglo-Norman conquest and from which the criminal jurisdiction of king's bench evolved."

Ecclesiastical Court. "Ecclesiastical courts dealt largely with marriage and testamentary matters, ecclesiastical administration, cases of clerical misconduct, defamation and suits for the payment of tithe."

Four Courts. "The four central royal courts of justice were king's bench, chancery, the exchequer, and common pleas. All evolved from the undifferentiated curia regis or king's council, the assembly of advisers and officials which attended the king."

Justiciar. "Hist. A royal judicial officer in medieval England; esp., a justice presiding over a superior court."

Prerogative Court. "Courts operating alongside the common law courts which arose out of the curia regis (king's council) to deal with cases for which no remedy existed at common law or particular areas in which the regular courts would not deal. They were known as prerogative courts because through them the king exercised his discretionary power as sovereign to provide justice to his subjects."

Probate, n. "The judicial process by which a will purporting to be the last will of a deceased person is declared legally valid. If so adjudged, the will is then admitted to probate and the executor can begin to dispose of the estate." **Vb.** To admit (a will) to proof and/or administer an estate.

References

Joseph Byrne, *Byrne's Dictionary of Irish Local History*, (Cork, Ireland: Mercier Press, 2004), pp. 78, 92, 106, 126, 247, 251.

Bryan A. Garner, ed., *Black's Law Dictionary*, 8th ed. (2004; reprint, St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing Co., 2007), pp. 882, 1239.

Johnston of Rossinver, Leitrim One-Name Study

(updated Sep. 29, 2022)

by Donna Moughty

Over the past 20 years, my personal genealogy has taken a back seat to my business with client work, consultations, and lectures. Now, as I wind down my business, I've got a lot to do. The joke in my family is about my daughters cremating my file cabinets with me. I need to focus and get my "stuff" into a format that can be shared. Honestly, I think I know how to do it…it's just doing it. I've got my electronic filing system set up, but I have to admit that I haven't gotten all of my research into the correct files yet. I'm highly susceptible to BSOs (bright shiny objects), so I'll begin filing and jump into researching.

If you've been following me for a while, you might remember that over a year ago I wrote about a brick wall with my Johnston ancestors from Rossinver Parish in northern County Leitrim. I know that my 3x great-grandfather was James Johnston. I can follow my line down from there, but I don't know the name of James' wife, the mother of my 2x great-grandmother, Rachel. When I started, I knew Rachel had a sister, Margaret. Just as a refresher, my family was Church of Ireland and the records for the parish didn't begin until the 1880s, as the earlier records had been sent to the Public Records Office for safekeeping. Another problem is that the landlord for the area was also named Johnston, and no, there are no estate records available for the family.

For the past year and a half, I jumped in and out of this research between lectures, consultations, and research trip preparation. I'm really trying to focus. As you

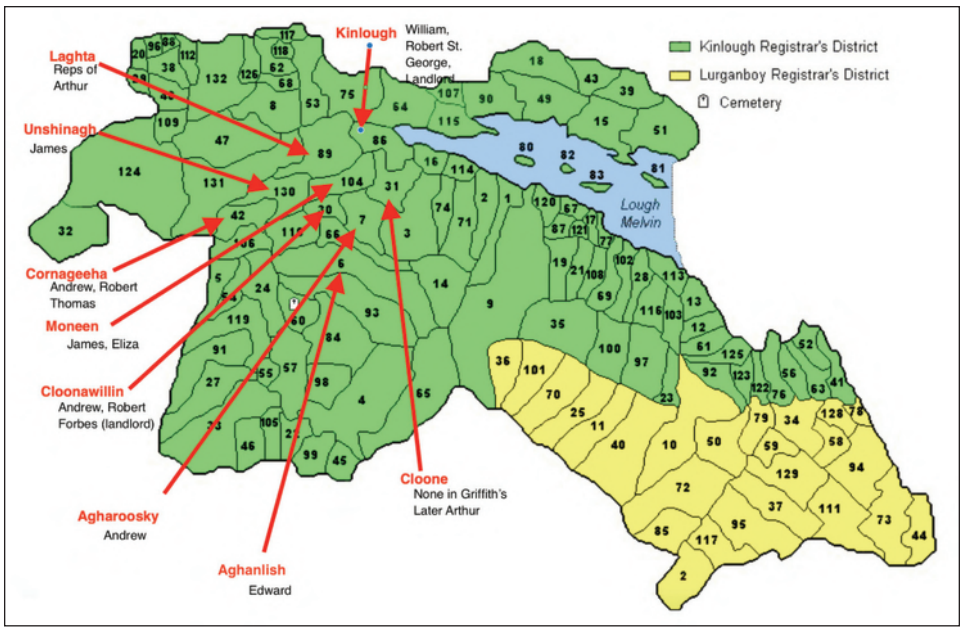


Image 1: *Map of Townlands in Rossinver Parish showing locations of Johnstons with given names*

Births | Deaths | Marriages | Sheet 1

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	Surname	Given Name	Location		GRID	Father	Witnesses
1845-4-28	Boyde	John	Ballaghameehan	Widower	3157099	James	Robert Johnston
	Johnston	Margaret	Brookhill	Spinster		Robert	Andrew Johnston
1846-5-2	Johnston	Thomas	Tiranagher	Widower	3168824	Thomas	James Johnston
	Johnston	Sarah	Bohevny, Inishmacsaint	Spinster		William	Charles Stewart
1848-5-4	Elliott	James	Manger, Inishmacsaint	Bachelor	3182886	James	Hugh Raynor
	Johnston	Harriet	Tievealough, Belleek	Spinster		James	James Johnston
1848-11-10	St. George	Archibald	Kinlough House	Bachelor	3185173	Thomas	William Johnsdton
	Johnston	Penelope	Kinlough House	Spinster		Robert	Robert Johnston
1851-1-16	Johnston	Thomas	Devenish, Devenish	Bachelor	3213864	?	Robert Johnston
	Johnston	Mary	Devenish, Devenish	Spinster		William	James Johnston
1852-2-12	Corry	David	Laughta	Bachelor	3218430	George	John Elliott
	Brookes	Fanny	Edenvella	Spinster		George	
1855-2-8	Bell	Andrew	Derryrona, Belleek	Bachelor	3246814	Edward	Robert Donaldson
	Johnston	Ellenor	Derryrona, Belleek	Spinster		James	William Thompson
1856-11-21	Johnston	James	Unchena	Bachelor	3261318	John	James McEntyne
	Johnston (Wallace)	Eliza	Moneen	Widow		John Wallace	James Whitten
1858-1-1	Dundas	Aaron	Mayglass, Devenish	Bachelor	3278081	John	Robert Johnston
	Johnston	Sarah	Drumreask, Inishmacsaint	Spinster		Thomas	William Fears
1858-3-24	Johnston	James	Kinlough Gate House	Widower	3280393	James	Edward Johnston
	Johnston	Jane	Aghanlish	Spinster		Edward	Alexander Bye
1858-6-24	Johnston	John	Aghamuldowney, Devenish	Bachelor	3280434	Francis	Andrew Rodgers
	Peterson	Anne	Manger, Inishmacsaint	Spinster		James	Dundas O'Reily

Image 2: *County Leitrim Marriage Worksheet*

can see from the map [Image 1], I've identified all of the Johnston families in the area and, because they were Protestant, I began by looking at all of the marriage records starting in 1845. I then went on to identify all births and deaths after 1864 in order to put the various families together. One of the things I discovered was that I had multiple marriages of Johnstons marrying Johnstons! [Image 2]

The Superintendent Registration District (Poor Law Union) for the area was Ballyshannon (used at *IrishGenealogy.ie*). Still, Johnston wasn't just a common name in Leitrim…it was common as well in Donegal and Fermanagh in the Ballyshannon Superintendent Registration District. I had to look at each image to determine the locality. I was looking for an easier way to identify the Registration District of Kinlough, and John Grenham solved the problem for me. At

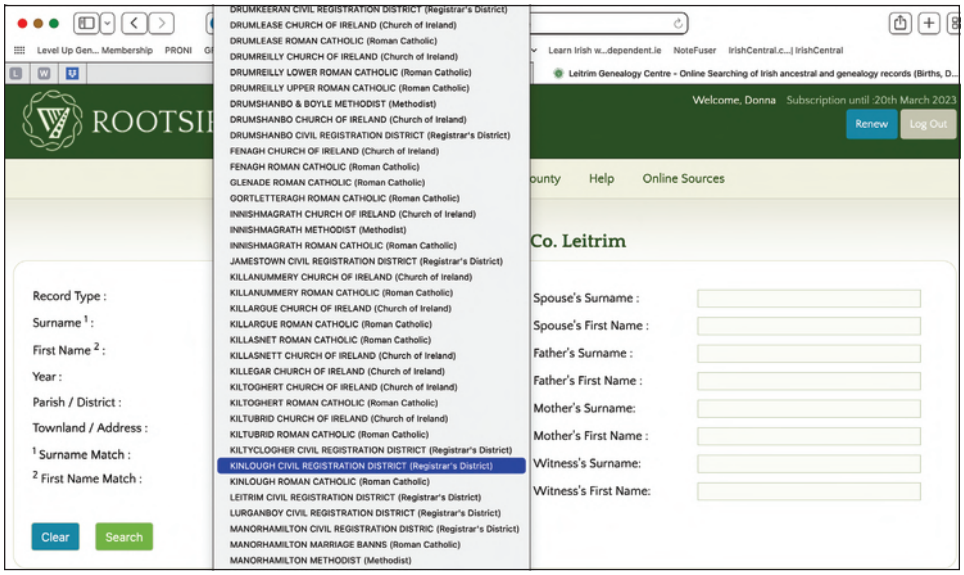


Image 3: *Dropdown Menu for County Leitrim's Kinlough Civil Registration District*

RootsIreland.ie, after selecting the County (Leitrim), I could select the Parish/District of Kinlough Civil Registration [Image 3]. This allowed me to select only those from my area of interest when I went back to *IrishGenealogy.ie* to see the actual image for the detailed information.

On my trip to Ireland in May, I spent a good amount of time at the Valuation Office, viewing the Revision Books. The map [Image 1] is based on the Johnstons in each parish at the time of Griffith's Valuation. If I could identify how the property moved from one individual to another within each parish, I could possibly determine how or if these people were related.

Addendum (Nov 7, 2022 blog):
While I was in Ireland in October 2022, I received a *Facebook* message from an individual who had found my website and thought our great-grandmothers might be sisters. Yes, they were (although it was my 2x great-grandmother and his 3x great-grandmother). It was an exciting find, and I didn't think there was anyone from that family left in Ireland. Matthew drove from Fermanagh to Belfast to meet me on Saturday, October 29th. We had a lovely chat and lunch and he agreed to do a DNA test for me. (I never travel without a supply...think about that for the upcoming Holidays. The sales have already started.) Since he doesn't carry the Johnston name, I had him do an atDNA test.

Endnotes

[1] Donna Moughty, "Johnston of Rossinver, Leitrim One-Name Study," I*rish Family Roots* (https://www.irishfamilyroots.com/post/johnston-of-rossinver-leitrim-one-name-study : accessed 17 September 2023).

[2] "Map for the Civil Parish of Rossinver in County Leitrim Showing Townland Locations," *Leitrim-Roscommon Genealogy Website* (http://www.leitrim-roscommon.com/MAPS/rossinver.html : accessed 6 April 2021).

[3] "Marriage Records for County Leitrim," *RootsIreland.ie* (https://www.rootsireland.ie/leitrim/quis.php?page=0&prevStartQuery=0 : accessed 6 April 2021).

Irish Family Roots
(reprinted with permission)

Donna Moughty, has been conducting research for over 30 years and is a member of APG, a blogger on topics including Methodology, Internet, Irish research, and technology, the author of the Quick Reference Guides for Irish Research, *and has conducted research trips to Dublin and Belfast for the past 12 years. She recently retired from lecturing and private research to focus on her own family and will conduct her final group research trips to Ireland this October. Donna continues to blog at https://www.irishfamilyroots.com and is on* Facebook *at https://www.facebook.com/DonnaMoughtyGenealogy/.*



Connecting Irish Ethnicity to Historical Events

by Rob[t]. Flanagan Stieglitz

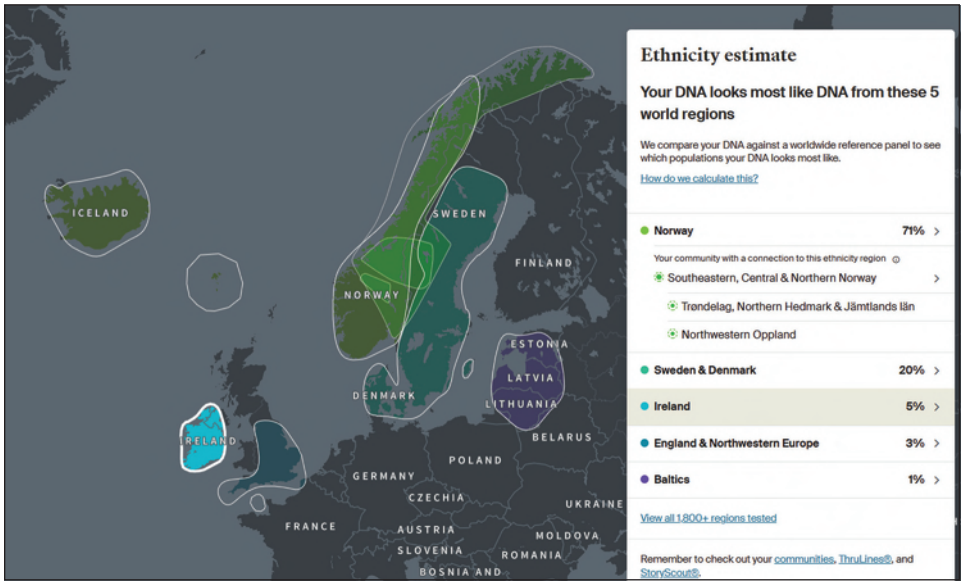
My use of DNA for genealogy consists of autosomal (atDNA) matches to individuals found on various testing sites. These atDNA matches are used to supplement my genealogical research. "Genetic genealogy is the use of DNA testing in combination with traditional genealogical and historical records to infer relationships between individuals."1 It is important to emphasize that DNA analysis cannot be used alone; your matches must have accurately-sourced family trees.

Ethnicity is rarely used in my research. That said, those recently reported in my Scandinavian wife Bette's AncestryDNA results proved to be quite revealing. Knowing her ancestral history, an outcome of 91% of Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish heritage was unsurprising. The 5% Irish and 1% Baltic were unforeseen, however.[2] Where did those come from, and are they accurate? *Ancestry* provides an excellent explanation of how they derive their results. With current technology, AncestryDNA has, on average, an accuracy rate of over 99 percent for each marker tested.[3]

The use of DNA is still a relatively new technology to some for genealogy. There is a learning curve in how one can apply it to their genealogical research. As previously mentioned, the use of atDNA matches alone is incomplete without knowing your ancestral trees to determine the shared MRCA (Most Recent Common Ancestor). Ethnicity estimates, as tested, represent only your genetic history and may go back as far as 1,000 years.[4] Most of us have a good idea of our ethnic origins but, given that amount of time, as seen with Bette's results, we may find surprises. Is it then possible to explain these results by historical events?

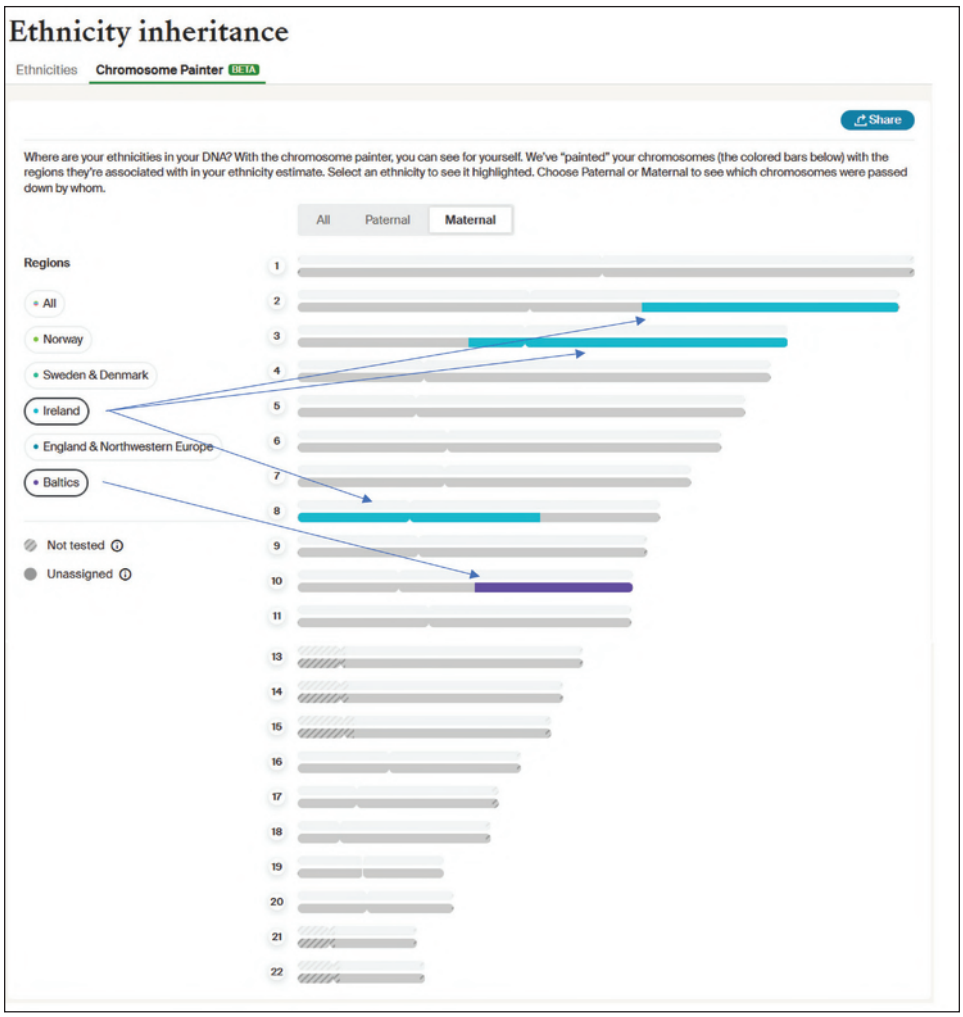
A study published in the January 2023 issue of *Cell* explored the genetic dynamics of people in Norway, Sweden and Denmark dating back two millennia based on 297 genomes from ancient human remains and data from 16,638 modern Scandinavian men and women.[5] To summarize, the study analyzed the DNA of ancient Scandinavian people who were alive prior to the Viking Age. "The Viking Age (793–1066 CE) was the period during the Middle Ages when Norsemen known as Vikings undertook large-scale raiding, colonizing, conquest, and trading throughout Europe (including Ireland and Great Britain) and reached North America." After comparing results to more contemporary people of Norway/Sweden/Denmark (i.e., those after the Viking Age), researchers found that DNA from females (more than from men) from the eastern Baltic region and, to a lesser extent the British and Irish isles, were added to the genome.[6]

According to molecular archaeologist Ricardo Rodríguez-Varela of Stockholm University's Center for Palaeogenetics, lead author of the study, "We have no way to know with our data the number of women involved or if these women with east Baltic and British-Irish ancestries were in Scandinavia voluntarily or involuntarily."[7] Vikings taking hostages and trading slaves is well documented in history. Could Bette's Irish ancestors be some of those women who arrived in the region during that time?



Bette's "Ethnicity estimate" on AncestryDNA

DNA does not lie; the interpretation of ethnicity results improves every year with each technological advance. It is well documented that the Irish people have a genetic connection to those Scandinavian raiders from the Viking Age. Rodríguez-Varela's study establishes that the Scandinavian people owe their Irish ancestry to the same historical events. This is not definitive proof of Bette's ancestral history, but is certainly a plausible explanation for her Irish ethnicity! Before the release of this study, one may have believed this was the case, but it would have been pure conjecture. This scientific research now provides supporting evidence of such conjectures.



Irish and Baltic DNA segments on Bette's atDNA (AncestryDNA)

Endnotes

1 "Genetic Genealogy," *ISOGG* (http://www.isogg.org/wiki/Genetic_genealogy : accessed 14 June 2023).

2 "AncestryDNA® Test Accuracy | AncestryDNA® Learning Hub," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/c/dna-learning-hub/ancestrydna-test-accuracy : accessed 14 June 2023).

3 "AncestryDNA® Test Accuracy | AncestryDNA® Learning Hub," Ancestry (https://www.ancestry.com/c/dna-learning-hub/ancestrydna-test-accuracy : accessed 14 June 2023).

4 *Ancestry*, "Test Accuracy/Learning Hub."

5 Rodríguez-Varela, Ricardo, et al. "The Genetic History of Scandinavia from the Roman Iron Age to the Present," *Cell*, no.1 (January 2023): 186, (https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36608656/ : accessed 14 June 2023), pp. 32-46.e19. doi: 10.1016/j.cell.2022.11.024. See also Will Dunham, "Study shows how Viking age left mark on genetics of Scandinavians," 5 January 2023, *Reuters* (http://www.reuters.com : accessed 14 June 2023).

6 Rodríguez-Varela, "Genetic History."

7 Rodríguez-Varela, "Genetic History."

Rob Flanagan Stieglitz was born in New Jersey and is now happily retired in Minnesota for most of the year. He started researching his family history in 1999, is a graduate of the Boston University Genealogical Research Certificate Program, and has had articles published in The New York Researcher, Irish Lives Remembered, *and* Irish Roots.



"Ireland is where strange tales begin and happy endings are possible."

~ Charles Haughey, *Taoiseach (1925-2006)*

Colin Murphy and Donal O'Dea, *The Feckin' Book of Everything Irish: A Gansey-Load of Deadly Craic for Cute Hoors and Bowsies* (Fall River Press: New York, NY, compiled in 2006).

Teaching Computers to Decipher Old Newsprint — in Gaelic

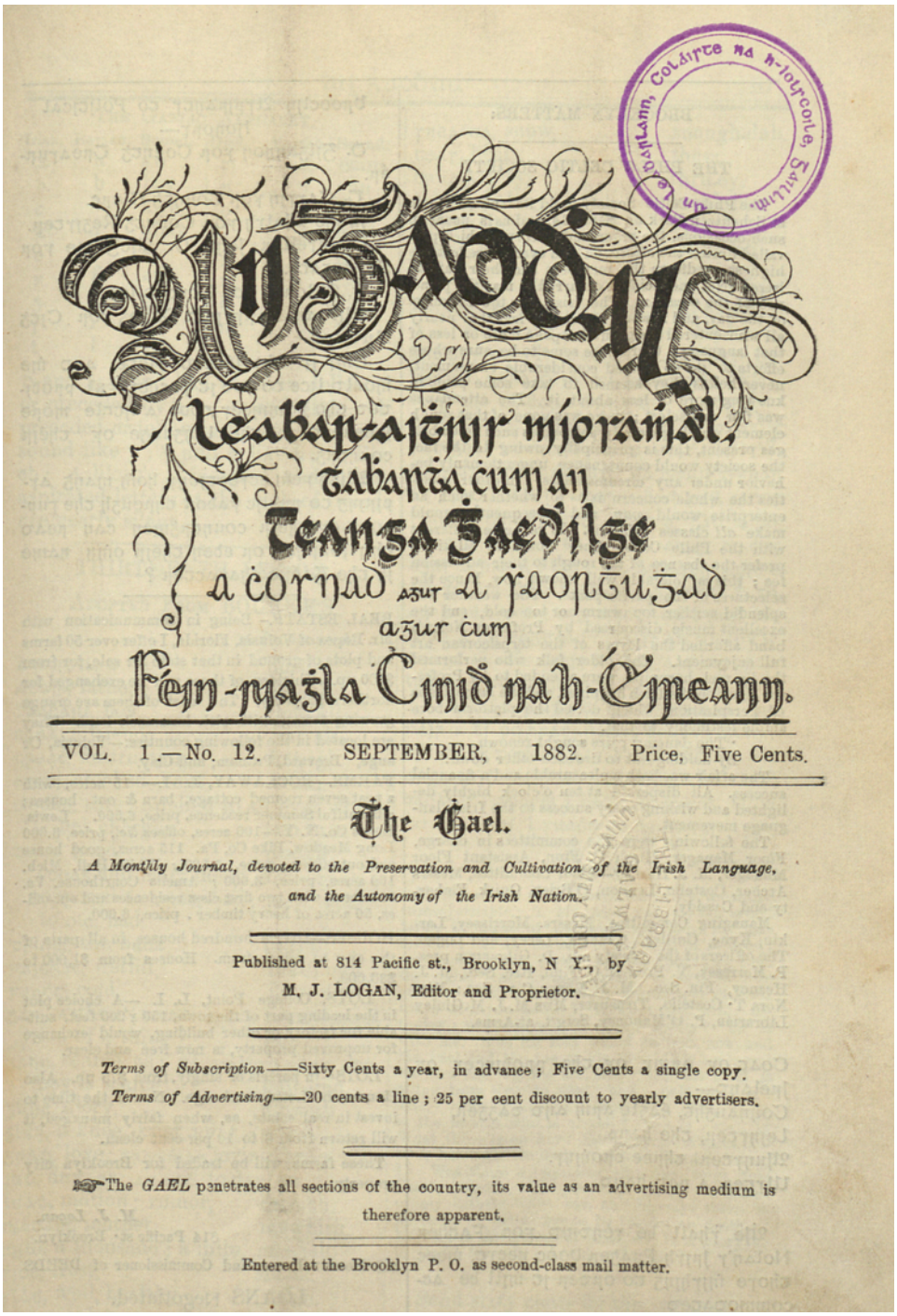
by By Eileen Reynolds

NYU and University of Galway researchers turn to AI to preserve a piece of Brooklyn's Irish past.
(Reprinted courtesy of NYU's Office of Public Affairs)

The first-ever Irish language newspaper to be printed anywhere in the world was born not in Ireland, where spoken Irish had declined under British colonial rule, but — like so many expressions of diasporic pride — right here in linguistically diverse New York City. Some 800 languages are spoken in the five boroughs today, with some neighborhoods — especially in Brooklyn and Queens — housing rare enclaves of endangered languages that aren't spoken much anymore, even back in their home communities.

Already a haven for minority languages by the late 19th century, New York was home to an estimated 200,000 to 250,000 native Irish speakers in 1881, when the Irish paper *An Gaodhal* got its start. Its creator, Mícheál Ó Lócháin, a former newspaper reporter from County Galway who found work in the city as a schoolteacher and then a real estate agent, was among the 1.5 million children and adults who had left Ireland for a new start in America in waves of migration following the Great Famine of the 1840s and '50s.

Whereas previous Irish American newspapers beginning in the mid-19th century may have included a few lines of Irish here or there, *An Gaodhal* was the first fully bilingual attempt, with full sections of Irish text rendered in Gaelic type (known as the sean-chló) interspersed with different content in English. Often working out of his home at 267 Kosciuszko Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Ó Lócháin,



An Gaodhal

Leabhar-aitheas mhíosamhail,

Tabharta cum an

Teanga Gaedilge

a cothú agus a shaothrú

agus cum

Fein-mhisle Chinéadh na h-Éireann.

VOL. 1.—No. 12. SEPTEMBER, 1882. Price, Five Cents.

The Gael.

A Monthly Journal, devoted to the Preservation and Cultivation of the Irish Language, and the Autonomy of the Irish Nation.

Published at 814 Pacific st., Brooklyn, N Y., by
M. J. LOGAN, Editor and Proprietor.

Terms of Subscription——Sixty Cents a year, in advance; Five Cents a single copy.
Terms of Advertising——20 cents a line; 25 per cent discount to yearly advertisers.

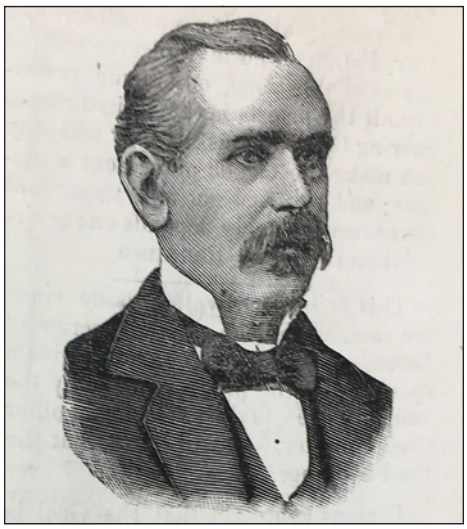
☞The *GAEL* penetrates all sections of the country, its value as an advertising medium is therefore apparent.

Entered at the Brooklyn P. O. as second-class mail matter.

Cover page of An Gaodhal

a passionate cheerleader for his mother tongue, published the paper up until his death in 1899.

Today, issues of *An Gaodhal* survive in only about 20 libraries worldwide, with one near-complete run housed in the Hardiman Library at the University of Galway. For decades, it has remained what researchers call a "hidden collection – a valuable repository of, in this case, Irish songs, poetry, and folklore, as well as local Brooklyn history – that is inaccessible to most scholars worldwide.



Founder and editor Mícheál Ó Lócháin (anglicized here as Michael Logan) was born in Galway in 1836 and died in Brooklyn in 1899.

Nicholas Wolf, a data services and research data management librarian at the NYU Libraries and affiliated Glucksman Ireland House faculty member, is working to change that. Wolf became interested in the history of Irish speakers as an understudied subject in the course of his graduate research on the country's 19th-century social and cultural history, a pursuit that resulted in his first book on the subject, *An Irish-Speaking Island* (2014), and 15 years of studying the topic. With Galway-based NYU research scholar Deirdre Ní Chonghaile (a native Irish speaker) and colleagues, he is leading an effort to build a fully digital edition of the newspaper with searchable text and metadata.



Nicholas Wolf

In the first phase of the project, supported with Irish government funds and by Glucksman Ireland House, the team created digital images of all the newspaper's pages. Now, with funding from the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation, the Irish Institute of New York, Glucksman Ireland House, and the University of Galway, they're embarking on a new challenge: training machines to read the Gaelic type, an AI feat that would make the entire digital edition easily searchable.

"When you have a media object like this in a minority language – something spoken by a small number of people in the world, as Irish is now – digitization isn't always going to be at the top of the priority list for vendors and libraries, because the readership today, even among scholars, is going to be smaller," Wolf says. That's why the dedicated investment is crucial: without it, this rare trove of Irish Americana risks being overlooked and forgotten. But once the digital transcriptions are complete, the files can potentially be integrated into existing research databases and accessed from anywhere.

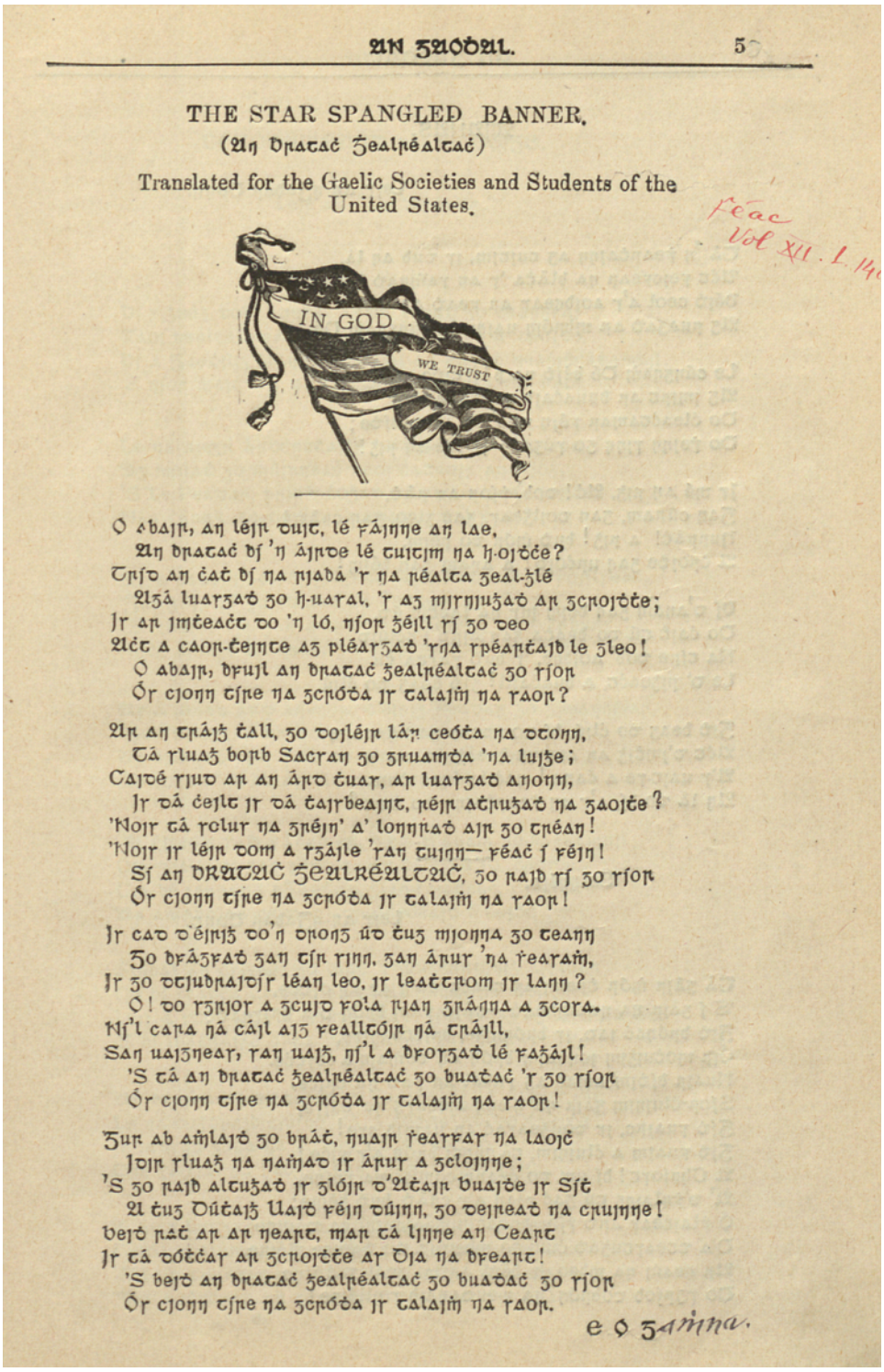
NYU News spoke with Wolf about Irish New York, methods for teaching 21st-century computers to read historic fonts, and librarians' passion for data preservation.

Founded in 1831, NYU is one of the world's foremost research universities and is a member of the selective Association of American Universities. NYU has degree-granting campuses in New York, Abu Dhabi, and Shanghai and has 12 other global academic sites around the world. Through its numerous schools and colleges, NYU conducts research and provides education in the arts and sciences, law, medicine, business, dentistry, education, nursing, the cinematic and performing arts, music and studio arts, public administration, engineering, social work, cities, global public health, big data, and continuing and professional studies, among other areas. For the latest research stories, visit nyu.edu/news.

Q: *What was the purpose of* An Gaodhal*, and who was it trying to reach?*

It's part of what are often called the "ethnic newspapers" of the time. There were a lot of them, in languages other than English. The notion was "We have our community here in America, and we want to talk to that community." So an Irish American community audience is, first and foremost, what Ó Lócháin was envisioning. But there had been other Irish American newspapers before, and this one is actually even more specialized within that. It was really interested in reaching a subset of that community who were interested in perpetuating or preserving the Irish language for the long term. This idea

was just picking up when the newspaper was founded in the 1880s — there was a growing community of people going to Irish language classes at night or founding Irish language societies with monthly meetings in places like Boston and New York, and New Jersey. The attendees at those types of things are who the paper is really trying to reach. Ó Lócháin himself taught an Irish language class around this time. He was a bit of a fanatic about it.



AN GAODHAL. 5

THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER.

(An Bratach Gealréaltach)

Translated for the Gaelic Societies and Students of the United States.

Féac Vol XII. 1. 14

IN GOD WE TRUST

Ó abair, an léir duit, lé fáinne an lae,
An bratach bí 'n ájride lé cuicim na h-oíche?
Trír an cat bí na riada 'r na réalta geal-glé
Aiśá luaisead go h-uaral, 'r as mírnuśad an gcroíche;
Ir an imteact do 'n ló, nír féill rí go deo
Act a caor-éeinte as pléarśad 'na fréamhaib le gleo!
Ó abair, bruil an bratach gealréaltach go ríor
Ór cionn tíre na gcróda ir talaimh na faor?

Air an trálh tall, go dtí léir láir ceóda na dtonn,
Tá fluaś bonb Sacran go gruamda 'na luiże;
Caidé fiud ar an árd tuar, an luaisead anonn,
Ir dá éeilt ir dá tairbeaint, réir athnuśad na gaoiże?
'Noir tá foiur na gréin' a' lonnrad air go tréan!
'Noir ir léir dom a rśáile 'ran cuinn— féac í réin!
Sí an BRATAC GEALRÉALTAC, go raib rí go ríor
Ór cionn tíre na gcróda ir talaimh na faor!

Ir cad d'éirid do'n dronn úd cuś mionna go teann
Go brágad gan tír rinn, gan árur 'na fearaim,
Ir go dtiubhradír léan leo, ir leabtrom ir lann?
Ó! do rśníor a gcuid fola riar gráinne a gcora.
Ní'l carad ná cáil ais fealltóir ná tráill,
San uaigneas, ran uaig, ní'l a dhoisead lé fażáil!
'S tá an bratach gealréaltach go buadach 'r go ríor
Ór cionn tíre na gcróda ir talaimh na faor!

Gur ab amlaid go brát, nuair fearfar na laoic
Idir fluaś na namad ir árur a gclainne;
'S go raib altuśad ir glóir d'Aitair buaide ir Síd
Ai cuś Dúdaig Uaid féin dúinn, go deimead na cruinne!
Beid rad ar an neart, mar tá inne an Ceart
Ir tá dóchar an gcroíche ar Dia na dreamt!
'S beid an bratach gealréaltach go buadach go ríor
Ór cionn tíre na gcróda ir talaimh na faor.

e Ó Gamna.

A representative example of the mixed Irish American identity of An Gaodhal*'s readers: the text of the Star-Spangled Banner, translated into Irish by an Irish-speaking emigrant at the turn of the century.*

Q: *What is Irish type? And why does it make digitization more difficult?*

The closest analogy that you might be familiar with would be the old Gothic fonts used in printing in German up until the early 20th century. In the case of Irish, the sean-chló, as it's called, or the old type that was used, was derived from the manuscripts that Irish was written in before that, and so the roots are in handwriting. There's some correspondence between the characters in these fonts and what you would see in contemporary Irish, so it's not as though a completely different system was used. But there are some aspects of the Irish language that don't correspond directly with a typical Romance language system or English language system, and those sounds are conveyed through characters that aren't present in typical contemporary Latin-character-based alphabets. To do that in print, writers in Irish had to make slight adjustments to Latin-alphabet-based characters to convey the additional letters needed for Irish. It's not impossible to train a machine to learn this, but it does take a little more work.

Q: *So, how do you train computers to read this font?*

We have to produce the training data, which is where the extra work comes in. So, we'll look at a page and transcribe it. Once we have about 70 pages transcribed, we can integrate that into an optical character recognition machine learning process and try to gauge its success in reading pages it hasn't seen before. What typically happens is that about 2 to 5% of

the transcribed pages are held back, and at the end of every cycle the computer will try to adjust its knowledge or ability to recognize the characters by checking against our validation set. The bottom line is that we have to do those transcriptions to give it what is called a "ground truth" to work from — otherwise it would have no way of knowing if it was getting the answer right. Printed text recognition is one of the oldest machine learning challenges, so this is a typical process that's been around for quite a while. But it has not been done extensively with this particular font for this language compared to, say, the English language.

Q: *Who will benefit from being able to access the digital, searchable* An Gaodhal *files once the project is complete?*

There are definitely a few categories of folks who would benefit. On the one hand, here's a newspaper that gives us a window into the history of the Irish language, Irish songs, or Irish folklore. That's the media history component for academics — we're trying to understand the history of certain minority language media. And then linguists might want to look up a certain word in Irish and see all the historical contexts in which it appears, which can be more precise than a modern dictionary. But certainly this could also be useful to the general community who might be looking into genealogy or even the local history of New York City. If you look up an address in New York, and it happens to be mentioned in this newspaper, you get a sense of what was happening at that location, whether that's a place where a Celtic society met or the address of a person who sent in a snippet of an Irish language poem. And for genealogy, someone could search for a great-grandparent and see if the name comes up, giving a sense of where they were at a given point in time and their touchpoints with the Irish immigrant community.

Links

[1] https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.irishgenealogical.org_&d=DwMFaQ&c=slrrB7dE8n7gBJbeO0g-IQ&r=ipLOMeaC8bMXSpCjtcL97iNenkC_knPFayQBaOfWjLs&m=2V1H1cDC4JZkUDn72innvxaPWemdzosUTMu-T2rx4QRsRTM5mUQD4zB-ZNyajTuL&s=xD3RJ0rvAepTnsogfUF63nt73za9u5Wcl8SOFpFxazQ&e=

[2] http://nyu.edu/news

[3] http://nyu.edu/socialmedia

[4] https://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/features.html

[5] http://instagram.com/nyuniversity

[6] https://www.linkedin.com/school/3159?pathWildcard=3159

[7] https://www.tiktok.com/@nyuniversity?lang=en

[8] http://facebook.com/nyu

[9] http://twitter.com/nyuniversity

As social media director in NYU's Office of Public Affairs, Eileen Reynolds oversees content and strategy for platforms with a combined 2 million followers and serves as a writer, editor, and producer for the NYU News website. Eileen has also written on arts and culture for publications such as the Forward, the Los Angeles Review of Books, the Believer, and the website of the The New Yorker. She holds a Master's degree in Cultural Reporting and Criticism from NYU's Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute and a Bachelor's degree in bassoon performance and English literature from Florida State University.



Reminder:
Let Your Email System Know that IGSI Email is Not Spam

Please take a moment to ensure that your email provider is not treating IGSI email as spam.

Check your email's Junk/Spam folder; if you find a message from us there, please move it to your normal inbox.

Add webeditor@irishgenealogical.org and education@irishgenealogical.org to your Safe Senders list.

- If you don't know how to add us, enter the phrase "add sender to safe senders list with [email service provider name here]" into your favorite search engine.
- Alternatively, search for "Allow List" or "Whitelist" instead of "Safe Senders."

Information Wanted

by Kim Gehrman White

In the 19th century, when people left Ireland and took the emigrant boat to America, it was likely that parents, brothers, sisters, and friends would never hear from them again. Communication in the 1800s was not without its challenges, particularly because many of our Irish ancestors were illiterate.

People would arrive in the United States, perhaps following in the footsteps of family members before them. What could they do? How did one find family or friends? One of the most common methods of finding folks was by taking out an "Information Wanted" advertisement in an Irish newspaper, such as the *Irish-American*, a weekly newspaper published in New York City for Irish immigrants. In the 1850s, an ad placed in the *Irish-American* would run for four issues for $1.[1]

"Information Wanted" and "Missing Friends" ads may be found in various places. For example, you can search the card catalog on Ancestry with the keyword "Irish," filtered by North America > USA > Newspapers & Periodicals. Of the three results, I am most interested in "Irish Relatives and Friends." Ancestry has digitized the 2001 book "Irish Relatives and Friends: From 'Information Wanted' Ads in the *Irish-American*, 1850-1871."[2] The book (as well as *Ancestry*'s database) is arranged chronologically. Although the ads would run for multiple weeks, there is only one transcription of each ad. You may search with an ancestor's name and possible location or use one of the indexes: Personal Names, Places in Ireland, Places in the United States, Places other than Ireland and the U.S., and an index to Streets in New York City.

Using my copy of *Irish Relatives and Friends*, I searched the index for entries of people from County Limerick, organized by location below:

Askeaton **18 April 1868**

[Information wanted] "Of **Michael Lally**, a native of ASKEATON, County LIMERICK, Ireland. When last heard from (a year ago last Christmas) he was in BATON ROUGE. Information of him will be thankfully received by **John Lally**, WEST TROY, ALBANY County, N.Y."[3]

Parish of Bruff **6 August 1864**

[Information wanted] "Of **Daniel Clancy**, of the Parish of BRUFF, County LIMERICK, Ireland. When last heard from was in PUTNAM County, INDIANA. Any intelligence of him will be thankfully received by his nephew, **Michael Corbett**, 125 GREENWICH STREET, NEW YORK, in care of **Patrick Clancy**. Indiana papers, please copy."[4]

Limerick City **20 March 1852**

[Information Wanted] "Of **Mr. Bernard O'Farrell** (formerly of LIMERICK City), Architect. His old friend John Ryan (hatter), late of LIMERICK, now of NEWARK, NEW JERSEY, would be glad to hear from him. New Orleans papers please read."[5]

Searching for Missing Friends & Family

Before the waves of mid-18th century emigrants from Ireland, there was an Irish exodus to North America after the Napoleonic Wars and before the Great Famine. The composition and character of this era of Irish emigration was much different than that of the massive flight to come with potato crop failures and the onslaught of the famine. Those differences did not alter the communication challenges.

The Truth Teller was a Catholic newspaper circulated widely in the Irish community. Like the Irish-American that came later, *The Truth Teller* accepted Information Wanted ads. Some advertisements were placed by shipping companies, immigrant aid societies, priests and masters looking for runaway apprentices, and parents searching for missing children.[6]

The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society (NYG&B) has digitized the compilation of extracts of *The Truth Teller* from the book by Haberstroh and DeGrazia, *Voices of the Irish Immigrant: Information Wanted Ads in New York City, 1825-1844*.[7] The database (with images) can be found in their eLibrary. NYG & B members can browse the entire work online; print copies are also available for purchase on the website.[8]

Villanova University has a small collection of *The Truth Teller* in Falvey Library — the issues owned by the University span from April 1825-December 1826. This online, digitized collection contains the entire issue of each weekly publication. Online access appears free, but it does not look like you may perform a keyword search.

Perhaps one of the most widely known Irish American newspapers was the *Boston Pilot*, which ran similar ads in this period. Before publishing their book *Voices of the Irish Immigrant*, Haberstroh and DeGrazia checked *The Truth Teller*'s ads against those in the *Pilot* and found almost no duplication.

The New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) offers members access to the database "Boston Pilot: Irish Immigrant Advertisements (Search for Missing Friends), 1831-1920." *Findmypast* offers the transcripts from NEHGS as a searchable database entitled, "Boston Pilot Newspaper Information Wanted Ads, 1831-1920," which can be found in the Travel & Migration category and appears to have over 40,000 records.

GenealogyBank has a collection of Irish-American newspapers spanning the decades from 1810 to the present. They hold the following newspapers: *Exile, Irish American Weekly, Irish Citizen, Irish Nation, Irish Voice, Irish World, Shamrock-Hibernian Chronicle, and Western Star-And-Harp of Erin*. A simple search of the collection using the keywords "missing+friends" results in 454 hits.

Newspaper (information wanted) ads can be an excellent resource for Irish researchers. Plus, if you're a book hoarder like me, you may find the two Haberstroh and DeGrazia books from a used bookseller.

Endnotes

1 Laura Murphy DeGrazia (Compiler) and Diane Fitzpatrick Haberstroh (Compiler), *Irish Relatives and Friends From "Information Wanted" Ads in the Irish-American, 1850-1871*, 1st ed. (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2001).

2 DeGrazia-Haberstroh, *Irish Relatives*.

3 DeGrazia-Haberstroh, *Irish Relatives*, 316.

4 DeGrazia-Haberstroh, *Irish Relatives*, 207.

5 DeGrazia-Haberstroh, *Irish Relatives*, 11.

6 New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, "New York County Newspaper Abstracts, 1825-1870," *New York Genealogical and Biographical Society* (https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org : accessed 25 Aug 2023).

7 Diane Fitzpatrick Haberstroh (Compiler), and Laura Murphy DeGrazia (Compiler), Voices of the Irish Immigrant: Information Wanted Ads in "The Truth Teller" New York City, 1825-1844 (New York: New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 2005).

8 *New York Genealogical and Biographical Society* (https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org).

9 Falvey Library, *Villanova University*, (https://digital.library.villanova.edu/Item/vudl:223926).

New Resource for Those with Kildare Roots!

The Kildare County Archives recently digitized 6,000+ pages from the Grand Jury Presentments (1809-1893), and Query Books (1857-1864; 1891-1893), which are now available online and downloadable in PDF. You can find them at: https://kildarecoco.ie/library/LocalStudiesGenealogyandArchives/Archives/OnlineArchives/GrandJury/

These books cover the records of the Grand Jury, which met at the Assizes to discuss proposals for use of the county cess (tax). They frequently name individuals such as contractors, medical staff, and those working with orphans. The available Query Books cover County Treasurer and County Surveyor records.

Source: "County Kildare's Grand Jury Presentment and query books digitized," *Irish Genealogy News* (https://www.irishgenealogynews.com : accessed 29 September 2023); citing Claire Santry's blog.

Using *Find a Grave* to Add Branches to a Family Tree

by Trish Little Taylor

When looking for deceased relatives with whom we are unfamiliar, it's common to begin by searching vital records for pertinent information on births, marriages, and deaths. While useful, sometimes clues to parents' names or birthplaces may be omitted or incorrect. Death certificates *should* disclose the place of burial, but don't always. An obituary in a local newspaper may detail the deceased's life and list the survivors or other family. Names for pallbearers, pre-deceased family members, and even surnames for married daughters or sisters might appear. FAN (family, associates, and neighbors) Club members can be researched by gathering names from markers near your ancestor's gravesite.

While vital records provide a good start, how do you research someone if, for example, all you have is the given or maiden name of a wife, but no known locations for her or something too broad like "New York City"?

When I began research on my Little family, I began with the obituary of my grandfather, William Little.[1] [Image 1]

William died on 31 December 1935. Finding the names of those surviving him was a stroke of luck. Listed are not only my grandmother, my dad, my aunts and uncles, but also his brothers and his sisters in the United States and in Ireland. Even so, the obit drove me crazy because the surname of William's sister was misspelled. It can be challenging to find a woman in a family when they are referred to only as "Mrs. Husband's Name" or, in the case of my great-aunt, as "Mrs. Sarah 'Gunshannon' of New York City."

Normally my next step would be to visit the cemetery and look for other relatives. Unfortunately, a lack of information on my grandfather's brothers or sister Sarah confounded my research. Instead I began researching John Little, William's son and Bill's (aka William Jr.'s) brother. A funeral card for John Joseph Little, who died 23 June 1958 and was buried in Calvary Cemetery in Queens, New York, inspired me to learn more about John on *Ancestry*; there I found a link to a John's *Find a Grave* memorial.[2] [Image 2]

To the right-hand side of the ancestor's memorial page, below the header, is an option to search for any additional memorials created for the surname "Little." Because of this filter, not only had I found John, but also his brother Francis, his sister, Sarah, and Sarah's daughter, Anne. I began doing a happy dance because previously all I had known was that Bill had a brother named Francis.

My happy dance increased considerably upon seeing my great-aunt Sarah's married name, "Gunshenan," which finally solved my spelling mystery and enabled me to look for more records on her!

When my grandfather William first arrived in 1901, he lived with his brother Francis.[3] I had no other information about my grandfather's siblings. John's gravestone provided me with Francis' age and death date. Do I still have information gaps in the family? YES! Will I work on them? Certainly!

William Little

RED BANK Jan. 2.—William Little, 52, proprietor of a restaurant in Wall street, New York city, died Tuesday at his home, Newman Springs road. Mr. Little, who was born in Leitrin county, Ireland, and came to this country 35 years ago, has been a resident of Red Bank for 14 years. Surviving are his wife, Elizabeth Little; five children, Francis, Dorothy, William, John and Marion, all living at home; two brothers, Joseph, New York, and Thomas, Ireland; four sisters, Mrs. Sarah Gunshannon, New York city; Mrs. Peter Gibbons, Long Island, Elizabeth and Bridget Little, Ireland.

Funeral services will be held tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock at his home, and 10 o'clock at St. James R. C. church. The Rev. John B. McCloskey, rector, will officiate. Interment in charge of Director John E. Day, will be in Mt. Olivet cemetery.

Image 1: *William Little's Obituary*



Image 2: *John's abbreviated record on* Find a Grave

Here is how you can use *Find a Grave* to fill in some gaps. *Find a Grave* is free database, but if you would like to edit, add a note, or update memorial pages, you will need to create an account. Registration is simple and once you have an account you will be able to edit memorials to update or add family members and to upload pictures.[4]

On John's memorial page, you'll see that there is no indication whether the other names on the stone are close family members or more distant relations. This means you need to collect data from the memorial page and any grave marker photos to begin researching these other family members. Because largely crowd-sourced sites such as *Find a Grave* cannot be relied on for accuracy, it is vital to do reasonably exhaustive research on family members.

Once verified, you can begin adding family members one by one to the *Find a Grave* database, including birth locations and dates, middle names, and so on. You will likely want to add parents, spouses, and children. Siblings can only be added if you first link a parent to the memorial subject. For example, I was unable to link John to Francis and Sarah because their parents are buried in Ireland in an area that has not yet been indexed. In these cases, you will need to contact the Find a Grave administrator to request that the Irish cemetery be added. If the cemetery is small, this could take a while. After researching John more fully, I was able to update his Memorial. [Image 3]

I also updated my great-aunt Sarah's record by adding her birth date, birthplace, and middle name but neither she nor John can be linked to Francis and Anne Little, who are buried in Mohill, County Leitrim, Ireland, which remains an unindexed cemetery.[5] [Image 4]



Image 3: *John Little's updated* Find a Grave *Memorial*



Image 4: *Sarah Anne Gunshenan's updated* Find a Grave *Memorial*

After switching family lines, I began looking for Mary Ann (Brandon) Peters, my great-grandmother, using the search parameters in Image 5.

There were no "hits," even after adding St. Raymond's as the place of burial. I have visited her grave, so I know she is there. I instead tried searching for another of my aunts; that tweak led me to Mary Ann.[6] [Image 6]

Turns out I had omitted the word "Old" from the cemetery's name. If your search produces no results ("hits"), try thinking about how to broaden your search.

Mary Ann's memorial page provides a list of her family members, but her son Hugh, my grandfather, isn't there. [Image 7]

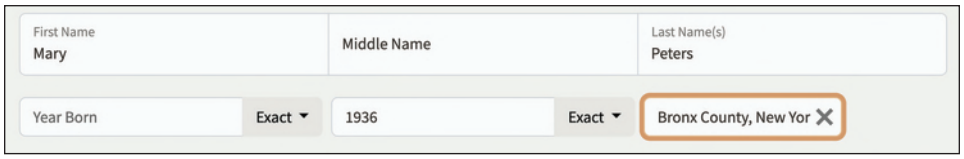


Image 5: Find a Grave *search box for my great-grandmother*



Image 6: Find a Grave *search result for Mary Ann Brandon*



Image 7: *Mary Ann (Brandon) Peters's family members on her* Find a Grave *memorial page*

In order to link my grandfather's page to his parents's I needed to make a note of their memorial ID numbers. These numbers allowed me to add them to Hugh's memorial record once I located it, thus completing the family.[7] [Images 8 & 9]

Hugh's memorial page shows his family, including parents, siblings, and children. [Image 9]



Image 8: *Hugh Dennis Peters's* Find a Grave *memorial page*



Image 9: *Hugh Dennis Peters's family members*

Once I located Hugh's memorial, I was able to follow the links there to Eleanore and Marjorie's pages, then update them to include their parents. If you click on the names of Hugh's siblings or parents, you will be taken to their memorial pages, which represent a number of different cemeteries. Also, If you compare the list of Hugh's siblings on his memorial to the list of children on Mary Brandon Peters's memorial, you'll be able to see how an update can be delayed while waiting for approval. This can be very frustrating to a researcher.

Later, when looking up the memorials for my in-laws and my late husband on *Find a Grave*, I discovered that my father-in-law's page was linked to my mother-in-law's and to his parents, but not to my late husband's. This was surprising because all three pages showed their gravestones and because their memorial ID numbers were very close, suggesting they were created around the same time.[8] I edited their memorials to link them together, but it took over two weeks for the approval to go through and for the corrections to appear.

Visiting cemeteries and examining surrounding tombstones may help you identify collateral family members, but *Find a Grave* is another great tool to help you locate ancestors. Obituaries posted on the site may even provide clues to an ancestor's place of origin or other amazing details. Be forewarned that you may go down the rabbit hole of updating each family member's page and then waiting impatiently for the administrator to approve changes. It's worth it, though… give *Find a Grave* a try to see what new information you may discover.

Endnotes

1 "William Little," *Asbury Park Press* (Asbury Park, New Jersey), 2 January 1936, 2; digital images, *Newspapers.com* (https://www.newspapers.com : accessed 21 August 2023).

2 *Find a Grave*, database with images (https://www.findagrave.com : accessed 21 August 2023), memorial 225744579, image of headstone for John J. Little, Calvary Cemetery, Woodside, Queens Co., New York.

3 New York, U.S., State and Federal Naturalization Records, 1794-1943," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 21 August 2023), Declaration of Intention, William Little, arrived at the port of New York, 29 May 1901; citing the National Archives at Philadelphia, PA, Record Group 21: Records of District Courts of the United States, 1685-2009.

4 *Find a Grave*, "Contribute to Find a Grave," introduction page (https://www.findagrave.com/contribute : accessed 5 September 2023).

5 *Find a Grave*, memorial 225744578, Sarah Anne *Little* Gunshenan (1892-1954); gravestone photograph by I. Fada.

6 *Find a Grave*, memorial 156473589, Mary Ann Brandon (1862-1933); gravestone photograph by Bronx Cop.

7 *Find a Grave*, memorial 12412547, Hugh Dennis Peters (1894-1935); gravestone photograph by Michael Holmes.

8 *Find a Grave*, memorial 147115643 for Nelson McDonald Taylor (1913-1957), memorial 147115721 for Pauline *Stokes* Taylor (1918-1975), and memorial 147115528 for Larry M. Taylor (1946-1976), gravestone photographs by Fredrick.

Trish Little Taylor is a retired librarian living in Virginia. She graduated with a BA from the University of Mary Washington, an MLS from Western Michigan, and an MH from the University of Richmond. She is co-chair of IGSI's Education Committee and is also a Board member. Her Irish roots are from Leitrim, Tipperary, and Limerick. She likes to help others discover their roots.



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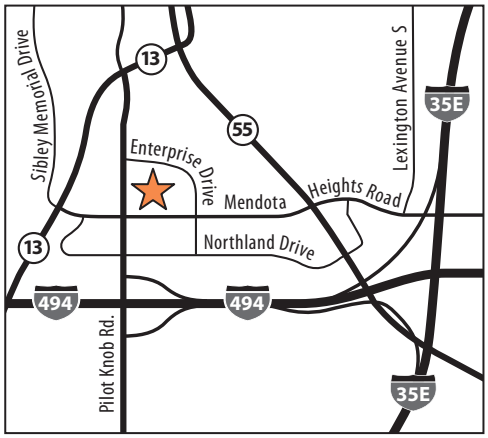
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The Septs

JANUARY (EANÁIR) 2024 $10.00



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IRISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Genealogy Library Open

The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2024.

The Hoffman Research Library is a private genealogy research library created for members of the organizations in the MGS Partners' Group. Access to the library materials is free to members of IGSI and other MGS Partner societies. Non-members and the general public are requested to pay a per visit $10 donation for use.

The Hoffman Library will be open only if there are two volunteers available to staff the building. (Won't you consider becoming a MGC/library volunteer to help ensure research access for all?)

Hours of service:

Monday	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
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Thursday	10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Irish Saturdays

Stop by the library on the second Saturday of the month between 10 AM and 4 PM for Irish research help from IGSI volunteers.

JANUARY 13, 2024
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MARCH 9, 2024
APRIL 13, 2024
MAY 11, 2024
JUNE 8, 2024
JULY 13, 2024
AUGUST 10, 2024
SEPTEMBER 14, 2024
OCTOBER 12, 2024
NOVEMBER 9, 2024
DECEMBER 14, 2024

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Scan with your phone to view IGSI's website

The Septs, the quarterly journal of the Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc., is one of the primary benefits of IGSI membership and is published in January, April, July, and October. Members receive a printed version of the journal unless they have chosen to receive it electronically.

Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc.

2024

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of *The Septs* is built around a core theme. Research articles on the theme should be 1500-2500 words in length and include no more than 3-4 images. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g., family stories submitted by IGSI members and others. Articles unrelated to the theme should be 750-1500 words.

If you wish to write on theme or share case studies, family research, or articles on general Irish culture and history and genealogy resources, please contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadlines to ensure your article is considered for the proper issue.

Contributions and ideas are welcome. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the editorial staff.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2024 | April | Connacht Province

Researching in the five Irish counties of Galway, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon, and Sligo; stories about finding family in Connacht locales are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2024.

2024 | July | Penal Colonies & Criminal Law

Explore "black sheep" ancestors in Australian, New Zealand, and Caribbean penal colonies, as well as court proceedings that include criminal and settlement records.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2024.

2024 | October | Hidden Children

Delve into lost ancestors hidden by adoption, orphan trains, and poorhouses. How do you find them? Resources for locating adoptees, orphans, the indigent, etc. encouraged, as is DNA exploration.
Deadline for articles: August 15, 2024.

2025 | January | Using Social Media for Genealogical Research

Learn how to leverage social media such as Facebook descendant groups to advance your genealogical knowledge and to connect with other researchers and/or family members.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2024.

Cover Photo: *National Library of Ireland, Kildare Street.*
Photo credit: Can Pac Swire at Flickr.com.

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2023 Year in Review

by Co-Presidents, Ron Zweber and Donna Jones

Last year was a busy and successful year for our organization, and we would like to share with you some of IGSI's 2023 accomplishments.

While a bit "behind the scenes" from a member's perspective, IGSI experienced several impactful changes, including a leadership shift in the publication of *The Septs*. After several years as Editor, Ann Eccles transitioned out of this role and Mary Stuart and Kim Gehrman White took over as Editor and Associate Editor. This transition took place with no noticeable change in this great quarterly journal. Gigi Hickey and Mary Wickersham are continuing as Managing Editors.

More recently, there has also been an editorial changeover for *Ginealas*, our newsletter. Greg Winters asked to step down after his 12-year tenure; Board member Pat Sheehan has agreed to take over this role. The transition occurred over a couple of installments.

As co-presidents, one of our priorities is being ready with skilled volunteers when long-time volunteers want to conclude their service.

IGSI participated in several in-person events this year. Local events included our annual Irish Fair booth and a St. Patrick's Day booth at an Irish Arts event. Our members participated in two Minnesota Genealogical Society events: the combined genealogy booth at the Minnesota State Fair and their North Star Conference.

Our Education Team was hard at it, organizing 12 webinars in 2023, one of which was free. The presenters were top-notch and the programs originated in both the US and Ireland. We have scheduled a very strong start to 2024.

After a significant amount of planning, we have contracted with Responsive Design for a large website upgrade which will take place in early 2024. Our website is at the center of everything we do, and technology keeps giving us new options to create a better member interface.

Dave Miller continued to impress us with his high-quality "This Month at the IGSI" podcasts during 2023, which was just the second year of these productions. We look forward to more in 2024.

In addition to quarterly issues of *The Septs*, bimonthly *Ginealas* newsletters, and our monthly podcast, we also communicate with our members and followers through our blog, as well as social media and direct emails.

Our library collection, located in Mendota Heights, MN, continues to be a great genealogical resource. Several dedicated IGSI volunteers coordinate monthly "Irish Saturday" research sessions. In 2024, we hope to test a model whereby out-of-town members could access the library and library volunteers via Zoom.

We all need to clean and organize those catchall areas in our homes every few years or so. For IGSI, this meant cleaning out office and storage space. We were able to move ownership of a wonderful collection from Ancient Order of Hibernian Ladies Auxiliary, covering multiple MN chapters, to the Minnesota Historical Society. This transfer will allow this collection to become accessible to researchers. You'll hear from us in 2024 regarding the numerous maps of Ireland we coordinated, which will be for sale.

Lastly, we planned ahead by committing to hosting Fintan Mullan and Gillian Hunt of the Ulster Historical Society for a full-day hybrid conference in March 2025! We needed to make this commitment two years in advance to get on their calendar.



After retiring from Oxford University Press, Donna Jones finally has more time to research her heritage and ancestry. She is passionate about genealogy education and is a member of the IGSI Education committee and the Board of Directors. IGSI provides her the opportunity to learn more about Irish research as she continues to search for where in Ireland her great, great-grandparents lived.



Ron Zweber is a native Minnesotan who lives in Saint Paul. He has been a member of IGSI for over 35 years and served as IGSI treasurer in 2021. All eight of his Irish 2nd great-grandparents (from Counties Cork, Tipperary, Clare and Mayo) immigrated to the U.S. during the height of the Famine or shortly thereafter.

Forging Ahead

by Mary Stuart, Editor

Ahis thbhliain Faoi Mhaise Daoibh! Happy New Year!

Now that Kim and I have a full year as editors under our belt, we are beginning to look for new ways to continue growing and developing *The Septs*. To that end, we published a Readership Survey in the October 2023 issue to better gauge the needs and interests of our readers. We also offered the incentive of an added year of IGSI membership to encourage replies. The winner was drawn on November 16, 2023 — Congratulations to Pamela Kingzett of Ohio! Many thanks to all of you who responded; we received over 100 replies!

The survey results were surprising. We expected that more people would be interested in reading family stories written by fellow members. While many were, 90% of you said you would like more articles on research tips, techniques, methodologies, and Irish-specific resources — especially new ones. Duly noted.

We also read several good suggestions for future topics, many of which we already had scheduled for future issues; it is good to know we are on the right track. The most popular survey request was for articles related to immigration/emigration. We have already been looking into untapped resources on immigration and will continue to do so with your requests in mind. Our issues focusing on Ireland's provinces appear to have been particularly well-received. We will be following up the provinces of Munster and Leinster with Connacht this year and Ulster in 2025. Once we've toured the provinces, we can consider how best to address your requests for more county-related material. Other popular topics included Irish History and Culture, Northern Ireland/Ulster, and Scots-Irish. So many options!!



Person holding firework, by Brigitte Tohm.

Now that we have an abundance of great topics to pursue, we likewise need many writers to pursue them. We have a small but dedicated cadre of authors, but we hope to expand that pool so that our handful of regulars can stay energized. A few of you stated that you have written for us in the past, and we hope that you will consider doing so again as time permits. Some suggested you might write on a topic in which you have expertise. If so, we will gladly consider your submission at any time. Please do not feel you must wait for a particular theme or deadline. We can always save an accepted article to slot in later where the space (or theme) permits.

Others of you felt you needed more experience before writing an article. We understand that the editorial process can be intimidating if you are not used to it. Rest assured that our goal is never to tear down someone's work, but rather to collaborate with you to help it become the best it can be. To borrow from Vidal Sassoon, "If you don't look good, we don't look good." (Admit it—you read it in the commercial voice.)

If writing will never be your jam, you can still help by sending other potential authors our way. Do you know a historian? An Irish relative full of stories? An Irish musician? An awesome writer? A webinar teacher? Ask them if they would be willing to share something with us. Many of you have connections we do not. You can also help by continuing to provide ideas and suggestions. The Readership Survey was so successful that the editorial staff is contemplating creating an online "suggestion box" to serve our readership better. We are brimming with ideas for the year ahead. Stay tuned!

We at *The Septs* wish everyone a joyous and prosperous 2024, filled with successful research and many crumbling brick walls!

Mary Stuart serves as Editor of The Septs *and on IGSI's Board of Directors. A native Hoosier and former university writing teacher with an MA in English, Mary is now a professional genealogist whose specialties include Indiana research, military repatriation, and DNA. Her Irish lines hail largely from Donegal/Northern Ireland. Mary is currently working on her BCG certification portfolio and is pursuing an AFA in Glass Arts. She enjoys singing, sewing, and blowing glass in her spare time.*



Keeping in Touch

by Donna Jones

The New Year is once again bringing changes to IGSI. Our colleague, Ron Zweber, has served his five-year term limit on the board of directors and is leaving the board as our bylaws require. His tenure has included the roles of Director, Treasurer, and two years as Co-President.

The benefit of two people sharing this last role is that each brings different skills and experiences to IGSI. Ron's career as a banker brought his strategic and problem-solving skills to the Society, as did his experience working with other non-profit and all-volunteer organizations.

Sharing job responsibilities requires collaboration, and we have been fortunate that our styles allowed us to work well together. At the beginning of our tenure, we set goals and areas of focus for the organization. We recognized that our all-volunteer structure required us to look at where we could operate more efficiently. We wanted to grow the base of IGSI's core leadership and to increase membership. These themes will continue to challenge our society in the future.

Highlights of the past two years include Ron's working on our fundraising campaigns. Ron has also coordinated with the organizers of the Minnesota Irish Fair. Our presence at this Fair is part of our mission statement to assist the community in discovering Irish history, culture, and heritage. After a collection of records of The Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians of Minnesota was donated to IGSI, Ron coordinated with the Minnesota Historical Society recently to transfer four banker's boxes of the Order's periodicals to them. This collection will eventually be available to researchers.

Thank you, Ron, for your significant contributions to IGSI. Working with you has been a pleasure, and I wish you all the best with your next venture.



It is now my great pleasure to announce that Walt Rothwell will join me as Co-President on January 1, 2024. Walt joined the board in 2023, and I am looking forward to working with him and the board of directors this year.

Walt Rothwell is a health care retiree and amateur genealogist who has served as part of the IGSI Education Committee for three years. Following the retirement of Kathleen Foley, Walt has worked with Trish Little Taylor on coordinating webinar events for over two years. Walt is comfortable with technology and is working with IGSI leadership to ensure that we have a forward-thinking and welcoming outreach to the larger community of family historians. While Walt has not yet met all members of IGSI leadership, he feels the collective volunteer spirit of the group is nurturing and exemplary. Walt volunteers at the Hoffman Research Library in Minnesota, is at the library most Irish Saturdays, and works to broaden services to on-site and remote Library patrons.

We are excited that Mary Stuart will join the board of directors in the new year. Mary Stuart has just completed her first year as editor of *The Septs* and her third year as a member of IGSI. Her goals for the journal include expanding both its reach and author pool while continuing to develop the quality articles members have come to expect. Mary looks forward to this new opportunity to serve IGSI and the board, where hopefully her language and research skills can be put to additional use.



Returning board officers are Donna Jones, Co-President; Mike Flynn, Treasurer; and Jeanne Bakken, Secretary. Returning Directors are Sandra Mc Laughlin, Dave Miller, Kay Swanson, Pat Sheehan, and Trish Little Taylor.

We are looking forward to 2024 and appreciate our volunteers. We want to thank all our members for their support.

After retiring from Oxford University Press, Donna Jones finally has more time to research her heritage and ancestry. She is passionate about genealogy education and is a member of the IGSI Education committee and the Board of Directors. IGSI provides her the opportunity to learn more about Irish research as she continues to search for where in Ireland her great, great-grandparents lived.



Onto the Next Big Project!

by Ron Zweber

As I end my five years on the IGSI Board of Directors, with the last two as co-president, I slide back into my long-time role as an IGSI member and supporter. I joined The Irish Interest Group (n.k.a. IGSI) in my 20s — more than 40 years ago! My initial membership number was 214, and I was disappointed when IGSI changed their tracking system and I lost my low number!

Even though I had been a long-time member, *Septs* reader, and attendee at in-person events, I had not volunteered until 2018. I met Ann Eccles, then president of IGSI, at the 2018 Celtic Connection Conference in Boston. She and the Twin Cities contingent attending were very welcoming. I then volunteered to help at IGSI's booth at the Minnesota Genealogical Society's (MGS's) North Star Conference that fall. There, Ann asked me to consider joining the board of directors. The rest is history.

From the beginning of my board involvement, what stood out was the quality of the other people on the leadership team. I've been on seven boards of directors in the last 20 years; however, IGSI's is the only completely volunteer-run organization. Given its volunteer structure, I was always pleased that IGSI functioned so well. IGSI has a long history of a core group of very committed volunteers who consistently deliver for the organization. It's been a great group of people to work with.

In the fall of 2021, there was board consensus that I should follow Ann as president. However, it occurred to me that a co-presidency model might be better for the organization. I reached out to Donna Jones to see if she would consider joining me as a co-president. After a couple of conversations, Donna agreed, but we needed to amend the bylaws to create this co-presidency model. Donna and I weren't sure how to divide responsibilities, but we were confident that we would figure it out.

With Donna living in North Carolina, she became the first non-Minnesota president or co-president. Her physical location, and that of other board members living outside of Minnesota, allowed us to model our informal goal that "geography should not matter" for membership involvement and benefits.

Donna has been a great partner. Our skill sets are different and, in many ways, complementary. It may surprise many that we have never met in person, even though Donna and I worked so closely together and constantly communicated. With her in NC and me in MN, a mere 1,200 miles separates us!

What's next for me? Like many of you, I'm starting my next project — behind schedule! I'm in the early stages of launching a town history project for the small Minnesota community where I grew up. It is a multi-year project. I'm very excited to be the champion for this important project.



Ron Zweber is a native Minnesotan who lives in Saint Paul. He has been a member of IGSI for over 35 years and served as IGSI treasurer in 2021. All eight of his Irish 2nd great-grandparents (from Counties Cork, Tipperary, Clare and Mayo) immigrated to the U.S. during the height of the Famine or shortly thereafter.



Old Library, Long Room – Trinity College, Dublin. Photo credit Joris Leermakers at Flickr.com.

"I love everything that's old: old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine."

~ Oliver Goldsmith, *Poet and Writer (1728-1774)*

Preparing for a visit to the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)

by Natalie Bodle

About PRONI

The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) is in a purpose-built archive in the Titanic Quarter of Belfast, County Antrim, Northern Ireland. It is overlooked by Samson and Goliath, the two iconic, yellow-painted gantry cranes of the Harland and Wolff shipyard where the doomed *Titanic* was built.

Following the partition of Ireland, PRONI was established on 22 June 1923, and this year has seen celebrations to mark its centenary. These included unveiling a treasure trove of documents spanning more than 800 years that showcased Northern Ireland's 'historical, social and cultural' history.[1]

One of the records showcased in this treasure trove is the oldest document currently held by PRONI — a papal bull from Pope Honorius III dating back to 1219.

PRONI holds a vast array of records of interest to the genealogist, many of which have not been digitised and may only be viewed during an in-person visit. These include, for example, church records, wills and testamentary records, estate records, land valuations, maps, sales of land to tenant farmers under the Land Commission, voter records, business records, government and local government records, muster rolls, court and prison records, workhouse records, hospital records, school records, correspondence, family papers, and family trees.

Although it is the official archive of Northern Ireland, PRONI also holds some records for the Republic of Ireland, particularly church records, along with some estate and workhouse records.

For example, PRONI holds the church records for most places of worship in Northern Ireland [Counties Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, and Tyrone] and a substantial number for the remaining three counties of Ulster [Donegal, Monaghan, and Cavan].

More surprisingly, perhaps, is that church records from counties Clare, Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Leitrim, Limerick, Longford, Louth, Mayo, Meath, Offaly, Tipperary, Waterford, Westmeath, and Wexford are also available at PRONI; these are mostly for Protestant churches.

Prepare Before You Visit

The key to a successful PRONI visit is to prepare well before you go.

As someone who visits PRONI on an almost weekly basis to conduct client research, I often see first-time visitors arrive late in the day, with limited information about their ancestors and no real understanding of what type of records they might be able to find at PRONI. Sadly, these people often leave disappointed.

The PRONI staff are generally helpful, friendly, and knowledgeable, but cannot do research for you and can only guide you to certain records or help with technical queries such as searching the catalogue. During busy periods, they have limited time to devote to any one person.

Therefore, find out as much as possible about your ancestors in the country they emigrated to. The civil registration of births, deaths, and Roman Catholic marriages commenced in Ireland in 1864, while non-Roman Catholic marriages were registered from 1845.

Before these dates, you ideally want to tie your ancestor to a parish (and preferably a townland) because so many records used these administrative units. Church records, Griffith's Primary Valuation, tithe applotment books, pre-1901 census records, etc., were all grouped under civil parishes. If you don't know the parish, it can be a very long, time-consuming process to track down your ancestor, particularly if the records are not digitised.

Clues about a place of origin in Ireland might be found in letters, family Bibles, headstones, wills, the names of farmsteads, etc. Researching your ancestors' FAN [family, friends, associates, and neighbours] network could also help, particularly as chain migration saw people from the same area in Ireland emigrating to the same area as people they already knew from home.

Research on PRONI's Website

PRONI's website has quite a bit of freely-available information that you can access from the comfort of your own home.

A good use of time would be doing as much research as possible on PRONI's website before undertaking a visit to access records that are unavailable online.

The PRONI website may be found at https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/public-record-office-northern-ireland-proni

Search the Archives Online Section

In this section, the following records may be accessed:

- E-catalogue — PRONI's e-catalogue is comprehensive and often quite detailed, with over one million entries. Searching for your ancestor's name and any townlands they lived in is always worthwhile. A useful video that provides guidance on searching the catalogue may be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SF3uEA_lW8Q
- If you find any records of interest, take note of the PRONI reference number, as you can search for that record when you visit in person
- Do be aware of different spellings of names and placenames — the asterisk wildcard can only be used at the end of words on the e-catalogue so you may have to try numerous spelling variations
- Freeholders' registers and poll books — Before the 1872 Ballot Act, voting was not done in secret and the right to vote was mostly tied to whether one owned land outright or the type of lease one had. These records provide information on who was registered to vote, the lists of voters, and the candidates for whom they voted
- Londonderry Corporation records — Includes three record sets:
    - Corporation Minute Books. These are digital copies of the Corporation Minute Books from 1673-1901 that record the city's business life, along with many names of townsfolk and merchants
    - Records of Freemen of the city between 1675 and 1945
    - War memorial records provide information about those locals who died during World War One and who are commemorated on the war memorial located in the Diamond in Derry/Londonderry city centre
- Name Search — Provides transcripts of surviving pre-1858 will indexes, along with surviving fragments of the 1740 and 1766 religious census returns and 1775 dissenters' petitions
- The Historical Maps Viewer — Allows you to search within and to view Ordnance Survey maps for Northern Ireland from 1832-1986
- Web Archive — PRONI captures and preserves a selection of Northern Ireland's websites that are of historical and cultural importance to Northern Ireland. Websites are listed alphabetically, and it is possible to search using keywords
- Street Directories — PRONI has digitised and indexed a number of fully searchable street directories. The earliest is Bradshaw's General and Commercial Directory for 1819, while the latest is The Belfast and Province of Ulster Directory of 1900. Some only provide information about Belfast, while others offer entries about smaller towns and villages and details of their tradespeople and inhabitants
- The Ulster Covenant — Includes almost half a million signatures and addresses of the men and women who signed the Ulster Covenant or corresponding Women's Declaration on 28 September 1912. The Covenant was signed by those of Ulster birth who opposed Irish Home Rule and were of a Unionist persuasion
- Valuation Revision Books — Griffith's Primary Valuation was published on a rolling basis throughout Ireland between 1847-1864. Thereafter, properties were valued annually from 1864 to the early 1930s. The ledgers were annotated with different colour inks for each year and recorded change of owner, tenant, size, and property value. The books for Northern Ireland are here and accessible using a browse function, so you will need to know which parish and townland you want to view
- Will Calendars 1858-1965 — There are also Copy Wills on the website for the Registries of Armagh (1858 to 1918), Belfast (1858 to 1909), and Londonderry (1858 to 1899).

What's On at PRONI Section

The What's On at PRONI section provides access to 3500 photographs on Flickr, and has a link to PRONI's *YouTube* channel where you can view (at the time of writing) 391 talks on a range of topics. You can also subscribe to the PRONI Express newsletter and register for forthcoming talks.

Resources and Learning Section

The Resources and Learning Section primarily provides background information on key subjects, although the Absent Voters Lists 1918 and the Royal Victoria Hospital Register 1914-1916 list names of individuals from the World War One era — these are easily overlooked in this section.

Your Research Section

The Your Research Section provides information leaflets about the different types of records held at PRONI and Guides to PRONI Records.

This is where you will find the vitally important Guide to Church Records which is, in fact, two separate documents. The PRONI Guide to Church records lists all the holdings at PRONI, and some still held in local custody or in other repositories such as the Presbyterian Historical Society. This large PDF may be downloaded and saved to your device. It is mostly laid out on a parish basis, apart from Belfast and most of the Republic of Ireland church records.

Anything with a MIC prefix indicates that the record is available on microfilm and can be viewed using the microfilm readers in the Search Room at PRONI.

Any church records with a D, T, or CR prefix can generally be ordered and viewed during your visit or, alternatively, as one of the digital church records.

The Church Records Available as Digital Copies in PRONI lists those records that have been digitised (but not indexed), and you can browse these on the same computers that hold the PRONI catalogue in the Search Room. All these records have the CR prefix. Both catalogues may be found here: https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/guide-church-records.

This section also has the Index to School Collections [https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/index-school-collections], where you can find further information about over 1,500 national schools in Northern Ireland, mainly from the 1860s to the 1940s — these can be ordered and viewed in person when in PRONI.



PRONI exterior shot (photo by author)

Getting to PRONI and Parking

PRONI is located at 2 Titanic Boulevard in the Titanic Quarter, Belfast — a former industrial area that has undergone quite a transformation in recent years. It is close to landmark sites such as the Titanic Centre, the HMS Caroline, and the Titanic Exhibition Centre. It is about a 25-minute walk from Belfast City Centre, but buses run regularly and taxis are also available.

If you are driving, there is very limited parking in front of PRONI, but there is a large car park at the SSE Arena or the Titanic Quarter Premier Inn, which are both nearby.

Arriving at PRONI and Getting Your Visitor's Pass

Before you can access any records in PRONI, you must be issued with a Visitor's Pass. Upon arrival, you will complete a form, have your photo taken, and be issued with a pass that is valid for ten years. To be issued a card, you must bring an acceptable form of photographic ID — a list of options may be found at https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/registration-and-preparing-visit.

The pass will be issued free of charge, but if you forget it or lose it, a £10 fee will be charged for a replacement.

Your card must be validated at reception each time you visit by tapping it on the electronic swipe machine.

You will need to keep the card with you during your visit as it will be required to provide access into the Search Room and the Reading Room. You will be asked to show your card before being issued any documents in the Reading Room.

What Can You Take With You?

There are restrictions on what you can take with you into the Search and Reading Rooms.

You are not allowed to wear outdoor coats, but it can be chilly in the building, so bring a fleece or a warm jumper.

You cannot take bags with you, but PRONI does provide clear plastic bags in which you can take everything you need, such as phone, keys, wallet, etc. You can also take your laptop or tablet and a notebook.

Lockers are provided to store all other belongings; a token is provided to lock it.

You cannot eat or drink in the Search and Reading Rooms or take pens into the Reading Room – pencils are provided there.

The Search Room

The Search and Reading Rooms are located on the first floor.

Swipe your Visitor's Pass to access the Search Room; upon entering, you will see computer terminals on both sides of the room. On the left-hand side, terminals provide internet access; some terminals provide access to paid subscriptions to Find My Past, The British Newspaper Archive, and Ancestry. You can also access Northern Ireland Screen's Digital Film Archive, State Papers Online, and the Prison Memories Archive here.

On the right-hand side of the Search Room, some terminals provide access to PRONI's catalogue and ordering system.

You can search by a PRONI reference number or just using keywords. You can also order wills dated after 1858 — for this you will need to know the registry in which the will was probated, the date of probate, and the type of record, i.e., a will, administration, etc.

This is when you will reap the benefit of having done your research before arriving at PRONI, as knowing what to order will save valuable time.

Five documents may be ordered simultaneously; you will need to enter your reader number (found on your Visitor's Pass) for each document ordered. You will then be allocated a table number; when your order is ready to be collected, your table number will show on the overhead monitors located in the Search Room.

The Search Room also houses four terminals belonging to the General Register Office of Northern Ireland (GRONI).

GRONI holds civil registration of births, marriages, and deaths for Northern Ireland since registration commenced, but there are restrictions on what you can view when searching from home. From home, you can view births that are more than 100 years old, marriages more than 75 years old, and deaths more than 50 years old. On GRONI terminals, however, you can view records up to the present day.

To do so, you must have registered for an account and paid upfront for credits to view records. Save time by setting this up before you arrive at PRONI. You cannot print from these terminals, or take screenshots or photos of any records that you find, but you can transcribe what you see on the screen. Records cost 50 pence for a limited view and £2.50 for the full record. Register for a GRONI account at https://geni.nidirect.gov.uk/.

During busy times, GRONI terminals are limited to 20 minutes usage per person.

You will find the microfilm readers in the Search Room, and the microfilms themselves are held in a bank of drawers at the back of the room. Two of the microfilm machines have a printing capability.

Guides to the church records are available in hard-copy folders. Some church records might be found in one of a series of microfilms – consult the guides to determine which microfilm holds which specific records.

Other records available on microfilm are estate papers, correspondence, family papers, business records, newspapers, etc. Consult the e-catalogue to find what is available or browse under M to get a listing of all microfilms.

Bookshelves in the Reading Room hold will calendars, indexes to some church records, gravestone inscriptions, passenger lists, a householders index, street directories, deputy keepers reports, ordnance surveys, ordnance survey memoirs, useful genealogy guidebooks, and fasti lists [Editor's Note: *fasti* detail a minister's postings and often give additional information on his background and/or family].

There is also a stand with copies of PRONI leaflets on genealogy and local history topics and a range of maps to view.

Staff are on hand to assist with queries and help with any difficulties you encounter.

The Reading Room

When your allocated table number shows on the overhead monitors, your order is ready; exit the Search Room, go to the opposite end of the corridor, swipe your Visitor's Card for entry, and find your table number - numbers are located on the end of each table and on each corner.

Go to the desk and tell the staff your table number. They will check your Visitor's Pass and issue you with your requested document, which you must sign for using a pencil. When you return the document, you must sign it back in.

Generally, you can take photos of documents with your phone but, if in doubt, ask the staff.

To use the Reading Room's photocopiers, you will need to purchase a photocopy card. Five credits costing 25 pence apiece



PRONI bookshelves in the Search Room (photo by author)

are loaded onto each card; each copy takes one credit. These cards may be bought from the staff in the Reading Room. The photo-copiers allow you to print or to save a copy to a memory stick. If you don't remember to bring a stick with you, you can buy one from the staff.

Return to the Search Room and repeat the earlier process to order additional documents.

Disabled Access

PRONI is a modern building with good disabled access. A lift can take you to the Search and Reading Rooms on the first floor if required.

On-Site Facilities

Visitor's toilets are on the ground floor.

There is a reasonably-priced café on the ground floor where you can buy snacks and lunch. There are also vending machines for drinks and snacks.

In the atrium, displays are regularly changed to showcase records held at PRONI.

There are also regular exhibitions such as the recent Creative Responses to the Prisons Memory Archive, Lynne Hocking's art installation 'Ancestral Interconnections,' and the Ulster Scots and The Declaration of Independence exhibition that included an original copy of the US Declaration of Independence on loan from The National Archives.

There is a regular talks programme – see the website's What's On At PRONI section for more information.

Opening Hours

PRONI is open Monday to Friday and is closed on public holidays.

It opens at 9.00 am daily, apart from Thursday's opening at 10.00 am, and closes each day at 4.45 pm. The last time to order documents is 4.15 pm.

Check the website before you visit for details of upcoming closures.

Conclusion

PRONI is a wonderful facility with a great deal of information that can help you research your family tree and discover more about the life and times of your ancestors. However, you will benefit from good preparation and planning for your research trip, especially if you are visiting from abroad and have limited time.

Good luck and happy researching!

Endnotes

[1] Department for Communities, Northern Ireland. 22 June 2023. PRONI turns 100. https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/news/proni-turns-100 : accessed 20 December 2023

Natalie Bodle is a full-time professional genealogist who specialises in Irish and Scots-Irish research. She is a frequent speaker on Irish genealogy topics and delivers regular Irish genealogy courses. Her company, Roots Revealed, is based in her hometown of Ballymena, County Antrim, Northern Ireland. Her first book, Tracing Your Family History Using Irish Newspapers and Other Printed Material, *will be published by Pen and Sword in Feb. 2024; she is also looking forward to presenting at RootsTech 2024 for the first time.*



How to Find Genealogy Collections Anywhere and Everywhere

by Jill Fuller, WHS Reference Librarian

To achieve a research goal, we need to start with a plan! Consider critically which records will have all the information you need. I use a three-step planning process to locate records by asking myself, "What do I already know or have?" "What don't I know and what do I need?" and "Which records could have that information?"

First, start by getting organized. It helps to know what you already have, so fill out family group sheets, pedigree charts, or family tree software. Make sure to cite your sources. Creating timelines also helps put your ancestors into a historical context. Below are some helpful websites for getting organized.

Family Tree Charts

- http://familytreemagazine.com/freeforms/
- http://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Genealogy_Research_Forms
- http://www.ancestry.com/cs/charts-and-forms.

Citations

- http://familytreemagazine.com/research/beginner-genealogy-source-citation
- http://www.evidenceexplained.com.

Historical Information

- Age Calculator: http://www.calculator.net/age-calculator.html
- Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator: http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl
- Our Timelines: http://ourtimelines.com
- Time and Date: Once organized, the next step is to create a plan. What are you missing? Where are the gaps in the research you compiled? To address this, create focused research questions, prepare a research log, and make a list of the records you need to find. *Family Tree Magazine* provides information on creating a research log at http://familytreemagazine.com/research/6-details-genealogy-research-log, while Thomas MacEntee's research log template is available at *Geneabloggers* here: https://geneabloggers.us5.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=e6b48e8de3ee2e5430b75a4d5&id=98e4273404.

Next, it's time to find the records. Start by identifying records that contain information that may answer your research question, then consider the institutions that may have existed in the relevant location and time. Examine record creation history to determine if any laws, border changes, or destruction may have impacted the documents being sought.

It's also important to analyze each individual record to determine whether it was from a primary or secondary source, who the informants were, and the purpose and format of the record. Also, consider whether other records were created for the event and where they might be stored.

There are two main types of documentation: public and private. Public records are created by government offices/departments. Types of public records include censuses and vital, court, military, land, and immigration records. Census records include federal population schedules, special schedules, and state or vital records. Vital records, i.e., births/marriages/deaths, are usually located in county courthouses, state archives, published books, or online databases. If none exist, think of what other documents may include vital information. Court records can consist of probate files, civil and criminal court cases, and documentation from government-run institutions. Military records may contain service records, pension files, draft cards, published unit histories, and unpublished manuscripts. Land and Property records may comprise land patents, deeds, and tax rolls and may appear in probate files. Lastly, immigration, emigration, and migration documents may include citizenship and naturalization records, passenger lists, emigration trail histories, and migration stories.

Private records include those from religious institutions, schools, clubs, social organizations, newspapers, cemetery records, and papers from personal collections.

To locate public records, check with public repositories at the local town and county level (courthouses, town halls, libraries, and museums), at the state level (libraries, archives, government offices, and state agencies), at the regional level (area archives, universities, and research libraries), and the federal level (the National Archives, Library of Congress, and other federal agencies).

Private repositories include online databases, churches, clubs and organizations, schools, and funeral homes.

One public repository is the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) in Madison, Wisconsin. Our library catalog is available

at http://www.library.wisc.edu. You can perform keyword searches by location (town, county, or state), record creator/record type, and family name. Try using the terms "papers" or "records" when searching for archival records. Don't forget to include "history" or "genealogy" when searching for published records. Using wildcards can also help, as can looking at the Subject options. You can click on a result from the search result listing to find the location and request options for that result. Also check archival finding aids for descriptions, locations, permissions, and restrictions. You can search our archival finding aids at https://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/wiarchives/. For worldwide collections, search finding aids at ArchiveGrid (https://researchworks.oclc.org/archivegrid/).

For additional assistance, contact the following WHS websites:

- Wisconsin Historical Society: www.wisconsinhistory.org
- Archives Reference: askarchives@wisconsinhistory.org
- Library Reference: asklibrary@wisconsinhistory.org
- WHS Area Research Centers: http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS4000
- UW Madison Online Catalog: http://library.wisc.edu.

The following is a list of helpful websites, including some with library and archival materials, to assist your research. For the online databases, read each collection's descriptions to see what is covered and what is not. Also, don't be afraid to browse catalogs by location or record type or browse the various record sets. The *FamilySearch* Research Wiki includes extensive research tips and links to where records are located and can be searched by location or record type.

Happy Hunting!

Helpful Websites

- Naturalization Laws Timeline: http://familytreemagazine.com/freebie/free-naturalization-laws-timeline
- Immigration Timeline: http://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/immigration/global-timeline/
- National Archives (NARA): http://www.archives.gov/
- Library of Congress (LOC): http://www.loc.gov/
- General Land Office, Bureau of Land Management: https://www.glorecords.blm.gov.
- Maps:
  - http://digital.newberry.org/ahcb/
  - http://www.davidrumsey.com
  - http://www.historicmapworks.com
  - http://www.johngrenham.com/places/ (Ireland Maps).

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Wisconsin Historical Society, located at 816 State Street in Madison, Wisconsin, is among the top five institutions for genealogy research in the United States. Its collections house examples of nearly every type of genealogical resource, including vital records, military records, and census records. WHS also maintains a 4,000-title newspaper collection second only to the Library of Congress's in size. Collections span the entire United States and Canada and are invaluable for researching family heritage.

Most of its genealogy resources are located within the Society's library. A small but rich group of genealogy holdings is online and accessible for searching by name from your home computer.

Librarians can guide you through the Society's extensive collections and resources and answer questions.

Explore the Wisconsin Historical Society online at wisconsinhistory.org. You can contact the library at asklibrary@wisconsinhistory.org or call the Reference Desk at 608-264-6535. You can contact the Archives Reference Desk at askarchives@wisconsinhistory.org or call 608-264-6460.

Online Databases

- *Ancestry.com*: http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/catalog
- *FamilySearch*: http://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog
- *FamilySearch* Research Wiki: http://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main_Page.

Newspapers

- *The Ancestor Hunt*: http://theancestorhunt.com/newspaper-research-links.html
- *Chronicling America* Newspaper Directory (LOC): http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/search/titles/.

Periodicals

- PERSI: https://www.genealogycenter.info/persi/
- JSTOR: (available at libraries).

Digital Books

- *FamilySearch* Digital Library: http://www.familysearch.org/library/books/
- *WorldCat*: http://www.worldcat.org/
- *Google Books*: http://books.google.com
- *Internet Archive*: http://archive.org
- *HathiTrust*: http://www.hathitrust.org
- *ProQuest* Ebook Central: (available at libraries).

Religious Records

- *The Ancestor Hunt*: http://theancestorhunt.com/church-recordsz.html
- Denomination Archives
- Local/State Archives
- Local Churches.

Blogs/Newsletters

- *The Ancestor Hunt* blog: http://theancestorhunt.com/blog.html/
- *Ancestry.com* blog: http://blogs.ancestry.com/cm/
- *Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter*: http://eogn.com
- *FamilySearch* blog: http://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/
- *FamilyTree Magazine* newsletter: https://familytreemagazine.com/genealogy-insider-newsletter/
- *FindMyPast* blog: http://www.findmypast.com/blog
- *Genealogy Gems* newsletter: http://lisalouisecooke.com/newsletter-form/
- *MyHeritage* blog: http://blog.myheritage.com
- *Legacy Tree Genealogists* blog: http://www.legacytree.com/newsletter.

Jill Fuller (she/her) is a Reference Librarian and Stacks Manager at the Wisconsin Historical Library. She has a B.A. in history from Winona State University and an MLIS from UW-Madison. Jill is also a Louisa May Alcott Society member and co-creator of a podcast on Louisa May Alcott's life.



Did You Know?

Ancestry has recently added a new index of more than 87,000 entries; sourced from PRONI, the index is called "Ireland, Wills and Admins, 1515-1858." While free to search, users should note that this is an index and does not provide document images, which can only be viewed in PRONI's search room. The index also includes some entries for non-Northern Ireland locales, including Counties Cork, Leitrim, and Dublin.

Source: Claire Santry's blog, *Irish Genealogy News*, 15 December 2023. https://www.irishgenealogynews.com/

The Irish Research Collection at the Hoffman Research Library in Minnesota

by Ann Eccles

"It's not all on the Internet." One of my favorite genealogists has shared this advice on numerous occasions. Even before a search screen reports, "No results found," it's worth remembering. That's when it's time to consider the old-fashioned alternative of print sources. But where can a beginning Irish researcher find those in middle America?

IGSI members living in or near the Twin Cities metro area will find a collection of Irish research materials at the Hoffman Research Library (HRL) in Mendota Heights (hours are provided on pages 2 and 32). About 3,000 items — hardcover and paperback books, older journals from Irish groups, historical maps of Ireland, and indexes of various publications — will help start or direct a search.

So, what might you find?

Family Histories. In the IGSI collection, we have family histories of Irish families, yet there are also numerous family histories in the Minnesota area of the collection.

Irish Geographical Resources. Use Brian Mitchell's *New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland* to better understand the geographical basis for 19th-century Irish records. Consult the Ordnance Survey maps (referenced in Griffith's Valuation records) to identify the townland area of an Irish ancestor. Utilize the guides to Irish research, such as John Grenham's *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors*, to identify specific Irish resources by county.

Check the landed estate indexes in the IGSI collection to identify ancestors whose names or information may be included in Landed Estate Records, which are found only in manuscripts at the National Archives or National Library of Ireland.

History of Ireland and Counties. Consult the numerous and varied books on the history of Ireland or about a specific county. Books on a particular historical event (e.g., the 1798 rebellion) may name the participants. Other guides describing a county's culture and land use may not name the citizens of a specific period, but will still provide background information on their lifestyle and environment, providing a setting in time and locale for your ancestors. Note that the collection includes Scots-Irish materials as well.

Emigration and Immigration. This collection includes several books and series of 18th- and 19th-century passenger records for Irish emigrants. Books on the Peter Robinson settlement in Canada, the *Search for Missing Friends* (ads from the *Boston Pilot*, 1831-1920), and numerous other books with immigration lists may provide a research lead. The catalog lists additional resources for the Irish who settled in or traveled throughout the U.S. and eastern Canadian provinces. There are even a few books of cemetery inscriptions, such as *Tombstones of the Irish* (in Flatbush, New York).

This is but a sampling. Anyone can access the library's catalog from the IGSI website. Click on the Library page, then click on the icon for the catalog to start your investigation into print resources at the Hoffman Library. By checking the catalog from home and noting the call numbers or titles of potentially helpful materials, researchers can have a great starting point when arriving at the library.

But — full disclosure — an in-person researcher in Mendota Heights will discover specific online resources available at the Hoffman Research Library that may be worth exploring.

The Hoffman Research Library is also a *FamilySearch* affiliate library. If your *FamilySearch* research has ever encountered a message of "visit an affiliate library to view" an image, a trip to Mendota Heights may help. You can use your laptop and *FamilySearch* login at the library.

The *AncestryLibrary*® edition is standard at most public libraries; the Hoffman Research Library also has *Findmypast*, an Irish- and British-centered site. Both are free to use in the library. While there is some overlap in coverage, the indexing by each company was done independently. Each also has its own sets of data records, with most Irish records to be found on *Findmypast*.

In 2023, IGSI acquired subscriptions to John Grenham's *IrishAncestors* website and *RootsIreland*. Grenham's site is simple to start — a surname search on *IrishAncestors* leads to maps to locate a placename and to external resources for further searching. *RootsIreland* is considered one of the best resources for Irish church record transcripts.

While the Hoffman Research Library offers extensive resources for Irish researchers, including dedicated "Irish Saturdays" once a month (see page 2), it should be noted that the HRL also offers a diverse array of resources for other ethnicities, including (but not

limited) to Czech, Polish, Romanian, Canadian, Swedish, Norwegian, and German. In fact, the Germanic and Canadian resources are about the same size as the Irish collection, each housing approximately 2,500-3,000 items. Non-Irish-specific online resources at the HRL include *American Ancestors*, *Newspapers.com*, *Fold3* (all MGS-owned), the Canadian *PRDH* (*Programme de recherche en démographie historique*) and nine different Swedish databases.

For individuals just starting to explore family history, the costs of subscriptions to online databases and websites may seem prohibitive. Using the resources freely available at libraries such as the HRL can help the line of exploration and identify which print or electronic sources may be worth an investment.

Ann Eccles is a longtime member of IGSI. She served a few terms as president of the Society; she was editor of this publication for 16 years. She currently serves as the IGSI librarian. Ann has traced three of her great-grandparents to counties Armagh and Tyrone; another four are from the Republic of Ireland.



Applying for Irish Citizenship and Passport

by Rita McNabb

Did you know you can apply for Irish citizenship based on descent from a grandparent born in Ireland?

Because both my paternal grandparents were born in Ireland, I took this as a challenge. First, I collected all the necessary documents, most of which I already had from my genealogy research. However, I needed to obtain certified copies from the original sources. The pandemic made this a drawn-out process, but I eventually obtained all the certified documents from Ireland and New York City. The Irish Immigration Service Website (http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/citizenship-parents-born-ireland) gives clear instructions on what documents are needed.

Do not be afraid to send original documents. Every original document I submitted was returned intact. The only original I did not include was my original United States passport, which I need for travel; instead, I sent a notarized copy. The processing time for obtaining a certificate for a Foreign Birth registration was long, mainly due to backlog and closed offices during COVID-19.

I submitted my application for a foreign birth certificate on August 3, 2022, received a confirmation of my mailing address on May 8, 2023, and was granted approval on June 7, 2023. I was added to the Foreign Birth Register about two weeks later; the certificate I received shows my birth name, date of birth, location of birth (Ohio), and my father's name. My mother's name was not mentioned since I qualified for citizenship based on my paternal line.

Once I received my foreign birth certificate, I could file for an Irish passport. The passport application requested some of the same documents I had submitted for the birth certificate. Again, I did not send my US passport but a notarized copy instead. I submitted the online passport application on August 17, 2023, and followed up with the necessary documents. On September 25, 2023, I received a request for additional information in the form of a certified or original copy of my marriage certificate since the passport was to be issued under my married name. My passport application was expected to be completed the first week of November, but tracking showed it had gotten stalled in customs in New York City since November 25, 2023. After receiving my passport card in early December, my passport finally arrived on December 29, 2023.

Being added to the Foreign Birth Register and receiving a foreign birth certificate and Irish passport in no way affects your US citizenship or US passport. I took on this project just because I could, and so can you.

Rita McNabb took up genealogy in 2013 after retirement from the IRS (37 years). Her paternal grandparents immigrated in the early 1900s from Ireland. The McNabbs made their first trip to Ireland in 2022, where they connected with three different family lines. Rita is especially proud that her search for her husband's birth family resulted in Jim being accepted into the Sons of the American Revolution and the Society of Mayflower Descendants as of December 2023.



Exploring The Diocese of Brooklyn's Diocesan Archives

by Trish Little Taylor

In September 2023, I had the opportunity to tour the Diocese of Brooklyn's Diocesan Archives, which was my first visit to an archive of the Catholic Church. I have used Ancestry and *FindMyPast* to research my Manhattan, New York, families, but realized that some of my grandfather's siblings moved to Brooklyn and Queens so I wanted to fill in those details. I have also been helping friends research their Brooklyn families in the 1880s and later. When one of my New York groups scheduled a tour, I signed up. Long story short, the tour was cancelled but Joseph Coen, Archivist at R.C. Diocese of Brooklyn, graciously agreed to give me a private tour.

I had several questions regarding what the Archives contained and where the parish records and/or school records were. I needed to understand the development of the Brooklyn Diocese, as well as the growth and development of the surrounding area. I started by looking on the Brooklyn Archives' home page: https://dioceseofbrooklyn.org/offices/diocesan-offices/archives. In 1853, the Archdiocese of New York created the Brooklyn Diocese, which included all the counties of Long Island. The city of Brooklyn in Kings County became the headquarters for the Diocese. Other counties included were Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk.[1] A post-World War II population boom caused a suburban spread that created an administrative crisis, resulting in a surge of new churches. This changed the complexion the diocese; in 1957, Nassau and Suffolk churches split from the Diocese of Brooklyn and were moved into the Diocese of Rockville Center.[2]

After having learned some of the diocesan history from the website, Mr. Coen further explained that Brooklyn is an urban diocese comprised of 147 churches in Brooklyn and 103 churches in Queens.[3] In addition, there are various chapels under the control of specific religious orders. Early in the development of Brooklyn's Archives, the leaders decided to model the archives collection after the Archdiocese of Boston's design. In 1999, the Archdiocesan offices moved into the Congregation of the Infant Jesus Motherhouse, a nursing order for the poor. After renovations, the Archive is now housed in the Motherhouse basement with archival shelving and temperature and humidity controls.[4]

According to Mr. Coen, the Archives contains mainly paper records from 1853 to 1994. These include published parish histories, boundary changes, biographies of priests, marriage dispensations, financial records, and other administrative materials, as well as an extensive collection of student records from closed schools, some yearbooks, and photos. The Archives also holds parish registers from ten closed German-language parish es; the German Genealogical Society of Long Island is in the process of indexing these now-digitized records.[5]

The Brooklyn Archives also holds some newspaper resources. *The Tablet* is a weekly diocesan newspaper containing information on parish activities, obituaries (especially of priests and other religious leaders), and access to news from the Vatican, other American dioceses, and international happenings. The Archives maintains a complete run of *The Tablet*, which began in 1908. Similarly, *The Brooklyn Eagle* is a local newspaper from 1841 that covers death notices, court cases, and details on daily life and other activities. Its print holdings can be found in New York City-area libraries. Digital copies of both newspapers are available on *Newspapers.com*.[6]

Mr. Coen further explained during my tour that there are both territorial and national parishes. A national parish reflects the language of specific groups of immigrants, so services and any records held would be in that native language. For example, Italians might have attended a church such as St. Rocco, which kept records in Italian. Later, instead of creating a new national parish, existing parishes held masses and other services in the native language of new arrivals. Some still do today. For example, Irish churchgoers usually attended a territorial (local) parish. When establishing a new church in an Irish neighborhood, an Irish saint's name was often selected as the name of the new church.

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, a lack of priests created a dilemma for the diocese, so it was decided to merge neighboring churches. Parishes were consolidated based on geographic proximity. The Brooklyn Archives website contains a chronological list of Brooklyn parishes from 1822-2008, and of Queens parishes from 1843-2009.[7] This list provides the names of the churches, the dates they were founded, and whether they were national or territorial. If a parish school was closed, details on locating its records are provided. The contact information is also provided, as well as any comments about the parish and its history. This means that a modern-day researcher may find Irish ancestors in a parish that was originally a German or an Italian church. When parishes merge, all their records go to the main church. When additional mergers occur, those records still go to the main church and can often be in multiple languages.

What can a researcher find in church registers? Sacramental records contain baptism details such as a baby's name,

parents, and godparents. Some baptismal records may also contain the names and dates of the child's spouses since a couple must produce baptismal records to be married in the Church. Marriage records may be more helpful because they contain both the place of birth and the name of the baptismal parish. Canon law requires these records to be kept either in the local church or at the diocese.[8] Some churches may keep records of first communions, confirmations, and other religious services.

Burial records may or may not be kept by the parish, so a researcher may need to use other tools to locate ancestors' graves. The Catholic Cemeteries Office website (https://www.ccbklyn.org/) holds the records for parish, diocesan, and secular cemeteries used by Catholics. Calvary Cemetery is in Woodside, Queens, and was established in 1846. Calvary Cemetery is controlled by the Archdiocese of New York (www.archny.org).[9]

By the time my tour was over, I had learned I would need a good bit of luck and a lot of creativity in using census records, maps of all ages, city directories, and church parish records to locate ancestors. Take Rose Little Gibbons, my grandfather's sister, for example. Rose lived on Northern Boulevard in Corona, Queens. To locate her church, I will need to locate her in census records, city directories, and other records. I will then need to identify the Catholic churches closest to her home on Northern Boulevard. Like other researchers working on Long Island ancestors, the phrase "Location, location, location" will be the key to identifying where church records may be found.

While I didn't get all my original questions answered, I learned more about how to research in an urban area. I will need to continue using many different tools in my research to locate other family members who lived on Long Island. I truly appreciated all of Joseph Coen's time in giving me this amazing tour.

For more information on various New York Catholic archives, contact the following offices:

Brooklyn and Queens
R.C. Diocese of Brooklyn
Office of the Archivist
310 Prospect Park
West Brooklyn, NY 11215
(718) 965-7300
https://dioceseofbrooklyn.org/offices/diocesan-offices/archives/

Nassau and Suffolk Counties
Mrs. Jean Walsh, Archivist
Diocese of Rockville Centre
P.O. Box 9023 Rockville Centre, NY 11571-9023
(631) 423-0491
archives@drvc.org

Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten Island
Kate Feighery, Archivist
Archdiocese of New York Archives and Record Management
St. Joseph's Seminary
201 Seminary Avenue Yonkers, NY 10704
(914) 476-6333
kate.feighery@archny.org

Catholic Cemeteries
Office of Catholic Cemeteries
P.O. Box 182
Westbury, NY 11590
phone: (516) 334-7990
http://www.holyroodcemetery.org.

Endnotes

1 *Archdiocese of Brooklyn Archives* (https://dioceseofbrooklyn.org/offices/diocesan-offices/archives/ : accessed 28 December 2023).

2 *Archdiocese of Brooklyn Archives*, December 2023.

3 Conversation with Joseph Coen, *Archivist*, 27 September 2023. See also: "Diocesan Archives," *Archdiocese of Brooklyn Archives* (https://dioceseofbrooklyn.org/offices/diocesan-offices/archives/ : accessed 28 December 2023).

4 Joseph Coen, September 2023.

5 Joseph Coen, September 2023.

6 "The Tablet (Brooklyn)," *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tablet_(Brooklyn) : accessed 28 December 2023).

7 Joseph Coen, September 2023.

8 Joseph Coen, September 2023.

9 Joseph Coen, September 2023.

Trish Little Taylor is a retired librarian living in Virginia. She graduated with a BA from the University of Mary Washington, an MLS from Western Michigan, and an MH from the University of Richmond. She is co-chair of IGSI's Education Committee and is also a Board member. Her Irish roots are from Leitrim, Tipperary, and Limerick. She likes to help others discover their roots.



Mystical Ireland

by Gabrielle Ní Mheachair

On a trip to visit the crumbling ruins of my mother's paternal ancestors' homestead, my mother was excited to see the entrance gates, and that two piers were still standing. 'Would you look at that! One conical, and one flat for the fairies to dance on,' she exclaimed in delight. When I asked her what she was talking about, she explained. If a family lived near a fairy fort, it was customary to build one pier flat-topped to provide a resting surface for the fairies as they travelled abroad, or a place for them to dance after midnight. Second piers were usually conical to combat erosion from the constant Irish rain. If a farmer failed to honor this tradition, inexplicable misfortunes followed.



Flat and Rounded Piers at entrance to old cottage ruin (photo by author)

From the most ancient of times, Ireland was reputed to be inhabited by three uniquely different inhabitants: humans, trooping fairies, and solitary fairies. These three races had clearly defined rules of engagement to ensure a peaceful co-existence between them. Transgressions such as entering fairy property without the proper invitation or permission were dealt with harshly and without leniency. Since humans were mortal and the weakest of the three inhabitants, they were forced to develop effective protective codes of behavior, passing them from one generation to the next. Such protections might include dressing up a human's newborn baby boy in girls' clothing to prevent the fairies from spiriting them away to fairy land or always carrying a knife/blade to ward off malevolent fairies who abhor metal.

Trooping fairies are the most common type of fairy encountered in Ireland. They have both winter and summer homes. In summer, they reside in the numerous fairy forts scattered throughout Ireland, and also in groves, woods, forests, and inside abandoned quarries. In winter, they migrate towards the nearest mountain and shelter underground during Ireland's cold, wet winters.

Modern Ireland is so removed from the time of our ancestors as to be almost a different country entirely. I was fortunate to grow up in an Ireland that straddled both eras. In my youth people lived in small cottages, many hidden at the end of mile-long lanes. It was not uncommon for people to have electricity but no indoor plumbing. Farmers still ploughed the fields with horses. Neighbors rode to Mass on their bicycles or in pony and traps; within ten years, all that changed.[1] Ireland began to modernize. The country was lit up like a Christmas tree. Cottages were abandoned, and bungalows with bathrooms and fitted kitchens littered the countryside. Cars and tractors were everywhere, while bicycles and traps gathered cobwebs in sheds. The dray horse grew old, grazing lazily in the field.[2] As W.B. Yeats aptly put it, *'All changed, changed utterly: A terrible beauty is born.' (W.B. Yeats, Easter, 1916).*

In the early 1900s, The Schools' Manuscript Collections (1937-1938) endeavored to capture what remained of our ancient lore. Over 50,000 schoolchildren from 5,000 schools contributed invaluable information to this collection.[3] However, not everyone participated, and there were obvious limitations to such a program. Significant cultural material slipped through the cracks. Unfortunately, after the rapid transformations of the early '60s and '70s, Ireland lost even more valuable cultural, mystical, and religious traditions. This wealth of ancient lore vanished with my parents' generation. My generation was 'getting on with it,' while the current generation appears to have little interest.

My mother, or 'Kit Ryan the River' as she was known, was a veritable seanchaí (storyteller), and I was fortunate to have inherited her gift for remembering. Hence, when as an adult I realized the older generation were passing on and time was getting short, I began collecting and recording



An Irish Fairy Fort (photo by author)

local lore from my parents, aunts, uncles, and neighbors. To date, I have only published the fairy lore. This can be found in my published books listed below. I hope to publish the remaining stories and lore in the coming years or, at the very least, to incorporate them into other works. By so doing, I hope not all will be lost.

When visiting the ancient homeland of one's ancestors, it helps to have some knowledge of the local fairy lore. This lore would have had as strong an impact on our ancestors' lifestyles as did religion, British rule, education, environment, and social status.

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Yeats, W. B., *Irish Fairy and Folk Tales* (Dublin: Macmillan, 1983).

The National Folklore Collections, University College Dublin (UCD), County Tipperary 1938-1939.

Endnotes

[1] "A trap, pony trap (sometimes pony and trap) or horse trap is a light, often sporty, two-wheeled or sometimes four-wheeled horse- or pony-drawn carriage." Wikipedia contributors, "Trap (carriage,)" *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Trap_(carriage)&oldid=1185378705 : accessed 17 November 2023).

[2] Dray horse: "a horse adapted for drawing heavy loads." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary* (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dray%20horse : accessed 17 November 2023), s.v. "dray horse."

[3] "The Schools' Collection," *Dúchas.ie* (https://www.duchas.ie/en/info/cbe : accessed December 2023); see also The National Folklore Collections, University College Dublin (UCD), County Tipperary 1938-1939 in bibliography.

Gabrielle Ní Mheachair, a native of Templemore, Co. Tipperary, Ireland writes children's books in the Irish language. She has also published history, folklore, and memoirs. Her books are available on Amazon. Irish Fairies Fearsome or Friendly, Solitary Fairies Life or Death, *and* Ivy Hall and the Liosbán Curse *are her three books relating to the fairy lore of Ireland.*



Ireland – Fifty Years Later

by Peggy Flynn Peters

The last time I was on Irish soil was in the fall of 1972 as a newly minted high school graduate. My sister Chris and I were mainly headed to the 1972 Munich Olympics, but we added visits to towns in England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, and Austria. We backpacked, stayed in Youth Hostels, and traveled on trains with Britrail and Eurail passes, which were low cost and minimalist.

This time would be different. With funds from my mom's recently settled estate, I could travel in a more upscale fashion, so I took advantage of an IGSI tour and the patience of my brother, Mike Flynn, and his wife, Mary, who were to travel with me. They had been to Ireland in 2011 on a previous IGSI tour, where they found many baptismal records to confirm ancestor names and places of nativity. On this trip, we wanted to walk on the land that my ancestors had owned.

Using the ten-day Irish Genealogical Society International (IGSI)-sponsored tour as a trigger, I added five more days to each end of the tour for research and further sightseeing. It may have taken me nearly fifty years to the day to return to Ireland, but the trip was more fantastic than I could have imagined.

Mike and I have been research partners for more than 20 years and have traveled the backroads of Minnesota to find county records, cemeteries, and the farms that our ancestors worked. Mike has also found a wealth of information on our Irish and German ancestors in Illinois, Montana, and Wisconsin through records and news clippings.

With the COVID pandemic winding down, the repositories in Dublin were open but still observing some protocols. We went armed with our reading cards, appointments, and masks in hand. After arriving in Dublin on Thursday, September 22, 2022, and settling in the hotel, I visited the Trinity College Campus to see the *Book of Kells*. Meanwhile, Mike and Mary visited the National Library, where they also validated their reading cards. On Friday, the three of us walked to the National Library again. Mike headed to the third floor where he could look at newspapers while I went to the second floor where I could access the computers with various online databases. Mike found a newspaper article at the library on the inquest into our great-grand-uncle's, David Flynn's, death. We knew from his death certificate that he drowned in the Blackwater River in Fermoy, County Cork, but this gave us new details that added depth to the story already provided in family papers.

On Monday, we were at the National Archives office when the doors opened, trying to do as much research as possible since our IGSI tourmates were due to arrive the next day. We studied and photographed many original probate records and other court documents at the archives. These provided a fuller picture of the land transfers to his sister's (O)Callaghan's family after our great-granduncle's, David Flynn's, death in 1908. His sister was our great-grandaunt, Ellen (Flynn) Callaghan.

We met our bus driver/tour guide and our fellow travelers at the Dublin airport on Tuesday. Our tour was marketed on the idea that we would go to places people probably had not yet seen since many had already been to Ireland. I personally prefer God-created natural beauty and museums to castles and churches, so I was thrilled with many of the planned stops on our itinerary.

I never thought I would ever get to Northern Ireland, but our first night was spent in Belfast. We traveled across Northern Ireland along the Causeway Coast from Belfast to Derry (Londonderry), which was a rugged and beautiful trip. When we reached Derry, we hosted for dinner Brian Mitchell, a noted Derry genealogical researcher and author perhaps best-known for the *New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland*. He was also available for a Q & A the following day after we toured the Derry Museum.

On our way back towards the Republic of Ireland, many of our scheduled stops were along the Wild Atlantic Way – a 1,500-mile-long coastal road from County Donegal to County Cork. If you are planning a trip to the western coast of Ireland, be sure to consider a few stops in this area.

On Friday, at the end of the IGSI-part of our vacation, we had a free day to see Dublin. As earlier in our trip, Mike continued his research at the Land Valuation Office, now known as Tailte Éireann — a new governmental agency formed in March 2023 from the merger of the Property Registration Authority, the Valuation Office, and the Ordnance Survey Ireland. There, he was able to pin down the exact site of a family farm now occupied by non-family members. Armed with copies of records, we were now ready to head the next day to Glenarousk, Castlelyons, County Cork, just outside of Fermoy.

The summer before my trip, I tried to pin down where our three-times great-grandfather, James Shea, was from. The Sheas are our paternal grandmother's ancestors. Mike and I thought they were from Kilkenny, but after researching at the Hoffman Library in Mendota Heights [see

Ann Eccles' article for more information], we discovered via marriage and baptismal records that they were, in fact, from Fethard, County Tipperary. We knew from *The Famine Immigrants* set housed at the Library that they had come to New York in 1847. The Library's Ordnance Survey maps further showed us the location of Fethard, so we were able to add it to our stops as we drove towards Fermoy. I was just thrilled to be in the neighborhood. My previous research had not yet enabled me to pin down the family land.

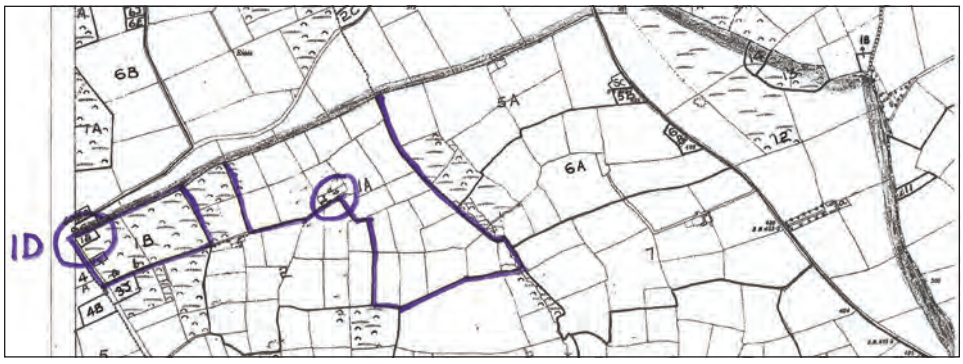


View across the valley from where the Flynn house would have been.

After Fethard, we drove to Glenarousk, asking many people along the way where the farm would be. We knew from the map Mike copied at the Land Valuation Office that four lots were sold from the edge of the original seventy-five acres; we also had the homeowners' names from 1984. Could these people still live in those homes? Finally, we flagged down a couple who knew the one family on our record who still lived in their home. He said he would take us there and leave us at the driveway.

When we arrived – late in the day – a young woman and her daughter were just leaving. Her mother still lived in the house, but her dad had passed. Her mother talked to us and told us what she knew. Both she and her daughter remembered the property being called "the Callaghan place" for the family who inherited the land after our great-granduncle David Flynn died. After visiting with us for an hour, these women said the current owner had put up a gate and didn't know if he would talk to us. We drove up the long driveway and sat. The man came along, let us in, and spoke to us. We chatted, and he asked us to stay for tea. Can you believe this wonderful offer?? Unfortunately, we had to get on the road soon as we had reservations in Killarney. We didn't think to ask the man his name or get his email, so we were unable to keep in contact. We couldn't believe we'd made such a significant mistake. So, the thrill of being on ancestral land was tempered by our rush to get to the next place and missing such a great opportunity. We had scheduled ourselves too tightly – we should have stayed at a hotel in Fermoy before moving on.

While Mike and Mary would like to revisit Ireland in the next few years, I probably won't. Who has another 50 years to plan a trip? In all seriousness, it was a wonderful adventure and I loved every minute of it.



An Ordinance Survey map of the land with 1A – site of the Flynn and current house and 1D – site of the current lot owner

Peggy Flynn Peters initially joined forces with her brother, Mike Flynn, more than 25 years ago to research the Flynn line in Ireland and across the United States from Boston to Seattle. They later added other paternal lines, as well as the Wellenstein/Bauch ancestors in their maternal line. Peggy volunteers at the Hoffman Library on Irish Saturdays and works on MGS projects on Wednesdays. She is also on the proofing teams for The Septs *and the website.*



Solving a DNA Cluster

by Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D.

Clustering — creating groups of shared matches — is an amazing way to organize your DNA matches and discover how matches are related to you. In the July issue of *The Septs*, we described a variety of manual and automated methods for creating groups and clusters.

Matches fall into clusters because they share ancestry with you and with each other. Sometimes it's easy to identify shared ancestors for a cluster, but sometimes it isn't.

In this article, I'll share methods for identifying the shared ancestors of a cluster. Steps in the method are:

1. Mark or define the cluster in some way so that you can retrieve it whenever you want to work with it. At *Ancestry* or *MyHeritage*, you can assign a colored dot; you can also name the cluster and put the name in the Notes field for the matches in the cluster. If your testing site provides neither dots nor a Notes field, make a separate list of the cluster members and any identifying information (for example: kit names, amount of shared DNA) in a word processor or spreadsheet.

2. Determine whether you already know your relationship to any matches in the cluster. Identify the part of your pedigree chart they share.

3. Now look at the matches in the cluster you haven't identified. Do any have trees? Note whether the trees are public or private, linked or unlinked.[1] It's a good idea to note how many people are in each match tree and whether the trees have any peculiarities (for example, only individuals marked private or only showing one side of the match's family). Compile this information into a table so it's at your fingertips. Also, go to the match's profile page. You may find the match's age, place of residence, and other information there.

4. Compare the tree information for the matches in the cluster. Are there common surnames, locations, or ancestors?

5. Conduct your own research into the shared matches' trees. Extend those trees as far backward as you can. Do you now see common surnames, locations, or ancestors?

6. Expand the cluster. If you've tested or uploaded a test kit at other sites, see whether any members of your cluster show up in your match list on the other site and add their shared matches on that site to the cluster. If you can access closely related test kits (say, test kits of your siblings), repeat the clustering with their kits.

As an illustration, I'll use a cluster of matches belonging to my husband, Jere Mackin, which I will call the "Maureen" cluster.[2] This cluster initially caught my attention because it includes a large (97 cM) match at *Ancestry* with no tree whom I call "Maureen." *Ancestry* estimates that "Maureen" is potentially a second–third cousin on Jere's paternal side. Jere and "Maureen" share seventeen matches, including our daughter and Jere's three DNA-tested siblings. An additional three cluster members are shared matches of Jere and cluster members other than "Maureen."

Let's walk through the six steps highlighted at the beginning of the article to identify the ancestors shared by Jere and the members of the "Maureen" cluster.

Step 1. Mark or Define the Cluster

The "Maureen" cluster was initially defined by examining the shared matches between Jere Mackin and "Maureen," then expanded by examining the shared matches of the shared matches. The cluster initially consisted of 17 matches, some of which are shown in the table below. After adding the shared matches of the shared matches, the cluster contained 20 matches.

Table 1. Matches in the "Maureen" cluster at *Ancestry*

Kit name	DNA Shared with Jere	Role in cluster
Jere Mackin	Self	Tester
"Maureen"	97 cM	Match of interest
Kathryn Mackin	3,478 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"
Patrick Mackin	2,842 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"
"Sheila"	22 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"
"Pat"	22 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"
"E.T."	20 cM	Shared match w ith Jere and "Maureen"

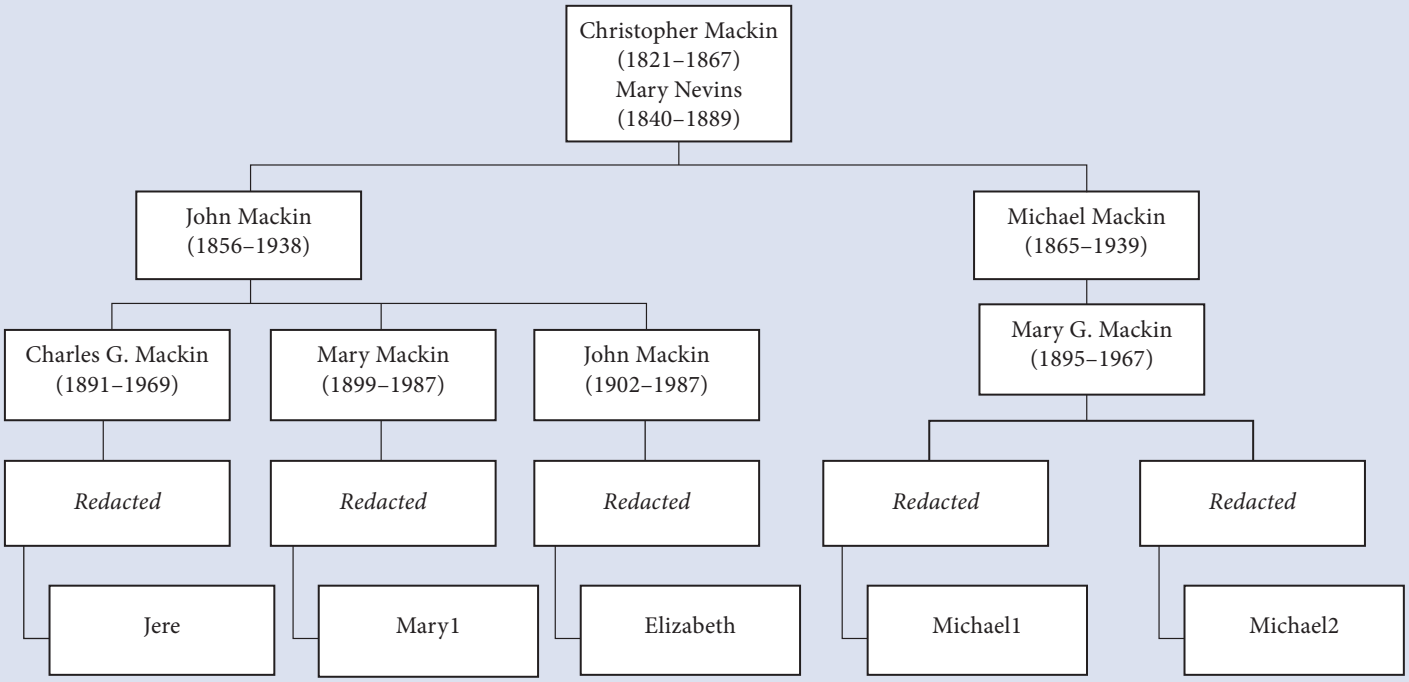
Source: Ancestry *shared matches, Jere Mackin and "Maureen," Jere Mackin and Kathryn Mackin, Jere Mackin and Patrick Mackin, Jere Mackin and "Sheila," Jere Mackin and "Pat," and Jere Mackin and "E.T.," author's screenshots dated 15 Nov 2023, author's files.*

Since *Ancestry* had already identified "Maureen" as a paternal match for Jere, I applied my colored-dot system to the matches in this cluster, labeling them with the dots for "Paternal." I also entered in the notes field that these matches are part of the "Maureen" cluster, established a private, unsearchable *Ancestry* tree for the cluster, and noted the name of the cluster's new *Ancestry* tree.

Step 2. Identify Known Matches in the Cluster

Jere descends from Irish immigrants Christopher Mackin and Mary Nevins, whose Irish places of origin and ancestors

Figure 1. Known descendants of Christopher Mackin and Mary Nevins in the "Maureen" cluster.



Sources:

For Jere to his father, see Mitchell County, Iowa, birth certificate (1942), Jere Gene Mackin; Mitchell County courthouse, Osage. For Redacted to his father, see Iowa Department of Public Health, death certificate, Redacted; Mitchell County courthouse, Osage. For Charles G. Mackin to his father, see Mitchell County, Iowa, death certificate, Charles G. Mackin (1969); Mitchell County courthouse, Osage. For John Mackin to his father, see "John Mackin Died Thursday Evening," The Mitchell County Press *and the* Osage News Consolidated*, 13 October 1938, p. 1, col. 4.*

For Mary1 to their father, see "U.S., Obituary Collection, 1930–2018," Ancestry *(https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7545/), entry for Redacted. For Redacted to their mother, see Indiana Board of Health, birth certificate 53525 (1930), Redacted; imaged in "Indiana, U.S., Birth Certificates, 1907–1944,"* Ancestry *(https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60871/). For Mary to her father, see "John Mackin Died," p. 1, col. 4.*

For Elizabeth to her mother and Redacted to her father, see "Redacted," Globe-Gazette *(Mason City, Iowa), 28 April 2020, p. A5, col. 2. For John to his father, see "John Mackin Died," p. 1, col. 4.*

For Michael1 to their father, see "U.S., Obituary Collection, 1930–Current," Ancestry *(https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7545/), entry for Redacted. For Redacted to his mother, see 1940 U.S. census, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Milwaukee, enumeration district (ED) 72-16A, sheets 3A–B, visited number 79, Mae and Redacted Myles. For Mary's marriage, see "Society,"* Wisconsin State Journal*, 4 September 1918, p. 5, cols. 2–3. For Mary to her father, see Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Registration of Births 229: 428; imaged in "Milwaukee, Wisconsin, U.S. Births, 1839–1911),* Ancestry *(https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61719/). For Michael to his father, see Dane County, Wisconsin, Marriages 6: 228, Mackin-Keliher; Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison.*

For Michael2 to their father, see Michael Myles, "Myles Family Tree," Ancestry *(https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/tree/86919468/). For Redacted to their mother, see "U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936–2007,"* Ancestry *(https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60901/), entry for Redacted, Social Security number Redacted.*

For Christopher Mackin and Mary Nevins, see Find A Grave *memorials 71507914 and 71540752 (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/71507914/christopher-mackin and https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/71540752/mary-dinneen).*

Redacted documents are in author's files.

are unknown. In addition to Jere, the "Maureen" cluster includes four known descendants of Christopher and Mary.[3] This strongly suggests that both the original match, "Maureen," and the other cluster members share DNA that Jere inherited from Christopher and Mary. It doesn't mean that the entire cluster descended from Christopher and Mary, but that the members of the cluster inherited DNA from potential ancestors of Christopher and Mary. Solving the cluster could lead to identifying Christopher's and Mary's ancestors and places of origin.

Figure 1 (page 25) shows the descent of the known members of the "Maureen" cluster from Christopher and Mary.[4]

Table 2 adds the identity of some of the known matches in the cluster to a new column in our cluster table.

The known matches already had colored dots for "Paternal," "03 Mackin-Lohff" (denoting shared ancestry through Jere's paternal grandfather), and "07 Mackin-Nevins" (denoting shared ancestry through Jere's paternal great-great-grandfather and his wife). They also had notes identifying the ancestors in the descent line they share with Jere. For example, Elizabeth's note says, "Elizabeth [surname redacted] > Janet Mackin > John Mackin > John Mackin > Christopher Mackin."

Step 3. Examine Trees and Profiles of Unidentified Matches

Now that we've identified the known members of the cluster, it's time to gather information about the remaining unknown cluster members. Table 3 adds a new column for tree information to our cluster table. In the "Maureen" cluster, two unknown cluster members have no tree, three have public trees in which all individuals are private, and two have very small trees, leaving six cluster members with trees that may extend far enough to converge on common surnames or locations. When reviewing the information these matches have provided about themselves, don't forget to check their profiles on the testing site. You may find information about their ages, their residences, and more.

Step 4. Compare Tree Information

The kit names of the unidentified cluster members included two common surnames: Murphy (three cluster members) and O'Rourke (three cluster members). Both

Table 2. Matches in the "Maureen" cluster at *Ancestry*

Kit name	DNA Shared with Jere	Role in cluster	Identification
Jere Mackin	Self	Tester	
"Maureen"	97 cM	Match of interest	
Richard Mackin	2,727 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"	Jere's full sibling
Joann Mackin	2,722 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"	Jere's full sibling
"Brendan"	67 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"	
"Erin"	65 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"	
"Nicholas"	64 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"	

Source: Ancestry *shared matches Jere Mackin and "Maureen," Jere Mackin and Richard Mackin, Jere Mackin and Joann Mackin, Jere Mackin and "Brendan," Jere Mackin and "Erin," and Jere Mackin and "Nicholas," author's screenshots dated 15 Nov 2023, author's files.*

Table 3. Matches in the "Maureen" cluster at *Ancestry*

Kit name	DNA Shared with Jere	Role in cluster	Identified matches	Tree information for unidentified matches
Jere Mackin	Self	Tester		
"Maureen"	97 cM	Match of interest		No tree
Elizabeth	248 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"	Jere's 2nd cousin, common ancestor John Mackin	
Mary1	160 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"	Jere's 2nd cousin, common ancestor John Mackin	
"Meghan"	41 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Maureen"		Public unlinked tree, 38 people, mainly paternal
"Ashley"	26 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Meghan," "Mary Eileen," "Sheila," and Victoria"		Public linked tree, 13 people
"Victoria"	20 cM	Shared match with Jere and "Meghan," "Sheila," and "Ashley"		Public linked tree, 44 people

Source: Ancestry *shared matches Jere Mackin and "Maureen," Jere Mackin and Elizabeth, Jere Mackin and Mary1, Jere Mackin and "Meghan," Jere Mackin and "Ashley," and Jere Mackin and "Victoria," author's screenshots dated 15 Nov 2023, author's files.*

are common surnames; they could be helpful as we work with the match trees.

After noting that, my next step was to examine the trees for "Meghan," "Sheila," "Pat," "E.T.," "Ashley," and "Victoria." "Pat's" kit and "E.T.'s" kit are attached to the same tree.

I transferred the tree information from the matches' trees into the tree for the cluster I set up in Step 1. I started with a "floating" profile for each cluster member and either added DNA in the suffix field or tagged the profile with a "DNA match" tag. ("Floating" simply means that these profiles don't have parents or children attached at the outset.) Then I used the trees attached to their DNA kits to build and connect their ancestry.

In the case of the "Maureen" cluster, tree-building for "Meghan," "Sheila," "Pat," and "E.T." converged on a couple of Irish descent from St. Lawrence County, New York, named John "Jockey" Murphy (1830–1916) and Ann Ruth Clements (1832–1877). "Victoria's" tree does not connect to these Murphys.[5]

Step 5. Extend Cluster Members' Trees

My next step was extending the truncated and asymmetrical trees belonging to cluster members. In this step, I also use people-finder sites such as *BeenVerified* (https://www.beenverified.com/app/) to start trees for individuals who do not provide trees but give information about their age or residence. This second stage of tree-building resulted in the discovery that "Brendan," "Erin," "Patrick," and "Mary Eileen" are also descended from John "Jockey" Murphy and Ann Ruth Clements. In contrast, "Ashley" and "2005rewind" descend from John Murphy's sister, Mary Murphy (1837–1908) and John Mahony (c1820–1875), who moved from St. Lawrence County, New York, to Dane County, Wisconsin.[6] (This migration path was parallel to the path followed by Christopher Mackin and Mary Nevins.[7]) The Irish parents of John and Mary Murphy are John Murphy (1785–1855) and Bridget Condlin (1792–1860) of the parish of Rathkenny in County Meath, who emigrated to St. Lawrence County, New York, with several of their children before 1830.[8]

Step 6. Expand the Cluster

The next step is to further enlarge the cluster by searching for Jere's matches at other testing sites where he has a kit and searching the matches of closely related testers such as Jere's siblings.

I mentioned at the outset that Jere has test kits at *23andMe*, *Family Tree DNA*, *MyHeritage*, and *GEDmatch*. Looking for matches in the "Maureen" cluster at these sites allowed me to obtain segment data for several of the *Ancestry* cluster members and to identify new cluster members.

Jere's kit at *23andMe*. Logging into Jere's *23andMe* kit reveals that "Maureen" has also tested at *23andMe*, where she shares 1.30% (97cM) of DNA with Jere.[9] *23andMe* places Maureen in Jere's family tree as most likely a paternal third cousin descended from Jere's paternal great-great-grandparents (Christopher Mackin and Mary Nevins).[10] Before *23andMe*'s recent removal of shared matches and their chromosome browser, "Maureen's" match to Jere was shown as 97 cM on chromosome 12. Her shared matches with Jere at *23andMe* include two more descendants of Christopher Mackin and Mary Nevins who tested at *23andMe*. These testers are grandchildren of Mary Mackin (1899–1987), who appears in Figure 1. Before it was removed, the *23andMe* chromosome browser showed that these matches share part of the chromosome-12 segment shared by "Maureen" and Jere; they share additional DNA (31 and 33 cM on chromosome 3) with "Maureen."[11]

Jere's kit at *FTDNA*. No cluster members were identified in Jere's match list at *FTDNA*.

Jere's kit at *MyHeritage*. One *Ancestry* cluster member, "Pat," appears in Jere's *MyHeritage* match list. However, Jere's *MyHeritage* match list also includes "David" and "Linda," 46.4 and 12.7 cM matches who share the chromosome-12 segment that Jere and "Maureen" share. Although "David's" *MyHeritage* tree shows only himself and Linda has no tree, the author determined that both are descended from John Murphy and Ann Ruth Clements of St. Lawrence County.[12]

Jere's kit at *GEDmatch*. *Ancestry* cluster members "Pat" and "E.T." also appear in Jere's match list at *GEDmatch*.[13]

Jere's siblings' kits. Returning to *Ancestry* and searching the match lists of Jere's three DNA-tested siblings for cluster members resulted in comparing the amount of DNA shared with cluster members by the four tested Mackin siblings.[14]

Conclusion

My research into the "Maureen" cluster revealed that almost all traceable cluster members descend from John Murphy and Bridget Condlin of Rathkenny, County Mayo, and St. Lawrence County, New York. This suggests that St. Lawrence County, nearby parts of Ontario, County Mayo, and neighboring areas could be fruitful avenues of research into the New York and Irish antecedents of Christopher Mackin and Mary Nevins.

Endnotes

1 Linked trees are trees in which the tester identified themself; they are linked to the tester's DNA kit in the kit settings. Unlinked trees are trees that usually belong to the tester; however, the tester is not identified within the tree. It cannot be assumed that the tester is the person whose pedigree is shown in the tree.

2 Jere has tested autosomal and Y-DNA on Ancestry, *Family Tree DNA (FTDNA)*, *23andMe*, and *LivingDNA*. His test results have been uploaded to *MyHeritage* and *GEDmatch*. Information about Jere's DNA test results is shared with his permission.

3 Author's screenshot, *Ancestry* DNA match between Jere Mackin and "Maureen," 22 October 2023, author's files.

4 Jere and Elizabeth have given permission for their names to be used; names of the other three testers have been anonymized.

5 These lineages are fully documented in the author's private, unsearchable tree "DNA Mackin Nevins Murphy Family Tree" at *Ancestry*. Redacted documentation that does not name either the cluster members, their parents, or other living individuals is available on the Free Downloads page of the author's website (https://www.loismackin.com/free-downloads/).

6 See footnote 5.

7 For the Mackin migration path, see the children's birthplaces in 1850 U.S. census, Dane Co., Wis., pop. sch., Town of Vermont, p. 126, dwell. 760, fam. 802, Christopher Macan household.

8 This couple has been thoroughly researched and documented in Ireland and New York by Charles M. Carletta in his tree "Carletta Family Tree," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/tree/48272275) and in his book *For the Grass of a Cow: Marion Tiernan's Irish ancestors from County Meath to Saint Lawrence County, New York, 1820-1999* (Pukalani, Hawaii: Sunny Home Media, 2020).

9 *23andMe* match, Jere Mackin and "Maureen," author's screenshot dated 16 Nov 2023, author's files. The Shared cM Project 4.0 tool v4 at *DNAPainter* (https://dnapainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4) shows 1.30% as 97 cM.

10 *23andMe* family tree, Jere Mackin, showing "Maureen," author's screenshot dated 16 Nov 2023, author's files.

11 Author's screenshots, author's presentation "An Irish Cluster in New York," 2022, author's files.

12 Author's screenshots, author's presentation "An Irish Cluster in New York," 2022, author's files.

13 Kits that match one or both of the kits [Jere Mackin] and ["Pat"], *GEDmatch*, author's screenshot, 19 Nov 2023, author's files.

14 Amounts of shared DNA and number of shared segments can be viewed in the addenda to this article on the Free Downloads page of the author's website (https://www.loismackin.com/free-downloads/).

Lois Abromitis Mackin, PhD, is a professional genealogist focusing on American and English research. She has three degrees in history and has studied at major genealogical institutes. She writes for Minnesota Genealogist *and is the 2013 winner of the Minnesota Genealogical Society's Founders Award for visionary leadership.*



New Database for Cork Researchers!

Volunteers for Skibbereen Heritage Centre have ammassed more than 57,000 burial records as part of their Cork Graveyard Project. The Centre has also created an interactive map of Cork graveyards designed to work in tandem with the burial database on their website. For more information, see Daire Fitton's 9 May 2023 article on *CorkBeo* at https://www.corkbeo.ie/news/history/cork-genealogy-database-holds-57000-26874923.

Introduction to Repositories

by Kim Gehrman White

The terms "archive" and "repository" may be used interchangeably. An archive/repository typically has as its mission the collection and preservation of original documents. This differs significantly from libraries, which generally collect published sources (books, maps, microfilm, etc.).

As genealogists, we are always searching for original records. Original records are created during or shortly after an event and are based on something other than prior data. Although we recognize that errors in information may exist in an original document, we are more likely to prove a conclusion with an original vs. an authored or derivative record.

In our quest for original works, a repository trip may break down a long-standing brick wall in our research. Plans to visit a repository should begin by ascertaining what hours they are open, what services they provide, and if any fees are expected. Unless visiting a large, national archive, such as here in the USA, you are likely to run into limited hours of operation and services.

We have compiled a short list of repositories and their websites for you to peruse.



A fourth-generation Californian, Kim Gehrman White holds a certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University (OL22) and completed ProGen 55 in 2022. She has an M.A. in International Studies and a B.A. in History and International Relations. Her research is focused on Spain, Portugal, and Ireland. She is the current Associate Editor of The Septs *and perhaps a little obsessed with spreadsheets in her work.*

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National Library of Ireland (NLI)	https://www.nli.ie	Kildare Street Dublin 2, D02 P638 Tele +353 1 603 0200
Representative Church Body Library (RCBL) [Church of Ireland]	https://www.ireland.anglican.org	Braemor Park, Newtown Little, Churchtown Dublin 14, D14 N735 Tele +353 1 492 3979
Registry of Deeds	https://www.prai.ie/registry-of-deeds-services/	King's Inn Henrietta Street Dublin 1, D01 EK82 Tele +353 1 804 8412
Land Valuation Office	https://www.valoff.ie/	Block 2 Irish Life Centre Abbey Street Lower Dublin 1, D01 E9X0 Tele +353 1 817 1180
General Register Office (GRO)	https://www.gov.ie/gro	Research Room Werburgh Street Dublin 8, D08 E277 Tele +353 90 663 2900
Friends Historical Library (Quakers)	https://www.quakers-in-ireland.ie	Quaker House Stocking Lane Dublin 16, D16 V3F8 Tele +353 1 499 8003

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Presbyterian Historical Society Library (PHS)	https://presbyterianhistoryireland.com/collections/library/	Assembly Buildings Fisherwick Place Belfast, BT1 6DW Tele +44 028 9041 7299
North of Ireland Family History Society (NIFHS)	https://www.nifhs.org	Valley Business Centre Unit C4 67 Church Road Newtownabbey Co. Antrim, BT36 7LS
General Register Office Northern Ireland (GRONI)	https://www.nidirect.gov.uk	NISRA Colby House Stranmillis Court Belfast, BT9 5RR Tele +44 300 200 7890
Registry of Deeds: Department of Finance (LPS) [Pre-1990 records]	https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/lps-offices	Land & Property Services (LPS) Lanyon Plaza 7 Lanyon Place Belfast, BT1 3LP Tele +44 0300 200 7801
Queen's University, Belfast [formerly known as Queen's College]	https://www.qub.ac.uk/specialcollections	The McClay Library 10 College Park Belfast, BT7 1LP Tele +44 028 9097 6333
Methodist Historical Society of Ireland	https://www.methodisthistoryireland.org	Edgehill House 9 Lennoxvale Belfast, BT9 5BY Tele +44 028 9068 6934

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Saturday, February 24 | ***Mapping Ireland's Records*** | by John Grenham

Prominent scholar John Grenham returns to explore ways to visualize Irish locations in your record searching: the households of your surnames in Catholic records, Griffith's Valuation, Irish census records, and local vital records. Learn how these records can help with genealogical and local history research through John's vivid examples of how local some names are and how impossibly widespread others can be. A favorite speaker, John will help us flesh out Irish families using maps to help pinpoint particular surnames and records.

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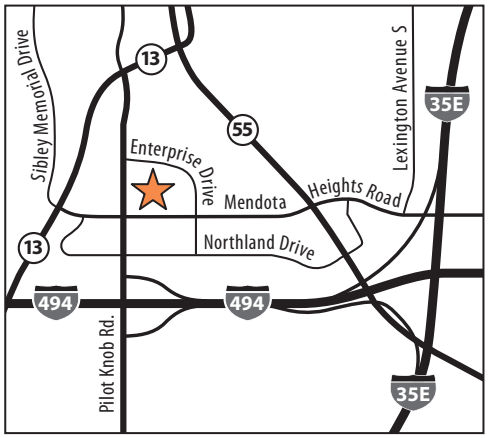
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The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2024.

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of The Septs is built around a core theme. Research articles on the theme should be 1500-2500 words in length and include no more than 2-4 images. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g., family stories submitted by IGSI members and others. Articles unrelated to the theme should be 750-1500 words.

If you wish to write on theme or share case studies, family research, or articles on general Irish culture and history and genealogy resources, please contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadlines to ensure your article is considered for the proper issue.

Contributions and ideas are welcome. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the editorial staff.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2024 | July | Penal Colonies & Criminal Law

Explore "black sheep" ancestors in Australian, New Zealand, and Caribbean penal colonies, as well as court proceedings that include criminal and settlement records.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2024.

2024 | October | Hidden Children

Delve into lost ancestors hidden by adoption, orphan trains, and poorhouses. How do you find them? Resources for locating adoptees, orphans, the indigent, etc. encouraged, as is DNA exploration.
Deadline for articles: August 15, 2024.

2025 | January | Using Social Media for Genealogical Research

Learn how to leverage social media such as Facebook descendant groups to advance your genealogical knowledge and to connect with other researchers and/or family members.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2024.

2025 | April | Ulster Province

Researching in Northern Ireland's six counties of Antrim, Armagh, Derry (Londonderry), Down, Fermanagh, and Tyrone, and Republic of Ireland counties Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan. Ulster locals are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2025.

Cover Photo: *Sunset at Dunguaire Castle.*
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Thank You to Our Volunteers, Donors, and Members!

by Walt Rothwell & Donna Jones

April is National Volunteer Month, and is the month we recognize the importance and significance of our volunteers' contributions. IGSI is an all-volunteer organization, so our success is the result of the dedicated people who generously donate their time and talents. We want to give a huge shout-out to this wonderful group of people who make IGSI such a special community.

The reward part of volunteering is the satisfaction that comes from being on a team that shares a love of Irish culture and heritage, and family history. Volunteering also provides an opportunity to learn from others. If you have any time or interest in volunteering, we would like to discuss how you can help IGSI. Please contact us at volunteers@irishgenealogical.org. We look forward to continue growing our community!

Thank you especially to last year's generous donors. These contributions have enabled us to begin implementing two software upgrades.

We want IGSI members and friends to know that changes are forthcoming in our webinar and event registration process. As we introduce hybrid webinars this year, beginning with our May and June events, new options are required for the registration process. These exciting new events will allow IGSI to have more engagement with virtual audiences AND offer the option of attending programs live in Minnesota. We have chosen to give in-person registrants the option of purchasing a box lunch when they register. A lunchtime social hour will allow attendees to mingle and learn more about the Library and its Irish collection.

To meet those goals, we have created a fresh look for webinar registration process, with more options. Pricing for registration will not change, nor will the use of the discount codes members have come to expect. These codes will be provided to members via email and the members-only portion of IGSI's website. As you experience the new "look and feel" of registering, we welcome your feedback so IGSI can fine-tune this process to make it smoother and more effective.

The IGSI Board has given us the green-light to pursue enhancements to our website. Because our current website is only optimized for desktop computers, the main improvement will be a "responsive" website that offers a better experience for visitors using mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets, to address website traffic from mobile users.

IGSI's Web Editor, Mary Wickersham, is leading the team building a new website. This group began meeting in January, and started working on the new platform. As this issue goes to press, we anticipate moving slowly as we need the website vendor to build further tools to reach our goal of creating an excellent website.

In other news, we are very excited to announce that Peggy Peters will now be serving as Library Co-Chair with Ann Eccles. Welcome, Peggy!

Finally, thank you to our members. Forty-five years ago, an Irish special-interest group was formed, eventually becoming the Irish Genealogical Society International. We are so fortunate that our society continues to thrive.



After retiring from Oxford University Press, Donna Jones finally has more time to research her heritage and ancestry. She is passionate about genealogy education and is a member of the IGSI Education committee and the Board of Directors. IGSI provides her the opportunity to learn more about Irish research as she continues to search for where in Ireland her great, great-grandparents lived.



Walt Rothwell is an IGSI board member and co-chair of the Education Committee. He is also affiliated with the Yankee Genealogical Society and the Canadian Interest Group of the Minnesota Genealogical Society. He is endlessly researching family lines across North American, Ireland, and England.

New Beginnings

by Mary Stuart

"The world is full of magic things, patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper." ~ William Butler Yeats

While impending Spring attempts to vanquish the cold solitude of winter (here in the mid-Atlantic, at least), I am enjoying the sounds of wind rustling through the trees and birds chirping outside my open window. I hope that by the time you read this, friendlier weather will have reached you wherever you may be.

As we all look forward to warmer days and the glorious blossoming of a new season, we here at *The Septs* are likewise experiencing new growth. We are excited to welcome Rita McNabb, a former member of our proofreading staff, to the role of Managing Co-Editor! Rita joins Gigi Hickey as Mary Wickersham transitions from her former post to focus on leading the team building IGSI's new website. Rita received her Accounting degree from Wright State University and worked as a CPA with the IRS for thirty-seven years. Now retired, she completed the Boston University Genealogical Principles course in July 2020. Rita's grandparents emigrated from Ireland in the early 1900s. As you may have read in our January issue, she recently took advantage of this connection to procure Irish dual citizenship and an Irish passport. Rita is incredibly proud that her research helped her husband Jim become a member of the Sons of the American Revolution, as well as the Society of Mayflower Descendants, just this past December!

We are also thrilled to introduce two new members of our proofreading team, Jane Halloran Ryan and Janelle Asselin. Jane is an expat American living in County Clare, where she puts her thirty years of experience to good use while working as a genealogy and family history researcher. She received her bachelor's degree in accounting from Fairfield University and studied law in Dublin. A qualified (non-practicing) Irish solicitor, Jane is a doctoral candidate in History at the University of Limerick. She was recently awarded the Hibernian Research Award Grant from the Cushwa Center at the University of Notre Dame. Jane has also written for *The Septs* in the past; we hope she will share her invaluable insights and research with us again soon.

Janelle is an award-winning writer and editor who has been professionally editing while investigating her family tree as a hobby for close to twenty years. She won the Pace University Award for Excellence in the Study of Publishing, has broken stories of behind-the-scenes misconduct in the comics industry as a journalist, and has edited everything from engineering briefs to comics for children. With a grandmother named Eileen O'Rourke, it was impossible Janelle wouldn't be bitten by a desire to learn more about her Irish roots; this quest brought her into the IGSI family.

Welcome, Jane and Janelle! We're delighted you've joined us!

This issue includes articles on Roscommon ancestors by Patricia B. Coleman and Robert Flanagan Stieglitz and on Mayo ancestors by Tom Mahoney. Lois Mackin shows us how to navigate treeless matches, while Mary Kircher Roddy, CG, explains how FAN Club research helped her identify immigrant origins in Counties Mayo and Sligo. Lastly, Gabrielle Ní Mheachair provides another look at Irish folklore to help provide context to the lives of our ancestors.

Even as we finalize this issue, The Septs team is already working hard to plan our July issue on Penal Colonies and Criminal Law. We are excited to share some new authors with you. We have also been considering your many thoughtful content suggestions from October's Readership Survey and deciding how best to incorporate them into future issues so that we may better serve our readership.

We here at *The Septs* wish you all a Happy Spring! *Earrach Sona*!

Mary Stuart serves as Editor of The Septs *and on IGSI's Board of Directors. A native Hoosier and former university writing teacher with an MA in English, Mary is now a professional genealogist whose specialties include military repatriation, Indiana research, and DNA. Her Irish ancestors hail largely from Donegal/Northern Ireland. Mary is working on her BCG certification portfolio and pursuing an AFA in Glass Arts. In her non-existent spare time, she enjoys singing, sewing, reading, and blowing glass.*



Using FANs to Blow a Family Home

by Mary Kircher Roddy, CG

Too often, the most specific origin data for Irish ancestors is that they came from … Ireland. While it's not a large country, more specific detail is necessary to have any hope of finding records and previous generations. When the data on an ancestor is too sparse to make headway, look to the FAN club — Family and Friends, Associates, and Neighbors — to get him home.

Immigrant Bartley Roddy left few records in Ohio to document his origins. Four census records list simply "Ireland" as a birthplace. In 1860, "Bartlett" Roddy, age 27, was enumerated in a household with Patrick Roddy, 27, and Catherine Roddy, 24.[1] In 1870, Bartley, age 23, lived with his probable wife, Alice, age 21, and a seven-month-old child, William. Though Bartley's age is inconsistent with the 1860 census, Patrick and Catherine's presence in the next household suggests this is the same Bartley.[2] By 1880, Bartley, aged 42, and his growing family had moved to South Charleston in adjacent Clark County, where he worked as a "solone" [saloon] keeper.[3] In 1900, the family continued their life there. Bartley, born March 1836, reported immigrating in 1859.[4]

Bartley died on 11 January 1904 in South Charleston, aged 69 years, 1 month, and 13 days. His parents were Andrew "Rody" and Mary Morrison, and his birthplace was simply "Ireland." The informant was his wife.[5] His Catholic burial record helpfully provided a county of birth — Mayo.[6] Both Bartley's civil marriage record and his church record provide no information about the couple's parents or birth locations.[7] Given Co. Mayo's large area, boundary changes between Counties Mayo, Sligo, Galway, and Roscommon in 1899,[8] and a scarcity of records in the first half of the 19th century, particularly in the west of Ireland, a county is not enough information to locate Bartley before he came to America.

Bartley Roddy's FAN Club

Bartley's FAN club may help to narrow the area to be searched. His immediate neighbors with the Roddy surname in Madison County, Ohio, in 1860 and 1870 provide a start to a FAN club. In 1860, two Roddy households were enumerated in Stokes Township in Madison County – Patrick, Catharine, and Bartlett in one household, followed immediately by Michael, age 65, Bridget, 55, Michael, 23, and Catharine, 17.[9] The combination suggests two generations, parents Michael and Bridget, and children Patrick, Michael, and Catharine. A couple is not likely to name two daughters Catherine; the Catherine listed with Patrick is likely his wife.

Bartley's wife named his father, Andrew, on his death record. Alice lived two households away from Michael and Bridget in 1870, and would have known if they were Bartley's parents, suggesting another relationship — perhaps Michael was Bartley's uncle.

By 1870, Bartley was married, as were Michael and Bridget Roddy's children. Bridget Roddy's 1890 obituary names five children: Patrick, Michael, Mrs. Martin Murray, Mrs. James Sweeney, and Mrs. John Murphy. Bartley is not included in the obituary.[10] Family members occupied neighboring dwellings in Madison County (adults are born in Ireland and children in Ohio):

492. John Murphy, 28; Catherine, 25; Mary, 1.

493. Bartley Roddy, 23; Alice, 21; William, 7/12. Ellen Gorman, 5; Dan Mathew, 40.

494. Patrick Roddy, 38; Catharine, 30; Margaret, 9; Thomas, 6; William, 5; Michael, 2; Catharine, 9/12.

495. Michael Roddy, 77; Bridget, 65.

496. Anthony Foody, 33; Catharine, 32; six children, ages 9 to 4/12. (More discussion below.)

497. Michael Roddy, 30; Annie, 25; John, 8; Michael, 6; Maggie, 5; Patrick, 2.

498. Martin Murry, 46; Bridget, 38; Michael, 14; John, 13; Mary, 10; Kate, 8; Margaret, 4; Martin, 2.[11]

Four of Michael and Bridget's five children are neighbors: Mrs. John (Catharine) Murphy, Patrick, Michael, and Mrs. Martin (Bridget) "Murry." Mrs. James (Mary) Sweeney lived in South Charleston in 1860 and 1870.[12]

Michael Roddy's family members' biographical details provide some Irish location information:

- Bridget Roddy's 1890 obituary states she was born in Co. Sligo in February 1801.[13]
- Michael S. Murray, the oldest son of Bridget (Roddy) Murray, said Bridget was born in Co. Mayo, near the town of Ballina.[14]

The Local Government (Ireland) Act 1898 transferred the Co. Sligo portion of the civil parish of Kilmoremoy, along with portions of the civil parish of Castleconnor to Co. Mayo.[15] These parishes are to the east and northeast of Ballina. It is possible that the area where Bridget was born is now part of Co. Mayo. Regardless, the details significantly sharpen the focus on an area to search for Bartley's origins.

1870 Neighbor, Anthony Foody

Anthony Foody's appearance in the middle of "Roddy Town" is not coincidental. Conceivably he was kin or a neighbor of the Roddys in Ireland, and he chose to live near familiar people in America.

Records of his family provide a birthdate, approximate marriage date, maiden name for his wife, and origin locations for both.

- Anthony Foody died on 17 January 1901 at age 64 years, 9 months, and 14 days, calculating to a birthdate of 3 April 1836.[16]
- In 1900, Anthony and Catherine had been married for 41 years. They both reported immigration in 1859.[17]
- Son John Foody's death certificate names parents Anthony Foody and Katharine Murphy.[18]
- Daughter Sarah Jane Foody's birth record names the same parents.[19]
- Son Anthony Foody's death record names the same parents and identifies their births in Co. Mayo.[20]

Anthony Foody, of Emlymoran, and Catherine Murphy of Dooneen married on 12 February 1859 in Castleconnor parish. Parents are not named. Witnesses were Michael Foody and Mary Timblin.[21] Baptism records are extant for Castleconnor parish beginning in April 1835. No baptism record was found for Anthony Foody in April or May of 1835, 1836, nor 1837.[22]

Anthony's reported immigration year matched Bartley's. Passengers with similar names and the correct ages arrived in New York aboard the *Tornado* on 6 Jun 1859. Passengers 262 and 263 Bartley Ruddy and Antony Foody, both apparently hailed from England.[23] Except for the first and last pages, which show some variation in nationality, the remaining ten pages of the manifest all show "England" written once at the top of the page, with ditto marks down the entire column, despite a multitude of Irish surnames including Haggerty, Brady, Quinn, Joyce, and others. The place of origin on the manifest is likely incorrect. The absence of Anthony's new bride is also a concern. However, passengers traveling together were not necessarily listed together on a passenger manifest. A Catherine Murphy, age 20, is listed as passenger number 153.[24] It is possible that Anthony Foody's wife was listed under her maiden name. Or she may have traveled after Anthony had settled in America.

Anthony has not been located in 1860 in Ohio.[25] The Foodys may not have immediately migrated to Ohio. They were in Ohio by 5 July 1861 when Thomas James Foody was born.[26]

1860 Neighbor, Michael Donigan

While Anthony Foody lived in the middle of "Roddy Town" in 1870, in 1860, Irish-born Michael Donigan was enumerated immediately before Patrick Roddy. Included in Michael's household were Honor, 37 and Patrick, 14, both born in Ireland; Andrew, 10, and Edward, 9, both born in New York; and Ohio-born Mary A., 7, and Michael, 5.[27] These details suggest a useful timeline for the family:

- Michael and Honor likely married about 1845
- Patrick was born about 1846
- The family immigrated between 1847 and 1850, settling somewhere in New York
- Andrew was born about 1849–1850, and Edward about 1850–1851
- The family migrated to Ohio before about 1853.

A likely candidate for this family lived in Ontario County, New York, in 1850.[28] By 1870, they lived in Caldwell County, Missouri; in 1880, they were in Neosho County, Kansas.[29] Table 1 shows details for the household members.

Table 1. Michael Dunigan Family 1850–1880, with ages and birthplaces

1850[a]	1860[b]	1870[c]	1880[d]
Michael, 30, Ireland	Michael, 37, Ireland	Michael, 48, Ireland	Michael, 57, Ireland
Honora, 27, Ireland	Honor, 37, Ireland	Honor, 48, Ireland	Honore, 57, Ireland
Patsy, 3, Ireland	Patrick, 14, Ireland	Patrick, 24, Ireland	
Andrew, 1, NY	Andrew, 10, NY	Andrew, 20, NY	
	Edward, 9, NY	Edward, 19, NY	
	Mary A., 7, OH	Mary, 17, OH	
		Michael, 15, OH	
		Mannus, 7, OH	Maurice, 16, OH

[a] 1850 US census, Ontario Co., NY, pop. sch., Hopewell, p. 28 (penned), dwell./fam. 194, Michael Dunigan; NARA microfilm M432, roll 571.

[b] 1860 US census, Madison Co., Ohio, pop. sch., Stokes Twp., p. 157 (penned), dwell. 1031, fam. 1081, Michael Donigan household; NARA microfilm M653, roll 1004.

[c] 1870, US census, Caldwell Co., Mo., pop. sch., Kingston Twp., p. 16 (penned), dwell./fam. 128, Michael Dunigan household; NARA microfilm M593, roll 763.

[d] 1880 US census, Neosho County, Ks., pop. sch., Osage Mission, p. 6 (penned), dwell. 54, fam. 55, Michael Dunakin; NARA microfilm publication T9, roll 391.

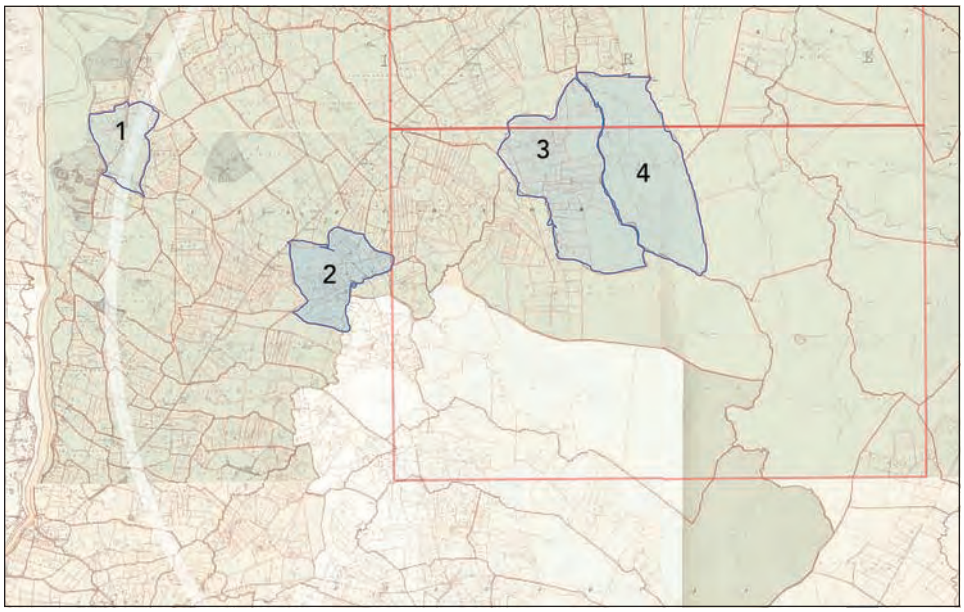


Figure 1. Map of selected townlands in Castleconnor and Kilglass parishes in Co. Sligo
1 - Dooneen, Castleconnor; 2 - Emlymoran, Castleconnor; 3 - Carns, Castleconnor; 4 - Tawnalaghta, Kilglass

The unusual name of the youngest son is a helpful marker when researching this Dunigan family. Multiple *Ancestry* family trees provide Burke as Honora's birth surname.[30] "Burke" is not an uncommon name, but it is possible there is a familial relationship with Michael Roddy's wife, Bridget Burke.

Honora's maiden name, an approximate marriage date, and a possible Co. Mayo or Co. Sligo connection between the Roddys and the Dunigans provided sufficient data to search Catholic parish registers in Ireland. "Michl Dunigan" of Carns and "Honoria Bourk" married in Castleconnor parish on 30 January 1845.[31] Their son Patrick was baptized on 1 February 1846 in Kilglass parish. The family lived in Tawnalaghta, Kilglass parish, Co. Sligo.[32]

Conclusion

Records in the West of Ireland are scarce, particularly in the first half of the 19th century. It may be impossible to find baptismal records in Ireland for Bartley or the children of Michael and Bridget (Burke) Roddy. But by focusing on their Irish-born Ohio neighbors, an approximate area encompassing two or three parishes on the border of Mayo and Sligo comes forward as a strong possibility for the birthplaces of Bartley Roddy and his probable cousins. As more records become available, Roddy researchers can focus their searches on the specific parishes unearthed using FAN club research, rather than thirty-two or even one county.

Endnotes

1 1860 US census, Madison Co., Ohio, population schedule, Stokes Twp., p. 157 (penned), dwelling 1032, family 1082, Patrick Roddy household; microfilm publication M653, roll 1004; National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C.

2 1870 US census, Madison Co., Ohio, pop. sch., Union Twp. p. 68, dwell. 493, fam. 514, Bartley Roddy household; NARA microfilm M593, roll 1238. Patrick Roddy is in dwelling 494.

3 1880 US census, Clark Co., Ohio, pop. sch., South Charleston, enumeration district (ED) 38, p. 32D, dwell. 282, fam. 289, Bartley Roddey household; NARA microfilm T9, roll 999.

4 1900 US census, Clark Co., Ohio, pop. sch., South Charleston, ED 7, p. 7B, dwell. 145, fam. 151 Bartley Roddy household; NARA microfilm T623, roll 1246.

5 Clark Co., Ohio, Probate Court, record of deaths, 2:394–95, Barkley Rody (1904); *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org), Image Group Number (DGS) 4016797, image 394.

6 "Cincinnati Roman Catholic Burials," *FindmyPast*, Archdiocese of Cincinnati, St. Charles Borromeo, South Charleston, Clark, Ohio.

7 Madison Co., Ohio, Probate Court, marriage record, 2:9, Roddy-Barrett, 23 Jan 1869; *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org), Image Group Number (DGS) 4016839, image 35. Also, Roddy-Barrett marriage certificate (1869 marriage); issued 2024, St. Patrick's Catholic Church. London, Ohio; privately held by author.

8 "Local Government (Ireland) Act 1898," *Wikipedia*, (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_Government_(Ireland)_Act_1898#County_and_county_borough_boundaries) 17 Nov 2023, 9:57.

9 1860 US census, Madison Co., Ohio, pop. sch., Stokes Twp., p. 157 (penned), dwell. 1032, fam. 1082, Patrick Roddy household; NARA microfilm M653, roll 1004. Also, dwell. 1033, fam. 1083, Michael Roddy household.

10 "The Death Record," *Madison County Democrat* (London, Ohio), 27 Aug 1890, p. 1.

11 1870 US census, Madison Co., Ohio, pop. sch., Union Twp., p. 68–69 (penned),

dwell. 492–498, various households; NARA microfilm M593, roll 1238.

12 1860 US census, Clark Co., Ohio, pop. sch., South Charleston, p. 48 (penned), dwell 339, fam. 350, James Sweeney household; NARA microfilm M653, roll 943. Also, 1870 US census, Clark Co., Ohio, pop. sch., South Charleston, p. 13 (penned), dwell. 98, fam. 104, James Swaney household; NARA microfilm M593, roll 1180.

13 "The Death Record," 27 Aug 1890.

14 Chester E. Bryan, ed., *History of Madison County* (Indianapolis: H. F. Bowen & Co., 1915), p. 536.

15 "Kilmacteige-Kilmactigue Parish Genealogy – South Sligo, Ireland," (https://kilmacteige.com/local-government-act-1898-castleconnor/), accessed 9 Dec 2023.

16 Madison Co., Ohio, Probate Court, general index to death, v. 2, unpaginated, surname "F," given name "A," no. 166, Anthony Foody; *FamilySearch*, DGS 4016807, image 431.

17 1900 US census, Madison Co., Ohio, pop. sch., Union Twp., ED 69, p. 191A, dwell. 77, fam. 87, Anthony Foody; NARA microfilm T623, roll 1299.

18 Ohio, Department of Health, death certificate, 68507 (1937), John Foody; *FamilySearch*, DGS 4057863, image 2902.

19 Madison Co., Ohio, Probate Court, birth record, 1:81, no. 3551, Sarah Jane Foody; FamilySearch, DGS 4016806, image 87.

20 "Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths, 1916–1947," Anthony Foody, 13 Jul 1940; *FamilySearch*, (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NQGQ-Q7D).

21 Castleconnor Parish, County Sligo, Ireland, Marriages, Feb 1859, Foody-Murphy; National Library of Ireland Catholic Parish registers, microfilm 04230/09.

22 Catholic parish registers begin at the National Library of Ireland in Oct 1854. See *Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI*, Castleconnor (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/0743). However, *Ancestry*'s collection "Ireland, Select Catholic Birth and Baptism Registers, 1763–1917" (www.ancestry.com/search/collections/6068) has Castleconnor baptisms beginning in April 1835. *Ancestry*'s collection was searched page-by-page for the relevant time frame and no baptism was found for Anthony Foody, but other Foodys were found in the records.

23 Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, 1820-1897, microfilm publication M237 (NARA, 1962), roll 192 manifest, Ship *Tornado*, 6 Jun 1850, page not numbered, lines 262–63, Bartley Ruddy and Antony Foody; *FamilySearch*, 4679860, image 443.

24 Ibid., line 153.

25 Search 1860 US census in Ohio for given name Ant*, surname F*d*y, birthplace "Ireland," and various combinations.

26 "California Death Index, 1940-1997," Thomas James Foody, 6 May 1948; *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5180/).

27 1860 US census, Madison Co., Ohio, pop. sch., Stokes Twp., p. 157 (penned), dwell. 1031, fam. 1081, Michael Donigan household; NARA microfilm M653, roll 1004.

28 1850 US census, Ontario Co., NY, pop. sch., Hopewell, p. 28 (penned), dwell./fam. 194, Michael Dunigan; NARA microfilm M432, roll 571.

29 1870, US census, Caldwell Co., Mo., pop. sch., Kingston Twp., p. 16 (penned), dwell./fam. 128, Michael Dunigan household; NARA microfilm M593, roll 763. Also, 1880 US census, Neosho County, Ks., pop. sch., Osage Mission, p. 6 (penned), dwell. 54, fam. 55, Michael Dunakin; NARA microfilm publication T9, roll 391.

30 For example, see *Ancestry*, Gosper Family Tree (www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/158271910/person/162265792264/facts).

31 "Ireland, Select Catholic Marriage Registers, 1778-1942," *Ancestry* > Sligo > Castleconnor > 1831-1855 > image 19 of 30; citing Celtic Catholic Registers, E-Celtic, Ltd., Dublin.

32 Kilglass Parish, County Sligo, Ireland, Baptisms, 1 Feb 1846, Patrick Donegan; National Library of Ireland Catholic Parish registers, microfilm 04229/11.

Mary Kircher Roddy, CG, is a genealogical researcher, writer, speaker, and educator. She served as treasurer of the Association of Professional Genealogists and is a trustee of the Board for Certification of Genealogists. She is co-editor of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly. *She is one of the founders of the Applied Genealogy Institute (https://appliedgen.institute), where she teaches about Irish research, DNA, and finding living people. Mary's personal research focuses on her Irish and German roots.*



Locating Thomas Byrnes's Home in County Roscommon with DNA Matches in the Absence of Historical Records

by Patricia B. Coleman, PhD

In 1859, Thomas Byrnes arrived in New York on the ship *Cultivator*. The manifest lists twenty-four people from Roscommon.[1] Besides Thomas, none of them had surnames of any variation of Byrnes or Shannon, Thomas's mother's maiden name.[2] The personal information listed for Thomas on the ship's manifest included that he was twenty years old and from Roscommon.[3] This corroborated with family information from a book about the descendants of William Fenton, published in 1955. Thomas married William's granddaughter, Bridget.[4] The Fenton family lived in County Limerick. Bridget Fenton and her parents followed in the steps of William Fenton and his children, immigrating to Petersburg, Virginia, when she was a child.

The marriage record for Bridget and Thomas names Patrick and Hanora as Thomas's parents.[5] A targeted search for Thomas in Catholic baptismal records, based on his parents' names, birth counties in Ireland, and approximate birth years, may yield results. Unfortunately, no record has been found to date.[6] Where in County Roscommon was Thomas born?

Research into Roscommon showed that many Catholic parishes' baptismal records from around 1839 have not survived (see Table 1 for more information).[7] Further research showed that Roscommon's thirteen Catholic parishes correspond to parts of its twenty-nine Civil Parishes.[8] Thomas likely lived in one of these areas.

Because Griffith's Valuation for Roscommon was held in 1858, the year before Thomas emigrated, it's possible his father Patrick was listed in the Valuation. A search for Patrick Byrnes, including the spelling variations "Burns," "Byrne," and "Beirne" (the most common variant in Roscommon), uncovered 116 Patrick Beirnes.[9] Of these, thirty-two resided in thirteen of the civil parishes corresponding to Catholic parishes in which baptismal records did not survive (see Table 1). If Patrick were alive in 1858, one of these parishes would likely be where Thomas had lived when he was a child (see Figure 1).

Table 1. Civil Parishes Where Baptismal Records Did Not Survive Around 1840 and where Patrick Beirnes Were Listed in 1858 Griffith's Valuation.

Catholic Parish	Civil Parishes	Griffith's Valuation
Cootehall	Ardcam	2
Ogulla (Tulsk)	Baslick	2
Tarmonbarry	Bumlin	
Castlemore	Castlemore	
Oran	Drumatemple	
Dysart	Dysart	1
Ballinameen	Estersnow	4
Clontuskert	Kilbride	
Ballinameen	Kilcolagh	7
Castlemore	Kilcolman	2
Castlemore	Kilcolman (Costello)	
Ogulla (Tulsk)	Kilcooley	
Frenchpark (Belegagar)	Kilcorkey	2
Clontuskert	Kilgefin	
Kilglass	Kilglass	4
Knockcroghery (KIllinvoy)	Killnvoy	3
Ogulla (Tulsk)	Killukin (Roscommon)	1
Knockcroghery (KIllinvoy)	Kilmeane	1
Ballinameen	Kilnamanagh	2
Moore	Moore	
Ogulla (Tulsk)	Ogulla	
Oran	Oran	
Knockcroghery (KIllinvoy)	Rahara	
Knockcroghery (KIllinvoy)	St. John	
Dysart	Taghboy	1
Taughmaconnell	Taughmaconnell	
Kilglass	Termonbarry	
Tarminbarry	Termonbarry	
Dysart	Tisrara	
Cootehall	Tumna	

"Results for Patrick Beirne," *FindmyPast* (https://www.findmypast.com/). Results from a search of each civil parish associated with no surviving baptismal records from 1839.

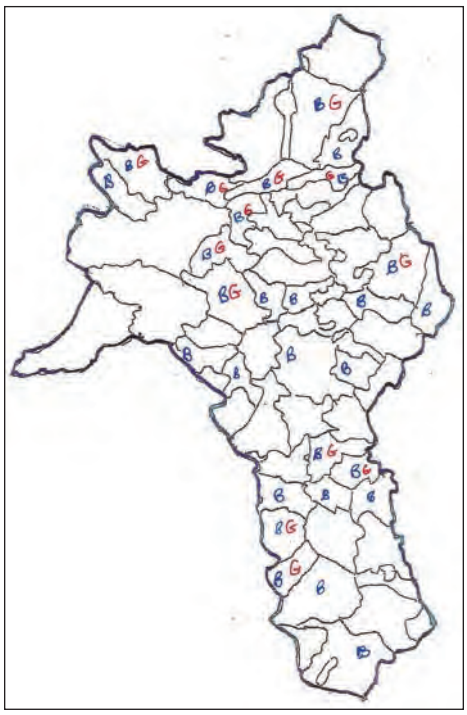


Figure 1. Roscommon civil parishes where Catholic baptismal records did not survive (marked with blue 'B'), and where Patrick Beirne was found in Griffith's Valuation (marked with red 'G')

DNA Matches

Few records exist for Thomas Byrnes because early census records were lost in the 1922 Four Courts fire and civil registration did not start until 1864 — so I turned to DNA.[10] My second cousin, Patricia Harris Anthony (Trish),[11] and I tested at *Ancestry* and *23andMe* then uploaded our raw DNA data to *MyHeritage*, *Family Tree DNA* (FTDNA), and *GEDmatch*. Trish and I share 387 cM of DNA on seventeen segments. Our most recent common ancestors (MRCA) are our great-grandparents, Thomas Byrnes and Bridget Fenton.

Byrnes Family

Thomas and Bridget had six children.[12] Their oldest, Johanna, died in infancy. Sadly, of Thomas's and Bridget's six children, only Nora, Mary, and Julia survived, married, and had families. Mary was Trish's grandmother, and Nora was mine. Although Julia has two surviving grandchildren, one has not replied to messages and the other was disinterested in DNA testing. Trish and I are both only children, and neither of us has any first cousins. We do not know if Thomas Byrnes had any siblings. If he had any, their great-grandchildren would be our third cousins. Likewise, Thomas's parents' great-great-grandchildren would be our fourth cousins.

The closest any DNA matches Trish and I share would likely be third cousins, though probably even more distant. Finding documentation to identify the MRCA may not be possible, especially for ancestors who lived in Ireland. However, determining where our DNA matches' ancestors lived might provide clues as to where our own ancestors lived.

MyHeritage

Trish and I have the largest number of shared matches on *MyHeritage*, with the closest estimated to be third or fourth cousins. *MyHeritage* AutoClusters collects about one hundred matches, starting with 400 cM, and groups them to show how the different matches are connected to each other. We used the AutoClusters tool on my DNA matches.[13]

Trish is in a cluster with five other matches: "Ed," "Keith," "Dan," "Mark," and "Marge."[14] Communicating with these matches provided additional information. "Ed's" surname is Burns. His ancestors lived in County Roscommon, but he doesn't know where. "Keith" and "Dan" only know of ancestors who lived in England. "Mark" shared his Irish grandparents' names with us, but searching civil registration databases and *RootsIreland* for their marriage records provided no further information.[15]

"Marge," however, has a tree on *MyHeritage*.[16] Her tree's paternal lines extend back to great-grandparents and second great-grandparents. Her maternal lines end with her grandparents, James Grogan, born about 1878, and Anne Kenny, born about 1880. James and Anne lived in County Mayo, which is just west of County Roscommon.[17]

Building and Verifying a Family Tree

When an online tree provides a couple's names, it is usually best to start searching for their marriage record. Civil Registration for Catholic marriages in Ireland began in 1864.[18] Based on the approximate birth dates in "Marge's" tree, we searched for Irish marriage records between 1900 and 1905. Of the thirty-one "Ann Kenny" marriage results, only the twelve found in County Mayo registration districts needed to be searched.[19] James Grogan married Ann Kenny on 21 September 1903 in the Swinford registration district. The marriage record names Austin Grogan as James's father and Michael Kenny (deceased) as Anne's father. This allowed extending the tree by a generation for their fathers. Additionally, the record included where each lived, that James was a postmaster, that both were of "full age," (meaning they were at least twenty-one years old), and that they were married at the Aghamore Catholic church.[20]

Finding an ancestor's registration district can be key because it narrows your search to only that district or those districts nearby. Knowing the father's name also

helps to distinguish between people of the same name.

Searching for James Grogan's 1875-1885 civil birth record in Swinford produced three results. James, son of Austin, was born 22 February 1877. His mother was Catherine McNulty.[21] Six results for females named Anne Kenny, born 1875-1885, yielded Anne, daughter of Michael, who was born 20 October 1881. Her mother was Mary Lyons.[22]

Austin Grogan married Catherine McNulty on 18 March 1876 at the Kilmovee Catholic Church. Austin's father was John Grogan and Catherine's father was James McNulty.[23] Kilmovee Catholic marriage records survive from 1824 through 1880; however, baptismal records only survive from 1854.[24] Since the marriage record says Catherine was of full age, she could have been born in 1855, but no baptismal record was found. Michael Kenny married Mary Lyons on 6 February 1868 at Aghamore Catholic Church. Michael's father was also Michael, and Mary's father was Pat[rick] Lyons.[25] Only Aghamore Catholic Church's marriage records from 1864 through 1880 have survived.

Griffith's Valuation of property from 1847-1864 serves as a useful resource prior to civil registration. Griffith's Valuation in this part of County Mayo occurred in 1856.[26] In it, James Grogan was living in Mountaincommon, Aghamore; John McNulty was living in Urlaur, Kilmovee; and Michael Kenny was living in Carrowneden, Aghamore. Three men named "Patrick Lyons" were living in Aghamore; two resided in Ballina Costello, and the third resided in Corhawnagh. Using these same resources, we verified "Marge's" paternal lines. While we don't know of any family members with these surnames, their locations in County Mayo gave us hints about where Thomas

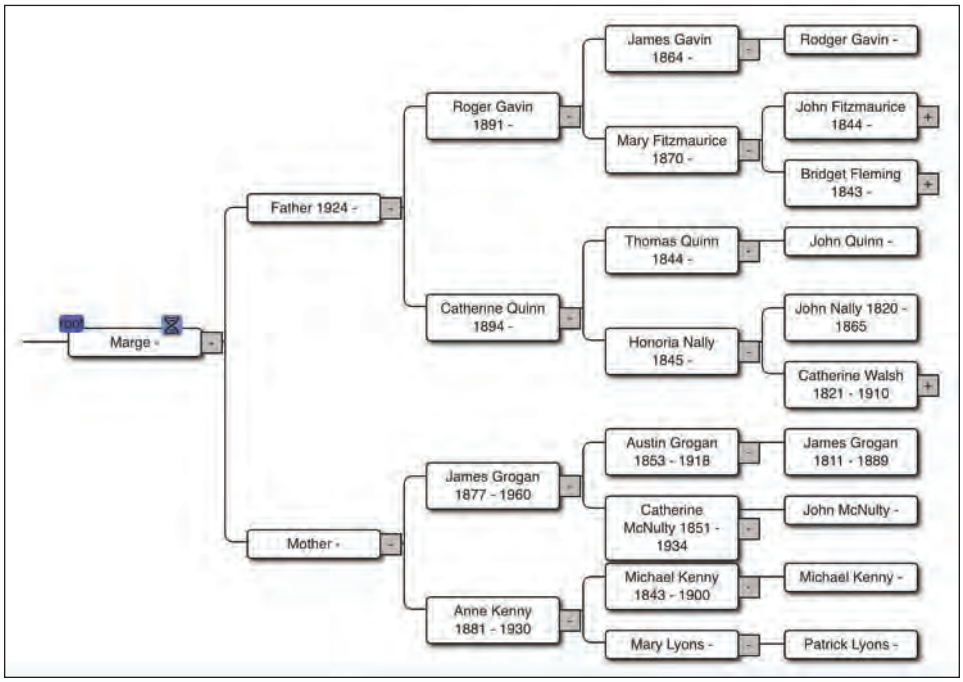


Figure 2. "Marge's" Constructed Family Tree (based on verified records)

lived. Aghamore and Kilmovee civil parishes both border County Roscommon. Now, we can build out the maternal lines of "Marge's" trees (see Figure 2).

Looking back at cluster and DNA connections, we find that "Marge" triangulates with "Mark," "Keith," Trish, and me in one DNA segment on Chromosome 15. Sharing 29 cM with Trish and me, "Marge" is a fourth or more-distant cousin.[27] The MRCA for fourth cousins is third great-grandparents. We know only the names of our second great-grandparents, Patrick and Hanora; we have yet to find any records for them in Ireland. Since Bridget's family lived in County Limerick, over 200 km (125 miles) from County Roscommon, we can assign the segment of DNA on Chromosome 15 to a distant ancestor on Thomas's side of our family, who lived in County Mayo or Roscommon.

Ancestry

"Marge" also tested at *Ancestry*, where she has several shared matches with Trish and me. After copying all the matches I share with Trish into a spreadsheet and saving it as a CSV file, we then copied all our matches' other shared matches into a second spreadsheet, saving it as a shared match file. We used these two files to run an AutoCluster at *Genetic Affairs*.[28]

"Marge" is in a cluster with six others, only one of whom, "Mitch," has a tree. Employing the same process used to build and verify "Marge's" tree, we extended "Mitch's" family tree back to Griffith's Valuation for 1856. There we found one surname common to both "Marge's" and "Mitch's" families: Grogan. "Marge's" second great-grandfather, James Grogan lived in Mountaincommon, Aghamore. "Mitch's" second great-grandfather, Peter Grogan, lived in Glentaraun, Kilmovee. The distance between these two locations is only about twelve kilometers (eight miles).[29] This is likely how "Marge's" and "Mitch's" families connect. "Mitch's" family also includes the surname Shannon, which was Thomas's mother's maiden name. Interestingly, in "Mitch's" tree is a photo of his great-grandmother, Mary Shannon, who was born in 1843.[30] When Trish saw this

photo, she asked why he had a photo of her grandmother, Mary Byrnes Tall, in his tree! (Mary Byrnes Tall was Thomas's daughter and Hanora Shannon's granddaughter.)

In another *Ancestry* cluster are three matches named "Deb," "Louise," and "Pat." Their trees have ancestors with the surname Gralton living in Creeve, County Roscommon. Research showed they all descended from Cornelius and Ann Gralton. Their son, Cornelius [Jr.], age 24, and his daughter, Ann, age 4, immigrated to Australia in 1858 on the *Herald of the Morning*. Cornelius's paperwork shows that he was born in Creeve, County Roscommon, his parents were Cornelius and Ann Gralton (both deceased), and that his wife Honoria was in Sydney.[31] "Betty," a match on *23andMe*, told me that her second great-grandparents were Cornelius Gralton from Creeve, and Honoria Quinlan.[32] "Deb" also descends from Cornelius and Honoria. Cornelius's sister Ann married John Marshall in 1857.[33] "Louise" and "Pat" descend from Ann and John. "Betty" shares 26 cM of DNA and triangulates with Trish and me on Chromosome 4. "Pat" is also on *MyHeritage* and triangulates with Trish and me on Chromosome 4 in the same segment as "Betty." The MRCA for this group of matches would be Cornelius and Ann, their third great-grandparents (see Figure 3).

We continued using this procedure to expand the family trees of our other DNA matches and locate where ancestors lived. We marked on the map where the ones who lived near County Roscommon lived on the supposition that our DNA matches' ancestors must have lived near each other. In addition to sources already mentioned, we also used the 1901 and 1911 Irish censuses, to locate the DNA matches' ancestors. Table 2 summarizes our results for testing sites, shared cM, shared chromosomes (if given), surnames, townlands, and civil parishes.

Table 2. Summary of DNA Match information in Counties Mayo and Roscommon.

Pseudonym	Site	cM	Chr	Surname	Townland	Civil Parish	County
Marge	A, MyH	29	15	Grogan	Mountain-common	Aghamore	Mayo
				Kenny	Carrownden	Aghamore	Mayo
				Lyons		Aghamore	Mayo
				McNulty	Urlaur	Kilmovee	Mayo
Mitch	A	24	-	Grogan	Glentaraun	Kilmovee	Mayo
				Shannon	Kilmore	Kilmovee	Mayo
Deb	A	26	-	Gralton		Creeve	Ros
Louise	A	26	-	Gralton		Creeve	Ros
Pat	A, MyH	26	4	Gralton		Creeve	Ros
Betty	23	26	4	Gralton		Creeve	Ros
	MyH	23	13	Murphy		Fluerty	Ros
	MyH	16	14	Dockery	Kye	Clooncroft	Ros
				Beirne	Kilnalosset	Kilgefin	Ros
	MyH	9	17	Duffy	Cloonierin	Kilmovee	Mayo
				Casey	Aghalustia	Castlemore	Ros
Carol	A	72	-	Beirne	Ballyglass	Baslick	Ros
				Murray	Ballyglass	Baslick	Ros

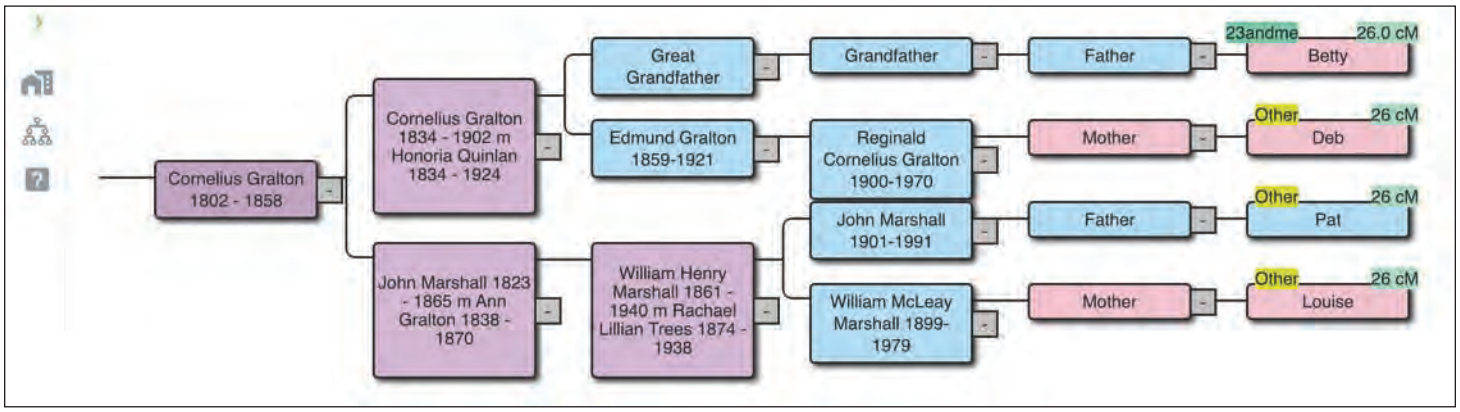


Figure 3. Gralton Reconstructed Family Tree using the Four DNA Matches

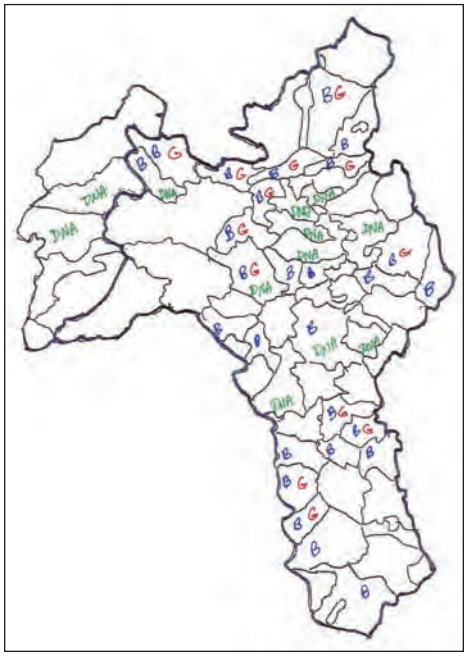


Figure 4. Map of Roscommon and Adjoining Civil Parishes in Mayo Showing Where DNA Matches' Ancestors Lived

Civil parishes are marked with a green "DNA" on the map in Figure 4. Because these DNA locations in County Roscommon and County Mayo are directly adjacent to County Roscommon, it is likely that the segments shared on Chromosomes 4, 13, 14, 15, and 17 came from our great-grandfather, Thomas.

In addition to shared matches, we also looked at any matches either of us had with a "Beirne" or "Shannon" in their trees. Interestingly, on Chromosome 15 I have six triangulated matches with the Shannon surname in one of their trees.[34] Around the same location on Chromosome 15, Trish has seven triangulated matches with the Burns surname in their trees.[35] The cM probability tool on DNA Painter calculates the overlap of our two segments as 11 cM.[36] Likely Trish inherited Thomas's father's DNA segment at this location, while I inherited Thomas's mother's DNA segment. Figure 5 shows Trish's triangulated segments in pink and mine in blue.[37] Trish's line is through her mother, and mine is through my father.

After eliminating locations where early baptismal records did not survive and comparing the rest to where the ancestors of our DNA matches lived, only Castlemore, Kilbride, and Baslick remained viable for further research (see Figure 4).

Castlemore and Kilbride did not show any "Patrick Beirnes" in Griffith's Valuations, but Baslick did. One of the last trees we built was for our DNA match, "Carol," whose ancestors lived in Baslick. She shares 72 cM with me. While her tree's maternal lines were well-developed, only her grandfather, Stephen Murray, born in 1903, appeared to have lived in Ireland. Using Irish civil records, we only found one person who matched those parameters. Stephan Murray was born in Ballyglass, Baslick, Roscommon, and his mother's name was Ellen Beirne.[38] We also found Ellen's 1891 marriage record, which gave her father's name as Patrick.[39] Only one Patrick Beirne was living in Ballyglass during the 1857 Griffith's Valuation. We checked the 1901 census and found Patrick Beirne living with his daughter, Ellen, and his son-in-law.[40] Since the census was organized by district electoral divisions rather than civil parishes, it was unclear if this was the same place he had lived on Griffith's Valuation. Cancelled Revision Books from the Valuation Office in Dublin between Griffith's 1857 Valuation and the 1901 census established it was the exact same location.[41] Patrick died in 1902 at age ninety.[42] He would have been about fifty-three when Ellen was born. Knowing the family always lived in Ballyglass made it easier to search for Ellen's mother's death.

A search for Beirne deaths between 1864-1901 garnered 390 results. Ellen's mother would have been at least twenty-one when Ellen was born, making her born about 1841. By eliminating all male Beirnes, all very young females, and estimating a death age based on an 1841 birth, we identified a Bridget Beirne who died in 1883 at age forty-two.[43] She would have been about twenty-three when Ellen was born. Based on the large age difference, it's possible that this was a second marriage for Patrick.

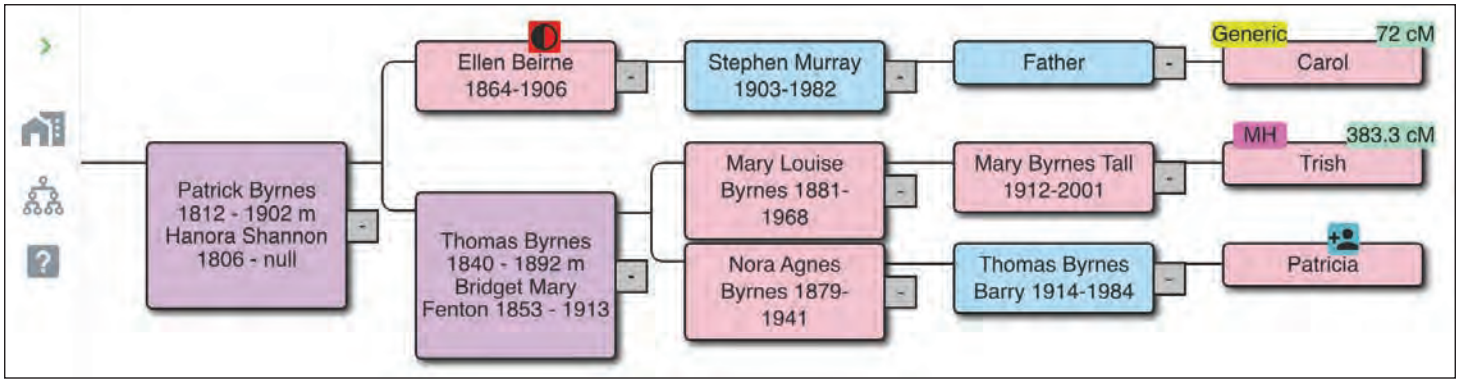


Figure 5. Reconstructed Family Tree by AutoLineage

According to the Shared cM Project, the 72 cM that "Carol" shares with me has a thirty-two percent probability of her being a half-third cousin and a twenty-eight percent probability of her being a full third cousin.[44] Since we know "Carol" has a second great-grandmother who is different than Trish and me, she cannot be a full third cousin. Genetic Affairs' AutoLineage compares the family trees of DNA matches to find common ancestors. Using Trish's family tree, the tree we built out for "Carol," and my family tree, AutoLineage generated a reconstructed tree (see Figure 5) which predicts that "Carol" shares a second great-grandfather, Patrick, with us. The half-red circle above Ellen's name in Figure 5 indicates a likely half-relationship.[45] This closeness of this DNA match, the lack of baptismal records, and finding Patrick in Griffith's Valuation makes Ballyglass, in Baslick civil parish, the most likely location for Thomas's birth.

Eighteen months after determining where Thomas likely lived in County Roscommon, Ancestry placed Thomas in the "Central Ireland Community," in a similar location to what we found.[46]

Conclusion

Trish and I started researching to find where our great-grandfather, Thomas Byrnes, had lived in County Roscommon. After following his trail through sources including property records, birth and death registrations, and DNA, we now believe that Thomas was born in Ballyglass, Baslick, County Roscommon. Not only did we find Thomas' birthplace, we found our second great-grandfather, Patrick, and a half-third cousin!

Endnotes

1 "New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1891", database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:27T9-F4Y : accessed 8 June 2021), manifest, *Cultivator*, arrival 2 August 1859, entry no. 153, Thos Byrne, age 20.; citing NARA microfilm publications M237, without specific roll.

2 Letter from Thomas Barry, Richmond, Virginia, to Julia (Byrnes) Diani, Norfolk, Virginia, September 1953, regarding family history and surnames; privately held by Coleman. Thomas Barry was grandson of Thomas and Bridget and Julia (Byrnes) Diani was their daughter.

3 Manifest, *Cultivator*, 2 August 1859, Thos Byrne, 20.

4 James H. Bailey II, *A Compilation of the Descendants of William Fenton of County Limerick, Ireland, and Petersburg, Virginia: On the One Hundredth Anniversary of His Death, November 2, 1955* (Petersburg, Virginia: James H. Bailey II, 1955), p. 23.

5 Petersburg City, Virginia, Marriage Register, v. 1, p. 83 (penned), line 7, Burnes-Fenton, 1877; imaged, "Virginia, Vital Records, 1715-1901," *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/475992), > image 480 of 776; citing Clerk of the Hustings Court.

6 *RootsIreland* (https://rootsireland.ie/roscommon/) and *FindmyPast* (https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records/ireland-roman-catholic-parish-baptisms) negative search for baptismal record for Thomas Byrnes with variations Beirne, and Burns with father forename Patrick, mother forename Hanora, and 1839 +/- 5 years.

7 "Genealogical Sources Available Online for County Roscommon," *RootsIreland* (https://rootsireland.ie/roscommon/online-sources.php).

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11 Trish has given permission to use her real name and to manage her DNA matches.

12 Bailey, *The Descendants of William Fenton 1792 – 1855*, 23. See also: "Irish Naming Conventions and Baptism Traditions," *IrelandXO.com* (https://irelandxo.com/ireland-xo/news/irelandxo-insight-irish-naming-and-baptism-traditions). See also: *FamilySearch Wiki* (https://www.familysearch.org : 15 March 2024), "Irish Naming Customs," revised 13:46, 12 March 2024.

13 "AutoClusters," *MyHeritage* (https://www.myheritage.com/dna/autoclusters).

14 Pseudonyms have been given to all our DNA matches to preserve their privacy.

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search for marriage record for William James Reilly and Mary Flaherty.

16 "<Private> Family Tree," *MyHeritage* (https://www.myheritage.com/).

17 "Civil Parishes," *Irish Ancestors* (https://www.johngrenham.com/).

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20 "Marriage Results for Ann Kenny from 1900 to 1905," *irishgenealogy.ie* (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/).

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22 "Birth Results for Ann Kenny of Swinford from 1875 to 1885," *irishgenealogy.ie* (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/).

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26 "Record Transcription in 1856," *FindmyPast* (https://www.findmypast.com/).

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35 "Burns Family Tree, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/).

36 "cM Estimator," *DNAPainter.com* (https://dnapainter.com/tools/cme).

37 "Triangulates with <Private>," Patricia Coleman's profile, *DNAPainter.com* (https://dnapainter.com/tools/cme) and "Triangulates with <Private> Burns MyH," Trish's profile, *DNAPainter.com* (https://dnapainter.com/tools/cme).

38 "Birth Results for Stephen Murray from 1903 to 1904," *irishgenealogy.ie* (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/).

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40 "Residents of a House 8 in Ballyglass (Bellanagare, Roscommon)," The National Archives of Ireland (https://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1901/).

41 Conor McNamara, Valuation Public Office, Dublin, Ireland [info@VALOFF.IE], to Patricia Coleman [address private], email, 28 March 2022, "Valuation Records for number 5a Ballyglass Co. Roscommon," Byrnes Family email folder, privately held by Coleman. Copies of pages from the Cancel books can be purchased from the Valuation Office in Dublin, and digital copies are sent by email.

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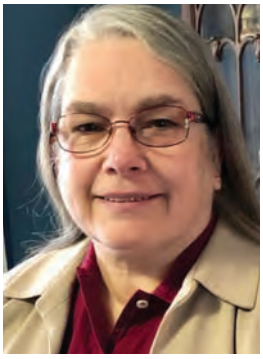
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Oh No! My DNA Match Has No Tree!

by Lois Abromitis Mackin, PhD

Have you ever had a DNA match with no tree? Or maybe your match has a tree in which all the people are marked private, or a tree in which only one branch is filled out. Maybe your tree-challenged match is a nice, big one that the shared matches tell you are connected to a branch of your family that is very interesting to you.

Are you out of luck? Maybe, maybe not! Here are three steps you can follow:

1. Send the match a message.
2. Follow the clues.
3. Check other testing sites.

Send a Message

This step seems obvious, but you'd be amazed how many genetic genealogists don't reach out to their matches. Even matches with no trees come with a Contact or Message button (and at *Family Tree DNA* [FTDNA], you get their email addresses). Do try sending a message, whether you expect a reply or not. You never know; your treeless match might just respond. If you are new to contacting DNA matches, or want to improve your contact methods, DNA expert Diahan Southard has a great article on the topic.[1]

Follow Clues

If your treeless match doesn't respond to messages, don't give up! Testing companies give you information that can provide clues to the identity of testers, including:

- Match name
- Age/birthdate
- Location
- Email
- Photo
- Match profile
- Surnames and locations.

If you have a match name, especially if it's a real name, you're off to a great start. Try Googling the tester's name. Try even if the name is not a [traditional] "Forename/Surname" type of name. Some people use the same alias (such as "kittylover23") in email addresses and account names. All four major DNA testing companies (*Ancestry*, *MyHeritage*, *23andMe*, and FTDNA) provide match names.

If you have an age or birth date, even better! You can use ages or birth dates to refine name searches. *MyHeritage* displays ages in decades (e.g., 60s) if the testers provide their age, and *23andMe* provides birth years if available.

If you have a location, add it to your name search. Testers at *MyHeritage* and *23andMe* can provide a location. *Ancestry* users sometimes provide locations in their profiles. (You will have to click the name of the tester or kit manager to see the profile at *Ancestry*.)

If you have an email, you've probably tested at FTDNA. They are unique in providing an email for each test kit. Click the name of your FTDNA match to pop up their profile. You'll find their email there. The other testing sites do not provide emails, but sometimes testers or kit managers include an email in their *Ancestry* profile or in the "About" information on the match page that appears when you click their name in your match list.

If you have a photo, you can capture it and do a Google image search. People often reuse photos in DNA test accounts and on social media. For instructions on how to search for images, go to "Search with an image on Google" in Google's Help Center.[2]

If you have a match profile, mine it for information. You never know what information testers might share until you look at their profiles. *Ancestry*'s profiles can be reached by clicking the name of your match or the person who manages their test kit on their DNA match page (the page you open by clicking their name in your match list). *MyHeritage* puts a mini-profile (name, age in decade, location, photo if uploaded, and kit manager) next to every match name in your match list. *23andMe* puts birth year, last activity on their site, location, photo, and a tester-supplied "About" paragraph on every match page. FTDNA's profiles are reachable by clicking a tester's name on your match list.

If you have a list of surnames and locations, use it to help identify your match. Testers can provide lists of surnames at FTDNA and *23andMe*. At FTDNA, look for surname lists both on the match list and in the profiles reached by clicking each match's name; while FTDNA does not ask for locations, some testers include them in surname lists. At *23andMe*, testers can list the birthplaces of their paternal and maternal grandparents in the "Family Background" section of their match page; they can also list family surnames there. *23andMe* testers tend to list fewer surnames than FTDNA users. *Ancestry* and *MyHeritage* construct lists of names and locations from the trees attached to test kits, making this feature less useful for kits without attached trees.

Put the clues together. We've already mentioned using name + age + location searches to learn more about matches. As you accumulate clues from the information your match provided, put them together with the information you glean

from Google searches. For example, maybe you find your match's photo on a *Facebook* or *LinkedIn* profile, which then gives or corroborates a location. *Facebook* pages can provide the names of friends; coupled with family surnames from the DNA testing website, you can map names into a rudimentary tree for the match.

Incorporate shared-match information and compare trees. A 60-cM match on *MyHeritage* provided a tree showing names and some dates but no locations for their four grandparents. The branch for the paternal grandmother is built out for three generations beyond the grandmother, but none of the other branches goes beyond their grandparents. The match's age is given as "20s"; their tree indicates that two of their grandparents are living and provides only their surnames. This woefully incomplete partial tree, however, contained an important clue that appeared when I searched my tester's tree for the match's surnames.

The name and birthdate of the match's paternal grandfather are the same as the name and birthdate of a distant cousin I had identified while researching my tester's tree. Was this a case of "the name's the same," or could the match's paternal grandfather be the same man as the distant cousin in my tester's tree?

To help find the answer, I first looked at the shared matches on *MyHeritage*. Two of the matches shared by my tester and the mystery match had already been identified as part of my tester's Clark-Neville branch, which is the branch of my tester's tree that contains the man with the same name and birth date as the match's paternal grandfather. Following up on this finding, I expanded the research I had done on the man in my tester's tree. This led to the confirmation that he married a woman with the same surname as the paternal grandmother in the *MyHeritage* match's tree, and that his wife was the daughter of the parents who appear in the match's tree. The two "same name" men were, in fact, the same man. Once I had established that, I was able to build out the match's tree and identify the common ancestors of my tester and the *MyHeritage* match.

Build your own tree broad and deep. Key to the success of this identification was that my tester's tree was both broad and deep. When I built it, I included the siblings of my tester's direct ancestors; I also included their children and their grandchildren. If I had not, the 60-cM match's ancestor would not have appeared in my tester's tree, and I could not have made the correlation.

Check Other Testing Sites

Provided that you have tested at or uploaded DNA kits that you manage to multiple testing companies, you can look for your tree-challenged matches across all sites. Matches who did not attach trees to their kits at the site where you originally found them might have attached trees, provided surnames, or included other useful information at other sites. Use the Notes fields on all sites where the match appears to record information about the match, e.g., "Also tested at FTDNA; has five-generation tree there. Email is marysmith@xyz.com."

All URLs are current as of February 14, 2024.

Endnotes

1 Diahan Southard, "Contacting Your DNA Matches," *Your DNA Guide* (https://www.yourdnaguide.com/ydgblog/contacting-your-dna-matches).

2 "Search with an image on Google," *Google Help Center* (https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/1325808).

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New Online Archive!!

The University of Galway recently launched IMIRCE (Irish for "migration"), a digital repository containing thousands of letters and memoirs of Irish emigrants dating from the late 1600s to the mid-20th century. Compiled over the course of five decades of work by Emeritus Professor of History, Kerby A. Miller, IMIRCE is now live and can be found at: https://imirce.universityofgalway.ie/p/ms. See Pat McGrath's RTÉ article for more information: (https://www.rte.ie/news/regional/2024/0308/1436755-emigrant-letters/).

Tracking County Mayo Ancestors

by Thomas Mahoney

Sometimes, it pays to be the tortoise and not the hare in genealogy research. While we all want immediate results, the passage of time opens unexpected doors. The long game worked for me with my Mahoney research. When I attended an IGSI conference in 2007, I was introduced to Virginia Mahoney. Virginia could not find any specific Mahoney records, but she did send me in the right direction for where there was a lot of Mahoney "activity." Her advice led me to the Mallow Heritage Centre in County Cork, where I discovered an 1855 Mahoney — Harrington wedding in Ballyclough Parish and five ancestral birth records I couldn't wait to explore.[1]

The "slowly but surely" approach has also worked on my maternal Marion line. While I had three maternal generations living in near Owatonna, Steele County, Minnesota, and various notes from assorted relatives, I still had only a family Bible and a Marion family tombstone in Owatonna's Sacred Heart Cemetery that clearly referenced Marion family origins in County Mayo. Not one note mentioned *where* in County Mayo those ancestors originated.

I subscribed to *The Green Room on Your Irish Heritage* (https://youririshheritage.com) in 2018. This site is managed by Mike and Carina Collins in County Cork, Ireland. I contacted Mike five years ago as I began researching my Marion relatives. He wound up interviewing me about my research and providing a lot of useful information, giving this tortoise a gentle push in the right direction.[3]

I told Mike I was most interested in finding out more about my ancestor James Marion, born in 1820 in County Mayo, Ireland, and his wife, Nancy Ann Owen, born in 1837 in Ireland. James was my mother's great-grandfather. Oral history and the family Bible (the family was Roman Catholic) told me that James came from County Mayo, but I had no documentation identifying his townland of origin or the circumstances behind his emigration. I wanted to know what village in County Mayo James Marion was from, and what conditions would have propelled him to leave it. I also wanted to know how he traveled from County Mayo to reach Liverpool for passage on a ship.



JAMES MARION
Born in
Co. Mayo Ireland
March 10, 1820
Aged 75 Years

May his soul rest in peace. Amen

NANCY MARION
Born in
Co. Mayo Ireland
Oct. 30, 1837
Died Aug. 4, 1915

Rest in Peace

Headstone of James & Nancy Marion (photo by author)[2]

Mike told me that County Mayo was one of Ireland's counties hit hardest by the famine; its population declined from 388,000 to 109,000 between 1841 and 1971 [*sic*] because of death and migration. He calculated that around 13% of the Irish diaspora around the world has roots in County Mayo. He further stated that the population of Ireland had grown from about two million in the mid-1700s to over eight million by 1841, which had a "profound effect on the division of farms, availability of food, etc.," and suggested that perhaps James Marion had left because of a desperate situation. Like many young people, he might have had to seek opportunity elsewhere or perhaps already had a specific job offer. He may also have been following other family members overseas.

Mike suggested that James may have made his way overland from Mayo to Dublin, then taken a short sea crossing from there to Liverpool if sailing from there to the United States; he also pointed out that Sligo, Ballina, Westport, and Galway were also active ports at the time and shipped both people and goods directly to the United States, Canada, and England.

Jane Kennedy's article, "County Mayo Remembers its History, Embraces its Descendants,"[4] recounts the 1880s efforts of James Tuke to help the Irish, including

her Kennedy ancestors, to emigrate to the United States. I saw parallels in her story to my own ancestors' stories, though they predate her forebears. Jane kindly introduced me to County Mayo resident, Philomena ("Phil") McIntyre, who would prove to be of enormous help to my research efforts.[5]

I told Mike I thought it would be easy to track down my ancestors because "Marion" is not a common name, but it has proven to be difficult. I wondered if perhaps the Marions' stay in County Mayo was short and if they originated from elsewhere, though I suspected they had been there longer because they were farmers, and it takes time to establish a successful farm.

Mike agreed that I was correct about the Marion surname and noted the likelihood of spellings or pronunciations changing after immigration. He pointed out that while the Marion surname is found in Ireland, it is mostly found in the northeast and is of English origin. He said that while it was possible that the surname was originally spelled "Marion" in County Mayo (though he could find no records of any Marions there), it was also possible that it was originally one of the more common surnames in County Mayo, such as Marrin/Marron or Maree.

This was extremely frustrating. We were proud of our "Marion" ancestors; how could they not be actual Marions? However, census and other records show that James and Nancy Marion could not read or write, so everything was written phonetically by others.[6] Welcome to my Marren/Marrin/Marron ancestors!

After learning this, I joined more genealogy groups to continue making connections and to bolster my research. These included: *Ancestry*, *Irelandxo*, *RootsChat*, *GEDmatch*, *FamilySearch*, the Irish Genealogical Society International (IGSI), and *Immigrantships.net*, etc.

Matches from my various DNA test kits began to provide good leads. A woman named Emma O'Hare contacted me through *23andMe* about a 4th-generation DNA match with her birth father. She reported:

> His father was Regan from the village Kilmovee in County Mayo. My great-great-grandparents on this side were a Regan, Towey, Shiel, and Currigan, all from Kilmovee. Your great-great-grandfather was probably first cousins with one of them. Of the generation before (so maybe a sibling to your great-great-grandfather), I have the male surnames but I'm missing the female ones except for one "Mullen." It's possible one of these great-great-great-grandmothers of mine was James Marion's sister. I've searched that name for the Swinford district, which contains Kilmovee on IrishGeneaology.ie, and there's no Marions alright, but plenty of Marrons, Manions, and Mannions, so [it is] probably one of them.[7]

However, back in County Mayo, Phil McIntyre believed that the townlands around the Doocastle district were a better fit than those of Kilmovee.

Another DNA match with a second cousin from New Jersey, John Flory, proved Phil's Doocastle hunch correct. Flory is connected to James and Nancy Marion. In her later years, Nancy lived with Flory's mother and identified Doocastle as the Marion townland of origin. Flory has traveled to Doocastle (an electoral division) and located the County Mayo townland for Nancy Ann Owens near Swinford. Flory described the Doocastle and Swinford area as "boggy and rocky."

Locating direct Marion/Marren descendants near Doocastle has proven a challenge given the few resources available. I suspect a connection between the Marren, Healey, and McAndrews families, which may prove helpful in locating Marion homes in Mayo. For example, a Griffith's Valuation map of Doocastle shows a "James Maran" living on plots #90 and #93 (see Figure 1).[8] An 1833 Tithe Applotment Book for Achonry Diocese, Kilturra Parish, County Sligo, lists a Mark Healy living near "James Marren" in Ballyfahy East, and a "P. Marren," "P. Owen Marren," and "Peter Healy" residing in Upper Rathbane Doobeg [sic].[9] Doocastle is very close to County Sligo, while Kilturra

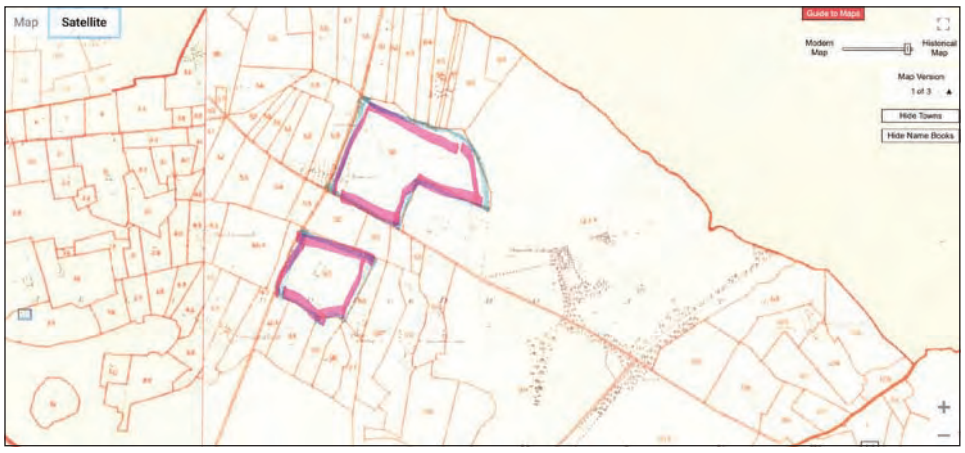


Figure 1. Griffith's Valuation Map of Doocastle

Parish encompasses Counties Sligo and Mayo. Griffith's Valuation and Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) are great places to search for such ancestors.

Phil McIntyre and I found additional, albeit tangential, clues. Phil introduced us to Vincent McGrath, a man with Doocastle ancestors, including Richard Cawley and Ellen Marren. McGrath told us his father and uncles:

> had a band called the "Emerald Isle Orchestra" that played at 114th Street and 3rd Avenue from 1928-1934. My father came back to Ireland in 1932 on a short visit which became permanent because he was denied re-entry, possibly for not having a re-entry permit. John McGrath went on to become an important teacher of Irish music until his death in 1955.

I was surprised to learn that Richard Cawley and Ellen Marren's grandson is former U.S. Vice President Mike Pence.[10]

Original research showed a James Marion emigrating to the United States in 1837 on the S.S. *Smyrna*, which departed from Liverpool, England, and arrived in Providence, Rhode Island.[11] He and Nancy Owen eventually moved to Clinton County, Iowa, which is where I suspect they were married.[12] They then settled on a farm in Hope, Somerset Township, Steele County, Minnesota, and had eight children: John Ambrose, James B., Mark, Peter H., Michael F., Mary Ann, Kate, and Ellen Angelia.[13]

I later questioned James's supposed 1837 *Smyrna* emigration record because the Clinton County district court records showed that James declared his intention to become a United States citizen on 11 March 1853, he took the Oath of Citizenship on 17 September 1855, and proved he had resided in the United States for five years, one of which was in Iowa.[14] He should have emigrated around 1850, but I have not found a record of it. Could James have waited more than five years before completing his naturalization? If so, the search for passenger records may need to be expanded.

I also question the "wagon train" travels unless relating to short-distance travel. Railroads had not yet been developed that far west, and steamboat travel seemed more likely. The Marions's initial farming venture was in Clinton County, in the easternmost section of Iowa, on the Mississippi.[15] Their eldest son, John Ambrose, was born there in 1853. By 1875, John Ambrose had moved to Somerset Township, Steele County, Minnesota. In 1883, John Ambrose and his brother Mark moved to Marshall County, South Dakota, to establish their farms, taking advantage of the Homestead Act of 1862.[16] Marshall County's land was not as good as Minnesotan and Iowan soil, however, so John Ambrose returned to Minnesota. There he became a highly successful and well-respected farmer and entrepreneur who was tragically killed by his bull in 1914 at the age of sixty-one.[17] His son, John Mark Marion (my grandfather), had to take over the farm at age 16 and support five people.

I brought some of these points up to Mike during our interview, telling him I believed there was a connection to the Ambrose family and others, such as the Healeys and McAndrews, that might help identify our County Mayo roots. My understanding is that the Healey family emigrated to the United States from England, but I told Mike that I suspected they were originally from County Mayo because two Marions had married Healeys. All of them lived in Somerset Township in Steele County Minnesota, and all of them were farmers.[18]

Mike agreed that it is always good to treat possible/probable "facts" with some skepticism. He told me I had "a great pioneering story," saying it sounded like James made the right decision back in County Mayo to embark on that long, uncertain journey.

Not only did the Marions and Healeys intermarry, but they also farmed near one another in Somerset Township, so there had to be a connection between the families. The 1897 Steele County, Minnesota, map in Figure 2 shows the Marion and Healey farms near one another.[19] The Marions's

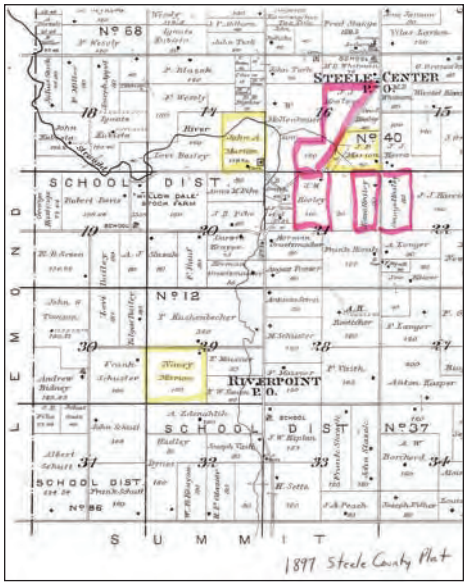


Figure 2. 1897 Steele County, Minnesota, plat map

eldest son and my great-grandfather, John Ambrose, married Margaret McManus.[20] In 1880, Margaret was living with Jesse and Mary Healy as a "niece;" while that relationship has not yet been corroborated, it still suggests another connection between the Healeys and the Marions.[21] Although Margaret was born and grew up in Edinburgh, Scotland, my mother said that Margaret's parents were from County Cork.[22] The McManus family operated a photo studio in Edinburgh; our ancestors' first portraits came from it.[23]

In our 2019 interview, Mike mentioned that the connection of various family names can be very useful in uncovering the likely source location of an ancestor in Ireland. He noted there are two main groupings of Healeys in Ireland; the first is in County Cork, while the other runs up County Sligo into County Mayo, where Healeys are numerous still today. Mike further observed that McAndrew, a branch of the local Norman Barrett family, is a prevalent surname in County Mayo and is very rare outside Counties Mayo and Sligo. Lastly, he mentioned that the name "Ambrose" is typically found in Counties Cork and Limerick rather than in Mayo, although Ambrose was a common given name for boys even in County Mayo.

I originally told Mike that all I knew of Nancy Ann Owen was her date of birth and that she was from Ireland. I didn't know who her parents were or her county of birth. The 1900 and 1910 U.S. federal censuses suggested that she emigrated in either 1847 or 1850, though I have been unable to verify either date.[24] Nancy was proving to be a tough nut to crack. Both dates were during the height of the Great Famine, however, which provides a logical timetable for further research.

Mike suggested during our interview that because James immigrated around 1837, while Nancy arrived after 1847, it is plausible James was living somewhere on the east coast before he migrated to Iowa. Mike also theorized that Nancy arrived in the United States because of the Famine, noting that while the Owen/Owens surname is found in many parts of Ireland, "Owens" is found in particularly large numbers in Counties Mayo and Sligo, making it possible that James and Nancy had similar local Irish accents.

Several years of research later, I now believe Nancy Ann Owens arrived on 9 September 1847, on the S.S. *Memphis*.[25] John Flory provided me with the 4 August 1915 death certificate for Anna Marion, which indicates that her father was John Owens, and her mother's maiden name was Ryan.[26] The *Memphis*'s passenger manifest includes her family members: John Owens, 40; his wife Mary, 35; Francis, 13; Ann (my great-great-grandmother), 11; Joseph, 9; Edw[ard], 7; and John, 4.

John Flory also told me about two small cemeteries he discovered in Clinton County, Iowa: St. Irenaeus and Holy Cross, both of which are filled with Owens family members we believe to be our distant DNA cousins; Flory discovered DNA matches with James Owens (b.1816) and Peter Owens (b.1790).

Now that I've made progress on these brick walls, what's next? I hope to take a trip to Doocastle so I can fill out more of the Marren tree, and perhaps find a connection to the Kilmovee, County Mayo relatives. I also hope to discover when James Marion emigrated to the United States and when and where he married Nancy Ann, then track their journey to the Midwest. Perhaps one of the genealogical groups I've joined and/or the very helpful Michael Collins of *Your Irish History*, will be able to provide additional insights for those quests as well.

Endnotes

1 Several digitized records at the Mallow Heritage Centre have been made available online at the *Irish Family History Foundation* website (rootsireland.ie.) and the National Library of Ireland website. For the marriage: Parishes of Ballyclough and Kilbrin (County Cork, Ireland), Matrimonial Registry, 1828-1855, image 46 of 66, Mahoney-Harrington, 8 May 1855; "Catholic Parish Registers," *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/parishes/0012 : 25 March 2024), microfilm 05010/03.

2 *Find a Grave*, image (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/97269756/james-marion : accessed 25 March 2024), memorial 97269756, James Marion (1820-[1895]), and Nancy Marion (1837-1915), Sacred Heart Cemetery, Owatonna, Steele County, Minnesota; gravestone photograph by Jean Kiefer.

3 "The Green Room: Letter From Ireland," *Your Irish History* (https://youririshheritage.com/community/ : accessed 27 March 2024), interview of Tom Mahoney by Mike Collins, 8 January 2019.

4 Jane Kennedy, "County Mayo Remembers its History, Embraces its Descendants," *The Septs*, vol. 39, no. 4, (2018), pp. 118-121.

5 The names of all living people (Phil McIntyre, Emma, John Flory, and Vincent McGrath have been used with permission.

6 1880 U.S. census, Steele County, Minnesota, population schedule, Somerset Township, p. 16 (penciled), dwelling 123, family 123, James Marim [Marion] household; image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 26 January 2024), citing NARA microfilm publication T9, roll 635.

7 I am grateful to Emma and John Flory for allowing me to publish their DNA information, 27 March 2024.

8 This is a section of a Griffith's Valuation map for Ballindoo/Doocastle, Parish of Kilturra, County Mayo, map viewer, *Ask about Ireland* (https://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/ : accessed 26 January 2024). Also, "Ireland, Griffith's Valuation, 1847-1864," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 26 January 2024),

entries 90a and 93a, James Maran, occupier, 1857. See also: "Ordnance Survey Map (1838)," *VirtualTreasury.ie* (https://virtualtreasury.ie/item/LBC-OS-6-1279 : accessed 2 April 2024).

[9] Ireland, Land Commission, "Tithe Applotment Books, 1823-37," image, *National Archives of Ireland* (http://tithe-applotmentbooks.nationalarchives.ie/search/tab/index.jsp : accessed 25 March 2024), Search > Healy, Mark, County Sligo, Kilturra Parish > 1833, Ballyfahy East, lines 12 and 13, Mark Healy, and line 15 James Marren.

[10] Sinead O'Shea, Mitch Smith, Kitty Bennett, and Susan Beachy, contributors, "Mike Pence's 1980s Visit to His Grandfather's Home," *The Irish Times*, March 2017 (https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/mike-pence : accessed 25 March 2024), rev. 18:16 GMT, 17 March 2017.

[11] Manifest, Brig *Smyrna*, May 1837, line 42, James Marion, age 19, image 473 of 538; "U.S., Atlantic Ports Arriving and Departing Passenger and Crew Lists, 1820-1959," image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 25 March 2024); citing *The National Archives*, series #M575, roll 15.

[12] The state of Iowa did not require marriage registration until 1880. *FamilySearch Research Wiki*, "Iowa Vital Records," rev. 21:17, 9 March 2024.

[13] "1880 United States Census, "database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MZ9R-3LW : accessed 25 March 2024), entry for James Marion (age 56), District 1, page 16 (penciled), Town of Somerset, Steele County, Minnesota; citing National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) microfilm publication T756.

[14] "Naturalization records, 1855-1955; index 1859-1877, unindexed database, *FamilySearch* (http://www.familysearch.org : accessed 29 March 2024), p. 7, [Final] Naturalization Book, vol. 1855-1859, Oath of Allegiance, James Moran [sic], image 738 of 847; citing FHL film no. 00778061 and Clinton County District Court, Iowa.

[15] "1860 United States Census," database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M82P-TLG : accessed 25 March 2024), entry for James Marron (age 37), page 54 (penciled), Hampshire Township, Clinton County, Iowa; citing NARA microfilm publication M653.

[16] US Bureau of Land Management, Dakota Territory, Tract Books, vol. 42, page 93 (stamped, top, left-hand page), Township 128 North, Range 58 West, Section 26, 160 acres, entry for Mark Marion, 28 May 1883; "United States Bureau of Land Management Tract Books, 1800-c.1955," images, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:D92B-V93Z : accessed 25 March 2024). And for the Homestead Act, "Act of May 20, 1862 (Homestead Act)," Public Law 37-64, (12 STAT 392); 05/20/1862; Enrolled Acts and Resolutions of Congress, 1789-2011; General Records of the U.S. Government, Record Group 11; *National Archives Catalog* (https://www.archives.gov : viewed 23 July 2021).

[17] "John A. Marion is Killed by Enraged Bull Friday Afternoon," *The People's Press* (Owatonna, Minnesota), 9 October 1914, p. 10, col. 1; digital image, *Newspapers.com* (https://www.newspapers.com : accessed 25 March 2024).

[18] For marriage of James Marion and Mary Ann Healey, see: Minnesota Marriages, 1849-1950," unindexed database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FDXL-72W : accessed 28 March 2024), p. 174, marriage, James Marion – Mary A. Healey, 9 June 1885, image 1196 of 1278; citing FHL film no. 007413030 and Steele County, Minnesota, Marriage Record Volume "D" (1882-1891); See also: Steele County District and Probate Courts, Will Book E (1923-1925), p. 51, will for Jesse Healey, 16 October 1912, (proved 27 September 1924); "Minnesota, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1801-1925," database with images, *Ancestry* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 28 March 2024), image 144 of 474. For marriage of George J. Healey and Mary A. Marion, see: "Minnesota Marriages, 1849-1950," unindexed database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FDXL-MM5 : accessed 28 March 2024), p. 244, marriage, George F. Healey – Mary A. Marion, 9 November 1886, image 1231 of 1278; citing FHL film no. 007413030 and Steele County, Minnesota, Marriage Record Volume "D" (1882-1891). For marriage of John A. Marion and Margaret McManus, see: "Minnesota, County Marriages, 1860-1949," unindexed database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FDXL-72W : accessed 28 March 2024), p. 12, marriage, John A. Marion – Margarette McManus, 9 February 1891, image 103 of 913; citing FHL film no. 007413031 and Steele County, Minnesota, Marriage Record Volume "E" (1882-1891). Margaret may have an affiliation with the Healey family; in 1880 she was living with Jesse and Mary Ann Healey: 1880 U.S. census, Steele County, Minnesota, population schedule, Somerset Township, p. 1 (penciled), dwelling 1, family 1, Jesse Heuley [sic] household, Margaret Mc Maud [sic]; image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 26 January 2024), citing NARA microfilm publication T9, roll 635. For residences of Healeys and Marions, see: 1900 U.S. census, Steele County, Minnesota, population schedule, Somerset Township, ED 137, p. 2B, (penciled), dwelling 31, family 31, Jesse Healey household; dwelling 32, family 32,

George J. Healey household; dwelling 33, family 33, James B. Marion household; image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 29 March 2024), image 4 of 20; citing NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 793; also 2A, image 3 of 20, for dwelling 24, family 24, John Marion household.

[19] The MNGenWeb Project, *RootsWeb* (https://sites.rootsweb.com/~mnsteele/ : accessed 25 March 2024), Steele County > Plat Maps > 1897 Plat maps > Somerset Township.

[20] "Minnesota, U.S., Marriages Index, 1849-1950," index, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 26 January 2024), marriage of John A Marion and Margarette McManns [sic], 9 February 1891.

[21] 1880 U.S. census, Steele, MN, pop. sched., Somerset Twp., p. 1, dwell. 1, fam. 1, Jesse Heuley [sic].

[22] Olmstead County, Minnesota, death certificate no. 9965 (1944), Margaret Marion, d. 16 February 1944; citing Minnesota State Department of Health. Record is privately held by author. See also: "Minnesota, County Deaths, 1850-2001," database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L9DL-H82C?i=17 : accessed 28 March 2024), p. 7, no. 9, death register, Margaret Marion (1944), image 18 of 1498; also, "Rites in Owatonna for Mrs. Marion," obituary, *The Austin Daily Herald*, Austin, Minnesota, 17 February 1944, p. 4, col. 5; *Newspapers.com* (http://www.newspapers.com : accessed 27 March 2024), image 4 of 16.

[23] Photography album, J. McManus Studio, Edinburgh, Scotland, 13 High Street (beside Knox's Church): created ca. mid- to late-1800s, (miscellaneous family records, portraits, and memorabilia); privately held by Tom Mahoney [ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE,] Minnesota.

[24] "1900 United States Census," database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M9QM-PDT : accessed 26 March 2024), entry for Ann Marion (age 65), widow, mother of 8, year of immigration 1847, Enumeration District (ED) 134, page 15B, Owatonna, Steele County, Minnesota.

[25] Manifest, *Memphis*, 29 September 1847, line 12, Ann Owens, age 11, image 3 of 6; "New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 26 March 2024); citing NARA microfilm M237, roll 36.

[26] South Dakota Department of Health, death certificate #45274 (1915), Anna Marion; privately held by John Flory [address for private use].

Tom Mahoney, a Minnesota resident since 1960, has been researching his family history since 1992. At around 80% Irish, Tom has spent ample time trying to circumvent the many black holes in Irish records. He credits his aunt, Margaret Jean Mahoney, for leading the way because she, unbeknownst to him, spent much of the 1960s-1980s scouring Irish records the old-fashioned way via on-site visits, ultimately making him the grateful recipient of the fruits of all her hard work. An MBA, Tom has worked in various executive finance and strategic planning roles during his career.



Na Sióga (The Fairies)

Who are they who rule Ireland?
From hill and dale, they come.
We see them at their behest,
As their invited guest!

What form shall they take?
Man, woman, child,
Flitting winged insect,
Who knows what to expect!

What do they want from me?
Entice, enchant, enthrall,
To jibe or fool,
To hire as tool.

How shall I break their spell?
Salt, shamrock, or nettle,
Fresh primroses of the day,
And a pocket full of clay!

Will they let me go my way?
Touched by their hand,
Riches, talents, and charm,
Curses, entrapments, or
bodily harm!

What is one to do?
Bow, grovel and beg,
Be humble and polite,
And for goodness' sake don't fight.

If a fairy you meet one day,
Just smile and look the other way.
Leave well enough alone!
And cut a dash towards home.

~ by Gabrielle Ní Mheachair

Fairy Mounds

by Gabrielle Ní Mheachair[1]

When negotiating the precariously curvaceous, narrow roads of Ireland, you probably don't have the luxury of admiring anything other than those thorny hedge rows stretching threateningly towards your rental car; you dread how much each scratch is going to cost when you return the car. Behind those grasping hedges lies a whole world hidden from view. A proliferation of fairy sites goes unrecognized and unappreciated by the casual tourist.

For thousands of years, people feared and respected fairy sites, avoiding contact with them in order to protect themselves from malevolent curses, inexplicable injuries, disappearance, or even death. As a result, these ancient sites have remained almost entirely intact, leaving Ireland with a generous legacy of mystical monuments, historical sites, and profoundly rich folklore.

Irish fairies are probably the most ancient and inimitable fairies in the world. There are two distinct types: trooping and solitary. Trooping fairies are the most common species found in Ireland. They live in colonies and are known for their obsession with food and festivities. However, they can be deadly dangerous when distracted, disturbed, or disobeyed.

Solitary fairies, on the other hand, are distinctly different from each other, and from the Trooping fairies. While they intimidate, threaten, maim, kidnap, and can even cause death to mortals, their impact is not as pervasive as the trooping fairies. Solitary fairies include the leprechaun and the fairies' shoemaker, as well as the following:

- The *púca* (pooka) – a fearsome evil spirit
- The *cluaricaun* (clue-ri-kahn) — a clever trickster, not unlike the leprechaun
- The *beansídhe* (ban-shee) — a vengeful death spirit
- The *grogoch* (grog-och) — a friendly half-human, half-fairy beast
- The *selkie* (seal-key) — a seal who takes human form on land, and
- The *merrow* — a type of mermaid.



The fairy fort on the farm, complete with the fairy king's beech tree (photo by author)

Unlike Solitary fairies, Trooping fairies malevolently manipulate the Irish people and their way of life. In order to fully appreciate the fairies' reputation and power, one must first understand their origin stories.

Two stories attempt to explain who the fairies are and where they came from. The one I least subscribe to is the "fallen angel's story." Here, the theory is that a host of belligerent angels were banished from Heaven for rebelling against God. These angels fell to Earth and took possession of that idyllic island, Éire (Ireland), subsequently using their magical powers to intimidate and dominate the natives. The second origin story, though somewhat fanciful, is more compelling and more readily aligns with Ireland's myths, legends, and fairy lore.

Fairies, also called *Aes Sidhe*, *na Daoine Maithe*, *na Sióga, na Sidhe (Sí)*, the Good People, the Others, the Fairy Folk, the Wee Folk, the Tuatha Dé Danann, or the Little People, are found throughout the island. They claim descent from one of Ireland's oldest inhabitants, the "Tuatha Dé Danann," also known as the "tribe of the goddess *Danú*." Hence, they have god-like qualities and skills. This tribe lived peacefully in Ireland for thousands of years, until the arrival of the sword-wielding Celts. Since iron was one of the few tools that could kill the otherwise immortal Dé Danann, they surrendered to the invaders without a fight and fled underground, taking up residence in the ancient dwellings, burial sites, and sacred ceremonial places of their ancestors. There they remain to this day, a shadowy nuisance to Ireland's earthly inhabitants.

When the iron-wielding invaders, who were ancestors of the current Celtic Irish race, took possession of the island, the Sidhe remained its most formidable

residents. Only they can manipulate the land, the sea, and the air around them. Every Irish native knows reverence must be shown to these ancient inhabitants. Failure to do so is dealt with severely.

The most common fairy habitation is the fairy fort, which is a circular mound usually found in the center of a field and surrounded by a ring of trees. Trees growing on fairy forts are intimately associated with the forts' inhabitants. The Beech tree (*Fagus sylvatica*) is the Tree of Knowledge – the Fairy King's favorite. Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) trees have poisonous seeds and bark, though its fruit is non-toxic. Whitethorn (*Crataegus monogyna*, or Hawthorn) trees can be used in medicine.[2] Ash (*Fraxinus*) is sacred to the druids, while Elder (*Sambucus* nigra) absorbs menacing fairy energy. Those who live in the vicinity of a fairy fort must be vigilant in their day-to-day interactions.

Fairy rules specifically forbid humans from entering their forts without permission. No tree, branch, leaf, or blade of grass on a fort may be damaged in any way. Nothing can be taken from the fort, and nothing can be placed within. For all intents and purposes, fairy forts are "no-go" areas. At midnight, the fairies emerge to feast and dance under the starry sky. Anyone within sight or sound of the fort at this time is at risk of being spirited away, never to be seen or heard of again. There are ample stories demonstrating the penalties for breaking fairy rules; Big Jim Ryan's and Patrick Maher's tales are just two such examples.

Big Jim Ryan and the Fairy Fort[3]

My mother loved to tell us the story of how her father had to lie on the flat of his back for a year, because he desecrated a fairy fort. My grandfather, Jim Ryan, had a large family and a farm too small to support them. There was a sizeable fairy fort in the field opposite his cottage. Living so close to the fairy fort Jim had the utmost respect for the fairies. He even built the piers of his gates according to fairy tradition; one conical and one flat topped, (for the fairies to dance on). However, the trees growing on the embankment of the fort were very old and their branches stretched far into Jim's field. Their leafy limbs blocked the sunlight, and nothing grew in the shaded areas. Jim decided to trim the branches. Throwing caution to the wind, he got up bright and early one morning. With hatchet in hand, he headed straight for the fort. The last thing he remembers of that morning was himself sitting high in the tree, hacking away at a branch, when suddenly the hatchet went flying out of his hands and disappeared into the center of the fort.

When he didn't return for dinner that evening his sons were sent to look for him. They found him lying unconscious beneath a tree, on the edge of the fort. The hatchet was nowhere in sight. Jim regained consciousness only to discover he had lost the use of his limbs. For a year thereafter, he was crippled with back pain and had to sleep on the kitchen table to keep his spine straight. He swears the fairies cursed him for damaging their property. Jim tried to take the limbs from their trees, so they took the use of his limbs from him. His experience is a typical example of fairy justice.

Patrick Maher and the Hay Shed[4]

My father, Michael J. Maher, and my uncle, John G. Maher, told this story about my grandfather, Patrick Maher.

Patrick Maher, my paternal grandfather, vocally and publicly renounced any allegiance to, or respect for, the Little People. He made known he was above such silly superstitions. According to Pat, it was such notions that prevented the Irish man from advancing in life and becoming independent and prosperous. In a time when Ireland was dictated to by the British, the Catholic Church, and the Sidhe, he keenly felt these forces of oppression restricted his ability to prosper. He could not control the intimidating British Army, nor the dictatorial Catholic Church, but he thought he could control the elusive Sidhe. Therein was his biggest misconception. He would pay dearly, in numerous ways throughout his life, for his blatant disregard for the Little People.

Pat needed another hay shed to hold his flourishing hay crop. He had bought more land recently and the single hayshed near his dwelling would not suffice for the coming year's crop. He agonized over where to build the shed. Finally, he decided to build it in a central location with all his fields accessible from that spot. As ill luck would have it, the most central spot on his entire farm was the fairy fort. It sat alongside the farm road linking two major public roads. In Pat's mind it was the perfect spot for transporting hay to and from every field on the farm. Ignoring the advice of his neighbors, he decided to build his shed beside the fort, knowing its ring of trees would provide year-round shelter from the elements. He threw fairy traditions to the wind and refused to ask the fairies for permission to build on that particular site. He did, however, draw up plans making every effort to avoid touching or tampering with the actual fairy ring.

When the workers excavated the foundation site, they dumped the unwanted soil over the mound into the fairy enclosure. When the shed was erected and roofed, no one seemed to notice that the back wall actually touched the mound. That August when the hay crop was saved Pat filled his hayshed to the rafters with the newly mown hay. Then he boasted to his friends that he had saved more than enough hay to feed his animals throughout the winter and to sell his excess to the County Mayo farmers.



The cursed hayshed built alongside the fort (photo by author)

When winter came, he fed his cattle with the hay from the fort/field shed. Each day he found a cow dead in the fields. After a week and the loss of seven cows, Pat called for the vet. There were no visible marks or trauma on his cows. They all died of inexplicable causes. His neighbors, of course, knew exactly what his cattle died from. The fairies had poisoned his hay. Old Pat had desecrated their property, so they desecrated his. It was another case of fairy justice.

Not only was Pat forced to burn the poisoned hay, but he had to swallow his pride and beg fodder from the very neighbors he had bragged of his excess to earlier.

I still recall the burned-out blackened hay strewn in and around the long abandoned fort/field shed.

It is not beyond the realm of possibility that there is a fairy fort in close proximity to the ancestral home of the foreign researcher. It would behoove them to enquire about such sites and any local lore attached to them. How exciting it would be to find that one's ancestors had direct dealings with such a site!

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Endnotes

1 An expert on Irish fairies and fairy lore, Gabrielle Ní Mheachair has expanded on material drawn from her books *Irish Fairies Fearsome or Friendly*, *Solitary Fairies Life or Death*, and *Ivy Hall* and the Liosbán Curse for this article.

2 "Folklore of the Hedgerow," *The Folklore and Traditions of the Irish Hedgerow* (http://irishhedgerows.weebly.com/flora.html : accessed 18 March 2024). See also "Hawthorn Harvest," *Eat the Weeds* (https://www.eattheweeds.com/the-crataegus-clan-food-poison-2/ : accessed 18 March 2024).

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Gabrielle Ní Mheachair, a native of Templemore, Co. Tipperary, writes children's books in the Irish language. She has also published history, folklore, and memoirs. Her books are available on Amazon. Irish Fairies Fearsome or Friendly, Solitary Fairies Life or Death, *and* Ivy Hall and the Liosbán Curse *are her three books relating to the fairy lore of Ireland.*



My Great-Great-Grandfather's Life in County Roscommon, Ireland, 1835-1860

by Robt. Flanagan Stieglitz

"In Roscommon, deaths by famine are so prevalent that whole families who retire at night are corpses in the morning."[1]
~ *The Nation*, Dublin, Ireland, March 1847.

When I became interested in learning about my ancestors, I questioned my mom about our family's history in Ireland. Surprisingly, she had little knowledge of them, including not knowing where they originated! My mother was Virginia M. Flanagan (1922–2002), a third-generation Irish American. All eight of her great-grandparents emigrated from Ireland between 1851–1867, both during and shortly after the Great Famine.[2] It seems every time I asked questions of her or others of her generation, I received the same response: "No one talked about their past." How could this be?

Setting out to uncover this mystery, I began researching Thomas Flanagan (1835–1880), my great-great-grandfather, who emigrated from Cloonfree, County Roscommon, Ireland, in 1860.[3] He settled in New York City, where he met and married another Irish immigrant from County Roscommon.[4] They raised their family in NYC until his untimely death in 1880.[5] What could Thomas have experienced as a child, and then a young man, that prevented him from sharing stories about life in his native homeland?

My research indicated Thomas was the son of James and Mary (O'Gorman) Flanagan of Cloonfree.[6] Because of 19th century Irish census losses, Griffith's Valuation of Ireland was used to find the location of the correct Flanagan farm in Cloonfree.[7]

The survey of Roscommon by Griffith was completed on 1 July 1858, suggesting that the Flanagan family was likely still living on the farm before Thomas departed for America.[8]

Famine

Roscommon was one of the first counties to report the potato blight in 1845, with estimates of a 31% population loss occurring between 1845 and 1855, making it one of the hardest hit counties in all of Ireland.[9]

On 22 August 1846, the residents of Clonahee submitted a petition to their landowners, who lived just six miles north of Strokestown. Signed by residents, including William and John Flanagan, this well-known Clonahee Petition made evident the conditions of the Strokestown area of Roscommon: "Our families are really and truly suffering in our present, and we cannot much longer withstand their cries for food. We have no food for them, our potatoes are rotten, and we have no grain."[10]

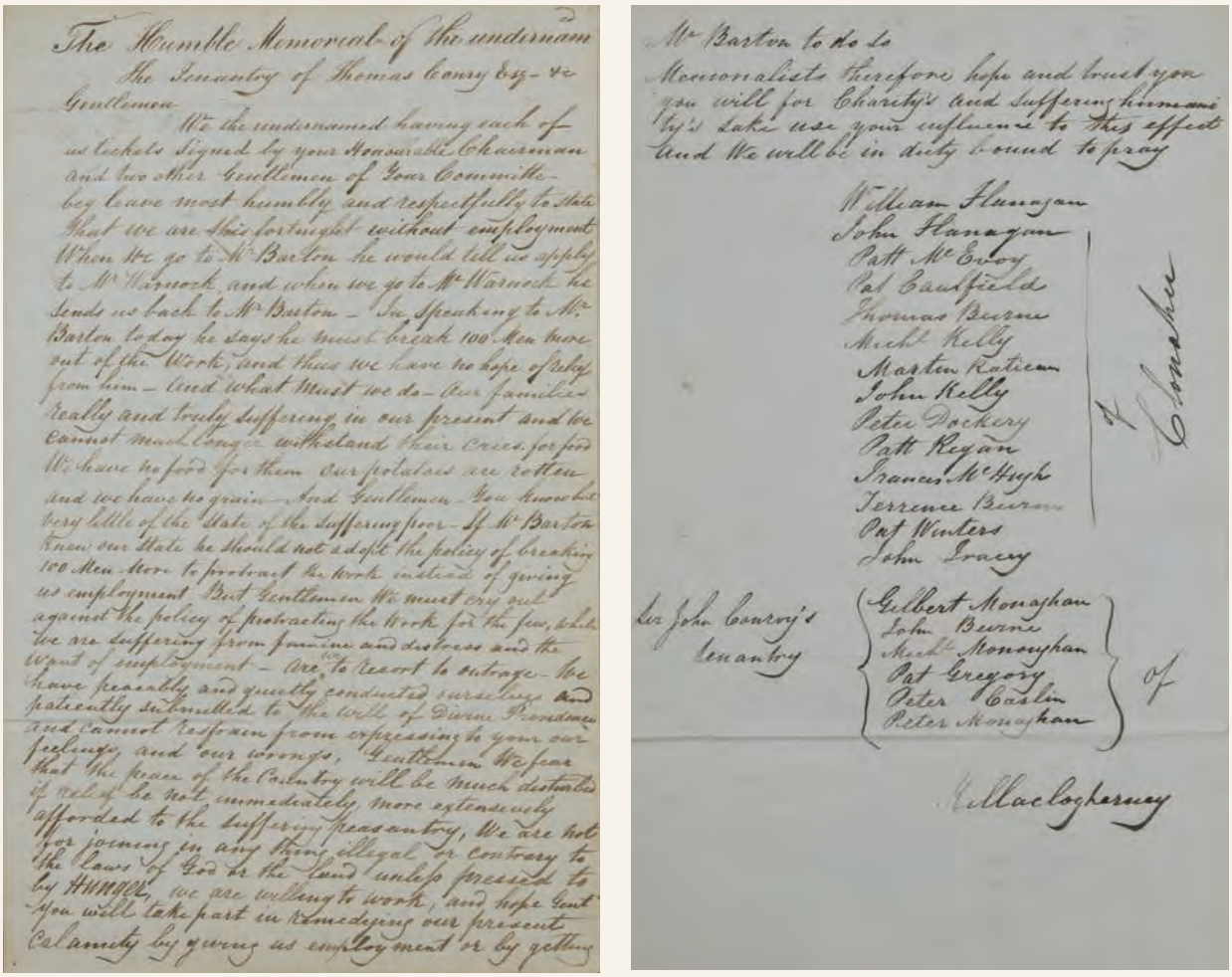
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VALUATION OF TENEMENTS.

PARISH OF CLOONFINLOUGH.

No. and Letters of Reference to Map.	Names. Townlands and Occupiers.	Names. Immediate Lessors.	Description of Tenement.	Area. A. R. P.	Rateable Annual Valuation. Land. £ s. d.	Rateable Annual Valuation. Buildings. £ s. d.	Total Annual Valuation of Rateable Property. £ s. d.
	CLOONFREE—*continued.*						
49	Thomas Healy,	William Mahon,	Land,	5 2 20	3 15 0	—	3 15 0
50 a	John Carberry,	Same,	House, office, and land,	10 3 0	7 10 0	0 15 0	8 5 0
– b	Thomas Healy,	Same,	House, office, & garden,	0 1 0	0 5 0	0 10 0	0 15 0
51 a	Anne Leaven,	Same,	House, office, and land,	5 2 20	4 0 0	0 10 0	4 10 0
52 a	James Flanagan,	Same,	House, office, and land,	10 3 0	7 0 0	0 15 0	7 15 0
53 a	Edward Neary,	Same,	House and land,	17 2 14	11 5 0	0 10 0	11 15 0
54 a	John Hunt,	Same,	House and land,	5 3 0	4 5 0	0 10 0	4 15 0
55 A a	Martin O'Hara,	Same,	House and land,	6 0 15	2 5 0	0 5 0	2 10 0
55 B	Mary Barry,		Land,		2 5 0	—	2 5 0
56 a	John Brennan,	Same,	House, offices, and land,	11 2 35	9 0 0	1 0 0	10 0 0
57	John Brennan,	Same,	Land,	10 0 35	1 15 0	—	1 15 0
57 a	James M'Loughlin,		House, office, & land,		6 0 0	1 0 0	7 0 0
– b	John Gormley,	Same,	House and land,	0 1 25	0 5 0	0 10 0	0 15 0
– c	John Ivory,	John Brennan,	House and land,	0 1 25	0 5 0	0 10 0	0 15 0
58	James M'Loughlin,	William Mahon,	Land,	10 1 20	7 10 0	—	7 10 0

Griffith's Valuation of Cloonfree, Cloonfinlough, County Roscommon



The Humble Memorial of the undersigned
the Tenantry of Thomas Conry Esqr &c
Gentlemen
We the undersigned having each of
us tickets Signed by your Honourable Chairman
and two other Gentlemen of Your Committee
beg leave most humbly and respectfully to State
That we are this fortnight without employment
When we go to Mr Barton he would tell us apply
to Mr Warnock, and when we go to Mr Warnock he
sends us back to Mr Burton – In Speaking to M^r
Barton today he says he must break 100 Men more
out of the Work, and thus we have no hope of Relief
from him – And what Must we do – Our families
really and truly suffering in our present and we
cannot much longer withstand their Cries for food
We have no food for them our potatoes are rotten
and we have no grain – And Gentlemen You know but
very little of the State of the suffering poor – If Mr Barton
knew our State he should not adopt the policy of breaking
100 Men More to protract the Work instead of giving
us employment But Gentlemen We must cry out
against the policy of protracting the Work for the few, while
we are suffering from famine and distress and the
want of employment – Are, to resort to outrage – We
have peaceably and quietly conducted ourselves and
patiently submitted to the Will of Divine Providence
and cannot refrain from expressing to you our
feelings, and our wrongs, Gentlemen We fear
that the peace of the Country will be much disturbed
if relief be not immediately, more extensively
afforded to the suffering Peasantry, We are not
for joining in any thing illegal or contrary to
the Laws of God or the Land unless pressed to
by HUNGER, we are willing to work, and hope that
you will take part in Remedying our present
Calamity by giving us employment or by getting

Mr Barton to do &c
Memorialists therefore hope and trust you
you will for Charity's and Suffering humanity's Sake use your influence to this effect
And We will be in duty bound to pray

William Flanagan
John Flanagan
Patt Mc Evoy
Pat Caulfield
Thomas Burne
Mich^l Kelly
Martin Ratteam
John Kelly
Peter Dockery
Patt Regan
Francis Mc Hugh
Terrence Burne
Pat Winters
John Treacy
} of Clonahee

Per John Conroy's Tenantry
Gilbert Monaghan
John Burne
Mich^l Monoughan
Pat Gregory
Peter Caslin
Peter Monaghan
} of

Mac Loghenny

The Clonahee Petition [11]

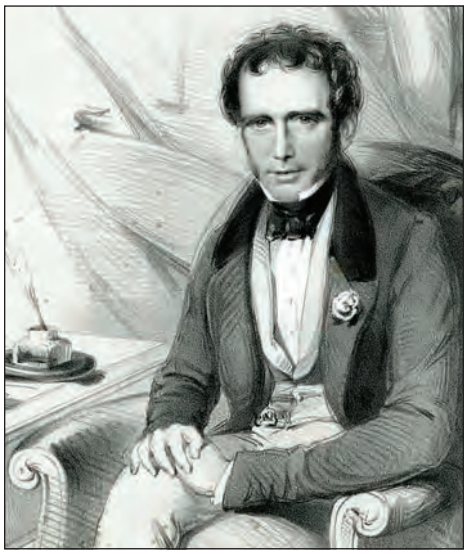
Disease

Along with the blight that destroyed the potato crops in Ireland, fever, dysentery, and smallpox were significant causes of death. These diseases were present long before the famine but were made more acute due to malnutrition between 1845 and 1849 and compounded by widespread tuberculosis, influenza, pneumonia, diarrhea, and measles.[12]

Evictions, Violence, Rioting, Murders and Social Unrest

Cloonfree is a small townland just west of Strokestown and is approximately 3.6 km^2 in size.[13] Thomas, in his early teens, lived on the Cloonfree farm with his parents during the height of the famine. The land was leased from William Mahon, a relative of Major Denis Mahon, who was the Anglo-Irish landlord of Strokestown.

William's side of the Mahon family was established in Cloonfree in 1735. At the time of Griffith's Valuation, William controlled land in five parishes, including Cloonfinlough (Cloonfree). The Cloonfree estate was advertised for sale by the Mahon family in March of 1860; it was around this time that Thomas decided to leave for America.[15]



Portrait of Major Denis Mahon[14]

Prior to Thomas's departure to America, Major Denis Mahon, owner of the Strokestown Manor House, managed 11,500 tenants living on 11,000 acres of land in 1846.[16] An excerpt from *IrelandXO* states:

> In the summer of 1847, Major Mahon paid £4,000 for the emigration of 1,432 of his tenants to Canada – a quarter of whom died at sea. Upon hearing this news, a large number of his tenants refused to go. Mahon responded by evicting 600 families (about 3,000 people). The struggle was compounded by what amounted to a war of religion and a complicated conflict between Mahon and Strokestown's parish priest, who declared from the altar that Mahon was "worse than Cromwell."[17]

One of the evicted tenants was Denis Mahon's coachman, William Flanagan, who was turned out from his farmland in May of 1847.[18] Major Mahon's actions so angered the locals that on the evening of 2 November 1847, Major Mahon was shot to death as he was returning home from a meeting in Roscommon town.[19] With him at the time of his murder was his new coachman Martin Flanagan. Martin was uninjured and later testified against the assailants.

Approximately one month after the murder of Denis Mahon, another high-profile assassination occurred in Roscommon. The Reverend John Lloyd of Elphin, a Protestant clergyman and landowner, was shot and killed on his way home from church on Sunday, 28 November 1847.[20] One of the individuals involved in Lloyd's murder was a local named John Flanagan. John escaped the fate of his hanged co-conspirators because, on 5 February 1847, he "died from fever in the County Jail" before his death sentence could be upheld.[21]

During the 1840s, a group called the "Anti-Landlord Agitators," was headed by an Irish widow named Molly Maguire. Their protests eventually turned violent, causing the group to become well-known throughout Ireland, Great Britain and, ultimately, the United States. This group eventually became known as the "Molly Maguires," and was quite active in Roscommon.[22]



Strokestown House, circa 1910

Along with these violent protest groups, family feuds were commonplace and could also be quite brutal. The Flanagan clan was well-known locally, as seen by an 1846 newspaper clipping which details a brawl occurring in Elphin, fourteen kilometers (less than nine miles) from Cloonfree and Strokestown, between the Flanagans and the Carneys.[23]

On Wednesday last the two rival and dreaded factions "Carneys and Flanagans" met again at Elphin, and a dreadful fight ensued, which could not be put down until the authorities procured the aid of the military. The Magistrates, aided by the Roman Catholic Clergymen of the Parish, exerted themselves in a praise worthy manner to quell the riot but without success. We have been informed that one of the Rev. Gentlemen was repeatedly struck by the rioters and received a severe wound in the face from a blow of a stone. Some of the ringleaders have been arrested, one of whom was so dreadfully beaten that only slight hopes are entertained of his recovery.

"Carneys and Flanagans" — Extracted from the Roscommon and Leitrim Gazette*, dated 3 January 1846.*

Conclusion

It is unknown if the William, Martin, and John Flanagan who were directly involved in some of these tragic events were relatives of Thomas. It is also unclear whether Thomas or any close family members participated in the riot in Elphin, but as his surname featured prominently in all these events, it is reasonable to suppose Thomas might have been related to them, even if only distantly.

Once I gained some historical context into what Thomas may have experienced while growing up in Roscommon during 1835–1860, it became understandable why he may have never spoken about his life in Ireland. He spent his childhood and early adult years surrounded by starvation and disease, threatened by violence from an environment of civil unrest and murder, and facing imminent eviction from his home.

Thomas left Ireland in 1860 for America, where he worked as a coachman (like both William and Martin) until he died in 1880. While I can't fully relate to my great-great-grandfather's experiences, being an American separated by both time and distance from his life in Ireland, I can still try to understand it.

Endnotes

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17 "The Murder of Major Dennis Mahon 1847," compiled by *IrelandXO* (https://www.irelandxo.com/ireland-xo/history-and-genealogy/timeline/murder-major-dennis-mahon-1847 : accessed 23 April 2023); citing Ireland's Famine Museum.

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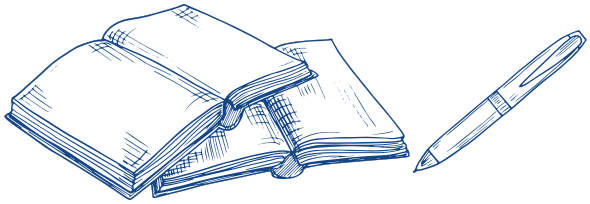


Rob Flanagan Stieglitz is a retired chemistry/physiology teacher and clinical pharmacist living in Fargo, ND, who summers in Nevis, MN. Rob completed the Boston University Genealogical Research Certificate program in 2020 and received a certificate in genetic genealogy from the University of Strathclyde in 2022. Since Boston U., he has published multiple articles in various genealogical magazines, including The New York Researcher, Irish Roots, Irish Lives Remembered, The Irish Genealogist, Family Tree Magazine, The Bridge, Genealogen, *and* The Septs. *New articles will come out this spring in the* German Genealogical Journal *and* The Journal of Genetic Genealogy. *In addition to writing, Rob teaches general and genetic genealogy classes at local workshops and libraries.*

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Do you have a story to tell?

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Entries are due on July 1, 2024

For more information and complete contest rules, visit
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Go Raibh Maith Agat!

Thank you to all the donors who helped IGSI exceed its 2023 donation goal. Donations are an important part of our financial budget and we think they are a reflection of the value that members place on the benefits the organization provides. We appreciate this vote of confidence!

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Thank You to All Volunteers

by Jeanne Bakken, Volunteer Coordinator

Because April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, we want to thank all those members that volunteered their time in 2023. You are all appreciated and IGSI could not manage without you. As you know, our organization is totally dependent on our volunteers, and we sincerely want to thank each and every one of you. Here is a list of committees and volunteers contributing their time in 2023, for a total of more than 3,000 hours! Thank you.

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2024 Webinar Series – Save the Dates!

Saturday, April 20 | *Shamrocks in Cyberspace: Irish Genealogy Databases* | by Michael Brophy

Information about our Irish ancestors is exploding on the internet. The best websites for Irish research will be explored and analyzed. Landmark additions of Catholic Church records and vital records will be presented. Finding aids for further Irish research will be assessed and critiqued during this tour of everything happening with online Irish resources.

Saturday, May 4 | *Waves & Ripples: Irish Immigration Patterns To and Across North America* | by Mary Wickersham

Knowing your ancestors' arrival dates and places, along with tracking their movements within North America, will help you develop theories about their migration motives and guide your research. Mary will provide an overview of Irish migration patterns and demonstrate how to leverage this information for your research.

This hybrid talk/webinar at the Minnesota Genealogical Society (MGS) will be followed by a discussion and Q&A session. Registration for the live event is limited to 40 people and includes options to pre-order a box lunch or tour the Research Library's Irish Collection. Virtual registration is unlimited. All registrants will have access to the webinar recording.

Saturday, June 22 | *Researching a Mid-Nineteenth-Century Cork Family from Wisconsin to Ireland* | by Lois Mackin, PhD

This hybrid talk will be about an Irishman from Cork, born about 1845, who settled in Wisconsin. Learn the records and methods used to identify six of his eleven siblings in America and then trace his family back to Ireland, where new information on his parents and the remaining siblings was discovered.

If you have questions about any of our webinars or classes, contact Trish and Walt, IGSI Education Co-Chairs, at Education@IrishGenealogical.org.

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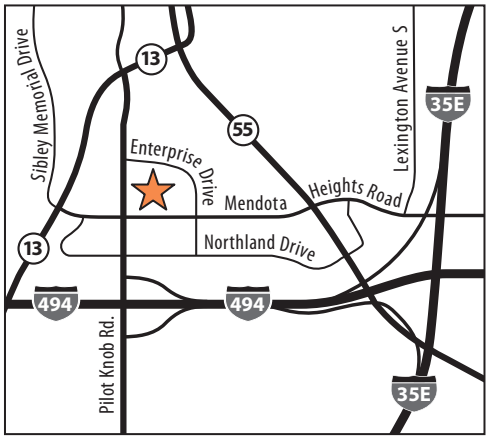
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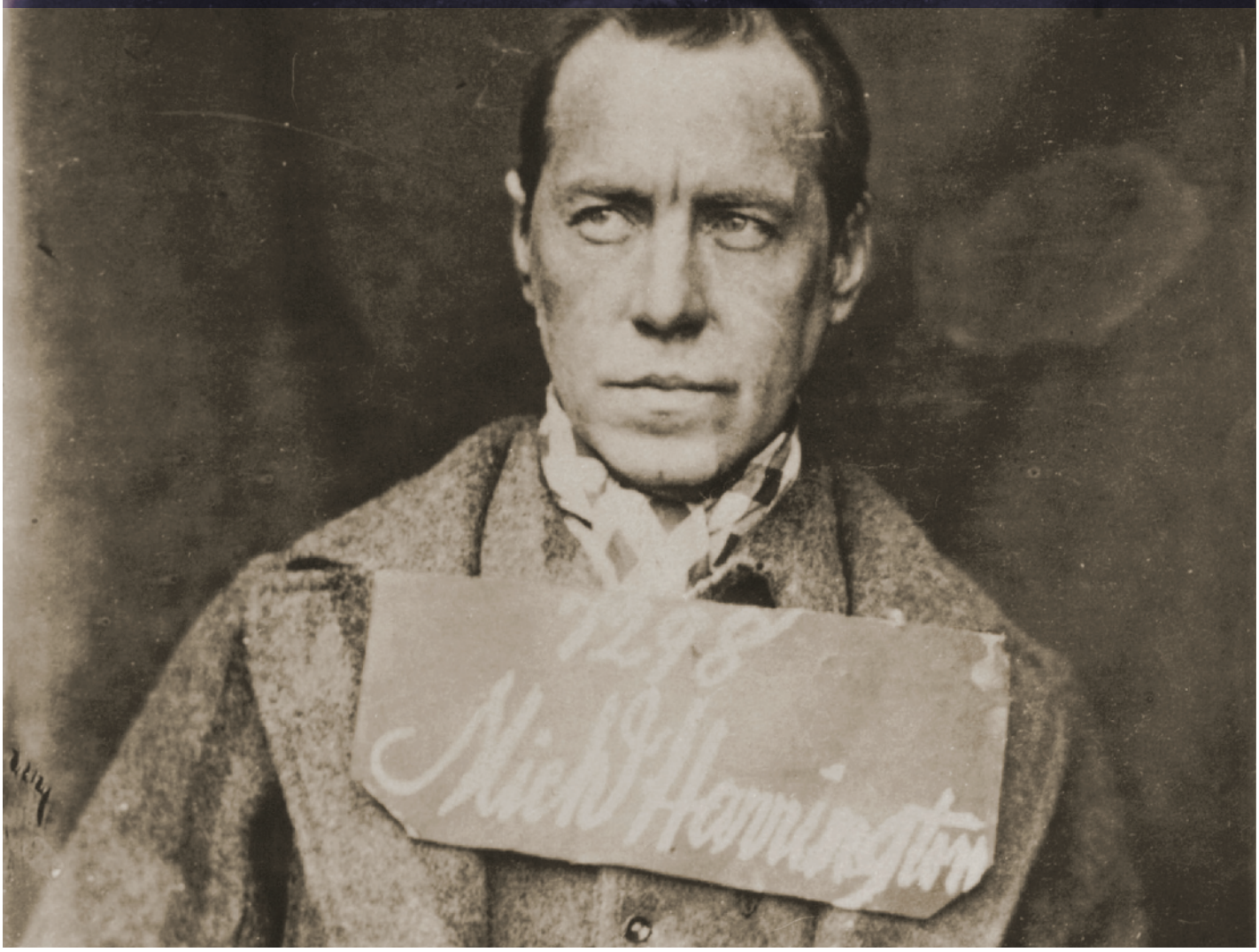
The library is a self-supporting research library staffed by volunteers. If you are a member of the IGSI and are coming from out of town, contact Librarian@IrishGenealogical.org so we can have an Irish researcher available to meet you.

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The Septs

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IRISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Genealogy Library Open

The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2024.

The Hoffman Research Library is a private genealogy research library created for members of the organizations in the MGS Partners' Group. Access to the library materials is free to members of IGSI and other MGS Partner societies. Non-members and the general public are requested to pay a per visit $10 donation for use.

The Hoffman Library will be open only if there are two volunteers available to staff the building. (Won't you consider becoming a MGC/library volunteer to help ensure research access for all?)

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Saturday	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Irish Saturdays

Stop by the library on the second Saturday of the month between 10 AM and 4 PM for Irish research help from IGSI volunteers.

JULY 13, 2024
AUGUST 10, 2024
SEPTEMBER 14, 2024
OCTOBER 12, 2024
NOVEMBER 9, 2024
DECEMBER 14, 2024
JANUARY 11, 2025
FEBRUARY 8, 2025
MARCH 8, 2025

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The Septs, the quarterly journal of the Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc., is one of the primary benefits of IGSI membership and is published in January, April, July, and October. Members receive a printed version of the journal unless they have chosen to receive it electronically.

Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc.

2024

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of *The Septs* is built around a core theme. Research articles on the theme should be 1500-2500 words in length and include no more than 2-4 images. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g., family stories submitted by IGSI members and non-members, etc. Articles unrelated to the theme should be 750-1500 words.

If you wish to write on the theme or share case studies, family research, or articles on general Irish culture and history and genealogy resources, please contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadlines to ensure your article is considered for the proper issue.

Contributions and ideas are welcome. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the editorial staff.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2024 | October | Hidden Children

Delve into lost ancestors hidden by adoption, orphan trains, and poorhouses. How do you find them? Resources for locating adoptees, orphans, the indigent, etc. encouraged, as is DNA exploration.
Deadline for articles: August 15, 2024.

2025 | January | Using Social Media for Genealogical Research

Learn how to leverage social media such as Facebook descendant groups to advance your genealogical knowledge and to connect with other researchers and/or family members.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2024.

2025 | April | Ulster Province

Researching in Northern Ireland's six counties of Antrim, Armagh, Derry (Londonderry), Down, Fermanagh, and Tyrone, and Republic of Ireland counties Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan. Ulster locals are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2025.

2025 | July | British Military Records

Learn about using British military records and the British War Museum to locate 18th and 19th century Irish ancestors before the partition of Ireland in 1922.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2025.

Cover Photo: *Michael Harrington, Fenian convict to Australia.* Mountjoy Prison photo collection, ©Folger Shakespeare Library.

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The Beth Mullinax Award

by Donna Jones and Walt Rothwell

In May we presented the Beth Mullinax Award to Tom Rice. This award was named after Beth, who was part of the small group of people founding IGSI in 1979, and recognizes those who have provided outstanding service to our society.

Tom has been educating members since his first IGSI presentation in 2004, and has generously shared his knowledge by teaching classes and presenting webinars, reminding us of the importance of education. He has also authored several articles for *The Septs*; many of his methodology articles are posted on the website. A significant effort by Tom resulted in scanning back issues of *The Septs*, which are available on the IGSI website. Tom believes family history provides a life-long opportunity to learn about history, culture, research methods, and records. Thank you, Tom, for fostering this fundamental value at IGSI.

Society News

As we start the second half of the year, we'd like to reflect on some of our volunteers' accomplishments. In the last six months, we have implemented new registration software for webinars, including additional options for hybrid presentations. In January, we launched a project to upgrade our website to a responsible design platform because approximately 35% of users access our website via mobile devices. Responsive software will automatically resize our webpages to fit the device being used. This project is taking longer than anticipated due to a learning curve and a small group of volunteers working on the project, but steady progress continues.

In June, we added an Instagram account to expand our social media presence. We are excited about this platform since it appeals to a younger demographic. You can find us at: https://www.instagram.com/irishgensi/.

In other social media news, the number of views on our YouTube channel continues to increase.

Season Three of The IGSI Podcast begins in July at https://www.youtube.com/@IrishGenealogyIGSI. Be sure to like and subscribe to the podcast. Our blog, which can be accessed from the website's home page (https://www.irishgenealogical.org/blog.php?sid=1), continues to cover genealogy news. Over the last few months, we have also seen an increase in the number of followers on our *Facebook* page, found at: https://www.facebook.com/le8afhd.

The National Genealogical Society's virtual conference this year ran from May 16 – 18. IGSI sponsored a virtual booth and placed an ad in the NGS Compendium. Our booth included a video about the IGSI, our membership brochure, and an article titled, "Get Started With Irish Ancestral Research." We received some great comments about the booth, and several people expressed an interest in becoming members. Please see Walt's note regarding this effort on page 80.



After retiring from Oxford University Press, Donna Jones finally has more time to research her heritage and ancestry. She is passionate about genealogy education and is a member of the IGSI Education committee and the Board of Directors. IGSI provides her the opportunity to learn more about Irish research as she continues to search for where in Ireland her great, great-grandparents lived.



Walt Rothwell is an IGSI board member and co-chair of the Education Committee. He is also affiliated with the Yankee Genealogical Society and the Canadian Interest Group of the Minnesota Genealogical Society. He is endlessly researching family lines across North American, Ireland, and England.

Save the Date!!

IGSI will host a virtual social gathering on Thursday, September 5th, from 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Please join us to share questions, challenges, strategies, and accomplishments or to learn more about IGSI's future. Walt Rothwell will start things off with a quick live demo on the new and especially useful features of *FamilySearch*.

Finding Black Sheep and Asking Questions

by Mary LaRue Stuart

Greetings from a toasty East Coast! I hope everyone's summer (or winter, for those "Down Under") has gotten off to a good start and that the weather is being kind to you either way.

While cranking away on this issue, we here at The Septs have been busy prepping for our October and January installments and also working on upcoming features. We're especially excited to introduce a new column in this issue called "Ask *The Septs*."

This column will allow readers to ask *The Septs* genealogists a question. It might be something as simple as recommending books or online sources for a particular topic or geographical area of research. Perhaps you need help finding someone in a specific newspaper or record set. Or maybe you've spent the last thirty years beating your head against one of the omnipresent genealogical brick walls and could use fresh eyes on the problem. Whatever the case, email us your questions at askthesepts@gmail.com. We will select one question each quarter to answer in the following issue. Strap on your thinking caps and hit us up — we will do our best to answer your question or find someone else who can. Stay tuned!

Aside from the new column, we have a great lineup of articles on penal colonies for transported Irish/assorted black sheep ancestors. Andrew Redfern, an active member of the Society of Australian Genealogists, shares vignettes about the unexpected ups and downs in the lives of three of his Irish-Australian ancestors.

Next, a New Zealand genealogist named Miles Dillon shares the story of his ancestor, Tom Clements, a man with a penchant for drink that led him into all sorts of interesting mischief and not a few run-ins with the law.

Mike Mahoney of The National Archives (UK) introduces us to indentured Irish Labour in the Caribbean during the Cromwellian era, partly dispelling the myth that all transported Irish became slaves. For those who don't know, Irish and English prisoners were often transported to the West Indies and Colonial America until Great Britain's loss in the American War of Independence made those locations untenable, after which Australia became the penal colony of choice.

Kim Gehrman White provides some much-needed insight into the history of penal law and the transportation perpetrated primarily by the British and introduces us to *Trove*, an underutilized but handy resource for researching ancestors "Down Under." In her companion article, "Using *Trove* for Irish Genealogy," Kim covers *Trove* in more detail.

Mary Stuart has compiled an extensive collection of resources on transported Irish genealogy. Divided by location (Colonial America, the West Indies, and Australia/New Zealand), listed resources include books, articles, and websites providing historical background on the theme and some online convict databases that can be searched for prisoner ancestors.

Lois Mackin uses her vast experience to thoroughly explain how to write up DNA proofs, including proof statements, proof summaries, and case studies. Her straightforward approach helps to take the sting and intimidation out of writing up one's research.

Get Golden Visa offers step-by-step instructions on how to claim Irish citizenship by descent, noting that an Irish passport and citizenship are currently one of the most coveted worldwide, providing several perks to those lucky enough to claim one successfully.

Last but not least, Patti Salvaggio treats us to the first part of her thorough case study, in which she shows us how she was able to use assorted records, particularly dog licenses, to help her track the migration of her ancestor Thomas Conboy and ultimately discover both his birth origins and his siblings. This well-documented and engaging study will be continued in October.

This issue's theme has provided an excellent opportunity for us to connect with genealogists from farther afield than our regular pool of authors. We hope you will enjoy the results.

Mary LaRue Stuart serves as Editor of The Septs *and on IGSI's Board of Directors. A native Hoosier and former university writing teacher with an MA in English, Mary is now a professional genealogist whose specialties include military repatriation, Indiana research, and DNA. Her Irish ancestors hail largely from Donegal/Northern Ireland. Mary is currently working on her BCG certification portfolio and pursuing an AFA in Glass Arts. In her non-existent spare time, she enjoys singing, sewing, reading, and blowing glass.*



Penal Law in Ireland & Transport to Penal Colonies

by Kim Gehrman White

The British, once a significant colonial power, are often associated with the practice of penal transportation. From the mid-17th century, they transported convicts to colonies in America and the West Indies, a practice that continued until the American War of Independence. In the wake of their 1783 defeat, the British initiated transportation to Australia to offer an alternative destination for England's convicts and political prisoners.[1] Until the cessation of penal transportation in 1853 (though it continued unofficially through most of the 1860s), Australia received over 160,000 convicts, approximately 26,500 of whom sailed from Ireland.[2]

By the 18th century, over 200 crimes were punishable by death. Measures such as the Waltham Black Act of 1723 were created to "deal with deer-stealing, and other activities in the royal forests" and "making more than fifty distinct offences capital for seven different group of offenders".[3] This Act created a series of extreme laws in England, Wales, and Ireland later known as the "Bloody Code" of English law.[4]

The Judgement of Death Act of 1823 gave judges the prerogative to pass a lesser sentence (although it did not apply to murder or treason). The new law mandated the courts to hand down a sentence of death so it would appear on the court record. The judge was then allowed to resentence convicts to either imprisonment or transportation.[5] The penal system was insufficient for imprisoning ever larger numbers of convicts. A sentence of transportation that removed the offender from society was seen as a more merciful punishment than death and relieved overcrowding in the prisons. During the years of the Great Famine, crime was rampant in Ireland as desperate people were forced to steal for survival.

Of the countries outside of Ireland that are home to vast numbers of Irish migrants, Australia ranks third (behind the U.K. and the U.S.), with about 11.5% of the Irish diaspora.[6] About 2 million people said they were of Irish descent in the 2011 Australian census.[7] While the Great Famine of 1845-1852[8] is often thought of when first considering Irish migration patterns, we still need to reflect on the role Australia's being a British penal colony played in Irish Migration.[9]

Irish Trial Records

Trove is Australia's free online research portal, offering access to the collection of "Transportation records (Ireland to Australia) held by the National Archives of Ireland."[10] These records cover 1788 to 1868 and include records of both some of the convicts transported and some of the free settlers who applied to accompany the convicts to Australia. Those documented as free settlers were often the wives and children of the convicts.[11]

Information related to Irish trial records and the crimes of some Irish convicts may be available in transportation records. These records were not immune to the 1922 fire at the National Archives in Dublin and are not comprehensive.

As an example, both the *National Archives of Ireland* and *Trove* websites will be used to find an Irish convict's record:

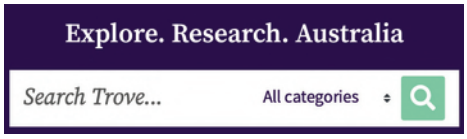
Step 1: Search the available index online by accessing the National Archives Ireland (https://www.nationalarchives.ie) > Historical Records > Research Guides & Sources > Articles > "Sources in the National Archives for research into the transportation of Irish convicts to Australia (1791-1853)" by Rena Lohan; this database contains 38,907 records. (See also the Ireland-Australia transportation database and PDF version, which is available for download.)

Step 2: Do a simple search for Nancy Adams in the Ireland-Australia transportation database or scroll through the PDF version for "Surname: Adams; First name: Nancy;"

Match 1 from 'Ireland-Australia transportation database'	
Last name:	ADAMS
First name:	NANCY
Full name:	**NANCY ADAMS**
Sex:	F
Age:	14
Trial place:	Antrim
Trial date:	06/01/1842
Crime desc:	Burglary and robbery
Sentence:	Transportation 10 yrs
Document ref1:	TR 4, P 193

At the bottom of Nancy Adam's entry is a document reference number: TR 4, P 193. The various Record Reference Codes are defined in the PDF version. TR is the reference code for the Transportation Register.

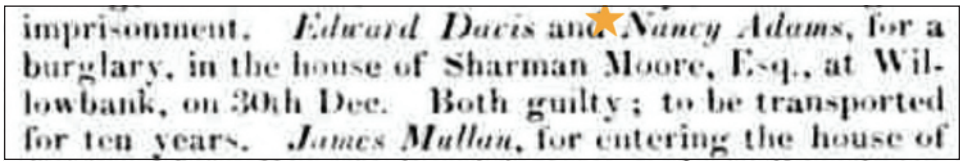
Once you have found the person in the index, you can access records on *Trove*. The search function is front and center on the home page:



Search function on Trove *home page*

Step 3: Search for transportation records (Ireland to Australia) in the "Diaries, Letters, and Archives" category; there are 1,089 results.

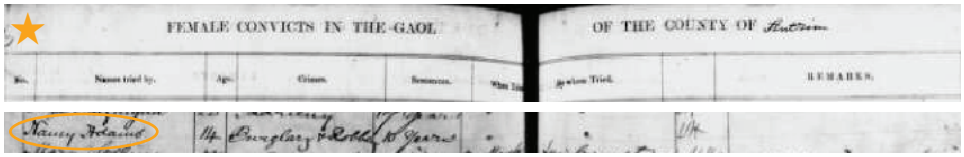
Step 4: Search for Vol. TR 4 by using the "Document ref1" information at the bottom of Nancy Adam's index entry. TR 4, 1841 - 1842.


imprisonment. *Edward Davis* and *Nancy Adams*, for a burglary, in the house of Sharman Moore, Esq., at Willowbank, on 30th Dec. Both guilty; to be transported for ten years. *James Mullan*, for entering the house of

Nancy Adams's trial and sentencing in Trove's *newspaper collection*



Search result for Vol. TR 4



Register entry for Nancy Adams

Step 5: Browse the register images. Each register is divided by male and female convicts, and further divided by county of trial.

Nancy Adams, age 14, 6 January 1842, Antrim (trial place), is found in image 103. (Just left of the orange star was page number 193, as noted on Nancy's register entry.)[12]

Trial Information in Newspapers

A convict's trial may only be found in a newspaper. It would be best to look at both newspapers in Ireland and New South Wales (NSW), Australia. Try searching for a report of the trial or a report of a convict ship's arrival in the port of NSW. The newspaper collection on *Trove* allows you to search and view articles freely. You may also search the *British Newspaper Archive*, but a subscription or "pay as you go" fee is needed to view articles. The *Irish Newspaper Archives* are another viable option with a subscription.[13]

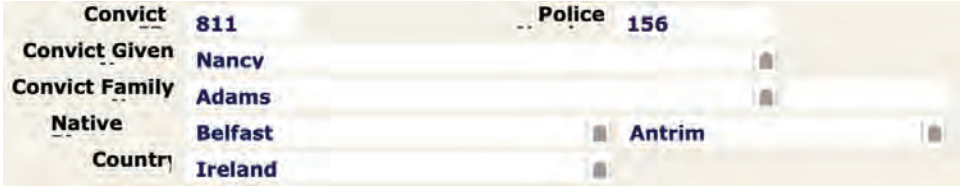
Convict Records

Nancy Adams was discovered in the *Ancestry* database, "Australia, Convict Records Index, 1787-1867." The information in this record had a few errors, such as her conviction date in 1917 at age 91. Still, it led to a new source, *Convict Records* (https://convictrecords.com.au), which provided further information about Nancy after arriving at Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) on the *Hope* on 17 August 1842. This database is a community-contributed project and includes brief biographical information. Of particular interest, Nancy ("mostly known as Ann"), was married in 1844 to William Neighbour and was the mother of 9 children. Nancy died in 1917 and is buried as "Ann Neighbour and William" at the Old Anglican Cemetery in Campbell Town.[14]

Convict Records – Female Specific

The *Female Convicts Research Centre Inc.* (FCRC) is a volunteer-run non-profit group. The center focuses on the female convicts of Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania). Although there is no subscription fee, the user must register with the FCRC to gain access. The volunteers are attempting to reconstruct full biographical sketches of each female convict. Because this is a volunteer effort, the database continues to be a work in progress.

Nancy Adams, convict 811, has extensive records in her "convict story." One section, entitled "Relations," provides biographical data on convicts sourced by volunteers and includes information on many of Nancy's family members, such as the birth years of her husband and nine children and the names and places of nativity of her mother, brother, and sister. In the section "Pre-Transportation," a transcription of a petition submitted by Nancy's mother asking for leniency toward her daughter is sourced and provides the contributor's name.[15]



Nancy Adams, Convict 811 in the Convict Records database

Convict Transportation Ends

With a growing number of free settlers arriving in Australia, opposition to transporting convicts saw the growth of the anti-transportation movement. The convict transport *Hougoumont* carried 269 prisoners on board and arrived in the port of Fremantle, Australia, on 9 January 1868. This ship's arrival marked the end of about 80 years of penal transportation to the Australian continent.[16]

Endnotes

For additional resources, see the "Irish Penal Colony Resources" article on page 81.

1 "Methods of Punishment - WJEC," *BBC* (https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/ : accessed 21 May 2024), "Transportation From the 1770s to the 1860s," part of the *History: Changes in Crime and Punishment, c. 1500 to the Present Day*, exam board content from BBC Bitesize.

2 Rena Lohan, "Sources in the National Archives for Research Into the Transportation of Irish Convicts to Australia (1791-1853)," *National Archives* (https://www.nationalarchives.ie : accessed 21 May 2024), Historical Records > Research Guides & Sources > Articles; Journal of the Irish Society for Archives, Irish Archives, Spring 1996, p. 1.

3 "The 'Bloody Code'?" news and blog post, *National Justice Museum*, 29 July 2019 (https://www.nationaljusticemuseum.org.uk/museum/news/what-was-the-bloody-code : accessed 26 May 2024).

4 *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloody_Code : accessed 26 May 2024), "Bloody Code," revised 04:53, 23 May 2024.

5 *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judgment_of_Death_Act_1823 : accessed 21 June 2024), "Judgment of Death Act 1823," revised 02:41 (UTC), 15 November 2023.

6 Haynie, Devon. "10 Countries With the Most Irish Emigrants." *U.S. News & World Report*, March 17, 2016 (https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2016-03-17/10-countries-with-the-most-irish-emigrants).

7 "Cultural Diversity in Australia: Reflecting a Nation: Stories From the 2011 Census," *Australian Bureau of Statistics* (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2071.0main+features902012-2013 : accessed 21 May 2024), "Selected Characteristics of Ancestry Groups," originally released 11:30 a.m. ACT, 21 June 2012, last updated 21 March 2023.

8 *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Famine_(Ireland)), "Great Famine (Ireland)," revised 17:07, 23 May 2024.

9 Historical Note, "Irish convict transportation records, 1781-1868," (https://www.nla.gov.au/sites/default/files/blogs/m_2125-2229_national_archives_of_ireland.pdf : accessed 21 May 2024).

10 See the article in this issue, "Using *Trove* for Irish Genealogy," on page 77.

11 National Archives of Ireland, "Transportation Records (Ireland to Australia) Held by the National Archives of Ireland (as filmed by the AJCP)," 1788 - 1868, *Australian Joint Copying Project* (http://nla.gov.au/nla : accessed 26 May 2024); *National Library of Australia* : [AJCP reels M2125-M229].

12 *Transportation Records (Ireland to Australia) Held by the National Archives of Ireland* [as filmed by the AJCP], AJCP microfilm reels M2125-M229 (Dublin, Ireland: National Archives of Ireland, n.d.), Vol. TR 4, 1841 to 1842, Transportation Registers (TR), page 193 (image 103), entry for Nancy Adams, 14, 6 January 1842, County Antrim; *Trove* (http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2283300659 : accessed 14 June 2024).

13 "Belfast Quarter Sessions: Thursday, Jan. 13, 1842," *The Vindicator (Belfast)*, 15 January 1842, p. 4, col. 4, the court case of Edward Davis and Nancy Adams; image copy, *Findmypast Newspaper Archive Limited* (https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/search/results/1842-01-15 : accessed 14 June 2024).

14 *Convict Records* (https://convictrecords.com.au/convicts/adams/nancy/130631 : accessed 14 June 2024), a record search for "Nancy Adams" resulted in one record for Nancy, aka Ann.

15 "The Female Convicts in VDL Database," *Female Convicts Research Centre Inc.* (https://femaleconvicts.org.au : accessed 14 June 2024), the database file entry for Nancy Adams, convict 811, does not allow for hyperlink access. See p. 75, col. 3, para. 2: "the user must register with the FCRC to gain access.

16 *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convicts_in_Australia : accessed 14 June 2024), "Convicts in Australia," revised 10:39 (UTC), 9 June 2024.



A fourth-generation Californian, Kim Gehrman White holds a certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University (OL22) and completed ProGen 55 in 2022. She has an M.A. in International Studies and a B.A. in History and International Relations. Her research is focused on Spain, Portugal, and Ireland. She is the current Associate Editor of The Septs *and perhaps a little obsessed with spreadsheets in her work.*

Using *Trove* for Irish Genealogy

by Kim Gehrman White

Do you ever use the term "treasure trove" to describe finding a resource for expanding your Irish Whiskey collection or perhaps referring to the attic in your grandparent's house? If you have Irish ancestors who emigrated to Australia, you may want to search *Trove*. *Trove* is an alliance between the National Library of Australia (NLA) and many partner organizations nationwide. These partnerships collectively have created a true treasure trove waiting to be mined for genealogy purposes.

Trove has the following and more available online for free:

- Australian Newspapers and Government Gazettes
- Magazines and newsletters
- Books, images, and artifacts
- Information about prominent Australians, including copies of letters, diaries, and personal archives
- Australian Web Archive: records of Australian websites, preserved as they were at the time of capture (akin to the *Internet Archive's* Wayback Machine); information from archived websites which may have included published family histories

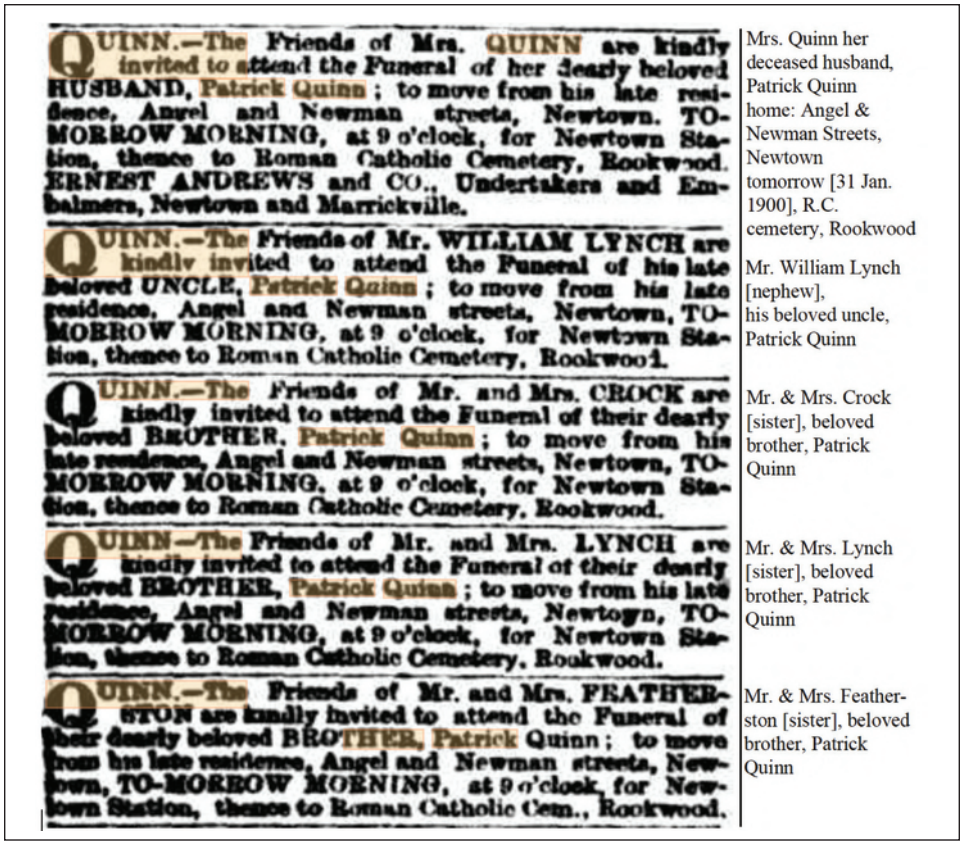
An example from *The Sydney Morning Herald* regards the death of Patrick Quinn in 1900 in Sydney, Australia.[1] Listed in the "Family Notices" section is the funeral announcement. But there is so much more; note the additional notices provided by various family members (Image 1).[2]

One year later, Mrs. Quinn memorialized her late husband in the same newspaper (Image 2).[3]

And, in 1902, Mrs. Ellen Quinn ran the same memorial in the same newspaper and used the exact wording as in 1901.[4]

Trove allows you to create a free account and offers tools that will enable you to organize your research. Listed below are some of the perks of a free account:

- Create different lists for each ancestor you're tracing
- Keep track of the information found
- Share your lists with other people, making it a collaborative effort
- Add notes to each list, as well as to each item on a list, as a reminder of the information contained within
- Save your lists into customizable groups, such as for each family unit
- Add tags and notes to keep track of when you performed searches, as well as your search parameters



QUINN.—The Friends of Mrs. QUINN are kindly invited to attend the Funeral of her dearly beloved HUSBAND, Patrick Quinn; to move from his late residence, Angel and Newman streets, Newtown, TO-MORROW MORNING, at 9 o'clock, for Newtown Station, thence to Roman Catholic Cemetery, Rookwood. ERNEST ANDREWS and CO., Undertakers and Embalmers, Newtown and Marrickville.

Mrs. Quinn her deceased husband, Patrick Quinn home: Angel & Newman Streets, Newtown tomorrow [31 Jan. 1900], R.C. cemetery, Rookwood

QUINN.—The Friends of Mr. WILLIAM LYNCH are kindly invited to attend the Funeral of his late beloved UNCLE, Patrick Quinn; to move from his late residence, Angel and Newman streets, Newtown, TO-MORROW MORNING, at 9 o'clock, for Newtown Station, thence to Roman Catholic Cemetery, Rookwood.

Mr. William Lynch [nephew], his beloved uncle, Patrick Quinn

QUINN.—The Friends of Mr. and Mrs. CROCK are kindly invited to attend the Funeral of their dearly beloved BROTHER, Patrick Quinn; to move from his late residence, Angel and Newman streets, Newtown, TO-MORROW MORNING, at 9 o'clock, for Newtown Station, thence to Roman Catholic Cemetery, Rookwood.

Mr. & Mrs. Crock [sister], beloved brother, Patrick Quinn

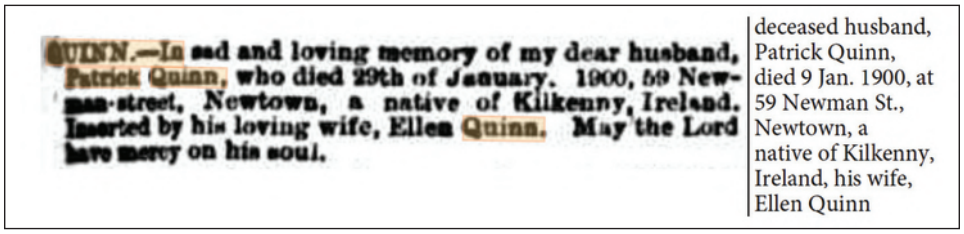
QUINN.—The Friends of Mr. and Mrs. LYNCH are kindly invited to attend the Funeral of their dearly beloved BROTHER, Patrick Quinn; to move from his late residence, Angel and Newman streets, Newtown, TO-MORROW MORNING, at 9 o'clock, for Newtown Station, thence to Roman Catholic Cemetery, Rookwood.

Mr. & Mrs. Lynch [sister], beloved brother, Patrick Quinn

QUINN.—The Friends of Mr. and Mrs. FEATHERSTON are kindly invited to attend the Funeral of their dearly beloved BROTHER, Patrick Quinn; to move from his late residence, Angel and Newman streets, Newtown, TO-MORROW MORNING, at 9 o'clock, for Newtown Station, thence to Roman Catholic Cem., Rookwood.

Mr. & Mrs. Featherston [sister], beloved brother, Patrick Quinn

Image 1



QUINN.—In sad and loving memory of my dear husband, Patrick Quinn, who died 29th of January, 1900, 59 Newman-street, Newtown, a native of Kilkenny, Ireland. Inserted by his loving wife, Ellen Quinn. May the Lord have mercy on his soul.

deceased husband, Patrick Quinn, died 9 Jan. 1900, at 59 Newman St., Newtown, a native of Kilkenny, Ireland, his wife, Ellen Quinn

Image 2

Set aside time to familiarize yourself with everything available on *Trove*. If you have Irish ancestors who made new lives for themselves in Australia, you owe yourself the pleasure of adding *Trove* to your genealogy toolbox.

Endnotes

[1] "Australia, Death Index, 1787-1985," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 17 August 2023), Patrick Quinn, death 1900; citing NSW Pioneer Index – Federation Series 1889-1918.

[2] Patrick Quinn, "Family Notices," *The Sydney (Australia) Morning Herald (NSW: 1842-1954)*, 30 January 1900, p. 10, col. 1; image copy, *Trove* (https://www.trove.nla.gov.au/nla.news-article14291592 : accessed 17 August 2023), Newspapers and Gazettes.

[3] Patrick Quinn, "Family Notices," *The Sydney (Australia) Morning Herald (NSW: 1842-1954)*, 29 January 1901, p. 1, col. 1; image copy, *Trove* (https://www.trove.nla.gov.au/nla.news-article14338715 : accessed 17 August 2023), Newspapers and Gazettes.

[4] Patrick Quinn, "Family Notices," *The Sydney (Australia) Morning Herald (NSW: 1842-1954)*, 29 January 1902, p. 1, col. 1; image copy, *Trove* (https://www.trove.nla.gov.au/nla.news-article14455363 : accessed 17 August 2023), Newspapers and Gazettes.

Ask *The Septs*



Have you ever found yourself thinking "I have a question?" In our Membership Survey last fall, readers shared their ideas for future topics in *The Septs*. People passionate about genealogy, from hobbyists to pros, often face challenges in their research, whether hitting the proverbial brick wall or needing help finding new record sources. We asked ourselves, "How can we at *The Septs* help break down brick walls or provide requested research tips?" Introducing our new column, "Ask *The Septs*."

Let us know what you are struggling to find by sending your Irish-related query to askthesepts@gmail.com — we might be able to help you break down that brick wall! Be sure to include any steps you have already taken, such as searching U.S. census records, passenger lists, etc.

We will select one query per quarter and prepare an answer for the next issue of *The Septs*.We have provided the following example to show what this might look like.

Where can I find Irish church records online?

We recommend that you refer to the April 2018 issue of *The Septs* (Vol. 39, No. 2), which focused on church records. In particular, check out the article "Working with Church Records: a Mackin Case Study in Philadelphia" by Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D. Although this issue is six years old, the methods used to work with church records have remained relatively constant. As a member of IGSI, you may view back issues for free.

One helpful resource is the *FamilySearch Wiki*, which has a subdivision for church records within the Ireland section. The Ireland Church Records section is divided into online resources and in-country resources. The online record sets include Catholics, Church of Ireland (Anglican, Episcopalian), Non-Conformists, and Quakers.[1] Two recommended websites are *RootsIreland*, a subscription site with over 22 million church records for Irish baptisms, marriages, and deaths, and *IrishGenealogy.ie*, a free site providing access to civil records of births, marriages for non-Catholics and Catholics, and deaths.

[1] *FamilySearch Wiki*, (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Ireland_Church_Records : accessed 19 June 2024), last revision 17 May 2024, at 19:43.

Illustration designed by Freepik

Irish Indentured Labour in the Caribbean

by Michael Mahoney, The National Archives, UK [reprinted with permission]

Whilst doing research for the 'Caribbean through a lens' user participation project (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/outreach/projects/migration-histories/caribbean-through-a-lens/), a chance phone call from a community group in Birmingham led to the uncovering of a remarkable hidden history of Irish servants or indentured labour being employed on English-owned plantations in the Caribbean. At The National Archives, we have unique documentation demonstrating the sale of indentured labour before, during and after the English Civil War of the 17th century.[1] Many thousands of dispossessed Catholic Irish men, women and children were transported either willingly or unwillingly in this period to work on new sugar and tobacco plantations in Barbados, Jamaica and the smaller Caribbean islands, including St Kitts, Nevis, Antigua and Montserrat.

There has been a deal of controversy amongst writers on this subject in the descriptions of Irish indentured labourers as 'slaves' or 'servants.' Certainly, it can be argued that willing indenture agreements were signed by individuals and a shipper in which the individual agreed to sell his services for a period of time in exchange for passage, housing, food, clothing, and usually a piece of land at the end of the term of service. However, during the post-Civil War period, many can be described as 'political prisoners' after their land was confiscated by the Cromwellian regime, driven from their land to waiting ships and transported to English colonies. The scarcity of detailed information on the servant trade makes it impossible to ascertain accurately what proportion of labour was involuntary. Still, the evidence strongly suggests a lively traffic in deportees, especially between 1650-1659. In 1658, for example, Thomas Povey, an English merchant with extensive West Indian investments, stated that the English state had transported the majority of Irish servants in Barbados and St Kitts for treason.[2]

Moreover, John Scott, an English adventurer who travelled in the West Indies during the Commonwealth, saw Irish servants working in field gangs with slaves 'without stockings under the scorching sun'. The Irish, he wrote, were "derided by the negroes, and branded with the Epithet of 'white slaves.'"[3]

One historian, Thomas Addis Emmet, asserts that most Irish individuals appeared in English records as English. No vessel was allowed to sail from Ireland directly but, by law, was obliged first to visit an English port before clearance papers could be obtained. Consequently, every such Irish emigrant crossing in an Irish or English vessel appeared in the official records as English, for the voyage did not begin according to law until the ship cleared from an English port.[4]

Once in the Caribbean, many plantation owners considered servants and freemen from Ireland as a potentially subversive lot who had to be controlled and kept in a labouring status. The English government allegedly referred to the Irish as rogues, vagabonds, rebels, neutrals, felons and military prisoners.[5] Punishments for attempted escapes included branding the letters 'FT' (Fugitive Traitor) on the servant's forehead.

One assembly member in Barbados is quoted in 1667 as stating, 'We have more than a good many Irish amongst us, therefore I am for the downright Scott, who I am certain will fight without a crucifix about his neck.'[6]

By the third quarter of the 17th century on the island of Montserrat, the Irish immigrants were in the ascendancy. A 1678 census shows a vibrant community of almost 1,900 Irish men, women and children — a verifiable 50% of the population — existing as either indentured servants or freemen. Comparable figures for the other Leeward Islands were 26% Irish on Antigua, 22% on Nevis, and 10% on St Christopher.[7]

Successive governors promised immigrants religious tolerance and easy access to land ownership. Servants from Ireland, as well as Irish freemen from Barbados and the Leeward Islands, responded in the period 1660-1700. Jamaica became the leading West Indian destination for Irish and English servants departing from Kinsale, Bristol and London in this period.

The legacy of such a diaspora today is that on several Caribbean islands there are place names such as Cork Hill, Kinsale and Roche's Mountain from the Emerald Isle. In islands such as Montserrat, St Patrick's Day is a national holiday among the inhabitants, and the telephone directory contains page after page of Irish names such as Allens, Ryans, Daleys, Farrells, Rileys and Sweeneys.

Endnotes

[1] See HCA 30/636 (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/results/r/?_q=HCA+30%2F636&x=0&y=0&_sd=yyyy&_ed=yyyy), CO 1/21 (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/results/r/?_q=CO+1%2F21&x=0&y=0), and CO 1/42 (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/results/r/?_q=CO+1%2F42&x=0&y=0).

[2] Thomas Povey's Diary, British Library, MS 12410, Folio 10.

[3] Catalogue reference: CO 1/21 (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/results/r/?_q=CO+1%2F21+&x=0&y=0), no. 170.

[4] Thomas Addis Emmet, Ireland Under English Rule, 1903, page 211.

[5] Richard S. Dunn, Sugar and Slaves 1624-1713, Jonathan Cape, 1973.

[6] Catalogue reference: CO 1/21 (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/results/r/?_q=CO+1%2F21+&x=0&y=0), folio 108.

[7] Hilary McD. Beckles, A 'Riotous and Unruly Lot': Irish Indentured Servants and Freemen in the English West Indies, 1644-1713, The William and Mary Quarterly XLVII, no. 4 (1990), 503-22.



Michael Mahoney is a Learning and Outreach Officer in the Education & Outreach Department at The National Archives (UK). He has undertaken research in Caribbean history, indentured Indian labour, and has recently delivered a talk to the Irish Cultural Centre in London on his research relating to National Archive records on the Irish War of Independence. He also facilitates the creation of resources for wellbeing activities. He holds an MA in Public History.

A Note from Walt

IGSI held its first hybrid webinar on May 4, 2024. It was an excellent presentation by Mary Wickersham and moderator Lois Mackin, with lively discussion with our inaugural in-person audience.

Unfortunately, despite extensive testing and consultation in preparation for this groundbreaking event, the online audio feed proved to be a major shortcoming.

Through the laudable extra efforts of our speaker, moderator, and support staff, however, we were able to serve up a good recording of the May session to online attendees.

Our experience with the technological "school of hard knocks" has caused us to redouble our efforts in preparing for the hybrid session with Lois Mackin on June 22. I look forward to reporting 100% success with that event.

For the remainder of 2024, we will offer hybrid programs in September and October. All other webinars this year will be virtual. Our planning for 2025 is getting underway now, and we look forward to sharing that in the coming months.

Registration is open for the IGSI virtual webinars in July and August.

Irish Transportation and Penal Colony Resources

by Mary LaRue Stuart

For those of you researching Irish ancestors transported to British penal colonies, I have compiled a list of resources[1] to aid your search. The earliest transportations occurred during the Cromwellian era (mid-17th century) when political prisoners, criminals, or other "undesirables" (read: "Catholics") were transported primarily to the American colonies and the West Indies — Barbados in particular — and sold as indentured servants to sugar plantation owners.[2] Transportations to Australia began in 1787 after the defeat of the British in the American War of Independence, when they could no longer use the American colonies for the purpose.[3]

The West Indies

Websites

Jamaican Family Search (http://www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com/)

Ancestry (https://www.ancestry.com/search/places/north_america/barbados/) (https://www.ancestry.com/search/places/north_america/jamaica/)

Library of Congress (https://guides.loc.gov/barbados-local-history-genealogy/vital-records) (https://guides.loc.gov/jamaica-local-history-genealogy/archival-records)

FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Barbados_Online_Genealogy_Records) (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Jamaica_Genealogy)

Wikipedia: "Irish indentured servants" (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_indentured_servants)

Books

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Sadler, John, and Rosie Serdiville, *Cromwell's Convicts: The Death March from Dunbar 1650* (Pen and Sword Military, 2020).

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- You must be a member to see entire collections
- Includes Irish Transportation records from 1788-1868, aka "The Irish Gift" (https://catalogue.sag.org.au/#record/32219).

The Ironclad Sisterhood (https://ironcladsisterhood.sag.org.au/)

- Database with names of female convicts, arrival date, ship, place of trial, crime and sentence
- Provides name of convict ships used to transport convicts to Australia
- Named for the literal heavy chains shackling the women together

Female Convicts Research Centre, Inc. (https://femaleconvicts.org/au)

- Has a database of female convicts transported to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) from 1803-1853

Convicts to Australia (www.convictcentral.com)

- Includes Research Guide, list of convict ships, convict women, convict tales, and more.

State Library of New South Wales [NSW] (https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/)

- Getting Started Guide on Convicts Bound for Australia (https://guides.sl.nsw.gov.au/c.php?g=671838&p=4840424)
- Convicts: Life in the Colony (https://guides.sl.nsw.gov.au/life-in-the-colony)
    - This is a helpful guide for researching the convict's life after they arrived in the colony.

New South Wales State Archives Convicts Guide (https://mhnsw.au/guides/convicts-guide/)

- Tells where to begin convict research
- Has some convict indents [indentures] and indexes.

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National Australia Museum

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- See also (https://members.pcug.org.au/~ppmay/austlinks.htm).

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- Hosted by the *University of Melbourne* (https://researchdata.edu.au/founders-survivors-online-1818-1853/395079)
- Has a searchable database of all convicts transported to Tasmania in the 19th century
- It also includes a list of convict ships in chronological order of arrival
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Fremantle Prison

- The Convict Era at Fremantle Prison: Convict profiles and databases for the Western Australian prison at Swan River Colony from 1850-1868 (https://fremantleprison.com.au/history-heritage/history/the-convict-era)
- The Convict Database can be found here (https://fremantleprison.com.au/history-heritage/research/convict-database/)

State Library of Queensland (https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/)

- British Convict Transportation Registers database (https://www.data.qld.gov.au/dataset/british-convict-registers)
    - This database contains details of convicts transported to Australia in the 18th and 19th centuries, including prisoners sent to New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), Moreton Bay (Brisbane), Port Phillip, Western Australia, and Norfolk Island.
    - Some ships bound for Gibraltar were also recorded from 1787 to 1867.

Price Genealogy

- Immigrant Servants Database (https://immigrant.pricegen.com/search/simple.php).

Coraweb (https://coraweb.com.au/)

- A Guide to Researching Your Convict Ancestors (https://coraweb.com.au/link/convicts-to-australia-a-guide-to-researching-your-convict-ancestors/).

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Irish Newspaper Archive (https://www.irishnewsarchive.com/)

- Requires a subscription

Ancestry (https://www.ancestry.com)

- Australian Convict Collection (https://www.ancestry.com/search/categories/auconvicts/#collections)
    - Largely covers transportations to NSW and Tasmania
    - Includes NSW, Australia, Convict Indents, 1788-1842 [indenture]
        - Can include age, crime, physical description, nativity, marital status, number of children, trade, port and date of arrival, vessel, information on tickets of leave, certificates of freedom or pardons, and to whom a convict was assigned

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- New South Wales Convict Records (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/New_South_Wales_Convict_Records)
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Did You Know?

Did you know? Convict tokens, also known as "leaden hearts," were created by prisoners around the time of their sentencing. These tokens were then given to friends and loved ones as keepsakes. The National Museum of Australia houses the largest collection, with 315 tokens dating from 1761 to 1856. Some of the tokens predate the transportation of convicts to Australia and are related to convicts sent to other British penal colonies. (https://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/not-just-ned/family-history/irish/convicts : accessed 21 May 2024).

Save the Date!!

IGSI will be hosting the Ulster Historical Foundation (UHF) for a two-day event on March 11-12, 2025, in Minneapolis, MN. Mark your calendars!

New Databases!!

FamilySearch has recently expanded their "Ireland, Catholic Parish Registers, 1740-1900" collection (ID 2820100) to 52,814 records. You can find them at: https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/2820100.

Through a partnership with the Irish Railway Records Society, Irish Railway records are now available at *Ancestry* in a collection called the "Ireland Railway Employment Records, 1870-1940." You can find them here: https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/62687/.

John Grenham has restored on his website some of the databases taken down from Dublin City's heritage database site.

These can be found temporarily at: http://www.johngrenham.com/dcla. For more information, see John Grenham's blog post at: https://www.johngrenham.com/blog/2024/05/28/some-of-me-oul-darlin-databases-are-back-online/.

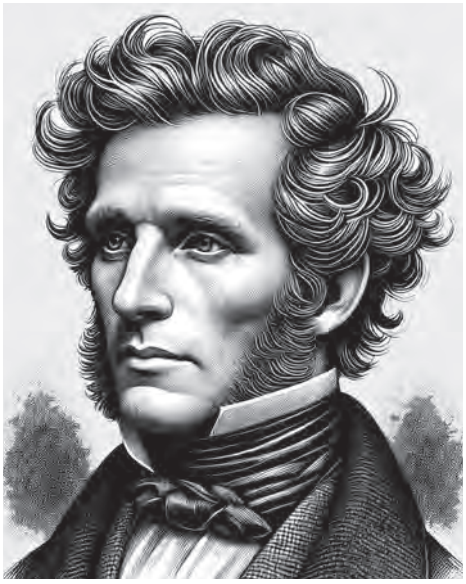
Tales of the Redfern Family: A Family of Black Sheep in Colonial Australia

by Andrew Redfern

When researching one's family history, it is always a joy to uncover a "black sheep," i.e., an ancestor who fell afoul of the law or went against the grain in some way compared to other members of the family. In the colourful tapestry of Australia's colonial history, the Redfern family stands out as a fascinating case study of defiance, transformation, and societal impact, including not just one but an entire lineage of black sheep spanning generations and multiple countries across the globe. Several members of the family navigated the rigid expectations of 19th-century society, leaving a distinct mark on both their immediate community and on broader historical narratives.

Dr. William Redfern: From Mutineer to Medical Pioneer

Dr. William Redfern's life took a dramatic turn with his involvement in the notorious Nore Mutiny of 1797. A surgeon's mate in the British Royal Navy, William sided with the mutineers and was sentenced to death.[1] Following several years languishing in English prisons, he requested transportation to Australia, resulting in him arriving in a convoy of the *Nile*, *Canada*, and *Minorca* in 1801.[2] After spending time on Norfolk Island, where he was granted a pardon, he was appointed as Assistant Surgeon upon returning to Sydney in 1808.[3] As part of his appointment, his credentials were verified through an examination by the colony's principal surgeon, and the surgeon and assistant surgeon of the NSW Corps, making him the first medical graduate of Australia. Through his association with Governor Macquarie, who became a close friend, William quickly became



Dr. William Redfern (AI image generated by DALL-E based on portrait held in family possession, June 2024).

an instrumental figure, revolutionising the colony's approach to medical care and public health. He introduced vaccination for smallpox. His recommendations to improve conditions on convict transports led to considerably fewer deaths during transportation. His advocation for the rights of Emancipists often saw him challenging authority, particulary that of Commissioner Thomas Bigge, who was sent to the Australian colony to investigate the effectiveness of Governor Macquarie's administration. A well-travelled gentleman, William made the journey between Sydney and England on at least three occasions. The current Sydney suburb of Redfern is named in his honour. Redfern remained a black sheep until his 1833 death at age 58 in Edinburgh, where he had been undertaking further medical studies at university.

From Irish Rebel to Respected Settler: The Story of Robert Redfern

Robert Redfern, Dr. William Redfern's brother, has a similar tale of challenging



Dr. Redfern's home, "Campbellfield," in Minto, New South Wales. The site has been refurbished and is now a childcare centre (photo by author).

authority and standing up for his beliefs, likewise earning himself a nomination for the title of "black sheep." Robert's journey from Ireland to Australia reads like a script from a high-stakes adventure film. Initially embroiled in the political upheavals of the United Irishmen in Belfast in 1797, Robert faced severe repercussions, leading to his imprisonment[4] and forced exile under the Banishment Act.[5] Both Robert and William were in prison at the same time. One wonders if they each knew of each other's plight. Robert ended up in Portugal, where he was press-ganged into the British Army during the Napoleonic Wars. Percy Bysshe Shelley was made aware of Redfern's situation through a friend, often referring to Redfern's cruel treatment in his correspondence while he campaigned to free the man.[6] Robert arrived in Philadelphia sometime in the 1810s, where he established a successful saddlery business. He received a contract for the manufacture of United States Army hats, several of which still survive to this day. After returning to England in 1824, Robert then proceeded to Australia under the promise of a land grant[7] of 2000 acres, no doubt secured through the good word of his brother. Robert's wife Margaret and some of their children were mentioned in her 1799 letters of petition for his release from prison, but their fate after that remains a mystery because no other information on them has yet been found. Robert arrived in Australia in 1825 with only son William, where he became a successful landowner before going bankrupt and having to start over again.[8] In running the gamut from a political prisoner convicted of treason to a successful saddler and farmer, Robert Redfern's life certainly went "against the grain," making him another black sheep.

'Naughty William' Redfern: From White to Black Sheep

William Redfern, the son of Robert and dubbed affectionately by his descendants as "Naughty William," could also be considered a black sheep. After arriving in Australia as a free man of about 15 years, Naughty William began associating with bushrangers (armed robbers who hid in the bush) and cattle rustlers. In 1836, he became a colonial convict after being charged with stealing six head of cattle. William was locked up in Bathurst Gaol, but his internment was short-lived after he escaped through an open window, jumped on his waiting horse, and remained on the run for over twelve months. Newspapers across the land reported his story, and a reward of fifty pounds or a conditional pardon[9] was offered for his apprehension. William ultimately travelled over 1100 kilometres, from Bathurst in New South Wales to Hobart, Tasmania. His luck finally ran out when a police officer visiting from Bathurst recognised him in the street and arrested him.[10] William was sent back to Sydney before being transported to Tasmania to serve a sentence[11] of hard labour. He eventually received a pardon and returned to Bathurst in 1860[12] to marry and have a family. With an uncle and father who were now both respectable and highly-regarded citizens, Naughty William had well and truly earned the moniker of "black sheep of the family."

Reflecting on the Redfern Legacy

The Redfern family's legacy challenges our perceptions of what it means to be a "black sheep." Far from merely straying from the norm, these individuals leveraged their outsider status to effect substantial changes in their worlds. Their lives prompt a deeper reflection on the nature of punishment and redemption by illustrating how personal transformation from adverse situations can lead to significant societal contributions.



Gravestone of Robert & "Naughty William" in Bathurst, New South Wales, December 2022 (photo by author).

The narratives of Dr. William, Robert, and Naughty William Redfern offer more than just tales of getting into trouble with the law and subsequent redemption; they provide a window into the complexities of life in Colonial Australia, where the line between conformity and resistance was both stark and blurred. It is almost as if the mantle of black sheep was passed between family members. Some may even say it was an inheritance passed down the generations. Were these men thwarting the law or simply standing up for what they believed in? Their tales are certainly stories of individual resilience and a willingness to pay dearly for their convictions.

The Redferns, with their chequered pasts and remarkable turnarounds, continue to

inspire those who believe in the power of second chances and in the enduring spirit of human resilience. Their stories, even centuries later, remain captivating tales in Australia's rich historical narrative, reminding us that, sometimes, the black sheep is the one who stands out for all the right reasons.

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[11] "Name Indexes: Convicts," image, *Libraries Tasmania* (https://libraries.tas.gov.au/Digital/CON31-1-36/CON31-1-36P154 : accessed 14 June 2024), entry for William Redfern, index no. 58676, conduct record: CON31-1-36, image 154.

[12] "New South Wales Marriages, 1788-1945," index, *Findmypast* (https://www.findmypast.com : accessed 14 June 2024), entry for William Redfern-Julia Ryan, 1860; a transcript of registration number 1210, as indexed for Barraba registration district, New South Wales, Australia.

Andrew Redfern is a keen family historian with an interesting array of ancestors, including convicts, murderers, priests, wealthy gentlemen, travelling musicians, and the odd asylum inmate. An active member of the Society of Australian Genealogists, Andrew has particular interests in utilising technology to make the work of family historians more effective and in sharing his findings in creative ways.



Irish Citizenship by Descent: The Extensive Guide

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Ireland is a country steeped in rich cultural history and heritage. With its breathtaking landscapes, friendly people, and vibrant culture, it is no wonder that so many people wish to call it home. For those of Irish descent, obtaining Irish citizenship is a way to connect with their ancestral roots and embrace their Irish identity.

Irish citizenship by descent allows individuals with Irish ancestry to claim their Irish citizenship and gain all the rights and privileges that come with it. From traveling freely across the EU to voting in Irish elections, becoming an Irish citizen can be a life-changing experience. This article delves into the intricacies of Irish citizenship by descent by exploring the eligibility criteria, application process, and benefits of becoming an Irish citizen through ancestry.

What It Means to Be an Irish Citizen

Irish citizenship comes with a range of benefits that extend beyond the borders of the Emerald Isle. As a member state of the European Union, being an Irish citizen grants you a set of rights available exclusively to EU nationals. These privileges are far-reaching and include the freedom to live and work in any EU country, including Ireland. Moreover, holding an Irish passport, ranked amongst the most powerful in the world, provides you with unparalleled access to global travel. Irish citizenship is a gateway to a world of opportunities and experiences, and its advantages extend beyond the shores of the Emerald Isle.

Advantages of Irish Citizenship

Becoming an Irish citizen opens a gateway to a world of possibilities and offering numerous benefits extending far beyond the shores of the Emerald Isle. Holding an Irish passport is only one of the many privileges of Irish citizenship. Here are some of the benefits you can expect to enjoy as an Irish citizen:

- **Freedom to Reside Anywhere**
  As an Irish citizen, you can live anywhere in the world. There are no requirements to live in Ireland to hold onto your citizenship, but you may need to obtain a visa or permit, depending on the country you choose to reside in. As a citizen of the European Union, you can take advantage of zero-tax residency programs and have a wealth of options when selecting your country of residence.
- **Visa-Free Travel to Over 185 Countries**
  Holding an Irish passport, you can travel visa-free to more than 185 countries. Whether traveling for business or pleasure, having an Irish passport grants you unparalleled access to the world.
- **Ease of Movement within the EU**
  Since Ireland is a member of the European Union, Irish citizens have the right to move freely within the EU states, making travel throughout the continent incredibly easy. Furthermore, Irish citizens can work and reside in any EU country.
- **High-Ranking Passport**
  The Irish passport is currently considered one of the most powerful in the world. Most countries have a favorable view of Irish passport holders, and the low-risk status of the Irish passport makes travel hassle-free. With the added benefit of being an EU member state, Ireland's passport is a powerful document to possess.

Who's Eligible for Irish Citizenship by Descent?

Obtaining Irish citizenship through descent can open doors to a wealth of opportunities, but applicants must meet certain requirements to become eligible.

To be eligible for Irish citizenship by descent, you must meet one of the following criteria:

- **Born in Ireland or Northern Ireland**
  If you were born in Ireland or Northern Ireland before January 1, 2005, and have at least one parent who was an Irish or British citizen at the time of your birth, you may be eligible for Irish citizenship by descent.
- **Irish Descent**
  You may also qualify for Irish citizenship by descent if you have at least one Irish grandparent or parent who's an Irish citizen. This applies to individuals born outside of Ireland or Northern Ireland.
- **Residency Permits**
  If one or both of your parents hold a residency permit in Ireland or Northern Ireland, you may also be eligible for Irish citizenship by descent.

Steps to Getting Ireland Citizenship by Descent

To obtain Irish citizenship by descent, you must follow a few steps to ensure a smooth and successful application process. Here's a breakdown:

- **Register your birth:** You must first register your birth in the Foreign Births Register and provide all

relevant certificates and records pertaining to your birth.

- **Submit your application:** Complete the relevant application form for Irish citizenship by descent and submit it with all required documentation.
- **Receive your approval certificate:** Once your application is approved, you'll receive a certificate confirming your registration in the Irish Register of Foreign Births, which signifies your approval for Irish citizenship.

Once officially registered in the Irish Register of Foreign Births, you'll be recognized as an Irish citizen. The final step is to obtain your Irish passport, which will grant you access to all the benefits and privileges of Irish citizenship.

How to Obtain an Irish Passport

Getting an Irish passport is crucial to enjoying the benefits of Irish citizenship. However, it's important to note that you'll need to follow a set of requirements and submit relevant documents to obtain your passport. These documents include a valid passport or travel document, an original birth certificate, documents proving your identity and address, digital passport photos, and documentation proving that at least one of your parents or grandparents was an Irish citizen. Additionally, you'll have to pay the relevant fees. Once you've gathered and submitted all the necessary documents, you'll be on your way to obtaining your Irish passport, allowing you to enjoy all the benefits that come with it.

Waiting Time and Fees for the Irish Passport

The fees you're required to pay to acquire an Irish passport are as follows:

- Standard 10-year passport: €75
- 66-page 10-year passport: €105
- Passport Card: €35
- Standard passport + Passport Card: €100
- 66-page passport + Passport Card: €130
- 5-year standard passport for those under 18: €20
- 5-year 66-page passport for those under 18: €50
- Standard 5-year passport + Passport Card for the under-18: €45
- 5-year 66-page passport + Passport Card for the under-18: €75

It's important to note that the fees above do not include additional postal fees, which amount to €5 for those inside Ireland and €15 for those outside of Ireland. When applying online for the first time, the typical waiting time is around 20 business days, although this may vary depending on demand. After successfully submitting, you can track the application process online.

Alternative Routes for Obtaining Irish Citizenship

There are several alternative routes to acquiring Irish citizenship apart from proving Irish ancestry. Available options are:

- **Citizenship by Naturalization:** This method of acquiring Irish citizenship is lengthier than the others. Eligible applicants must have resided in Ireland for at least five years within the nine years preceding their application.
- **Citizenship Through Marriage:** You can apply for Irish citizenship after being in a civil relationship or marriage with an Irish partner and living in Ireland for three years. The Irish government recognizes same-sex marriages, so sexual orientation is not an obstacle.
- **Citizenship by Investment:** Investing in Ireland through the Irish Golden Visa Program is another option for obtaining Irish citizenship. A minimum investment of €1 million is required to apply for residency. After completing five years of residency, you may apply for Irish citizenship.

Irish Citizenship by Descent: The Bottom Line

Obtaining Irish citizenship by descent is typically a straightforward process for those with the necessary documentation and who follow the appropriate steps. Registering in the Foreign Births Register and submitting the required documents for citizenship and passport applications are crucial steps. It's important to note that the waiting times for passport applications can vary, and additional postal fees may apply.

However, citizenship by descent is not the only way to become an Irish citizen. Eligible applicants can also obtain citizenship through naturalization, marriage, and investment.

Becoming an Irish citizen grants you many benefits, including the right to vote, work, and travel freely within the European Union. It's a worthwhile investment for those with Irish ancestry and individuals seeking to broaden their opportunities and experiences. Hence, if you're eligible and interested in obtaining Irish citizenship, go ahead and start your process: don't let the waiting times discourage you from taking advantage of this incredible opportunity.

Writing DNA Proof Statements, Summaries, and Arguments

by Lois Abromitis Mackin, PhD

The author is indebted to Chelley Brekke McLear of the Minnesota Genealogical Society's Writing and DNA Interest Groups for giving me the idea of writing about cases requiring genetic proof. All URLs are current as of May 20, 2024.

This issue's theme is penal colonies and criminal law, "black sheep" ancestors in Australia, New Zealand, and Caribbean penal colonies, and court proceedings that include criminal and settlement records. DNA won't help with those items (although it might find matches from Australia, New Zealand, and the Caribbean). Here's what our issue's theme and DNA have in common: both criminal courts and proving genetic genealogy conclusions require evidence. Read on for ideas and examples for "making your case."

Genealogical Proof

The Genealogical Proof Standard

The Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS), codified by the Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG), provides a means "to measure the credibility of conclusions about ancestral identities, relationships, and life events."[1] The GPS has five components:

- Reasonably exhaustive research
- Complete and accurate source citations
- Analysis and correlation of sources, information items, and evidence
- Resolution of conflicts
- Soundly reasoned, coherently written conclusion.[2]

The last component, the soundly reasoned, coherently written conclusion, can take different forms depending on whether the conclusion is simple and obvious or highly complex, requiring many pages of explanation. In his book *Mastering Genealogical Proof*, Thomas W. Jones describes three options for presenting conclusions:

- A *proof statement* is the simplest option, consisting of an item of data or a sentence accompanied by a citation. Proof statements work well when an author's conclusion is perfectly supported by direct evidence from credible sources and there is no conflicting evidence.
- A *proof summary* consists of one or more pages of documented lists or narratives supporting a conclusion. These often include one or more proof statements. Authors write proof summaries when more than one documented fact or statement is needed to explain an author's conclusion and show the credibility of the supporting documentation, but the proof, including the resolution of conflicting information, can still be expressed in a few paragraphs or pages.
- A *proof argument* is the most complex explanation, requiring several or many pages of documented lists, narratives, and explanations to fully resolve conflicting information and support the author's conclusion. Proof arguments may include multiple proof summaries and proof statements and often take the form of stand-alone articles or case studies.[3]

Jones' book gives numerous examples of proof statements, summaries, and arguments. If you want more, go to the BCG website's learning center and read the examples in Judy Kellar Fox's ten-minute methodology series.

Incorporating DNA evidence

As readers of *The Septs* know, the availability of reasonably priced direct-to-consumer genetic testing and the proliferation of research and analytical tools for working with genetic test results have brought genetic genealogy into the mainstream of genealogical research.

Appropriately, BCG's genealogy standards include a section on using DNA evidence. The authors of *Genealogy Standards* write:

> Meeting the Genealogical Proof Standard requires using all available and relevant types of evidence…like other types of evidence, DNA evidence is not always available, relevant, or usable for a specific problem, is not used alone, and involves planning, analyzing, drawing conclusions, and reporting.[4]

The DNA evidence section of *Genealogy Standards* includes seven standards aimed at planning DNA tests, analyzing DNA test results, deciding on the extent of DNA evidence required, providing sufficient verifiable data, integrating DNA and documentary evidence, drawing conclusions about genetic relationships, and respecting privacy rights.[5] The late Debbie Parker Wayne wrote a series of blog posts summarizing the 2019 versions of these standards.[6]

Because of the ubiquity of genetic genealogy in practice, BCG launched a new Certified Genetic Genealogist (CGG) credential in March 2024. The first BCG associate (that is, a genealogist certified by BCG) who received the new credential was Thomas W. Jones.[7]

Documenting DNA Evidence

Elizabeth Shown Mills, author of *Evidence Explained*, the exhaustive guide to citing history sources (now in its fourth edition), published a QuickSheet on citing genetic sources in 2015, along with a QuickLesson on her *Evidence Explained* website. Mills updated the QuickSheet in 2017.[8] Thomas W. Jones, author of *Mastering Genealogical Proof* and *Mastering Genealogical Documentation*, wrote the chapter on writing about, documenting, and publishing DNA test results for Debbie Parker Wayne's A*dvanced Genetic Genealogy*, which applies his "Who-What-Where-When-Wherein" method for citations to genetic genealogy sources.[9] Jones also offered a course on citing DNA-related sources in 2022 through the Family History Academy.[10] Dr. Jones recommended studying recent articles using DNA evidence in genealogical journals such as the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* in his course. The BCG website's learning center provides an extensive list of scholarly journal articles on DNA. They provide great models for authors learning to present genetic genealogy results, cite genetic sources, and set forth conclusions.

Writing Proof Statements, Summaries, and Arguments

Whether we write a proof statement, a proof summary, or a proof argument depends on the complexity of the conclusion we must explain and document. As *Genealogy Standards* reminds us, DNA evidence is not used alone; when we use DNA evidence in a written proof statement, summary, or argument, we present, analyze, and weigh it along with the documentary evidence relevant to the conclusion we are presenting.

A fictional example

Let's look at a case where the problem we are examining is a problem of relationship. Our research question is, "Who are the parents of Mary Flynn (1834–1896), who was born near Nenagh, County Tipperary, and died in Walworth County, Wisconsin? Mary was the wife of Thomas Keenan (1824–1867) of Oswego County, New York, and Walworth County, Wisconsin, and the mother of Thomas Keenan (1854–1914), John Keenan (1856–1902), Mary (Keenan) Dunnavan (1858–1887), and Clementine (Keenan) Casey (1861–1925), all of Buchanan County, Iowa."[11]

Documentary research on Mary and her family has uncovered the following:

- Mary's age and birthplace in Ireland are documented by the 1860, 1870, and 1880 U.S. censuses, along with the 1875, 1885, and 1895 Wisconsin state censuses.
- Mary's birthplace near Nenagh is stated in an article on her son Thomas, published during Thomas' lifetime in a 1911 history of Buchanan County, Iowa.
- Mary's death is documented in a Walworth County death register; her tombstone in a Walworth County Catholic Cemetery records her married name, the fact that she was the wife of Thomas Keenan, and her date of death. No death notice for Mary appeared in Walworth County newspapers.
- Mary's maiden name is documented in her county death record, which lists her father as John Flynn and her mother as "don't know."
- Documents for Thomas, Mary's husband, include a complete set of federal and state census records, death notices in two Walworth County newspapers, a Civil War service record, and a pension file. Mary received a widow's pension. Thomas' death notices refer to his widow only as Mrs. Keenan and do not name her parents.
- Documents for Mary's children include a complete set of federal and state census records taken during their lifetimes. All the children, except Mary (Keenan) Dunnavan, have death records naming both parents; all, including Mary, have marriage records naming both parents. These records agree that Mary Keenan's maiden name was Flynn, the same maiden name recorded on her death record.
- Although the county-history evidence indicates that Mary came from the area of Nenagh, there is no baptismal record for a girl named Mary Flynn, born between 1829 and 1839, appearing in the records of any Roman Catholic parish within 25 miles of that city. Parish records include numerous Flynn baptisms, including children born to at least one man named John Flynn.

In addition to this documentary evidence, we have DNA evidence. Three descendants of Thomas, John, and Clementine, Mary's children, have taken autosomal DNA tests. These testers appear on each other's match lists and share an amount of DNA appropriate for their documented

biological relationships. Their shared matches include four matches descended from three different children of a man named John Flynn of Ballynahinch, County Tipperary. Ballynahinch lies in the Roman Catholic parish of Newport and is 19 kilometers from Nenagh. The amount of DNA shared between these Flynn descendants and the tested descendants of Mary (Flynn) Keenan is consistent with the range of DNA that descendants of siblings would share.

Newport parish records document baptisms for the children of John Flynn from whom these DNA matches descend, along with five other children. All baptism records except one, which does not name John Flynn's wife, report that the children were born to John Flynn and wife Margaret. Parish records include a marriage for John Flynn and Margaret Doyle before the first child's birth.

If we conclude from this body of evidence that Mary (Flynn) Keenan was the daughter of John Flynn of Ballynahinch, County Tipperary, and his wife Margaret Doyle, we can present both documentary and DNA evidence to prove our case. The evidence is much too voluminous for a simple proof statement, but since none of the evidence conflicts with any other evidence, we can likely write a proof summary to support our conclusion. Our proof summary will need to summarize and document the following information, though not necessarily in this order:

- Our research question and starting point.
- The American documentary evidence showing Mary's age, birthplace, and maiden name.
- The testing companies and amount of DNA shared by the testers descended from Mary and the DNA matches descended from John Flynn of Ballynahinch.
- The documentary evidence for the descent of our DNA testers from Mary, with corroborative evidence showing the amount of DNA they share and that the shared amount of DNA is appropriate to their relationship.
- The documentary evidence for the descent of the DNA matches from John Flynn and Margaret Doyle and, if available, the amount of DNA they share with each other.

We will also need to document that the amount of DNA shared by Mary's descendants and John Flynn's descendants is appropriate for the concluded relationship between the two groups of testers. Even though our research has turned up no conflicting evidence, our proof summary might grow into a proof argument simply because of its potential length and complexity!

Resources

Board for Certification of Genealogists. https://bcgcertification.org/. Of particular interest are the Ethics and Standards page, https://bcgcertification.org/ethics-standards/, and the BCG Learning Center, https://bcgcertification.org/learning/.

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1 Board for Certification of Genealogists, *Genealogy Standards*, 2nd ed. rev., Kindle format (Washington, DC: Board for Certification of Genealogists, 2021), 1.

2 Board for Certification of Genealogists, *Genealogy Standards*, 1.

3 Thomas W. Jones, *Mastering Genealogical Proof*, Kindle format (Arlington, VA: National Genealogical Society, 2013), locations 1670–1765.

4 Board for Certification of Genealogists, *Genealogy Standards*, 28–30.

5 Board for Certification of Genealogists, *Genealogy Standards*, 28–30.

6 See Debbie Parker Wayne, "DNA Standards – Part 1" through "DNA Standards – Part 8," *Deb's Delvings in Genealogy*, beginning at https://debsdelvings.blogspot.com/2019/03/dna-standards-part-1.html, posted between 4 and 10 March 2019. URLs for each part are provided under Resources. Although these blog posts describe the 2019 version of the standards, which were updated in 2021, they still provide a good summary.

7 "BCG Announced First Certified Genetic Genealogist," Board for Certification of Genealogists (https://bcgcertification.org/bcg-first-cgg-apr-2024/ : posted 12 April 2024).

8 Elizabeth Shown Mills, *QuickSheet: Citing Genetic Sources for History Research Evidence style** (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2015). See also "QuickLesson 21: Citing DNA Evidence: Five Ground Rules, " *Evidence Explained: Historical Analysis, Citation & Source Usage* (https://www.evidenceexplained.com/content/quicklesson-21-citing-dna-evidence-five-ground-rules : posted 29 June 2015).

9 Thomas W. Jones, "Writing about, Documenting, and Publishing DNA Test Results," in Debbie Parker Wayne, editor, *Advanced Genetic Genealogy: Techniques and Case Studies* (Cushing, TX: Wayne Research, 2019), chapter 11, pages 277–302.

10 *Family History Academy*, https://www.familyhistoryacademy.com.au/, based in Queensland, Australia, is a provider of live virtual courses from leading genealogical educators such as Jones.

11 Mary Flynn and all her relatives, past and present, are fictional and have been created for the purposes of this article.

Lois Abromitis Mackin, PhD, is a professional genealogist focusing on American and English research. She has three degrees in history and has studied at major genealogical institutes. She writes for Minnesota Genealogist *and is the 2013 winner of the Minnesota Genealogical Society's Founders Award for visionary leadership.*



"Not about family much..." Tom Clements – Black Sheep?

by Miles Dillon

Telling stories of our ancestors raises the tricky question of whether we should judge them and commit our conclusions to paper. Or do we just let the facts stand for themselves? The description of someone as a "black sheep" implies we have made a judgement. My father used to dish up the old adage, "Judge not lest ye be judged!" which still tempers my thinking and moderates my writing. It is a difficult call, as we possess incomplete information and often have been unable to talk with the person concerned. Even interviews with those who knew them are coloured by the interviewee's perceptions and prejudices.

Thomas Patrick Clements, the eldest child in his family, was born in Tauranga, New Zealand, in November 1880, the son of Irish migrants James Joseph and Ellen Clements (née Cunningham). His birth is recorded in the family birthday book; the father was 22, and the mother was 19.[1] Subsequent births record the family moving from Tauranga to Te Aroha to Paeroa before arriving in Auckland around 1884. Tom's father worked as a cordial maker, but it was often said that his preoccupation was brewing beverages of another kind. Through the New Zealand newspaper website, *Papers Past*, we read of the tragic effect alcohol had on the parents and the young family.



Thomas Patrick Clements

Tom would have received a basic education at schools in Parnell and Newmarket – perhaps some at the local convent. How regularly is open to question, as his father was fined for not sending the children to school on more than one occasion.[2]

I imagine that as soon as he could, Tom would quit school and begin working as a fisherman. My grandmother told me that he was known as "Rocks" because one of his allotted roles was to clamber to the top of the mast to look for navigational hazards, calling "rocks ahead" when they loomed near. A recurring theme in Tom's life appears in *The New Zealand Herald* of 21 January 1902 – abusive language while inebriated dished up to the licensee of the Metropolitan Hotel.[3] Albert Drake had refused to supply Tom with alcohol as he was already drunk upon entering the hotel. This incident followed a similar offence for which the sentence was twenty shillings or seven days' imprisonment with hard labour. Tom landed up in gaol for his misdemeanours at the Metropolitan Hotel, but was discharged after paying the fine of ten shillings.

In August 1905, Tom found himself in court once more, this time as a witness for the defence in a Magistrate's Court trial for the attempted murder of a young woman, Mary Kate Donovan, by William Reid.[4] Tom had been drinking with a group of men on board the yacht *Christina* when he heard a female calling that she was overboard. While he was pouring a whiskey, the accused got up and pulled the girl aboard. In an attempt to impugn the integrity of the witness, Detective Marsack repeatedly challenged Tom as to his state of intoxication. Tom replied that he was sober enough to know what took place on that day; yes, he had been drinking on the morning of the trial (two glasses). "You have paid a few visits to the Police Court yourself?" – "Yes, I have been in for drunkenness."[5]

The sequel took place in the Supreme Court in early December when Tom once more appeared as a defence witness. He reiterated that he had been pouring a whiskey when he heard the splash but did not hear a cry of "Murder" when the woman went overboard. He stated that Reid had not forced more liquor on her and that he had not ill-treated her.[6]

In summation, the judge described the evidence given by some of the witnesses for the prisoner (Reid) as obviously false. There was no doubt that the woman had been screaming and calling out "Murder" and that Reid had treated her with great brutality. "The whole thing was shocking and, moreover, showed an absolute want of decency scarcely credible in a civilised country. The conduct of the fishermen in the [witness] box and out of it made the matter even more shocking than the actual circumstances of the case." Despite that, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty, and the prisoner was discharged.[7]

In 1908, Rocks Clements was on a list of alleged "bad characters" in Marine Department correspondence now held at the National Archives, Auckland. The bad characters included both crew and "frequenters" of fishing boats.[8] At the time, Tom was one of the crew of the *Victory*, which was frequented by Maud Hartnell, a middle-aged woman well-known to the Auckland justice system. She was described as a rogue and a vagabond in the press but was supported by Joseph Winter, Master of the *Victory*. In April 1908, the police swooped onto the *Victory*, where they found Maud Hartnell "alone, attired in the scantiest raiment, and unclean to a decidedly unpleasant degree while in

the distance the crew of the craft tugged excitedly at the dinghy oars in a frenzy to escape a contretemps." Maud incurred a prison sentence of three months, having failed to reform her ways.[9]

The greatest surprise in Tom's life hit me unexpectedly. He died in June 1948, and his death certificate informed me that he had been married to a woman named O'Connor who had predeceased him.[10] Another piece of information from the New Zealand Expeditionary Roll of the Second Division was that Tom was working as a railway constructor at Okahukura in the King Country, not far from Taumarunui (North Island).[11] By 1901, work had started on the link from Stratford to the Main Trunk Railway Line. Travelling to Ruapehu, I passed the turnoff to Okahukura and was reminded of Tom. "I must look into his life some more," I thought.

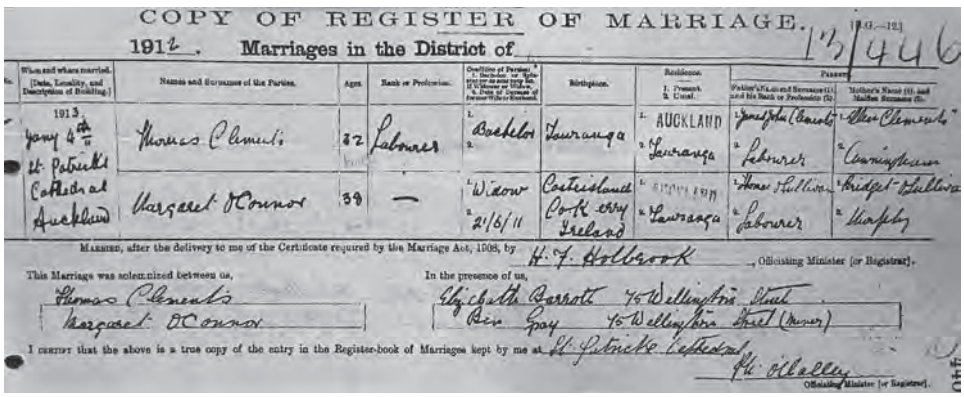
I purchased a copy of the certificate for Tom's marriage in January 1913, at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Auckland. His wife was Margaret O'Connor, who had been widowed on 21 June 1911. The couple were usually residents of Tauranga, but had come to Auckland to marry. I was intrigued to see that Margaret had been born in Castleisland, County Kerry, Ireland, the birthplace of Tom's mother, Ellen Cunningham.[12] Margaret's parents' names were given as Thomas O'Sullivan and Bridget (née Murphy). The prior marriage of Margaret had to be checked, and the easiest place to start was with the death of her first husband, James O'Connor, a battery hand at Waihi.[13] What took me by surprise was the information on the death certificate that Margaret's maiden name was not O'Sullivan but Cunningham, the same as Tom's mother, Ellen! Perhaps Margaret was an Irish cousin.

I checked my notes and discovered that Ellen had a sister, Margaret. One by one, I obtained the birth certificates for the O'Connor children, some of whom had Cunningham as a middle name.[14] I became increasingly suspicious that Tom had married his mother's sister, one of the prohibited degrees of marriage on account of consanguinity. The final proof lay in James's and Margaret O'Connor's marriage certificate, a marriage solemnized in Limerick, Ireland, in July 1888, not long before they emigrated.[15] James's surname is written as "Connors," and Margaret was not an O'Sullivan but a Cunningham, the daughter of John, a labourer who matches Ellen's father.[16] QED, I reckoned![17]

Issues of the *Waihi Daily Telegraph* appearing on the website *Papers Past* show that Margaret O'Connor was as fond of alcohol as her nephew.[18] Her exasperated husband, James, sought a prohibition order to try to keep her sober as she drank every day and drank everything she got. The newspapers reported that she had cleared out in September 1908 with a young man of 27, her nephew, and was now in Tauranga, leaving her hard-working husband with six children.[19] There is evidence that Margaret and Tom looked after her children after James's death, but the youngsters also spent considerable time in Catholic institutions during their formative years.

A few weeks after his marriage to Margaret, Tom was featured in the newspapers, this time under another alias: Frank Clements, "a fisherman from Tauranga known as Rocks Clements on account of his association with rock oysters," said the *Auckland Star*. He was accused of stealing a gold watch and chain worth £9 from the people with whom they were staying, which he sold to a barman for 22 shillings.[20] His fondness for alcohol was acknowledged at the trial; he had spent time on Rotoroa Island drying out but did not have a history of dishonesty. He had no need for any money; it was Auckland Anniversary Day, and he was celebrating. It was found that the act was that of a drunk man rather than premeditated. Tom was fined, ordered to reimburse the affected parties, and made subject to a prohibition order.[21]

In September the following year, a taxi driver found himself in hot water, charged with receiving Benzene supposedly stolen by Tom Clements from the ship on which he worked. It was conceded that the taxi driver had been the victim of a underhanded action by Clements, whom he took to be a fisherman on a drinking bender, willing to sell his Benzene at any price to secure liquor. The charge against the taxi driver was dismissed, but Clements was sentenced "to six weeks' hard labour."[22]



COPY OF REGISTER OF MARRIAGE. 13/446

1912. Marriages in the District of

When and where married. [Date, Locality, and Description of Building.]	Names and Surnames of the Parties.	Ages.	Rank or Profession.	Condition of Parties. [1. Bachelor or Spinster. 2. Widower or Widow. 3. Date of Decree of former Wife or Husband.	Birthplace.	Residence. [1. Present. 2. Usual.]	Parties' Fathers' Names and Surnames (1) and his Rank or Profession (2).	Parties' Mothers' Names (1) and Maiden Surnames (2).
1913 January 4th at St Patrick's Cathedral Auckland	Thomas Clements	32	Labourer	1. Bachelor 2.	Tauranga	1. AUCKLAND 2. Tauranga	1. James John Clements 2. Labourer	1. Ellen Clements 2. Cunningham
	Margaret O'Connor	39	—	1. Widow 2. 21/6/11	Castleisland Cork Co. Ireland	1. [illegible] 2. Tauranga	1. Thomas Sullivan 2. Labourer	1. Bridget Sullivan 2. Murphy

Married, after the delivery to me of the Certificate required by the Marriage Act, 1908, by H. J. Holbrook, Officiating Minister (or Registrar).

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Thomas Clements, Margaret O'Connor.

In the presence of us, Elizabeth Garratt 75 Wellington Street, Rice Gay 75 Wellington Street (Owner).

I CERTIFY that the above is a true copy of the entry in the Register-book of Marriages kept by me at St Patrick's Cathedral, H. O'Malley, Officiating Minister [or Registrar].

Marriage of Thomas Clements and Margaret O'Connor

During the early 1920s, Tom and Margaret moved north, around the Dargaville area. In January 1923, "down from Dargaville," Tom asked a plainclothes constable in Queen Street, Auckland, for the price of a drink and landed once more in the Police Court — his 17th appearance. He said he had come to town for a holiday but had made a fool of himself. He was convicted and told by the Magistrate, "If there is any more of this begging business you will go up to Mount Eden Prison for three months."[23]

Margaret died suddenly at Tauraroa, inland from Whangarei, in January 1925. She had taken Tom his lunch at the Quarry, where he worked for the Public Works Department. She visited her next-door neighbour at four p.m. for a cup of tea and complained of a pain in her chest. Tom found his wife (and aunt) dead on the floor of their house just over an hour later.[24] A month afterwards, Tom was once more in the news in conjunction with an assault case between belligerent boarders at rival boarding houses in Tauraroa — he had been playing cards and witnessed the fracas but did not appear to have joined in.[25]

By 1932, Tom had returned to his calling as a fisherman at Maketu in the Bay of Plenty, where, I was told, he was living with local Maori.[26] My Aunt Margaret remembers him visiting in the early 1930s, attired in shabby clothes, but what horrified her most was that he was wearing sandshoes! My grandmother said Margaret had to realise that now that he lived with the Maori, a different standard had been applied. An acquaintance of Maketu-Maori descent, who would have been in that community when Tom was there, told me she recalled his name from her childhood. Tom's last reported misdemeanour was in November 1936, once more for drunkenness.[27]

There seem to be no family photos of Tom. The *New Zealand Police Gazette* describes him as having "a fresh complexion, brown hair, blue eyes, a long nose, and a scar on his right arm near the wrist." I browsed through hard copies of the *Gazettes*, hoping to find mugshots, but my efforts were in vain. However, a few months ago, I noticed that the *Police Gazettes* from 1877 to 1945 were now searchable on *Papers Past*. I researched once more, and there, dated 2 December 1914, I saw for the first time my Grandmother's elusive brother Tom looking at me.[28]

Tom Clements, aka "Rocks" Clements aka Frank Clements died in June 1948 at Tauranga, up from Maketu.[29] His sister Annie attended the funeral at St Mary's Church. She spoke with folk from Maketu, who assured her the family need not worry as they would look after his grave, which is unmarked in the Catholic cemetery.[30] The priest appears to have been the informant on Tom's death certificate, and I have often wondered if Tom shared his story as a death-bed confession.

I was told that Tom Clements was "not about family much," and I think now I have some insight into why. I ask myself again — should we judge the lives of those about whom we write? Tom Clements — black sheep? These are the facts with which I leave you, dear reader, to be the judge.

Endnotes

1 Birthday Book held privately in Dillon family papers.

2 "Auckland Education Series 29," *Archives New Zealand* (https://www.archives.govt.nz), item 1057.

3 "Law and Police: Police Court News," *New Zealand Herald*, 21 January 1902, p. 7, image copy, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ : accessed 4 April 2024).

4 "Charge of Attempted Murder," New Zealand Herald, 19 August 1905, p. 3, image copy, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ : accessed 4 April 2024).

5 "Charge of Attempted Murder."

6 "Supreme Court: Fishing Boat Orgies," New Zealand Herald, 6 December 1905, p. 8, image copy, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.got.nz/ : accessed 4 April 2024).

7 "Supreme Court: Fishing Boat Orgies."

8 Electoral District of Tauranga, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand, Supplementary Roll, p. 11, No. 4749 for Thomas Patrick Clements, fisherman, 1908; citing "New Zealand Electoral Rolls, 1853-2010; "New Zealand, Electoral Rolls, 1853-2010," image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 4 April 2024). This provides occupation and residence information for Thomas.

9 "Charge of Vagabondage," *Auckland* (New Zealand) *Star*, 20 April 1908, p. 5; and "Up For Sentence," *Auckland* (New Zealand) *Star*, 24 April 1908, p. 2; and "Misellaneous," *New Zealand Herald*, 25 April 1908, p. 7, image copies, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz : accessed 4 April 2024).

10 "Death Registration," database, (https://www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz : accessed 25 June 2024), ref. no. 1948/26546, Thomas Clements (1948).

11 "New Zealand, World War I Army Reserve Rolls, 1916-1917," digital image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 25 June 2024), entry for Thomas Patrick Clements, 2nd Division, p. 312, image 161 of 929.

12 Castleisland Parish, Diocese of Kerry (Ireland), April 1823-29 Dec 1858, Catholic Parish Registers, image, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie : viewed 10 April 2024), p. 217 of 288, entry for Ellen Cunningham, 22 February 1857, parents

John Cunningham and Bridget Sullivan; NLI microfilm 04276/03.

[13] "Death Registration," database, (https://www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz : accessed 25 June 2024), ref. no. 1911/4111, James O'Connor (1911).

[14] "Birth Registration," database, (https://www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz : accessed 25 June 2024), ref. no. 1896/2274, James Cunningham O'Connor (1896) and ref. no. 1902/6978, Kitchener Cunningham O'Connor (1902).

[15] Marriage Records for Ireland, *RootsIreland* (https://www.rootsireland.ie : accessed 10 April 2024), database entry for James Connors-Margaret Cunningham, 2 July 1888, Feenagh Parish, Co. Limerick (Ireland).

[16] Castleisland Parish, Diocese of Kerry (Ireland), Jan 1859-29 Aug 1869, Catholic Parish Registers, image, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie : viewed 10 April 2024), p. 150 of 232, entry for Margaret Cunningham, 1 April 1869, parents John Cunningham and Bridget O'Sullivan, and sponsors Barthalemue [sic] Murphy and Maria Horan; NLI microfilm 04276/04.

[17] QED, Latin for *quod erat demonstrandum*, "what was to be demonstrated," i.e., "Wait for it, he married his mother's sister, boom, there it is!"

[18] "At the Police Court yesterday afternoon...," *Waihi* (New Zealand) *Daily Telegraph*, 22 December 1904, p. 2, image copy, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ : accessed 4 April 2024).

[19] "Prohibition Orders: James O'Connor v. Margaret O'Connor," *Waihi* (New Zealand) *Daily Telegraph*, 1 September 1908, p. 2, image copy, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ : accessed 4 April 2024).

[20] "A Fisherman's Catch," *Auckland* (New Zealand) Star, 20 March 1913, p. 5, image copy, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ : accessed 4 April 2024).

[21] A Prohibition Order was a court order to prohibit drinking. For an example, see: "Prohibition Orders. Are They Effective? An Affirmative View," *New Zealand Herald* (Auckland), 26 July 1909, p. 6, image copy, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ : accessed 25 June 2024).

[22] "Police Court: A Bargain in Benzine," *Auckland Star* (Auckland, New Zealand), 15 September 1914, p. 4, image copy, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ : accessed 25 June 2024). Clements admitted to stealing two tins of benzene, valued at 20 shillings.

[23] "Police Court: Down From Dargaville," *Auckland Star* (New Zealand), 3 January 1923, p. 6, image copy, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ : accessed 4 April 2024).

[24] "Local and General: Upon returning to his home...," *Northern* (Whangarei, New Zealand), *Advocate*, 9 January 1925, p. 4, image copy, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ : accessed 4 April 2024).

[25] "Trouble at Tauraroa: Assault and 'Language,'" *Northern Advocate* (Whangarei, New Zealand), 10 February 1925, p. 2, image copy, *Papers Past* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ : accessed 4 April 2024).

[26] "New Zealand, Electoral Rolls, 1853-2010," digital image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 25 June 2024), entry for Thomas Patrick Clements, 1931, Maketu, Tauranga, Bay of Plenty, p. 7, image 94 of 107.

[27] "News in Town: Charge of Drunkenness," *Bay of Plenty Times*, (Tauranga, New Zealand), 2 November 1936, pg. 2, image copy, *PapersPast* (https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ : accessed 25 June 2024).

[28] "New Zealand, Police Gazettes, 1878-1945," image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 10 April 2024), entry and photograph for Thomas Patrick Clements, alias Frank Clements, 2 December 1914, image 127 of 935; citing *Archives New Zealand,* Wellington, New Zealand, item #IE26364917, roll #R15423687.

[29] NZ Death Reg., ref. 1948/26546, T. P. Clements.

[30] "New Zealand, Cemetery Records, 1800-2007," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 4 April 2024), entry for Thomas Patrick Clements, 21 June 1948, plot no. 2, sect. 40, RC [Roman Catholic], Tuapiro cemetery, Tauranga, Thames Valley, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand.

Images: Mugshot of Thomas Clements from New Zealand Police Gazette, Wellington, Australia, 2 December 1914, no. 12, p.47. Marriage: Thomas Clements – Margaret O'Connor, 4 January 1913, Auckland, New Zealand, Folio 13, no. 446, reg. no. 1913/1039.

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Thomas Conboy's Forgotten Home in Cornamucklagh, Ballymoe – Part I

by Patti Salvaggio

A death record with questionable information, confusing Irish boundaries, and record loss all present challenges to establishing a townland of origin for Thomas Conboy (~1856–1908). Direct, indirect, and negative evidence are combined to answer whether Thomas Conboy, who died on 28 May 1908 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is the son of Michael Conboy and Ellen Kane, from Cornamucklagh, County Galway, Ireland.[1]

Ireland

Geographical Boundaries: Zeroing in on the Conboy Family

The surname "Conboy" and its "Cunnaboy" variant are relatively unusual in Ireland, but are common in County Galway. In 1855, in Kilcroan Civil Parish, County Galway, there were four Cunnaboy families living between Ballymoe and Williamstown.[2]

The Catholic Parish of Ballintubber-Ballymoe (current boundaries) includes St. Croan's in Ballymoe and St. Bride's in County Roscommon.[3] Cornamucklagh townland (see Figure 1) is in the adjacent Kilcroan Parish, about one mile south of Ballymoe.

Context

Documentation of impoverished Irish Catholics in the pre-1800s and early 1800s is limited, primarily because of the penal laws enacted by England against Catholics in the 16th and 17th centuries. The restrictive laws gradually relaxed and, by the 1820s, the Catholic hierarchy initiated the reconstruction of churches, leading to the establishment of sacramental registers.[4]

Moreover, the predominant English or Anglo-Irish ruling class held most of the land. The rural Irish endured deplorable living conditions, residing on modest plots and paying rent to their landlords. Those without land didn't leave documented records such as wills or deeds, but they might be traceable in landlords' estate papers or tax records like the Tithe Applotment Books or Richard Griffith's Valuation of Ireland (1847-1864). No complete census exists in Ireland from 1821 to 1891.[5] Discovering information about the Conboys necessitates a reliance on census substitutes, church records, and various other sources such as court records.[6]

The Records

Thomas and Mary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Thomas Conboy's birthplace has proven to be elusive, a common challenge in researching Irish immigrants. Neither

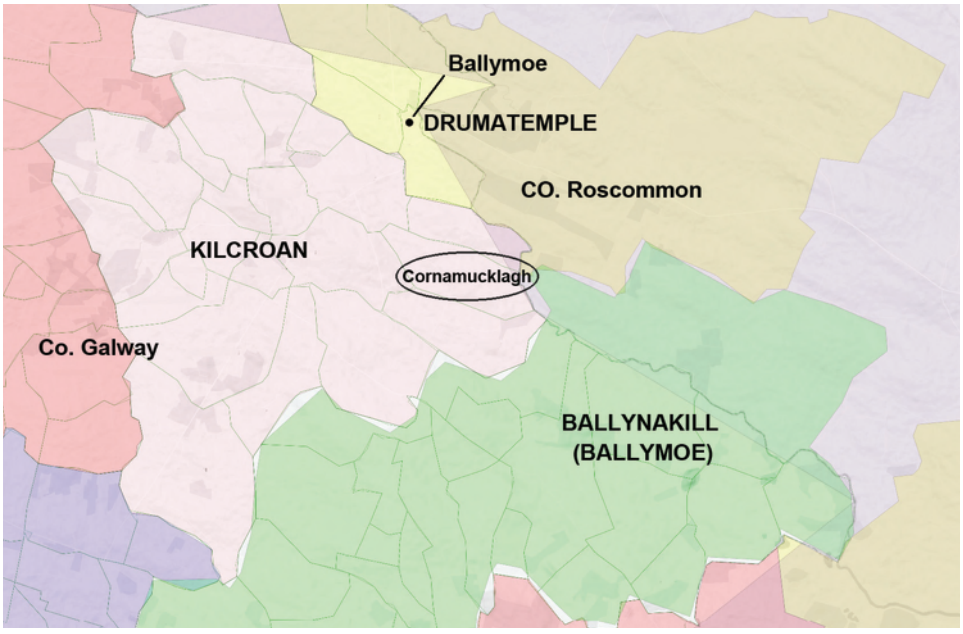


Figure 1. Map adapted from Irish Ancestors *(https://www.Johngrenham.com/places/civil_Index.php : Accessed 29 October 2023), Civil Parish Maps. Used with permission.*



Figure 2. Map: NordNordWest, License: (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/de/legalcode); adapted from Wikipedia *(https://en.wikipedia.org/?curid=2041167).*

ship passenger manifests nor citizenship documents specify his birthplace, and his obituary provides no insight into his origins. The 1900 U.S. census lists Thomas as born in Ireland.[7] His 1908 Pennsylvania death certificate indicates he was born in Ireland in February 1862, and was the son of Michael Conboy and Ellen Kane.[8] However, oral family history suggests Thomas's widow Mary and their three youngest children journeyed in 1910 to Ballymoe, County Galway, to visit the cottage where he was allegedly born.[9] Could Thomas's origins be definitively traced to Ballymoe or a nearby townland?

Building Thomas's Family

Establishing the presence of Thomas Conboy in Ireland becomes more feasible if one can connect him with a Conboy family possessing the relevant birth intervals in the right location during the appropriate period. The sole records for a local Conboy-Kane family were found at the St. Croan Catholic Church in Ballymoe. Sources spanning 1840 to 1901 confirm the residence of a Michael and Ellen Conboy in neighboring Cornamucklagh townland. The church's "Baptismale" book documents the births of five children to Michael Conboy and Ellen Kane between 1843 and 1859, occurring at approximately twenty-three-month intervals. Thomas was not among the children recorded.[10]

The 1908 Old Age Pension records reveal evidence of two more Conboy-Kane children.[11] In Patrick Conboy's 1921 pension application, he stated his parents were Michael and Ellen Kane Conboy of Cornamucklagh. However, Patrick was not found in the 1851 Ireland census, suggesting he was born after that date. Official records noted both a younger Patrick who had died in 1845 at age 5 and an1835 marriage for Michael and Ellen.[12]

Church and pension records reveal the following known children of Michael and Ellen Conboy:[13]

1. Patrick, born about 1840,
2. Michael, baptized 6 March 1843,
3. Margaret, baptized 18 May 1845,
4. Bridget, baptized 29 April 1847,[14]
5. Patrick, born after 1851,
6. Eleanor, baptized 24 January 1858, and
7. Bridget, baptized 2 October 1859.

Thomas's marriage certificate provides a birth year of 1858, which is likely more reliable than the one on his death certificate.[15] However, Eleanor's baptism in January 1858 raises doubts about this birth year, as it would imply Thomas being either her twin or born very late in 1858; this would make Bridget's conception in early 1859 improbable. Because Michael and Ellen's known children were all born about twenty-three months apart, using that approximate interval as a starting point to backtrack from Ellen's baptism proved successful in finding a more plausible birth window of February 1856 for Thomas. This date also correlates with gaps in record coverage and would explain the absence of baptismal documentation for Thomas. Going back yet another twenty-three months would suggest a possible birth corresponding to Patrick in 1854, whose baptism also wasn't found.

Civil marriage and death records for the Glennamaddy Superintendent's District commenced in 1864. These excellent sources provided further information about the Conboys.[16] The following Conboy death and marriage records provide continuity of location and relationships:

- Michael Conboy, from Cornamucklagh, died 23 November 1876, at age 50.
  - Bridget Conboy was the informant.[17]
- Bridget Conboy, age 40, from Cornamucklagh, daughter of Michael Conboy.
  - Married Michael Simon 23 February 1889.[18]
- Patrick Conboy, "of age," from Cornamucklagh, son of Michael Conboy.
  - Married Anne Connolly 13 December 1893.[19]
- Ellen Conboy, widow of Cornamucklagh, died 15 May 1897 at age 76.
  - Her daughter, Bridget Simon, was the informant.[20]
- No civil death and marriage records exist for a Thomas Conboy of the appropriate age or location between 1864 and 1908.[21]

This article will be continued in the October 2024 issue.

Endnotes

1 The name *Conboy* is variously spelled as "Cunnaboy" and "Curboy" in records. Unless quoting directly from a record, *Conboy* is used throughout. Cornamucklagh is often spelled "Curnamuckla(gh)" in records. Unless quoting directly from a record, *Cornamucklagh* is used.

2 John Grenham, "Surnames," *IrishAncestors* (https://www.johngrenham.com/c_parish/c_parish.php?county=Galway&surname=Conboy : accessed 29 October 2023), Conboy households by parish in Galway. For distance, see *Google Maps* (https://www.google.com/maps/ : accessed 17 October 2023). Williamstown is five miles west of Ballymoe.

3 Francis Beirne, ed., "Parish of Ballintubber," *The Diocese of Elphin; People, Places and Pilgrimage* (Dublin: Columba

Press, 2000), 204-205. Ibid, "Parish of Kilbegnet," p. 258. From 1821 to 1869, nearby Glinsk Parish in County Galway was served by priests in Ballymoe.

4 "Roman Catholic baptism, marriage & burial records: An overview of Irish Catholic records," *Irish Genealogy Toolkit* (https://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/Roman-Catholic-baptism.html : accessed 30 October 2023).

5 John Grenham, "Census Records," *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors* (Dublin: Gill Books, 2019), pp. 23-27.

6 John Grenham, pp. 18-37.

7 For the passenger record, see "New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 24 February 2022) > 1882 > Apr > 20 > Lake Winnipeg > image 10, S.S. *Lake Winnipeg*, (Liverpool to New York), arriving 20 April 1882, p. 10 (penned), lines 1-3: citing National Archives, Washington D.C., microfilm publication M237, 1820-1897. For citizenship, see "Pennsylvania, Eastern District Court, Naturalization Records, 1795-1952," database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org : accessed 28 October 2023). Negative findings for Thomas Conboy between 1885 and 1908. For the census, see 1900 U.S. census, Philadelphia, PA., population schedule, 75A (stamped), Enumeration District (ED) 450, sheet 1, dwell. 5, fam. 5, Thomas Conboy; "1900 Unites States Federal Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 28 October 2023). For his obituary, see "Conboy," obituary, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 31 May 1908, p. 8b, col.3; imaged, *Newspapers.com* (https://www.newspapers.com : accessed 15 November 2023).

8 Pennsylvania, Bureau of Vital Statistics, death certificate 53951 (1908), Thomas Conboy; "Pennsylvania, U.S., Death Certificates, 1906-1969," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 13 October 2023). The undertaker, as the informant, had second-hand knowledge of Thomas's birth date and place of birth although he likely received the information from Mary Conboy, who had no direct knowledge of Thomas's birth date.

9 Mary Verbrugghe, granddaughter of Thomas and Mary Conboy, interview by Patti Salvaggio, 2013. For the 1910 travel, see "Pennsylvania, U.S. Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1798-1962," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 15 November 2023), > T840-Philadelphia, 1883-1945 > 82, image 363, S.S. *Haverford*, (Liverpool to Philadelphia), arriving on 21 August 1910, List "H" (penned), lines 23-26; citing National Archives, Washington, D.C., microfilm publication T840-Philadelphia, 1883-1945, roll 82. Mary Conboy and 3 children "returning home." The family likely traveled from Ireland to Liverpool for the journey back to America. In 1910, Ireland was considered part of the UK and no records were kept for travel between the two countries. See also: "Finding an Irish Ancestor Using English Records," *FamilySearch Wiki* (https://www.familysearch.org : accessed 15 November 2023).

10 "Baptismal/Birth Records for Ireland," database, *RootsIreland* (https://ifhf.rootsireland.ie/ : accessed 27 June 2023), search surnames Conboy/Kane and variations, 1840-1864. Also, St. Croan Catholic Church, Ballymoe, "Baptismale," viewed at St. Bride's Rectory, Ballintubber, County Roscommon, Ireland, October 2019. The parish book begins in February 1840 and has missing records from 14 March 1850 to 4 July 1856, anomalies in the page numbering, and two different sets of pages for portions of 1858, 1859, and 1860. In the 1800s, priests traveled between towns and townlands to perform marriages and baptisms. Their records, likely copied or lost over the years, explain the irregularities in St. Croan's baptismal records and Thomas's absence therein.

11 "Irish Pension Records-Census Search Forms: An likely but useful genealogy resource," *Irish Genealogy Toolkit* (https://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/irish-pension-records.html : accessed 30 October 2023). The Old Age Pension Act was introduced in Ireland for those aged 70 and over. Public Record Office (PRO) officials searched the 1841 and 1851 census for information regarding an applicant. The reliability of the information found in the census is unknown, but the record created by the PRO provides direct evidence of a Michael Conboy family in Cornamucklagh in 1851. The 1922 fire in the PRO destroyed much of the 1851 census. For the 1851 census, see Matthew Woollard, "Census of Ireland, 1851," *Online Historical Population Reports* (http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/AssociatedView : accessed 7 July 2023). Form A asked about marital status, years of marriage, and members who died in the previous ten years.

12 Public Record Office, Ireland, old age pension application no. C/21 3185, Patrick Conboy, Knockodonnell, Ballymoe, Castlerea; *National Archives of Ireland* (http://censussearchforms.nationalarchives.ie/reels/c19/007246689/007246689_00158.pdf : accessed 28 June 2023) > Genealogy > "Census Search Forms, 1841—1851." There is no indication that Patrick was given a pension. For acceptable evidence of age, see William

A. Casson, ed., Old-Age Pensions Act, 1908 (London: Chas. Knight & Co., LTD, 1908), p. 171, Appendix F, Conditions 1. For reuse of names, see Fiona Fitzsimons, "Traditional Irish naming patterns," *Findmypast* (https://www.findmypast.com : accessed 20 October 2023). Reuse of a name indicates an importance within the family. No marriage records exist for Ballymoe in 1835.

[13] For Patrick's (b~1840) negative findings, see St. Croan's, "Baptismale." Records commence 15 February 1840. Also, "Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI," database with images, *National Library of Ireland* (https://registers.nli.ie/ accessed 4 November 2023), search: Glinsk parish, Diocese of Elphin, microfilm,04620/01. Glinsk was once served by St. Croan's and might contain duplicate records. For Michael, see St. Croan's "Baptismale," p.34, 6 March 1843 [fifth entry]; viewed at St. Bride's Rectory, Ballintubber, County Roscommon, Ireland, October 2019. Ibid., p. 55, 18 May 1845 [seventh entry], Margaret Conboy baptism. Ibid., p.75, 29 April 1847 [third entry], Bridget Conboy baptism. Ibid., p.118, 24 January 1855 [page bottom], Eleanor Conboy baptism. Ibid., p.122, 2 October 1859 [page top], Bridget Conboy baptism. For baptismal traditions, see Msgr. William J. King, "How Soon Should Your Child Be Baptized?," *SimplyCatholic* (https://www.simplycatholic.com/how-soon-should-your-child- be-baptized/ : accessed 1 November 2023). As Catholics typically baptize children shortly after birth, it is probable that the date of birth precedes the baptism by approximately one week.

[14] Age in civil and census records agree Bridget (Conboy) Simon was born about 1847. No further information is known about the second Bridget. She may have died before the civil death registrations began in 1864.

[15] See note 3. The undertaker was the informant for Thomas's birth year in his death record. No one with first- hand knowledge of Thomas's birth provided the information. The marriage record is more reliable since Thomas would have a rough guess as to his birth year, know his father's name, and that he was deceased.

[16] *IrishGenealogy* (https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/irish-records-what-is-available/civil-records : accessed 27 June 2023). All the Conboy children were born before the start of civil registration in 1864.

[17] "Civil Records," database with images, *IrishGenealogy* (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/churchrecords/civil-perform-search.jsp : accessed 27 June 2023), search terms: Glenamaddy Registration District, deaths,1876, Michael Conboy. The volume and page number of each record are not indicated. Glenamaddy Registration District includes the townlands around Ballymoe, County Galway.

[18] Ibid., civil marriages 1889, Conboy-Simon

[19] Ibid., civil marriages, 1893, Conboy-Connelly. "Of age" indicates Patrick was over twenty-one.

[20] Ibid., civil deaths, 1897, Ellen Conboy.

[21] Ibid., civil deaths and marriages (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/churchrecords/civil-perform-search.jsp : accessed 6 November 2023); search terms: Glenamaddy Superintendent Registrar's District, Thomas Conboy, 1864- 1908, death records. Thomas Conboy died in 1878, age 80, in Moneen Townland; Thomas Conboy died in 1865, age 0, image not available; Thomas Conboy died in 1870, age 27, image not available. No marriage records were found for Thomas Conboy.

Patti Salvaggio started delving into her Irish ancestry fifteen years ago and became addicted to chasing her ancestors. Her Irish ancestors hail from Donegal/Tyrone, Sligo, Mayo, and an East Galway area adjacent to County Roscommon. She completed Boston University's Genealogical Principles Course, ProGen 61, and multiple SLIG and GRIP courses. She volunteers in her local library's genealogy section and has plans to pursue a certificate in History of Family through the University of Limerick. Her most cherished achievement is reconnecting with Irish cousins, who welcome her "home."



"What Ireland exports to the world is nothing trivial. It is everything that counts, its Guiness, poetry, passion, prose and politics... and people who have shaped nations. Australia without the Irish would be unthinkable...unimaginable...unspeakable."

~ Paul Keating,
to the Irish Australian Chamber of Commerce, 17 March 1992

2024 Webinar Series — Save the Dates!

Saturday, July 20 | *From Tithes to Griffith's: Property and Valuation Records in Ireland* | by Michael Walsh, AGI
Michael will not only introduce significant land and property valuation record sources from 19th-century Ireland, but also demonstrate a logical and methodical approach to analyzing data. Record sets to be discussed will include Tithe Applotment Books, early townland valuations and notebooks, Griffith's Valuation, and Revision Books. This practical approach will equip you with problem-solving skills to create well-grounded research, making your genealogical journey more fruitful.

Saturday, August 17 | *Railroad Records and Railroad History: Methods for Tracking* | by Paula Stuart-Warren, CG, FMGS, FUGA
International genealogical educator Paula Stuart-Warren will use visuals and references to demonstrate the wealth of historical materials available on railroads across the U.S. This lecture will teach you where to find out more about the railroad, its records, and how to find them. It will also help you answer such questions as "For which railroad did Great-Grandpa work?" "Where did it run?" "Where can I find his personnel records?"

Saturday, September 28 | *What is Your Brick Wall? (Panel Discussion)* | by Tom Rice, CG, and Kathy Lund
This hybrid panel discussion will help you identify the differences between "brick walls" and research difficulties which might be overcome with additional learning, insight, or possibly professional research. Tim and Kathy will discuss how to identify ways to move forward on stalled research problems and distinguish between actual "dead ends" and temporary research intermissions requiring time to reflect on new strategies and tactics. Multiple examples will be provided to illustrate key points.

If you have questions about any of our webinars or classes, contact Trish and Walt, IGSI Education Co-Chairs, at Education@IrishGenealogical.org.

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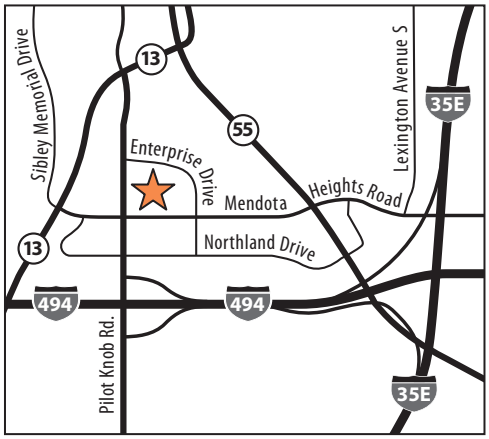
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The library is a self-supporting research library staffed by volunteers. If you are a member of the IGSI and are coming from out of town, contact Librarian@IrishGenealogical.org so we can have an Irish researcher available to meet you.

Volume 45, Number 4

The Septs

OCTOBER (DEIREADH FOMHAIR) 2024 $10.00

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IRISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Genealogy Library Open

The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2024.

The Hoffman Research Library is a private genealogy research library created for members of the organizations in the MGS Partners' Group. Access to the library materials is free to members of IGSI and other MGS Partner societies. Non-members and the general public are requested to pay a per visit $10 donation for use.

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Irish Saturdays

Stop by the library on the second Saturday of the month between 10 AM and 4 PM for Irish research help from IGSI volunteers.

OCTOBER 12, 2024
NOVEMBER 9, 2024
DECEMBER 14, 2024
JANUARY 11, 2025
FEBRUARY 8, 2025
MARCH 8, 2025
APRIL 12, 2025
MAY 10, 2025

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The Septs, the quarterly journal of the Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc., is one of the primary benefits of IGSI membership and is published in January, April, July, and October. Members receive a printed version of the journal unless they have chosen to receive it electronically.

Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc.

2024

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of *The Septs* is built around a core theme. Research articles on the theme should be 1500-2500 words in length and include no more than 2-4 images. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g., family stories submitted by IGSI members and non-members, etc. Articles unrelated to the theme should be 750-1500 words.

If you wish to write on the theme or share case studies, family research, or articles on general Irish culture and history and genealogy resources, please contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadlines to ensure your article is considered for the proper issue.

Contributions and ideas are welcome. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the editorial staff.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2025 | January | Using Crowdsourcing for Genealogical Research

Learn how to use crowdsourcing to advance your genealogical knowledge and to connect with other researchers and/or family members. Examples might include leveraging social media such as Facebook groups.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2024.

2025 | April | Ulster Province

Researching in Northern Ireland's six counties of Antrim, Armagh, Derry (Londonderry), Down, Fermanagh, and Tyrone, and Republic of Ireland counties Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan. Ulster locales are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2025.

2025 | July | Military Records

Learn about the British War Museum and using military records from Ireland, Canada, and the U.S. to locate 18th and 19th century ancestors before the partition of Ireland in 1922.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2025.

2025 | October | Hidden – Women Lost to Time

Discover tips and resources for locating elusive female ancestors after their marriage, immigration, etc. Topics covered may include DNA and locating maiden names.
Deadline for articles: August 15, 2025.

Cover Photo: *New York children trying to stay warm upon steam grates.* Public Domain.

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Hidden Children

by Donna Jones

This edition's theme intrigues me since there was a "hidden child" in my paternal grandmother's family. An 1897 death record for my grandmother's older sister indicated she had a twin named "Verna," who had died at birth. Besides searching for the twin by surname, my other clue was that for over 150 years, all daughters' first names ended in an "a," a tradition that continues today. This twin did not appear in birth, church, death, or census records.

My grandmother's family moved from Canada to Cleveland, Ohio, in 1912. It was not until researching the 1920 U.S. census that I finally found the missing twin. Her name was Vera, and she was an inmate at the Cleveland State Hospital for the Insane. The family also had reported that Vera was living at home. I was excited to find Vera, but it was heartbreaking that she was hidden away because of mental illness or special needs. I thought about how there might be medication available now that could have changed her life.

Society News

by Donna Jones and Walt Rothwell

IGSI is honored that our blog was recognized on a list of "20 Best Irish Genealogy Blogs and Websites in 2024." The website is https://family.feedspot.com/irish_genealogy_blogs/. The list includes other terrific Irish blogs.

Gigi Hickey has done an amazing job posting over 2000 fully searchable articles in the last 12 years. Congratulations, Gigi, on the well-deserved recognition! Gigi always seeks interesting content about Irish research and the genealogy world. If you find information that would help other researchers, please send it to Gigi at Blog@IrishGenealogical.org.

IGSI had a booth in June at the New Jersey Irish Festival in Monmouth, NJ. We also had a booth at the Irish Fair of Minnesota, held at Harriet Island, in August. IGSI member Lois Mackin did two presentations at the Fair. There were great crowds at both events, and we appreciate our volunteers for staffing them.

We have a new marketing committee, for which Janelle Asselin has volunteered as committee chair. The group is working to increase our outreach in media, and with genealogical societies and other organizations such as historical societies. They will also develop a marketing strategy for the Ulster Historical Foundation's conference on March 11-12, 2025.

October is the month we kick off our fall fundraising activity. Donations provide approximately one-third of our annual budget. Stay tuned for more information about this year's campaign.



After retiring from Oxford University Press, Co-President Donna Jones finally has more time to research her heritage and ancestry. She is passionate about genealogy education and is a member of the IGSI Education committee and the Board of Directors. IGSI provides her the opportunity to learn more about Irish research as she continues to search for where in Ireland her great, greatgrandparents lived.



Co-President Walt Rothwell is an IGSI board member and co-chair of the Education Committee. He is also affiliated with the Yankee Genealogical Society and the Canadian Interest Group of the Minnesota Genealogical Society. He is endlessly researching family lines across North American, Ireland, and England.

Locating the Lost

by Mary LaRue Stuart

This issue's theme, "Hidden Children," hits particularly hard for me. When we chose this theme, it immediately reminded me of the 2013 movie, "Philomena," starring Judi Dench and Steve Coogan. Philomena Lee spent three years in Sean Ross Abbey, Co. Tipperary, which operated a mother and baby home like those in Tuam, Co. Galway. These homes were established for unwed mothers but often did more harm than good. The movie was based on Martin Sixsmith's novel, *The Lost Child of Philomena Lee*, and details Philomena's efforts years later to locate her young son after being forced into an adoption contract. As an adoptee, I found the story particularly compelling and often heartbreaking, with not a little of the "there but for the grace of God go I" about it.

While the film took some artistic license with the facts (it was rated 70.9% accurate by the *Information is Beautiful* blog), it doesn't alter the fact that Mother and Baby homes such as those at Sean Ross Abbey or Tuam, or the Magdalen asylums (sometimes called "laundries") in Ireland, and later Philadelphia and New York, were problematic.[1] It is thought that nearly 6,000 babies died in Irish Magdalene laundries from 1767 till the last one closed in 1996.[2]

Our regular DNA columnist, Lois Mackin, is taking a well-deserved sabbatical for this issue. Still, we are fortunate to have a guest article from fellow DNA expert Maurice Gleeson, who discusses the mass grave of infants found at Tuam and how DNA is being used to help identify their remains and eventually match them to potential relatives.



Cherub on a damaged gravestone, by Andrew Hubbell. Licensed as CC BY-NC-ND 2-0.

In her article on New York City orphans, Jill Morelli discusses the origins of orphan trains and the practice of using them to send children to the Midwest for fosterage and to create a labor force. Her article focuses on Iowa, offering the stories of three riders who forged a life there after being transported.

A similarly excellent piece on the same topic by Clark Kidder shares the story of two highly successful orphan train transplants, as well as that of his grandmother. Clark also provides extensive information on how and where to research these riders. A six-volume set called *A History of the New York Juvenile Asylum and Its Orphan Trains*, edited by Mr. Kidder, includes the surviving records of The Juvenile Asylum and was published in 2021.[3]

Lastly, we pick up with the second part of Patti Salvaggio's outstanding case study, in which she shows us how she was able to use assorted records, particularly dog licenses, to help her track the migration of her ancestor Thomas Conboy and ultimately discover both his birth origins and his siblings.

We hope you enjoy the issue!

Endnotes

[1] "Philomena (film)," Wikipedia (https://www.wikipedia.org : accessed 15 September 2024). See also the Wikipedia on Sean Ross Abbey.

[2] "Forgive us our Trespasses: Mother and Baby Homes in Ireland," Sage Journals (permalink at https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357219894044 : accessed 15 September 2024). See also: "Magdalene asylum," Wikipedia (http://www.wikipedia.org : accessed 15 September 2024).

[3] John D. Beatty, CG, "The New York Juvenile Asylum and Orphan Trains," Genealogy Gems: News from the Allen County Public Library at Fort Wayne [IN], no. 246, 31 August 2024, Genealogy Gems (https://lists.friendsofallencounty.org/pipermail/genealogygems/msg00241.html : accessed 2 September 2024).

Mary LaRue Stuart serves as Editor of The Septs *and on IGSI's Board of Directors. A native Hoosier and former university writing teacher with an MA in English, Mary is now a professional genealogist whose specialties include Indiana research, military repatriation, and DNA. Her Irish ancestors hail largely from Donegal/Northern Ireland. Mary is currently working on her BCG certification portfolio and is pursuing an AFA in Glass Arts. She enjoys singing, sewing, reading, and blowing glass in her non-existent spare time.*



The NYC Irish Orphans & Their Midwest Families

by Jill Morelli, CG

In the mid-nineteenth century United States, two issues emerged and collided into a solution. The population of street children in East Coast cities was an affront to the desired world image of America and a labor shortage in the Midwest resulted from the swift settlement of the area due to the Homestead Acts.[1] The out-placement of East Coast orphans to Midwest farmers attempted to solve both problems.

Between 1846 and 1852, the Great Famine in Ireland resulted in a massive migration of poor Irish to East Coast cities.[2] As early as 1855, more than one-quarter of the population in both Manhattan and Brooklyn had been born in Ireland. Many crowded into tenement housing in the fourth and sixth wards. Locked in poverty, any crisis in a family could result in a child being forced to work, fend for themselves on the street, or placed in an orphanage. Single women and children were particularly vulnerable to any familial crisis, but married couples were not immune. It is not known what percentage of the foundlings, partial orphans, or street children were Irish. Still, with 25% of the population Irish or of Irish heritage, one can assume that a significant percentage of the at-risk children were also Irish.[3]

Just as the Midwest and West were opening to settlement, the industrial cities of the Northeast encouraged a movement of labor from rural areas to urban. Farming and agricultural support suffered a labor shortage as a result.[4] Representatives of New York City social service agencies responded and established programs to transport these children out of the cities.[5]

The Orphan Train Movement, as it is more contemporaneously known, operated from the 1850s to 1929. Three of the larger New York City organizations that conducted out-placement programs included the New York Foundling Hospital, run by the Sisters of Charity; the New York Juvenile System; and the Children's Aid Society (CAS), founded by Charles Loring Brace. It is estimated that over 250,000 children were outplaced to foster families across the United States, primarily to farmers.[6]

A typical foster family included a farming couple with no children or an older couple with gown children. The typical orphan was between the ages of two and ten and was expected to work on the farm or in the home.[7] Foster families were to provide room, board, and education as if the orphan were their own child.[8] At the orphanage, each child received new clothes, including a small piece of fabric pinned to the inside of their coat with their New York City name and birth date. The orphans and their foster parents were instructed to "forget the past" and the NYC agents removed all mementoes of childhood before the trip. An agent of the orphanage escorted children to their destination, where pre-screened individuals could select a child to come join their family.[9] The Foundling Hospital had a slightly different selection process.

Three stories of Midwest foster families and their New York City orphans of Irish heritage follow. All three orphans arrived in Hamilton County, Iowa, circa 1890, from New York City.

Harry Caroon

NYC name: Jules Virgne
Born of an Irish mother and an unknown father; placed with an Irish family

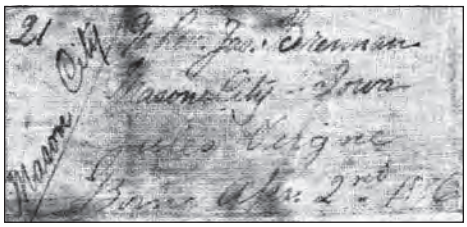


Harry Caroon ("Insurance Agent Quits after 23 Years," Orlando Sentinal [Florida], May 1951, p. 12, col. 4.)

Jules Virgne came to Mason City, Iowa, about 1888, under the sponsorship of the Sisters of Charity of the New York Foundling Hospital. Reverend Father James Brennen, a Catholic priest, was the pre-designated recipient. Between 1888 and 1889, Rev. Brennan relocated to Webster City, Iowa, bringing with him the orphan boy. The child was transferred to the farm home of Patrick and Ellen Caroon, immigrants from Ireland, and assumed the name of Harry Caroon.

In December 1889, Robert Curran, an agent for the Foundling Hospital, wrote a letter requesting information from the Caroons:

> *"Dear Sir, Please to let me know the name of the child you got from Rev. Father Brennan of Webster City. I want to know as soon as possible. You will find the child's name under the collar of Her [sic] dress."*[10]



NYC identification scrap for Harry Caroon, 1888 (permission granted by Betty Jo Stockton; original in the Orphan Train Depot Collection, Kansas.)

The information found on this fabric scrap states that Jules Virgne is the original name of Harry Caroon, born on 2 April 1886.[11] This example illustrates a common problem with out-placed orphans. Their first and last names and even birth dates were often changed or assigned by the foster parents. If the child was a NYC foundling, the mother could have also fabricated information. No civil birth registration for a Jules or Julius born in 1886 in New York City exists.[12] During this period, the Irish tended to record births at their church and not with the city.[13]

The Caroons responded to the Foundling Hosptial by requesting more information about Harry's heritage. A second letter from the Foundling Hospital, dated 30 December 1889, continued the discussion:

> *"I think you are making a mistake in the faith of the child for his mother we know was an Irish woman and was a good strict catholic and a good honest woman. It was through the request of the priest that attended her that the little fellow was taken and I think by the surroundings of his case that he is not of a Jewish religion…."*[14]

Interestingly, the writer did not identify the mother or the father's name or ethnicity. Since Virgne is not an Irish name, the Caroons logically questioned the ethnicity of their foster child. Virgne (or some spelling variation thereof) may be the surname of the father.

By 1895, Harry, now age 9, resided with Patrick and Ellen Caroon and their three adult children.[15] Patrick Caroon, born in 1819 in County Mayo, immigrated in 1853 as part of The Great Famine diaspora, and married Ellen Roach, born in County Cork.[16] Tracing the birth locations of their children shows the family made multiple moves: from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, to Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, and then, before 1867, to Illinois.[17] In 1880, the family resided in Hamilton County, Iowa.[18]

Patrick died in 1897. In 1900, Ellen Caroon headed a household composed of Harry, Ellen's daughter Margaret, Margaret's husband, and Catherine Roach, a sister to Ellen. Harry was born in April 1886 in Iowa [sic], but the birth location of his parents was unknown.[19] By 1910, Harry Caroon, now 24, no longer resided in the Caroon household and instead worked as a farm laborer for another farmer.[20]

Harry Caroon married Margaret Mowbray in Waterloo, Black Hawk County, Iowa, on 27 April 1918. At the time of his marriage, Harry worked as a junior auditor for Standard Oil. He identified his parents as Patrick and Ellen (Roach) Caroon.[21]

Around 1921, Harry and Margaret moved to Leesburg, Lake County, Florida, where Harry sold insurance for Metropolitan Life, a company he stayed with until his retirement in 1951.[22] The couple resided in Lake County until about 1928, when the couple moved to Orlando, Florida. Harry was active in many fraternal organizations in the area and liked to travel and fish.[23]

Harry died on 18 October 1973 in Orlando, Florida. The survivors were nieces and nephews.[24] Margaret died on 6 August 1963.[25] Both are buried in Glen Haven cemetery in Orange County, Florida.[26]

An effort was made to identify Harry's NYC parents but, unfortunately, no evidence emerged. Harry and Margaret had no descendants.

Belle Wientjes

NYC Name: Bella Welch
Born of an Irish mother and unknown father; placed with a German family



Belle (Welch) Wientjes (permission granted by the Eckhoff children)

Bella Welch, born on 4 April 1882 in Nursery & Childs Hospital on Staten Island, came to the CAS in April 1890. Her mother, Maggie Welch, was a twenty-eight-year-old Irish Catholic; the father was unknown. By request of her mother, Bella was sent west. Bella Welch, age 7, arrived in Hamilton County, Iowa, in October of 1890 and was placed with Fred & Minnie Wientjes, immigrants from Germany.[27] As an older farming couple with no children, Fred and Minnie were a typical foster family.[28]

It is unusual that Bella, born a Catholic, would be placed with a Protestant family.

Communication with the CAS occurred intermittently throughout Belle's life. In 1895, she was described as "a nice, bright young girl who spoke, read and wrote German."[29] In 1900, Katie Hines, another New York City orphan to Hamilton County, wrote to the CAS stating, "Belle was well and doing nicely."[30] Mr. Fry of the CAS visited in March of 1901. "She had a good home with people who were attached to her."[31] According to family members, Belle had a close relationship with her foster mother.

When Belle married Dick Eckhoff on 22 February 1905, she named her foster parents as her parents.[32] The couple first moved to Grundy County, Iowa, where Dick rented a farm and did general farm work. By 1910, Belle had given birth to three children, two of whom survived.[33] Within five years, the Eckhoff family had moved to Butler County, Iowa.[34] Dick was a laborer in a lumber yard, supporting Belle and their four daughters. They rented their home.[35]

In 1924, Dick and Belle Eckhoff became members of the Christian Reformed Church of Austinville, Iowa.[36] One year later, the Eckhoff family moved to another rented home within Butler County. Belle noted that her mother was Maggie Welch, but named her foster father, Fred Wientjes, as her father.[37] Belle knew her NYC mother's name, probably because she wrote to CAS to obtain that information. More recently, a granddaughter also wrote CAS and received similar confirmation.[38]

Dick died on 28 December 1928 in the Illinois Central Hospital in Chicago.[39] Now a widow and entering the Depression decade, Belle, four of her five daughters, and her mother-in-law resided in a house, which they rented for $5 per month. The oldest daughter was a schoolteacher in a rural school, and the only employed individual in the family.[40] The family resided in the same home through the difficult 1930s. By 1940, the family's fortunes looked more promising. The family now owned their home, which was valued at $1000. Belle was a nurse, and had worked 20 weeks during the previous year, earning $150. Her son-in-law farmed; one of her daughters was a teacher and contributed $560 to the family's welfare.[41]

Belle died on 4 February 1947, at Mercy Hospital in Waverly, Iowa, of a cerebral hemorrhage.[42] Belle and Dick are buried in Memorial Park Cemetery in Austinville, Iowa.[43]

With five children and multiple descendants, DNA may assist in confirming the NYC mother and identifying the father.

Richard Doyle

NYC name: Richard Doyle
Born of an Irish mother and an English father; placed with an English/Canadian family



Richard Doyle (photo used with permission of great-grandson Ken Norstrud)

At twelve years of age, Richard Doyle was an older orphan who left New York City in 1890 for Iowa.[44] The great-grandson of Richard provided other information:

> *"Richard was born in Cuba. … His mother Annie [Newall] died and his father [John] remarried. That is when he was sent to Iowa with his sister Sadie. Family lore has it that when his father, an attorney in New York, died he left $50 for each of the children. Richard refused to return to get the money."*[45]

> *"Sadie moved back to New York City. …the last address that we had was in Brooklyn."*[46]

Like most family stories, there is a mix of fact and family lore. Richard and his two siblings, Sadie and William, were born in Cuba. Based on William's birth year, the family came to the United States after 1882.[47] John was enumerated as a machinist, not a lawyer.[48]

It is unlikely that Sadie was an out-placed orphan. CAS did not enumerate her as traveling with her brother in 1890.[49] And, in 1892, she lived in Brooklyn with her father, stepmother, and brother.[50] If she was an out-placed orphan, she traveled alone and returned to NYC quickly—possible, but unlikely.

Richard was placed with the William R. Wilson family of Stanhope, Hamilton County, Iowa.[51] Only the manifest provided by the Children's Aid Society places him with this family. This is understandable. William, an early pioneer to the area and Stanhope's postmaster, died in late 1894, before the next half-decade Iowa census in 1895.[52] Richard, now age 16 or 17, was old enough to work on his own.[53]

Two years later, Richard's father, John Doyle, died intestate in New York City. His

second wife, Martha, was named administratrix of the estate.[54] In the probate file, five children of John's previous wife were identified: Richard Doyle of Stanhope, Iowa; Sadie Valentine (William); and three other siblings. The estate's personal property did not exceed a value of $8000, and there was no real estate.[55] According to New York law, Martha was due the entire estate because it was less than $50,000.[56] While the amount offered to Richard cannot be confirmed, Martha determined how much, if any, she gave to each of the five children. Martha possibly made the offer of $50 to Richard, which he rejected.

Richard married Minnie Runyon on 7 August 1899 in Hamilton County.[57] A year later, the couple resided in Webster County, Iowa. They farmed and took in boarders.[58] Richard carved out a typical Iowa life, considering he had no generational wealth — he married, had children, and farmed — a stable life quite different than he could have imagined while growing up in Cuba or New York City.

By 1917, Richard registered for the WWI draft, stating he was born on 12 October 1879, and that Minnie was the person who would know his address. He was tall and of medium build, with dark blue eyes and dark brown hair.[59] In support of the war effort, Richard purchased war bonds.[60]

Few documents remain of Annie (Newall) Doyle, Richard's mother. She was born about 1857 in Ireland and died 30 September 1890 in Flatbush, New York, perhaps in the Kings County Insane Asylum.[61] Her death may have precipitated Richard leaving the family in November 1890.

The surname of Newell is concentrated in County Galway and Dublin.[62]

Richard Doyle died on 17 November 1933, in the Cherokee State Hospital, Cherokee County, Iowa, of a perforated gastric ulcer.[63] Minnie died in 1962. Richard and Minnie were buried at West Lawn Cemetery in Webster County, Iowa.[64]

Richard and Minnie had children who had descendants. DNA might confirm the parents of Richard.

The author conducted a study of 46 unnamed, out-placed orphans who came in the fall of 1890 to Hamilton County, Iowa, from New York City. This article is based on that research. The resultant book is titled *Journeys of the Forgotten: The Orphans of Hamilton County, Iowa.* Published in July 2024, this book offers insights into the broader impacts of the Orphan Train Movement and the research techniques applied. It is available at *lulu.com* and *Amazon*.

Conclusion

Not all out-placed orphans like Harry, Belle, and Richard had happy outcomes. A study conducted in 1922 by the CAS observed that 50% of the placements had unsuccessful outcomes.[65] A survey of the forty-six orphans who came in the fall of 1890 to Hamilton County, Iowa, exhibited a similar pattern. Readers also should not assume that all orphans were Irish or of Irish heritage. The Hamilton County orphans represent a variety of ethnicities, with Germany being the predominant country of origin or heritage.

Harry Caroon, placed with Irish immigrant foster parents, had an Irish mother and an unknown father. Bella was released to the orphanage by her mother, a single Irish woman; her father's ethnicity was unknown. Richard Doyle was born to an Irish mother and an English father, both living at the time of his release. All three orphans married and lived extraordinarily ordinary lives they would not have achieved had they remained in New York City.

By the turn of the century, the acceptance of out-placement programs had waned. Orphan Trains stopped in 1929 with the onset of the Depression, the passage of laws related to child labor and the transporting of children across state lines, and the decreasing need for labor in the Midwest.

Endnotes

All newspaper references are found at https://hamiltoncounty.advantage-preservation.com unless otherwise noted. All federal censuses are found at https://www.ancestry.com. All off-decade or special censuses are found at https://familysearch.org. All references checked June 2024.

1 Steven O'Connor, *Orphan Trains: The Story of Charles Loring Brace and the Children He Saved and Failed*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001) 84-85.

2 University of College Cork, Ireland, "Irish Emigration History," updated 5 September 2013. https://www.ucc.ie/en/emigre/history/.

[3] Marian R. Casey, author, Kenneth Jackson, et al., editors, "Irish," *The Encyclopedia of New York City: Second Edition* (Yale University Press, 2010), p. 657. JSTOR, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vm1cb.14. Accessed 2 July 2024.

[4] Stanley Lebergott, "Labor Force and employment, 1800-1960," *Output, Employment, and Productivity in the United States after 1800*, Dorothy S. Brady, ed., (n.p.: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1966), https://www.nber.org/system/files/chapters/c1567/c1567.pdf. See also, O'Connor, *Orphan Trains: The Story of Charles Loring Brace*, 98.

[5] O'Connor, *Orphan Trains: The Story of Charles Loring Brace*, 96. Citing first publicity circular of the Children's Aid Society, New York (publisher unknown, March 1853).

[6] National Orphan Train Complex, "Placing Out," https://orphantraindepot.org/history/the-childrens-aid-society/.

[7] Jill Morelli, CG, *Journeys of the Forgotten: The Orphans of Hamilton County, Iowa*, "By the Numbers," (Seattle: Lulu.com, 2024), 225-229.

[8] "Boys Wanting Homes," *Webster City Freeman*, 20 August 1890, p. 4, col. 5.

[9] Betty Jo Stockton, Central Florida Genealogical Society, "Papers Found in an Abandoned Office: The Search for Harry Caroon, 1886-1973," *Buried Treasures*, 38 (September-December 2006):4, 84-86. The process outlined is that of the Children's Aid Society; the Foundling Hospital's process was slightly different with the Sisters of Charity assigning each orphan to a specific foster family in NYC.

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[12] Italian Genealogy Group, "Databases," (https://italiangen.org) and *MyHeritage* (https://MyHeritage.com) [Searched all birth databases for given name of Jules or Julius born in 1886. No findings.]

[13] NYC Historic Vital Records, "FAQs," Question 1, a., (https://a860-historicalvitalrecords.nyc.gov/faq). Records are only available online for Kings County and Brooklyn.

[14] Stockton, Central Florida Genealogical Society, "Papers Found in an Abandoned Office." It is possible the surname reflects the surname of the father.

[15] 1895 State of Iowa census, Hamilton County, Iowa, population schedule, image 652 of 681, Harry Caroom in the household of Patrick Caroom; digital image, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org).

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[18] 1880 U.S. census, Hamilton County, Iowa, population schedule, Williams, ED 100, household 43, dwelling 43, Patrick Caroon.

[19] 1900 U.S. census, Hamilton County, Iowa, population schedule, Williams Township, ED 114, p. 6, household 124, dwelling 129, Harry Caroom residing in the household of Ellen Caroom; NARA T623.

[20] 1910 U.S. census, Hamilton County, Iowa, population schedule, Williams Township, ED 125, p. 3B, household 71, dwelling 74, Harry Caroom in the household of Thomas Lister; NARA T624, roll 404.

[21] "Iowa, U.S. marriage records, 1778-1951," vol 473, Caroon-Mowbray marriage entry (27 April 1918). State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

[22] 1930 U.S. Census, Lake County, Florida, population schedule, Leesburg, p. 8A, ED 13, household 174, dwelling 182, Harry Carson; NARA T626.

[23] "Insurance Agent Quits after 23 Years," *Orlando Sentinel* [Florida], 6 May 1951, p. 12, col. 4.

[24] "Mr. Harry Caroon…," obituary, The *Orlando Sentinel*, 19 October 1973, p. 45, col. 1. Death occurred the day before. Also, "Florida Death Index, 1877-1998," database, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VVQ6-FTM : accessed 30 April 2021), certificate number 71588, Harry Caroon death entry (18 Oct 1973); Florida Department of Health, Office of Vital Records, Jacksonville.

[25] "Caroon, Mrs. Margaret Mary," obituary, The *Orlando Sentinel*, 8 August 1963, p. 51, col. 2. Death occurred two days before publication.

[26] *Find a Grave*, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/71022937/harry-caroon:

accessed July 2, 2024), memorial page for Harry Caroon (2 Apr 1887–18 Oct 1973), Find a Grave Memorial ID 71022937, citing Glen Haven Memorial Park and Mausoleum, Winter Park, Orange County, Florida, USA; Maintained by NLColes (contributor 47336358). Also, Margaret Mary "Maggie" (Mowbray) Caroon.

27 Kialy Carson, Kansas, [(CURATOR@ORPHANTRAINDEPOT.COM),] to Jill Morelli, email, 7 March 2023, "Info from the CAS," OTR folder, privately held by Morelli, [(E-ADDRESS), & STREET ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE], Seattle, Washington, 2023. The email referred to an email from the archivist, Paul Clarke [(ARCHIVIST@CHILDRENSAIDNYC.ORG)] of the CAS to the Depot, listing the agent's name (Trott), 13 children by name, and their foster parents. Ten boys, three girls.

28 1900 U.S. census, Hamilton County, Iowa, population schedule, Liberty Township, ED 98, p. 7B, household 131, dwelling 131, Belle Wientjes in the household of Fred Wientjes.

29 1900 U.S. census, Hamilton County, Iowa, population schedule, Liberty Township, ED 98, p. 7B, household 131, dwelling 131, Belle Wientjes in the household of Fred Wientjes.

30 Paul Clarke, Archivist, Children's Aid (117 W. 124th Street, New York, New York 10027] to Kathleen Beebe via email {address for private use], 29 April 2022.

31 Paul Clarke, Archivist, Children's Aid (117 W. 124th Street, New York, New York 10027] to Kathleen Beebe via email {address for private use], 29 April 2022.

32 "Iowa Marriages 1880-1945," 1905-1906 > 421 (Emmet-Jones), Dick Eckhoff's & Belle Wientjes's marriage record (22 February 1905). Also, "Liberty," *Daily Freeman Tribune*, 3 March 1905, p. 8, col. 4.

33 1910 U.S. census, Grundy County, Iowa, population schedule, German Township, ED 48, p. 5B, household 74, dwelling 74, Dirk H. Eckhoff.

34 1915 Iowa state census, Butler County, Iowa, populations schedule, Washington Township, image 4082 of 5261, card no. 49, Bell Eckhoff.

35 1920 U.S. census, Butler County, Iowa, population schedule, Washington Township, ED 93, p. 7A, household 118, dwelling 118, Dick H. Eckhoff.

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37 1925 Iowa state census, Butler County, Iowa, population schedule, Washington Township, image 47 of 82, lines 18-24, Dick Eckhoff.

38 Paul Clarke, Archivist, Children's Aid (117 W. 124th Street, New York, New York 10027] to [granddaughter] via email [address for private use], 29 April 2022. No formal adoption has been identified.

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40 1930 U.S. census, Butler County, Iowa, population schedule, Washington Township, ED 27, p. 8A, dwelling 149, Belle Eckhoff.

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44 Kialy Carson, Kansas, [(CURATOR@ORPHANTRAINDEPOT.COM),] to Jill Morelli, email, 7 March 2023, "Info from the CAS," OTR folder.

45 Ken Norstrud, [(E-ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE),] to Jill Morelli, e-mail, 12 March 2023, "Richard Doyle," OTR Research Files, privately held by Morelli, [(E-ADDRESS) & STREET ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE], Seattle, Washington 2023.

46 Ken Norstrud, [(E-ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE),] to Jill Morelli, e-mail, 12 March 2023, "Richard Doyle," OTR Research Files, privately held by Morelli, [(E-ADDRESS) & STREET ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USe], Seattle, Washington 2023.

47 "1892, New York state Census, Kings County, New York, population schedule, Brooklyn, Ward 17, ED 21, bottom of second column, John Doyle; database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-6PT4-FV).

48 New York City Municipal Archives, "Historical Vital Records," Certificate of Death, certificate 11318, John Doyle death entry (2 July 1896).

49 Kialy Carson, Kansas, [(CURATOR@ORPHANTRAINDEPOT.COM),] to Jill

Morelli, email, 7 March 2023, "Info from the CAS," OTR folder.

[50] "1892, New York state census, Kings County, New York, population schedule, Brooklyn, Ward 17, ED 21, bottom of second column, John Doyle; database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-6PT4-FV).

[51] "1892, New York state census, Kings County, New York, population schedule, Brooklyn, Ward 17, ED 21, bottom of second column, John Doyle; database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-6PT4-FV).

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[53] 1895 State of Iowa census, Hamilton County, Iowa, population schedule, image 514 of 681, Richard Doyle in the household of Leonard Hill.

[54] For death, New York City Municipal Archives, "Historical Vital Records," Certificate of Death, certificate 11318, John Doyle death entry (2 July 1896). For probate, New York, Wills & Probate records, 1659-1999," Kings County, Admin Records Deverman-Cocoran, 1896, John Doyle probate filed 17 August 1896.

[55] "New York, Wills & Probate records, 1659-1999," Kings County, Admin Records Deverman-Cocoran, 1896, John Doyle probate filed 17 August 1896.

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[61] "New York, New York, Extracted Death Index, 1862-1948," certificate 3744, Flatbush, Annie Doyle death entry (30 September 1890). Original certificate not at NYC Historic Vital Records. Also, "Public Member Trees," database, *Ancestry* (https://wwww.ancestry.com)," "Judy Norstrud" family tree by Judy Norstrud, profile for Annie Doyle (1857-1890, d. Flatbush, New York), undocumented data.

[62] "Ireland Surname Map," https://www.surnamemap.eu/ireland/index.php?sur=NEWeLL&s=Search.

[63] "Iowa, Death Records, 1904-1951," database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSQ7-Y9PS-S > image 4039 of 4702.

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[65] Henry W. Thurston, *The Dependent Child* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1930), 133. The location of the study is now not known, but Thurston included the entire table that summarized the data as described (1922). Georgia G. Ralph compiled the study based on all orphan outplacements conducted by the Children's Aid Society in 10 year increments between 1865 to 1905.

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Researching Irish Orphan Train Riders

by Clark Kidder

Between 1854 and 1929, tens of thousands of children were loaded on trains in New York City, New York, and Boston, Massachusetts, and sent to the western and southern United States.

The trains they rode, now known as "orphan trains," were collectively a part of what historians call the "Orphan Train Movement." An estimated 150,000 children rode such trains to nearly every state in the US.[1] The Midwest, particularly Illinois and Iowa, received the largest number of children outside of New York. [2]

The movement, which originated in New York City, created a unique set of records and certain challenges for researchers and descendants. Did one of your ancestors seem to just drop out of the sky into your family tree, with a surname (or DNA) not matching that of the presumed family? If so, there is every chance that the ancestor may have been an orphan train rider.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the city was being overwhelmed by thousands of immigrants arriving from Europe, many of whom were Irish and poor. They soon found living conditions in New York City to be nearly as challenging as those they left behind in the old country. By 1848, ten to thirty thousand children were roaming the city's streets.[3] Very few attended schools, for reasons including poverty, an inability to speak English, or crime. By 1850, the city's population had swelled to 515,477.[4] The City's police chief reported to city officials that there was a "deplorable and growing evil" and warned of "the constantly increasing numbers of vagrant, idle and vicious children of both sexes, who infest our public thoroughfares, hotels, [and] docks."[5]

The city began building orphan asylums to hold the thousands of children arrested for vagrancy, truancy, or petty crimes, and placed in adult prisons. Not all the children were full orphans. Some were half-orphans, having lost one parent. Others were the children of parents too destitute or intemperate to provide food and shelter for them.[6]

Participating Organizations

"Child savers," such as the Protestant Children's Aid Society (CAS), decided transporting children West would provide them with wholesome, religious homes where they might also learn a trade.[7] The CAS, founded by a minister named Charles Loring Brace, and the Protestant New York Juvenile Asylum, aka Children's Village (NYJA), were the first organizations to adopt an official policy of transporting children to the Midwest. These two organizations partnered to send the first company of children west in September 1854. Traveling on trains and steamboats, thirty-six children made their way to Dowagiac, Michigan, accompanied by CAS placing agent Edward P. Smith.[8] Both organizations continued sending companies of children west into the early years of the twentieth century.

Other Protestant organizations joining the movement included the Five Points Mission, the Howard Mission and Home for Little Wanderers, the Home for the Friendless, and the New York House of Refuge. The Boston Children's Mission to the Children of the Destitute began sending companies of children west around 1857, followed by the Boston Home for Destitute Catholic Children in about 1883. The Boston Home for Little Wanderers began sending children west in 1865, ultimately sending the largest number of children (about 6,500) of all Boston organizations.[9]

The CAS was not a brick-and-mortar orphan asylum per se. The Society instead obtained children from orphan asylums all over New York City and, later, from upstate New York. They obtained a fair number from the Nursery and Children's Hospital on Randalls Island.[10] Many children also came from Society-operated lodging, such as the Newsboys Lodging House and the Elizabeth Home for Girls. The author's grandmother was sent west from the latter.

Catholic clergy did not participate in sending children west on the orphan trains until 1873. The first such organization was the New York Foundling Asylum, later called the New York Foundling Hospital. Its trains were often called baby or mercy trains since they generally transported children aged five and under. Concerned about Protestant organizations proselytizing to Catholic children, the New York Catholic Protectory began sending children primarily to Iowa, Illinois, and Nebraska in 1876.[11]

Irish Orphan Train Riders

The early years of the orphan train movement involved a fairly large percentage of children either born in Ireland or born of Irish parents and was undoubtedly a result of the vast numbers of Irish immigrants arriving in New York City during that time.

The CAS sent two Irish boys — Andrew Horace Burke, age thirteen, and James Green Brady, age ten — as part of a company of thirty-two children bound for Noblesville, Indiana, on 2 August 1859, under the care of a CAS agent.[12] The

boys would become both two of the CAS's greatest successes and stereotypical rags-to-riches stories of the American West. Born in New York City in 1850, Burke was deserted by his parents by age four. He became a newsboy, shined shoes, and slept in dry goods boxes. He was retrieved from the streets of New York City and sent to the Boys' Nursery on Randalls Island, which held many hundreds of "street Arabs" such as himself.[13] He was placed with D. W. Butler of Noblesville. In his early teens, Burke enlisted as a drummer boy in an Indiana regiment during the Civil War. After the war, he returned to Indiana and finished his education, saving enough money to attend Asbury College (later renamed DePauw) for two years.



Andrew Horace Burke

Burke and his wife arrived at Casselton, Dakota Territory, in 1880, with only $65. Ten years later, he was governor of North Dakota. Burke began as a general store bookkeeper, then became a cashier of the First National Bank of Casselton. He served as treasurer of Cass County for six years, then became governor.[14]

John Green Brady was born in a "ramshackle house" attic at the East River end of Roosevelt Street. As soon as "he could run," his alcoholic father and his stepmother "compelled him to sell newspapers and would beat him when he did not bring home money enough." While sleeping near the old Chatham Street Theater one evening, he was "aroused by a policeman," who told him to go to Randalls Island. He met Andrew Burke here:

> "Andy Burke and I were friends there. I was simply a little Mick picked off the street. They didn't put us in the criminal home, although the reason, I guess, is that they didn't catch me in all the things I did down around the end of Broadway."[15]

The two boys, along with several others, were chosen by the Superintendent to go west with the CAS. Brady was apprenticed to a lawyer (later a judge) named John Green, in Tipton, Indiana, who recalled the day:

> "It was the most motley crowd of youngsters I ever did see. I decided to take John Brady home with me because I considered him the homeliest, toughest, most unpromising boy in the whole lot," adding, "I had a curious desire to see what could be made of such a specimen of humanity."[16]

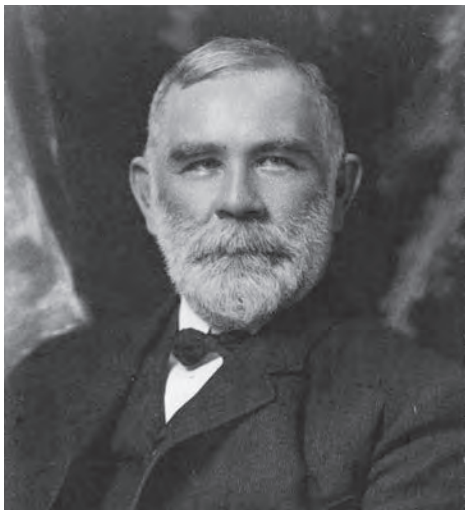
John Brady became a schoolteacher in 1867, but really wished to become a minister, eventually attending Yale University in 1870, then Union Theological Seminary in 1874. Charles Loring Brace, President of the CAS, had also attended this Seminary. Brady "sought to benefit boys situated as he had been" by establishing a home for city waifs in Texas. Unable to raise sufficient funds, he went to Alaska as a missionary to the Native Americans residing there. He acquired a one-third interest in the Sitka Trading Company and "became the most powerful man in the Territory."[17] In 1897, President McKinley appointed him Governor of the Territory.[18]

One of the other Irish boys the NYJA sent to Illinois in 1859 was named John F. Donovan. He later enlisted in Company C, 56th Regiment, Illinois Volunteers, during the Civil War. By 1878, he was a lawyer and postmaster in Kinmundy, Illinois, and was elected their Mayor by 1883.[19]

Ages and Locations of Riders

Most of those sent west on the orphan trains were children between the ages of five and twelve, but babies, adults, and even entire families were also sent. The latter was nearly exclusive to the CAS, which also sent young men, aged eighteen to twenty-one, who were in search of employment.[20]

During the movement's early years, most children were sent to upstate New York (the largest number), Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Some were sent to states much closer to New York, such as Pennsylvania and Maryland. Between 1854 and 1898, the NYJA indentured nearly all its children in Illinois. The Asylum then switched to Iowa (for several years), with occasional placements in adjoining states (for instance, a company was sent to Mexico, Missouri, in 1886), finally switching back to Illinois.[21]



John Green Brady

As railroads and settlements expanded farther west, so did the orphan train movement. The states of Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas, and Minnesota began receiving large numbers of orphan train riders. The CAS alone reported sending 4,864 children to Missouri by 1893.[22] Eventually, every state except for Arizona, Alaska, and Hawaii, received at least a few orphan train riders.

Most children remained in the state where they were placed and started their own families. Some, especially those under indenture, still returned to their families in New York or Boston after their period of indenture expired.[23]



This company of children posed on the steps of the New York Juvenile Asylum before leaving for the West on 15 June 1903 (New York Juvenile Asylum Annual Report for the Year 1903).

Placing Out

If one or both parents were living, an attempt was made to locate them and obtain permission to send the child west. If a child were committed to the orphan asylum by a court and the parents could not provide sufficient reasons for the child's release, the institution stood *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent) and therefore needed no permission to send a child west.

The experience of being sent west affected each child uniquely. Some children were enthusiastic (especially full orphans with no parents to leave behind), and others were fearful of the unknown and of the possibility of not being chosen by foster parents. Siblings were often separated when foster parents had room for just one child in their home. In addition, sibling rivalry frequently caused disruption in a foster home, resulting in one of the orphan siblings being sent to another home.

Most organizations forbade the children, once placed, from having any contact with biological family members. The one known exception is the New York Juvenile Asylum, which seemed to switch back and forth between allowing it and not allowing it.

The CAS was using the term "placing out" by 1873 and was referring to this department of their organization as "Emigration."[24] It would appoint a local committee consisting of prominent businessmen or clergymen. A few weeks before the arrival of the orphan train, the committee would advertise in the newspaper and distribute leaflets in rural mailboxes asking anyone interested to show up on the appointed day. Applications for children would be accepted or denied by the local committee or the placing agent.

The New York Foundling Asylum and the New York Catholic Protectory required homes to be pre-arranged before the arrival of an orphan train.[25] Local priests made pleas to parish members to take children and, if interested, to fill out applications sent to the institutions. Prospective parents could request the hair and eye color, sex, and age of their preferred child. Some have referred to the process as mail-ordering babies. "Beats the stork all hollow," quipped one new foster father, "We asked for a boy of 18 months with brown hair and blue eyes and the bill was filled to the last specification. The young rascal even has my name tacked on to him."[26]

For New York Foundling Asylum children, the train would arrive at a scheduled place and time, and the placing agent would call out numbers from a book. Each number designated a child and the foster parents for whom the child was reserved. Babies had their number affixed to their outer clothing. A cloth tag was sewn into or pinned on the hems of girls' dresses or the collars of boys' shirts, listing the name and birthdate of the child as well as the name and address of the foster parent. Many of the cloth tags, clothing, and numbers worn by the children have survived and been passed down through their families.[27]

Research in Census Records

One scenario that may indicate a potential orphan rider is when the ancestor was born in New York or Massachusetts or was foreign-born, while all other family

members were born in the Midwest. Further research is needed to determine this identity; federal and state census records can help the process.

Beginning with the 1850 federal census, orphan children are often described as "inmates" or "pupils" in the occupation column for the New York and Boston orphan asylums. Like other orphans, children sent west on the orphan trains are listed in households where they were placed with occupations such as boarder, laborer, farmhand, or servant.

Name changes may cause challenges in census research. Some children took on the surname of their foster parent, employer, or master, whether legally adopted or not, perhaps out of high regard for their foster families. These children may have retained the last names of their foster parents even after reaching legal age, or they may have reverted to their original surnames. Those not legally changing their names would later have to prove their birth name when entering the military or applying for Social Security. They would have to write to New York or Massachusetts to try to obtain a copy of their birth certificates or apply for a delayed birth certificate. The latter were then normally filed in the county of their original birth.

Ages listed for children in census records (or in the original records at institutions) may be incorrect. Many children could not, or would not, provide their precise age or the date and place of their birth. Officials at the New York House of Refuge recorded a default birthday as 4 July if the correct date was unknown.[28]

Many children (especially older ones) ran away. Some found employment elsewhere, but others returned to New York using any means possible, including hiding in cattle cars.[29] These frequent changes of residence can make it difficult to track the children in census records.

Ancestry has an index to the federal and state census records for the CAS and the New York Foundling Home.[30] *Ancestry* and *FamilySearch* have all available federal census records and many state census records. The 1880 supplemental schedules of the defective, dependent, and delinquent classes contain information for homeless children in institutions including orphan asylums.[31]

Newspapers

Obituaries of suspected orphan train riders may refer to the individual as a New York or Boston orphan, or at least confirm they were born in New York or in a foreign country.

Search newspapers for the town or county seat nearest the home where the orphan train rider was placed. For weeks before the arrival of an orphan train, newspapers often ran announcements of the day, time, and venue for the distribution of children. After the distribution, a follow-up article sometimes listed details such as the name and location of each person who took a child home and the child's name and age. When searching digitized newspapers, consider widening your search to include later years as many newspapers mentioned the arrival of orphan trains in their news for Twenty-Five, Fifty, and One Hundred Years Ago columns.[32]

After about 1900, some newspapers published photos of arrivals of companies of children, especially of the babies of the New York Foundling Hospital. Newspapers sometimes noted circumstances such as children running away from their foster homes.

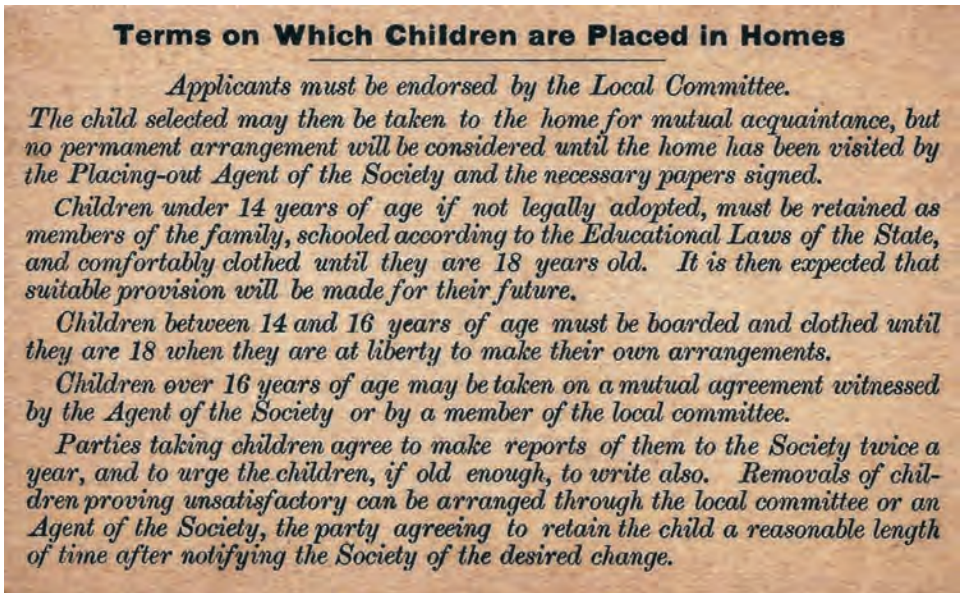
Adoption vs. Indenture

Orphan train children were legally adopted occasionally, but it was not typical. Adoption occurred most frequently with infants sent west by the New York Foundling Asylum — probably because they were so young and assimilated into their foster homes so well.[33] Check for adoption records in the county where the child lived at the time an adoption would have occurred because such papers were not required to be filed in the New York courts.

Each organization had its own policy regarding the placement of children. None required legally binding documents to be signed, except for the indentures of the NYJA. Instead, foster parents simply signed an informal agreement to provide food, shelter, clothing, and at least three months per year of schooling.[34] Nearly every child was expected to work on the farm or in the home, which was true of nearly all children back then, whether being fostered or not.

If the child or the foster parents were dissatisfied with the arrangement at any time, the institution would usually remove the child and find another foster home. Agents visited new foster homes very infrequently during the first half of the orphan train era. In later years, agents employed by the participating institutions tried to visit at least once or twice yearly. Some children were placed in as many as fifteen homes before they found a good fit.[35]

Institutions such as the NYJA and the New York House of Refuge required indenture of their children until they reached specific ages: twenty-one for boys and eighteen for girls placed by the NYJA, and eighteen for boys and girls placed by the House of Refuge. In addition, an indenture required



Terms on Which Children are Placed in Homes

Applicants must be endorsed by the Local Committee.

The child selected may then be taken to the home for mutual acquaintance, but no permanent arrangement will be considered until the home has been visited by the Placing-out Agent of the Society and the necessary papers signed.

Children under 14 years of age if not legally adopted, must be retained as members of the family, schooled according to the Educational Laws of the State, and comfortably clothed until they are 18 years old. It is then expected that suitable provision will be made for their future.

Children between 14 and 16 years of age must be boarded and clothed until they are 18 when they are at liberty to make their own arrangements.

Children over 16 years of age may be taken on a mutual agreement witnessed by the Agent of the Society or by a member of the local committee.

Parties taking children agree to make reports of them to the Society twice a year, and to urge the children, if old enough, to write also. Removals of children proving unsatisfactory can be arranged through the local committee or an Agent of the Society, the party agreeing to retain the child a reasonable length of time after notifying the Society of the desired change.

New foster parents received this card outlining the terms on which children were placed in homes when taking a child sent by the New York Children's Aid Society (Courtesy of John Knight).

the master to teach the child a trade during the term of indenture, usually farming or blacksmithing. There were exceptions, with some children being indentured to doctors, lawyers, and widows.[36]

If a child was placed out by the NYJA, check for indenture records in the county courthouse where the child was placed. The Illinois state legislature legalized the indentures of the NYJA in 1861.[37] Many such indentures have survived in Champaign County, Illinois.[38] Indenture papers were otherwise retained by some of the participating institutions, such as the New York House of Refuge, New York Catholic Protectory, and the New York Foundling Asylum.

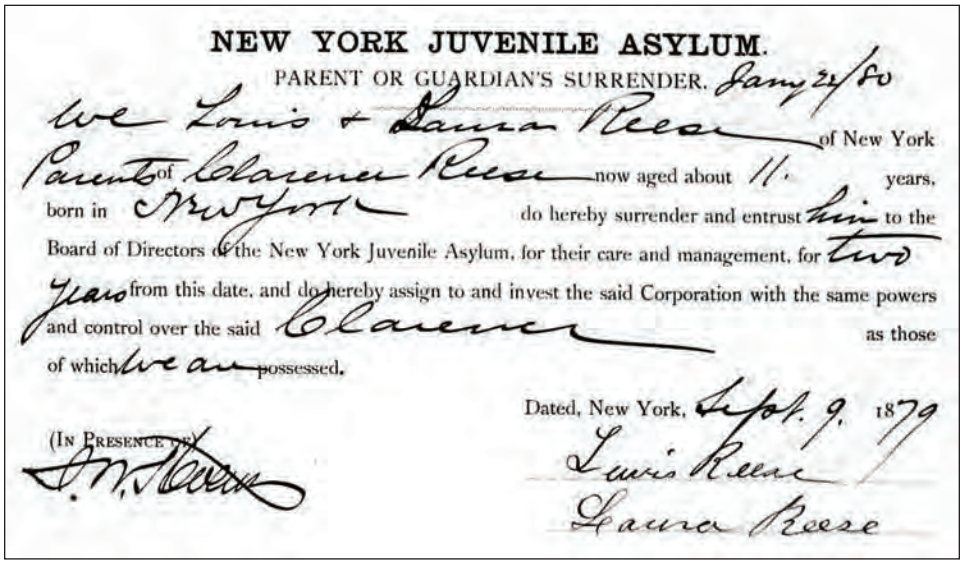
Adoptions and apprenticeships are often recorded in deeds. An orphan train rider may have been remembered in the will of the foster parent, even if not legally adopted. Other potential records include Justice of the Peace dockets, guardians' records, county order records, and the board of supervisors' minutes.[39]

Orphan Records

If the name of the orphan asylum or organization sending a child west can be ascertained, the original orphan records should be searched. Many have survived; a list of repositories appears at the end of this article. Sources of information for the name of an institution sending an ancestor west include census records listing the child as an inmate in an orphan asylum, indenture records, and agreements signed by the foster parents.

The New York Children's Aid Society, New York Foundling Hospital, New York Juvenile Asylum (later called Children's Village), and New England Home for Little Wanderers are still in operation. The New York Children's Aid Society releases records only with proof of lineage back to the orphan train rider via documents such as birth, marriage, and death certificates.[40] Consult each institution or record repository for its requirements.

Orphan asylum records may include admission and discharge ledgers, medical exams, educational records, case files, letters, and photos. Miscellaneous records include board minutes, visiting committee minutes, and parental surrenders. Minute books often contain details about companies of children sent west. The participating institutions generally asked



NEW YORK JUVENILE ASYLUM.

PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S SURRENDER. Jany 24/80

We Lewis & Laura Reese of New York

Parents of Clarence Reese now aged about 11 years,

born in New York do hereby surrender and entrust him to the

Board of Directors of the New York Juvenile Asylum, for their care and management, for two

years from this date, and do hereby assign to and invest the said Corporation with the same powers

and control over the said Clarence as those

of which we are possessed.

Dated, New York, Sept. 9. 1879

(In Presence of)

Lewis Reese

Laura Reese

Surrender form for Clarence Reese, age eleven, signed by his parents, Lewis and Laura, when surrendering Clarence for the required two-year term at the New York Juvenile Asylum. Clarence was not sent west, but his sister Emily, who was placed in the Home for Destitute Children, was taken west by the New York Children's Aid Society in 1906.[41]

children or their "employers" (foster parents) to write letters at least twice a year and report on their well-being.[42]

The CAS and the NYJA printed samples of such letters in their annual reports, many of which are available online via Google Books, HathiTrust Digital Library, and Internet Archive. Some original letters have survived at the CAS, but sadly all have been lost for the NYJA, which once had numerous volumes of "letter books" and files packed full of hundreds of such letters.[43]

The Story of Emily Reese

One such letter, written by the author's grandmother, Emily (Reese) Kidder, survives. She rode an orphan train sent west by the CAS in 1906 at age thirteen and wrote positively, if not grammatically, about her life on 26 December 1908:

> *Dear Sir –*
>
> *I received your letter quite a while ago but did not answer. I go to school with the children that I live with. I stay at home and help with the work. I have not any photograph to sent. We live 2 ? miles south east of Waukon [Iowa]. I do not know of the future years what I am going to do. I think I will be a dressmaker. I believed I will start to sew next summer. Well, I will close this time.*
>
> *Your Truly,*
> *Emily Reese*

Emily spoke very little about her early life to her children and grandchildren. After her trip west on the orphan train, Emily was placed in four foster homes spread across three states, and was abused in one of the homes. She met Earl Kidder near her final foster home in Milton Junction, Wisconsin. Earl and Emily were married in 1912, raised five children, and farmed in the Milton area during their seventy-four years of marriage.

As with Emily, the experience of being sent west varied greatly from child to child and from home to home. It's important to assess the orphan train movement in the context of the time it took place. It was far from perfect, but through trial and error, the movement laid the groundwork for today's foster care system.

Clark Kidder and Colleen Bradford Krantz's award-winning 2014 documentary, "West by Orphan Train," is based on Mr. Kidder's book, *Emily's Story: The Brave Journey of an Orphan Train Rider*, which chronicles the life of his paternal grandmother.

This documentary is available for purchase or streaming at https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4543530.

View a collection of video clips at: https://tpt.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/experiences_of_orphan_train_riders/.

Where to Find Original Orphan Asylum Records

All these asylums were originally located in New York City except for the New England Home for Little Wanderers. Provide as much information as possible when requesting records.

American Female Guardian Society/ Home for the Friendless

c/o National Orphan Train Complex (formerly Orphan Train Heritage Society of America) Concordia, KS (785-243-4471)
www.orphantraindepot.org

Brooklyn Nursery and Infants Hospital

Brooklyn Historical Society
(718-222-4111)
http://brooklynhistory.org/
See: "Guide to the Brooklyn hospitals and health services organizations collection ARC.141"
https://findingaids.library.nyu.edu/cbh/arc_141_brooklyn_hospitals_health_services/

Five Points Mission

Records at General Commission on Archives and History,
The United Methodist Church,
Madison, NJ (973-408-3189)
http://www.gcah.org
See: "Guide to the Records of the Five Points Mission, 1845-1995,"
http://catalog.gcah.org/publicdata/gcah2383.htm

Brooklyn Industrial School Association and Home for Destitute Children, aka Brooklyn Home for Children

c/o Forestdale Inc., Forest Hills, NY
www.forestdaleinc.org

Howard Mission and Home for Little Wanderers, New York Child's Foster Home Services, Sheltering Arms

Rutgers University Libraries,
New Brunswick, NJ (848-932-6148)
www.libraries.rutgers.edu/scua
See: "Sheltering Arms Children's Service"

https://archives.libraries.rutgers.edu/repositories/11/resources/876

New England Home for Little Wanderers, aka Baldwin Place Home for Little Wanderers

c/o The Home for Little Wanderers
Boston, MA (888-466-3321)
http://www.thehome.org

Records at Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston University, Boston, MA (617-353-3696)
http://archives.bu.edu/home
See: "Home for Little Wanderers Collection"
https://www.bu.edu/library/wp-assets/finding-aids/Home-for-Little-Wanderers-1830.pdf

New York Children's Aid Society

Office of Closed Records c/o Paul Clarke, Archivist
New York, NY
www.childrensaidsociety.org
Records at Children's Aid Archives Department
(212-949-4847)
archives@childrensaidnyc.org

Records at New-York Historical Society Museum & Library
www.nyhistory.org/library
See: "Guide to the Records of the Children's Aid Society, 1836-2006 (bulk 1853-1947), Ms 111;"
Series XI - Records of the Children's Emigration, Placing-Out, and Foster Home Programs, 1853-2006, 1853-1939
http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/nyhs/childrensaidsociety/dscaspace_ref11_8wt.html

New York Foundling Asylum, aka New York Foundling Hospital

Record Information Department
New York, NY (212-206-4171)
records@nyfoundling.org

Records at New-York Historical Society Museum & Library
www.nyhistory.org/library
See: "Guide to the Records of the New York Foundling Hospital, 1869-2009, Ms 347;"
Series XIV – Records of Children and Mothers (Restricted), 1869-1966
http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/nyhs/foundling/dscref198.html

New York House of Refuge

Records at New York State Archives, Albany, NY
See: "The Greatest Reform School in the World: A Guide to the Records of the New York House of Refuge"
http://www.archives.nysed.gov/publications/greatest-reform-school-world-guide-records-new-york-house-refuge

New York Infant Asylum (1865-1910), aka New York Nursery and Child's Hospital (1910-1947)

New York Weill Cornell Medical Center Archives
New York, NY (212-746-6072)
https://library.weill.cornell.edu/archives/patient-medical-records

New York Juvenile Asylum, aka Children's Village (renamed in 1920)

The Children's Village, Office of Alumni Affairs
Dobbs Ferry, NY (914-693-0600, ext. 1410)
www.childrensvillage.org

Records at the Columbia University Rare Book & Manuscript Library
Butler Library, New York, NY
See: "New York Juvenile Asylum records (Children's Village), 1853-1954, Ms 1488"
https://findingaids.library.columbia.edu/ead//nnc-rb/ldpd_6909466

Orphan Asylum Society of Brooklyn

Brooklyn Historical Society
See: "Orphan Asylum Society of the City of Brooklyn records, 1834 – 1997, ARC.131"
https://findingaids.library.nyu.edu/cbh/arc_131_orphan_asylum_society_brooklyn/

Records at University of Minnesota Social Welfare History Archives
Elmer L. Andersen Library
Minneapolis, MN (612-625-9825)
www.lib.umn.edu/special
See: "Brookwood Child Care Records" (new name from 1952)
https://archives.lib.umn.edu/repositories/11/resources/7216

Orphan Asylum Society of New York City

c/o Graham Windham Services to Families and Children
Hastings-on-Hudson, NY
(914-478-1100)
www.graham-windham.org

Records at the New York Historical Society Museum & Library
www.nyhistory.org/library
See: "Guide to the Records of Graham Windham, 1804-2011, MS 2916"
http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/nyhs/grahamwindham

Resources

Websites

National Orphan Train Complex (formerly Orphan Train Heritage Society of America)
www.orphantraindepot.org

This organization collects, preserves, and disseminates information on America's orphan train movement. The Morgan-Dowell Research Center holds over ten thousand files on individual riders.

Research Service for Records of the New York Juvenile Asylum
www.newyorkjuvenileasylum.com

Historian Clark Kidder [MS3][MS4][CK5]offers a research service for those seeking children placed in the New York Juvenile Asylum between 1853 and 1923. https://www.newyorkjuvenileasylum.com/contact

Ancestry
www.ancestry.com

Provides records for many orphan asylums, including census records; admission and discharge records for the New York Hebrew Orphan Asylum, which placed children in Georgia; and perhaps other southern states in the 1860s; see also the "New York, Orphans Placed in the New York Foundling Hospital and Children's Aid Society, 1855-1925" database.

Cyndi's List
www.cyndislist.com/orphans.htm#Orphans

Has links to numerous websites related to orphan train research.

State Websites

Orphan Train Riders to Iowa
www.iagenweb.org/iaorphans/

Orphan Trains of Nebraska
https://sites.rootsweb.com/~neadoptn/

Orphan Train—A Wisconsin GenWeb Project
https://sites.rootsweb.com/~wiorphan/sitemap.html

Books

Inskeep, Carolee R. *The New York Foundling Hospital: An Index to the Federal, State, and Local Census Records, 1870-1925*. Baltimore, MD: Clearfield Publishing Co., 2012.

Inskeep, Carolee R. *The Children's Aid Society of New York: An Index to the Federal, State, and Local Census Records of Its Lodging Houses, 1855-1925*. Baltimore, MD: Clearfield Publishing Co., 2005.

Kidder, Clark. *Orphan Trains and Their Precious Cargo: The Life's Work of Rev. H. D. Clarke*. CreateSpace, 2017, revised edition. Hundreds of orphans sent west by the Children's Aid Society are listed by name and date sent.

Kidder, Clark. *The New York Juvenile Asylum: An Index to Its Federal and State Census Records, 1855-1920*. CreateSpace, 2018.

Kidder, Clark. *Names of Children in the Records of the New York Juvenile Asylum, 1853-1923*. CreateSpace. 2018.

Patrick, Michael D., and Trickel, Evelyn Goodrich. *Orphan Trains to Missouri*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1997.

Riley, Tom. *Orphan Train Riders: Entrance Records from the American Female Guardian Society's Home for the Friendless in New York, Volumes One and Two*. Heritage Books, 2008, 2014.

Endnotes

[1] Records compiled by the National Orphan Train Complex in Concordia, Kansas; The 150,000 figure is the writer's conclusion, based on twenty years of research in historical sources related to orphan trains.

[2] Children's Aid Society, *Forty-First Annual Report* (1893). The Children's Aid Society placed out the vast majority of children via orphan trains. The report lists 7,507 as the total number sent to Illinois as of 1893. Iowa's placements were second at 4,938. This conclusion was based on the NYJA sending nearly all its approximately 6,620 children west to Illinois. In addition, all the other participating organizations were known to have sent at least a few companies to Illinois.

[3] The ten thousand figure comes from Children's Aid Society, *First Annual Report* (New York, 1854), 4, and Charles Loring Brace, *The Dangerous Classes of New York and Twenty Years' Work among Them* (New York: Wynkoop and Hallenbeck, 1872), 132–33. "Captain Matsell, in the celebrated report I have alluded to, estimated the number of vagrant children at 10,000, and subsequently in later years, the estimate was as high as 30,000."; George W. Matsell, "Appendix," *Juvenile Depravity and Crime in Our City*, by Thomas L. Harris (Charles B. Norton: New York, 1850), 14-15.

[4] John William Leonard, *History of the City of New York 1609–1909* (New York: Journal of Commerce and Commercial Bulletin, 1910), 539. According to Leonard,

"The Population of New York City in 1850 was, by Federal census, 515,477."

[5] Miriam Z. Langsam, *Children West: A History of the Placing-Out System of the New York Children's Aid Society 1853–1890* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1964), 2.

[6] The writer's conclusion, based on twenty years of research in historical sources related to orphan trains.

[7] Anthony Platt, *The Child Savers: The Invention of Delinquency* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969). See also "Child savers," *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_savers).

[8] "Street Boys to the West," *Third Annual Report of the Children's Aid Society* (New York: M. B. Wynkoop, 1856), 54-60; digital image, Missouri Digital Heritage (http://cdm.sos.mo.gov/cdm/ref/collection/p16795coll15/id/12157).

[9] For the Home for Little Wanderers, see "City and Vicinity," *Lowell (Massachusetts) Daily Citizen News*, 14 August 1865, p. 2, col. 4. For the Home for Destitute Catholic Children, see "Local Laconics," *Daily Press and Dakotan* (Yankton, Dakota Territory now South Dakota), 1 September 1883, p. 3, cols. 2-3. In the latter nineteenth century, Midwestern organizations like the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society sent out groups of children further west for placement. Other orphan asylums sent children one at a time or with siblings.

[10] Data compiled by the National Orphan Train Complex, based on queries from descendants of the children placed out; Numerous newspaper articles documenting the arrival of orphan trains in western and southern states.

[11] Crenson, Matthew A. *Building the Invisible Orphanage*, 78, 221; For Nebraska, see New York Herald Sun, 22 October 1882, 19.

[12] "Guide to the Records of the Children's Aid Society, 1836-2006 (bulk 1853-1947), Ms 111" Series XI – Records of the Children's Emigration, Placing-Out, and Foster Home Programs, 1853-2006, 1853-1939. New York Historical Museum and Library, Vol. 364, Company Book 1, 1854-1863, 98-9.

[13] The term "street Arabs," was first used in the mid-1800s and alluded to the nomadic lifestyle of some Arabic peoples; "Street Arabs and Street Urchins," *Encyclopedia.com* (https://www.encyclopedia.com : accessed 18 September 2024).

[14] State Historical Society of North Dakota; https://www.history.nd.gov/exhibits/governors/governors2.html; *The Jeffersonian Gazette*, Lawrence, Kansas, November 7, 1900, 1. "Won Their Way."

[15] *The Indianapolis Star*, December 9, 1906. "The Story of Three Waifs."

[16] *The Indianapolis Star*, December 9, 1906. "The Story of Three Waifs."

[17] *The Jeffersonian Gazette*, Lawrence, Kansas, November 7, 1900, 1. "Won Their Way."

[18] *The Des Moines Register*, December 19, 1918. "Former Governor Dead."

[19] NYJA records; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library. Indentures-Case Files (Box 61), 1854-1888.

[20] For families, see *The Brooklyn Union Argus*, 24 March 1880. For an example of a young man, see "Saved from the Streets," *New York (New York) Tribune*, 14 April 1880, p. 5, cols. 1-2.

[21] 'Asylum Children," *Mexico Weekly (Missouri) Ledger*, 30 September 1886, p. 3, col. 4; "Minutes of the Committee on Admissions, Indentures, and Discharges," 1889-1901, New York Juvenile Asylum Records (Children's Village), 1853-1954, Series I: Administrative Records 1853-1954, Minutes-Committees, Box 1, Folder 3, 330; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

[22] Children's Aid Society, *Forty-First Annual Report* (New York: Wynkoop and Hallenbeck, 1893), 10.

[23] "Indentures/Case Notes," 1854-1888, with case numbers, New York Juvenile Asylum Records (Children's Village), 1853-1954, Series II: General Operation Records, 1853-1950, Apprenticeship Records, box 61; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

[24] Children's Aid Society, *Twenty-first Annual Report* (New York: Wynkoop and Hallenbeck, 1873), 8.

[25] *Eighteenth Annual Report of the New York Catholic Protectory*. (Westchester, NY: New York Catholic Protectory, 1881), 29. For the New York Foundling Asylum policy, see Marie de Lourdes Walsh, The Sisters of Charity of New York, 1809-1959, vol. 3 (New York: Fordham University Press, 1960), 81.

[26] *The World-Herald*, Omaha, Nebraska, December 15, 1921. "Christmas Dolls for Nebraska Homes."

[27] The clothing and/or tags worn by some orphan train riders have been gifted to museums, such as the Smithsonian, the National Orphan Train Complex, or the Louisiana Orphan Train Museum.

[28] Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents in the City of New York and Nathaniel C. Hart, *Documents Relative to the House of Refuge...in 1824* (New York: Mahlon Day, 1832), 234.

[29] "Indentures/Case Notes," 1854-1888, with case numbers, New York Juvenile Asylum Records (Children's Village), 1853-1954, Series II: General Operation Records, 1853-1950, Apprenticeship

Records, Box 61; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

30 "New York, Orphans Placed in the New York Foundling Hospital and Children's Aid Society, 1855-1925," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/newyorkorphans).

31 For details and locations, see Kathy Petlewski, "1880 Supplemental Schedules: Defective, Dependent, and Delinquent Classes," *NGS Magazine* 44:3 (July-September 2018), 49.

32 For an example of using newspaper articles, see Jenny Ashcraft, "Orphan Trains Head West," 3 March 2019, *Fishwrap* blog, *Newspapers.com* (https://blog.newspapers.com/orphan-trains-head-west).

33 The author's conclusion based on communication with descendants of orphan train riders and his knowledge of the orphan train movement.

34 *Terms on Which Children are Placed in Homes*. On a card given to the foster parents of Gertrude L. Bell, placed in Maxwell, Iowa, in 1905 by the CAS.

35 "Indentures/Case Notes," 1854-1888, with case numbers, New York Juvenile Asylum Records (Children's Village), 1853-1954, Series II: General Operation Records, 1853-1950, Apprenticeship Records, Box 61; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

36 "Indentures/Case Notes," 1854-1888, with case numbers, New York Juvenile Asylum Records (Children's Village), 1853-1954, Series II: General Operation Records, 1853-1950, Apprenticeship Records, Box 61; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

37 An act confirming the indentures of certain apprentices, "Public Laws of Illinois," Sangamo Journal-Illinois State Journal (Springfield, Illinois), 26 March 1861, 3:4.

38 Urbana Free Library, Urbana, Illinois. urbanafreelibrary.org.

39 Kay Haviland Freilich and Ann Carter Fleming, "Business, Institution, and Organization Records," in Loretto Dennis Szucs and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking, *The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy* (Provo, UT: Ancestry, 2006), 136.

40 Based on the personal experience of the author and in-person and emailed statements made by other descendants of orphan train riders.

41 New York Juvenile Asylum, Parent Surrender Forms, 1878-1880, (Box 59, Folder 3); Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

42 *Terms on Which Children are Placed in Homes*. On a card given to the foster parents of Gertrude L. Bell, placed in Maxwell, Iowa, in 1905 by the CAS.

43 For reference to the letter books, see: "City Waifs on Western Farms: New York Juvenile Asylum," *Springfield Republican* (Massachusetts), 12 March 1905, 17:6.

Recognized as an authority on America's orphan train movement, Clark Kidder has won several awards related to the topic, including the Charles Loring Brace Award from the National Orphan Train Complex, a Leadership in History Award from the American Association for State and Local History, and an Upper Midwest Regional Emmy Award for the documentary West by Orphan Train. His latest book chronicles the history of the New York Juvenile Asylum and its orphan trains.



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Thomas Conboy's Forgotten Home in Cornamucklagh, Ballymoe – Part II

by Patti Salvaggio

The nearest graveyards, Kilcroan and Ballinakill-Glinsk, do not contain headstones for this family.[22] These graveyards have no burial records, as few Catholic churches maintained burial records in the 1800s.[23]

The earliest records referencing Michael and Ellen Conboy can be found in the Sustainability Loan Funds, which pinpoint their residence in Cornamucklagh during their children's births.[24]

- "Mich" Conboy, Cornamucklagh, 10 March 1840, second guarantor to Patt Keane.[25]
- Michael Conboy, Cornamucklagh, 21 February 1845, borrower.[26]
- Ellen Conboy, Cornamucklagh, 27 February 1846, borrower.[27]

In the County Galway valuation conducted by Richard Griffith in June 1857, surveyors documented that a Michael "Cunnaboy" held a small parcel in Cornamucklagh, within the Kilcroan Civil Parish. This land record verifies Michael's residence in the parish around the time of Thomas' birth. There is no other Michael Conboy identified in Kilcroan.[28] In Valuation Revision records, the occupancy changes on Michael's land are evident, passing first to Ellen Cunnaboy in 1901 and later to Pat Cunnaboy in 1912.[29]

Dog License Records, Ballymoe, County Galway

The Petty Court Session Records, encompassing 1866 to 1901, include valuable Dog License Records which serve as a census substitute. Instituted in 1866, this system involved dog owners paying an annual license fee to the local court. These records, spanning decades, provide detailed information about individuals and their townlands. The abrupt absence of an individual from these records can indicate either death or emigration.[30]

Michael Conboy, a Cornamucklagh resident, consistently held dog licenses from March 1866 to March 1876.[31] Notably, his absence from the records aligns with his death in November 1876. Thomas Conboy, also from Cornamucklagh, subsequently took up the responsibility of dog licensing, covering the period from March 1877 to March 1880.[32] These dates suggest that Thomas assumed this duty after his father's death, until he left for England.

Pat Conboy of Cornamucklagh first appeared in licensing records in March 1881. He maintained dog licenses until after 1902, when he moved to nearby Knockodonnell.[33]

The dog license records do not specify an age for Thomas Conboy. Could there be another Thomas Conboy in Cornamucklagh not yet accounted for? The one other Conboy family in Cornamucklagh, Andrew and Margaret (Diffley) Conboy, had a son named Thomas born in 1844.[34] He is unaccounted for in both civil and parish marriage records and in death records.[35] Although it is possible Andrew's son licensed a dog beginning in 1877 and stopping in 1880, this would be an unlikely coincidence.

Proving Thomas Left Ireland: Negative Findings and Eliminating Other Families

- No Thomas Conboy of the correct age, son of Michael of Cornamucklagh, was found in the Glennamaddy Registration District marriage or death records between 1864 and 1908.[36]
- The 1901 census of Ballymoe DED does not contain anyone named Thomas Conboy.[37]
- Thomas Conboy from Cornamucklagh does not appear in the Ballymoe Petty Court Session records between 1880 and 1908.[38]
- Irish military records do not include any Thomas Conboy from Cornamucklagh, Ballymoe.[39]

The 1901 Census of Cornamucklagh lists three Conboy families.

- James and Margaret Conboy: James is Andrew Conboy's son.[40]
- Patrick and Anne Conboy: Patrick is Michael's son.[41]
- Ellen Conboy: Michael and Ellen's daughter, who likely lived in the family cottage.[42]

Thomas Conboy: Ireland to England

Placing Thomas in Farnworth, Lancashire County, England

Evidence firmly positions Thomas Conboy in Farnworth in early 1881, the same year he married Mary Moffatt. Notably, he served as a godparent at the 6 March 1881 christening of Michael Crane, the son of James and Mary (Flaherty) Crane, residing at 27 Northumberland Street, Farnworth.[43] However, the 3 April 1881 census, taken about ten weeks before his marriage, omits Thomas Conboy in Farnworth. Instead, it features a Thomas Caine in the Charles

Table 1. Comparison of Thomas Caine and Thomas Conboy

	Death Certificate[a] 28 May 1908	Marriage Certificate[b] 13 June 1881	1881 Census[c] 3 April 1881
Approximate birth date	Feb 1862	1858 (based on age)	1857 (based on age)
Birthplace	Ireland	Not Stated	County Galway
Mother's surname	Kane	Not Stated	Unknown
Moffitt connection	N.A.	Mary Moffatt (age 21), daughter of Patrick Moffatt, at 25 Kent Street	Lodger in home of Charles Moffitt with daughter Mary, age 22
Age	46 years	23 years	24 years
Address	Philadelphia, PA.	27 Northumberland Street	25 Kent Street
Occupation	Iron Worker	Laborer	General Laborer
Father	Michael Conboy	Michael Conboy (deceased)	Unknown

[a] See note 8
[b] See note 46
[c] See note 44

Moffatt household.[44] A comparison of evidence suggests that Thomas Caine and Thomas Conboy may be the same individual (see Table 1).

- The birth years of Conboy and Caine in the earliest available records are nearly identical.
- Thomas Caine was born in County Galway, and oral history places Thomas Conboy in Ballymoe, County Galway.
- The maiden name of Conboy's mother was "Kane," which is phonetically identical to "Caine."
- Caine was enumerated at 25 Kent Street in the Moffitt household on 3 April 1881.
- Mary Moffitt lived at 25 Kent Street when she married Thomas Conboy on 13 June 1881.
- Conboy lived at 27 Northumberland Street on 13 June 1881. If "Caine" equals "Conboy," this suggests Thomas moved after the census but before his marriage.
- In the census, Mary Moffitt's father was Charles Moffitt, a brickmaker at 25 Kent Street. On her marriage certificate, her father's name was Patrick, a brickmaker at 25 Kent Street. Despite the different first names, the correlation between her father's occupation and address indicates this is the same man.
- Thomas Caine did not marry in the Bolton Registration District between 1881 and 1885.[45]

Thomas Conboy, son of the late Michael Conboy, married Mary Moffatt, the daughter of Patrick Moffatt, on 13 June 1881, at St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church in Farnworth. The marriage was witnessed by Jane Moffatt and James Crane.[46] Interestingly, the marriage record indicates Thomas's address was 27 Northumberland Street, Farnworth — the exact address as James Crane's in the 1881 baptismal record. This shared address strongly suggests a more than casual connection between Thomas Conboy and James Crane.

What prompted Thomas to relocate to the Crane residence? It's possible a desire for decorum motivated his move before the marriage. The prospect of a young man and woman residing in the same household before marriage could have stirred gossip. It's plausible that Thomas tried to avoid this by finding accommodation at the residence of his good friend and best man, James Crane.

The new couple didn't stay in England for long. On 9 April 1882, Thomas "Conbon" (26) sailed from Liverpool on the S.S. *Lake Winnipeg* and was listed consecutively with "Chas. Moffit" (48) and Jane Moffit (18).[47] Mary appears to have stayed behind because their son, John A. Conboy, was born on 9 May 1882 in Farnworth.[48] When Mary and baby John immigrated to America is unknown.[49]

Was the Thomas Conboy in England the same Thomas Conby in Philadelphia? A comparison of his wife's records confirms they were the same person (see Table 2).

Michael Conboy: an unknown relationship

Michael Conboy assumed the role of godfather at the baptism of John A. Conboy on 21 May 1882, at St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church in Farnworth.[50] Despite the absence of a Michael Conboy in the 1881 English census for Farnworth, his likely familial connection is evident; he is perhaps Thomas's older brother. His absence as a witness to Thomas's 1881 marriage suggests Michael was not living nearby at the time.[51]

In March 1884, Michael Conboy again served as a godparent, this time for Mary Crane, daughter of James and Mary (Flaherty) Crane.[52] The connection between the Cranes, Thomas, and

Michael implies a close relationship. While Michael's 1884 presence indicates he remained in the area after Thomas's emigration, details about his relationship with Thomas and his life post-1884 remain unknown.[53]

Summary

A unique Conboy family, based in Cornamucklagh, is described in land, civil, court, and census records, providing evidence of Thomas's parents and siblings and supporting the oral family history that Thomas Conboy came from nearby Ballymoe, in County Galway. Table 3 summarizes key records within the timeline.

- Dog license records cover the pivotal period when Thomas likely left Ireland. The changes in registrants align with Michael's 1876 death.
- The dog license registered by Patrick in March 1881 reflects Thomas's departure from Ireland and his subsequent role as a godparent in England in March 1881.
- Thomas's 1881 marriage record indicates his father was deceased, which correlates to the 1876 death record of Michael Conboy in Cornamucklagh.
- The 1881 England census details suggest Thomas Caine was Thomas Conboy, with their close match in age and place of birth.
- If the only Michael Conboy–Ellen Kane in Irish baptismal records are at St.Croan's, then their children are likely Thomas's siblings.
- The spacing of Conboy births suggests Thomas was born about 1856, while gaps in baptismal records explain his absence from them.
- Although Patrick's Old Age Pension application is a derivative source, supporting evidence of his father is found in his marriage record.
- The presence of Michael Conboy in Farnworth in 1882 provides a possible link to Thomas.
- The baptisms from 1843 to 1859 correlate with Sustainability Loan Records, Griffith's Valuation, Canceled Land Books, civil death and marriage records, petty session court records, and dog licenses; these create a continuous timeline for the Conboy family in Cornamucklagh from 1840 to 1901.
- There is no evidence of a Thomas Conboy, born about 1856, in pertinent civil records for Kilcroan Parish, Glennamaddy Superintendent's Registrar's District.
- Evidence supports family lore: Thomas came from Ballymoe, County Galway, the nearest town to Cornamucklagh.

Table 2. Comparison of Records for Mary Moffitt: Placing her in England and Philadelphia

	Birth[a]	1871 Census[b]	1881 Census[c]	1881 Civil Marriage[d]	1900 Census[e]	1930 Death[f]
Location	Rochdale, Lancashire, England	Rochdale, Lancashire, England	Farnworth, Lancashire, England	Farnworth, Lancashire, England	Philadelphia, PA.	Philadelphia, PA.
Date	16 October 1859	2 April 1871	3 April 1881	13 June 1881	1 June 1900	26 November 1930
Age	N.A.	11	22	21	38	63
Father's name	Charles	Charles	Charles	Patrick	NA	Charles
Father's occupation	Laborer	Brick maker	Brick maker	Brick maker	N.A.	N.A.
Mother's name	Jane	Jane	Jane	NA	NA	Jane
Spouse's name	NA	NA	NA	Thomas Conboy	Thomas Conboy	Thomas Conboy

a. England, birth certificate (certified copy) for Mary "Mofed," born 16 October 1859; registered December quarter 1859, Middleton District [8d/554]; GRO; personal files.

b. 1871 census of England, Lancashire, Wuerdle and Wardle, p. 38 (stamped), no. 206, Charles Moffatt; image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7619/images/LANRG10_4126_4128-0332 : accessed 7 February 2023); citing R.G. 10, piece 4127, folio 22, page 38, Census Return of England and Wales, TNA, Kew.

c. 1881 census of England, Lancashire County, Farnworth, St. John's Parish, [Enumeration District 11a], p. 33-34 (stamped), no. 165, Thomas Caine in the household of Charles Moffitt; "1881 England Census," imaged, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7572/images/LANRG11_3814_3818-0378 : accessed 16 October 2023), images 34-35; citing RG11, piece 3815, folio 70, Census Returns of England and Wales, TNA, Kew.

d. England, marriage certificate, Conboy-Moffitt, 1881; Bolton District.

e. 1900 U.S. census, Philadelphia, PA., population schedule, 75A (stamped), Enumeration District (E.D.) 450, sheet 1, dwell. 5, fam. 5, Thomas Conboy; "1900 United States Federal Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7602/images/4115199_00763 : accessed 28 October 2023).

f. Pennsylvania, Bureau of Vital Statistics, death certificate 99826 (1930), Mary Conboy; "Pennsylvania, U.S., Death Certificates, 1906-1969," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5164/images/42342_2421406260_0653-00400 : accessed 13 December 2023). The informant was Mrs. Marie Conroy, Mary's daughter. For Marie's parents, see FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-D1G3-1P4 : accessed 19 December 2023), IGN 4128171, image 356, Conboy-Conroy license 534859 (1926).

Table 3. Comparison of Sources for Michael, Thomas, and Patrick Conboy

Date	Event	Source	Identity and Location
March 1840	Guarantor of loan	Sustainability Loan Fund	Michael Conboy, Cornamucklagh
1840	Birth	Old Age Pension	Patrick Conboy, Cornamucklagh
March 1843	Baptism	St. Croans	Michael Conboy, son of Michael Conboy and Ellen Kean, not stated
February 1845	Borrower	Sustainability Loan Fund	Michael Conboy, Cornamucklagh
May 1845	Baptism	St. Croans	Margaret Conboy, daughter of Michael Conboy and Ellen Kean, not stated
February 1846	Borrower	Sustainability Loan Fund	Ellen Conboy, Cornamucklagh
April 1847	Baptism	St. Croans	Bridget Conboy, daughter of Michael Conboy and Ellen Kean, not stated
1853	Residence	House Books-GV	Michael Curboy, Cornamucklagh
1857	Residence	Griffith's valuation	Michael Cunnaboy, Cornamucklagh
January 1858	Baptism	St. Croans	Eleanor, daughter of Michael Conboy and Ellen Kean, not stated
October 1859	Baptism	St. Croans	Bridget, daughter of Michael Conboy and Ellen Kean, not stated
March 1865	Defendants	Ballymoe Court Petty Sessions	Patrick Conboy and Ellen Conboy, Cornamucklagh
1866-1875	Dog License	Dog License Register	Michael Conboy, Cornamucklagh
August 1875	Defendant	Ballymoe Court Petty Sessions	Michael Conboy, Cornamucklagh
November 1876	Death	Irish Civil Records	Michael Conboy, Cornamucklagh
1877-1880	Dog License	Ballymoe Court Petty Sessions	Thomas Conboy, Cornamucklagh
March 1881	Baptism	St. Gregory the Great	Thomas Conboy, godparent, Farnworth, Lancashire County.
March 1881-1903	Dog License	Ballymoe Court Petty Sessions	Patrick Conboy, Cornamucklagh (first appearance)
June 1881	Marriage	St. Gregory the Great Church	Thomas Conboy and Mary Moffitt, Farnworth, Lancashire County.
April 1882	Immigration	Passenger Records	Thomas Conboy sails from Liverpool to New York
April 1885	Baptism	St. John the Baptist Church	Thomas Conboy and Mary Moffitt's son born in Philadelphia.
February 1889	Marriage	Irish Civil Records	Bridget Conboy, daughter of Michael Conboy, Cornamucklagh, to Michael Simon of Tubber (Knockogonnell)
December 1893	Marriage	Irish Civil Records	Patrick Conboy, son of Michael Conboy, Cornamucklagh, to Anne Connelly, Knockogonnell
January 1896	Complainant	Ballymoe Court Petty Sessions	Ellen Conboy, widow, Cornamucklagh against Patrick Conboy, Cornamucklagh
May 1897	Death	Irish Civil Records	Ellen Conboy, widow, Cornamucklagh
1901	Residence	Ireland Census records	Patrick Conboy, wife Anne, son Michael in Cornamucklagh
1901	Residence	Ireland Census records	Ellen Conboy, unmarried, in Cornamucklagh

The color variation for Thomas indicates his change of location. Sources found in the text.

Endnotes

[22] Personal visit of cemeteries October 2019, Ballinakill-Glinsk and Kilcroan. Graveyards have a burial map with headstone names and locations. Headstones were too costly for many families or have sunk/deteriorated over the years.

[23] "Irish Roman Catholic Burials," *Findmypast* (https://www.findmypast.com : accessed 22 July 2023) > Discover More About These Records.

[24] *Findmypast* (https://www.findmypast.com : accessed 5 November 2023). Small loans were provided to the "industrious poor" during the 1830s and 1840s to help alleviate the dire economic conditions in rural Ireland. Recipients had to be at least 21 years old and have two guarantors. Michael's appearance suggests a birth year of at least 1819. Also known as the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund.

[25] "Ireland, Sustainability Loan Fund, 1812-1868," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 31 October 2023), image 104 of 282 > Local Associations > Roscommon > Piece 013: Ballymoe Security Note Book and Balance Account (1839-1842), unpaginated, no. 154, Michael Conboy, second guarantor to Patt Keane.

[26] Ibid, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 31 October 2023), image 15 of 200, Local Associations > Roscommon > Piece 015: Ballymoe Security Note Book (1845-1847), unpaginated, no. 85,

Michael Conboy, borrower, Michael and Pat Keane guarantors.

[27] Ibid, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 31 October 2023), image 103 of 200, Local Associations > Roscommon > Piece 015: Ballymoe Security Note Book (1845-1847), unpaginated, no. 94, Ellen Conboy, borrower, Michael Kean and Pat Kean guarantors.

[28] "Griffith's Valuation," database with images, *AskaboutIreland* (https://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/: accessed 21 October 2023), search for Cunnaboy, County Galway, Parish of Kilcroan. Michael occupied parcel no. 7, leased from the representatives of the Reverend Solomon Richards.

[29] Valuation Office, Ireland, "County Galway, District of Glennamaddy, E.D. Ballymoe, 1856-1939," Cornamucklagh townland, parcel no. 7, Michael Cunnaboy, occupier; digital images, accessed 28 September 2023, available only at Tailte Éireann, Dublin, Ireland. The volume contains eight canceled land books covering the years indicated on the spine. The parcel number was changed to no. 14a in 1903, when the occupier became Ellen Conboy. Most canceled books covered ten or fifteen years. Each year, the revisions were done in a different ink or pencil. In rural areas, updates occurred less frequently, explaining the interval after 1876.

[30] "Ireland, Dog Licence Registrations, 1810-1926," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 7 July 2023). Due to attacks on livestock, the dog licenses were intended to register the animals and their owners. A two-shilling tax was paid per dog beginning in 1866.

[31] Ireland, Court of Petty Sessions, Dog Licence Registers, Ballymoe Court, County Galway, "Registry of Dogs License Book," non-paginated (n.p.), 26 March 1866, registry no. 108, "Michl Conboy;" imaged, "Ireland, Dog Licence Registrations, 1810-1926," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 7 July 2023), image 2; citing "The National Archives of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland, Ireland Dog Licence Registrations, Reference #: CSPS 2/0484-0485." Also, 8 April 1867, registry no. 114 [image 6]; 31 March 1868, registry no. 133 [image 9]; 31 March 1869, registry no. 182 [image 13]; March 1870, registry no. 52 [image 15]; 31 March 1871, registry no. 167 [image 21]; 31 March 1872, registry no. 163 [image 25]; 31 March 1873, registry no. 224 [image 31]; 30 March 1874, registry no. 139 [image 33]; 25 August 1875, registry no. 279 [image 40]; 25 March 1876, registry no. 17 [image 41]. In 1866, Michael Conboy of Curnamucklagh registered a white and gray sheep dog. In 1867, Michael Conboy of Tubber, registered a gray "scotch" [sheep dog]. There is no evidence of a Michael Conboy in Tubber, so they are likely the same man.

[32] Ibid, n.p., 31 March 1878, entry 117, "Thos. Conboy;" *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 18 July 2023), image 52. Ibid, 31 March 1879, n.p., registry no. 125, Thomas Conboy, image 57. Ibid, n.p., entry 104, 31 March 1880, "Thos. Conboy", image 160.

[33] Ibid, 31 March 1881, registry no. 102 [image 64]; 31 March 1882, registry no. 79 [image 70]; 31 March 1883, registry no. 88 [image 73]; 29 March 1884, registry no. 99 [image 78]; 28 March 1887, registry no. 116 [image 89]; 28 March 1888, registry no. 115 [image 94]; 28 March 1889, registry no. 113 [image 99]; 31 March 1890, registry no. 173 [image 103]; 29 March 1891, registry no. 104 [image 107]; 31 March 1892, registry no. 237 [image 114]; 31 March 1893, registry no. 260 [image 119]; 25 March 1895, registry no. 58 [image 125]; 30 March 1897, registry no. 193 [image 138]; 25 March 1899, registry no. 263 [image 149]; 31 March 1900, registry no. 222 [image 153]; 29 March 1902, registry no. 225 [image 170]. Patrick was not recorded in the years 1885, 1886, 1894,1896, 1898, and 1901. He was fined in 1898 for not having a dog license.

[34] St. Croan Catholic Church, Ballymoe, "Baptismale," p. 40 [penned], 20 January 1844, "Joannem & Thomas fili Andrei Conboy & Margarita Diffely." Thomas and John were twins. Thomas may have died after his baptism.

[35] Negative findings in marriage and death records, *IrishGenealogy* (https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/irish-records-what-is-available/civil-records : accessed 27 June 2023), search terms: Thomas Conboy, Glennamaddy.

[36] Negative findings in marriage and death records, *IrishGenealogy* (https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/irish-records-what-is-available/civil-records : accessed 27 June 2023), search terms: Thomas Conboy, Glennamaddy.

[37] Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Ireland, 1901 census, County Galway, Ballymoe DED; *National Archives of Ireland* (https://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/search/results.jsp : accessed 26 Feburary 2024) > Genealogy > "Census of Ireland, 1901 and 1911, and pre-1901 survivals," search terms: 1901, Conboy, County Galway, Ballymoe DED.

[38] "Ireland, Petty Session Court Registers," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 20 March 2023), search terms: Thomas Conboy, Ballymoe Court, County Galway.

[39] "Ireland Military Records," database with images, *Findmypast* (https://www.findmypast.com : accessed 15 November

2023), broad search for Thomas Conboy (variants).

40 "Census of Ireland, 1901 and 1911, and pre-1901 survivals," 1901, Ballymoe DED, Cornamucklagh, house no. 15. For James's father, see "Civil Records," marriages, Williamstown Registrar's District, unspecified volume and page no., entry no. 19, Conboy-Coen marriage, 16 February 1873; database with images, *Irish Genealogy*: (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/churchrecords/images/marriage_returns/marriages_1873/11265/8208306.pdf : accessed 15 November 2023).

41 "Civil Records," marriages, 1893, Conboy-Connelly. Patrick's residence was Cornamucklagh.

42 See note 32, valuation revision of Michael Conboy parcel. For her residence, see "Census of Ireland 1901/1911," Ballymoe DED, house no. 14. For Ellen as next of kin to Ellen, see Irish Land Commission, *Return According to Provinces and Counties of Judicial Rents…November 1900*, "Month of November 1900, Second Statutory Term," (Dublin: H.M. Stationery Office, 1901), p.96, "Ellen Conboy, jun, Ltd. Admix. of Ellen Conboy," Cornamucklagh, 29 November 1900; digital images, Google Books (https://www.google.com/books/edition/Sessional_Papers/ZDoxAQAAMAAJ : accessed 19 December 2023), search terms; Conboy and Cornamucklagh. The volume contains multiple books with repeating page numbers.

43 St. Gregory the Great Catholic Parish, Farnworth (Lancashire, England), untitled baptism book, n.p., entry no. 3035, Michael Crane, baptized 6 March 1881; PDF, Lancashire City Council Archives [England], Roman Catholic Parish collections, RCFG/1/4; email received 25 October 2023, personal files of author. Crane born on 25 February 1881. Address of godparents not noted.

44 Negative search for Thomas Conboy [variations], "1881 England Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 3 April 2023). For Thomas Caine, see 1881 census of England, Lancashire County, Farnworth, St. John's Parish, [Enumeration District 11a], p. 33-34 (stamped), no. 165, Thomas Caine in the household of Charles Moffitt; "1881 England Census," imaged, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 16 October 2023), images 34-35; citing RG11, piece 3815, folio 70, Census Returns of England and Wales, The National Archives of England (TNA), Kew. The address for the Moffitt family and Thomas Caine is 25 Kent Street.

45 *FreeBMD* (https://www.freebmd.org.uk : accessed 20 October 2023), search terms: Marriages, Thomas Caine (variations), March [first quarter] 1881 to December 1885 [fourth quarter], Lancashire County, Bolton registration district [includes Farnworth].

46 England, marriage certificate (certified copy) for Thomas Conboy and Mary Moffitt, 13 June 1881; Bolton District [June 1881, 8c/500]; General Registry Office (GRO), Southport; personal files. Based on his age, he was born about 1858. Moffatt is also recorded as Moffitt in some records.

47 "New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 24 February 2022) > 1882 > Apr > 20 > Lake Winnipeg > image 10, S.S. *Lake Winnipeg*, (Liverpool to New York), arriving 20 April 1882, p. 10, lines 1-3: citing National Archives, Washington D.C., microfilm publication M237, 1820-1897. Jane, age 18, was listed as a wife but was likely Charles's daughter.

48 England, birth certificate (certified copy) for John "Comboy", 9 May 1882; registered June quarter 1882, Bolton District [8c/325]; GRO; personal files.

49 "Immigration and Travel," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 10 May 2023), negative search for Mary Conboy [variations], Mary Moffatt [variations], 1881-1885, with an infant. Mary was in Philadelphia by 24 April 1885, when son Patrick was born, suggesting he was conceived in late July or early August 1884. For Patrick's baptism, see St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish (Philadelphia, PA.), Register of Baptisms, v. II, 4 August 1861 to 27 December 1887, "Patritium Conboy", p. 340, born 24 April 1885; "Philadelphia Roman Catholic Parish Baptisms," database with images, *Findmypast* (https://search.findmypast.com : accessed 5 April 2023). For date of conception see, *Calculator.net* (https://www.calculator.net/pregnancy-conception-calculator.html : accessed 10 May 2023).

50 St. Gregory the Great Catholic Parish, Farnworth (Lancashire, England), John Conboy, 9 May 1882.

51 Negative search for Michael Conboy [variations], "1881 England Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 3 April 2023).

52 St. Gregory the Great Catholic Parish, Farnworth (Lancashire, England), untitled baptism book, n.p., entry no. 3513, Mary Crane, baptized 23 March 1884; PDF, Lancashire City Council Archives [England], Roman Catholic Parish collections, RCFG/1/4; email received 25 October 2023, personal files of author. Mary born on 3 March 1884. The address noted as 64 Kent Street. Record numbers on the page are struck out and renumbered consecutively, beginning with 3512 through 3516.

53 Negative findings for Michael Conboy, "1891 England Census," database with

images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 28 October 2023). For marriages and deaths, *FreeBMD* (https://www.freebmd.org.uk : accessed 20 October 2023), search terms: Marriages and deaths, Michael Conboy, March 1884 to December 1901, Lancashire County, Bolton registration district [includes Farnworth]. For Irish marriages and deaths, see "Civil Records," pdf images, *IrishGenealogy* (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/churchrecords/civil-perform-search.jsp : accessed 27 June 2023), search terms: Glenamaddy Registration District, marriages and deaths, 1884-1901, Michael Conboy.

Patti Salvaggio started delving into her Irish ancestry fifteen years ago and became addicted to chasing her ancestors. Her Irish ancestors hail from Donegal/Tyrone, Sligo, Mayo, and an East Galway area adjacent to County Roscommon. She completed Boston University's Genealogical Principles Course, ProGen 61, and multiple SLIG and GRIP courses. She volunteers in her local library's genealogy section and has plans to pursue a certificate in History of Family through the University of Limerick. Her most cherished achievement is reconnecting with Irish cousins, who have welcomed her "home."



Where Else Can I Look for Lost Children?

In addition to Orphan Trains, the following are other potential sources to search for family members, such as those below.

Workhouses

Workhouses often housed children and orphans in addition to indigent families. The National Archives has recently digitized Dublin workhouse registers covering 1840-1919. Covering workhouses in Dublin North, Dublin South, and Rathdown, these Workhouse Admission and Discharge registers are now available on *Findmypast* and often detail an inmate's age, occupation, religion, health, and occasionally an address.[1]

Irish Famine Memorial

Between 1849 and 1851, more than 4,000 girls aged fourteen to nineteen were sent to Australia to work as servants under the Earl Grey Scheme, created partly to populate the new colony and partly to free up space in workhouses. The Irish Famine Memorial hosts databases of orphans sent to Australia and the ships on which they sailed.[2]

Adoption Authority of Ireland

In 2022, the Irish government initiated an online service for Irish adoptees to access previously restricted information such as birth mother names. Not all adoptees may find information; the Authority estimates that tens of thousands of children were informally fostered or adopted prior to the legal adoption system in 1953, with some registered illegally at their birth.[3]

[1] Moss, Helen, "Irish Workhouse Records," *Irish Family History Centre* (https://www.irishfamilyhistorycentre.com/article/workhouse-records/ : accessed 19 September 2024); see also "Dublin Workhouses Admission & Discharge Registers 1840-1919," *Findmypast* (https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records/dublin-workhouses-admission-and-discharge-registers-1840-1919).

[2] O'Neill, Siobhán, "The story of the Irish Famine orphan girls shipped to Australia," The Irish Times, 7 November 2019 (https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/abroad/the-story-of-the-irish-famine-orphan-girls-shipped-to-australia-1.4075722 : accessed 19 September 2024); see also I*rish Famine Memorial* (https://irishfaminememorial.org/orphans/)

[3] O'Loughlin, Ed, "Ireland Opens Decades of Secret Records to Adoptees," New York Times (https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/07/world/europe/ireland-adoption-records.html?searchResultPosition=1 : accessed 19 September 2024); see also: T*he Adoption Authority of Ireland* (https://aai.gov.ie/en/who-we-are/information-records.html), citing "Information and Records" page.

Identifying the "Hidden Children" at Tuam

by Maurice Gleeson

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For many years, it was known that there was a mass grave on the site of the former Mothers and Babies Home at Tuam, Co. Galway. Children had found it in the 1970s. They reported that there were many sets of skeletal remains, and that they seemed to belong to children. The local residents established a memorial garden to honour these young souls.

Fast-forward to 2014 when Catherine Corless, a local historian, was researching an article on the former Home. She discovered that almost 800 children died there between 1925 and 1961.[1] The full list of these children is available online.[2] The oldest was less than ten years old and the youngest lived for only 10 minutes. The infant mortality rate in the Home was almost double that of other homes and many times higher than the national average.[3] Her sterling efforts to communicate the story to a broader audience and to highlight the injustices surrounding these children's deaths earned her a People of the Year Award in 2018.

The then-Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, made an impassioned speech in the Irish Parliament and called for action.[4] The bodies of many of the 800 children who died at the Tuam Home are probably buried in the mass grave — a disused sewage pit that existed on the site of the former workhouse from the mid-1800s. The question is: Can we use modern DNA techniques to identify them?

The Expert Technical Report commissioned by the Irish government concluded that recovery of DNA from the site would be possible but challenging.[5] A team of DNA experts from Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin suggested that modern genetic techniques (many of them pioneered in Ireland) stood a good chance of identifying the remains of those buried in the disused pit.

Thankfully, there have been considerable advances in the various fields of genetics over the past few years, and we have learned a lot from recent projects that have identified ancient DNA: the identification of Richard III made headline news; the discovery of 250 WWI soldiers in a mass grave at Fromelles sparked a £20 million recovery project; the analysis of the DNA from 4000-year-old skeletons on Rathlin Island (off the Antrim coast) changed what we understood of our ancient Irish roots forever; and the identification of the remains of 1916 rebel Thomas Kent spurred the development of novel techniques that will herald a new era for forensic and ancient DNA.

Since 2018, a new branch of genetic genealogy has emerged: Investigative Genetic Genealogy.[6] This new approach is firmly rooted in the methodology that genetic genealogists have been using for years to identify the biological families of adoptees, foundlings, and other people of unknown parentage. To date, many sets of unidentified human remains have now been identified, and over 200 perpetrators of violent crime have been identified.

The Tuam Home Survivors Network issued a press release in January 2018 that outlined what they hoped would happen.[7] This included:

1) the recovery and preservation of intact skeletons wherever possible,

2) the creation of a database of DNA recovered from the children's remains, and

3) the identification of those children who belonged to any family that had reasonable grounds to believe that their relative was among the children who died there.

DNA Has Several Roles to Play at Tuam

Firstly, some people suspect that they may have had a related child at Tuam, whose death may have been falsified and who was subsequently trafficked (e.g. sold to American adoptive parents). Such people should have their DNA tested to see if it matches anyone who fits that description in the over 40-million strong pool of people who have undertaken recreational DNA testing. The best option is to test at *Ancestry* and upload the results to *FamilyTreeDNA*, *MyHeritage*, *LivingDNA* & *Gedmatch*. You could also test with *23andMe*. If your relative is in one of the databases, you will find them.

The process of identification is the leading role for DNA at Tuam. The process is described in new legislation that was introduced in 2022 specifically for this project.[8] Identification will depend on the quantity and quality of the DNA extracted from the children's remains. At this stage, it is impossible to say how successful DNA extraction will be. It may be that for some sets of remains, no DNA can be obtained and thus identification will be impossible. Only time will tell.

If DNA can be successfully extracted, the next step will be to test it. The current

plans are to use a relatively new autosomal DNA test, called the Kintelligence test, which was introduced in 2021.[9,10] This test is designed to work with degraded samples and assesses over 10,000 SNP markers (compared to the 27 autosomal markers on the standard forensic test).

The DNA results will need to be compared to a reference DNA sample. This could be DNA supplied by interested parties or from individuals targeted by the project team. In the future (and there are no plans for this currently), the DNA extracted from the children's remains could be compared against public databases such as *Gedmatch* or *FamilyTreeDNA*, which are the only commercial databases that allow Investigative Genetic Genealogy by law enforcement.

Currently, any person who has reasonable grounds to believe that they may be related to one of the Tuam children will be invited to submit their DNA for comparison with the Tuam Children's DNA Database. If a positive identification is made, the remains of the child in question can be released to the family for burial in the family plot.

At this stage, it is not clear what will happen to the remains of children who are not identified. Will they be buried in a grave identified by their DNA "kit number" (or equivalent)? Will this be changed to a named gravestone if a positive identification is made at some time in the future?

Or is there a case for identifying all the children at Tuam, and not just a small subset? The use of the *Gedmatch* or *FTDNA* databases could achieve this. But is this a step too far? This and other ethical questions remain to be answered. But what is abundantly clear is that modern DNA techniques (in Ireland and globally) have advanced to the stage where they can help identify the children in the mass grave at Tuam, reunite families with their children, and provide the children of Tuam with the dignity of their identity in death.



Memorial at the Mother and Babies Home, Tuam, County Galway, Republic of Ireland. Photo by Auguste Blanqui, Creative Commons BY-SA 4.0. (Photo was cropped.)

People who think they may have a relative among the 800 or so children who may be in the mass grave, only qualify for the comparative Relatives Database if they are an "eligible family member" (i.e. closer than first cousins — first cousins are not currently eligible). A general call for such people to apply to join the comparative Relatives Database is planned to go out in 2025; however, if a likely-eligible person is very frail or elderly, and may not be still alive in 2025, such people can contact the project team in confidence at (+353) 1 5391777; Info@dait.ie; or Office of the Director of Authorised Intervention Tuam, Custom House, Flood Street, Galway H91 XV2C.

Another resource that may prove increasingly helpful is a searchable database that is currently being constructed of all the children who died in Mothers and Babies Homes throughout Ireland. This is available via Project Infant, which was established in July 2022.[11,12] As of May 2024, there are just over 6000 children in the database.

Endnotes

[1] For a historical background in the newspapers, see: https://www.irishcentral.com/news/the-home-babies-in-the-news-a-timeline-of-neglect-in-plain-sight. For a Q&A on the story, see also: https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/q-a-the-tuam-babies-and-children-who-died-1.2998787.

[2] For list of children who died at the Tuam Mothers and Babies Home: https://www.tuamhomesurvivors.com/about/tuam-baby-death-records.

[3] For mortality rate, see: http://www.thejournal.ie/tuam-infant-deaths-1563994-Jul2014/.

[4] For Enda Kenny's speech, see: http://www.thejournal.ie/tuam-babie-enda-kenny-3275702-Mar2017/

[5] For the expert technical report, see: https://assets.gov.ie/26675/584015ef1aa742c88f93f71fd6e2bd53.pdf.

[6] For *Wikipedia* article on Investigative Genetic Genealogy, see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Investigative_genetic_genealogy.

[7] For Tuam Home Survivors Network, Press Release, Jan 2018, see: https://www.tuamhomesurvivors.com/press-releases/63-press-release-tuam-home-survivors-network-response-regarding-report-of-the-expert-technical-group-report.

[8] See The Institutional Burials Act 2022 at: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2022/act/18/enacted/en/html.

[9] For Kintelligence Test (Verogen), see: https://verogen.com/products/forenseq-kintelligence-kit/.

[10] For current status as of Mar 2023, see: https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/social-affairs/2023/03/13/advanced-dna-technology-to-aid-matching-of-infants-buried-at-tuam-to-relatives/.

[11] For the story behind Project Infant, see: https://www.thejournal.ie/project-infant-mother-and-baby-homes-5859800-Sep2022/.

[12] Project Infant website at: https://projectinfant.ie/about/.

Maurice Gleeson is administrator of several Surname DNA Projects, including the O'Malley, Gleason, Spearin, & Farrell Projects among others. He is an international speaker and organised the DNA Lectures for "Genetic Genealogy Ireland" in Dublin/Belfast and "Who Do You Think You Are" in the UK. He also works with adoptees and with people of unknown parentage and has appeared on Irish TV as a consultant for the TV series Adoption Stories. He authors several blogs (e.g. DNA and Family Tree Research) and his YouTube *videos on genetic genealogy are very popular. He was voted "Genetic Genealogist of the Year 2015" (SurnameDNA Journal).*



Further Reading

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Ask *The Septs*

In this special Halloween edition of Ask *The Septs*, we answer reader Jackie O'Lantern's following question:

Dear Septs Gremlins,

Q: Is it true that Halloween was "invented" by the Irish?

Well, Jackie O', it is true that Halloween originates from the Celtic festival of Samhain (pronounced "Sau-ihn," "Sow-win," or "SAH-win," depending on who you ask). Samhain was a pagan festival held at the end of the harvest season (traditionally on November 1) and has been around for over a thousand years. In the eighth century, Pope Gregory III designated November 1 as a time to honor saints, becoming All Saints Day (initially held in May). The origin of the word "Halloween" has evolved from "All Hallows Eve."

The festival of Samhain was a time when the Celtic people believed the souls of the dead, or spirits, returned home. What better way to ward off evil spirits than to disguise yourself in a costume and light a bonfire? That should confuse the souls of the dead and send them packing. It is easy to understand how witches, ghosts, and other scary beings became part of the holiday. Here, we see the cross-over between the pagan festival and Christian tradition.

The tradition of carving Jack o' Lanterns can be traced back to Ireland and originates from the legend of "Stingy Jack." According to folklore, Jack, known for his mischievous ways, was turned away from the Pearly Gates of Heaven upon his death, as neither Heaven nor Hell wanted his soul. As a result, Jack was doomed to wander as a ghost for eternity. To light his way, Jack carried a carved out turnip with a burning lump of coal inside, thus giving birth to the Jack o' Lantern tradition.

Join us again in January when we return to answering your genealogical inquiries. To submit a question for future issues, please email your request to asksepts@gmail.com.

Logo Illustration designed by Freepik
Carved Turnip, by Themeisle at Flickr.com



2024 Webinar Series — Save the Dates!

Saturday, October 19 | *Genealogy Detective Skills: Following Clues from the Census* | by J.H. ("Jay") Fonkert, CG
Census records are the bread and butter of genealogical research. A census enumeration anchors your ancestors in a time and place but also offers clues to family migrations and dynamics. You might reveal blended families, clues to migration routes, and relatives "in the hood." This hybrid event will help you navigate census errors and double enumerations and explain how to make sense of pre-1850 tick marks.

Saturday, November 16 | *The Connemara of County Galway: Despair in the American Heartland* | by Jane Kennedy, MA
Learn how Famine emigrants from Connemara were helped to escape the ravages of famine and disease as they traveled to Western Minnesota in 1880. Frail and hungry after 3700 miles of travel, they were faced first with a prairie landscape that scarcely resembled the Irish coast and then with one of the worst Minnesota winters ever recorded. Jane Kennedy's efforts to uncover their story of despair, struggle, and ultimately perseverance will suggest new approaches for researching your Irish ancestors, regardless of their county of origin in Ireland.

Saturday, December 7 | *The Medieval Origins of Irish Genealogy* | by Thomas Finan, PhD
The medieval era (often called The Middle Ages or Dark Ages) began around 476 CE and spanned roughly 1,000 years, ending between 1400 and 1450. We will explore how the medieval Irish established the genealogical research we pursue today. Many source records remain accessible, including textual documents, maps, and landscape information.

If you have questions about any of our webinars or classes, contact Trish and Walt, IGSI Education Co-Chairs, at Education@IrishGenealogical.org.

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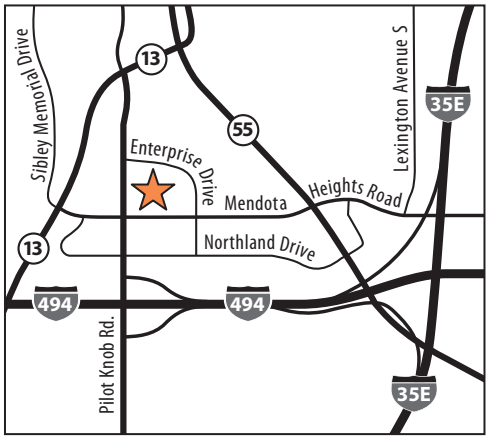
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During severe weather, or if traveling a long distance, please call before coming to the library to check if open.

The library is a self-supporting research library staffed by volunteers. If you are a member of the IGSI and are coming from out of town, contact Librarian@IrishGenealogical.org so we can have an Irish researcher available to meet you.

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The Septs

JANUARY (EANÁIR) 2025 $10.00



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IRISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Genealogy Library Open

The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2025.

The Hoffman Research Library is a private genealogy research library created for members of the organizations in the MGS Partners' Group. Access to the library materials is free to members of IGSI and other MGS Partner societies. Non-members and the general public are requested to pay a per visit $10 donation for use.

The Hoffman Library will be open only if there are two volunteers available to staff the building. (Won't you consider becoming a MGC/library volunteer to help ensure research access for all?)

Hours of service:

Monday	10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Wednesday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Irish Saturdays

Stop by the library on the second Saturday of the month between 10 AM and 4 PM for Irish research help from IGSI volunteers.

JANUARY 11, 2025
FEBRUARY 8, 2025
MARCH 8, 2025
APRIL 12, 2025
MAY 10, 2025
JUNE 14, 2025
JULY 12, 2025
AUGUST 9, 2025

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Scan with your phone to view IGSI's website

The Septs, the quarterly journal of the Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc., is one of the primary benefits of IGSI membership and is published in January, April, July, and October. Members receive a printed version of the journal unless they have chosen to receive it electronically.

Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc.

2025

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of *The Septs* is built around a core theme. Research articles on the theme should be 1500-2500 words in length and include no more than 2-4 images. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g., family stories submitted by IGSI members and non-members, etc. Articles unrelated to the theme should be 750-1500 words.

If you wish to write on the theme or share case studies, family research, or articles on general Irish culture and history and genealogy resources, please contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadlines to ensure your article is considered for the proper issue.

Contributions and ideas are welcome. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the editorial staff.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2025 | April | Ulster Province

Researching in Northern Ireland's six counties of Antrim, Armagh, Derry (Londonderry), Down, Fermanagh, and Tyrone, and Republic of Ireland counties Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan. Ulster locales are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2025.

2025 | July | Military Records

Learn about the British War Museum and using military records from Ireland, Canada, and the U.S. to locate 18th and 19th century ancestors before the partition of Ireland in 1922.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2025.

2025 | October | Hidden – Women Lost to Time

Discover tips and resources for locating elusive female ancestors after their marriage, immigration, etc. Topics covered may include DNA and locating maiden names.
Deadline for articles: August 15, 2025.

2026 | January | Documenting Death

Learn more about your ancestors via sources such as death certificates, obituaries, probate materials, funeral homes, cemeteries, and even gravestone symbology. Techniques for accessing and interpreting death records are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2025.

Cover Photo: *Man holding pieces of jigsaw puzzle.*
Photo credit: iStock.com/metamorworks.

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Best Wishes for the New Year

by Donna Jones

I am looking forward to reading this issue, "Using Crowdsourcing for Genealogical Research." Reaching out to others in different venues can be a prudent strategy. I reluctantly entered the world of social media to focus on my family history. Someone in a Facebook group volunteered to go to an archive on my behalf and found my 2x great-grandfather's baptismal record. I also connected with a fourth cousin who shared remarkable documents that my Irish 5x great-grandfather had written in the 1790s.

In Society News

It is a pleasure to announce that a terrific new member will join the Board of Directors on January 1, 2025. Terry Chism has been a member of the *Ginealas* committee for the past two years.

Terry writes that she is:

> A retired healthcare executive, a graduate of Saint Mary's University, and of the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota. She's been a member of IGSI for eight years and currently volunteers with the team that prepares *Ginealas*, the bi-monthly IGSI e-newsletter. Some of her Irish ancestors, including the Malloys, Dunlevys, and Gallegers, came from the Glenties area of Donegal during the mid-1800s. Terry says that IGSI's many resources are invaluable for any researcher, regardless of their level of expertise, and she feels fortunate to be able to access them in her search for her Irish ancestors. She's excited to join the IGSI Board and looks forward to supporting the work of IGSI's committees and genealogy experts.

Returning Board officers are Donna Jones and Walt Rothwell, Co-Presidents; Mike Flynn, Treasurer; and Jeanne Bakken, Secretary. Returning Directors are: Sandra Mc Laughlin, Dave Miller, Pat Sheehan, Mary Stuart, Kay Swanson, and Trish Little Taylor.

Some of IGSI's 2024 accomplishments included:

- Starting a marketing committee with Janelle Asselin as the chair. Janelle launched our IGSI Instagram account and hosted the excellent *Irish History Minute* monthly.
- A project team is working on upgrading our website to a responsive system so that the website adapts to the device a person is using.
- *The Septs* staff publishing four editions of the journal.
- Tom Rice being recognized for his contributions to IGSI and receiving the Beth Mullinax Award in May.
- Our blog being recognized on a list of the "20 Best Irish Genealogy Blogs," and having over 2,000 searchable articles. Gigi Hickey, who runs the blog, has been posting articles for twelve years. Congratulations, Gigi — great work!

A few of IGSI's 2025 goals are:

- Hosting the Ulster Historical Foundation's Fintan Mullan and Gillian Hunt on March 11-12, 2025. On Tuesday, March 11, there will be a full-day workshop; individual consultations can be scheduled on Wednesday morning. The conference will be both in-person and virtual, so please save the date.
- Evaluating if there is an opportunity to use AI (artificial intelligence) to access the over 40 years of content for *The Septs*, *Ginealas*, and our blog with one search.

As we begin the new year, we want to thank all our members for their support. We also appreciate all our wonderful volunteers for their time and efforts.



After retiring from Oxford University Press, Donna Jones finally has more time to research her heritage and ancestry. She is passionate about genealogy education and is a member of the IGSI Education committee and the Board of Directors. IGSI provides her the opportunity to learn more about Irish research as she continues to search for where in Ireland her great, great-grandparents lived.

The Power of Connection

by Mary Stuart and Kim Gehrman White

Athbhliain Faoi Mhaise Dhuit! Happy New Year to You!

We here at *The Septs* hope you have enjoyed a wonderful holiday season full of laughter, love, baked goods, and a pint (or twelve) of Guinness.

"Crowdsourcing" and/or using social media may seem like an odd topic for a genealogy journal, but it has the potential to help break through brick walls every day. So, what exactly is it? Associate Editor Kim Gehrman White relates:

> When I think of crowdsourcing, I usually think of GoFundMe or Kickstarter campaigns. Often, I encounter calls for crowdsourcing on social media platforms. Crowdsourcing is merely obtaining information or "input" for a project by enlisting the help of many people, whether paid or unpaid, and typically via the Internet. Take, for example, "The Genealogy Squad," a private *Facebook* group moderated by four professional genealogists. Besides offering an encouraging space, its focus is answering questions and solving genealogy-related problems. With over 70,000 members of varying degrees of genealogy experience, this group is the epitome of crowdsourcing.
>
> How can we use crowdsourcing in our genealogical research? This issue of *The Septs* addresses crowdsourcing through personal research stories, step-by-step guides, and other resources. Not all the articles are Irish-centric, but the methods and experiences of the authors, both professionals and hobbyists, may spark your imagination.

We start our journey through crowdsourcing with Janelle Asselin's detailed introduction to *Instagram* as a genealogy resource. Janelle explains how to register for an account and provides several tips and tricks for navigating the site and leveraging it to your genealogical benefit.

DNA columnist Lois Mackin provides an overview of social media sites that can be used for genetic genealogy research and explains why (and how) we should be using them.

Michael Collins of *The Letter from Ireland* and *The Green Room* discusses the evolution of digital communities and the value of harnessing them for genealogy, creating the image of a "digital hearth" around which we can all gather to aid each other as we explore our common interests.

We cannot cover crowdsourcing and social media without giving a big nod to *Facebook*'s extensive collection of group pages. Co-Managing Editor Rita McNabb takes us on a tour of both *Facebook* groups hosted by *Ireland Genealogy Projects* and assorted surname projects, then later shares her own crowdsourcing experience in "I Know the Family."

Author Julie Szczepankiewicz delves even further into the wilds of *Facebook*, providing the "why should you" and "how do I" of leveraging *Facebook* to your advantage for genealogy research. Julie covers how to join (for those who haven't) and how to employ *Facebook*'s in-house messaging system, "Messenger." One of the highlights for me was Julie's thorough list of the "do's and don'ts" of utilizing *Facebook* groups.

In "The Search for My Great-Great-Grandmother, Abigail Evans," Freya Ottem Hanson relates her adventures in tracing her Evans family and the lovely locals who helped along the way.

Kieran Jordan and Noreen Maher of *IrelandXO/Ireland Reaching Out* explain how *IrelandXO* was established to assist the Irish Diaspora in connecting to their Irish roots. They have graciously provided information on how to become a member and what perks come with that membership. Spoiler alert: the Message Board and the Newsletter are among the biggest!

Last but not least, Teresa Anderson, Ruth Charchian, Janet Magnuson, and Mary Wickersham take us on a brief tour of Norway, Scotland, and County Meath as they share their crowdsourcing success stories.

We hope these resources will help open potential new research avenues as you delve deeper into your family history.

Mary LaRue Stuart serves as Editor of The Septs *and on IGSI's Board of Directors. A native Hoosier and former university writing teacher with an MA in English, Mary is now a professional genealogist whose specialties include Indiana research, military repatriation, and DNA. Her Irish ancestors hail largely from Donegal/Northern Ireland. Mary is currently working on her BCG certification portfolio and is pursuing an AFA in Glass Arts. She enjoys singing, sewing, reading, and blowing glass in her non-existent spare time.*



Connecting to Genealogy on *Instagram*

by Janelle Asselin

When considering social media as a tool for genealogy, *Instagram* may not be the first site to come to mind. While genealogists commonly use *Facebook* to connect with groups tied to locations, ethnicities, surnames, and more, *Instagram* has a lot to offer genealogists, regardless of the type of research they do or how experienced they are. Here are some tips for using *Instagram* in your genealogy.

Hashtags Are Your Friends

Many social media services use "hashtags," a word or phrase preceded by the # sign, such as in #genealogy. Hashtags are useful for searching and categorizing posts. When you share a post or a reel on *Instagram*, you can include hashtags within your caption. Some examples of hashtags include broad descriptors, like #genealogy, #genealogist, #familyhistorian, or #irishgenealogy. You can also get specific if the post warrants it. If you share a photo of an ancestor, you could include their surname, town, county, or other related information as hashtags. Examples might be: #Rourke, #ORourke, #County Westmeath, #Westmeath, #Ireland, #Canada, #BelleRiver, or #Ontario. Hashtags also allow you to provide additional context that might need to be clarified to explain your post thoroughly. If you write a short caption about your 2x great-grandfather, you may only want to include or explain some of his residences and/or related surnames — but you can include all of them as hashtags for others searching for these same connections.

Hashtags can also be used to search on *Instagram*. If you are investigating a specific surname like the O'Rourke mentioned above, you can search by tapping (or clicking) the magnifying glass tab and entering the surname in the search field at the top. You will see a "For you" results page, which is curated based on the accounts you follow and your general *Instagram* activity. You can also tap on the "Accounts" results, which will provide accounts using that term either in the "handle" (the @username) or in the name listed for the account. Other results tabs offer similarly filtered lists based on their type, such as the "Places" list that includes actual locations with the search term in their names.

Using a hashtag in searching may give you slightly different results than just typing in the word or phrase of interest. Since hashtags are primarily used within posts, this is where the "For you" results become particularly helpful. Genealogists often research many family lines at once and do not typically dedicate their accounts to just one surname or location. By using hashtags, you might find someone who posted just once about a surname but who is connected to your family…or they might find you the same way. Clicking on a hashtag in a post will even take you to search results for that hashtag.

As when using traditional genealogy websites, sometimes it is helpful to try spelling variants as you search. To follow our example above, you might search using O'Rourke, #orourke, Rourke, #rourke, Rourk, #rourk, etc. Ultimately, hashtags provide *Instagram* posters and followers a way to discover, track, and connect with others using keywords related to an account's post or content.

Build a Community

Like other social media, the greatest draw of *Instagram* is the ability to build a community. For this reason, it is helpful to have different accounts for different interests so that you can curate specific communities for those interests. When you first join *Instagram*, you will likely want to quickly find accounts to follow so that your feed begins to show you the types of content you are interested in. There are different ways to find other accounts, and your ideal mix of who to follow will depend on what you hope to achieve on *Instagram*.

One way to get started is to ask family members if they are on *Instagram* and then start following them. This can help you remain connected to relatives, especially if you are sharing a lot of your own family history. If there are other genealogists within your family tree, you may find this particularly helpful as you can follow each other on *Instagram*, where each benefits from what the others share. For those with privacy concerns who primarily want to use *Instagram* to follow other accounts and share their research into their family tree, creating a private account where your followers are all related can be a fantastic way to do that.

Beyond people you already know, *Instagram* is a great place to follow genealogy businesses, genealogy societies, historical societies, museums, and archives. This can be a powerful tool for those looking to learn new skills and maximize their research. Many genealogy societies, including IGSI, share upcoming events and tips for research on *Instagram*. Archives might share a look at different collections or post about how to research in person. Professional genealogists might post about their work. Historical societies in locations of interest might share new research or newly donated materials for those places.

The search function helps find accounts that might interest you, especially as you spend more time on *Instagram* and the algorithm learns what you like. Searching the term "genealogy" provides results of related posts and reels, such as tips for research or organization, images of documents, details of events, genealogy-focused memes, family photos, and more. If you see a post that interests you, selecting it will show more of that post. If it is helpful, you can then follow the account posting it.

Building a community continues after following others, though. A great way to meet people interested in genealogy and get them to engage with your posts is to engage with theirs! If you find a post helpful, let that account know. You can comment if you have advice based on a question in a post. Observing good web etiquette applies to *Instagram*; do not spam an account or post. Being kind will get you further. You may even make friends over time — or find family — by interacting with the same accounts.

Use Locations

Location tags are another way that family historians can use *Instagram* for their research. When creating a post, users can choose to select a particular location. It is not required, but if you are posting about something that happened in a specific location or sharing a photo taken at a given site, it can be helpful to tag that location. Not only can other users then easily find your post if they are searching for that location, but doing so may also help you connect with family or researchers in that area. The location tag option is on the final screen of the posting process, along with many other options for tags or other

Getting Started with *Instagram*

Although you can browse *Instagram* without an account, the best way to use it effectively is to create one. While *Instagram* is accessible via the web on computers, its full functionality is best accessed through your smartphone or tablet app. The user-friendly account creation process requires you to choose a handle. A handle is essentially a username, such as "@IrishGenSI" (to use IGSI's *Instagram* account as an example). If you hope to have others find you, tag you, etc., it is preferable to keep your handle descriptive, memorable, and short. Spaces are not allowed in handles, but you can use symbols such as underscores to give that effect, as in @firstnamegenealogy or @surname_family_historian.

Once you have chosen your handle and completed the initial account setup, *Instagram* will prompt you to identify interests and follow some accounts. It is easiest to follow just a few at first, then once your account is ready, you can use the search functions to find additional accounts and posts more easily.

You will also need to decide if you want a public or a private account. A public account means all your posts will be visible to anyone who stumbles upon your feed or knows your handle, which can be a privacy concern for some. Alternatively, a private account prevents this by allowing only followers to see your posts, making it harder to engage with or tag others if you were hoping to crowdsource your research. There is no correct answer; it is just the answer that is right for what you are hoping to get out of *Instagram*.

Once your account is created, you might want to post, but there are distinct types of content to consider. The standard way of sharing into *Instagram*'s feed is called a "post" and consists of an image, a collection of images, or a short video with a written caption which will appear on your profile and go into your followers' feeds. A "reel" is a video often longer than a regular post and is formatted slightly differently than a post. It also appears on your profile under the reels tab. A "story" is shared for only 24 hours and does not appear on your profile feed unless you purposefully save it to your "highlights," where it will then become permanent. Finally, a "live post" is just that — a live video feed of you or what you record for those who choose to join.

As with most other social media, *Instagram* users are often at the mercy of the company's algorithms, so if you are trying to reach others who could help in your research or help grow an audience to talk about genealogy, it is worth seeking out further information on how to work with or around the algorithms.

information, and you should see it as you scroll down to the share button.

Similarly, if you search for a location, you may find anywhere from a handful to thousands of photos of that location. This can be useful for researchers living far from ancestral homes, if only to better understand what the place was like. If you know your 3x great-grandmother's hometown, searching for it in *Instagram*'s locations might show you what it looks like today. If you are interested in a specific museum or historical site, many visitors will tag those locations when they share photos.

Location tags are not always consistent, or they may be formatted differently than expected. When searching for a location, remember to try different spellings and configurations until you find what you are looking for.

Bookmark Freely

One of the lesser-known features of *Instagram* that can be useful for family historians is the bookmark. Any post you see has a bookmark icon at the bottom right of the image. If the icon is selected, the post is saved. There are many reasons for bookmarking posts, such as saving tips you want to remember, a story you find interesting, or a post related to your research.

It is also possible to create bookmark folders. On your profile, if you click the three lines in the upper right corner, one of the first options you will see is "Saved," i.e., your bookmarks archive. Selecting that will take you to your bookmarks which, by default, are all saved into one folder. However, the plus sign in the upper right corner will allow you to create a new folder and even select which of your existing bookmarks you want to add to that folder. Bookmarks can then be organized into topics, surnames, locations, or any other organizational method that works for the user.

Tell Your Story

Instagram is a visual form of social media requiring users to have an image or video to share with any captions, although as the platform has evolved, some users utilize services like Canva to create visuals with text. For family historians, much of the strength of *Instagram* is combining images and captions to connect with an audience. Whether you share old family photos or documents you uncovered in your research, storytelling is the best way to connect.

Genealogy-related accounts that get a lot of engagement are good at this intersection of history and interpersonal connection. Some users might focus on telling the stories of their ancestors, while others focus more on sharing research methodologies or on-location research. Other accounts share a little of everything to help others understand the big picture of family history research.

While there is a great deal of possible value in sharing your family's stories on *Instagram*, it is also true that many users are not interested in sharing so much as following other accounts to learn from. You may find connections faster if you share information about your family and your research, but it is not a requirement to be a part of the wide world of *Instagram* family historians. If all you want to do is create an account to follow other people and organizations, you are still likely to find a wealth of helpful information on *Instagram*.

Janelle Asselin edits historical fiction for children by day and works on genealogy by night. As an IGSI volunteer, she chairs the marketing committee, putting her decades of social media and marketing knowledge to use. A native Midwesterner who has lived all over the United States and currently calls Wisconsin home, Janelle is primarily of Irish, Scottish, and French-Canadian descent.



New from *FamilySearch*!

FamilySearch recently added over 49 million new records to its archives, which include a significant expansion to its "Ireland, Catholic Parish Registers, 1740-1900" collection.

For more information, see:
https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/new-records-december-2024

Using *Facebook* for Genealogy

by Julie Roberts Szczepankiewicz

When one thinks of useful tools for genealogy research, social media might not be the first thing that springs to mind. However, social media, in general, and *Facebook*, in particular, can be a powerful addition to one's genealogy "toolbox." *Facebook* genealogy groups can be used effectively for genealogy research, and I would like to offer some "do's and don'ts" for participating in these groups.

Why Use *Facebook* for Genealogy?

If you are not on *Facebook*, you might not realize that there are thousands of genealogy-related groups and pages there. Genealogist Katherine R. Willson has done for *Facebook* what Cyndi Ingle (creator of the popular *Cyndi's List*) has done for genealogy websites by compiling and indexing all the genealogy groups and pages on *Facebook* and making the list available in a searchable PDF form on her website. The list includes more than 16,000 links, although the number of unique groups represented in the list is smaller since some groups appear in more than one category. In addition to groups that focus on research in each of the fifty states, there are regional and county groups; groups focusing on research in foreign countries, and groups that focus on subjects like DNA, adoption, reuniting descendants with their family's Bibles, strategies for getting organized, military history, lineage societies, and everything in between. If you can think of a special interest that falls under the larger umbrella of genealogical research, chances are good that someone has already started a group or page for it on *Facebook*. Are you looking for an easy way to share your research progress or family photos with interested members of your extended family? Create your own *Facebook* group and invite them to join!

So, what exactly is the difference between a group and a page? Per *Facebook*'s explanation, pages are typically created and managed by an official representative of an organization. If you would like to keep up-to-date with the latest news, events and tips that the Irish Genealogical Society International shares, for example, you can "like" their *Facebook* page, and their posts will appear in your newsfeed. Typically, there is not as much discussion on a page as there is in a group, which is where people can discuss common interests, share photos, etc. Groups do not usually represent an organization outside of *Facebook*; therefore, they have no official representatives.

Although I have a "wee bit" of Irish ancestry through my 3x great-grandfather, Robert Walsh, my niche is Polish research. I am an administrator for several large (12,000–19,000 member) *Facebook* groups related to Polish genealogy and translation. Members of these groups range from beginners to professionals, and our assistance includes research analysis and document interpretation, suggestions for new resources or strategies, and translations of foreign-language records. We decipher handwriting, provide links to online records repositories, and offer camaraderie. *Facebook* groups are a little like attending a genealogy conference or society meeting that takes place 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, where you can celebrate successes, brainstorm, learn new strategies, or vent about frustrations, brick walls, and DNA matches who never reply to your messages. A core group of dedicated volunteers is typically on hand to help as personal schedules allow, but everyone is welcome to contribute to the discussion.

As an example of the power of these groups, in 2015, I posted a question in the German Genealogy group about where to find church records for the parish of Roding in Bavaria. One of the group members, Klemens ("Mente") Pongratz, commented on my thread.[1] Mente is a local historian and part-time archivist for his hometown in Germany. Many years ago, he created a private index for vital records in the parish of Roding and happened to have this index on an old hard drive in his basement. He found the baptismal record for my great-great-grandfather in short order, and additional records for the family going back to 1717! In addition to providing names and dates of birth, marriage, and death, Mente was able to provide the specific record and fiche numbers necessary for ordering scans from the diocesan archive. What a pleasure to find someone researching in the same area, who knows the local history, archives, language, and culture, and is willing to share his expertise! This is precisely the kind of connection that *Facebook* groups facilitate.

In Katherine Willson's aforementioned index of *Facebook* groups, you will note the list of Irish-related genealogy groups spans pages 254-260 and includes groups as varied as the Ireland Special Interest Group of the Ontario [Canada] Genealogical Society, History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland, Ireland in the Old Days: A Photo Collection, and Irish Adoption Database and DNA Match Finder, in addition to three different groups called "Irish Genealogy"! There are also local groups focused on every county in Ireland. Please note that Northern Ireland is indexed separately, beginning on page 272, although it shares some redundancies with the other list.

Note, too, that Katherine's list has not been updated since January 2021, so some of the groups indexed may no longer exist. New groups have also been created since that date, so this list is not comprehensive.

How Do I Join?

If you are not on *Facebook*, create an account at www.facebook.com. For those who do not currently have a *Facebook* profile and may be leery of social media, remember that you can use *Facebook* for genealogy without being active on *Facebook* in other ways. Posting in an Irish genealogy group does not require you to start posting photos of your pets or what you had for breakfast, although your profile should contain enough visible, personal information to make it clear to group admins that you are not a spammer or a bot. For example, you may want to consider adding a line or two about the locations or ancestral surnames you're researching to the "About" section of your profile.

Once logged in, you can find groups by typing keywords in the search box at the top of the page (see Figure 1).[2]

If you search "Irish Genealogy and Family History," for example, it will take you to that group's home page, where you will see a "Join Group" button. Once clicked, one of the admins will have to approve your request to join because this group is private. A "private" designation does not mean that new members cannot join; it means that posts and comments made within the group will not show up in the newsfeed of group members' *Facebook* friends who *are not* in the group, as can happen if a group is public. Here is more information about privacy levels in *Facebook* groups.

With 3 billion active monthly users, *Facebook* denizens represent a cross-section of humanity; not everyone in that community will be benevolent. In an effort to screen out the bad guys (fake profiles set up by phishers, spammers, or scammers), group admins must carefully review the profiles of new applicants, looking for evidence that applicants are real people with a genuine interest in genealogy. To aid in this task, most private groups have questions that the applicant must answer before admission. Please answer those questions to expedite your admission to the group. In rare cases, a group admin might also send a private message regarding your membership in the group.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Messages? What Messages?

Every *Facebook* user has three message boxes, all of which can be accessed by clicking on the little speech bubble icon shown in Figure 2.

This inbox is where you will find messages from your friends on *Facebook*. However, you may occasionally receive Message Requests from members of genealogy groups in which you are active. Once you read those messages, you can accept or delete them; the sender will not know that you have seen the message unless you accept. Within "Message Requests," there is another inbox that even many F*acebook-savvy* people do not know about: the "spam" inbox. This is where messages are sent when *Facebook*'s algorithms determine they are likely to be spam. However, it is worth checking this inbox occasionally because sometimes the algorithm gets it wrong and there may be a legitimate message inside. I once uncovered a year-old message from a woman trying to contact me because she suspected she was a distant cousin of my husband's. She owned an old photo of his great-grandfather that I had never seen before, so I was thrilled to have found her message!

With So Many Groups to Choose from, How Do I Decide?

Facebook groups can be a fantastic asset to your research, but no one person can keep up with a hundred separate groups. So, pick a few to start with and focus only on those. When choosing which *Facebook* groups might be most beneficial to your research, check out the group's description,

shown under "About this group," before clicking "Join Group." This section will also contain information on the group's history, where it is based, the number of members, and the group's activity. That activity parameter is important; lively, active groups with frequent posts are ideal, but smaller groups with a tighter focus are not necessarily the wrong choice.

A group's rules are also usually found in the "About this group" section. Rules vary from group to group but can range from general online etiquette to specific requirements for formatting posts. Many genealogy groups prohibit GIFs, discussions of politics, or solicitation by professional genealogists. Some groups — usually those not geared explicitly toward aiding adoptees — prohibit posting information on living people. Most groups also request that posts be kept on topic for the group. Be sure to read the rules for whatever groups you join before posting; violators risk getting their posts deleted, having restrictions placed on their ability to post and comment, or getting removed from the group.

Perhaps you have selected and joined a few *Facebook* genealogy groups. What should you do to derive maximum benefit from them?

The "Do's and Don'ts" of *Facebook* Groups

1. **Do** read the featured (pinned) post(s).

Featured posts can be found at the top of the group's page, under the cover photo, and usually contain information relevant to all group members. Featured posts may contain important news and announcements, links to online resources, or additional tips for using the group, such as pointing you to a specific form to fill out when requesting research assistance.



Figure 3



Figure 4

2. **Do** check out the group's files.

Files can be found under the group's cover photo, as indicated by the green arrow in Figure 3.

Files often contain information and genealogical resources specific to the group's focus. For example, in the "Ireland: Genealogy & Heritage" group files, there is a list of civil registration districts for each county; editable/printable family tree forms, family group sheets, research logs, and research checklists; three pages of research links for Irish genealogy; and more. You may need to hunt around to find all the relevant files, because this section may also contain miscellaneous files related to personal research uploaded by individual group members. It is typically easy to distinguish by the file name: for example, "Research Links" vs. "John Smith birth 1875."

3. **Do** search the group's discussion history.

This is done by clicking the magnifying glass icon shown by the green arrow in Figure 4.

Try simple searches for surnames or places of interest. You might find that your question has already been previously discussed, or you might find others who are working in the same parishes or on the same families. I can think of several occasions in my Polish groups when group members discovered they were related to one another, which could happen to you!

4. **Do** be sure to organize your data before you post and to give specific information.

Good posts identify both the research target and your relationship to that person. They provide relevant biographical details, including known or approximate dates and places of birth; names of parents, spouses, siblings, or other relatives; and places and dates of marriage and death. They identify the research question: What do you want to know? Importantly, they also identify sources you have already checked (civil registrations, church records, census, city directories, probate, land records, etc.) Volunteers get frustrated when they spend time tracking down records for a poster only to have that person reply, "Oh, I already have that."

5. **Don't** expect others to do your research for you.

Although group members will often bend over backwards to help someone, we are all volunteers. Everyone has jobs, families, their research, and lives outside of *Facebook*. Someone might find you several records for your family, but it is more likely that the volunteers will make suggestions about the next steps for you to take. If you get stuck, you can always post again and ask for further assistance but, mostly, these groups are about giving people fishing poles and teaching them to fish rather than handing them cooked fish on a silver platter.

6. **Don't** be thin-skinned.

Online interactions are often fraught with a bit of peril because they lack the tone of voice and body language that allow us to distinguish between gentle, good-natured teasing and outright hostility. I always try to read people's comments in the best possible light, recognizing that in *Facebook* groups, as in life, there are some people I would enjoy having a cup of coffee with and others I would prefer to avoid. If someone rubs you the wrong way, let it go and move on.

7. **Do** get to know the group's admins, moderators, and experts.

Everyone is entitled to an opinion, but not all opinions are equally well-informed. *Facebook* tries to help you identify contributors who are knowledgeable about the group's focus through "badges," which appear next to a group member's name. Most groups have badges for admins and moderators, while some groups have additional badges for a "group expert" or "top contributor." Note that these badges are assigned at the admin's discretion; not all group admins use such labels. In any case, you should carefully review all comments and recommendations received in a *Facebook* group to ensure they make sense and can be verified as accurate.

8. **Do** remember to thank those who helped you.

Although "thank you" is simple to say, we have all had moments of sharing our time and expertise with someone who never expresses gratitude. This is especially irksome when a volunteer has gone as far as providing scans of records or translations. Be gracious and grateful, and you will find that people are more willing to help you again in the future.

Facebook groups really offer something for everyone. You might break down a brick wall or two or meet some cousins. No matter your proficiency level, you are sure to learn something, and maybe even make some new friends. Happy researching!

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Endnotes

[1] Permission granted by Klemens Pongratz to use his name in this article.

[2] All screenshots taken from *Facebook* (https://www.facebook.com : 2024).

Julie Roberts Szczepankiewicz is a genealogist, writer, and speaker with nearly 30 years of experience in researching her family's origins in Poland, Germany, the U.S., and Canada. She currently serves as President of the Polish Genealogical Society of New York State (PGSNYS), and she administers several genealogy-related Facebook *groups. She is the author of a genealogy blog,* From Shepherds and Shoemakers.



May your tea
be strong
and your Monday
be short, and may
your New Year
start with a laugh
and a snort.
~Anon

Gathering at the Digital Hearth: The Genealogy Community — An Example of Social Media's Higher Purpose?

by Mike Collins — A Letter from Ireland & The Green Room

You might wonder, "How can a genealogy platform be considered social media?" Let's think about it for a moment. At their core, the best social media platforms facilitate connections between people, enable information sharing, and build communities around common interests. Modern genealogy platforms do exactly this — with a laser focus on family history.

The Green Room, our Irish genealogy platform, emerged organically from a social media presence back in 2011. At the time, my wife (Carina) and I spent many days exploring Ireland's long-distance walking trails, which wind through some of this country's most stunning landscapes. We shared photographs on a *Facebook* page, and while many followers commented on the scenery, we noticed a pattern emerging. Comments like "That's near where my Sullivan ancestors came from in Kerry" or "Which county does the Neeson surname originate from?" became increasingly common. While we answered these queries as best we could, we were delighted to see followers of the page also sharing their knowledge and insights (as well as too many "opinions" from time to time!)

This engagement inspired us to launch *A Letter from Ireland*, a weekly newsletter that went out each Sunday. In the newsletter, we shared stories about Irish counties and surnames, delved into Irish language and music, and explored various aspects of Irish heritage. However, the genealogy questions continued to multiply, and we recognised the need for a dedicated space to address them.

In 2014, we established *The Green Room*. On this platform, people of Irish descent could navigate both the charms and challenges of Irish genealogy, receive guidance from professional genealogists, and connect with others on a devoted forum.

The social media landscape has changed significantly since 2014, though some aspects remain constant. In the following sections, I will share some observations drawn from my experience with both social media and specialized genealogy platforms such as *The Green Room*.

The Evolution of Digital Communities

While traditional social media platforms like *Facebook* and *X* [formerly *Twitter*] cast wide nets across diverse interests, often resulting in shallow connections and fragmented discussion, a new breed of specialised platforms has emerged. Over the past several years, particularly in the genealogy space, these platforms have fostered deeper, more meaningful connections around shared ancestral quests.

These platforms combine the best aspects of social media — engagement, connection, and content sharing — with specialized resources and expert guidance. Members don't just scroll through posts; they actively collaborate on research challenges, share discoveries, and support each other's journeys to uncover their family histories.

The Power of Focused Communities

The genealogy platform I know best is *The Green Room*. As I mentioned, it grew from a *Facebook* page and a weekly newsletter called *A Letter from Ireland*. Initially, we felt uncertain about our ability to meet expectations, concerned about the pressure of being viewed as subject matter "experts." However, our worries proved unfounded. Within a year, the community had grown to about 500 members. A founding member pulled me aside for a quiet word: "Don't worry, Mike, we have this!" By "we," he meant the existing members. He taught us an invaluable lesson — that a community thrives through member interactions, guided by solid resources and focused conversation parameters.

Key Elements of Successful Genealogy Communities

Over the years, I've observed several features that distinguish successful genealogy community platforms from traditional social media:

- **Interactive Forums.** Unlike general social media, where conversations often disappear into the void, genealogy platforms foster sustained, purposeful discussions. Whether on Ancestry's Message Boards, FamilySearch's Communities, or specialized platforms like *The Green Room*, members engage in focused conversations about research strategies, brick walls, and discoveries.
- **Expert Integration.** Many platforms have found success by integrating professional genealogists into their communities. These experts become trusted mentors, guiding discussions and providing specialized knowledge. For instance, *The Green Room*'s resident genealogists, Jayne McGarvey and Pam Holland, actively

participate in discussions, while sites like *JewishGen* offer access to experts in specific geographic areas and research methodologies.

- **Educational Components.** While traditional social media focuses on quick interactions, genealogy platforms typically incorporate robust educational elements. Through webinars, courses, and tutorials, these learning opportunities create shared experiences that strengthen community bonds. *The Green Room* offers "Quick Win" tutorials, while *FamilySearch* hosts regular online classes and research groups.

Cultural Connection

What truly sets genealogy communities apart is their emphasis on cultural connection. Platforms focused on specific heritage groups often include features that help members understand their ancestors' lives beyond bare facts and dates. For example:

- ***The Green Room***'s "Irish Homeland" series takes our members into Ireland's 32 counties to explore the local context into which all record research must be conducted.
- ***JewishGen***'s "KehilaLinks" project documents Jewish communities worldwide.
- ***Italian Genealogy Forum***'s regional groups discuss local traditions and customs.

Success Through Community

The effectiveness of these specialized platforms is most evident through their success stories. In *The Green Room*, member Ernie Dowd's journey to Irish citizenship succeeded through community support. Similarly, *JewishGen*'s "Success Stories" section brims with tales of connections made through collaborative research.

Karen Ehatt's experience in *The Green Room* demonstrates the power of focused communities. She comments: "Since joining a year ago, I have broken down 6 of my 12 brick walls and learned so much about records and research. So many helpful members have helped me answer questions."

Building Trust in Digital Spaces

It took us a while to figure how to build trust for *The Green Room*, but we have come to realise that thriving genealogy communities maintain integrity through:

Clear Guidelines. Unlike open social media platforms where negative interactions often proliferate, genealogy platforms typically maintain strict community guidelines that foster respectful, productive discussions.

Moderation and Support. Active moderation ensures discussions remain focused and helpful. Many platforms train volunteer moderators who understand both genealogical research and community management.

Privacy Considerations. Given the personal nature of genealogical research, these platforms often implement more robust privacy controls than traditional social media. They typically offer options for private messaging and controlled sharing of sensitive information.

As traditional social media faces increasing scrutiny, specialized platforms offer a compelling alternative. Their success suggests a potential future in which social media fragments into focused, purpose-driven communities rather than trying to be everything to everyone.

Key Trends Emerging in These Spaces

Let's look at some of the trends emerging in these online communities — many of which have been borrowed from more traditional social media platforms. They include:

Integration of AI Tools. While still somewhat controversial, many platforms, including ours, are beginning to incorporate AI-assisted research tools, while maintaining the human element of community support. We have found that giving our genealogists access to AI tools allows them to review member-submitted material and see connections more quickly, with less critical information missed.

Enhanced Collaboration Features. New tools for sharing research, collaborating on family trees, and managing group projects are being developed. The constant challenge is making these features intuitive and user-friendly when a member is in full "research mode."

Mobile-First Design. Platforms are adapting to meet users' preferences for mobile access while maintaining robust functionality. This is consistently challenging due to the smaller footprint of these devices. However, we find that up to 40% of our members use devices such as iPads regularly, so we must design appropriately.

Measuring Success Differently

Unlike traditional social media platforms that measure success through engagement metrics, genealogy communities often focus on different indicators, such as:

- Research breakthroughs achieved through collaboration

- Long-term member retention
- Quality and depth of interaction
- Actual family connections made
- Documentation of shared historical knowledge

What makes these platforms truly successful is their ability to maintain a personal touch despite their digital nature. As *The Green Room* member Elizabeth Fitzpatrick notes, "The kind members made me feel so supported. I felt so overwhelmed I was thinking about taking a break from research altogether. Now, I feel empowered."

Looking Forward

As we continue to examine social media's role in our lives, specialised genealogy platforms offer valuable lessons about building meaningful online communities. They demonstrate that when social media is focused on a shared passion and guided by genuine care for community, it can create exceptional digital spaces where connection, learning, and discovery flourish together.

These platforms prove that social media doesn't have to be about viral trends or casual interactions. Instead, it can be a powerful tool for preserving history, building connections, and helping people understand their place in the continuing story of human heritage.

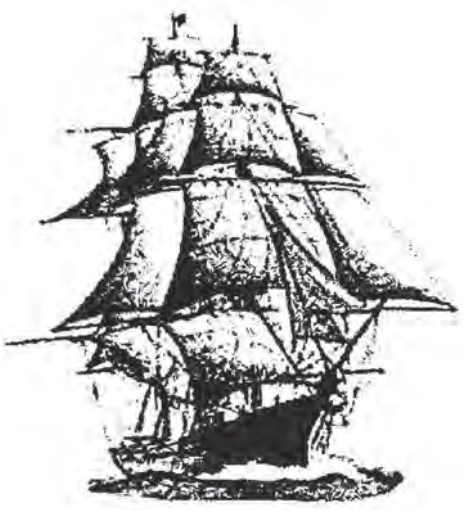
The ancient Irish proverb "Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine" ("People live in the shadow/shelter of each other") captures a fundamental truth about human connection that can resonate deeply in our digital age. I believe that when we share our stories and heritage online with authenticity and care, we create digital shelters where communities can safely gather, and learn from one another to ensure that precious memories and wisdom aren't lost to time.

What do *you* think?

Mike Collins and wife Carina run A Letter from Ireland *and* The Green Room *from their cottage in County Cork, Ireland. Since 2013, they've helped thousands of people worldwide break through their Irish ancestry brick walls via their unique combination of genealogy expertise, local knowledge, and storytelling. With over 30 years of experience in education and training, Mike spends his days travelling Ireland's 32 counties, gathering stories, and creating content to help people connect with their Irish heritage.*



www.youririshheritage.com
www.aletterfromireland.com



Save the Date!!

Tuesday, March 11, 2025 | 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

The Ulster Historical Foundation will visit Minneapolis, Minnesota, as part of their 2025 U.S. Tour. Executive Director Fintan Mullen and Research Officer Gillian Hunt will present a full day (hybrid) workshop on Tuesday, March 11 and will provide a half-day of one-on-one consultations on Wednesday, March 12, 2025.

Additional details, including pricing, will follow soon. Save the date and make a plan to join us!

Social Media for Genetic Genealogy

by Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D.

Why Use Social Media for Genetic Genealogy

Due to genetic genealogy's rapidly changing and innovative nature, social media is often the best way to keep up with developments in the field, post your achievements, and get advice from professionals and experts.

Content providers and subject-matter experts often share their messages using a combination of social media outlets. For example, a blogger might also maintain pages and post on *Facebook*, *LinkedIn*, *Instagram*, or *Pinterest*, and they might also podcast or post videos on *YouTube*. Information on the social media outlets used by a particular genetic genealogy expert or content provider is often posted at the bottom of their website or blog.

As with all social media, users should be mindful of their own personal privacy needs when setting up accounts and respect the privacy rights of living DNA matches when they post.

For a sampling of genetic genealogy social media, see the Resources list below.

Blogs

Blogs are regularly updated websites or pages, typically run by an individual or small group. Many genetic genealogy experts maintain blogs where they publish posts explaining genetic genealogy concepts and terms, showcasing new products from testing companies or tool developers, showing how to use genetic genealogy tools, and more.

An excellent way to find genetic genealogy blogs is through *Google*.

Facebook

https://www.facebook.com/

Now considered "old school" by many younger genetic genealogists, *Facebook*, a social media and networking service, remains a good source of information for those learning and practicing genetic genealogy. In addition to private pages maintained by many prominent genetic genealogists, there are numerous genetic-genealogy-focused private and public groups, including user groups hosted by tool developers.

Look for well-run groups that have rules about contact and interaction. Be aware of the identity and expertise of group administrators.

Instagram

https://www.instagram.com/

Instagram is a free social networking app and website for sharing photos and videos. Look for pages by prominent genetic genealogists, testing companies, and tool developers.

LinkedIn

https://www.linkedin.com/

LinkedIn is a professional networking site. Here you will find pages and posts by prominent genetic genealogists, testing companies, and tool developers. These may include announcements of new products or features, speaking appearances, course offerings, and more.

Pinterest

https://www.pinterest.com/

Pinterest is a social media platform that allows users to create visual cards ("pins") and organize them into boards. Look for accounts owned by genetic genealogy experts and search for concepts and ideas you are exploring to see what others have written and examples of how they have used tools in which you are interested.

Podcasts

Podcasts are series of digital audio and video files you can stream on demand or download for later viewing/listening. You can find podcasts on *Apple Podcasts* or *Spotify*, etc. You can also subscribe to many podcasts through their own mailing lists or RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds.

There are many long-running general genealogy podcasts, as well as specialized podcasts for genetic genealogy. Genetic genealogy cases are often featured in the popular category of true crime podcasts.

Reddit

https://www.reddit.com/

Reddit is a social media platform where users share and discuss content (photos, videos, links, and text) in bulletin board-like communities called subreddits. This site is popular with younger users.

TikTok

https://www.tiktok.com/

TikTok is a social media platform for creating and sharing short videos. It is very popular with younger users.

Wikis

Wikis are websites that allow users to collaboratively create, edit, and store content. They include general-purpose, encyclopedia-like sites such as *Wikipedia*, as well as specialized sites for particular fields, such as the *FamilySearch* or *International Society of Genetic Genealogy* wikis.

Networking and Microblogging

X

https://x.com/

X is the social media platform formerly known as *Twitter*. It is a networking and "microblogging" site where users share posts of up to 280 characters, images, and video clips. Many users in the genealogy and genetic genealogy communities are moving away from this platform.

Bluesky

https://bsky.app/

Bluesky is a social media platform designed not to be controlled by a single company. It is built on an open-source toolbox.[1] *Cyndi's List* has a *Bluesky* section in the Social Media for Genealogy category[2] where you can find links to the familyhistory, familytree, and genealogy hashtags on *Bluesky*, along with a *YouTube* video on using *Bluesky* for genealogy and two starter packs that hook you up to genealogy-related feeds. *Bluesky* users interested in genetic genealogy can search for "genetic genealogy" or #dna, as well as by the names of prominent genetic genealogists.

YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/

YouTube is a free video-sharing website where you can watch online videos. Many genetic genealogy experts have established channels on *YouTube*.

Resources

Blogs

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"DNA Detectives." https://www.facebook.com/groups/798315666906219 : 2024.

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"BanyanDNA User Group." https://www.facebook.com/groups/1052088932683162 : 2024.

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"DNA Painter User Group." https://www.facebook.com/groups/127620554606673 : 2024.

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"Popular Social Networks for Genealogy." *FamilySearch Research Wiki*. https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Popular_Social_Networks_for_Genealogy : 2024.

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"DNA Painter." https://www.youtube.com/@dna.painter : 2024.

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Endnotes

[1] See "About Bluesky," Bluesky (https://bsky.social/about/faq).

[2] https://www.cyndislist.com/social-media/bluesky/.

All URLs are current as of 19 November 2024.

Lois Abromitis Mackin, PhD, is a professional genealogist focusing on American and English research. She has three degrees in history and has studied at major genealogical institutes. She writes for Minnesota Genealogist *and is the 2013 winner of the Minnesota Genealogical Society's Founders Award for visionary leadership.*



My Experience with Irish Groups on *Facebook*

by Rita McNabb

When reviewing Maurice Gleeson's list of *Facebook* groups, I noticed several specific Irish county *Facebook* pages whose titles started with "IGP." A quick search revealed that "IGP" stands for "Ireland Genealogy Projects" (http://www.igp-web.com). This site includes both county pages, which provide historical background, geographical information, research aids, and archival pages covering record collections such as probate, vital records, land, cemetery, etc.

The *IGP* website consists of information provided entirely by volunteers, and sorted by county. *IGP* also hosts *Facebook* groups for the following counties: Cavan, Clare, Cork General Society, Donegal, Dublin, Fermanagh, Galway, Kilkenny, Laois, Limerick, Longford, Monaghan, Meath, Sligo, Tipperary, Westmeath, Wexford, and Wicklow. At right and on page 19 are sample pages from County Cavan's archive with the types of available information. Click on any of a county's page links to look for specific details. There is also a submission form where you can submit findings, which will then be shared with other readers.

Since these are private groups, you will need to ask to join. This step is to prevent spammers.

In addition to the *Facebook IGP* groups, I have also explored some of *Facebook*'s other Irish offerings. Below are a few notes on my experiences to help you navigate such groups and use their crowdsourcing capabilities to your advantage.

IGP's County Cavan Ireland Genealogy Group

https://www.facebook.com/groups/cavangenealogy/

[*As of 9 November 2024, there were approximately 3,600 members.*]

I made my first post on this *Facebook* group in 2018 when I asked for clarification on various placenames such as Rahulton, Castlesaunderson, and Belturbet…all located in County Cavan. I was looking for any geographical relationship between these three locations, all of which appeared in various documents found during my research. My post garnered nineteen comments from eight different individuals, a few of whom lived in the area. I was provided an explanation, maps, links to more maps, and information about the Castle Saunderson estate. To top it all off, a "Mulligan" contacted me, enabling us to explore our familial relationship.

I also saw a picture in this group of the church my Mulligan ancestors attended: St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in Drumalee.

During the pandemic, this group even coordinated a Christmas card exchange!

County Cavan GEDmatch DNA Comparisons

https://www.facebook.com/groups/541590396194527

[*As of 9 November 2024, there were approximately 2,300 members.*]

This group lets you share your *GEDmatch* listings and any narrative about your connection to County Cavan. I have



IGP County Cavan Ireland Genealogy Page and Archive



IGP County Cavan's Archival Offerings

identified a few distant relatives with whom I have exchanged information.

IGP Co. [*sic*] Monaghan Ireland Genealogy Group

https://www.facebook.com/groups/MonaghanGenealogyIGP

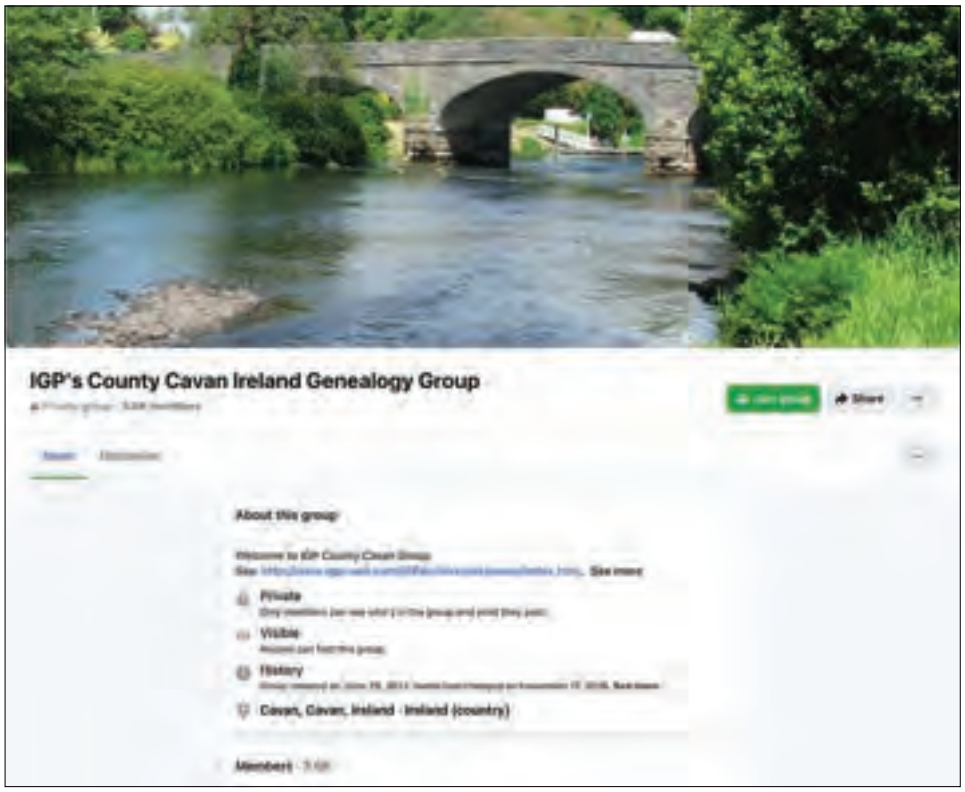
[*As of 9 November 2024, there were approximately 1,000 members.*]

While I have never directly posted within this *Facebook* group, I have responded to a few postings containing specific family surnames. In one case, I connected with a distant relative.

The Irish Surname Registry

https://www.facebook.com/groups/TheIrishSurnameRegistry/

[*As of 9 November 2024, there were approximately 89,300 members.*]



The home page of the IGP County Cavan *group on* Facebook

This group allows you to register your family surnames and *GEDmatch* kit numbers when looking for matches. While I do not post in it, it does have many different features. For example, it offers information on conducting research and covers topics related to Irish history, such as coats of arms and penal laws.

The *Irish Surname Registry* provides a register for members consisting of surnames, counties, and contributors' *Facebook* names and profile links. For example, 33 individuals have posted an interest in Mulligan (my maiden name). As of 29 September 2024, the registry contained 21,568 surnames.

The Irish Ancestry Project

https://www.facebook.com/groups/theirishancestorproject/

[*As of 9 November 2024, there were approximately 6,700 members.*]

This is a sister group to *The Irish Surname Registry*. It allows for more narrative and discussion than is available in the registry group.

Irish Family Ancestry Research and Help

https://www.facebook.com/groups/4588948841158019

[*As of 9 November 2024, there were approximately 77,700 members.*]

People post research questions and, just by scrolling through past conversations and posts, you might find helpful hints and resources previously unknown to you.

Irish Facebook Groups

by Maurice Gleeson (reprinted with permission)

The following is a listing of several Irish resources available on *Facebook*, which was graciously provided by Maurice Gleeson for this issue.

1. Genetic Genealogy Ireland
2. Irish Genealogy
3. Cork RC Parish Registers
4. DNA Corcaigh Cork Project
5. Annaghdown Genealogy Forum
6. Wicklow Genealogy
7. Ballymena Family History Society
8. Cork City Genealogy
9. 1916 Easter Rising Historical Society
10. Dál Cuinn Group
11. Guild of One-Name Studies — Ireland Region
12. Cork Genealogical Society
13. Adopted Illegally Ireland
14. County Tyrone Ireland
15. County Roscommon
16. IGP's County Clare Ireland Genealogy Group
17. County Limerick Genealogy DNA GEDmatch
18. Tuam PLU DNA & Ancestry
19. Tipperary IRE Matchmaker
20. Rosmuc Area Genealogy and DNA
21. IGP's County Longford Ireland Genealogy Group
22. IGP's County Wicklow Ireland Genealogy Group
23. Laois DNA
24. Republic of Ireland Genealogy
25. IGP's County Cavan Ireland Genealogy Group
26. IGP's Co Wexford Ireland Genealogy Group
27. Mountbellew PLU DNA and Genealogy
28. Menlough & Killascobe DNA and Genealogy
29. North Derry/Londonderry Genealogy & History Society
30. County Kerry, Ireland DNA and Genealogy
31. County Mayo Ireland Genealogy Forum
32. Irish DNA
33. Northern Ireland Genealogy
34. The Irish Surname Registry plus the New Family Finder Database
35. Irish Roots Hunters
36. Irish Jamaicans
37. IGP's County Limerick Ireland Genealogy
38. County Armagh Genealogy
39. Irish Clans and Families
40. IGP's County Dublin Ireland Genealogy Group
41. County Kerry Genealogy
42. Remembering An Gorta Mór
43. Gleeson Genealogy Forum
44. Spearin/Spearing group
45. Ryan Genealogy and DNA Forum
46. O'Malley Genealogy Forum
47. O'Donnell Clan Association
48. Farrell Clan

Surname Projects

Search "[surname of choice] surname projects" on *Facebook* to see any groups focused on the surname you are researching. Using this method, I found the following two groups related to my family:

Mulligan Cousins

https://www.facebook.com/groups/1147276238753152

[*As of 9 November 2024, there were 61 members.*]

I have also made distant family connections with this group.

McCabe Genealogy

https://www.facebook.com/groups/McCabeGenealogyGroup

[*As of 9 November 2024, there were 311 members.*]

My great-grandmother was a McCabe from County Fermanagh. This group has little activity, but reading about the various McCabe lines is intriguing. Also, one of the links that someone posted in this group led me to some photos. I found a picture of a McCabe from the late 1800s — the spitting image of one of my brothers!

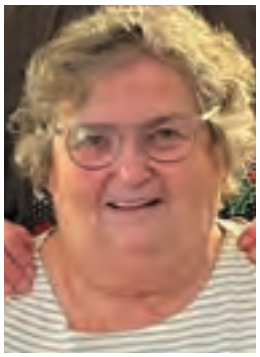
I had a funny experience with this group when I saw a bottle of McCabe's Irish Whiskey at our local grocery store and posted a picture with the caption, "Any relation to anybody?" I received several responses about where to purchase the whiskey and whether I would send a bottle (I did not). It seems the whiskey is distilled in barrels in Ireland and then shipped to the U.S. to be bottled in Indiana. It turns out that my stepson knew all about it. It is probably no accident he used "McCabe" as his alias while working undercover.

Photo's [*sic*] of Portglenone

https://www.facebook.com/oldportglenone

This group is not explicitly related to genealogical research, but it is known for posting and sharing old photographs of Portglenone, County Derry. My paternal grandmother came from this area, and I have seen many old photos of the location to help me get a feel for how things looked back in the day. Several group pictures are also posted, and I often recognize surnames from the Greenlough area. There have been multiple pictures of the church where my ancestors are buried.

As you can see, these Irish *Facebook* groups can be great at providing historical context for our ancestors' lives, sharing geolocation information, providing the occasional photo of actual relatives or their one-time environs, and maybe even surprising you with a relative you did not know you had!



Rita McNabb took up genealogy in 2013 after retirement from the IRS (37 years). Her paternal grandparents immigrated in the early 1900s from Ireland. The McNabbs made their first trip to Ireland in 2022, where they connected with three different family lines. Rita is especially proud that her search for her husband's birth family resulted in Jim being accepted into the Sons of the American Revolution and the Society of Mayflower Descendants as of December 2023.

Ask *The Septs*



Dear *Septs*:

I am so lucky to have a copy of my great-grandmother's death certificate with the names of her parents and their places of nativity included. But I have not found any other records confirming those names. Do you have any suggestions for getting over this hurdle?

~ Fiona O'Brien

Dear Fiona,

Congratulations on having a copy of the death certificate and on having the parents' names listed. How many of us have received a certificate and been let down when we find the question of parentage left blank or a notation such as "unknown" made by the clerk? That said, as genealogists, we must consider that parental names on a death certificate might be wrong. Three possible reasons are:

A. The deceased person was not the informant who supplied those names,

B. The person who provided the names was a third party (unless a parent was the informant for an adult child) who may not have known the correct names or may have been confused by grief, or

C. The names may have been copied onto the certificate incorrectly by an office clerk.

A more reliable record would be a marriage document, which may include the names of the couple's parents. The two married persons would have provided the names, eliminating a third party. These names could still be open to clerk error, but such errors are more likely to be name misspellings than cases of misidentification.

A birth record is even more reliable because the information contained would have come directly from the parents.

As genealogists, we strive to find the most reliable record available. One approach is to find a record produced at or near the time of the event. Memories can fade or become confused as time passes.

Disclaimer: In the age of DNA testing, if you are using DNA in your genealogy research, you must be prepared to stumble upon a situation of misidentified parentage.

To submit a question for future issues, please email your request to askthesepts@gmail.com. *Logo Illustration by Freepik*

The Search for My Great-Great-Grandmother, Abigail Evans (1833 – 1899): An Adventure in Crowdsourcing for Genealogy

by Freya Ottem Hanson

If crowdsourcing for genealogy involves obtaining information or feedback for a research project and enlisting the assistance of many people, then my quest to learn more about my Irish ancestry would qualify as such an effort. With the participation of many, I achieved success.

A few years ago, I began my search by asking cousins in South Dakota if they would travel to Ireland with me to discover some of the places our Irish ancestors had lived before coming to the United States. Although none accepted my request for help overseas, I did not lack assistance from folks on this side of the Atlantic.

I began by looking for my 2x great-grandmother, Abigail Evans, who was almost 17 when she left Ireland in 1849 during the famine.[1] Her mother, Eleanor Rounds Evans, died in 1841 when Abigail was only eight.[2] Eleanor's death left six children who were most likely reared by their grandparents, James and Elizabeth Evans, in a house called the "East Priory Cottage" and located on Priory Road, Priestsnewtown, Delgany, County Wicklow, Ireland. Abigail's siblings would also later emigrate to America.[3]

Among my mother's papers, I found a little red book.[4] This gem, penned in 1966 by Abigail Evans's granddaughter, Abigail Johnson Alexander, included a photo of the Irish home where Abigail Evans had lived, a list of the birth and baptismal dates for my 2x great-grandmother and her siblings, and a chapter entitled "The Proud Irish," which provided more detail about my Irish ancestry.

Lonnie Johnson Jenkins, Abigail Evans's great-granddaughter, updated the information in the little red book in 2005, and added a photo of my 2x great-grandmother.

In 2021, I received a wonderful birthday gift meant to encourage further interest in my Irish ancestry. A friend enlisted the help of Mary Wickersham, a genealogist specializing in Irish ancestry, who used a variety of online sources to complete a report on my Irish family.[5]

The report included information on three branches of my Irish family tree: the Thompsons, Reeds, and Evanses. I chose to focus my research on the Evans family for several reasons, but particularly because it was the only branch whose original home was still standing, and because it was about 50 miles from Dublin, making it more convenient to visit. This priceless gift of family research gave me an excellent place to start.

I located the Evans's home using *Google Maps*, as suggested by Ms. Wickersham. The house matched the picture in the little red book! Although the Priory house was built c. 1830, buildings on the property were in use as early as 1820.[6]

I couldn't *wait* to see it.

In December of 2023, I planned a trip to Ireland for the following October, although I had concerns about coordinating a visit to the Old Priory around my busy sightseeing schedule. My reluctance to drive in Ireland and the reality that I did not know a soul in Delgany only added to my apprehension about finding the location and visiting the old home.

I contacted several tour companies, none of which could provide suitable options, so I solicited the help of a friend who blogs for the Irish Genealogical Society International in Minnesota. She wrote a letter of introduction to Delgany Heritage



Evans home, 2024 (photo by author)

Village.[7] Sheena Gogarty, a DHV associate, gave me the name of someone who might help: Rodney Evans. Getting in touch with Rodney led me to connect with his wife, Audrey. Although Rodney shares the same surname as my Evans's branch, he does not appear to be related to us.

Bloodlines aside, my interactions and communications with Rodney and Audrey were delightful; they are truly remarkable people. Rodney and Audrey made several "pre-visit" explorations for me. Audrey visited the present-day owner of the Old Priory and met with Laillí de Buitléar, curator of the Old Burial Ground in Delgany Village. Laillí located graves and a still-standing tombstone for my ancestors. Audrey even solicited Rodney's help in untangling the vines that hid the tombstone.

Aside from our initial contact via postal service, my subsequent email correspondence with Audrey over the ensuing six months included over 40 messages in which she worked to help make Delgany a meaningful stop in tracing my Irish roots.

Although Rodney and Audrey were unavailable during my visit to Delgany, Audrey recruited her brother, David Whamley, to help us. She gave him a preview of all the essential places he was to show me. To my delight, a few days before our visit to Delgany, Audrey and Rodney visited us in Dublin at our StayCity accommodations. The chance to meet and thank them in person was a real treat.

On Saturday, October 19, 2024, my husband, son, and I boarded the Dart Train from the Tara Street Station in Dublin. We traveled along the beautiful Irish Sea, deboarding in Greystones, which was a five-minute trip from Delgany. David welcomed us at the train station and then drove us to the Old Burial Ground to meet Laillí de Buitléar in person.

Laillí, a spry 91-years-young, must be one of the best ambassadors for Delgany. She has "starred" in several videos for Delgany and is a font of information about almost everything Delgany.[8] Laillí showed us the ancestral Evans grave marker, and then invited us to her home for coffee, tea, and sweets. We met her wonderful dog Penney and conversed about ordinary life in Ireland and about the Evans branch of my family, which she claimed was originally from Wales and trained horses for war. I could not help but notice the immediate connection to my South Dakota relatives, all of whom are ranchers. Horses, sheep, and cattle are a big part of their lives.



Freya Hanson and son in Old Burial Ground, Delgany, Ireland 2024 (author's photo)

Once our visit with Laillí ended, David drove us to the former home of my 2x great-grandmother, Abigail Evans. The current owner, who is no doubt a very distant relative, could not meet us because he was taking sheep to market that day, but he permitted us to take photos in front of the house. The beautifully restored and preserved house, known as the Priory, matched a photo my 2x great-grandmother probably acquired sometime after arriving in America.[9] Standing in front of this ancestral home was an emotional and long-awaited moment for me.

Some Helpful Tips to Finding Your Roots:

1. Start with any information your family may already possess about your ancestry. Locate any letters, diaries, or other ancestral research that has been done previously.
2. Join a genealogy group.
3. Use online searches for your own inquiries.
4. Hire a genealogist to research your ancestry.
5. Contact historical societies or newspaper editors in the country of origin for information and possible contacts.
6. Get in touch with local cemetery caretakers or sextons who may be able to find family grave sites.
7. Give yourself time to plan a trip and be patient. It may take time to get responses to your inquiries and to make travel arrangements.
8. Finally, be thankful for any assistance you receive.

After our stop at the Priory, David showed us the recent developments in the Delgany area. He then drove us to Powerscourt Estate, House & Gardens in Enniskerry for a relaxing and delicious lunch. Afterwards, he graciously drove us back to our accommodations in Dublin. Before dropping us off, he drove us past St. Catherine's Church in Dublin, where Abigail's parents, James Evans and Eleanor Rounds (my 3x great-grandparents), were married on 13 October 1830.[10] St. Catherine's still hosts an active congregation.

My visit to Ireland gifted me with a renewed awareness of all the women in my maternal line, beginning with Eleanor and Abigail and trailing through time down to my mother and me. Raising a child may "take a village," but the same can be true of "raising" a family tree. In my case, the "village" turned out to be folks both in America and Ireland, who then enlisted the help of several *other* people.

It takes crowdsourcing to find your roots. I am grateful to relatives who document family history, genealogists who search records and provide historical context, and Irish locals who rally together to help make your ancestors real. These folks took the time to help me discover more of who I am, one of "the Proud Irish," and to make me feel I had returned "home."

Endnotes

1 "New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7488 : accessed 2 December 2024), entry for Abigail Evans, age 17, arrived New York, New York, 15 October 1849 on the *De Witt Clinton* from Liverpool, England; citing NARA microfilm publications M237, RG Title: "Records of the U.S. Customs Service," #36.

2 Delgany Parish Records, burial transcript, entry for Eleanor Evans, 7 November 1841, p. 40, line 64, *Church of Ireland* (https://www.churchofireland.org/cmsfiles/pdf/AboutUs/library/AngRecord/Delgany/Delgany-Vol-4-04.pdf : accessed 18 December 2024).

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4 Alexander, Abigail, "Little Red Book," (copy). Privately held by Freya (Ottem) Hanson, [ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE,] Minnesota, 2024.

5 Wickersham, Mary, "Evans, Thompson, and Reed families," report to Freya Hanson, 4 May 2021.

6 The Priory, survey, *Nat'l Built Heritage Service*.

7 The Delgany Heritage Village serves as an online archive for community members and those in the diaspora interested in the village's history and heritage; https://delganyheritagevillage.wicklowheritage.org

8 A video of Laillí De Buitléar describing the history of the Old Burial Ground in Delgany may be found on *YouTube*. See "Delgany Burial Ground 03/09/19," a PJ Film (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjSU2m1ahCE&t=5s : accessed 2 December 2024).

9 Abigail Evans, Manifest, SS *DeWitt Clinton*, 15 October 1849.

10 "Baptism, Marriage and Burial records, 1820-1840," database with transcripts, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltracht, Sport and Media, *Irish Genealogy.ie* (https://churchrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/churchrecords/search.jsp : 2 December 2024), transcription: Marriage of James Evains [*sic*] of Delgany, Co. Wicklow and Elenor [*sic*] Rounds, 13 October 1830, Parish of St. Catherine, Dublin (Church of Ireland).

Freya Hanson, a graduate of William Mitchell College of Law, St. Paul, Minnesota, has her own estate planning practice. She finds family history fascinating and grew up on a North Dakota family farm that her paternal Norwegian grandfather settled. Her maternal family history led her to Ireland, a part of her heritage she fondly embraces. Freya serves as president of her church's foundation, plays piano, and enjoys travel.



Reader Success Stories

Who among us hasn't polled *Facebook* friends for the best restaurant in the area or asked people at work or at the gym for the name of a good car mechanic or doctor? With ever more family historians turning to social media for advice and assistance with their research, we thought it might be helpful to share some success stories to demonstrate the power of crowdsourcing more effectively.

First up is IGSI member Ruth Charchian, who relates her experience with a volunteer from *Find a Grave*.

My Grand Adventure

By Ruth Charchian

One morning last April, I woke up feeling weighed down by misunderstandings, ironic twists, and the occasional humor that comes with the search for elusive Scottish cousins—2nd or 3rd, I wasn't even sure. Despite this, I set aside my weariness and sat at my computer, ready to embark on another grand adventure in genealogy.

I had already scoured records on *Ancestry* and *FamilySearch*, and my attempts with *ScotlandsPeople* had been frustrating, fruitless, and, frankly, unaffordable. That morning, I was on the verge of marking my cousin with the dreaded "brick wall" tag in my *Ancestry* tree.

In a last-ditch effort, I wondered if a photograph of a headstone or monument in a cemetery might offer more clues to confirm my cousin's identity. I logged onto *Find a Grave* and found a list of 23 cemeteries in West Lothian, where I believed my ancestor had lived and died. I searched through each one meticulously until I finally found a promising name. But there was no photo of the headstone.

Then I saw it…a tab below the memorial that said, "Request Photo." I hesitated. "Should I ask? How often does someone take photos in this cemetery?" I reasoned that I'd never know if I didn't try. So, with a click of the request button, my adventure began.

To my amazement, just 24 hours later, I received an email from Eric at *Find a Grave* in West Lothian. I could not believe my luck—someone had actually responded! Heart racing with excitement, I opened the photo and read the inscription. It wasn't my cousin after all. "That's the emotional roller-coaster of genealogy," I thought, trying to stay optimistic.

I sent a thank-you email to Eric, who had kindly taken the photo. Just before pressing "send," I paused. Feeling a surge of courage, I decided to take a leap. I asked Eric if he knew anyone at *Find a Grave* who might be willing to help with more detailed searches. I even offered to pay for their time. I hit send, feeling both hopeful and foolish. I never heard from Eric again.

Weeks passed, and I accepted that my grand adventure had ended quietly. Or so I thought.

Then, out of the blue, about a month later, I received a series of emails from someone in Scotland who went by the handle "NB Nightcruiser." Each email contained four or five photos of records—29 in total—from the Scottish Archives in Edinburgh. It was far more than I had expected or deserved. What an incredible gift! Within a week, I verified, copied, and entered every record into my *Ancestry* tree.

NB asked for more details about my Scottish family and I gladly provided them, inviting him to view my *Ancestry* tree for clarity. Three weeks later, I received another email from him with 20 more records. He made no promises, and I had no expectations. He had already gone above and beyond anything I could have imagined.

In one of his emails, NB explained how he obtained the records through his connections with *Find a Grave* and the Scottish Genealogy Society. He also revealed his real name: Brian. Grateful beyond words, I asked why he was doing all this. His reply was simple: "I do it because I like helping people, especially when they thank me." He added with a wink emoji, "Some people forget to say thank you." (Spoiler alert: always remember to say "thank you.")

A few more weeks passed, and I received a third batch of records. Then, just last week, Brian sent a fourth batch of nine unsolicited records. He is meticulous and conscientious, ensuring that each record he sends is verified. So far, I haven't been able to disprove a single marriage, birth, or death record he has sent me. Without Brian's help, I doubt I would have ever found these records, even if I had traveled to Edinburgh myself.

I've been the fortunate recipient of a mountain of generosity and goodwill. My grand adventure will end one day, and Brian will be helping someone else. Until then, I hope to find a way to pay my good fortune forward.

Genealogists are often reminded that being polite and prepared when interacting with repository staff can go a long way toward unearthing the records they need. (I frequently hear that chocolate is welcomed, for example.) Some people will go the extra mile if you ask nicely, as Ruth discovered.

Next up is a short anecdote from Teresa Anderson about the power of *Facebook* groups.

Norwegian Connections

By Teresa Anderson

I joined the *Facebook* group "Ikke for å skryte, men jeg kommer fra GREAKER," which translates to "Not to brag, but I come from Greaker." "Greaker" is my immigrant mother's hometown in Norway. The *Facebook* administrator asked for stories and pictures from before and during World War II. My mother was 10 years old then, so I shared a photo of my grandmother with my great-grandmother and her sister outside their house, including a guess as to the year. I posted only my grandmother's first name because I did not want to immediately give out too much information. One of the first comments received was, "You must be Jorunn's daughter." (Yes!) The person said, "I lived next door to her and we talked every day." She and I are now *Facebook* friends and have messaged back and forth. She shared a wartime story I had not heard. During the occupation, my grandmother warned a local farmer with a radio about an impending Nazi raid. He was able to get rid of the radio in time, and they all considered my grandmother a hero. I am so happy to have this new connection to the past.

While we frequently turn to social media for answers or connections like Ruth's and Teresa's, it is important to remember that not all crowdsourcing happens online. We often find answers in the most unlikely places, whether at a cemetery, while waiting in an airport, or just "down the pub." IGSI's webmistress Mary Wickersham and Janet Magnuson detail one such beneficial encounter next.

A Chance Encounter at the Genealogy Center Uncovers a Family Interview

By Mary Wickersham and Janet Magnuson

On an Irish Saturday in November, Janet Magnuson was at the Minnesota Genealogy Center (MGC) talking with IGSI Librarian Ann Eccles when Mary Wickersham joined the conversation. Janet was seeking more information about her Lynch family. Her ancestor, Patrick Lynch, was born on 7 July 1777, and immigrated in his 60s with his wife and six adult children.[1] They settled on a farm in Cedarburg, Ozauke County, Wisconsin. Later, several sons moved to other parts of the U.S. Janet commented that one family headstone indicated Meath as the family's county of origin; now Janet is seeking a specific location within County Meath.

Ann wondered if the family had come directly to Wisconsin. The trio discussed the need to trace all the Lynch children, hoping that tracing one of them would provide a clue to their ancestral townland. Janet knew that a son, Patrick Jr., died in 1916 in Brainerd, Crow Wing County, Minnesota.[2]

The mention of Brainerd caught Mary's attention because her sister, Margaret O'Rourke, works for the Crow Wing County Historical Society (CWCHS). Since the *Brainerd Dispatch* is not found in the online newspaper databases at the MGC, Mary offered to check with Margaret about how to request an obituary from CWCHS's microfilm.

On Sunday, Mary and her sister Margaret discussed Patrick Lynch Jr. and his connection to Brainerd. Margaret surmised that his age and possible dates of residence in Brainerd meant his occupation was likely related to mining, lumber, or railroads. Margaret provided Mary with the email address (history@crowwing.gov) to request an obituary and offered to recommend other CWCHS resources.

Minutes after ending their call, Margaret phoned Mary back. Margaret was working with CWCHS audio interviews from the 1970s. She knew that a subset of these interviews were online at the Minnesota Historical Society's Digital Library (mndigital.org); after checking it, she found an interview on the subject of Patrick Lynch Jr. Talk about the "luck o' the Irish"!!

The CWCHS oral history interview conducted with Ilene Rose Lynch is described as follows:[3]

> "Interview with Ilene Rose *Lynch*, granddaughter of Patrick and Rose *Lynch*. She relates some of the personal history of her grandparents and their families. This interview is part of a Works Progress Administration (WPA) in Crow Wing County during the years 1936-1939. This outreach effort sought to record personal accounts of the lives of early Crow Wing County pioneers and settlers."

During the interview, Patrick Lynch is asserted to have been born in County West Meath [*sic*], Ireland, in 1828. He first settled in New York, then Wisconsin, and "came to Blue Earth County, Minnesota, in 1900. He worked in the Northern Pacific Shops there."[4] The interviewee does not provide a specific Irish townland.

It may not seem like a solid example of crowdsourcing, but a trio of people working together to add meaningful insight to a research project still illustrates such work. The information regarding

Patrick Jr.'s place of death may help locate an obituary if one was written. If Patrick died in Brainerd but lived, worked, and was buried in Belle Plaine, the newspapers from both Belle Plaine and Brainerd should be searched for an obituary. And since not all WPA interviews have been added to the Historical Digital Library, CWCHS should be checked for additional interviews that may not yet be available on mndigital.org.

Postscript

Indeed, an obituary has now been found online for Patrick Lynch Jr.:

> "**BRAINERD MAN DIES.**
> (News Tribune Special.)
>
> BRAINERD, Minn., July 17. – Patrick Lynch, of 322 North Ninth street, died of paralysis at his home. He was born March 24, 1828, came to this country 76 years ago and was married in Cedarbrook, Wis., 63 years ago. He has made his home in Brainerd the last 16 years. He leaves a wife, six boys and two girls. The remains were sent to Belle Plaine for burial."[5]

Many thanks to Ruth, Teresa, and Mary and Janet for sharing their experiences with *The Septs*. Believe it or not, even editing these anecdotes involved crowdsourcing: *The Septs* Associate Editor, Kim Gehrman White, sourced records to craft citations for the death of Patrick Lynch Jr., including his obituary and for the interview with Ilene Rose Lynch. Editor Mary Stuart retraced some of Janet's earlier research steps to create a citation detailing the Lynch family's arrival to New York City, New York, in 1840, then contacted a cemetery for Patrick Lynch Sr.'s plot location so a photo of his tombstone could be requested from *Find a Grave* to corroborate and cite his birthdate. She also located a 1794 reference to a farmer named Patrick Lynch in Cregg, County Meath, Ireland.[6] Is he the same Patrick as in Mary's story? It is hard to say. More information, and possibly more crowdsourcing, would be needed to determine that. Our point is that no one lives (or does research) in isolation, as our readers' tales indicate. Hopefully, these stories will inspire you to be open to the many possibilities of crowdsourcing.

Endnotes

1 For birth, see: *Find A Grave* (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/155875903/patrick-lynch : accessed 11 December 2024), memorial page 155875903, Patrick Lynch (1777-1862), created by "Arkieologist," citing Calvary Cemetery and Mausoleum, Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, USA. [Note: an original source for this information has not yet been located, nor are there photos of the headstone.] For immigration, see: "New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," digital image, *Ancestry* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 11 December 2024), entry for Patk Lynch, age 60, arrived New York, New York, 2 June 1840, SS *Margaret*, line 111, image 4 of 7.

2 "Minnesota, Death Records and Certificates, 1900-1955," *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:DDK7-BG6Z : accessed 3 December 2024), entry for Patrick Lynch, 15 July 1916.

3 Ilene Rose Lynch (Minneapolis, Minnesota), recorded interview by Parker & Heald, March 1938; "People of Minnesota," WPA Oral History Collection, Crow Wing County Historical Society (https://collection.mndigital.org/catalog/cwc:2568 : accessed 8 December 2024), "Interview about Patrick Lynch, Crow Wing County, Minnesota," CWCHS #759. Lynch, now deceased, was the granddaughter of Patrick Lynch Jr., and his wife, Rose, spoke from personal knowledge.

4 Ilene Rose Lynch interview, March 1938.

5 "Brainerd Man Dies," *The Duluth* [Minnesota] *News Tribune*, 18 July 1916, page 11, column 4; imaged, *Newspapers.com* (https://www.newspapers.com/image/1127673484 : accessed 3 December 2024).

6 "Ireland, Catholic Qualification & Convert Rolls, 1701-1845," digital image, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org : accessed 11 December 2024), entry for Patrick Lynch, residence 207, Cregg, County Meath, image 158 of 442; citing National Archives of Ireland.

May your troubles be less, and your blessings be more, and nothing but happiness come through your door.

~

Happy New Year from the staff of *The Septs*!!

The Ireland Reaching Out (*IrelandXO*) Support Network for the Irish Diaspora

by Kieran Jordan and Noreen Maher

Ireland Reaching Out (*IrelandXO*) was established in 2009 to help the vast distribution of Irish descendants worldwide connect with the townlands of their ancestors in the entirety of the island of Ireland and possibly with any living relatives in Ireland. It is staffed by a network of volunteers around Ireland who give their time, expertise, and local knowledge to help people connect with their Irish origins. The *IrelandXO* website (www.irelandxo.com) has had 3.35 million visits since 2019, illustrating the popularity of the services offered there; best of all, these services are entirely free.

While *IrelandXO*'s primary aim is to help the diaspora, secondary aims include:

1. Enabling the Irish diaspora to learn more about their Irish heritage,
2. Promoting Irish culture and heritage abroad, and
3. Enabling local communities to connect to and engage with this diaspora.

Four main ways in which *IrelandXO* achieves these aims are through:

1. Membership,
2. The Message Board,
3. The Newsletter, and
4. Meet and Greet.

IrelandXO is also available on social media and offers a digital hub.

Membership

Becoming a member of *Ireland Reaching Out* is a very straightforward process, and there are several ways to become involved in the site once registered. To do so, go to www.irelandxo.com, and click the 'Sign up - Log in' link. Enter your email address, confirm it, then click 'Sign up to *IrelandXO*.' You will get membership confirmation within a few days, after which you can set a password. Afterwards, you can log in with your email address and password to browse the site. The Message Board can be found under the 'reconnect' tab. You can view all the messages or filter them to view specific messages related to a town, county, or name. To respond to a question, you will need to enter your email address and password.

Message Board

Any member can post a message on the Message Board and receive free help or advice from the volunteer network. When posting, it is important to give an appropriate title to the message so that volunteers will know whether they can help. Also, indicate the relevant county name so your message can be targeted correctly. It helps the volunteers if your questions are specific and if you provide as much information as possible. *IrelandXO* aims to answer all questions; it is common for one volunteer to alert another about a message if they think someone local may be of greater assistance. While these messages can be freely seen on the internet, only *IrelandXO*'s members are permitted to respond to messages. This helps reduce the amount of SPAM in the system and ensures there are 'real people' actively responding. Over 40,000 messages have been posted on the Message Board since 2019. Of these, 99% are in the form of a question; very few are phrased as comments. Messages in question format are all addressed with mostly complete answers, though sometimes they receive replies of 'looking for further information,' or, occasionally, 'I don't know'. One message can often lead to a thread with eight or ten replies, sometimes from several people who contributed additional information. For example, volunteers frequently have access to or know sources unknown to the diaspora. What seems simple and obvious to a volunteer might be a goldmine to Irish researchers.

Sometimes, it may not be appropriate to discuss a topic on the Message Board. In that case, the questioner can request the respondent's personal email address from Ireland's office (with the appropriate permissions). Then, a further exchange of information can take place privately off-site.

Newsletter

Registered members have the option to subscribe to Ireland's weekly newsletter. The newsletter's content can vary from genealogical advice or historical accounts of significant events to information from little-known online sources. Signing up for the newsletter is even easier than becoming a member. You will receive regular prompts about joining the mailing list; complete the information form and submit it to be added to the mailing list. If you prefer not to join the mailing list, pressing 'esc' at these prompts will return you to your page of interest. Currently, about 80,000 members have signed up to receive the newsletter.

Meet and Greet

The Meet and Greet facility is for those who are delving a little further into their family

history. Members can inform *IrelandXO*'s office that they plan to visit Ireland and would like to meet with a volunteer local to the area they are visiting. The *IrelandXO* office has a network of volunteers in most counties who have indicated their willingness to meet members of the diaspora and introduce them to the areas from which their ancestor(s) came. A visitor's goal can often be to walk in their ancestors' footsteps or visit churches and graveyards with a guide. However, most volunteers will also assist with additional research on the local area, such as the location of graves, land, houses, etc. Using the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines, the *IrelandXO* office will put a visitor and volunteer in touch, after which they leave the people to make their arrangements. Ideally, we would like as much notice as possible before your research visit.

The following two examples from our Meet and Greet Coordinator show the success of the Meet and Greet programme and how it can create lasting memories for visitors:

> One memorable experience was finding the grave of John O'Regan. [*IrelandXO* member] Tara Caldwell had done her research and so was brought to some locations associated with her ancestors. She had found a reference to the burial of John O'Regan in Ballinamona graveyard in County Cork. We arrived at the graveyard in the hope that there might be an information board with a burial index, as there is in some graveyards. Unfortunately, there wasn't any information on the five-acre burial ground with hundreds of headstones. Out of interest, we started to have a look at some of the older headstones. The first headstone we looked at was in memory of John O'Regan, Tara's ancestor. What a coincidence! As it happened, there were some wild flowers beside the grave. Tara picked these and was able to lay flowers on the grave of her ancestor, who died in 1830.
>
> On another occasion, Ann and Marybeth and their families were visiting Kilcorney and Ballysaggart in Counties Cork and Waterford, respectively. In Kilcorney, Ann wanted to find the location of the forge of her ancestor Denis O'Connell, whose son Cornelius emigrated in about 1875, while Marybeth wanted to visit the homeplace of her grandmother, Lizzie Nugent, in Ballysaggart. There was no local memory of the forge, but there was a reference to it in the school's folklore collection of 1936. There was one line in that collection that located the forge very specifically: 'Dennie Connell had a forge…where John Burke's shop is at present.' There was local memory of the shop, so we were able to locate the [original] site of the forge when we visited Kilcorney.



Tara laying flowers on the grave of her ancestor, John O'Regan, in Balinamona graveyard, Co. Cork.

> As is said, 'the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.' It is often relatively easy to identify the location of a person's ancestor from the First Edition 1840 maps that were used in Griffith's Valuation. Visiting ancestral areas can often yield good results in terms of finding relatives for a visiting member of the diaspora. That was the case with Marybeth. Up to the 1970s, Kevin and his family lived in the [same] house where Marybeth's grandmother [had] lived. Thanks to Kevin, we were able to visit the house and also the graveyard in Ballysaggart where Marybeth's great-grandparents were buried. Additionally, through other contacts that Marybeth had made, a group of about 30 relatives from different branches of the family met in Lismore for lunch. Phone numbers and email addresses were exchanged, and Marybeth and her family went away extremely happy.

Social Media

IrelandXO is active on all social media platforms and encourages members to follow us there.

Digital Hub

From this section, members can upload information on buildings, local events, and ancestors. This creates a unique platform to facilitate the diaspora's learning more about ancestral areas.

Conclusion

While joining *IrelandXO* is a way to contribute to the available information, you can always browse the site without joining and discover the wealth of information it has to offer. (In order to reduce SPAM, becoming a member is necessary

in order to contribute to the available information).

We are always looking for new volunteers who are connected to particular parishes or locales. Volunteering to help visitors or uploading information from your local area that may aid the diaspora in connecting (or reconnecting) with the land which their ancestors once called "home" brings a degree of satisfaction. You can join your parish's volunteers through our website.

Kieran Jordan is a retired scientist whose interests include local history and family history. He has been involved in local history publications in Cork and Galway. He has been volunteering with Ireland Reaching Out for four years and has recently taken up the role of administering the Ireland Reaching Out Meet and Greet programme, linking visiting members of the diaspora with volunteers around the country.



Noreen Maher is an Irish genealogist passionate about Irish history and genealogy. She has been a volunteer with Ireland Reaching Out for over 10 years. She recently took over the role of Communications Manager at Ireland Reaching Out.



Rules for Asking Effective Research Questions

Whether working with a professional researcher or relying on crowdsourcing for answers, successful genealogy often begins by asking questions: "Who is this ancestor's parent?" "Where did they live in Ireland?" "Why did they move to the United States?" etc. Research questions create focus, making our searches more likely to be successful.

The following is a list of rules for creating effective research questions.

1. **Don't ask for the moon.** We all want the Henry Louis Gates, Jr./ "Who Do You Think You Are" treatment. Still, unless you have Hollywood money and a cadre of worldwide researchers on speed-dial, a fully sourced 15-generation pedigree created overnight will probably not be realistic. What, then, makes a good question? Or are you even asking the right question?

2. **Select something achievable.** Break down your research goals into achievable nuggets rather than get overwhelmed trying to research everything at once. Start with one goal/question and build on it one quest at a time. Before you know it, you'll have enough nuggets piled up to create entire lines.

3. **Be specific.** The more specific a goal you can set, the better. Rather than asking, "Who was my Irish great-grandmother," try asking: "Who was the mother of [my grandmother] Nettie O'Brien, who was born in Co. Kilkenny in 1856?" Any detail you can give will help delineate your ancestor from others of the same name or place and will help those helping you. Please don't assume your helpers are mind-readers; be sure to give them a clear starting point.

4. **Consider where you've already looked.** No one wants to waste time repeating research, so keep track of where you have already looked and what you have found (or not found) when creating your research question. Spreadsheets can help with this. Also, share any background information you have already discovered with those helping you; it will make your lives easier.

5. **Ask what you need to know or prove.** Compile as much information as possible on a single family unit or generation before expanding your search; records from one generation will often provide clues to names and places in the next.

6. **Go beyond names and dates**. Don't focus exclusively on the names, dates, and places associated with your ancestors. While these provide a good starting point, they aren't enough to flesh out ancestral lives. Use context clues in documents such as probate inventories to identify your ancestors' occupations, beliefs, hobbies, or interests.

Considering these six items when preparing your next research goal will help provide much-needed clarity and direction to your endeavors and improve your chances for success!

Sources

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FamilySearch Community

by Mary Stuart

While most of us may default to traditional social media sites such as *Facebook*, *X*, *Instagram*, etc., for help with our genealogical questions, we would be remiss if we overlooked the extensive crowdsourcing potential available at *FamilySearch Community*.

You may know that *FamilySearch* is a premier resource in the genealogical community for its extensive (and free!) library and archival collections, but did you know it also hosts a thriving community where you may "find your answers from others who may know"?[1]



Image 1: FamilySearch Community *homepage (https://community.familysearch.org/en/ : 2024).*

This community is crowdsourcing at its best, providing opportunities both to ask and answer questions related to research and *FamilySearch*'s inner workings, to keep abreast of *FamilySearch*'s latest news, and to join variously themed groups.

From the homepage (see Image 1), there are several avenues for asking a question. Clicking on either the "Ask A Question" link in the menu bar (located above the search box) or on the "Ask A Question" box (placed directly below the search field) will take you directly to the *Ask A Question* homepage, where you can find a variety of topics about which to ask questions. Alternatively, there is a list of question categories in the right column of the homepage. Clicking on these will take you directly to that topic's page, where you may start a discussion.

If none of the pre-made topics suits the content of your question, you can enter it on the "General Questions" page instead. These topic pages work much like *Reddit*'s "subreddit" categories: you post a question, thereby starting a discussion thread within the category, or respond to an extant discussion. If you wish to follow discussions in other categories of questions, clicking on the "Follow" tab (next to the bell icon) at the top of each topic page will give you the option to be notified of new posts, comments, or updated events made within that category. It will also allow you to unfollow category pages. If you would rather not subscribe to the discussions in an entire category, you can bookmark individual discussion threads instead.

The right column of each *Community* page contains a "Quick Links" menu, which provides shortcuts to saved bookmarks, discussions, drafts, or groups for expedited access.

FamilySearch Community also offers the option to answer others' questions if you have information that may be of use in a particular thread. To do so, click on "Answer a Question" on the *Community*'s homepage, just below the Ask a Question, Community News, and Groups boxes. From there, you can skim the titles and first couple sentences of each inquiry to determine if you might be able to add to any of the discussions. Clicking on a title will open the full inquiry for review and provide a comment box for replies.

The Community News page (also accessed via the homepage or the menu bar) provides access to new announcements made by *FamilySearch*. These often include notices of technical problems, possible workarounds, and updates when issues are fixed; notices of new features being unveiled; and new blog or "quick tips" postings. As with the Question pages, a user may follow (subscribe to) the entirety of the news page or bookmark individual discussion threads instead.

While getting news updates and having the ability to crowdsource solutions to technical difficulties (or other issues) is helpful, arguably the most beneficial aspect of the *FamilySearch Community* pages relates to its group resources. These groups cover a broad spectrum of interests, from groups dedicated to ethnic groups or geographical locations, such as Arab Genealogy Research and Ireland Research, to individual surname groups or special topic groups, such as Adoption Research, Genetic Genealogy Research, and Justiss/Justice Family Genealogy.

You can scroll the the Groups homepage or use the search box to locate groups of interest. Clicking on "Research Groups" in the tab menu opens additional filters, allowing you to search for groups by language, region, or location (see Image 2).

After joining a group, you will usually see pinned posts towards the top of the page, one of which often includes a "Welcome to New Members" thread. These typically offer overviews of the group's rules and expectations or encourage new members to introduce themselves. You may also see some resource links related to that group's areas of interest in the page header.

As with all other aspects of *FamilySearch*'s communities, you can respond to ongoing discussions/threads, bookmark discussions of interest, or start discussions of your own. Group pages may also list announcements, upcoming events, and provide pop-ups for members at the bottom of the group's homepage. These pop-ups include counters for the number of discussions participated in and the number of comments made in the *FamilySearch Community*. They also provide links to the *Community* profile and the internal messaging system for that member and show any "badges" the member has received, such as community anniversaries, number of comments made, etc.

Each group has at least one moderator who ensures that each *Community* member or guest receives helpful answers to their questions. When no one responds to a query in the group, moderators may provide URLs directing questioners to information found elsewhere, such as in the Research Wiki, Help Center, Learning Center, *FamilySearch* blog, or other *Community* groups.[2] They may also add tags or bump posts to garner additional interaction or flag and delete comments and discussions that may be problematic.



Image 2: Groups homepage, FamilySearch Community (https://community.familysearch.org/en/categories/gp-groups-en : 2024)

Lastly, *FamilySearch* offers free virtual genealogy consultations. Clicking on "Free Research Consultation" in the righthand menu of the *Community* homepage will take you to *FamilySearch*'s OnceHub (https://go.oncehub.com/ResearchStrategySession), where you may select an area of research related to your person of interest, and then request a day and time for your meeting. Consultations are provided by specialized genealogists at the *FamilySearch Library* and BYU and are offered in several languages.

When exploring new places to crowdsource your genealogy research, consider all that the *FamilySearch Community* has to offer. You will not regret it.

Endnotes

[1] Quote taken from the *FamilySearch Community* homepage, *FamilySearch* (https://community.familysearch.org/en/ : accessed 26 December 2024).

[2] "How do I moderate a group in *FamilySearch Community*?" *FamilySearch* (https://community.familysearch.org/en/categories/gp-groups-en : accessed 26 December 2024).

Mary LaRue Stuart serves as Editor of The Septs *and on IGSI's Board of Directors. A native Hoosier and former university writing teacher with an MA in English, Mary is now a professional genealogist whose specialties include Indiana research, military repatriation, and DNA. Her Irish ancestors hail largely from Donegal/Northern Ireland. Mary is currently working on her BCG certification portfolio and is pursuing an AFA in Glass Arts. She enjoys singing, sewing, reading, and blowing glass in her non-existent spare time.*



"I Know the Family; Let Me Give Them a Call"

by Rita McNabb

In August/September 2022, my husband Jim and I made our first trip to Ireland. My paternal grandparents immigrated from Ireland (Bridget Henry in 1904 and James Mulligan in 1910), and I was very interested in exploring where they came from.[1] Bridget hailed from Magherafelt, County Derry, and James from Castlesaunderson, County Cavan.[2] Through my genealogical research, I have connected with cousins from both family lines. I was able to visit where my grandmother grew up (yes, the house was still standing) and where my grandfather grew up (the house had been abandoned but was still standing). I even met about ten of my Henry cousins and one Mulligan cousin.



Childhood home of great-grandmother, Kate McCabe, in County Fermanagh

One of my ancestors proved elusive, however: Katherine (Kate) McCabe of County Fermanagh, mother of my grandfather, James Mulligan.[3]

I ascertained through my research that Kate McCabe's parents (my 2x great-grandparents) were buried in St. Alphonsus Church, in the parish of Clones. I contacted a local historical organization, the Cassandra Hand Folk and Famine Centre,[4] for assistance. They were most helpful in finding my great-great-grandparents' gravesite and even sent me a picture of it!

My next step was to determine where their homestead was. I first went through the Griffith's Valuation Books online and found the McCabe property, but I could not locate it on a map, so I enlisted the services of *The Green Room*[5] and Jayne McGarvey. The property turned out to be where County Fermanagh's and County Monaghan's borders meet. Jayne McGarvey was most helpful in finding the actual location and sent a picture of the street signs that would lead me to the road. We intended to drive and look for the McCabe homestead in County Fermanagh.

My husband and I had enlisted a private driver, Breda, for most of our trip. Our first stop was St. Alphonsus Church, where we found Kate McCabe's grave site. While inspecting the gravestone, we could not read the bottom part. Breda went to her car, got a brush, told my husband to stand behind the gravestone because it was wobbly, and then proceeded to brush away the grime. Once clear, she read the headstone while I typed it into my phone.

While my husband and I were wandering around looking at other gravestones, Breda was approached by a woman visiting the graveyard who asked her, "Who are you visiting?" When Breda gave the name, the woman responded, "I know the family; let me give them a call."

The woman called the family and explained the situation, which resulted in our being invited to the McCabe home. She then escorted us to the house, where we had a wonderful visit with Brian McCabe (my second cousin, once removed), his wife, and his son Sean. After this visit, Sean later shared with me copies of handwritten



Breda cleaning a gravestone

family trees going back to the 1700s. A year later, I am still trying to verify the trees. I can't believe I was able to see the house where my great-grandmother grew up; the farm is directly on the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

This happenstance meeting in a graveyard led me to a wonderful visit with previously unknown family, a contact point for family tree information, and a look-see at where my 2x great-grandmother grew up. What a wonderful experience! Plus, a family mystery was solved! We had always been told that the Mulligans had multiple children, some of whom went to Australia and some to America, but it turns out it was the McCabe family's ten children who scattered all over the globe.



Rita McNabb and new cousin, Brian McCabe

Endnotes

[1] For Bridget Henry's arrival, see: "New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," digital image, *Ancestry* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 21 December 2024), entry for Bridget Henry, age 21, arrived New York, New York, 19 July 1904, SS *Laurentian*, p. 102, line 19, image 9 of 15. For James Mulligan's arrival, see: "New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," digital image, *Ancestry* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 21 December 2024), entry for James Mulligan, age 23, arrived New York, New York, 30 August 1905, SS *Oceanic*, p. 55, line 12, image 109 of 120.

[2] For Bridget Henry's hometown, see: Civil records search, digital image, *Irish Genealogy* (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/churchrecords/images/birth_returns/births_1883/02717/1999931.pdf : accessed 21 December 2024), birth record no. 395, Biddy Henry, 5 December 1883, Magherafelt. For James Mulligan's hometown, see: Civil records search, digital image, *Irish Genealogy* (https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/churchrecords/images/birth_returns/births_1880/02850/2044333.pdf : accessed 21 December 2024), birth record no. 170, James Mulligan, 7 November 1880, Castlesaunderson.

[3] James Mulligan, birth record 170, Castlesaunderson.

[4] Cassandra Hand Centre — Heritage Museum & Venue, County Monaghan (https://www.cassandrahandcentre.wordpress.com : accessed 21 December 2024).

[5] *The Green Room* is a support community for Irish Family History researchers (https://www.youririshheritage.com : accessed 21 December 2024).

Rita McNabb took up genealogy in 2013 after retirement from the IRS (37 years). Her paternal grandparents immigrated in the early 1900s from Ireland. The McNabbs made their first trip to Ireland in 2022, where they connected with three different family lines. Rita is especially proud that her search for her husband's birth family resulted in Jim being accepted into the Sons of the American Revolution and the Society of Mayflower Descendants as of December 2023.



Hot Off the Presses!

On Christmas Eve, 2024, *Reclaim the Records* launched the BIRLS database (https://www.birls.org/), which is an index to veteran benefits files from the Veteran's Administration. This free database includes more than 18 million veterans' names and has a built-in FOIA system for filing records requests.

For more information, see *Reclaim the Records* recent newsletter.

2025 Webinar Series — Save the Dates!

Saturday, January 4 | ***Using Artificial Intelligence to Research Documents & Letters*** **|** by Mark D. Thompson
Artificial intelligence can assist in analyzing and researching your family's personal archives, whether on paper or online. AI tools can make research more efficient and effective, such as by summarizing large documents to more easily identify names and relationships, to develop a timeline, or even to assist with transcription and translation. Mark will discuss how to use some of the most powerful AI tools available to "lighten the (research) load." This presentation will be online only.

Saturday, February 15 | ***Irish Vital Records: Unlock Your Ancestors*** **|** by Fiona Fitzimons
Civil records are the easiest of all Irish records to find and interpret, documenting over 180 years of social change in Ireland. As building blocks of family history, they are often the first records you will use in research. We'll discuss how to access them both online and in Ireland. This presentation will be online only.

Tuesday, March 11 | ***The Ulster Historical Foundation Full-Day Workshop*** **|** by Fintan Mullen and Gillian Hunt
The Ulster Historical Foundation (UHF) will visit Minneapolis, MN, as part of their 2025 U.S. tour. The only Irish research organization to consistently provide lecture tours in the USA and Canada, the UHF provides in-depth and highly educational workshops, covering a variety of topics to aid in tracking down your Irish and Scots-Irish ancestors. This will be a two-day event, featuring individual consultations on Wednesday, March 12.

The full-day workshop will be hybrid.

If you have questions about any of our webinars or classes, contact Trish and Walt, IGSI Education Co-Chairs, at Education@IrishGenealogical.org.

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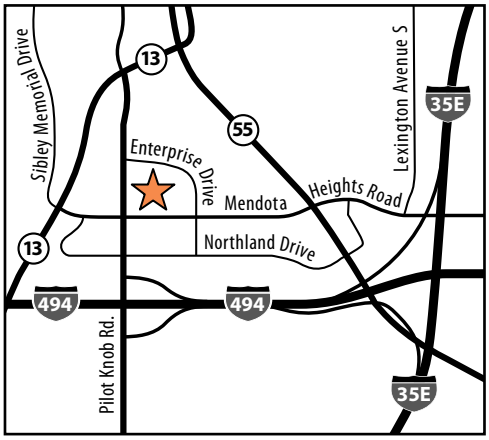
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Monday: 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
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Hoffman Research Library

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During severe weather, or if traveling a long distance, please call before coming to the library to check if open.

The library is a self-supporting research library staffed by volunteers. If you are a member of the IGSI and are coming from out of town, contact Librarian@IrishGenealogical.org so we can have an Irish researcher available to meet you.

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APRIL (AIBREÁN) 2025 $10.00

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IRISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Genealogy Library Open

The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2025.

The Hoffman Research Library is a private genealogy research library created for members of the organizations in the MGS Partners' Group. Access to the library materials is free to members of IGSI and other MGS Partner societies. Non-members and the general public are requested to pay a per visit $10 donation for use.

The Hoffman Library will be open only if there are two volunteers available to staff the building. (Won't you consider becoming a MGC/library volunteer to help ensure research access for all?)

Hours of service:

Monday	10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Wednesday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Irish Saturdays

Stop by the library on the second Saturday of the month between 10 AM and 4 PM for Irish research help from IGSI volunteers.

APRIL 12, 2025
MAY 10, 2025
JUNE 14, 2025
JULY 12, 2025
AUGUST 9, 2025
SEPTEMBER 13, 2025
OCTOBER 11, 2025
NOVEMBER 8, 2025
DECEMBER 13, 2025

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Scan with your phone to view IGSI's website

The Septs, the quarterly journal of the Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc., is one of the primary benefits of IGSI membership and is published in January, April, July, and October. Members receive a printed version of the journal unless they have chosen to receive it electronically.

Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc.

2025

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of *The Septs* is built around a core theme. Research articles on the theme should be 1500-2500 words in length and include no more than 2-4 images. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g., family stories submitted by IGSI members and non-members, etc. Articles unrelated to the theme should be 750-1500 words.

If you wish to write on the theme or share case studies, family research, or articles on general Irish culture and history and genealogy resources, please contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadlines to ensure your article is considered for the proper issue.

Contributions and ideas are welcome. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the editorial staff.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2025 | July | Military Records

Learn about using military records from Ireland, England, Canada, and the U.S. to locate 18th and 19th century ancestors before the partition of Ireland in 1922.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2025.

2025 | October | Hidden – Women Lost to Time

Discover tips and resources for locating elusive female ancestors after their marriage, immigration, etc. Topics covered may include DNA and locating maiden names.
Deadline for articles: August 15, 2025.

2026 | January | Documenting Death

Learn more about your ancestors via sources such as death certificates, obituaries, probate materials, funeral homes, cemeteries, and even gravestone symbology. Techniques for accessing and interpreting death records are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2025.

2026 | April | Irish Tapestry

Contribute stories or resources focused on genealogy that explore topics not usually covered by standard *Septs* themes. All submissions will be considered.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2026.

Cover Photo: *The giant's causeway, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland.* Photo by Giuseppe Milo. Creative Commons BY 2.0.

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Thank You to Our Volunteers, Donors, and Members!

by Donna Jones

The April edition of *The Septs* is always my favorite. It is an opportunity to recognize our volunteers, donors, and members. Forty-six years ago, an Irish special interest group was formed, eventually becoming the Irish Genealogical Society International. The group had a vision to create a library and, today, our Irish collection has approximately 3,500 items. We are so fortunate that the society continues to grow and thrive.

We are an all-volunteer society and appreciate our generous volunteers who share their knowledge and skills. Volunteering is an opportunity to learn new skills, receive mentorship, and connect with others who are passionate about genealogy. Fresh ideas, energy, and talent are essential to growing the society. It is a pleasure to work collaboratively with this wonderful, talented group of people. To learn more, please see our "Be a Volunteer" webpage: https://www.irishgenealogical.org/cpage.php?pt=28.

On March 11th & 12th, we hosted the hybrid Irish Heritage Day 2025 both in-person and virtually at the Lost Spur Golf and Event Center in Eagan, Minnesota. Gillian Hunt and Fintan Mullan from the Ulster Historical Society presented four lectures. Fintan and Gillian are expert Irish researchers whose presentations covered information applicable to both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Feedback from those attending in person indicated that the facility and food were wonderful. We had some initial technical difficulties with the sound for those watching virtually, but fortunately the audio was recorded. Attendees will receive links to the recording with the improved sound.

I am looking forward to this edition of *The Septs* because my 2x great-grandparents were from County Donegal. They were in the Cleveland, Ohio, area during the 1880 census, and my great-grandmother was born in Cleveland that year. I have other ancestors from County Donegal who were in Canada by the 1780s.

Society News

by Walt Rothwell

IGSI continues to make bold strides in our education offerings. During the pandemic, under the leadership of Kathleen Foley, a tradition of monthly virtual webinars was established and became extremely popular. As we have adapted our lives coming out of the worst of times, we experimented with hosting four hybrid events last year with a live audience gathered in the traditional classroom at the Minnesota Genealogy Center. These events presented significant technical challenges, and we experienced several stumbles as we learned. However, those who attended the live sessions really enjoyed the experience, and our success steadily improved.

In 2025, we continue to explore new opportunities. As Donna mentioned, we hosted the Ulster Historical Foundation for a full-day hybrid workshop on March 11. A dedicated team of IGSI members worked tirelessly for over a year to organize this event. We highlighted the opportunity to visit our Hoffman Research Library and Irish collection in the days before and after the workshop. Our UHF lecturers, Fintan Mullan and Gillian Hunt, also offered one-on-one consultations at MGC the morning following the workshop. Volunteers were present each day the library was open during the week.

IGSI is actively collaborating with other Library-affiliated societies to enhance resources and improve the patron experience. We are exploring various ways to make the collection more accessible and robust, including both online and physical materials. We are seeking every opportunity to provide expanded member benefits for those who may not frequently visit the Twin Cities. We would love for you to join us in volunteering with our Library team on Wednesdays or as a patron helper on Irish Saturdays or even assisting on a virtual basis. Let's talk!



After retiring from Oxford University Press, Donna Jones finally has more time to research her heritage and ancestry. She is passionate about genealogy education and is a member of the IGSI Education committee and the Board of Directors. IGSI provides her the opportunity to learn more about Irish research as she continues to search for where in Ireland her great, great-grandparents lived.



Co-President Walt Rothwell is an IGSI board member and co-chair of the Education Committee. He is also affiliated with the Yankee Genealogical Society and the Canadian Interest Group of the Minnesota Genealogical Society. He is endlessly researching family lines across North American, Ireland, and England.

Foundations

by Mary Stuart

As the world hurtles towards warmer days, we here at *The Septs* have been hard at work on this last installment of our Irish province series, closing out the set with a deeper look at Ulster.

Ulster has a history fraught with conflict. Along with Scotland and the Isle of Man, Ulster formed the center of the ancient Gaelic world.[1] Attacks on Ulster from Meath during the 4th-5th centuries resulted in the division of Ulster into three kingdoms: Oriel/Airgialla, Aileach, and Ulaid.[2]

Anglo-Normans seized Ulster during their 12th-century conquest, turning it into the Earldom of Ulster. When this Earldom deteriorated in the 14th century, the leader of clan O'Neill proclaimed himself "King of Ulster," thereafter ruling most of the north.[3]

Fiercely independent, Ulster resisted England's attempts to seize control but eventually lost the Nine Years' War of 1594-1603, becoming the last province to fall under English rule.[4] The Crown then began the Plantation of Ulster to reinforce its dominance by installing loyalists, particularly those of the state religion.[5]

The ensuing clash between Protestants and Ireland's native Catholics led to the 1641 Rebellion.[6] Religious and political strife continued over the centuries with Cromwell's Conquest, the Williamite War, the rise of the Sinn Féin, and later The Troubles.[7] Through it all, the people of Ulster have retained a pride in their culture, language, music, and pioneering spirit.

In other news, we are thrilled to introduce two new members of our proofreading team, Dr. Patricia Coleman and Wendy Delery Hills. Patricia is a genealogist who uses DNA software tools, combined with online Irish records, to research her most recent common ancestors. She has a PhD in Chemistry from University of California at Davis, and is a graduate of ProGen58. She is a moderator of *Facebook* user groups for DNA Painter and Genetic Affairs and writes a blog on her website at: https://patriciacolemangenealogy.com/. Patricia has also written for *The Septs* and hopefully will again.

A native of New Orleans, Wendy currently lives in Mandeville, LA. Wendy is a mostly-retired estate lawyer who enjoys attending institutes to learn about DNA and researching French, German, and Irish ancestors, especially those from Counties Mayo, Carlow, Kilkenny, and Tipperary. Other interests include reading (especially mysteries), needlepoint, and volunteering for her alma maters. Wendy is excited to be receiving her 50-year diploma from Newcomb College this spring. Welcome, Patricia and Wendy! We're delighted you've joined us!

This issue includes a focus on Derry as an emigration gateway by Brian Mitchell, and articles on Cavan ancestry and resources by both Michael McShane and Robert Flanagan Stieglitz. Ann Eccles and Trish Little Taylor offer two write-ups of available Ulster resources, while Lois Mackin discusses her Northern Ireland DNA project. John Gwinn shows how to incorporate historical context while discussing Du Pont's powder mills and their impact on Irish immigrants.

We here at *The Septs* wish you all a Happy Spring! *Earrach Sona!*

Endnotes

1 "Ulster," *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulster : accessed 4 April 2025); site last updated 18 March 2025.

2 "Ulster," *Britannica* (https://www.britannica.com/place/Ulster-historic-province-Ireland : accessed 4 April 2025); site last updated 30 March 2025.

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4 John Dorney, "Hugh O'Neill and the Nine Years' War, 1594-1603," *The Irish Story* (https://www.theirishstory.com/2019/01/10/hugh-oneill-and-nine-years-war-1594-1603/ : accessed 4 April 2025).

5 "Ulster to America: The Plantation of Ulster," *Ulster Historical Foundation* (https://ulsterhistoricalfoundation.com/the-scots-in-ulster/from-ulster-to-america/plantation : accessed 4 April 2025).

6 "1641 Rebellion," *BBC History* (https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/plantation/planters/es10.shtml : accessed 4 April 2025); *Wayback Machine* (https://web.archive.org/).

7 "Ulster," *Wikipedia*.

Mary LaRue Stuart serves as Editor of The Septs *and on IGSI's Board of Directors. A native Hoosier and former university writing teacher with an MA in English, Mary is now a professional genealogist whose specialties include Indiana research, military repatriation, and DNA. Her Irish ancestors hail largely from Donegal/Northern Ireland. Mary is currently working on her BCG certification portfolio and is pursuing an AFA in Glass Arts. She enjoys singing, sewing, reading, and blowing glass in her non-existent spare time.*



The Townland and Searching for Your Cavan Ancestors

by Michael McShane

We are fortunate that the troubled history of County Cavan has resulted in the creation of a substantial amount of survey and land ownership information that would not otherwise exist. Our colonisers certainly knew how to maintain records regarding the confiscation, plantation, and taxation of lands.[1] The six escheated (confiscated) counties in the province of Ulster became some of the best mapped and surveyed lands in the world, particularly during the 17th century when ownership changed hands multiple times before settling into a relatively quieter period during the 18th century.[2]



Figure 1: *1610 Bodley map of the Barony of Tullyhunco including details showing the individual townlands to be granted to the Scottish undertaker Alexander Achmootie in the newly created Estate of Dromheada.*[3] *Reference numbers in red indicate townlands still existing today.*



Figure 2: *Townland map of Killinkere parish showing ownership of the lands at the time of the Commonwealth, c. 1652.*[4]

The Townland and Searching for Your Cavan Ancestors

The importance of the townland in Ireland cannot be emphasised enough. Identifying ancestral townlands is critical in genealogical and historical research for confirming that you have correctly pinpointed your individual and all subsequent information about them. For example, I knew that my family originated from County Cavan, but all I had was a copy of my grandfather's baptismal certificate from New Jersey. Through trial and error, I eventually learned I descended from ancestors from the townland of Cloggy in the parish of Killeshandra. Identifying this townland opened the research floodgates.

The townland is the smallest of cadastral units, tracing back to medieval times.[5] For centuries, the prevailing land denomination in Co. Cavan has been the 'poll,' a unit of Irish land measurement that still exists today in the form of townlands.[6] County Cavan is made up of just over two thousand townlands. One can imagine these townlands as a patchwork quilt of land plots that combine to cover the entire county. Cavan's townlands are distributed among 36 civil parishes, which also form an important part of the organisational structure of the administrative record-keeping system.

While the area of an Irish poll varies, a townland in Co. Cavan typically measures about 250 acres. In Cavan, townlands tend to encompass plentiful small hills or 'drumlins.' These helped define the land holdings of individual families [or 'septs'], which were also often bounded by rivers,



Figure 3: *The patchwork quilt of Cavan's 2,000 townlands distributed throughout the 36 civil parishes of the county. Cloggy is highlighted.*

streams, and other natural features. A poll was sometimes known as the 'Ballyboe,' or 'cow-land,' because its area of land could support about twenty cows.[7]



Figure 4: *This contour map represents physical features in the townland of Cloggy, parish of Killashandra.*[8]

Each Gaelic townland name represents the physical features of its land; most have been anglicized over time. For example, the townland of Cloggy translates as 'the place of small hills.' We are fortunate (if you can call it that) our colonisers were very conscientious about surveying and recording traditional land measurements as a means of advancing the Plantation of Ulster, which commenced in 1610. Identifying your ancestor's townland opens many doors, making it possible to piece together other records remaining in the public domain.

Remember, a townland is neither a town nor a village, but rather a specific area of land that may or may not include a village or town.[9] In fact, some towns straddle a number of townlands, which can lead to difficulties when searching for an individual by town.

A Note of Caution

Be careful when using the National Archives of Ireland (NAI)'s census records. Before Ireland was mapped by the Ordnance Survey (Cavan was first mapped from 1835-1836), there was no standardised or approved list of townland names. When using NAI's online search function, even a slight variation in spelling can complicate searches, and a significant number of townland names, although correctly transcribed, do not match the approved version at *Logainm.ie*.[10] For example, when investigating the NAI Tithe Applotment Book (TAB) records, we discovered many errors in transcriptions made by LDS volunteers, who carried out their work using microfilmed images of original book entries. Poor and inconsistent handwriting, along with a lack of local knowledge, has resulted in significant errors in the digitisation of names. A typical example of such errors is the townland of Snakeel, in the parish of Kilmore, being recorded as 'Snackeel' in the original book but transcribed as 'Inackeel,' thus limiting access to the list of Snakeel's twenty-one residents.

We suspect about 75% of NAI's records are obfuscated due to these errors. What we present on our website tables is an unedited listing of tenant names that has been re-indexed by both parish and townland. Furthermore, *Logainm.ie* has carefully identified the majority of Ireland's townlands, giving each a unique numerical identifier. This compilation is now considered the definitive list of townland names, which *Cavantownlands.ie* has used to re-index the full set of TAB records from the NAI listings. By mapping NAI's transcribed parish/townland names against official *Logainm.ie* names, the number

of Cavan's townlands has been reduced from 2,256 to 1,491. There are still 132 transcribed townlands which could not be matched to contemporary townland names.

Next Steps

Once your ancestor's specific townland is located, the doors to researching them unlock. Ultimately, all Crown and church records use the townland as the smallest land division for the identification of place. With that identification, searches can then be extended to estate records, maps, deeds, and newspaper articles, to name but a few.

Armed with a townland name in County Cavan, you may choose to explore the Cavan Townlands website at *Cavan townlands.ie*, which is free to view. Each unique townland has its own homepage, which acts as gateway to the record collections and data available for that townland.[11] This website has undergone significant development since launching in 2015 and now holds the entirety of surviving census records and available census substitutes from 1821-1911 for Cavan, extending to 345,000 individual records.

Cavantownlands.ie has recently added the 1901 and 1911 censuses, which have been indexed by townland. Now, for the first time, all census records for each of Cavan's 2,000 townlands are available in one easy-to-navigate venue, where they are locatable via a newly developed search engine that enables users to locate an individual from the complete set of 345,000 pages.[12]

Searching for a specific townland will pull up the following results:

- **Basic Information.** Location maps and basic townland information, along with specific articles relevant to the townland (where available), are provided.
- **1609 Bodley Plantation Maps.** A total of 137 townlands have been identified and classified. This includes analyses for Kildallan, Killashandra, and Scrabby townlands. Discover what a particular townland was called in 1609 and to whom the land was granted under the Plantation of Ulster. In this section, the name of the newly created estate, or proportion, is accessible, and the original maps can be viewed.

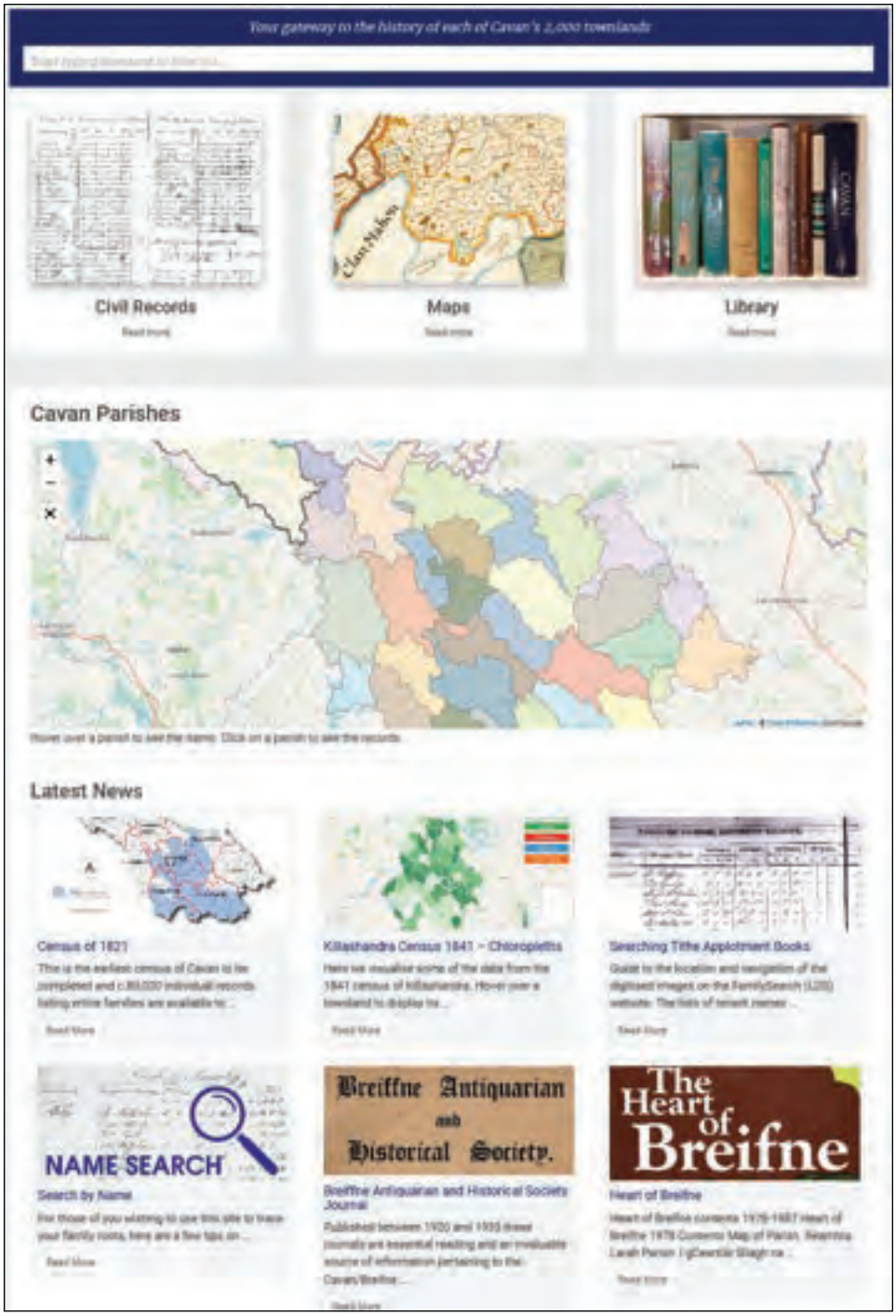


Figure 5: *Homepage of* Cavantownlands.ie

Following the Flight of the Earls in 1607, the six escheated counties comprising Ulster — Armagh, Cavan, Donegal, Fermanagh, Derry, and Tyrone — came into the hands of the Crown. The plantation process began with a survey of the land in 1608 and mapping the land in 1609, after which plans were drawn up to grant these counties to the various entities who were in the favour of King James I. These 1609 maps provide historians with a unique time-capsule that can be used to trace back some of the earliest townland names and connect them to their present-day equivalents. There is no pre-existing set of maps at this level of detail for the counties covered, so these serve as the foundation for the cartographic study of the townlands fortunate enough to have been included in the plantation process.

- **1652 Commonwealth Survey.** This record set is comprised of data and maps for all parishes. Following the quashing of the 1641 Rebellion by Irish Catholics against the English rule and the plantation of Ulster, Cromwell regranted the Irish lands. Each townland's new Proprietor's name is provided, along with estate maps. Included are approximately 1,500 unique townland records, some including tenant names. This record set is not available elsewhere.
- **1821 Census of Cavan.** These records cover 17 of the 36 civil parishes of Co. Cavan and list approximately 80,000 individuals. This surviving record set is very rare, as nearly the entire 1821 Ireland census was lost in the 30 June 1922 explosion and subsequent fire at the Four Courts, where the original records were held, during the Irish Civil War.[13]
- **1830 Tithe Applotment Books.** Records for 35 of the 36 civil parishes have survived. These have been re-indexed, corrected, and presented in a searchable, tabulated form for ease of access. Tenant/lease-holder names are provided in this record of the church tax applied to the tenant farmers. Approximately 30,000 individual records are available to view.[15]
- **1836 Name Books.** These books include physical descriptions of the lands encountered by Ordnance Survey agents in preparation for the mapping and valuation of the entire country. These Name Books were reproduced and published in 1985 and cover the townlands of the following nine parishes: Bailieborough, Castlerahan, Crosserlough, Denn, Killinkere, Knockbride, Lavey, Munterconnaught, and Shercock.[16]



Figure 6: *Map showing surviving 1821 census records for Cavan.*[14]

- **1841 Census of Killashandra.** This data set has been cross-checked, corrected, and is now fully searchable. A unique record of all inhabitants, this census includes names, ages, occupations, educational and marriage statuses, and more. This is the only surviving census data for the entire country in 1841. Taken before the Great Famine of 1845/46, this is likely one of the most valuable record sets from this era, about which numerous books and articles have been written. Josephine Masterson's 1999 transcription of this census was used to doublecheck entries on *Cavantownlands.ie*, where approximately 15,000 individual records are available to search.
- **1865 The Primary Valuation (Griffith's Valuation).** This was the first full-scale valuation of property in Ireland. It was overseen by Richard Griffith and published between 1847 and 1864.[17] Records cover the entirety of Co. Cavan. Tenant names are provided for each townland. This document is an important census substitute as only fragments of the census records from 1821 to 1891 remain in existence after the Four Courts fire.
- **1901 Census.** The 1901 records for Cavan contain 97,437 individual records. Issues in rendering townland names, resulting from NAI transcription errors, etc., has been rectified here by re-indexing the entire dataset in accordance with the approved *Logainm.ie* townland categorisation. Approximately 50% of these townlands were previously unsearchable.
- **1911 Census.** The 1911 records for Cavan contain 91,343 individual records. The same transcription issues apply, as per the 1901 record set.
- All included townland records have been referenced to their official *Logainm.ie* identifier.

Towns and Villages

As mentioned earlier, a townland does not typically represent either a town or village. Caution must be taken when searching for records by town or village name. It should be noted that each town is unique in terms of the information available online and how that information is best accessed. Some towns were clearly identified by census enumerators at the time of recording; a close examination of original census forms has established what information is available for the area. In some instances, where a town straddles several townlands (or even parishes), the records have been divided; this has resulted in towns sometimes being presented in a fragmented manner or even not at all.

Some townlands combine urban as well as rural areas and, where no breakdown is provided, each individual entry must be checked in terms of occupation and other factors. Some towns lie entirely within bounding townlands. There are a number of instances where the name of the townland and the town vary; e.g., the town of Shercock lies within the townland of Lisdrumskea, but no mention of Shercock turns up in the index. In other cases, the town and townland names match; e.g., the town of Mullagh lies in the townland of Mullagh. Larger towns can be more complex; e.g., Cavan town straddles at least seven townlands, some of which were incorporated into town records while others were not.[18]

A Homepage for Each Town

At *Cavantownlands.ie*, a homepage has been created for each of the towns listed on the map below; we hope this will make researching more straightforward. Consulting the guidance notes prepared for each town before examining search options or results presented on its homepage is strongly suggested as it may be necessary to search beyond the town's homepage in order to get a complete picture of all available data.

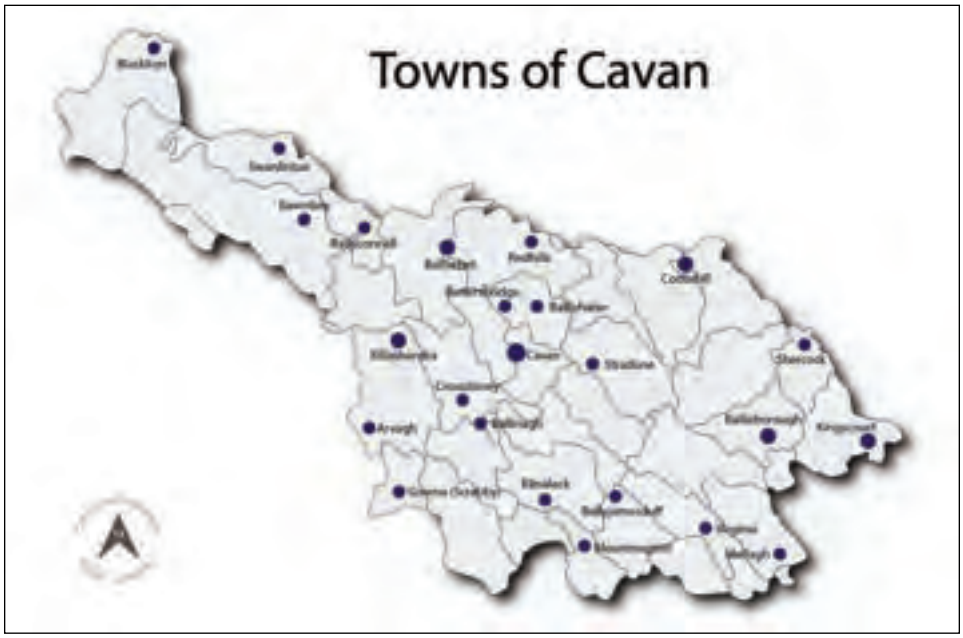


Figure 7: *The towns of Cavan*

Cootehill Example

Take, for instance, the available records on *Cavantownlands.ie* for the town of Cootehill, in the Parish of Drumgoon.

Cootehill perches on the townlands of Bellamont Forest, Magheranure, Munnnilly, Drumaveil North, Glebe, and Killycramph.

1821 Census: Population is 2152. No individual records available.

TAB 1828: The town is identified in thirty-seven original records, but the NAI data for this parish was incorrectly indexed as the parish of Drumgooland in County Down. (The records indexed as Drumgoon Parish in Co. Cavan are actually the Drumlane parish records.) These records cover a period of at least three years and have been duplicated. Cootehill lies predominantly within the townlands of Magheranure and Munnilly. Magheranure was transcribed as 'Maheramayo,' 'Magheranure,' 'Maheranura,' 'Maheranure,' and 'Mahoranure.' Munnilly was transcribed as 'Munally' in twenty-nine entries. (These townland records should also be consulted.)

1901 Census: Population is 1509.

1911 Census: Population is 1550.

Conclusion

Townlands provide the foundation for all Irish historical research. Until an ancestor's townland can be pinned down, it will be difficult to locate much information for them. Mis-transcriptions and other such errors only serve to exacerbate the problem. Fortunately, once a townland has been identified, websites such as *Cavantownlands.ie* can provide extensive background material on one's family.

Resources:

McShane, Michael. "Guide to Seventeenth-Century Surveys of Cavan as a Source For Townland Studies." *Breifne* 14:54 (2019) 436-455. https://cavantownlands.ie/guide-to-17th-century-surveys-of-cavan/.

McShane, Michael. "Land 'Parcells' of Tullyhunco From the Ulster Inquisitions of 1629." *Breifne* 13:51 (2016): 756-780.

McShane, Michael. "Robert Craige's County Cavan Tenants, 1703-4: An Update." *Breifne* 14:54 (2019) 456-468.

McShane, Michael. "A Very Curious Survey of the County of Cavan: The Commonwealth Survey of 1652-53; Part 1, West Cavan." *Breifne* 13:52 (2017) 19-90.

McShane, Michael. "A Very Curious Survey of the County of Cavan: The Commonwealth Survey of 1652-53; Part 2, East Cavan." Breifne 14:53 (2018): 329-384.

Endnotes

[1] You can read the guide to the 17th century surveys of Cavan here: https://cavantownlands.ie/guide-to-17th-century-surveys-of-cavan/[0].

[2] Joseph Byrne, *Byrne's Dictionary of Irish Local History From Earliest Times to c. 1900* (Douglas Village, Cork, Ireland: Mercier Press, 2004), 114, **escheat, 1**: "**A feudal incident** entailing the lapse of a property to the lord in default of an heir ... or upon the conviction of a tenant for a felony" and 2: "To confiscate."

[3] McShane, Michael. "Bodley's Map of Tullyhunco 1610." *Breifne* 13:50 (2015): 498-535. https://cavantownlands.ie/bodleys-maps-of-tullyhunco-1610/.

[4] "Killinkere Parish," townland map ca. 1652, https://cavantownlands.ie/killinkere-parish/.

[5] Byrne, *Dictionary of Irish Local History*, 45, **cadastral**, "Of or having to do with the extent, boundaries, value and ownership of real property. Cadastral surveys such as **Griffith's Valuation** were conducted for taxation purposes."

[6] "The Down Survey of Ireland: Glossary," *Trinity College Dublin* https://downsurvey.tchpc.tcd.ie/glossary.html. Definition of the term "townland" specifies that it was previously known by territorial/regional terms such as "polls."

[7] "Down Survey," *Trinity College Dublin*.

[8] McShane, Michael. "Cloggy, a Cavan Townland, 1609-1911." *Breifne* 14:55 (2020) pp. 621-688. See also: https://cavantownlands.ie/cloggy [PDF], p. 6.

[9] Byrne, Dictionary of Irish Local History, 311, **townland**, "The smallest and most enduring land division of the county."

[10] *The Placenames Database of Ireland* "is a public resource for Irish people at home and abroad." Available in both Gaelic and English, this website may be accessed at https://www.logainm.ie.

[11] Most townland homepages come with supporting articles, further providing background information and tips on searching. These homepages will likely continue to evolve as more information becomes available, and should be checked for updates occasionally.

[12] McShane, Michael. "The Destruction of the Public Record Office in 1922 and the Surviving Census and Census Substitute Records of Co. Cavan 1821-1911." Video. Uploaded April 26, 2022. *YouTube*: Cavan Library Service. https://www.youtube.com/@cavanlibraryservice9648 : 2025. Includes guide on how to conduct a search.

[13] Mcshane, "Destruction," 26 April 2022, *Youtube*: Cavan Library Service.

[14] McShane, Michael. "Cavan Civil Parishes for which 1821 Census Records Survive." Map created based on surviving

census records at the National Archives of Ireland (NAI).

[15] McShane, Michael. "Tithe Applotment Books: Navigating the National Archives Online Records." *Breifne*. 15:56 (2021) 46-60. https://cavantownlands.ie/tithe-applotment-books-of-1832/.

[16] Anna Sexton, *The Heart of Breifne: Traditions, Ballads, Legends and Folklore from Mid-Cavan* (Ireland: Cummann Staire Leathrátha, 1985).

[17] Grenham, John. "What is Griffith's Valuation," *Ask About Ireland*, https://www.askaboutireland.ie/reading-room/history-heritage/irish-genealogy/what-is-griffiths-valuati/.

[18] It is suggested you consult the article on this topic as it is quite complex, see: https://cavantownlands.ie/towns-of-cavan/.

Michael is an architect living in Killiney, Co. Dublin, with a keen interest in cartography. His passion for maps is reflected in Cavantownlands.ie, *the website he hosts with wife Catherine. Michael and Catherine have extensively compiled and corrected census and census substitutes for County Cavan. Although not a Cavan native, Michael has traced his ancestors back to the Cloggy townland in Killashandra parish. Michael has written a number of articles centred upon County Cavan's history and genealogy for Breifne Historical Society's journal,* Breifne.



Ulster Province Resources

In addition to the "usual suspects" such as John Grenham's *Irish Ancestors* website (https://www.johngrenham.com/) and *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org), listed below are a few additional resources, most of which are Ulster/Northern Ireland-specific.

Beine, Joe, "Irish Passenger Lists Research Guide," *Genealogy Branches* (https://www.genealogybranches.com/irishpassengerlists/).

Bell, Robert, *The Book of Ulster Surnames* (Blackstaff Press, 1997).

Dickson, R.J., *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, 1718-1785* (Ulster Historical Foundation, 2010).

FindMyPast, website (https://www.nifhs.org/research-centre/). Family history/genealogy website focused on primarily United Kingdom and Ireland records.

Gleeson, Maurice, and Kyle DePew, "Y-DNA Sheds New Light on the Medieval Genealogies of the Uí Briúin Dynasty of Northwest Ireland, Part 1," blog post, 24 May 2024, *FamilyTree DNA* (https://blog.familytreedna.com/y-dna-medieval-genealogies-ui-briuin-dynasty/).

Greene, John C., compiler, "The Belfast Newsletter Index, 1737-1800," database, *The Belfast Newsletter Index, 1737-1800* (https://www.ucs.louisiana.edu/bnl/). Includes a nearly complete run of newspapers 1750-1800. Some are also available 1737-1750, though only 25% of the original run survives.

Grenham, John, *Tracing your Irish Ancestors*, (Dublin, 2012).

"Ireland, James Alexander Henderson, The Belfast and Province of Ulster Directory – FamilySearch Historical Records," research guide, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Ireland,_James_Alexander_Henderson,_The_Belfast_and_Province_of_Ulster_Directory_-_FamilySearch_Historical_Records).

"Irish Genealogy Databases," *Ulster Historical Foundation* (https://ulsterhistoricalfoundation.com/genealogy-databases/list). Some collections are free to view, while others require a membership subscription.

IrishGenealogy.ie (https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/). Provides online and print resource lists, as well as the ability to search records or surnames on maps. Also provides access to a large, pre-20th century volume of baptisms, marriages, and burials that often pre-date civil registration.

Maclysaght, Edward, *The Surnames of Ireland* (Irish Academic Press, 1989).

Marshall, William F., *Ulster Sails West: The Story of the Great Emigration from Ulster to North America* (Genealogical Publishing Company, 1996).

Masterson, Josephine, *Ireland: 1841-1851 – Census Abstracts* [Northern Ireland] (Gene Burch, 2010).

Maxwell, Ian, *Tracking your Northern Irish Ancestors: A Guide for Family Historians* (Barnsley, 2008).

"Northern Ireland Genealogy," research guide, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Northern_Ireland_Genealogy). Provides links to genealogical research guides for the counties of Northern Ireland and the various record types available.

North of Ireland Family History Society [NIFHS], website (https://www.nifhs.org/). Houses a collection of Irish Section books, church records, graveyard records, newspapers, maps, and ordnance survey notes, etc.

PlacenamesNI.org website (https://www.placenamesni.org). Per the website, "contains information on the origins and meanings of over 30,000 placenames from all over Northern Ireland."

Continued on page 71

Researching Northern Ireland with DNA[1]

by Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D.

Most people who have done DNA testing or have considered taking a test understand that they will receive results indicating their predicted places of origin. These are usually expressed in terms of percentages of ancestry estimated to be from various regions, for example, Ireland (an *Ancestry* region), British & Irish (a *23andMe* region), or Irish, Scottish, and Welsh (a *MyHeritage* region).

However, there are several other methods for exploring places of origin. Did you know one testing company hosts groups focused on exploring ancestral geography, haplogroups, and surnames, while four others provide estimates of origin at a sub-regional level? Let's explore these options and examine how they might support your Northern Ireland research.

DNA Projects at FTDNA

Family Tree DNA (FTDNA) is the only testing company offering DNA Group Projects, which are communities for people interested in pursuing information about specific topics related to their genealogy. DNA Group Projects are run by volunteer administrators and are available to FTDNA testers at no cost. They can be surname-based, geographically based, or mitochondrial or Y-haplogroup based.[2] Projects may focus on mitochondrial DNA, Y-DNA, autosomal DNA, or a mix of types.

Once you have tested your mitochondrial, Y-, or autosomal DNA at FTDNA or uploaded autosomal test kit results, you can join one or more Group Projects. (Note: In most cases, the only way to join a mitochondrial or Y-DNA project is to purchase a mitochondrial or Y-DNA test from FTDNA, the only testing company that offers these specialized tests; however, many surname projects are allowing autosomal testers to join.) If no project exists for your area of interest, you can create one.[3]

FTDNA's Projects-Join page (https://www.familytreedna.com/my/group-join) allows you to search and browse existing projects.

Here are the Group Projects that Jere Mackin, who has tested his autosomal and Y-DNA at FTDNA using the Family Finder and Big Y-700 tests, has joined. You can see that they include a surname project, several Y-haplogroup projects, and several geographical projects, including the North of Ireland project.



Jere Mackin FTDNA projects

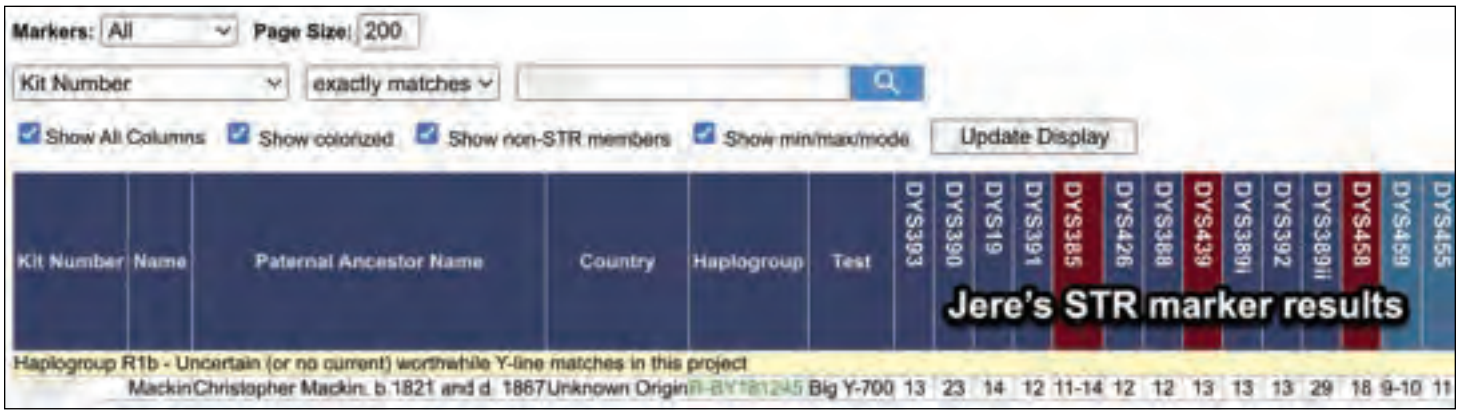
If you are interested in Northern Irish research, the North of Ireland Project, with 10,145 members, may be of particular interest. Established by the North of Ireland Family History Society (NIFHS), the project's goal is to promote DNA testing for those with heritage from the North of Ireland. The project provides information, support, and training for testers and test managers, shares DNA results to facilitate genealogical connections, and carries out research into the DNA of the North of Ireland.[4] The project is primarily an autosomal project but increasingly includes Y- and mitochondrial results from its testers.

The strength of this project lies in the large number of testers with Northern Irish ancestry and who have conducted extensive documentary research. One of the North of Ireland Project's administrators, Martin McDowell, has published several blog entries related to the project.[5] Martin also presented a lecture on the project at the Genetic Genealogy Ireland Conference in 2018 and created a *YouTube* video in 2024 updating the 2018 data about the project.[6] Anyone who is part of the project or considering joining should read or watch these!

NIFHS has undertaken two location-based projects combining DNA and documentary research in County Antrim, one for Ballycarry and one for Islandmagee.[7] There are also smaller geographic projects based around Killyleagh and Ballyeaston and another focused on those buried in Belfast City Cemetery; NIFHS is also providing free Family Finder tests to anyone over 80.[8]

The project has a *YouTube* channel with 18 videos about the project and working with DNA at https://www.youtube.com/@dnaatnifhs/videos.

Once you have joined the North of Ireland Project, you can view your Y- and mitochondrial-DNA results within the project by going to its DNA results page at https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/nifhs/dna-results?srsltid=AfmBOop48ubEWFoPtvXk-OjBRUEPO_YImwSy2dlynkWJ6MhFmtvJbCGh.

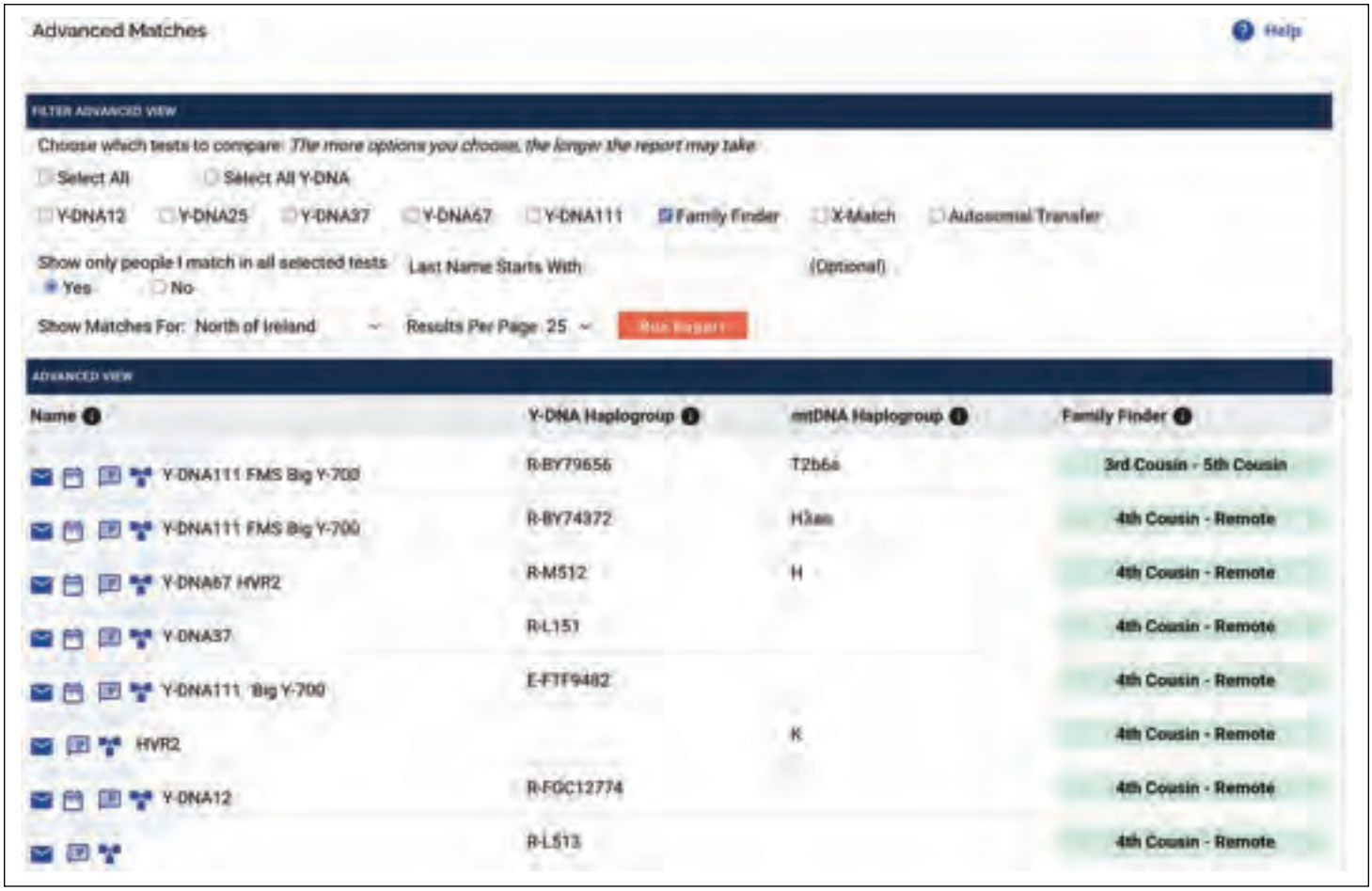


Jere Mackin NofI Y results

Above is a truncated shot of Jere Mackin's entry in the Y-DNA Results Overview, categorized by haplogroup by the project administrators.

You can see that Jere has at present no Y-DNA matches within the project.

You can also use FTDNA's Advanced Matches feature to find matches to your kit for any test you have taken (Y-, mitochondrial, and autosomal). To do this, scroll to the bottom of the home page until you reach "Additional Tests & Tools" and click "Advanced Matches." On this page (shown below), select the tests you wish to search. If you clicked more than one type of test, select Yes or No for "Show only people I match in all selected tests." This filter may be used if you want to search for a particular surname. If you want to search only matches within a group



Jere Mackin NofI adv matches



Mulligan Kevin NofI Adv Matches

project, select the group project's name from the dropdown menu. On page 51 are Jere's results for Family Finder (autosomal) matching with only participants in the North of Ireland Project. (No Y tests were selected because we already know from the Y results that Jere has no worthwhile Y-DNA matches within the project.) Jere has 52 Family Finder matches, with the closest in the third-to-fifth-cousin range. (The names of Jere's matches have been blurred for privacy). Clicking on a match name brings up the match's earliest known ancestors and ancestral surnames. The icons in the name column are links to the matches' email, time predictor (for those who have taken Y tests), notes, and trees. If you identify a match in Advanced Matches that you want to pursue, you can record the match's name and return to your home page to find them in your own match list.

Septs co-Managing Editor Rita McNabb, whose Mulligan family comes from County Cavan, has joined the North of Ireland DNA Project with both her own kit and her brother Kevin Mulligan's kit.[9] Using the Advanced Matches tool for Kevin's kit with the Family Finder test and the surname Mulligan shows one project member with the surname Mulligan matching Kevin. Examining this match's tree reveals that he is from a similar area to Kevin and Rita's Mulligans; Rita is currently investigating.

For more information about NIFHS and the North of Ireland DNA project, go to:

NIFHS website: http://www.nifhs.org/

NIFHS *Facebook* page: https://www.facebook.com/NIFHS/

North of Ireland DNA Project *Facebook* page: https://www.facebook.com/DNAatNIFHS

YouTube channel DNA at NIFHS: https://www.youtube.com/@dnaat-nifhs/videos.

Other Irish DNA projects and resources are listed in the *ISOGG Wiki* article "ISOGG Ireland," https://isogg.org/wiki/ISOGG_Ireland.

Beyond Ethnicity Regions: Genetic Groups, Ancestral Journeys, and FTDNA myOrigins®

The familiar-looking illustration at the top of page 52 shows Jere Gene Mackin's ancestral regions from AncestryDNA:[10]

Clicking the Journeys tab under "Origins" provides Jere's ancestral journeys: Leinster, Ulster, and Upper Midwest Settlers. These are AncestryDNA's identification of places where Jere's ancestors likely lived and moved in the past 50 to 300 years. AncestryDNA identifies journeys by looking for groups of DNA testers with a significant number of matches in common, then comparing family trees and identifying trends in birthdates, birth locations, and ancestor surnames.[11]

What's in a Journey?

Clicking the arrow to the right of a named region opens a new page showing a detailed map of the area with links to a timeline of historical vignettes. In the case of Jere's [?] Ulster journey, the timeline vignettes are:

1700–1775	A Rise in Fortunes
1775–1800	End of the Long Peace
1800–1825	A Time of Prosperity
1825–1850	More People, More Poverty
1850–1875	Fleeing Famine
1875–1900	Lands of Opportunity
1900–1950	An American Life
1950–1975	The Beginnings of Violence



Jere Mackin ancestral regions



Jere Mackin ancestral journeys



Jere Mackin featured matches

Ancestry's SideView™ technology[12] allocates each journey to one of Jere's parents, indicating that he likely inherited the part of his genetic makeup from one parent or the other. Jere's Ulster journey, however, is labeled "Unassigned."

Some journeys identify specific people in the tree linked to your DNA kit who have connections to this specific journey. For Jere's Ulster journey, no people are identified.

The last part of the Journeys page identifies a few featured matches who share this journey, indicating whether the featured matches are Paternal, Maternal, or Unassigned, and providing links to their trees.

Evaluating Ancestral Journeys

Like other ethnicity results, ancestral journeys need to be evaluated, not accepted at face value. Some tips for evaluating ancestral journeys are:

- Read carefully the **description and timeline** for the journey. How well does it fit what you know about the corresponding part of your family history?
- Examine the "**journeys by parent**" information. To your knowledge, does the parent identified have ancestors who fit with the ancestral journey?
- Examine the "**people in your tree**." Is the identification with the ancestral journey appropriate?
- Examine the **featured matches**. Are they linked to the correct side of your tree? How well does the ancestry you share with them link with the ancestral journey?

Let's apply these criteria to Jere's Ulster ancestral journey:

☑ **Description and timeline** of the journey: Jere has two possible groups of ancestors who can be linked to Ulster: his paternal Mackin family, who came to the U.S. circa 1850, and a maternal Emery family who emigrated from Ireland in 1771. The Mackins' story would link to the "More People, More Poverty" and "Fleeing Famine" portions of the Ulster timeline, while the Emerys' story would link to the "Rise in Fortunes" and "End of the Long Peace" segments. This part of the Jere's journey fits.

☑ "**Journeys by parent**." Since one possible Ulster link in Jere's tree is paternal and another is maternal, it appears appropriate that this journey would be "Unassigned."

☑ "**People in your tree**." No specific Irish place of origin has been located for the Mackin family or the Emery family. As a result, their tree entries simply show "Ireland" as their birthplaces, and they should not be flagged.

☒ **Featured matches**. The first featured match, Elizabeth, is correctly identified as a paternal match. Her mother is a first cousin of Jere's father, making her a second cousin to Jere through the Mackin family. Elizabeth shares the same Mackin ancestors, possibly from Ulster. The second and third featured matches are correctly identified as maternal relatives to Jere; however, they do not share Jere's maternal Emery ancestors, also possibly from Ulster. Instead, they share Hessian (German) Gerbig ancestors with Jere but have other Irish ancestors not shared with Jere who may or may not be from Ulster.



Jere Mackin MyHeritage genetic group

Similar Features on *MyHeritage* and *23andMe*

MyHeritage and *23andMe* also assign smaller ethnic groupings called "genetic groups" to testers.

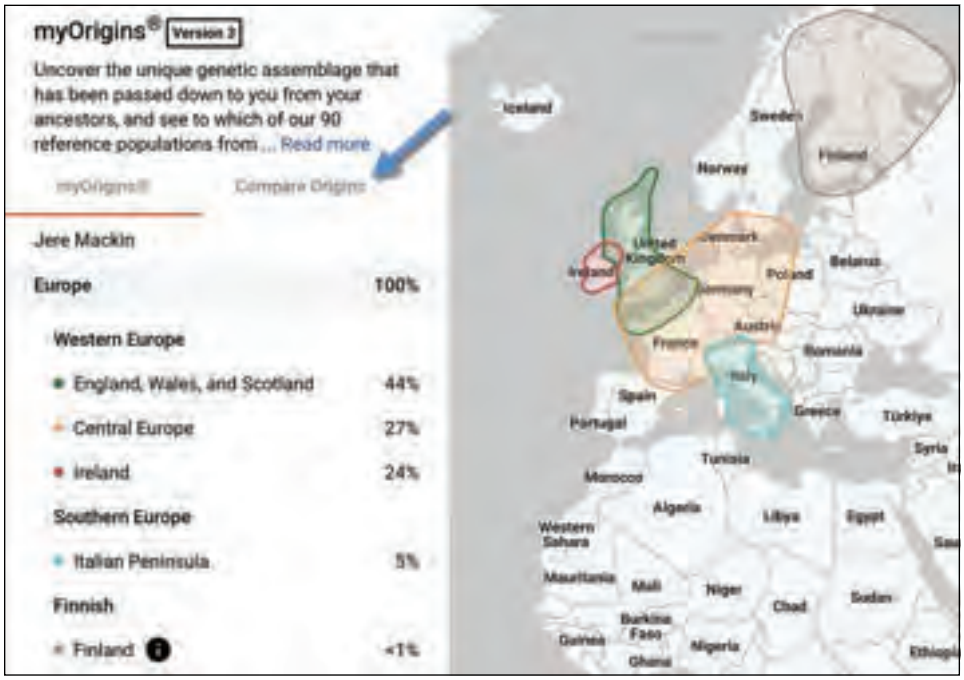
The figure above shows Jere Mackin's *MyHeritage* allocation of 44.1% Irish, Scottish, and Welsh ancestry, along with an associated genetic group called "UK and Ireland #8." *MyHeritage* breaks down ethnicity results into geographic regions. "Genetic Groups on *MyHeritage*" is an article describing the methodology used to create genetic groups.[13] Clicking on Jere's UK and Ireland #8 group brings up a description of the group ("Irish, English, Scottish and some Germans in the United Kingdom and in Ireland, and their descendants in the Northeastern United States and some in Australia"), the number of DNA kits used to form this group (15,570), the number of kits linked to family trees (6,219), and confidence level (medium). It also shows a heat map of top places, common surnames, common given names, common ethnicities, and related groups.

Although *MyHeritage* has identified 154 genetic groups in the Irish, Scottish, and



Jere Mackin 23andMe *genetic group*

Genetic Group	*23andMe* Estimate of Closeness	Documented Connection to Jere
Lancashire and West Yorkshire	Very Close	Paternal GG-grandmother
Northeast England	Very Close	None
Northern and Central Scotland	Very Close	None
Cumbria	Close	None
England	Close	None
Scotland and Northern Ireland	Close	Mackins and Emerys might fit here, also Galts (paternal G-grandfather)
Northern England and Southern Scotland	Distant	Paternal GG-grandfather
Northern Isles	Distant	None



Mackin Jere FTDNA myOrigins®



Mackin Jere FTDNA myOrigins® Compare

Welsh ethnicity, Jere has only been assigned UK and Ireland #8. If you are hunting for your Northern Irish heritage, you might consider testing or uploading a test kit to *MyHeritage* to see whether you are assigned to any of the Northern Irish groups.

23andMe provides less detailed genetic groups linked to regions.[14] The figure on page 53 shows the genetic groups linked to Jere's 62.4% British and Irish regions.

Of the eight genetic groups identified, the author can link only three to Jere's known ancestry (see table at top of page).

My Origins at FTDNA

FTDNA's myOrigins® tool shows Jere's regional ethnicity percentages, including 24% in Ireland.

Click the "Compare Origins" tab and select the black pin marker, and a pop-up box with the option to select either "Show All Paternal Ancestor Markers" or "Show All Maternal Ancestor Markers" appears. This links to the Earliest Known Paternal or Maternal Ancestor locations designated by Jere's matches.

Clicking a pin reveals the names of that match's earliest ancestors and links to their profile.

Return to the home page. By clicking Y- and mitochondrial DNA Matches Maps, a similar mapping of the earliest known ancestors for your Y- and mitochondrial matches appears.

Endnotes

[1] The author is indebted to Martin McDowell and Anne Johnston of the North of Ireland Family History Society for providing comments on an earlier version of this article, and to Rita McNabb, managing editor of *The Septs*, and her brother Kevin Mulligan for sharing their DNA results from the North of Ireland DNA project. All URLs are current as of 15 February 2025.

[2] See "Surname DNA Projects," *International Society of Genetic Genealogy (ISOGG) Wiki* (https://isogg.org/wiki/Surname_DNA_projects), "Geographical DNA Projects," *ISOGG Wiki* (https://isogg.org/wiki/Geographical_DNA_projects), "Haplogroup Projects," *ISOGG Wiki* (https://isogg.org/wiki/Category:Haplogroup_projects).

[3] FTDNA's Group Project page is here: https://www.familytreedna.com/group-project - TypeofGroupProjects. Additional information on projects from the *FTDNA Help Center* is available at "Introduction to Group Projects," *FTDNA Help Center* (https://help.familytreedna.com/hc/en-us/articles/4503173806351-Introduction-to-Group-Projects).

[4] "North of Ireland - About us – Overview," *FamilyTreeDNA* (https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/nifhs/about).

[5] Martin McDowell, "Group Project Administrator Series: Every Day Is Different," 2 January 2023; blog post, *Family Tree DNA Blog* (https://blog.familytreedna.com/gap-series-every-day-different/?utm_source=twitter.com&utm_medium=social&utm_content=gap+series+-+martin+mcdowell&utm_campaign=ftdna+blog), and Martin McDowell, "FTDNA Has the Largest 'Local DNA Database' in Northern Ireland," 13 February 2020; blog post, *Genetic Genealogy Ireland* (https://ggi2013.blogspot.com/2020/02/ftdna-has-largest-local-dna-database-in.html).

[6] Martin McDowell, DNA and NIFHS – *A Winning Combination* (2018); *YouTube: Genetic Genealogy Ireland Channel* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ftt_pjV_uI). *The North of Ireland Project Reaches a Milestone!* (2024); *YouTube: DNA at NIFHS Channel* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-HhPBVSAEs).

[7] "The Ballycarry DNA Project," *North of Ireland Family History Society* (https://www.nifhs.org/dna/ballycarry-dna-project/). Also "Ballycarry DNA Project," *Family Tree DNA* https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/ballycarry-dna-project/about). "The Islandmagee DNA Project," *North of Ireland Family History Society* (https://www.nifhs.org/dna/islandmagee-dna-project/). Also "Islandmagee," *Family Tree DNA* (https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/islandmagee/about). Results from the Ballycarry and Islandmagee projects are documented on *WikiTree*, https://www.wikitree.com/.

[8] Martin McDowell to Lois Mackin, e-mail, 14 February 2025, "Re: North of Ireland DNA Project in *The Septs*," privately held by Mackin.

[9] Kevin's name and DNA results are shared with his permission.

[10] Jere's name and DNA results are shared with his permission.

[11] For a more detailed description, see "Ancestral Journeys in AncestryDNA," *Ancestry* (https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/AncestryDNA-Communities?language=en_US) and Ross Curtis, Ameen Eetemadi, Jenna Lang, Keith Noto, Milos Pavlovic, Chaz Reid, Alisa Sedghifar, Linhua Wang, and Aaron Wolf, "Ancestral Journeys White Paper: Predicting fine-scale ancestral origins from the genetic sharing patterns among millions of individuals," last updated 1 February 2024, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestrycdn.com/support/us/2024/09/ancestraljourneyswhitepaper2024.pdf).

[12] See "How SideView™ Technology Split Your DNA Results by Parent," *Ancestry* (https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/SideView-Technology).

[13] "Genetic Groups on MyHeritage," *MyHeritage* (https://education.myheritage.com/article/genetic-groups-on-myheritage/).

[14] "Ancestry Composition — Scientific Details," *23andMe* (https://you.23andme.com/reports/ancestry_composition_hd/details/).

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Using Genetic Genealogy to Find Ancestors' Homes in County Cavan

by Rob[t]. Flanagan Stieglitz

While growing up in my mother's Irish-Catholic American family, the names Flanagan, Finnegan, Branegan, and Tighe were often mentioned. Like many people, by the time family history became important to me, those who could answer my questions about our family were long gone. Using traditional genealogical methods, I discovered my Flanagans's family farm was in Cloonfree, County Roscommon. This research led to my 2x great-grandfather's grave in Calvary Cemetery, Woodside, Queens, New York, where his headstone was engraved with the home he left behind in Ireland.[1]

The homes of my Tighe and Branegan branches in Counties Meath and Louth, respectively, were found with the assistance of a travel journal left by my great-uncle, who traveled to Ireland in 1965. A newspaper journalist and editor, he kept a journal throughout his trip, taking photos of the old homesteads and detailing their locations.[2]

Finding the home and land of which my great-grandmother Mary Finnegan was a native was my brick wall.

No documents linked her to her parents' home in Ireland. DNA research, ethnicity mapping, and conventional genealogy research led to breaking through my Finnegan brick wall.

Companies that offer genetic genealogy, such as *AncestryDNA*, are constantly enhancing their DNA ethnicity analysis as more people participate in testing. Below is a screenshot of my "origins" results provided by *AncestryDNA* (figure 1).[3] The Encyclopedia Britannica clarifies that "ethnicity is not the same as race; as it refers to identifying a group based on a recognized cultural distinctiveness that defines the group as a 'people.' This uniqueness is thought to be expressed in language, music, values, art, styles, literature, family life, religion, ritual, food, and more."[4] Essentially, 46% of my genome is associated with people currently living in or descended from those who identify as Irish, while 4% is associated with Scottish ancestry. In addition to general ethnicity, smaller subsets of a geographic area or country referred to as communities are also identified (figure 2). *Ancestry* defines its Genetic Communities as groups of individuals who have a significant number of matches with one another. Members of a community share descent from a group of people who either traveled to or originated from the same place around the same time.[5]



Figure 1: *Author's Ancestry DNA ethnicity results*

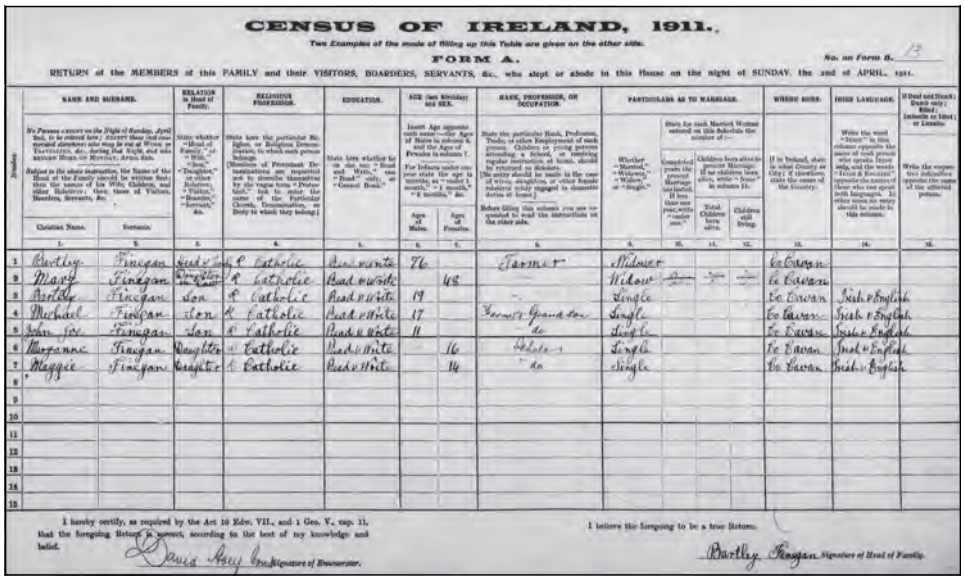


Figure 2: *Author's Ancestry DNA's Ancestral Journeys results*

When ethnicity results are reported to a tester, surprises may arise. I was no exception; the Ulster Province and Cavan communities on my results page did not support my family history research to date. Did Mary and her parents, James Finnegan and Mary Jane Connell, originate from Ulster Province or County Cavan specifically? Could I find additional evidence to support my DNA findings? According to genealogists Angie Bush and D. Joshua Taylor, "Genetic genealogy is the use of DNA testing in combination with traditional genealogical and historical records to infer relationships between individuals."[6] Bush and Taylor further suggest that "by understanding basic patterns of genetic inheritance, genealogists can very effectively use DNA testing to answer questions of kinship and identity, and in some cases, reconstruct kinships for which no records exist."[7]

Through testing at *AncestryDNA*, *FamilyTreeDNA*, *23andMe* and, in particular, *MyHeritage*, I was able to gather a substantial group of DNA matches related to my great-grandmother, Mary Finnegan. Using the same methodology I described in the July/August 2023 issue of *Family Tree Magazine*, I aimed to find my MRCAs (most common recent ancestors) among these matches.[8] The first step involved separating these matches by Mary's paternal and maternal lines.[9]

All of Mary Finnegan's matches were traced to Ballintemple Parish, County Cavan.[10] Unfortunately, a MRCA (most recent common ancestor) was not found for them, but all matches are connected to a Bartholomew Finnegan who was born in 1833 at Garrymore (figure 3).[11]



CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1911.

Two Examples of the mode of filling up this Table are given on the other side.

FORM A.

No. on Form H. 13

RETURN of the MEMBERS of this FAMILY and their VISITORS, BOARDERS, SERVANTS, &c., who slept or abode in this House on the night of SUNDAY, the 2nd of APRIL, 1911.

Number of House	Christian Name.	Surname.	Relation to Head of Family.	Religious Profession.	Education.	Age last Birthday and Sex. Age of Males.	Age of Females.	Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Particulars as to Marriage.	Completed years the present Marriage has lasted.	Total Children born alive.	Children still living.	Where Born.	Irish Language.
1	Bartley	Finegan	Head of Family	R. Catholic	Read & write	76		Farmer	Widower				Co Cavan	
2	Mary	Finegan	Daughter in Law	R. Catholic	Read & write		48		Widow				Co Cavan	
3	Bartley	Finegan	Son	R. Catholic	Read & write	19			Single				Co Cavan	Irish & English
4	Michael	Finegan	Son	R. Catholic	Read & write	17		Farmer's Grandson	Single				Co Cavan	Irish & English
5	John Joe	Finegan	Son	R. Catholic	Read & write	11		do	Single				Co Cavan	Irish & English
6	Maryanne	Finegan	Daughter	R. Catholic	Read & Write		16	Scholar	Single				Co Cavan	Irish & English
7	Maggie	Finegan	Daughter	R. Catholic	Read & Write		14	do	Single				Co Cavan	Irish & English

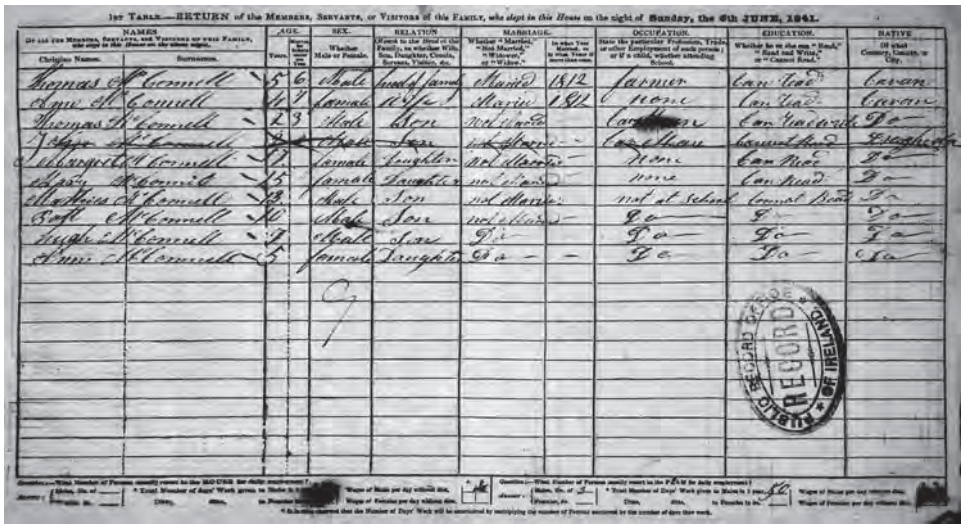
I hereby certify, as required by the Act 10 Edw. VII., and 1 Geo. V., cap. 11, that the foregoing Return is correct, according to the best of my knowledge and belief.

David Casey
Signature of Enumerator.

I believe the foregoing to be a true Return.

Bartley Finegan
Signature of Head of Family.

Figure 3: *1911 Census National Archives of Ireland Garrymore, County Cavan*



1st TABLE.—RETURN of the MEMBERS, SERVANTS, or VISITORS of this FAMILY, who slept in this House on the night of Sunday, the 6th JUNE, 1841.

NAMES of the MEMBERS, SERVANTS, and VISITORS of this FAMILY, who slept in this House on the above night. Christian Names.	Surnames.	AGE. Years.	SEX. Whether Male or Female.	RELATION to the Head of the Family, as whether Wife, Son, Daughter, Cousin, Servant, Visitor, &c.	MARRIAGE. Whether "Married," "Unmarried," "Widower," or "Widow."	In what Year Married, if in that Year of more than one.	OCCUPATION. State the particular Profession, Trade, or other Employment of each person; or if a child, whether attending School.	EDUCATION. Whether he or she can "Read," "Read and Write," or "Cannot Read."	NATIVE Of what County, Country, or City.
Thomas	McConnell	56	Male	Head of family	Married	1812	Farmer	Can Read	Cavan
Ann	McConnell	47	Female	Wife	Married	1811	None	Can Read	Cavan
Thomas	McConnell	23	Male	Son	Not Married		Carpenter	Can Read & Write	Do
John	McConnell	21	Male	Son	Not Married		Carpenter	Cannot Read	Fingal
Margaret	McConnell	17	Female	Daughter	Not Married		None	Can Read	Do
Mary	McConnell	15	Female	Daughter	Not Married		None	Can Read	Do
Mathias	McConnell	13	Male	Son	Not Married		Not at School	Cannot Read	Do
Bryan	McConnell	10	Male	Son	Not Married		Do	Do	Do
Hugh	McConnell	7	Male	Son	Do		Do	Do	Do
Ann	McConnell	5	Female	Daughter	Do		Do	Do	Do

Figure 4: *1841 Census, Towns Parks, Killashandra Parish, County Cavan (Find My Past)*

I believe that Bartholomew and James were brothers, but this remains unverified as of this writing. The same outcome occurred with the research on Mary's Connell/McConnell line. No ancestral couple was identified for the shared matches, yet a common location and genetic relatives were found in Killashandra Parish, Co. Cavan (figure 4).[12] It is possible that the Thomas McConnell of Portaliff or Townparks, Cavan, was Mary Jane's father, but it is more likely a sibling of Thomas's, which would make those parents the MRCAs.[13]

Garrymore is a townland in the Electoral Division (ED) of Bellananagh, in the Civil Parish of Ballintemple, in the Barony of Clanmahon, in County Cavan, where the Finnegan farm is located.[14] Killashandra is located north of Ballintemple.

SNP Tracker

With all the research, new findings, and new tools that arise after one's initial work, new information must be examined to determine whether subsequent information supports the original conclusion. A new online tool called SNP Tracker has recently been published online. ["SNP" stands for "Single Nucleotide Polymorphism."] What makes this useful for genetic genealogy is a feature called the "Britain and Ireland SNP and Surname Mapper." Rob Spencer developed this new online tool using data from FamilyTreeDNA.[15] A haplogroup is identified by the latest, or "terminal," SNP (mutation) on a male's Y-DNA. With this, geneticists can determine when and where this SNP occurred, and this tool will provide a visual map of that time and location (figure 5). The tool can take it a step further by plotting the origins of surnames. For example, I have identified my great-great-grandfather Finnegan's Y-Haplogroup as R-A260.[16]



Figure 5: *SNP Tracker Y-DNA path for Haplogroup R-A260 (Courtesy of Rob Spencer)*[17]

The 1921 Partition of Ireland

In genealogy, one new discovery always seems to lead to another. Now, with the knowledge that two of my Catholic great-great-grandparents came from Co. Cavan, in the province of Ulster, the Partition of Ireland in 1921 could provide some insight into the home they left behind. County Cavan was originally part of the province of Connacht, but was designated as part of Ulster in the early seventeenth century.[18] This move occurred just before Ulster was settled by the Scots and English beginning in 1610. Known as the Plantation of Ulster, it was a government-directed scheme of colonization involving the Ulster counties including Cavan.[19] The Partition of Ireland into what is now Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland occurred in 1921 as a result of the treaty between the Irish and British governments to end the Irish War of Independence.[20] It was determined that only six of Ulster's nine counties would come under British rule. The three not included, one being Cavan, were predominantly Catholic, and the British government sought a Protestant majority.[21]

Conclusion

My great-grandmother, Mary Finnegan Flanagan, has always been my most challenging ancestor to research. Although I have not solved the mystery of who her grandparents were, with the help of DNA, I have now been able to locate their home parishes in Ireland. Genealogy is always a series of steps in solving one's ancestral history, but now I can say, "I'm making progress!"

Endnotes

[1] Robert Flanagan Stieglitz, "Thomas Flanagan and the SS *Seawanhaka* Disaster," *New York Researcher* 31 (Winter 2020): 67-69; image copy "New York Researcher (formerly NYG&B Newsletter) Digital Archive," image copy, *New York Genealogical and Biographical Society*. (https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org), 2025.

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[4] "Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, & Accessibility," definition of "ethnicity," *Mount Saint Vincent University Library and Archives* (https://libguides.msvu.ca/edia/race : accessed 1 April 2025). Definition originally sourced from Britannica.com.

[5] Home > AncestryDNA > Ancestral Journeys in AncestryDNA > almost halfway down the page. https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/AncestryDNA-Communities?language=en_US.

[6] "Genetic Genealogy," wiki page, *Isogg.org* (https://isogg.org/wiki/Genetic_genealogy : accessed 1 April 2025). Page last updated 27 March 2022.

[7] Angie Bush and D. Joshua Taylor, "You Need Both! Uniting DNA and Traditional Research," webinar handout, March 2019, *Lake Region Public Library* (https://devilslakendlibrary.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/You-Need-Both-Uniting-DNA-and-Traditional-Research.pdf : accessed 25 Dec 2020).

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[9] Robert F. Stieglitz, "Finding Finnegan," *The Irish Genealogist* 16 (December 2022): 56-69.

[10] Robert F. Stieglitz, "The Mystery of Mary Jane Conroy," *The Irish Genealogist* 16 (March 2023): 160-166. [Note: The physical journal is labeled as Vol. 16, No. 2, 2023. The entry online to buy the article is labeled as Vol. 16, No. 2, March 2024.]

[11] Census of Ireland, 1911," database with images, *The National Archives of Ireland* (https://nationalarchives.ie/collections/search-the-census/census-record/? : accessed 26 February 2025) > Cavan > Bellananagh > Garrymore > House Number 13 > Form A, Head of Family, Bartley Finegan, 76.

[12] "Ireland Census 1821-1851," database with images, *Findmypast* (https://search.findmypast.com/ : accessed 26 February 2025) 1841 > Cavan > Killashandra > Portaliff or Town Parks > Book B > No. 10 > Head of Family, Thomas McConnell, 56.

[13] John Grenham, *Irish Ancestors* (https://www.johngrenham.com/browse/county_civil.php?county=Cavan : accessed 25 February 2025), "Cavan Civil Parishes." See also the Portaliff or Townparks Townland map at: https://www.townlands.ie/cavan/tullyhunco/killashandra/killashandra/portaliff-or-townparks/.

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[15] Rob Spencer, Mystic, Connecticut, spencerrrw@alum.mit.edu, to Robert Stieglitz, stieglitz@msn.com, 9 September 2024, "Images 6, 7, and 8 [SNP Tracker Y-DNA path for Haplogroup R-A260]"; privately held by Stieglitz, (rstieglitz@msn.com) & Street Address For Private Use,] Fargo, North Dakota.

[16] Robert Flanagan Stieglitz & Brigit McCone, "Chronology of a Chromosome: Tracing My Irish Family Prehistory Back to Africa!" *Irish Lives Remembered* 62 (Summer 2024): 10-29; image copy, I*rish Family History Centre*. (https://www.irishfamilyhistorycentre.com/product/irish-lives-remembered-issue-62/), 2025.

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Rob Flanagan Stieglitz is a retired chemistry/physiology teacher and clinical pharmacist living in Fargo, ND, who summers in Nevis, MN. Rob completed the Boston University Genealogical Research Certificate program in 2020 and received a certificate in genetic genealogy from the University of Strathclyde in 2022. Since Boston U., he has published multiple articles in various genealogical magazines, including The New York Researcher, Irish Roots, Irish Lives Remembered, The Irish Genealogist, Family Tree Magazine, The Bridge, Genealogen, *and* The Septs. *New articles will come out this spring in the* German Genealogical Journal *and* The Journal of Genetic Genealogy. *In addition to writing, Rob teaches general and genetic genealogy classes at local workshops and libraries.*



"Northern Ireland is the world's best kept secret, both in the character of its people and its scenery."

~Liam Neeson

Investigating Ulster Counties at the Hoffman Research Library

by Ann Eccles

Would you like to learn more about the counties of Ulster? IGSI's research collection in the Hoffman Research Library offers a variety of information on the individual counties of Ulster, including family histories, local histories, church and cemetery accounts, estate records, and more, covering Ulster and all of Ireland.

General Ulster

Perhaps the best introduction to researching Ulster ancestors is the second edition of Dr. William Roulston's *Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors* [IR 929.10720416 ROU]. The book is divided into two parts: (1) describes the sources for Scots-Irish research and their availability, and (2) contains two extensive appendices. The first appendix summarizes the available sources by each parish in Ulster, while the second appendix offers information about 350 estate collections across the counties.

Since the majority of Presbyterians reside in Northern Ireland, we have a few books in the collection on this topic. *In Researching Presbyterian Ancestors in Ireland* [IR 285.2415 ROU], Roulston discusses the denominations of Presbyterians, their records, and how to find them. *Presbyterians in Ireland: An Illustrated History* by Laurence Kirkpatrick [IR K120] provides images of numerous Presbyterian chapels and churches across Ireland. There are church histories for the three major religions — Catholicism, Presbyterianism, and the Church of Ireland — that focus on either a single parish in one county or are of general interest.

James Bardon's *Place Names in Ulster* [IR 947.1 BAR] opens the door to exploring the history and linkages of place names. *Placenames of County Derry* [IR A419] by Brian Mitchell, provides a list of 1750 placenames which were sourced from the 1901 census for the city and county of Londonderry; it is arranged in alphabetical order.

Similarly, the second edition of *The Book of Ulster Surnames* by Robert Bell [IR 929.4 BEL] explores the meanings and histories of over 500 of the most common family names. Be forewarned that, even with 3,000 variant spellings, not every ancestor's surname may be included. While my surname, Daly, is included, I found no entry for two less common names: Eccles (County Tyrone) or Fearon (County Armagh).

Another way to understand history is through the region's industries. In *Researching Farming Ancestors in Ireland* [IR 929.10720415 ROU], William Roulston discusses research methods for the landed estates in Ireland, as well as for the new class of farmers established in the early 1900s. Pat Conaghan highlights early fishing in *Zulu Fishermen: Forgotten Pioneers of Donegal's First Fishing Industry* [IR H539]. Gerald Hasson's *Thunder and Clatter: The History of Shipbuilding in Derry* [IR H312] offers a brief overview of that industry. Additionally, there's a collection of half a dozen books focusing on the linen industry and trade in Ulster, primarily in County Tyrone.

In *A Shorter Illustrated History of Ulster* [IR H348], Jonathan Bardon covers the province's history from early settlements and invasions to the Famine, detailing the linen and shipbuilding industries, as well as the partition and the Troubles of the 1990s.

While we own numerous books on some counties, others have only a handful. Our collection includes numerous maps for each county, cemetery and religious information, overview histories, and accounts of specific events or timeframes. Some materials are meant for a general read, while others are for researchers seeking depth. Connect to the Hoffman Research Library catalog (on the IGSI website's Library page) to search for materials by county name, author, or title.

Here are some examples of the titles available for each county:

County Antrim

George Benn's two-volume *History of the Town of Belfast* [IR H547.1 and H547.2] focuses on the late 1790s and early 1800s in the city. On another topic: ten books catalog graveyard inscriptions from cemeteries at Loughmorne, Carmoney, Kilrush and Lisburn, to name a few.

David Dobson's *People of Belfast, 1600-1799* [IR 929.34167 DOB] is a book of names which chronicles the two centuries during which Belfast expanded from about 1,000 to 22,000 residents. *A Past Apart: Studies in the History of Catholic Belfast*, by A.C. Hepburn [IR H271] examines the religious influences in Belfast from 1850 to 1950.

County Armagh

Armagh History and Society, edited by A.J. Hughes and William Nolan, [IR H527] contains thirty scholarly essays about the county. *County Armagh 100 Years Ago: A Guide and Directory, 1888* by George Henry Bassett [IR D012] is a reprint of an early directory featuring the names of the residents from that time. R.G, Gillespie's

Settlement and Survival on an Ulster Estate: The Brownlow Lease Book 1667-1771 [IR E 013] explores the history of an Irish estate.

County Cavan

The 1821 census for the civil parish of Crosserlough (Kildrumfertin) included over 8,000 names, addresses, ages, and occupations. This data is compiled in *Crosserlough, Co. Cavan 1821 Census* by Marie Keogh [IR G014 v.17]. Noel Farrell has written a series of books for beginning researchers in various counties. His *Exploring Family Origins and Old Cavan Town; Cavan Town Roots* [IR J051 V.2] offers helpful information on this specific area.

County Derry (Londonderry)

Another book recently added to the library collection is *The People of Derry City, 1921* [IR 929.341621 MIT] by genealogist Brian Mitchell. Arranged by surname, with street address, it provides a basic record of information for that city in a year when no Irish census was conducted.

Numerous books on the Siege of Londonderry and the Plantation years can be found on the shelves, as well as books on gravestone inscriptions and general histories of the county, such as Sean MacMahon's *History of County Derry* [IR H536]. Another topic popular with Derry is emigration, as it was one of the main ports from which people sailed for America.

County Donegal

Explore the impacts of the famine in Ulster in Pat Conaghan's book, *The Great Famine in South-West Donegal, 1845-1850* [IR H055]. W.E. Vaughan's book on the Derryveagh evictions [IR H130] illustrates the horrors of that period. Hugh Dorian's *Outer Edge of Ulster: A Memoir of Social Life in Nineteenth-Century Donegal* [IR H416] examines culture and society in Donegal during the 1800s. Noel Farrell produced four guides for family research in specific towns in Donegal.

County Down

While not strictly genealogy-focused, John Stevenson offers insights through contemporary letters, journals, and diaries into the customs, tastes, and values of Irish life in *Two Centuries of Life in Down, 1600-1800* [IR H257]. Explore histories of specific areas, such as Trevor McCavery's *Newtown: The History of Newtownards* [IR H263], or Peter Carr's account of the small village of Dundonald near Belfast [IR H264]. Ian Maxwell provides research assistance in his informative book, *Researching Down Ancestors: A Practical Guide for the Family and Local Historian*. [IR J159].

County Fermanagh

Despite being a hefty 800 pages, Henry Glassie's *Passing the Time in Ballymenone: Culture and History of an Ulster Community* [IR H218] offers valuable insights into traditional Irish values and history. Additionally, readers can explore historic images in Helen Lanigan Wood's collection of city photographs, *Enniskillen: Historic Images of an Island Town* [IR H256].

County Monaghan

Patrick J. Duffy utilized primary records to create the document *Assisted Emigration from the Shirley Estate, 1843-1854* [IR E048]. For a comprehensive overview, refer to Peadar Livingstone's 700-page *The Monaghan Story: A Documented History of the County Monaghan from the Earliest Times to 1976*. [IR H045] In *Unsung Heroes: The War of Independence in Monaghan* [IR H579], Kevin McGeough highlights local individuals who played crucial roles in Monaghan during the War of Independence.

County Tyrone

Faye Logue's *Strabane and West Ulster in the 1800s* [IR H620] examines local historical events using information extracted from broadsheets and the *Strabane Morning Post*, 1812-1837. Discover local justice with Audrey M. Hodges' *Gallows and Turnkeys: A Short History of Omagh Gaol*. [IR H736]. Alternatively, explore *Around Dungannon* with author Felix Hagan [IR H372].

In addition to books, the Irish collection contains various issues of periodicals published by Irish county organizations or societies. However, they are not listed in the catalog at this time. Two such periodicals are:

Lecale Miscellany is the journal of the Lecale Historical Society in County Down.

North Irish Roots is the journal of the North of Ireland Family History Society.

Contact Librarian@genealogical.org if you are interested in learning about other periodicals held at the library or if you would like to learn more about materials in the Irish research collection.

Ann Eccles is a longtime active member of IGSI and is currently co-chair of the IGSI Library Committee. She served a few terms as president of the Society and was editor of this publication for 16 years. Ann has traced four of her great-grandparents to counties Armagh and Tyrone; another four are from the Republic of Ireland.



Ulster Libraries Archives, Museums & Ancestral Heritage Centres: *A Visitors' Guide by Robert Keating O'Neill*

by Trish Little Taylor

Robert K. O'Neill's guide was published in 1997 and was produced with a North American audience in mind. O'Neill's research for the book began in 1991 when he joined a study tour of Ulster libraries and archives to identify resources for genealogists and to promote cooperation. The increasing interest in ancestral research prompted American and Canadian researchers to seek more localized references and guides. Developed in cooperation with major libraries and archival institutions and published by the Ulster Historical Foundation, the visitors' guide was, and still is, an excellent resource.

Why should researchers consider a twenty-eight-year-old publication? Finding unique resources that identify localized sources may help break down a research brick wall. Sources mentioned in O'Neill's guide may be available online today. Local libraries and historical societies are tasked with collecting materials relevant to their specific geographic areas. Amateur historians may have contributed indexes or clippings from local newspaper articles to their local repository, which may not otherwise yet be digitized. The major repositories, including the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI), the Ulster Historical Foundation, and the National Library of Ireland, have been extensively documented. However, smaller, regional, or specialized institutions often remain undiscovered by genealogists and family historians. A notable mention is of the Northern Ireland Library Authority.



Figure 1: *Useful Websites menu under Resources > Cultural Heritage on the Libraries NI website*

Public Library Sources

The Northern Ireland Library Authority, or Libraries NI (https://www.librariesni.org.uk), provides public library services in Northern Ireland. Its online resources include, but are not limited to, free access to e-books, databases, and collections. The Libraries NI drop-down menus extensively list regional libraries by county and other significant area designations (like townlands). Local library branches may house collections developed by amateur historians, such as privately published books, Excel spreadsheets of research data, or other artifacts.

Under the "Resources" menu on the Libraries NI website, a "Cultural Heritage" section lists several beneficial resources for genealogical research. One example from this section is a list of "Useful Websites."

A second example of the unique resources available from this section is "Support Materials," seen on page 63.

Specialized Libraries

Special Libraries encompass business, university, and religious libraries. Queen's University (https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/InformationServices/TheLibrary/SpecialCollections/) and Ulster University (https://guides.library.ulster.ac.uk/specialcollections) are in Belfast.

A list is generated when a researcher conducts an online search for colleges and universities. Records and pictures may be found if an ancestor attended one of these schools.



Figure 2: *Support Materials menu under Resources > Cultural Heritage on the Libraries NI website*



Figure 3: *https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/County_Tyrone,_Ireland_Genealogy*

Archives, County Heritage Centers, and Museums

The O'Neill book lists county heritage centers, local museums, and religious archives. After numerous Google searches, it became evident that since the 1997 publication, *FamilySearch* has engaged with these organizations to digitize their records. As a reminder of how valuable the *FamilySearch Research Wiki* is, here is an example of a recent search strategy:

1. Access *FamilySearch*.org, Search > Research Wiki >
2. Search by place in the *FamilySearch Research Wiki*, such as County Tyrone.
3. Select a record group for investigation.

Conclusion

Robert O'Neill's guide is nearly twenty-eight years old, published in December 1997. However, the information sourced within may still be as relevant today as in 1997. With the proliferation of small organizations hosting their own websites, finding some of the resources mentioned may be easier without scheduling your next research trip to Northern Ireland. Dusting off an old book from my shelves and realizing how I could still glean good information prompted me to view older books I hadn't picked up in years in a new light. Don't judge a book by its old cover; take a look at your bookshelves, and you may uncover other new uses for similarly old, dog-eared friends.

Check your local library, used bookstores, or eBook stores for Robert Keating O'Neill, *Ulster Libraries: Archives, Museums & Ancestral Heritage Centres* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1997).

Trish Little Taylor is a retired librarian living in Virginia. She graduated with a BA from the University of Mary Washington, an MLS from Western Michigan, and an MH from the University of Richmond. She is co-chair of IGSI's Education Committee and is also a Board member. Her Irish roots are from Leitrim, Tipperary, and Limerick. She likes to help others discover their roots.



From County Donegal to the Banks of the Brandywine

by John P Gwinn

The Catholic Church of St. Joseph on the Brandywine, originally known as Saint Joseph's Church, is less than a mile and a half from former President Joseph Biden's home in Wilmington, Delaware, and has served as the home parish of the 46th President.[1] The church and its accompanying upper and lower cemeteries are located in the now very tony neighborhood of Greenville. Still, many of the Irish people buried in that hallowed ground came from humble origins. Many had worked right down the hill from the church at the E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company powder mill, making gunpowder in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The Du Pont family, prominent in French society, emigrated from France at the end of the eighteenth century. Éleuthère Irénée du Pont set up his powder mill on the Brandywine Creek where a former cotton-spinning mill had stood. The company was launched as E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company, and the first gunpowder was produced in April 1804.[2]

Clearing the land and building the gunpowder mills required significant manpower. In July 1803, Irénée happily informed his brother, Victor, that the building work was progressing quickly and that he had been motivated "by the arrival of three boats of Irishmen, which have furnished all the workmen we needed."[3] Mr. du Pont was won over by the Irishmen and wanted to maintain their employment. The company needed reliable and hardworking employees who were not too averse to risking their lives daily while milling and grinding the ingredients for black gunpowder.

Irénée also believed that married men were more reliable and trustworthy than young, single men, so he soon offered to help his employees bring family members from Ireland. In particular, the powder mill families had their roots in Ulster and County Donegal, as in my family's case.[4] The du Pont Company began relocating families across the Atlantic. "Between 1823 and 1856, E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company helped approximately fifteen hundred men, women, and children emigrate from Ireland to the United States."[5] The small city of Wilmington, Delaware, which in 1840 had a population of 8,367, had increased to 13,979 by 1850.[6]

My 2x great-grandfather, Daniel Haggerty, was born on 20 November 1864, in Trillick, County Donegal, the son of Patrick and Mary. At sixteen, he left home and sailed to America on the SS *England*. The ship initially left the port of Derry and finally docked in New York on 8 November 1880. Daniel would eventually work at the powder mill with his future father-in-law, Edward Gallagher.[7]

Many of the jobs available to Irish immigrants in nineteenth-century America carried the risk of disability or, worse yet, death. Still, with du Pont, workmen at least had good wages and some security for their families. According to researcher Margaret Mulrooney,

> *Beginning with E.I. du Pont in 1802 and continuing at least until the death of his son, Henry, in 1889, managers of the powder company pledged to uplift their workmen through various policies of direct assistance, including good wages, interest-bearing savings accounts [they paid 6% interest on balances over $100], free or low-cost housing, education for children, opportunities for advancement, and impressive benefits for widows.*[8]

On the passenger list of the SS *Europa*, under her maiden name of Deery, Bridget, a newly widowed single mother, and her young daughter Ellen [later known as Ella, and my 2x great-grandmother] traveled to America, departing from Glasgow, Scotland, and arriving in New York on 9 April 1873.[9] Bridget and her daughter were also from County Donegal, the Parish of Moville, near the coast. Ellen, born in Leckemy, was baptized on 4 September 1870 at the Parish of Moville, County Donegal, the daughter of William Kearney and Bridget Deery. Her father registered her birth in the records office on 31 October 1870, where his occupation was given as a "Cottier."[10] Sadly, William died not even a month later, on 26 November 1870, at the young age of 25.[11]

Bridget (Deery) Kearney and Ella Kearney likely moved to Wilmington, Delaware, with other folks who immigrated on the same ship, the *Europa*, and became employees at the du Pont powder mill. Not long after their arrival, in late 1874, Bridget married Irish immigrant Ed Gallagher at St. Joseph on the Brandywine.[12]

Edward Gallagher was a du Pont powder mill employee when he married Bridget. The work at the powder mill was hazardous; one might even say "explosive." Between 1802 and 1921, there were 288 explosions, leaving at least 228 people dead.[13] The area around the Brandywine developed an Irish Catholic concentration partly due to the liberality of the du Ponts towards the church and the feeling of contentment it



DuPont Company metal keg mill workers, ca. 1885-1920[15] (Photo courtesy of the Hagley Museum and Library)

afforded the laborers. The diary of Father Patrick Kenny has offered information and perspective on the early Irish settlers in the Wilmington area. In 1818, Father Kenny noted an explosion at the powder works had killed thirty-five, twenty-eight of whom were Catholic, providing a valuable, if rough, indication of the percentage of Irish labor working in continuous danger at the powder mills.[14]

Daniel "Dan" Haggerty worked for a time as a "beamsman" in a Moroccan leatherworks factory in Wilmington's leather industry, which grew considerably during the nineteenth century.[16] Wilmington's economy and population swelled with the powder works and other milling industries. Wilmington's location near the Atlantic Ocean and the confluence of the Christina, Brandywine, and Delaware Rivers allowed for uncomplicated transportation of leather goods, driving Wilmington to become the world's second-largest producer of Moroccan leather for a time.[17]

In 1890, Ellen "Ella" Kearney married Dan Haggerty.[18] After the wedding, Dan left his job as a tanner at the leatherworks and sought employment at the du Pont powder mill with his new father-in-law, Ed Gallagher, where he earned somewhere between $42 and $48 a month.[19]

By 1884, company housing (aka "The Banks") for the Irish workforce had grown to 160 dwelling units. These units were grouped together into sections with expressive names like Flea Park, Squirrel Run, Walker's Banks, Wagoner's Row, and Henry Clay Village.[20] As families were given the chance to grow and prosper, many of them eventually moved out of The Banks and either rented or bought houses of their own in the growing town of Wilmington. By 1910, Dan and Ella Haggerty and their children were able to move out of company housing. They purchased a home on Townsend Street in a flood-prone neighborhood called Southbridge that was located in a low, marshy area where the Christina River flows into the Delaware.[21]

As demonstrated, the work at a gunpowder mill was extremely dangerous. As Father Kenny noted in his diary, explosions were a constant danger. Unfortunately, a number of Irish laborers were lost in these accidents. In an effort to minimize the damage caused by explosions, the powder rolling mills were designed with three masonry sides. The fourth wall, which faced the river, was made with thin, lightweight timber and had a sloping roof that could direct the full force of an explosion toward the river and away from other structures. Further precautions were taken with the construction of the mills and supporting buildings.[22]

Despite these precautions, there was no protection for the men mixing the powder inside the mill itself, so on 19 December 1893, Dan Haggerty just missed being blown to bits in a mid-morning explosion. His father-in-law, Ed Gallagher, had been mixing the charcoal, sulphur, and saltpeter into powder at the time and was killed instantly.[23] The explosion was felt for miles, shaking buildings in nearby Wilmington and even as far as Chester, Pennsylvania, some 14 miles away. What could be found of Mr. Gallagher's remains were gathered up in a bucket.[24]

Occurring just six days before Christmas, Edward's death must have created a sad and somber pall over the holiday for the large Gallagher family. Bridget and Ed had had 10 children after their marriage in 1874, in addition to Ella.[25] They had all been baptized at St. Joseph's on the Brandywine.[26]

The du Ponts had customarily provided widows' pensions (including free housing and lifetime payments) to widows of the men killed in their employ. After the Civil War, the company was under financial pressure so tightened its belt by capping the pensions at $500 maximum and providing limited annuities and free housing for a period of five years.[27] According to newspaper accounts, members of the du Pont family visited the home of Mrs. Gallagher after her husband's death. They promised her rent-free housing and a "generous" income of $10 a month for five years, unless she remarried.[28]

After Ed's death, Dan Haggerty left the powder works. It was too dangerous, and he and Ella had a growing family of their own to provide for. He went back to work at the leather tannery. Their fifth child, my great-grandmother Luella, was born 12 March 1897. According to family lore, she was named Luella because her mother had been reading a magazine and saw the name in an article. However, she could not be baptized without a Saint's name, so officially she was named Ella May.[29]



Grave of Daniel and Ellen Haggerty (author's photo)

Dan Haggerty, at the age of 53, died in 1918 from bronchopneumonia at the Homeopathic Hospital in Wilmington.[30] His wife Ella and their nine children survived him. Four years earlier, in 1914, my seventeen-year-old great-grandmother Luella married an Italian immigrant seven years her senior.[31] That immigrant, Philip Capriotti, had arrived at Ellis Island on 4 May 1907.[32] He and Luella rented an apartment on West 4th street. My half-Italian/half-Irish grandmother, Helen Marie Capriotti, was their 4th child. She was born 19 August 1922, in Wilmington, Delaware, four years after Dan Haggerty's passing. She would marry my grandfather, Lee Margolet, on 27 August 1941, in the same town where she was born.[33]

In 1921, DuPont closed the Brandywine powder yards. The demand for black powder was low, and the company was diversifying its product line.[34] Aside from the graves of Dan Haggerty and the many other Irishmen lured to Delaware to make gunpowder for DuPont, little remains of the old company housing or the powder mills, where generations of Irish families grew up. However, the Irish legacy lives on in the leather shops still present in Wilmington, in the scores of expensive condominiums built on the banks of the Brandywine, likely by descendants of the original Irish (and Italian) immigrants, and by demonstrating how tightly interwoven our ancestors were with the communities they both created and served. They represent our history, in ways both large and small.

Endnotes

1 *Wikipedia*, last edited on 10 January 2025, "St. Joseph on the Brandywine"

2 *Find a Grave*, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/308/ : accessed 30 January 2025), *Find a Grave* Memorial ID 308, citing Du Pont de Nemours Cemetery, Wilmington, New Castle County, Delaware, USA.

3 Cited in Nuala McGann Drescher, "The Irish in Industrial Wilmington, 1800-1845: A History of the Life of Irish Emigrants to the Wilmington Area in the Pre-Famine Years." (M.A. thesis, University of Delaware, 1960), 32. See also: Margaret M. Mulrooney,

"Labor at home: The domestic world of workers at the Du Pont powder mills, 1802-1902," Ph.D. dissertation (College of William & Mary: 1996), 12; *Dissertations, Theses, and Masters Projects*, William & Mary, Paper 1539623881 (https://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21220/s2-mj0e-dg16), p. 66.

4 Mulrooney, "Labor at home," p. 6.

5 *Hagley Museum and Library* (https://www.hagley.org/research/digital-exhibits/immigration-1803-1855 : accessed 30 January 2025), Dupont Company on the Brandywine exhibit > Immigration, 1803-1855.

6 *Wikipedia*, "1840 United States census," and "1850 United States census," Wilmington, Delaware, last edited on 5 June 2024 and 13 May 2024, respectively. https://www.wikipedia.org.

7 "Civil Records," database with images, *IrishGenealogy.ie* (https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/ : 30 January 2025), Inishowen District, Ireland, Birth Records, 1864, vol. 17, page 131, no. 116, Daniel Hagerty; citing General Register Office, Dublin. "New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7488/ : 30 January 2025), SS *England*, 8 November 1880, Dan Haggerty; citing National Archives in Washington, DC (NARA), microfilm M237, roll 36.

8 Mulrooney, "Labor at home," p. 35.

9 "New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7488/ : 31 January 2025), SS *Europa*, 9 April 1873, Biddy Deery, 25, and Ellen Deery, 2; citing National Archives in Washington, DC (NARA), microfilm M237, roll 36.

10 "Ireland Roman Catholic Parish Baptisms," *Findmypast* and Civil Birth Record, *rootsireland*.

11 Civil Death Record, William Kearney, Leckemy, laborer, registered by Brian Kearney, "occupier."

12 New Castle County, Delaware, Marriage Records, volume 52, page 205, Edward Gallagher and Bridget Derry [sic], 1874, recorded bond and license (with his mark and her original signature); "Delaware, U.S., Marriage Records, 1744-1912," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1508 : accessed 15 March 2025). Ella (baptized Ellen) kept her father's surname of Kearney, or Carney, as seen in many American records.

13 Hagley Museum and Library (https://www.hagley.org/research/digital-exhibits/mill-explosions : accessed 30 January 2025), Dupont Company on the Brandywine exhibit > Mill Explosions.

14 Richard J. Purcell, "Irish Settlers in Early Delaware," "Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies," vol. 14, no. 2 (1947): 94-107 (http://www.jstor.org/stable/27766773 : accessed 30 January 2025), 105.

15 Du Pont Company, "DuPont Company metal keg mill workers," *Hagley Digital Archives* (https://digital.hagley.org/ : accessed 4 April 2025), Accession 2017.226 [DuPont Company Brandywine powder yards and neighboring worker communities' photographs], Box 9, Folder 8, ID: HF_W063_086, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE, ca. 1885-1920, https://www.hagley.org.

16 1910 U.S. census, New Castle County, Delaware, Wilmington Ward 2, enumeration district (ED) 24, sheet 3-A, dwelling 31, family 31, Daniel Hagerty household; imaged "1910 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7884/records/2681484 : accessed 14 March 2025). Haggerty's job is listed as a "Moroccan beamsman" in a "leather works." For explanation of "beamsman" /"beamhouse", see: "What is a tannery? – Pre-tanning," blog post, *Carl Friedrik* (https://www.carlfriedrik.com/magazine/what-is-a-tannery : accessed 31 March 2025).

17 Powers, Mathew. "Main Office of the New Castle Leather Company and Allied Kid Company." Clio: Your Guide to History. February 10, 2021. Accessed January 31, 2025. https://theclio.com/entry/126513.

18 "Haggerty-Carney," *The Evening Journal* (Wilmington, Delaware), 30 April 1890, page 3, column 4, "Daniel Haggerty and Miss Ellen Carney were married last evening... St. Paul's R.C. Church"; imaged, *Newspapers.com* (https://www.newspapers.com/image/153927029 : accessed 15 March 2025).

19 Marie Walls, *Campbell and Haggerty History*, (Wilmington, DE: Self-Published, 2007). Also, per Moriarty, the average wage for powder mill worker during this time was $40-$50/month (p. 65).

20 Mulrooney, "Labor at Home," 200.

21 1910 U.S. census, Delaware, Wilmington Ward 2, ED 24, sheet 3-A, dwell. 31, fam. 31, Daniel Hagerty.

22 Mulrooney, "Labor at Home," 29.

23 "Powder Mill Explosion," *The Daily Republican* (Wilmington, Delaware), 19 December 1893, page 4, column 9; imaged, *Newspapers.com* (https://www.newspapers.com/image/605040510 : accessed 15 March 2025).

24 "Blown to Atoms!" *The News Journal* (Wilmington, Delaware), 19 December 1893, page 3, column 1; imaged, *Newspapers.com* (https://www.newspapers.com/image/159881798 : accessed 15 March 2025).

25 New Castle Co., Del., Marriage Licenses and Returns, 1874, Gallagher-[Deery]. 1900 U.S. census, New Castle County, Delaware, Wilmington Ward 8, enumeration district (ED) 36, sheet 3-A, dwelling 44, family 45, Bridget Gallagher household; imaged "1900

United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7602/records/7857257 : accessed 14 March 2025).

[26] Walls, Campbell and Haggerty, 2007.

[27] Mulrooney, "Labor at Home," 46.

[28] "Blown to Atoms!" *Delaware Gazette and State Journal*, 21 December 1893, page 1, column 1; imaged, *Newspapers.com* (https://www.newspapers.com/image/656234763 : accessed 15 March 2025).

[29] 1900 U.S. census, New Castle County, Delaware, Wilmington Ward 2, enumeration district (ED) 4, sheet 13-B, dwelling 322, family 212, Daniel Hagerty, [laborer at the Moroccan leather factory]; imaged "1900 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7602/records/3375145 : accessed 14 March 2025). "Delaware, U.S., Birth Records, 1800-1932," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1672/records/120747 : accessed 15 March 2025), Ella May Haggerty, 12 March 1897.

[30] New Castle County, Delaware, "Delaware, U.S., Death Records, 1861-1933," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1674/records/235986 : accessed 15 March 2025), Standard Death Certificate: Delaware, Daniel Haggerty, 17 June 1918. Note: Date on headstone photo is incorrect.

[31] "Delaware, U.S., Marriage Records, 1750-1954," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61368/records/900013646 : accessed 15 March 2025), Haggerty-Capriotti, 9 May 1914.

[32] "New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7488/ : 30 March 2025), SS *Konigin* Luise, 4 May 1907, Filippo Capriotti, 22, line 28; citing National Archives in Washington, DC (NARA), microfilm T715.

[33] Del., "Marriage Records, 1750-1954," image, marriage certificate no. 4436 (file no.), Margolet-Capriotte, 27 August 1941.

[34] *Hagley Museum and Library* (https://www.hagley.org/research/digital-exhibits/company-chronology-1890-1921 : accessed 30 January 2025), Dupont Company on the Brandywine exhibit > Company Chronology: 1890-1921.



John Gwinn was born and raised in Wilmington, Delaware, not far from the banks of the Brandywine River. He worked for one summer during high school washing glassware in a Du Pont Company Laboratory. He currently resides in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with his daughter. Besides doing genealogical research about his family, he writes and records radio programs about Minnesota culture and history and plays the snare drum in the Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band.

Adding Historical Context to Genealogical Research

Historical context influences how genealogists interpret the application of laws, language, and customs, as well as various internal and external factors and norms relevant to a specific place and time in history. The records we diligently search for can provide a name, date, or place of birth. These facts are the foundational pieces of our family trees. However, without considering when, where, about whom, and by whom a record was created, we may miss other essential information that aids in developing our story for each branch of our tree.

Consider what a basic family tree of names, dates, and places truly conveys about the individuals it represents. John Gwinn's article exemplifies the significance of adding historical context to our family research. His deep dive into the history of the du Pont powder works in Delaware may have led him to discover records or information relevant to his genealogical research. The du Ponts managed their Irish employees with more humanity than we often observe regarding our Irish immigrant ancestors. Their acknowledgment of the importance of family to the laborers suggests that we should examine immigration records for the chain migration of additional family members from Ireland.

While reading the Gwinn article, consider how your genealogical research might be enhanced by developing a historical context around the lives of your ancestors. As part of the Genealogical Proof Standard, grasping this broader context is essential for conducting reasonably exhaustive research.[1]

Endnote

[1] Board for Certification of Genealogists, Genealogy Standards, second edition revised (Nashville: Turner Publishing Co., 2021), 12.

Derry – Londonderry: Gateway to a New World

by Brian Mitchell

Editor's note: The following excerpts are taken from Brian Mitchell's book *Derry - Londonderry: Gateway to a New World* and are reprinted with his permission.[1]

From the sailing ships of the late 1600s to the last transatlantic steamer at the onset of World War II in 1939, Derry – Londonderry was one of the principal emigration ports in Ireland.[2]

17th Century Emigrants

Derry's port was ideally situated at the head of the 24 miles long by 2 miles wide and virtually land-locked Lough Foyle. The Lough was sheltered from the prevailing westerly winds by the Inishowen peninsula, making its harbour a safe and accessible refuge in all weather. Owing to her westerly positioning, Derry was seen as being halfway between London and the American colonies; a Derry ship "is no sooner out of the river, but she is immediately in the open sea and has but one course."

Derry was, therefore, well-placed to benefit from the emigration of Ulster residents to North America. Starting about 1680, the first trickle of north Irish emigrants, mainly from the Laggan (County Donegal) and Foyle valleys (Counties Derry and Tyrone), arrived in the American colonies.

18th Century Emigration and the Ulster-Scots

Between 1718 and the start of the War of American Independence in 1776, some 250,000 Ulster-Scots travelled through the ports of Belfast, Londonderry, Newry, Larne, and Portrush, heading for the British Colonies in North America. Often referred to as "Scotch-Irish" or "Scots-Irish" in the United States, Ulster-Scots were descendants of 17th century Scottish Presbyterian settlers in Ulster's nine counties: Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, and Tyrone in Northern Ireland; and Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan in the Republic of Ireland.

In what was to become the start of a large-scale exodus of Ulster-Scots, ten vessels departed Londonderry and Coleraine in 1718, bringing with them 1,000 Northern Irish people who landed and disembarked at Boston. The bulk of these early emigrants came from the Foyle (Counties Derry, Donegal, and Tyrone) and Bann valleys (Counties Derry and Antrim).

Prior to 1776, thirty percent of Ulster-Scots (around 75,000 people) had emigrated through Derry's port to North America, primarily landing in Philadelphia. Later Ulster-Scots departing through Derry founded the settlements of Londonderry, Nova Scotia (Canada) in 1770, and Londonderry, New Brunswick (Canada) in 1818.

After landing in Philadelphia, Ulster-Scots poured across the Susquehanna and into the Cumberland Valley. Many later moved south through the Great Valley and into the Shenandoah Valley (aka the "Valley of Virginia"), between the Blue Ridge and Appalachian ranges, before continuing into the Piedmont of North and South Carolina.

By the Revolutionary war in 1776, about 90% of Ulster emigrants had settled in Pennsylvania, The Valley of Virginia, and the Carolinas, dominating a 1,000-mile frontier. Of the early settlers in Pennsylvania, the Quakers were considered better traders, the Germans, better farmers, and the Ulster-Scots the best at coping with frontier conditions, if somewhat "troublesome settlers to the Government and hard neighbours to the Indians," according to a colonial administrator.

19th Century Emigration in the Age of Sail

There is still a tendency to see the Famine (1846-1851), when over a million people left Ireland for North America, as the beginning of the Irish Diaspora. In reality, heavy emigration from Ireland began well before the Famine and continued well after it. When the Napoleonic Wars ended in 1815, many small farmers, agricultural labourers, and rural tradesmen in Ireland saw emigration as the only solution to their declining economic prospects. Emigration thus acted as a "safety valve," enabling young men and women with little economic prospects to escape Ireland.

Derry's importance as an emigration port continued to grow in the 19th century; it was a profitable trade. Derry's merchants became ship-owners rather than shipping agents for American and British companies. Twice a year, in spring and in autumn, their ships took emigrants overseas and returned with a cargo of timber or grain, ensuring a sizeable profit.

Saint John (New Brunswick), Quebec (Canada), and New York and Philadelphia in the United States were the primary destinations for emigrants departing from Derry in the first half of the 19th century.

Of thirty-eight emigrant ships sailing from Derry in 1836, thirty-seven sailed for these ports, two thirds of which went to Saint John and Philadelphia.

The strong trade links established between the ports of Londonderry and Philadelphia by the mercantile community were reinforced by family connections on both sides. In 1771, the American colonies took more linen cloth and provisions from Derry than Britain did. These Derry connections continued into the 19th century, with the addition of trading partners in Liverpool (England), Glasgow (Scotland), and New Brunswick (Canada).



Anchor Line paddle tender Seamore *departs Derry, taking 300 emigrants to an ocean liner anchored at Moville c. 1929 (Bigger and McDonald Collection, Libraries NI).*

Sickness and Shipwreck

Conditions on board 18th century emigrant ships were harsh. Disease thrived on overcrowded ships. Emigrants were allocated communal berths in the space between decks, averaging a height 4' 6" and seldom exceeding 5' 6". Port holes providing ventilation and light were non-existent. Further hazards included storms, shipwreck, and even capture by French and Spanish privateers. By the 1770s, the voyage across the Atlantic took seven weeks on average.

In the 19th century, Europe was in the grip of a cholera epidemic, which it spread to North America. The *Londonderry Sentinel* of Saturday, 18 August 1832, recorded the deaths of 361 people in Quebec from cholera, with "passengers susceptible to the disease after a long sea voyage." The death rate at sea increased twelve-fold during the Famine; ship fever left sixty of the *Superior's* 360 passengers dead before they arrived at Quebec in 1847.

Shipping Lines

By the 1850s, local companies William McCorkell & Co., founded in 1778, and J & J Cooke, dominated transatlantic trade. J & J Cooke carried 22,199 passengers to North America between 1847 and 1867, with nine ships purchased specifically for the emigration trade. Forty-one percent of the 12,385 emigrants leaving Derry at the height of the Famine were carried to North America by J & J Cooke.

Derry served as the main emigration port for Counties Derry, Donegal, and Tyrone prior to the establishment of an Irish railway network in the 1860s. Over 40% of J & J Cooke's passengers in 1850 came from these counties, while McCorkell's line ran twenty-six passenger ships until 1897.

Pre-paid Passage Certificates

From its earliest days, Irish migration has been a family affair. The Irish either moved with kin or moved to join kin. By the 19th century, the emigrant trade in Derry depended largely on people in North America paying the fare to bring over family and friends.

J & J Cooke's Passenger Book records the names and addresses of 22,199 emigrants carried on their ships from Derry to North America between 1847 and 1867, many of whom held pre-paid passage certificates that had been purchased in the office of J & J Cooke's agent in Philadelphia (Andrew J. Catherwood).

Similarly, Robert Taylor and Co. of Philadelphia's order book records the names and addresses of 5,184 Irish emigrants in Philadelphia who were 'engaged' (i.e., 'in receipt of pre-paid passage') to sail from Derry on McCorkell ships between November 1863 and April 1871.

Liverpool

From the 1830s to 1860s, the port of Liverpool emerged as the preferred port of embarkation for Irish emigrants heading for North America. The introduction in the 1820s of regular steamboat services from Derry to Liverpool and Glasgow facilitated the transport of emigrants to North America, Australia, and a rapidly growing industrial Britain.

The Derry to Glasgow passenger and livestock steamer was known in Donegal as 'The Derry Boat' and in Derry as 'The Scotch Boat.' This steamer was an important part of Derry's maritime history, running for 137 years.

Australia

From 1837 to 1845, the British government fitted out ships to take selected emigrants from Irish ports such as Belfast, Cork, Derry, and Limerick to New South Wales, Australia. Eligible emigrants, particularly "married agriculturists, not exceeding a certain age, with their wives and families," were given free passage.

In 1837 and 1838, three ships provided by the government (*Adam Lodge*, *Parland* and *Susan*) sailed direct from Derry for New South Wales with nearly 1,000 emigrants. Other 19th century Irish emigrants sailed from British ports to Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

Emigration in the Age of Steam: The late-19th and early-20th Centuries

Between 1861 to 1939, transatlantic liners called at Moville, some 18 miles downstream from Derry, to pick up emigrants ferried from Derry in paddle tenders. Derry became increasingly dependent upon transatlantic steamers from the Anchor, Anchor-Donaldson, Allan, and Dominion Lines stopping at Moville to pick up passengers and mail on their way to Canada and the U.S.

In 1883, emigrant departures (12,385) from Derry exceeded the number of people who went through the port during 1847 (the Famine's peak year), when 15,217 emigrants boarded 154 steamers stopped at Moville, 10,496 of whom were traveling to the U.S., and 4,721 to Canada.

Annual emigration reports from the Port of Londonderry show that approximately 194,000 total passengers journeyed from Moville to North America, most of whom were headed for the United States.

Government records from 1851 to 1920 show that 407,781 people emigrated from Counties Derry, Donegal, and Tyrone to lands beyond the British Isles.

Ireland's extensive rail network also carried emigrants from the whole Ulster Province towards Derry, making it the hub of departure to North America.

The 1939 outbreak of WWII meant the end of emigrant and tourist trade. When peace came in 1945, the transatlantic liners did not return to Derry.

Endnotes

[1] Mitchell, Brian, *Derry-Londonderry: Gateway to a New world: The story of emigration from the Foyle by sail and steam* (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2014).

[2] James Wilson, "Why is Derry also called Londonderry?" *IrishCentral* (https://www.irishcentral.com/roots/history/derry-called-londonderry : posted May 2024).

The names of the city and county Derry were renamed Londonderry in 1613 by Royal Charter. Nationalists favor the name *Derry*, and unionists *Londonderry*. Although Londonderry is the official name, informally, plain Derry will do.

Brian Mitchell has been involved in local, family, and emigration research in the greater Derry area since 1982. He supervised construction of www.derry.rootsireland.ie's Co. Derry database, which contains one million+ civil and parish records dating from 1642-1922. He has also authored several Irish genealogy reference books, including A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland, A Guide to Irish Parish Registers, Irish Passenger Lists 1847-1871, *and* Genealogy at a Glance: Irish Genealogy Research. *He is currently contracted to Derry City and Strabane District Council as their genealogist; they encourage researchers to send any queries by email at genealogy@derrystrabane.com.*



Ulster Province Resources *(Continued from page 48)*

The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) (https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/public-record-office-northern-ireland-proni); Northern Ireland's official archive.

RootsIreland.ie website (https://www.rootsireland.ie). Offers over 23 million Irish records, including census enumerations, passenger lists, birth/marriage/death records, and searches by county. Must have a subscription for full access.

Roulston, William, *My Roots: Tracing your Belfast Ancestors* (Ulster Historical Foundation, 2012).

Roulston, William, *Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors: The Essential Genealogical Guide to Early Modern Ulster, 1600-1800* (Ulster Historical Foundation, 2005).

Ulster Historical Foundation, website, *Ulster Historical Foundation* (https://ulsterhistoricalfoundation.com/). Offers workshops, online courses, an online research library, and online bookstore.

Why I Volunteer

IGSI thrives because our members generously share their time and talents. The board recognizes how fortunate we are to have such a wonderful mix of volunteers. Some live close enough to assist at the Hoffman Library, while others support IGSI from as far away as Ireland. While many IGSI volunteers have served for a long time, we are grateful for those who have stepped up more recently.

We asked a few of our members why they volunteer, and here is what they had to say.

Kay Swanson has handled Membership duties for about 15 years. She processes checks and sends emails or letters to members if there's an issue to resolve. Kay states:

> *"It is very rewarding to serve in various IGSI functions and good to know our work is appreciated. I volunteer for IGSI since I enjoy researching my family history, and so many at our library are so willing to help others and me with our research. Our members are very supportive of our mission and frequently thank us for the work our society does. Quite often we receive compliments on the quality of our quarterly,* The Septs."

Mark Hartnett started volunteering in 2015 and frequently staffs the reception desk at the Minnesota Genealogy Center. Mark modestly describes his contributions, calling himself the "Walmart greeter" and the "mule" when shelves and file cabinets need to be moved around.

> *"I enjoy greeting the people (who are always smiling, curious & enthusiastic) coming thru the MGC door (especially for the first time), giving them a tour of the Center, then turning them loose. [They have] so many great family lore stories that I hope they can prove."*

Jane Halloran Ryan, one of *The Septs* proofreaders, writes:

> *"I was asked to get involved with proofreading* The Septs *magazine last year after I finished my PhD. I was delighted to be asked as being a member of the IGSI internationally (I live in Ireland) this allowed me to be involved with the organisation. I am enjoying doing this, and learning about research that others are doing."*



Kathleen Foley and Janelle Asselin announcing door prizes at IGSI UHF event

Janelle Asselin has recently become very involved in IGSI, serving in many capacities, including running IGSI's new-ish Instagram account. Janelle comments:

> *"I decided to volunteer with IGSI once I was a member because I found the website, publications, and presentations to all be invaluable resources, and I wanted to help make that possible for others who were just diving in deeper on their own genealogy. I've continued to volunteer with IGSI because I found such a wonderful community among the other volunteers. Genealogy can so often be a solo hobby or profession, and it's nice to spend time with other people who share your passion for family history. Although I'm not local to the IGSI's home base, there's no end of volunteer tasks I can take on from home, which so far have included proofreading for* The Septs, *joining the Education committee and helping with our webinars, writing a column for our eNewsletter, and founding and chairing the Marketing committee."*

Go Raibh Maith Agat!

Thank you to all the donors who helped IGSI exceed its 2024 donation goal. Donations are an important part of our financial budget and we think they are a reflection of the value that members place on the benefits the organization provides. We appreciate this vote of confidence!

We are very fortunate to have many members donate each year and truly prize donations in any dollar amount.



Your contributions are greatly appreciated.

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Thank You to All Our Volunteers

by Jeanne Bakken, Volunteer Coordinator

The Irish Genealogical Society International wishes to thank those who volunteered in 2024. We are an organization that relies on volunteers, and in 2024, a total of 3,634 volunteer hours were reported. All committees, events, and projects are listed along with the names of the members who dedicated their time. Thank you; you are deeply appreciated. IGSI could not have achieved all we did without each and every one of you.

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2025 Webinar Series — Save the Dates!

Saturday, April 26 | *Mr. Blackstone's Common Law* | Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL
William Blackstone's 18th-century book, Commentaries on the Law of England, was such an influential body of work that it became the definitive source on common law for all English-speaking countries. Blackstone's work is notable because it methodically collected and categorized English statutes and judicial decisions into coherent principles that could be more easily understood by laypersons. So absolute was its authority that our founding fathers chose it as the basis of our American legal system. Judy Russell will address its value and why historians and genealogy researchers should consult it regularly.

Saturday, May 31 | *Unlocking Alien Passenger Codes* | by Elizabeth Williams Gomoll, CG
While everyone enjoys locating ancestor names and locations on passenger manifests, often there is more to the story than immediately recognizable. Elizabeth Gomoll will help attendees understand the number codes and cryptic abbreviations the U.S. Customs staff added to passenger lists and what they can reveal about an immigrant's experience after arriving in America. This presentation will be hybrid, i.e., both in-person and online.

Saturday, June 28 | *The Same Name – Everywhere* | by Chelley Brekke McClear
It can be challenging to determine whether a record references your forebear when there are several people of the same name living in the same location at the same time. Chelley McClear will explain how to use grids and spreadsheets to help untangle these lives and identify which is your specific ancestor. Using trees to solve non-parental events may also be discussed. This presentation will be hybrid.

If you have questions about any of our webinars or classes, contact Trish and Walt, IGSI Education Co-Chairs, at Education@IrishGenealogical.org.

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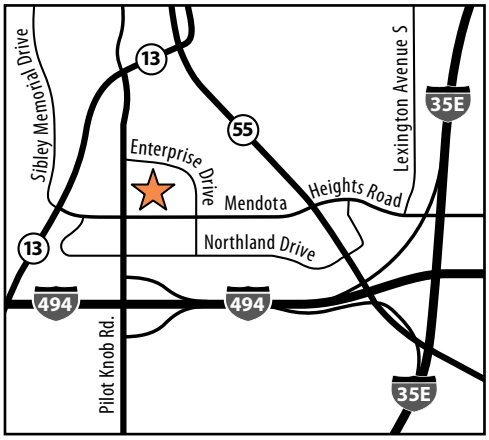
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During severe weather, or if traveling a long distance, please call before coming to the library to check if open.

The library is a self-supporting research library staffed by volunteers. If you are a member of the IGSI and are coming from out of town, contact Librarian@IrishGenealogical.org so we can have an Irish researcher available to meet you.

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The Septs

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IRISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Genealogy Library Open

The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2025.

The Hoffman Research Library is a private genealogy research library created for members of the organizations in the MGS Partners' Group. Access to the library materials is free to members of IGSI and other MGS Partner societies. Non-members and the general public are requested to pay a per visit $10 donation for use.

The Hoffman Library will be open only if there are two volunteers available to staff the building. (Won't you consider becoming a MGC/library volunteer to help ensure research access for all?)

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Monday	10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
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Irish Saturdays

Stop by the library on the second Saturday of the month between 10 AM and 4 PM for Irish research help from IGSI volunteers.

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OCTOBER 11, 2025
NOVEMBER 8, 2025
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Scan with your phone to view IGSI's website

The Septs, the quarterly journal of the Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc., is one of the primary benefits of IGSI membership and is published in January, April, July, and October. Members receive a printed version of the journal unless they have chosen to receive it electronically.

Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc.

2025

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of *The Septs* is built around a core theme. Research articles on the theme should be 1500-2500 words in length and include no more than 2-4 images. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g., family stories submitted by IGSI members and non-members, etc. Articles unrelated to the theme should be 750-1500 words.

If you wish to write on the theme or share case studies, family research, or articles on general Irish culture and history and genealogy resources, please contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadlines to ensure your article is considered for the proper issue.

Contributions and ideas are welcome. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the editorial staff.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2025 | October | Hidden – Women Lost to Time

Discover tips and resources for locating elusive female ancestors after their marriage, immigration, etc. Topics covered may include DNA and locating maiden names.
Deadline for articles: August 15, 2025.

2026 | January | Documenting Death

Learn more about your ancestors via sources such as death certificates, obituaries, probate materials, funeral homes, cemeteries, and even gravestone symbology. Techniques for accessing and interpreting death records are also encouraged.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2025.

2026 | April | Irish Tapestry

Contribute stories or resources focused on genealogy that explore topics not usually covered by standard *Septs* themes. All submissions will be considered.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2026.

2026 | July | Using Historical Newspapers

Explore how and when to use newspapers (or journals) to track ancestors beyond an obituary and provide context about their lives. Articles on newspaper repositories or newspaper case studies are welcome.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2026.

Cover Photo: *Injured soldier being cared for by the Red Cross on the South Western Front during the Irish Civil War*
Hogan Collection, National Library of Ireland.

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The July 2025 Edition of *The Septs*

by Donna Jones

I have been looking forward to *The Septs*' July military issue. Researching my military ancestors is fascinating. My interest began when I discovered that one of my ancestors was critically wounded in the Civil War after being stabbed with a saber. He stayed in a St. Louis, Missouri, hospital and was subsequently discharged via a certificate of disability.

I have ancestors who fought in the American Revolutionary War. My great-uncle served on a submarine in WWI, and I cannot imagine what that must have been like. Another great-uncle fought on the Pacific Front during WWII. I once found a book edited by Lt. Col. Max Myers on *eBay*, titled *Ours to Hold it High: The History of the 77th Infantry Division in World War II* (Washington Infantry Journal Press, 1947). This 585-page book covers my great-uncle's division's history from when its soldiers mustered at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, to the battles they fought, and it includes pictures, maps, and a personnel roster.

My 36-year-old grandfather volunteered during WWII and served in logistics in India, where he was responsible for ordering supplies to be flown from India to troops fighting in the Pacific. My dad joined the Army at age 18, after WWII ended, and served in the Engineering Corps in Japan. He joined the Army to attend college on the G.I. Bill.

It is important to me to tell their stories – not just the dates they served, but the battles they fought and what it was like to fight during those times. Military research and history are interesting, especially when they involve your ancestor(s).

Genealogy and Brain Health as We Age

by Walt Rothwell

I have dabbled in genealogy for decades and have volunteered with the American Association of Retired People [AARP] (https://www.aarp.org/) since my retirement six years ago. AARP volunteers engage in a wide variety of activities, including teaching classes on the safe use of technology, avoiding frauds and scams, adapting homes for aging, and understanding Medicare and Social Security.

A popular AARP topic lately has been the concept of brain health (https://www.aarp.org/health/brain-health/) and how to preserve it as we age. While many recognized strategies and activities are fruitful, the "six pillars" of brain health, as derived from the Global Council on Brain Health, include: Be Social, Engage Your Brain, Manage Stress, Ongoing Exercise, Restorative Sleep, and Eat Right [a.k.a. "BE MORE"] (https://www.aarp.org/pri/topics/health/brain-health/brain-healthy-behaviors/).

Last month, my genealogy and AARP worlds collided at the National Genealogical Society's (NGS) annual conference, which included a half-day, pre-conference online event titled, "Symposium on Healthy Aging and the Role of the Family History Community." This session brought together a unique mix of speakers, from *FamilySearch*, *Vivid-Pix* (which spoke on "family reminiscence therapy"), and the local Thrive Center's aging care professionals.

The key points of the program included the health and cognitive challenges facing an aging American population, the family history community's unique position to have a positive and broad impact on brain and social health, and that you can both benefit *and* help in your role as a family history researcher and advocate.

In short, all participants argued that our genealogy community is uniquely positioned to support activities that promote healthy aging. Genealogy societies, libraries, archives, and museums (SLAMs) assist thousands of people with their family history daily *and* contribute to the cognitive and social health of everyone.

Please remember that the research efforts, strategies, and conversations you pursue or teach are not only satisfying, but also help you age well, along with everyone you connect with or instruct in family history research! Happy trails!

After retiring from Oxford University Press, Donna Jones finally has more time to research her heritage and ancestry. She is passionate about genealogy education and is a member of the IGSI Education committee and the Board of Directors. IGSI provides her the opportunity to learn more about Irish research as she continues to search for where in Ireland her great, great-grandparents lived.

Walt Rothwell is an IGSI board member and co-chair of the Education Committee. He is also affiliated with the Yankee Genealogical Society and the Canadian Interest Group of the Minnesota Genealogical Society. He is endlessly researching family lines across North American, Ireland, and England.

Samhradh Sona! Happy Summer!

by Mary Stuart

I hope you are all enjoying as pleasant and relaxing a summer as possible. Here on the East Coast, we've been buffeted for weeks by petulant weather vacillating between rain squalls that drench us and excessive heat that tries to flambé us. I've taken to hiding inside as much as possible for fear that, like a Celtic vampire, I might burst into flames if I venture out.



Trish Little Taylor and Sandra La Vallee Mc Laughlin, photo by author

In other news, I had the good fortune in June to represent IGSI at the 53rd annual New Jersey Irish Festival at Monmouth Park Racetrack, where I met the inimitable Sandra La Vallee Mc Laughlin and Trish Little Taylor in person!

Most of the day was overcast and a little breezy, making it ideal for sitting outside all day talking to visitors. The three of us made a good team; Trish brought several books, including surname books, in which visitors could look up ancestors. Sandra created charts showing the distribution of Irish people in Monmouth and the surrounding counties. She did a fabulous job of hosting a large-scale map of Ireland, both answering questions and helping guests find their ancestral counties. I loitered in our booth with my laptop, which I used to look up genealogical records and ancestral counties on the fly for several people, including the marriage record for someone's 3X great-grandparents and beautiful sepia photos of another guest's ancestors, one of which they had never previously seen. Visitors seemed to enjoy the instant research.

A soft but steady rain began falling after lunch, but we remained dry and undaunted under a pop-up tent procured by Sandra. Each of us even had time for a side quest; I watched some young Céilí dancers in their ghillies, poodle socks, and glitzy finest, while Sandra chatted with one of the "Human Horse Race" contestants before the race. Trish, meanwhile, made a small profit off a racehorse named "Forever Chocolate." Now *that's* a moniker I can get behind. I may even have to co-opt it for a future book or album title...through proper copyright channels, of course.

This July, we have several excellent resources to help you find ancestors in military records. First, Sheilagh Doerfler of American Ancestors provides some outstanding examples of using military records to flesh out an ancestor's history. At the same time, Evva Benson Housley demonstrates where we might locate such records. Gigi Hickey does double-duty this quarter, providing first, an introduction to the *Daughters of the American Revolution's* (DAR's) online Genealogical Research System (GRS), and second, a thoughtfully researched history of Irish soldiers in the American Revolutionary War. Ann Eccles provides a book review of the recently released *Townlands of Ulster* as a palate cleanser, while Lois Mackin introduces us to an Irish naval stoker related by marriage to one of her husband's DNA ancestors. Last, our own Associate Editor, Kim Gehrman White, has compiled the sources mentioned in our articles into a spiffy table for ease of use.

Finally, I want to personally apologize to those of you who may have received copies of our April print issue with flimsy covers; it seems an error at our printing house caused copying machines to pull from a standard paper drawer instead of the cardstock drawer. These issues were processed and mailed out before any of us noticed...whoops!

Till next time, "May the sun shine warm upon your face, and rains fall soft upon your fields" (an Irish blessing).

Mary LaRue Stuart serves as Editor of The Septs *and on IGSI's Board of Directors. A native Hoosier and former university writing teacher with an MA in English, Mary is now a professional genealogist whose specialties include Indiana research, military repatriation, and DNA. Her Irish ancestors hail largely from Donegal/Northern Ireland. Mary is currently working on her BCG certification portfolio and is pursuing an AFA in Glass Arts. She enjoys singing, sewing, reading, and blowing glass in her non-existent spare time.*



The Irish: *Unacknowledged Heroes of the American Revolution*

by Gigi Hickey

The Irish and the Scots-Irish played a disproportionate and pivotal role in winning the American Revolution. Philip Thomas Tucker, PhD, a prolific historian of the Revolutionary War, built a convincing case for this argument in his 2015 book, *How the Irish Won the American Revolution: A New Look at the Forgotten Heroes of America's War of Independence*.

Until recent times, mainstream history generally overlooked or downplayed the importance of Irish immigrants to the success of the American patriotic cause. Modern scholarship has illuminated their role.

A diverse group of Patriots fought and won the War for Independence.[1] The Revolutionary military included both laborers and landowners, recent immigrants and long-established colonists, representing a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and national origins. Nonetheless, Irish and Scots-Irish immigrants stood out for their unexpectedly large and decisive contributions to the war efforts.[2]

Disproportionate Number of Soldiers

First, we should define the term "disproportion" regarding Irish involvement in America's War for Independence. Did the number of Irish immigrants who sided with the Patriots exceed their representation relative to the overall colonial population?

According to geographer/genealogist Brian Mitchell, about 250,000 Scots-Irish left Ireland for North America between 1717 and 1776.[3] Revolutionary War historian Thomas Fleming placed the number of Irish in the colonies at 300,000 by 1776.[4] However, some historians suggest Fleming's count may be low because it included only the Ulster Irish.

Historian David Noel Doyle pointed out the complexities of calculating the total Irish/Scots-Irish population — a composite of Irish Presbyterians of predominantly Scottish origin, Catholics from southern Ireland, as well as other Irish (e.g., Quakers and Anglicans).[5] Doyle lamented low estimates and suggested the overall Irish/Scots-Irish population in 1776 might have been as high as 450,000-500,000.[6]

The U.S. Census Bureau reliably estimated the total population of the new nation to be 2.5 million in 1776.[7] Consequently, while it is impossible to be precise, the Irish/Scots-Irish likely made up 12%-20% of the American population at the time.[8]

Exactly how many Irish served in the American Army and Navy is also subject to debate. The answer depends on who does the counting.

General George Washington's step-grandson, George Washington Parke Custis, is quoted as having written: "Ireland furnished one hundred men to any single man furnished by any other foreign nation."[9]

After exhaustive research, historian Michael J. O'Brien compiled a list of Irish surnames from Revolutionary muster lists and recruiting rolls. By his count, there were 695 Kellys in General Washington's army, 494 Murphys, 331 McCarthys, 327 Connors or O'Connors, 322 Ryans, and 248 Doughertys.[10] He went on to enumerate soldiers with ninety-six other common Irish names. O'Brien concluded approximately 38% of Washington's army was either Irish-born or of Irish descent."[11]

Scottish historian James Webb reported, "Estimates vary, but it is undeniable that the Scots-Irish comprised at least one-third and as many as one-half of the 'rebel' soldiers during the Revolutionary War."[12] His figures did not even count the Irish Catholics of Colonial America.

Other writers have claimed with certainty that two-fifths of the soldiers at Valley Forge were Irish and that the ratio would continue to grow after 1778.[13]

From these disparate accounts, one can reasonably conclude that a disproportionate number of Irish in the military did exist, and was approximately double their representation in the overall colonial population.

Disproportionate Fighting Spirit

Virtually all modern Revolutionary War historians emphasize that the disproportionate number of Irish/Scots-Irish in the Continental Army was not the only disproportionate contribution made by these soldiers. Irish/Scots-Irish soldiers also contributed a particularly resolute fighting spirit. According to Tucker, "Equally as impressive as the high numbers of Irish and Scotch-Irish Patriots who served throughout the struggle was the fact that these Celtic-Gaelic soldiers became Washington's most dependable and hardest fighting troops year after year."[14]

Tucker believed that this unique fighting spirit was rooted in Ireland's antagonistic relationship with England. He summarized it this way: "…The typical Irish soldier

was far from the stereotypical mercenary type. In overall terms, these Celtic-Gaelic soldiers were highly motivated not only because of America's struggle for liberty but also because of the overall Irish experience, especially regarding the centuries-long question for independence on Irish soil and the fact that England was the ancient enemy of the Irish people."[15]

Tucker notes how Irish immigrants were "fiercely antagonistic toward the king… Emerald Islanders were motivated by deep-seated concepts of self-determination, anti-aristocracy, and egalitarianism long before reaching America's shores: the central foundation for the most rebellious colonists in America."[16]

Economic realities also shaped and motivated Irish/Scots-Irish soldiers. Often at colonial societies' lowest social and economic rungs, their families were accustomed to adversity and hardship. The vast majority of the Scots-Irish had made their homes along the frontiers of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas, where they developed a resilience well-suited to the harsh demands of frontier life.[17]

As the war progressed and military service became less popular, Washington's Army became largely dependent on poor immigrants. Cash inducements and land bounties drew the lower classes to the military. They were encouraged to serve as soldiers for extended periods — a necessity for the Americans as the war dragged on.[18]

Tucker writes, "This multitude of young men and boys from the Green Isle were no ordinary soldiers in any sense…the Celtic-Gaelic warrior was an exceptional fighting man."[19] Their courage, determination, and, at times, ruthless resolve made them highly effective on the battlefield.

Notable Irish/Scots-Irish Military Generals

The Celtic-Gaelic "warrior tradition" made the Irish/Scots-Irish excellent military leaders. The following are just three of the many Patriots of Irish descent highlighted by Tucker in his book:

- Major General Richard Montgomery, born in County Dublin, died leading the assault on Quebec in December 1775. He was America's first general to be killed in combat during the American Revolution, making him "America's first authentic war hero and martyr to the cause of liberty."[20]
- General "Mad" Anthony Wayne, the son of Irish immigrants from Northern Ireland, got his nickname "for combat prowess, not mental instability."[21] Wayne commanded the elite Pennsylvania Continentals, which consisted of so many Irish and Scots-Irish soldiers that it became known as the "Line of Ireland."[22] Among the finest fighting men of Washington's Army, the Line of Ireland was said to "have served everywhere and surrendered nowhere."[23]
- General Henry Knox, whose parents were Scots-Irish immigrants from County Derry, played multiple key roles in Washington's Army.[24] In 1775, as mastermind of "one of the most stupendous feats of logistics,"[25] Knox and his troops successfully moved sixty tons of cannons from Fort Ticonderoga to Dorchester Heights, covering 300 miles of treacherous terrain in miserable winter conditions. His effort saved the day for the Americans by ending the Siege of Boston. Knox became an indispensable ally to Washington and later served as Secretary of War.[26]

At the war's conclusion, in April 1784, Lord Mountjoy reported to the British Parliament:

> *America was lost by Irish emigrants… I am assured from the best authority, the major part of the American Army was composed of Irish and that the Irish language was as commonly spoken in the American ranks as English, I am also informed it was their valor that determined the contest…*[27]

Though often overlooked by historians, Irish and Scots-Irish Patriots represented a disproportionately high percentage of troops, brought a distinctive fighting spirit, and included some of the cause's most innovative leaders in the fight for American independence. The Irish and Scots-Irish were an undeniable force in securing victory in the American Revolution. As we look forward to celebrating America's 250th birthday in 2026, we can reflect with gratitude on the outstanding contributions of Emerald Isle Patriots.

Endnotes

1 NSDAR's writing style guide states, "Patriot should be capitalized when referring to a Revolutionary War Patriot."

2 Phillip Thomas Tucker, *How the Irish Won the American Revolution: A New Look at the Forgotten Heroes of America's War of Independence* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, first paperback edition, 2020), 2.

3 Brian Mitchell, "Philadelphia: The Irish Gateway to America," reprinted as

blog posting at Genealogical.com, March 13, 2023. https://genealogical.com/2023/03/13/philadelphia-the-irish-gateway-to-america-by-brian-mitchell/

[4] Thomas Fleming, "Yankee Doodle with a Brogue: The Irish in the American Revolution," *IrishAmerica Magazine*, May/June 1998. Reprinted https://www.irishamerica.com/2020/07/yankee-doodle-with-a-brogue-the-irish-in-the-american-revolution-2/.

[5] David Noel Doyle, "The Irish in North America, 1776-1845," *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, eds. J. J. Lee and Marion R. Casey, (New York University Press, 2006), p. 171-179.

[6] Tucker, p. 51.

[7] "U.S. Census Bureau Releases Key Stats in Celebration of the Fourth of July," blog posting at commerce.gov, July 2, 2022. https://www.commerce.gov/news/blog/2022/07/us-census-bureau-releases-key-stats-celebration-fourth-july.

[8] Fleming/Doyle/U.S. Census Bureau: 300,000/2.5 million = 12%; 500,000/2.5 million = 20%.

[9] Connie Marshner, "How the Irish Saved the War of American Independence," *Royal Examiner*, March 22, 2023. https://royalexaminer.com/how-the-irish-saved-the-war-of-american-independence/2023.

[10] Michael O'Brien, *A Hidden Phase of American History: Ireland's Part in America's Struggle for Liberty* (New York: Dodd, Meade and Company, 1919), p. 216-218. https://archive.org/details/hiddenphaseofame00obri.

[11] O'Brien, p. xii.

[12] James Webb, *Born Fighting: How the Scots-Irish Shaped America* (New York: Broadway Books, 2004), p. 162.

[13] Marshner, "How the Irish Saved."

[14] Tucker, p. 163-164.

[15] Tucker, p. 15.

[16] Tucker, p. 44, 51-52.

[17] Mitchell, "Philadelphia."

[18] Tucker, p. 15.

[19] Tucker, p. 163.

[20] Tucker, p. 9.

[21] Tucker, p. 219.

[22] Tucker, un-numbered page between 196-197, caption for photo of General Anthony Wayne.

[23] Fleming and Doyle, "U.S. Census Bureau."

[24] Tucker, un-numbered page between 196-197, caption for photo of General Henry Knox.

[25] Victor Brooks, The Boston Campaign (Conshohocken, PA: Combined Publishing, 1999), p. 210.

[26] O'Dowd, p. 43.

[27] Niall O'Dowd, *George Washington and the Irish: Incredible Stories of the Irish Spies, Soldiers, and Workers Who Helped Free America* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2022), p. 4.

Gigi Hickey has twice served on the IGSI board and as IGSI blog editor since 2011. She currently volunteers as Co-Managing Editor of The Septs. *Finding the name of her 4X great-grandfather on Pennsylvania muster rolls in 2008 motivated her to prove both her lineage and his Revolutionary War service on an application to the Daughters of the American Revolution. Gigi has held leadership positions in the Lake Minnetonka (MN) DAR Chapter and at the state level.*



Did You Know?

In 2019, the Irish Cultural Center (ICC) of Western New England began collecting biographies and photos of Irish-born men who had served in the U.S. Military for an upcoming exhibit. After a pandemic-related delay, the in-person exhibit ran from November 11-21, 2021. These photos and bios have since been uploaded to ICC's website, which can be viewed at: https://www.irishcenterwne.org/programs/irish-veterans-photo-exhibit/.

Military Records: *An Overlooked Source in Irish Research*

by Sheilagh Doerfler

Researching our Irish ancestors can be a frustrating endeavor. Common names, sporadic parish records, and nearly non-existent early census records can stymie even the most experienced genealogists. When faced with a dwindling list of sources, consider exploring military records, which can provide a wealth of information beyond military service. They can serve as vital record replacements and census substitutes and can sometimes confirm Irish origins. You may find physical descriptions and health data amongst these records, which can be rare information found in few sources.

Our Irish ancestors, oppressed for generations, sought stability and a chance for economic independence within the ranks of the military. This involvement transported Irish military men worldwide, where they served with bravery and distinction. On the eve of the American Revolution in 1775, thousands of Irish immigrants had settled in the thirteen colonies. During this war, the Irish fought bravely on both sides; evidence of their service has been captured in the records of the British Army and the American forces. Sizable numbers of Irish immigrants enlisted in both the Continental Army and state militias, hoping to protect their new home from a familiar foe.

Military records from this era offer rich genealogical data, from details of military service to family data. This includes pension records, which document monetary support given to veterans and their families. The Revolutionary War Pension Act of 1818 allowed Continental Line soldiers to apply for financial assistance. The ensuing Pension Acts of 1832 and 1836 expanded eligibility to allow veterans of state militias and widows to apply. Today, these pensions are housed at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); many can also be accessed via *Fold3*.

John Davis was a New Sharon, Franklin County, Maine resident when he first applied for a pension in 1818. The affidavit detailing his military service noted that he enlisted in Captain Jeremiah Hill's Company for eight months at Saco, York County [county created in 1639], Maine, in 1775; this company was a part of Colonel James Scamman's Regiment. He then re-enlisted in this same company in 1776. Later, he served in Colonel Joseph Vose's 1st Massachusetts Regiment.[1] Most notably, John Davis saw service at the Battle of Bunker Hill, the Battle of Saratoga, and the Battle of Monmouth.[2] His pension application also recorded his age in 1818, 64, and the names of his family members: his wife, Hannah, and his children, Hannah, Catherine, Adam, and Amelia.[3]

In 1775, when John Davis first enlisted, he would have been a young man roughly twenty-one years of age. The population in Maine had been steadily increasing since the French and Indian War; its geographic position along the coast made York County an attractive place to live, drawing settlers from southern New England and many from Ireland.

Researching 18th-century ancestors can be challenging, as early record sets can be incomplete or nonexistent. However, as we have seen, military records can help to fill in these gaps, and state-based sources are some of the most helpful when beginning research. One of the most useful of these is the multi-volume set, *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War*, that was compiled at the beginning of the 20th century. This source offers an alphabetical listing of soldiers and sailors, provides information on their residence, origins, and military service, and can be found on *Google Books* and the *Internet Archive* (archive.org).

The corresponding muster rolls abstracted in *Soldiers and Sailors* that detail the service of John Davis in Colonel Joseph Vose's 1st Massachusetts Regiment reveal key information concerning his origins. On a list of deserters recorded at Camp Highlands in New York in July of 1780, John Davis's birthplace was listed as Simbross, Cork, Ireland.[4] A close inspection of the original muster roll does not clarify this location.[5] *The Placenames Database of Ireland* (logainm.ie), revealed no strong match for Simbross or even Simcross. However, there is a townland north of Lissavard called Sams Cross, which is the birthplace of Irish revolutionary Michael Collins (1890-1922). Though his origins in County Cork are inconclusive, the information contained in both John Davis's pension and muster roll provide valuable avenues for future research.

Similarly, many of our Irish ancestors enlisted in the British Army. This service transported troops worldwide as the British Empire engaged in various conflicts to protect and expand its territory. British Army records are comprehensive and can offer valuable biographical information. Many have been digitized, but not all collections are available digitally. To ensure an exhaustive search, be sure to check out research guides like "British Army Soldiers up to 1913" on the website of *The National Archives* at Kew (TNA).[6]

The British Crown was eager to settle Upper Canada (which now includes

Ontario) to secure its territory against American encroachment after the War of 1812. Military settlements were established, and land grants were offered to veterans. Many Irish arrived as soldiers to Upper Canada and remained to settle the province as veterans.

In 1826, James Kehoe, a tailor, and his wife, Sophia, sold the southwest half of lot number three in the first concession of Bathurst Township, Lanark County, Ontario, to Charles Brady.[7] Surveyed in 1816, Bathurst Township was established to facilitate the settlement of immigrants and veterans. An examination of the corresponding abstract index for Bathurst revealed that Kehoe had received this parcel of land via the British Crown, which suggests a land grant and possible military service.[8]

The corresponding Crown land grant confirmed that in 1821, James Kehoe received a 100-acre grant in the southwest half of lot number three in the first concession of the Bathurst Township. Kehoe was recorded as a veteran of the 49th Regiment, having served as a private.[9]

The 49th Regiment, also known as Princess Charlotte of Wales's Regiment of Foot, was deployed to Canada in 1802.[10] A search of British Army service records on *Findmypast* yielded discharge papers for a James Keough, confirming his service in the 49th Regiment. Born circa 1781 in Carlow parish, County Carlow, he first enlisted for a one-year term in 1799. His second term began in 1800; he was discharged from service on 8 July 1811. Physically, James was described as five feet nine-and-one-half inches tall, with brown hair, blue eyes, and a fair complexion. His profession was listed as tailor.[11] Here, we gain not only the birthplace of James Kehoe but also a physical description. Rich biographical information like this is unlikely to be found in other historical records.

Many of our Irish ancestors arrived in the United States in the 1840s, seeking refuge from the ravages of the Great Famine. As in previous generations, Irish immigrants joined the ranks of the military. Irish immigrants served in both the Union and Confederate Armies during the American Civil War. Pension records, as we have seen, can provide important biographical information. Additionally, the Compiled Military Service Records (CMSR) is an often-overlooked collection of our ancestors who served in the Civil War. The War Department began organizing this collection thirty years after the conflict ended, referencing original muster, pay, and hospital rolls, and other related sources. This information was transcribed onto cards and stored in envelopes. However, it is important to note that not *all* of the information was captured on these cards. It is imperative to examine the originals, too. The records from some Union states have been digitized and made available on *Fold3*, while records for other states must be ordered from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

James Funston was born circa 1830 in Ireland and was enumerated with his parents, David and Elizabeth, and seven siblings in the 1850 U.S. Federal Census for Irish Hollow in Jo Daviess County, Illinois.[12] David Funston, Jr., was born in Illinois in 1847, indicating that the family arrived in the United States sometime before that date.[13]

Five months after the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, James Funston mustered at Chicago into the Union Army's 19th Regiment of Missouri Infantry for a term of three years.[14] This unit was eventually reorganized into the 3rd Regiment of the Missouri Infantry. This regiment saw service at many engagements, including the Battle of Jackson and the Battle of Chattanooga.[15] Sadly, James Funston was injured during the Battle of New Hope Church in Paulding County, Georgia, on May 25 or 26, 1864; he succumbed to his injuries on 14 June 1864. His Final Statement record described James Funston as a thirty-year-old farmer with a fair complexion, blue eyes, and auburn hair.[16]

Perhaps most notably, James's birthplace was given as Carn, Ireland.[17] According to *logainm.ie*, there are several Carn placenames in Ireland. The records of the Methodist circuit of Ballintra in County Donegal recorded the baptisms of William Funston on 20 November 1841,[18] and Elizabeth Funston on December 19, 1843,[19] to parents David and Eliza [_____] Funston of Temple Carne [*sic*]. This family group was a strong match to the Funston family enumerated in the 1850 U.S. Federal Census at Irish Hollow, and whose members included father David Funston, mother Elizabeth Funston, and six-year-old daughter Elizabeth Funston.[20] Without an examination of James Funston's original service records, the Irish origins of the Funston family might have remained elusive.

These examples illustrate the power of military records and how they can offer key information regarding our veteran ancestors and their families. But before you delve into these collections, be sure to understand how they are organized, what has been digitized, and what records are only available locally. Seek out research guides like Military Records Research at The National Archives to help navigate these record collections.[21]

Over the centuries, our Irish ancestors left their homeland seeking new opportunities.

About American Ancestors®

American Ancestors® is a national nonprofit center for family history, heritage & culture based in Boston, Massachusetts that has been setting the gold standard for genealogical research since its founding in 1845. Today, American Ancestors serves 400K+ members and subscribers through AmericanAncestors.org, one of the world's largest online collections of family history resources. In 2025, American Ancestors launched the Family Heritage Experience, an interactive, state-of-the-art exhibition that introduces visitors to the joy of family history research, located at 97 Newbury Street at our headquarters in Boston. American Ancestors is also home to the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center, which preserves New England's Jewish history, and 10 Million Names, a project dedicated to finding the names of the enslaved men, women, and children in pre- and post-colonial America before emancipation. For more information, visit AmericanAncestors.org.

This often led to military service, which offered stable pay, housing, and security for many; hence, military records captured key information, like year and place of birth, military service, health information, and more. Be sure to add military records to your source list; you may break down your brick walls!

Resources

Friend or Foe: Researching Colonial Ancestors During the American Revolution (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOsn-_wYrqM)

United States, Revolutionary War Rolls - FamilySearch Historical Records (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/United_States,_Revolutionary_War_Rolls_-_*FamilySearch*_Historical_Records)

United States, Revolutionary War Pensions, 1800-1900 (https://www.fold3.com/publication/467/us-revolutionary-war-pensions-1800-1900)

Requesting Copies of Older Military Service Records (https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/pre-ww-1-records)

Civil War Research: Tracing Union & Confederate Ancestors (https://my.americanancestors.org/2454/2543)

Compiled Military Service Records (https://www.archives.gov/research/military/army/compiled-military-service-records)

British Army Soldiers up to 1913 (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-soldiers-up-to-1913/)

Military Records Research at The National Archives (https://www.archives.gov/research/military)

Endnotes

[1] John signed his affidavit with the Justice of the Peace, at Kennebeck [*sic*] Co., Mass., in 1818; Declaration of claimant, 16 January 1818, John Davis, (Capt. Jeremiah Hill, of Col. James Scamman regt., 1775 & 1776; Capt. George Smith, of Col. Joseph Vose regt. 1777 thru 1783; US Revolutionary War) pension no. S29,747 [*sic*]; Case Files of Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Applications Based on Revolutionary War Service, ca. 1800 – ca. 1912; Record Group 15; Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, 1773-2007; National Archives, Washington, D.C.; *Fold3* (www.fold3.com/image/15204310/davis-john-page-3-us-revolutionary-war-pensions-1800-1900). [Editor's note: In line 3, pension no. S29,747 [*sic*] should read without a comma; however, it appears in the Fold3 database with the comma, so if you search for "S29747" you may get an error message.]

[2] Declaration of claimant, 19 June 1820, John Davis, pension no. S29,747 [*sic*], page 8.

[3] John was age sixty-four in 1820, born about 1756: Declaration of claimant.

[4] *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War* (Wright & Potter Print Co., 1898), Volume 4, page 501, entry for John Davis of Biddeford; digital book, *Internet Archive* (https://archive.org/details/massachusettssolcdrymass/page/500/mode/2up : accessed 7 July 2025), image 506 of 1002.

[5] "A Descriptive List of Deserters from the 1st Massachusetts Regiment, *Muster/payrolls, and various papers (1663-1808) of the Revolutionary War [Massachusetts and Rhode Island]*, database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/catalog/729681 : accessed 7 July 2025); entry for John Davis, age 23, from County Cork, Ireland, vol. 9, p. 408,

image 657 of 710, citing FSL 8092183, "Vol. 8, Armed vessels, bonds 1775-1780 [volume 9, "Documents Relating to Prisoners Berkshire Co., 3 years Invalids and Half Pay, Certificates of Revolutionary Services, Deserters Lists, Pay Rolls," is contained within the volume 8 collection].

6 The National Archives (U.K.), "British Army Soldiers up to 1913," research guides, *The National Archives* (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-soldiers-up-to-1913/ : 2 July 2025).

7 James Kehoe Memorial (Petition) No. 422, 1826, Lanark County; Registrar of Deeds (South) Lanark Co. (Ontario), 1820-1834, Vol. B, folio 98; images, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSVG-K7DM-5?cat=483776&i=245&lang=en : 3 July 2025), FHL microfilm 8,129,923.

8 Township of Bathurst, "South West" Half Lot No. 3 in 1st Concession, grantee James Kehoe, deed, 1821, vol. A, p. 6; Registrar of Deeds (South) Lanark Co. (Ontario), "Abstract Index Books, ca. 1800-1959," images, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSLG-N7ZG-8?cat=484100&i=12&lang=en : 3 July 2025), FHL microfilm 8,200,284, film #200,691.

9 "Land Petitions of Upper Canada, 1763-1865," *Library and Archives of Canada* (LAC) (https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/land/land-petitions-upper-canada-1763-1865/Pages/List.aspx : 3 July 2025), James Kehoe, petition no. 33, 1821, vol. 421, p. 33a, Bathurst, Perth Military Settlement, microfilm C-2739, ref. RG 1 L3.

10 "49th (Princess Charlotte of Wales's) (Hertfordshire) Regiment of Foot," *National Army Museum* (London) (https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/49th-princess-charlotte-waless-hertfordshire-regiment-foot : 2 July 2025.

11 "Chelsea: Pensioners' Discharge Documents 1760-1887," database with images, *Findmypast* (https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=GBM%2FWO121%2F121031826&tab=this : accessed 7 July 2025), 1811 discharge for James Keough of County Carlow, Princess Charlotte of Wales's (Royal Berkshire Regiment) – 49th and 66th Foot; citing WO 121 (TNA).

12 1850 U.S. census, Jo Daviess Co., Illinois, population schedule, Irish Hollow Precinct, p. 206 (stamped), dwelling 1674, family 1678, James in the David Funston household; image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com : accessed 3 July 2025); citing National Archives microfilm publication M432, roll 111.

13 1850 U.S. census, Jo Daviess Co., Ill., pop. sch., Irish Hollow, p. 206 (stamped), dwell. 1674, fam. 1678, James and David Funston.

14 Compiled Military Service Record (CMSR), James Funston, 2 Cpl., Co. H, 3rd Missouri Infantry, Civil War; Carded Records, Volunteer Organizations, Civil War; Record Group 94: Missouri, 1861-1865, M405, roll 405; National Archives, Washington, D.C.; digital images, *Fold3* (https://www.fold3.com/image/230523275/funston-james-page-19-us-civil-war-service-records-cmsr-union-missouri-1861-1865 : 3 July 2025), page 19 of 29.

15 "3rd Regiment, Missouri Infantry," *National Park Service* (https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-battle-units-detail.htm?battleUnitCode=UMO0003RI01: 2 July 2025).

16 Compiled Military Service Record (CMSR), James Funston, Cpl., Co. H, 3rd M.O. Inf., Civil War.

17 CMSR, James Funston, Cpl., Co. H, 3rd M.O. Inf., Civil War.

18 Church Baptism Record, database, *RootsIreland.ie* (https://www.rootsireland.ie : 3 July 2025), entry for William Funston, baptized 4 December 1841, Methodist, Temple Carne, Ballintra Parish, County Donegal, Ireland (online transcript).

19 Church Baptism Record, database, *RootsIreland.ie* (https://www.rootsireland.ie : 3 July 2025), entry for Elizabeth Funston, baptized 30 December 1843, Methodist, Carne, Ballintra Parish, Co. Donegal, Ireland (online transcript).

20 1850 U.S. census, Jo Daviess Co., Ill., pop. sch., Irish Hollow, p. 206 (stamped), dwell. 1674, fam. 1678, Elizabeth in David Funston household.

21 U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), "Military Records Research," research our records, *National Archives* (https://www.archives.gov).

Sheilagh Doerfler joined American Ancestors in 2013. As a member of the Research and Library Services team, she works to connect patrons and members with their family histories by fulfilling research requests, providing educational programming, and writing for American Ancestors *magazine and our blog,* Vita Brevis. *Sheilagh holds a B.A. from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Her specialties include colonial New England, New Netherland, Ireland, Atlantic Canada, Ontario, Quebec, Scandinavia, and African American research.*



Discovering the Irish in British Military Records

by Evva Housley

During the 19th century, more than one-third of those enlisted in the British Military were Irish. This makes British military records a valuable resource for tracing Irish ancestors. Although information available for your ancestor will vary based on rank, length of service, medical condition, and the era in which he served, British military records often provide an age and place of birth for your Irish ancestor and, in the best case, a history of where he served, names of family members, and even a physical description.

The records highlighted in this article are not an exhaustive list of British military records; they are the records that are most likely to reveal a birthdate and birthplace for your military ancestor.

What clues suggest your ancestor served in the military? You might have a family story tradition, a photograph of a soldier in uniform, a war medal, or discharge papers. More likely, you found a civil registration, census, baptism, or marriage record indicating he was a soldier or army pensioner. Perhaps your ancestor's uncle or brother served in the military; finding their birthplace may lead you to your ancestor's birthplace.

British Army

British Army service records, a.k.a. Soldiers' documents or Chelsea pensioner records

A census record that states your ancestor's occupation as "Pensioner" usually refers to an Army Pensioner. The number one place to search for your British Army ancestor is in the record set "British Army Service Records," available at *Findmypast* (https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/british-army-service-records), which indexes the most significant collections of army pension records, as well as many other important army records. If an ancestor is in this index, you can view and download images of the actual records. Major record groups included in this index are WO 97, WO 22-23, WO 119, WO 121-122, WO 131, and others ("WO" stood for "War Office"; the department was reorganized into the Ministry of Defence in 1964).

The Chelsea pension records are the service records of British army soldiers, which were administered through the Royal Hospital at Chelsea. Most pensioners were "out-pensioners" who did not live in the hospital. These records include the soldier's place of birth, age at enlistment, previous occupation, physical description, and the regiment served in. They may also contain biographical material. The downside is that before 1883, only a minority of soldiers received a pension as most soldiers did not serve long enough to be eligible. Before 1871, twenty-one years of service were required to receive a pension; after, it dropped to twelve years. Most pensions were granted for physical disabilities incurred during service. Starting in 1883, those discharged without a pension were also included. See (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-soldiers-up-to-1913/) for more details. Before 1800, very few Irish were mentioned in these records, but it is always worth looking.

Certificates of service for pensions administered through the Royal Hospital Kilmainham in Dublin list service records of mainly Irish soldiers from 1783 to 1822. This valuable record set, WO 119, is also included in the "British Army Service Records" at *Findmypast* (see figure 1).



Figure 1: *Terce Riley of Templeport, County Cavan, Ireland, entry dated 1821.*[1]

Search for your ancestor's name and possible enlistment date. Although unnecessary, an approximate range of years will help narrow down results, particularly with common names.

Many of these records have also been indexed on *Ancestry* and can be found in their Military collection.

Muster Rolls

Many soldiers did not serve long enough to qualify for a pension, making muster rolls crucial as they include nearly all soldiers, regardless of pension status. You can hire a researcher (or go yourself) to search muster rolls at The National Archives of Great Britain (TNA), located near London. TNA's webpage (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/paying-for-research/) details how to commission research. To search

muster rolls, you need to know your ancestor's regiment, as the rolls are arranged by regiment. This information might be found on his marriage record, a baptismal or civil registration birth record of one of his children, family information, one of the records listed in the following paragraphs, or other sources. If you only know the regiment's name, refer to the following archived web page for a cross-reference between regiment names and their numbers: (https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20111208095443/http://yourarchives.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php?title=British_army_regiments_names_and_numbers).

If your soldier chose to have his children's births registered in the Army Regimental Registers of Births or if he was recorded in the Chaplains' returns (see following section), this will reveal his regiment. Once you know the regiment, trace a man forward and backward to his last and first muster roll. Though this is time-consuming, a man's first and/or last muster usually gives his birthplace and age.

If you have a soldier's army pension record, it can still be worthwhile to search the muster rolls. A birthplace in a muster roll can verify details from the pension record or provide different information. For example, the pension might only mention a county in Ireland, while the muster roll may give the town. Additionally, if the handwriting in the pension record is unclear, a separate muster roll could clarify information.

For more information about how to find and use Muster Rolls, see: (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-muster-rolls-pay-lists-1730-1898).

General Register Office (GRO): Regimental birth, marriage, and death indexes and Chaplains' Returns

As previously mentioned, children born while your ancestor was serving in the army may have been recorded in the Army Regimental Registers, regardless of whether the child was born in the British Isles or abroad. The GRO Army Regimental birth index provides the child's name, place of birth, and the father's regiment. Chaplain's returns are another source for baptisms of children, as well as marriages and deaths, but only for events that occurred abroad. The GRO Regimental indexes and Chaplains' Returns are indexed on *Findmypast* under the headings "British Armed Forces and Overseas Births and Baptisms" (covering 1761-2005), "British Armed Forces and Overseas Banns and Marriages" (covering 1796-2005), and "British Armed Forces and Overseas Deaths and Burials" (covering 1796-2005). There is also an index called "British Armed Forces, Roman Catholic Registers," covering the period from 1836 to 1975. You can find these by visiting www.findmypast.co.uk and clicking on the "Search" tab near the top of the page, then clicking on "All Record Sets," and then typing the name of the database of interest into the search box (currently found under the words "Search more than 1000 years of historical record sets").

The image associated with an entry from the Regimental birth index will give the soldier's regiment. For events recorded in Chaplains' returns, you must order the certificate from the GRO in order to see the regiment. If you want the birth certificate for a child found in the Regimental birth index, you must also order it from the GRO (https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/). Please note when ordering that the Regimental registers and Chaplains' returns are classified as "Outside the United Kingdom." Both the Army Regimental Registers and the Chaplains' Returns are incomplete in their coverage but are helpful if you are lucky enough to find your ancestor or his children in them.

Another use of these records might be to trace the "missing" children of an Army ancestor, who may have been born in unexpected places due to his army service. Births abroad were the minority, as few families travelled with a regiment when they were stationed abroad. Many births that took place in the British Isles are recorded.

> The Victorian army saw itself as a large family. Officers were encouraged to marry and to settle down; they played a paternal role within the regiment, and their wives an important maternal role.
>
> Marriage for other ranks, however, was positively discouraged; a man's regiment demanded his loyalty before a wife and child. A Victorian soldier needed permission from his commanding officer to get married, and this was only granted to a small percentage of the men in each regiment (https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/victorian-soldiering-wives).

Depot Description Books and Casualty Lists

Both depot description books (found in WO 25 and 67) and casualty lists (found in WO 25, when they have survived) include place of birth and former trade. The description books survive from 1795 to 1900 (although a few date back as early as 1756) and also provide an age and physical description. The casualty lists survive

from 1797 to 1910 and also provide rank and next of kin; both sometimes provide other interesting items (between 1797 and 1817, the casualty lists also include deserters). *FamilySearch* has microfilmed most of these records, but only a small percentage have been indexed in the *FamilySearch* collection, "Great Britain, War Office Registers, 1772-1935" (https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/collection/2366620). The index is free, but images of the original records (which give more information than the index) are only viewable at local *FamilySearch* Centers and affiliate libraries. To find one near you, look up www.familysearch.org and click on the place-marker symbol near the top of the page (or click the direct link at https://www.familysearch.org/en/centers/about) and either allow *FamilySearch* to access your location, or click on "Find a different center." Always call the number listed under "More info" to verify the hours of operation before visiting.

Most of the depot description books and casualty lists that are on *FamilySearch* microfilms have not been indexed. These records are arranged by regiment in the catalog entry, "War office registers: regimental description and succession books, including commissions, appointments, descriptions, returns of services, casualties, half pay, pensions, gratuities, etc.," that you can find by doing a keyword search for the first several words of that title in the *FamilySearch* catalog (https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/catalog). When you get to the catalog entry, look for your soldier's regiment. There are many types of documents for each regiment on these microfilms, so look through the entire catalog entry carefully as well as through the corresponding microfilm(s) to make sure you do not miss anything. Again, you must visit a *FamilySearch* center or affiliate library to view these digitized microfilms.

World War I Service Records

Approximately two-thirds of the British World War I service records were destroyed during World War II bombings. The records that do survive have been indexed with their original images by Ancestry. The service records provide wonderful information about your ancestor, including birthplace and date, and a physical description. To access these, search the Ancestry "Card Catalog" (found under the "Search" tab) by the title "UK, British Army World War I Service Records, 1914-1920." Also, check out "UK, British Army World War I Pension Records 1914-1920" and "UK, World War I Pension Ledgers and Index Cards, 1914-1923."

Officer's Records

Your work may be easier if your ancestor was an officer — a lieutenant, captain, major, lieutenant-colonel, colonel, or general. First, search the published *Army Lists* to find your officer's regiment. These can be downloaded as large PDF files from TNA for free (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C14273, available years are from 1754 to 1879), but are also indexed in the following places:

Website	Years	Titled
Ancestry	1882-1962	UK, British Army Records and Lists, 1882-1962
Findmypast	1839-1946	British Army, Army Lists 1839-1946
The Genealogist	1661-1940	Military

Once you know his regiment, you can find his service record in WO 76, "Record of Officers Services, 1770-1919," which is arranged first by regiment and then alphabetically by the officer's name. WO 76 is indexed in the *Ancestry* database as "UK, Officer Service Records, 1764-1932," although images of the records are on *Fold3*, they may require an additional subscription to view. Officers who were alive in 1828 can be found in one alphabetical sequence in WO 25, "Services of Officers on full and half pay." Both WO 25 and WO 76 are available on digital microfilm at *FamilySearch* centers and affiliate libraries. Search the Family History Library Catalog by keyword, using "Record of Officers Services, 1770-1919," or "Services of Offices on full and half pay War office registers," to find the records. Alternatively, you may hire a researcher at TNA (see link in the *Muster Rolls* section of this article). These records typically include a birthplace and date, details of the officer's career, and sometimes his marriage date and place, name of his bride, and names of his children.

Indian Army

Until 1858, the Indian Army was independent of the British Army. Like the British Army, many Irish served in the Indian Army. The India Office of Great Britain kept more than just military records, so if you believe your ancestor served in India, consult the *Families in British India Society* (www.fibis.org). The FIBIS website has indexed over two million names and allows you to search its database for free. The British Library holds the original records, and while it has yet to restore full website functionality after a 2023 cyberattack, many of its records are indexed on *Findmypast* in the "British

India Office" Collection. This collection is comprised of seven records sets. To locate them go to *Findmypast*, click on "Search" and then "All Record Sets" and then type in the words *British India Office* in the search box (found under the words "Search more than 1000 years of historical record sets"). Both *FIBIS* and *Findmypast* have indexed military records, birth, marriages, and deaths of the British in India, civil service records, cemeteries, wills and probate records, and more. Most of the records indexed on *Findmypast* have images of the originals that can be viewed, and *FIBIS* has a very helpful Beginner's Guide at (https://wiki.fibis.org/w/Beginners%27_Guide).

Royal Artillery, Royal Horse Artillery, and Royal Engineers

There were many branches of the British Army; the service records of men in these branches, such as the Royal Artillery, Royal Horse Artillery, and Royal Engineers, are available through TNA. Some of these records are indexed in TNA's catalog and guidance for using the index can be found here: (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-soldiers-up-to-1913/#10-royal-artillery-personnel-records). If you find your ancestor in this index, note the complete TNA reference code (which will begin with "WO 69") and then access the *FamilySearch* catalog using a keyword search to find: "Artillery records of services of non-commissioned officers and men consisting of description books, records of service, registers of marriages and baptisms, registers of deceased soldiers, and miscellaneous records of transfers, pension registers of the Royal Artillery and the Royal Horse Artillery, 1765-1906." Match the TNA reference with the *FamilySearch* catalog (not all the records in WO 69 have been microfilmed by *FamilySearch*) and view the film at a *FamilySearch* center or affiliate library. If *FamilySearch* does not have that WO 69 reference on microfilm, you can order it from TNA (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordcopying/) using TNA's full catalog reference. You can explore what other records are available through *FamilySearch*'s catalog by performing a keyword search for "Great Britain Royal Artillery" (or another branch of service). Another option is to hire one of the researchers listed on TNA's website (see link in the *Muster Rolls* section of this article).

Royal Navy

When searching for a naval ancestor, knowing the name of his ship and the approximate years he served on it is helpful. This information might come from family sources such as the man's marriage record, the christening of his children, or even a census. If you happen to know your ancestor received a Medal of Honor, a medal roll is indexed online at (https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/1687/?redirectFor=db.aspx). This medal roll index will reveal on which ship he served (see figure 2).

Seamen Serving 1853 to 1928

If your ancestor was a "rating" (the British term for a common seaman, including Able Seamen, Ordinary Seamen, Petty Officers, and Quartermasters) in the Royal Navy between 1853 and 1928, there is a good chance some of his records are available online. Visit TNA's "Royal Navy ratings' service records, 1853-1928" guide at (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-ratings-service-records-1853-1928/) for more details and to begin searching. This index provides a sailor's birthdate, place of birth, and enlistment date in the Navy. Since many men had the same names, you will need at least an idea of the dates he served at sea; you might also need to know additional information about your ancestor to ensure it is truly him. You can download his full record on TNA's website for £3.50. Remember that many of the men listed in these records began their service many years before 1853. For more guidance, visit (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-ratings-up-to-1913/).

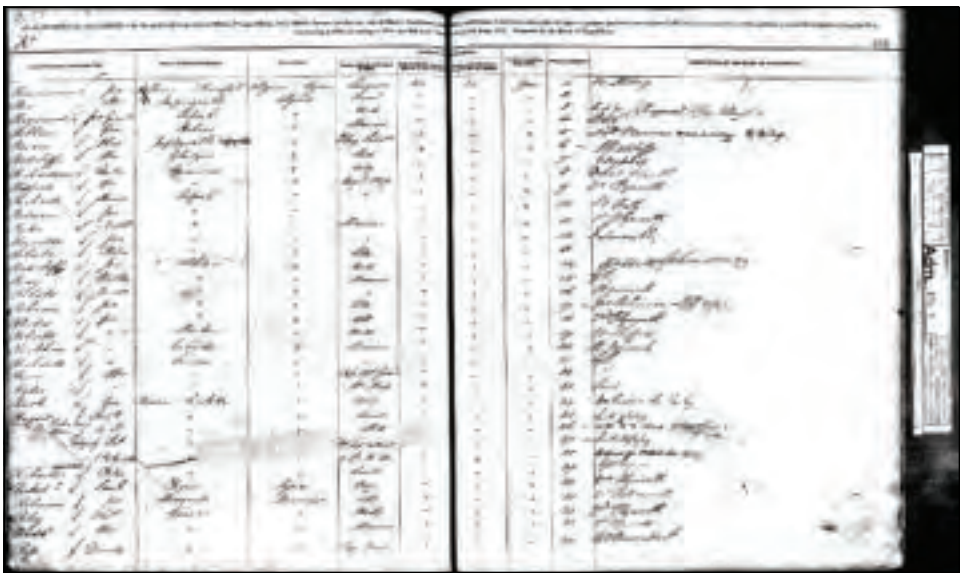


Figure 2: *Thoˢ Riley, on the ship Genoa, at the Battle of Navarino; his rating at the time was "Ordy" [Ordinary Seaman].*[2]

Seaman Serving Before 1853

If your ancestor was a rating before 1853, your search will likely be more difficult. If he had a pension record, these are indexed online at (https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/british-royal-navy-and-royal-marines-service-and-pension-records-1704-1939). Be sure to read TNA's important guide to the pension records before searching (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-ratings-pensions/).

Another important set of records indexed online for seamen before 1853 is the Certificates of Service, 1802 — c. 1894. These compile all the dates and ships a rating served on, his rank and "character" while serving on the ship, his age, and sometimes his birthplace. Knowing the dates he served and the name of a ship he served on will help you find *your* sailor, not just someone with the same name who may not be your man. *Ancestry* has created an index to the certificates of service, available at: (https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/9050/). *Ancestry*'s index has the original image attached, so you can look on it for the name of a ship the sailor served on to verify that you have the right man. If the man has a C.S. (continuous service) number at the top of the page, be sure to look for him in the Royal Navy ratings' service records (see the *Seaman serving 1853 to 1928* section of this article for the link). There is another free, but apparently less comprehensive, index to the certificates of service on TNA (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C1738). In this index, be sure to click on the man's name as the top layer of index results may suggest the birthplace was not given, but once clicked on, it may give his place of birth. This set also cross-references to the man's continuous service number if he continued in the Navy after 1853, when the continuous service books began to be kept. The disadvantage of this index is that no original images are linked, although a photocopy of the original record may be ordered from TNA.

If your rating did not have a pension or certificate of service, you must know the ship name and the years he served on it. This will enable you to search for the ship's muster list, giving your man's birthplace and age. Visit this TNA webpage (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-ratings-up-to-1913/) and scroll down to the heading "Records Only Available at the National Archives in Kew." The section just below it, marked "Ships musters, ledgers, pay books and description books," allows you to type in the name of your ancestor's ship to find the TNA identification number for its muster rolls. For example, the ship *Buffalo*'s muster rolls from 1799 to 1802 are assigned TNA number ADM 36/14230. Some of these musters are on microfilm and are available through your local *FamilySearch* Center. To find the film number, go to the *FamilySearch* Catalog and do a keyword search for the phrase *Great Britain Admiralty Muster*. There are three series; click on each one and see if you can match the ship's name, date, and ADM#. Not all the musters are available on *FamilySearch* microfilm. If they are unavailable, you can hire a researcher to search the muster rolls for that ship at TNA. TNA's "Royal Navy Ratings up to 1913" link (see above) also provides a helpful guide to the aforementioned records.

Seaman During WWI

There is some overlap between this topic and the aforementioned *Seaman serving 1853 to 1928* section. However, there is an extra online resource to those who served in the Royal Navy during World War I. The Royal Museums Greenwich hosts a database titled, "Royal Navy — First World War, Lives at Sea," found at (https://royalnavyrecordsww1.rmg.co.uk/). As long as a man was still serving during WWI, his service record (which may cover much earlier time periods), is likely to be on this site. TNA's record guide (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-ratings-of-the-first-world-war/) gives additional guidance for those seeking an ancestor during this period.

Royal Navy Officers

To look for an officer in the Royal Navy (commissioned or warrant), first try the TNA online index (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-officers-service-records-1756-1931/). It contains indexed service records of officers who joined the Royal Navy from 1756 to 1931. If you find your ancestor in the index, you can download his service record from the website for £3.50. Service records provide the names of ships an officer served on and his rank, though they rarely give his place of birth prior to the late 19th century. For a guide to other records which can provide information about officers, see (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-commissioned-and-warrant-officers-further-research/).

The following books also detail biographical information for officers:

A Naval Biographical Dictionary: Comprising the Life and Services of Every Living Officer in Her Majesty's Navy from the Rank of Admiral to that of Lieutenant,

by W.R. O'Byrne. (London: John Murray, 1849.) Reprint, 3 vols.

This book is available online at *FamilySearch* and can be accessed by clicking "Search," then "Catalog," then "Film/Fiche/Image Group Number (DGS)," and typing in the film number 845144 (or you can use a keyword search for the title and author). This book, while not comprehensive, is organized alphabetically and provides concise biographical details about the officers.

Royal Navy Lieutenants' Passing Certificates (1691-1902), by Bruno Pappalardo. (Kew, Surrey: List and Index Society, 2001).

This book indexes all the extant lieutenants' passing certificates. An exam was administered to achieve the first commissioned rank in the Navy. Along with this exam, candidates had to produce proof of age, which often included a baptismal certificate. Look for this book through WorldCat (https://search.worldcat.org/). If an item of interest is found in the index with the complete TNA reference, photocopies of the documents can be ordered from TNA's copying service.

The Commissioned Sea Officers of the Royal Navy 1660-1815, by D. Syrett and R.L. DiNardo. (Aldershot, Hants, England: Scholar Press for the Navy Records Society, rev. ed., 1994).

This book is also available through the *FamilySearch* catalog, which allows you to search either by film number (8006989) or by using a keyword search for the title (do not include the author's name). This book gives no real biographical information but has a listing of each man's ranks and the dates at which he attained each rank.

Royal Marines

For the TNA research guide for men who served as officers in the Royal Marines, see (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-marines-officers/). For help researching other ranks, see (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-marines-other-ranks/).

Royal Irish Constabulary

The Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) was not part of the regular military. Nicknamed the "Black and Tans" for the color of their uniforms, they were a police force specially raised to help keep the peace in Ireland. Their excellent records cover 1816 to 1922 and almost always provide a man's age and birth county, as well as details about his service; they occasionally give a death or marriage date. These records are indexed with accompanying images of the original record at *Findmypast* (https://www.findmypast.ie/discover/education-and-work/occupations/ireland-royal-irish-constabulary-service-records-1816-1922) and at *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/6087/). *Ancestry*'s index is less helpful since there are no images of the original records; it only lists the *FamilySearch* film number and page number on which to find the original, and these must be viewed at a local *FamilySearch* center or affiliate.

Conclusion

More military records are available online and offline at TNA than are listed here. For more details, see (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/), then click on "Military and Maritime" and check the box to apply the "Army and militia" filter or the "Royal Navy and Royal Marines" filter to see relevant guides to records. With persistence and a little luck, British military records might lead you to the origins of that elusive Irish ancestor. Even if they do not reveal his origins, they will give you a window into a unique period of his life.

Additional Resources

For a list of all the British military databases available at *Findmypast*, visit: https://www.findmypast.co.uk/articles/world-records/search-all-uk-records/military-armed-forces-and-conflict--records.

For a list of all the British military databases available at *Ancestry*, visit: https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/catalog/?limitToCountry=1&category=39&location=3257_1652381.

For a list of military databases available at *The Genealogist*, visit: https://www.thegenealogist.com/coverage/military-records/?type=diamond#includes.

For a list of TNA's free online digital microfilms, visit: https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/free-online-records-digital-microfilm/.

For a summary table listing army records that have been indexed online and which site they can be found at visit: https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/British_Military_Records_Online.

For the online class "Getting Started with British Army Records" by *FamilySearch* staff, see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgGdjXVq1tc. Also, explore the *FamilySearch* Wiki (https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main_Page) for guidance about many genealogy topics for a variety of locations.

Endnotes

[1] "British Army Service Records: Kilmainham: Pensioners' Discharge Documents, 1783-1822," database with images, *Findmypast* (https://www.findmypast.com/transcript?id=GBM%2FWO119%2F31584&tab=this), imaged Certificate of Service: Terence Riley, 45th Foot, Royal Regiment of Veterans; citing Royal Hospital, Kilmainham: Pensioner's Discharge Documents (Certificates of Service), WO 119 (Kew, Richmond, London: *The National Archives* [n.d.]).

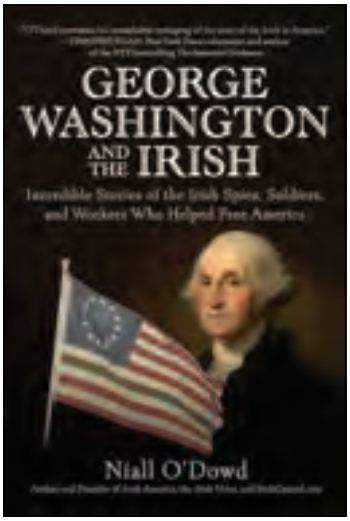
[2] "UK, Naval Medal and Award Rolls, 1793-1972," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1687/records/2148332?tid=&pid=&queryId=d230ab0b-f997-4645-b2e5-a88f8631ac42&_phsrc=KQa33&_phstart=successSource), entry for Thos Riley, [sailing ship] Genoa, 1827; citing *The National Archives* of the UK, Kew, Surrey, England, ADM 171, Admiralty, and Ministry of Defence, Navy Department: Medal Rolls.

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George Washington and the Irish:

Incredible Stories of the Irish Spies, Soldiers, and Workers Who Helped Free America



In his book, *George Washington and the Irish: Incredible Stories of the Irish Spies, Soldiers, and Workers Who Helped Free America*,[1] Niall O'Dowd writes about the vital role played by the Irish during the American Revolution. Each of the book's twenty-two chapters reveals a largely untold story about an American of Irish descent who played a decisive part in helping General George Washington defeat the British. O'Dowd reveals the almost mystical connection between George Washington and the Irish with entertaining tales about unknown heroes and the extraordinary experiences of ordinary people.

[1] Niall O'Dowd, *George Washington and the Irish: Incredible Stories of the Irish Spies, Soldiers, and Workers Who Helped Free America* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2022). O'Dowd is founder of *Irish America* magazine, the *Irish Voice* newspaper, and IrishCentral.com.

Researching Military Records (With a Hint of DNA)

by Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D.

Can DNA Reveal Military Service? No, but These DNA Matches Have a Military Connection.

The quarterly columns on DNA focus on genealogical research. However, with this issue's theme of utilizing British military records to locate and confirm Irish ancestors, linking DNA test results has proven challenging!

For example, I can connect my husband, Jere Mackin, to a 19th-century Irish immigrant in Chicago. This ancestor by marriage, who served in the Royal Navy, was named Daniel McCarthy (1834–1914). My research on Daniel's British military record may offer a model for others.[1]

AncestryDNA results provide a link. Jere has over 15 autosomal DNA matches descended from Daniel McCarthy's second wife, Charlotte (Kinney) Snell (1842–1880). Their Most Recent Common Ancestors (MRCA) are Charlotte's father, Peter Kinney (circa 1784–1876), and Bridget McDonagh (1800–1859).[2]

Daniel McCarthy's Story

Daniel McCarthy was born in Ireland on 6 January 1834 and died in Chicago, Illinois, on 14 June 1914.[3] Many details of Daniel's life come to us only through the unsourced genealogical narratives of his great-grandson Daniel A. Nicholson (1937–2011) of Chicago.[4] According to Nicholson's narrative, Daniel McCarthy was born in County Kerry in May 1833.[5]

Nicholson describes Daniel McCarthy's naval service:

> He was on the HMS Medeira from May 1854 until March 1856. He was then on HMS Caradoc from March 1856 until May 29, 1859. He was a stoker for the 5 years of his service although it looks like he was promoted briefly from April-May 1856. He was probably later demoted for some infraction because his record went from good to fair… His ship was in the Crimean War and was in the siege of Sevastopol. He received the Crimean medal with a Sevastopol Clasp. His release shows he was living in a town called Deptford…[6]

Nicholson continues:

> He came to the US in 1862 hoping to get a commission in the Civil War as he had been in the British navy. His parents had come over and were living in Chicago. There were other brothers and sisters also here. Shortly after the war he went up to Lake Geneva and there he met a young widow with 2 small children – Charlotte Kinney Snell… They were married and had 3 children in Lake Geneva before they moved to Chicago shortly after the fire.[7]

Daniel McCarthy's marriage to Charlotte in 1864 marked his first appearance in American records.[8] He then appears in Chicago city directories about ten years later, residing on Hobbie Street, moving soon after to nearby Crosby Street, where he lived until at least the late 1880s.[9] Charlotte (Kinney) McCarthy died on 27 June 1880, and Daniel McCarthy died on 14 June 1914, both in Chicago.[10]

Substantiating Daniel McCarthy's Military Service

Research Guides[11]

To research Daniel McCarthy, a rating who served during the nineteenth century, The National Archives's (TNA's) "Royal Navy ratings up to 1913" is the most relevant guide (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-ratings-up-to-1913/).[12]

The Crimean (or Russian) War

Before diving into Daniel McCarthy's Royal Navy service, it is helpful to learn about the conflict during which he served. A good place to start is Wikipedia, where the "Crimean War" article outlines events, provides historical context, and lists references.[13] Google searches for "Crimean War" and "Royal Navy Crimean War" produced more links, including:

- An illustrated web page from the National Army Museum[14]
- A web page on Ireland and the Crimean War[15]
- A website focused on the Victorian Royal Navy, with details of significant vessels[16]
- Journal articles on mid-nineteenth-century navies, naval technologies, and naval tactics.[17]

The brief timeline on page 97[18] shows significant events of the war, focusing on the Black Sea theater of operations, mapped against Daniel McCarthy's service.

Preliminaries for Military Research

Before researching naval ancestors, regardless of nationality or time, it is useful to determine a few key facts:

- What was the rank or rating of the military ancestor?
- What units or ships did the military ancestor serve in?
- What was the time frame of the ancestor's service?

Date	Events of the War	Daniel McCarthy's Service
July 1853	Russian troops occupied the Danubian Principalities of the Ottoman Empire.	
October 1853	The Ottoman Empire declared war on Russia.	
January 1854	British and French fleets moved into the Black Sea.	
March 1854	Britain and France declared war on Russia.	
May 1854		Stoker, HMS *Medina*
September 1854	Allied troops landed on the north-west coast of the Crimea, defeated the Russians at the Battle of the Alma, and besieged Sevastopol.	Stoker, HMS *Medina*
October–November 1854	The allies defeated Russian attempts to break their siege lines at Balaklava and Inkerman. Florence Nightingale and her nurses begin work in the military hospital at Scutari, near Constantinople.	Stoker, HMS *Medina*
November 1854–March 1855	British soldiers suffered severe hardship in the trenches in the bitter Crimean winter.	Stoker, HMS *Medina*
September 1855	The French captured a key part of the Sevastopol defenses, forcing the Russians to abandon the city.	Stoker, HMS *Medina*
March 1856	The Treaty of Paris ended the war.	Stoker, HMS *Medina* Stoker, HMS *Caradoc*
May 1859		Discharged from the Navy

With that information in hand, it's relatively easy to determine what records exist and where to find them.

In Daniel McCarthy's case, he was a "rating". i.e., an enlisted sailor of a rank subordinate to warrant and commissioned officers in the Royal Navy.[19] Dan Nicholson tells us he served between 1854 and 1859 on Royal Navy ships, including HMS *Medeira* and HMS *Caradoc*, as a stoker.[20]

Searching for Service Records

Service records are collected files containing multiple records of a single service member. Before these files were created, records of service members were found in the muster and pay records of the units in which they served.

For the Royal Navy, the transition from unit records to service-member records began with the implementation of a Continuous Service Scheme for naval ratings in 1853. Under this scheme, seamen signed on for a ten-year period and were assigned a continuous service number. Their records are stored in the Royal Navy Continuous Service Engagement Books in series ADM 139 at TNA in Kew; digital copies can be searched and downloaded on TNA's website.[21]

However, Daniel McCarthy was not a seaman; he was a stoker, which meant he fell into a different job category that was not initially included in the Continuous Service Scheme. As a result, his records are not included in ADM 139.

Searching Ships' Record Books

Daniel's records had to be searched in the same manner as the service records of seamen who served before the implementation of Continuous Service: in the records of the ships in which he served.

TNA's research guide for Royal Navy Ratings up to 1913 points researchers to

- Ships' musters and pay books, only available in textual format at TNA.
- Certificates of Service compiled from ships' pay books to support applications for pensions, gratuities, and medals. Certificates from ADM 29/1–96 are searchable on *Ancestry.co.uk* as part of "UK, Naval Officer and Rating Service Records, 1802–1919" (https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/9050/), and also within ADM 29 in TNA's catalog, for records from ADM 29/1–73. Daniel McCarthy does not appear in these records. Ian Waller and Bruno Pappalardo note in their books that the records in ADM 29 can provide a shortcut into individual ship records for ratings, warrant officers, and occasional

commissioned officers who applied for pensions, gratuities, or medals (see endnote 11).

- Pension records. Royal Navy pension records are available on *Findmypast* as "British Royal Navy & Royal Marines Service and Pension Records, 1704–1939" (https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/british-royal-navy-and-royal-marines-service-and-pension-records-1704-1939). Records from ADM 73/1–35 can also be searched through the TNA catalogue entry for ADM 73. Daniel McCarthy did not serve long enough to receive a pension.
- Allotment registers recording seamen's allotments of wages to be paid directly to their families. These can be searched at *Findmypast* as "British Royal Navy Allotment Declarations 1795–1852" (https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/british-royal-navy-allotment-declarations-1795-1852) or through the TNA catalogue entry for ADM 27. Daniel McCarthy does not appear in these records.[22]

Since Dan Nicholson provided the names of the ships in which Daniel McCarthy served (with one hiccup, to be described below), I was able to hire a researcher to search for Daniel McCarthy's records in Ship's Muster Books and Ship Record and Establishment Books.

Ship's Muster Books

Ship musters were taken monthly or quarterly for the purposes of pay and accounting.[23] TNA's research guide for Royal Navy Ratings to 1913 allows you to search for catalog entries within this series by the name of your ancestor's ship. From TNA's catalog I identified the muster books for the ships in which Daniel McCarthy served, and my researcher was able to retrieve Daniel's records.[24]



The survey vessel H.M.S. Merlin
Image credit: James Wilson Carmichael, public domain, via *Wikimedia Commons*.

HMS *Medina*

Although Daniel Nicholson indicated that Daniel McCarthy's first ship was HMS *Medeira*, the Royal Navy had no ship of that name. HMS *Medina* is the ship with the name closest to *Medeira* and was in commission during the Crimean War. It would have been easy to interpret the handwritten ship name '*Medina*' as '*Medeira*.'

The HMS *Medina* was a wooden packet boat of the *Merlin* class.[25] The steam plant and the stokehold, where Daniel McCarthy would have worked, was located amidships in between the two paddlewheels.

The ship muster book for HMS *Medina* covering the period when Daniel served includes a Muster Book with details of Daniel's service and a Description Book with personal details. Note the items in bold type; these are essential biographical details that may confirm you are researching the correct person or confirm a place of origin. Table 1 (page 99) displays the information contained in each of these books.[26]

HMS *Caradoc*

The ship muster book from *Caradoc* for the period of Daniel's service also includes a Muster Book and a Description Book. Table 2 (page 100) shows the information contained in *Caradoc*'s Muster and Description Books.[27]

Ship Record and Establishment Books

Ship Record and Establishment Books were kept from 1857 to 1873 and are available as textual records at TNA in series ADM 115. These books record the names of the officers and ratings serving on each ship.[28] A Ship Record and Establishment Book exists for HMS *Medina*, but its records do not begin until 1859, after Daniel McCarthy had been discharged

Table 1

Muster Book	Description Book
Entry: **8 May 1854** Whence and whether Pressed or Volunteer: Woolwich vols. Parish, town, and county where born: **Kerry, Ireland** **Age** when entered in this Ship: **20** If first entry in the Service: **First Entry** Name: Danl. McCarthy Ranks, Rating, Badges: Stoker D. [discharged] D.D. [discharged, dead] or R [run, i.e., deserted]: D **Date of discharge: 18 Mar 1856** Whither, or for what reason: "Royal Albert" for disposal CL 144 [HMS Royal Albert was a First Rate 120-gun sailing ship that had been converted to a 121-gun screw ship, serving in the Black Sea during the Crimean War. "First Rate" is the designation for the Royal Navy's largest ships of the line in the age of sail, typically a three-decker carrying at least 100 guns, with a crew of more than 850.[27]] Character given to parties: Good Charges and deductions: Clothing, &c., tobacco, soap, and religious books: 14.4.0 Monthly allowance: 10.6.0 Date of allotment: 1 Septr 54, stopd Jany 55 Two months advance: 10 Octr 55, 5.3.4 When mustered: full wages £59.11.9. Nett not paid £1.6.5. Ticket sent to "Royal Albert"	No. in Muster Book: 2 Entry 8 May 54 Name: Danl. McCarthy Last rating in Muster Book: Stoker Discharged: D., D.D., or R.: D When: 18 Mch 56 Whither; Also Conduct noted on certificate: "Royal Albert," Good. **Where born**: **Parish: Kerry** Town: ditto Country: Ireland Usual place of residence: Deptford **Age**: Years: **21** Months: **Stature:** **Feet: 5** **Inches: 9** **Complexion: Fair** **Eyes: Hazel** **Hair: D. R. Brown** Marks on person: None Wounds or scars: None If had the small pox or been vaccinated: Vac Single or married: **Single** Trade brought up to: **Cooper**

to his next assignment. Similarly, Ship Record and Establishment Books exist for HMS *Caradoc*, but do not begin until after Daniel's discharge.

Examining Medal and Award Rolls

TNA holds records of officers and men of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines who were awarded or claimed medals and clasps issued to commemorate actions and campaigns in series ADM 171. These are available on *Ancestry* as "UK, Naval Medal and Award Rolls, 1793–1972."

Daniel McCarthy was awarded the Crimea Medal with Sevastopol Clasp for his service on HMS *Medina*. His award is recorded in ADM 171/27, Crimea Medal Lists, vol. 1, Ships G–Q. His entry includes the following information:

- No.: 1
- Name: McCarthy Danl.
- Rating: Stoker
- No. on Ship's Book: 2
- When delivered or sent. Remarks &c.: D. "Royal Albert" 18 March 56. S delivered on board Caradoc, A Delved on board.[29]

Stokers in the Royal Navy

Daniel McCarthy served in the Royal Navy as a stoker — a rating "employed to shovel coal into a furnace and tend the water in a boiler."[30] Stokers also played a major role in coal trimming, shoveling coal from the bunkers where it was stored toward the stokehold. This was heavy, hard, dangerous



*Crimea War Medal (*Wikimedia Commons, *CC By 4.0)*

Table 2

Muster Book	Description Book
No.: 41 **Entry: 19 March 1858** Appearance: March 28 Whence: "Royal Albert" Parish, town, and county where born: **Kerry** Age when entered in this ship: **July 1834** The name of his last ship and date of discharge: **Medina, 18 March 1856** Name: Danl. McCarthy, Ranks, ratings, and badges: Stoker; 14 April 1856, Ord 2.C.; 1 June 1856, Stoker D., D.D., or R.: D **Date of Discharge: 30 Septr 1857** Whither or for what reason: Paid down Charges and deductions: Clothing &c., tobacco, soap, and religious books: 3.9.4 Monthly allowance: 10.0.0	No.: 41 **Entry: 19 March 1856** Name: Dl McCarthy Last rating in Muster Book: Stoker Discharged: D., D.D., or R.: D When: **29 May 1859** Whither. Also conduct noted on certificate: "Hibernia" to await a passage to England. Good. [HMS Hibernia was a First Rate of 110 guns, rerated to 104 guns in 1845, recommissioned in 1855, and used as a guard and receiving ship at Malta.29] Description of Person at the time of entry in this ship Where born Parish: [no entry] **Town: Kerry** Country: **Kerry** **Usual place of residence: Deptford** **Age:** **Years: 21** **Months: 9** **Stature:** **Feet: 5** **Inches: 9** **Complexion: Fair** **Eyes: Hazel** **Hair: Dk Brown** Marks on person: [no entry] Wounds or scars: [no entry] If had the small-pox or been vaccinated: Vac Single or married: **Single** Trade brought up to: [no entry] Copy of certificate produced Crimean Medal, Sevastopol Clasp Ship's name: Medina No.: 2 Rating: Stoker Entry: **8 May 1854** **Discharged: 18 March 1856** Conduct: Good Captain's signature: T. Spratt

work. Scalds, burns, heat exhaustion, cramps, dehydration, and diseases of the chest were not uncommon.[31]

According to Brian Lavery's social history of Royal Navy ratings,

> A good stoker would keep the fuel level inside his furnace rather than letting it pile up at one end. He would close the fire doors as much as possible to save heat; he would break up large pieces of coal, clear the bars of his furnace, re-use half-burnt cinders and make sure his fires were clean for the next watch. A reliable man would be needed to keep an eye on the water level inside the boiler — too low and some of the plates might overheat and create the danger of an explosion, too high and the water would boil over and go into the engine.[32]

This placed Daniel in a key role during the Royal Navy's technological transition from sail to steam. "The strength, skill, and stamina of a ship's stokers, together with the quality and amount of coal in its bunkers," determined the maximum speed it could achieve."[33] Steam power, at least in its initial period, depended on manpower.

Understanding the types of military service our ancestors performed can provide valuable clues to where we might find them in archival records, which can in turn provide a gold mine of biographical information on our patriotic ancestors... even those related to our DNA by marriage.

Resources

Research Guides

Herber, Mark. *Ancestral Trails: The Complete Guide to British Genealogy and Family History*, 2nd ed., fully updated and revised. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2010.

Pappalardo, Bruno. *Tracing Your Naval Ancestors*. Kew, Richmond, Surrey: Public Record Office, 2003.

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Royal Navy References

"John Bishop Experiences Life as A Naval Stoker," *Who Do You Think You Are*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6Mqqrnj36w. Same time frame as Daniel McCarthy's service. Bishop's ancestor served on HMS *Tiger*, a much larger ship (16-gun paddle frigate) with 10 boilers.

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Endnotes

1 Jere Mackin's DNA results are used with his permission. All URLs are current as of 24 May 2025. This and all census records cited are imaged at *Ancestry*, https://www.ancestry.com. For Daniel McCarthy's birth and death dates, see Cook County, Illinois, death certificate 00013505, Daniel McCarthy, 1914; Cook County Clerk's Office, Chicago.

2 "ThruLines® for Peter Kinney," *Ancestry*. Screenshots dated 19 April 2025 for Jere Gene Mackin test, author's files. For the birth and death dates of Charlotte (Kinney) Snell, see Cook County, Illinois, death certificate 00004628, Charlotte McCarthy, 1880; Cook County Clerk's Office, Chicago.

For the birth date of Peter Kinney, see 1860 U.S. census, Walworth County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Town of Geneva, p. 114, dwelling 817, family 167, Peter Kinney household. For the death date see Card Index, entry for Peter Kinney, died 1876; Buchanan County Genealogical Society, Independence, Iowa.

For the birth date of Bridget McDonagh, see Newport Roman Catholic Parish, Diocese of Cashel and Emly, baptisms 1795–1809, 26 January 1800, Brigida McDonough; imaged in "Ireland, Catholic Parish Registers, 1655–1915," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61039/); see also, 1850 U.S. census, Walworth County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Town of Geneva, pp. 265b–266a, dwelling 630, family 641, Bridget Kinney. For the death date, see 1860 U.S. census, Walworth Co., Wis., "Mortality" schedule, p. 2, Town of Geneva, Bridget Kinney.

3 Cook County, Illinois, death certificate 00013505, Daniel McCarthy, 1914; Cook County Clerk's Office, Chicago.

4 "Daniel A. Nicholson," *Legacy* (https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/chicagotribune/name/daniel-nicholson-obituary?id=2611929 : accessed 19 April 2025). Nicholson provided a copy of an undated, unsourced genealogical database report titled "Descendants of Peter Kinney" to Donna Kinney of Winthrop, Iowa, whose family hosted Kinney family reunions in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Donna collected original and derivative sources on the Kinney family and shared Nicholson's report with the author.

5 Daniel A. Nicholson, "Descendants of Peter Kinney," undated genealogical database report; copy given to author by Donna Kinney of Winthrop, Iowa. A slightly different version of the genealogy notes was provided to the author via email

dated 19 April 2025 from Ancestry member Angelina Martinez Nicholson, niece-in-law of Daniel A. Nicholson.

6 *Ibid*. Both versions of this portion of the narrative are identical.

7 *Ibid*. Both versions of this portion of the narrative are identical.

8 Copy of Records (Matrimonial) Solemnized in the Church of the Holy Name, dated 29 May 1866, Charlotte (Kinney) McCarthy, minors' pension application no. 81,458, certificate no. 80,326, combined with widow's pension application no. 5,034, certificate no. 4,767; service of Walter H. Snell (Pvt., Co. G, 3rd Wisc. Cav., Civil War); Case Files of Approved Pension Applications…, 1861–1934; Civil War and Later Pension Files; Record Group 15: Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs; National Archives, Washington, D.C.; imaged at *Fold3* (https://www.fold3.com/file/274369004 : accessed 19 April 2025).

9 "U.S. City Directories, 1822–1995," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2469/ : accessed 23 August 2022), Illinois > Chicago > 1873 > Chicago, Illinois, City Directory, 1873 > image 302 of 642. See, for example, "U.S. City Directories, 1822–1995," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2469/ : accessed 23 August 2022), Illinois > Chicago > 1874 > Chicago, Illinois, City Directory, 1874 > images 349 and 692 of 731. Also "U.S. City Directories, 1822–1995," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2469/ : accessed 23 August 2022), Illinois > Chicago > 1889 > Chicago City Directory 1889 > image 1070 of 2072.

10 Cook County, Illinois, Chicago City Board of Health, death certificate, Charlotte McCarthy, 27 June 1880; Cook County Clerk, Chicago. Cook County, Illinois, death certificate 17140 (1914), Daniel McCarthy; Cook County Clerk, Chicago.

11 Mark Herber's research guide to British genealogy devotes two chapters to British military records, "Records of the Army, Royal Marines and Royal Air Force" and "Records of Shipping and Seamen," noting that most important records of naval seamen are at The National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA), The National Maritime Museum, or the Guildhall Library. See Herber's *Ancestral Trails: The Complete Guide to British Genealogy and Family History*, 2nd ed., fully updated and revised (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2010), 384–440, 441–488. All three institutions provide research guides. To find TNA's research guides for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, go to the "Research guides, Military and Maritime" page and click the box for "Royal Navy and Royal Marines" to find a list of the 28 guides available. The National Maritime Museum offers three top-level research guides describing the Museum's principle records, with additional research guides searchable from the Research Guides page; see: "Research guides: General introduction," Royal Museums Greenwich (https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/research-guides/about-research-guides-general-introduction and "Research guides," *Royal Museums Greenwich* (https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/research-guides). Researchers should also be sure to search the Museum's library and archives catalogs, as well as the collections catalog, to find resources related to specific projects, at "Caird Library and Archive," *Royal Museums Greenwich* (https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/caird-library). The Guildhall Library and The London Archives also include significant maritime collections, particularly for merchant marine ancestors: "Guildhall Library – The Library of London History," *City of London* (https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/guildhall-library) and *The London Archives* (https://www.thelondonarchives.org/). Another potentially useful collection for Royal Navy ancestors is the petitions for pension or admittance to an almshouse in the Trinity House records held by The London Archives; see Trinity House, which was founded in 1514 to develop navigational aids, regulate pilotage, act as expert nautical advisors, and relieve needy seamen and their relatives. See "Trinity House Records Research Guide," *The London Archives* (https://www.thelondonarchives.org/your-research/research-guides/trinity-house-records). Some of this collection is calendared in "British Mariners, Trinity House Calendars 1787–1854" at *Findmypast* (https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/british-mariners-trinity-house-calendars-1787-1854). Lastly, in addition to Mark Herber's general research guide and the aforementioned repository guides, see the following two useful guides, which focus on the Royal Navy: Bruno Pappalardo's *Tracing Your Naval Ancestors* (Kew, Richmond, Surrey: Public Record Office, 2003) and Ian Waller's *My Ancestor Was in…The Royal Navy* (London: Society of Genealogists, 2014).

12 "Royal Navy ratings up to 1913," *The National Archives* (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-ratings-up-to-1913/).

13 "Crimean War," *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crimean_War).

14 "Crimean War," *National Army Museum* (https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/crimean-war).

15 "Ireland and the Crimean War," *Maynooth University* (https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/research/spotlight-research/ireland-and-crimean-war).

16 *The Victorian Royal Navy* (https://www.pdavis.nl/index.htm).

[17] Dooling, Michael Carroll, "The Thin Iron Line—The Crimean War Transforms Naval Power," *U.S. Naval Institute* (https://www.usni.org/magazines/naval-history-magazine/2004/june/thin-iron-line-crimean-war-tranforms-naval-power). Also D.K. Brown, "The Royal Navy in the Crimean War, Technological Advances," *Journal Of Naval Engineering*, vol. 30, no. 3: 620–649; digitized at "Library," *Institute of Marine Engineering, Science & Technology* (https://library.imarest.org/record/8720/files/v30b3p15a.pdf).

[18] "Crimean War," *Wikipedia*. "Crimean War," National Army Museum.

[19] *See Oxford English Dictionary*, "rating (n.1), sense 2.a" and "rating (n.1), sense 2.b," March 2025, (https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1071448294 and https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1073610951).

[20] Daniel A. Nicholson, "Descendants of Peter Kinney."

[21] See "Royal Navy ratings' service records 1853–1928," *The National Archives* (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-ratings-service-records-1853-1928/), also "Admiralty: Royal Navy Continuous Service Engagement Books," *The National Archives* (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C1848).

[22] "Royal Navy ratings up to 1913," *The National Archives*. See also Bruno Pappalardo, *Tracing Your Naval Ancestors* (Kew, Richmond, Surrey: Public Record Office, 2003), 79–80. Ian Waller, *My Ancestor Was in…The Royal Navy*, Kindle ed. (London: Society of Genealogists, 2014), locations 2266 and 2287.

[23] For more about these records see Pappalardo, *Tracing Your Naval Ancestors*, 99–101, also Waller, *My Ancestor Was in the Royal Navy*, locations 2287, 2315, 2339, 2363, and 2377, as well as "Royal Navy ratings up to 1913."

[24] I am indebted to Lisa Constanti of Chronicology, https://chronicology.co.uk/, for making room for me on her schedule, as well as providing copies of Daniel McCarthy's records.

[25] "HMS *Medina* (1840)," *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Medina_(1840)).

Rif Winfield, British Warships in the Age of Sail, 1817–1863, *Design, Constructions, Careers and Fates* (Barnsley, Yorkshire: Pen & Sword, 2014), Kindle edition, 1390.

David Lyon and Rif Winfield, *The Sail & Steam Navy List: All the Ships of the Royal Navy 1815–1889* (London: Chatham Publishing, 2004), 164, 167.

Also "Our Paddle-Wheel Steam Navy," The Victorian Royal Navy (https://www.pdavis.nl/USM_Paddle.htm) and "HMS *Medina* (1840)," *The Victorian Royal Navy* (https://www.pdavis.nl/ShowShip.php?id=1749).

[26] The National Archives of the UK (TNA): ADM 38/8524: Admiralty: Ships' Musters (Series III). Medina. C. [Muster or Complete Book],D. [Description Book],O. [Muster Open List].

[27] The National Archives of the UK (TNA): ADM 38/7766: Admiralty: Ships' Musters (Series III). Caradoc. C.,D.,O.

[28] See Pappalardo, *Tracing Your Naval Ancestors*, 101. Also "Admiralty: Ship Record and Establishment Books," *The National Archives* (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C1824).

[29] "UK, Naval Medal and Award Rolls, 1793–1972," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1687/), Crimea Medal 1854–1855 > ALL > Ships G-Q > image 78 of 154 for HMS *Medina*.

[30] Brian Lavery, *Able Seamen: The Lower Deck of the Royal Navy 1850–1939* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011), 325.

[31] Lavery, *Able Seamen*, 37. Also Tony Chamberlain, *"Stokers – the lowest of the low?" A Social History of Royal Navy stokers 1850–1950*, Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, University of Exeter, March 2013, 78–92, 98–125; University of Exeter (United Kingdom) ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, 2013.30398250 (https://www.proquest.com/openview/987b0108c7a84a7e5a1dc40e41ca06f4/1?cbl=2026366&diss=y&pq-origsite=gscholar). See also Lloyd's Register Foundation Heritage & Education Centre, Roy and Lesley Adkins, "Coal at Sea: The Hazards of Cargoes, Bunkers, Loading, Unloading, Trimming, and Shifting—Loading and Unloading Coal Cargoes," *Lloyd's Register Foundation Heritage & Education Centre* (https://hec.lrfoundation.org.uk/whats-on/stories/coal-at-sea-the-hazards-of-cargoes-bunkers-loading-unloading-trimming-and-shifting# -- One report summarised trimming 'as of large pieces of coal').

[34] Lavery, *Able Seamen*, 37.

[35] Chamberlain, *Stokers…, a Social History*, 229–230.

Lois Abromitis Mackin, PhD, is a professional genealogist focusing on American and English research. She has three degrees in history and has studied at major genealogical institutes. She writes for Minnesota Genealogist *and is the 2013 winner of the Minnesota Genealogical Society's Founders Award for visionary leadership.*



Finding Revolutionary War Ancestors with DAR's Genealogical Research System (GRS)

by Gigi Hickey

According to Dr. Philip Thomas Tucker, a prolific Revolutionary War historian, Irish and Scots-Irish soldiers constituted a disproportionately high percentage of troops during the American Revolutionary War.[1] [For more information, please see the author's companion article, "Unacknowledged Heroes," on page 82.] So how do we locate these patriotic Irish soldiers?

Do You Have a Revolutionary War Ancestor?

If your ancestors arrived in North America before 1783, one or more may have supported the Patriot cause. You can explore this possibility using the Genealogical Research System (GRS), which is free to the public and provided by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) on their website, *Daughters of the American Revolution* (https://www.dar.org/.)

To become DAR members, women must trace and document their lineage to a Patriot who contributed to American independence.[2] In many cases, another descendant may have already completed the application process, verifying both lineage and service. Valuable details about your ancestor's military, civil, or patriotic contributions might already be recorded and just waiting for you to uncover them.

The Genealogical Research System (GRS)

The Genealogical Research System is DAR's online genealogical portal.[3] Here you will find a combination of online databases created to organize the vast collection of information DAR has collected since its inception in 1890. The GRS was built to assist with applications for DAR membership and for general genealogical research. Membership is not required to access the GRS.

This article barely scratches the surface in describing the GRS. It is but one of the many databases in the DAR's vast collection, accessible through the Genealogy tab on the DAR website. The following three GRS databases are derived from approved DAR membership applications:[4]

- ***Ancestor Database***: Information on Revolutionary War Patriots whose service and identity have been established by the DAR. The DAR Ancestor Database is usually the best place to start a search for potential Patriots in your family. Be aware that the Ancestor Database is NOT a comprehensive list of all individuals who served in the Revolutionary War. New Patriots are added only as they are proven through new-member applications or through supplemental applications submitted by women who are already DAR members.[5]
- ***Member Database***: Contains basic information about DAR members and their Patriots. Accessible only with DAR member number, the info is limited due to privacy concerns.
- ***Descendants Database***: A searchable index of every name found on the lineage page of verified applications and supplemental applications. Access to recent generations may be restricted.

On the homepage of the DAR website, the GRS may be accessed by clicking the GRS tab at the top of the page (in the blue banner).

Types of Qualifying Service

It's important to note that "aiding the cause of American independence" is not limited to military service. Support may also come through civil or patriotic service. Some Patriots have proven service in more than one category. The listed 'Service Source' will refer you to more detailed records for each service type.[6]

- ***Military***: Serving in the Continental Army and Navy, state and local militia, or as a privateer,
- ***Civil***: Serving as a state, county, or town official,
- ***Patriotic***: Signing an oath of allegiance or rendering material aid.

The qualifying service must have occurred between 19 April 1775 (the Battle of Lexington) and 26 November 1783 (the withdrawal of British Troops from New York).

Recognize your Revolutionary ancestor for DAR's "America 250"

If your ancestors lived in Colonial America in the 1700s — whether they were Irish, Scots/Irish, German, English, or of other origin — chances are you may find someone in the family line who "aided the cause of American independence." Consider honoring them by researching their stories during America's bisesquicentennial anniversary in 2026. DAR's GRS would be a great place to start.

Endnotes

[1] Phillip Thomas Tucker, *How the Irish Won the American Revolution: A New Look at the Forgotten Heroes of America's*

War of Independence (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, First paperback edition, 2020), 2.

[2] NSDAR's writing style guide states, "'Patriot' should be capitalized when referring to a Revolutionary War Patriot."

[3] Extensive guidance about using the GRS can be found on the DAR website (https://www.dar.org/research/genealogy-resources/using-genealogical-research-system-grs), Home > Research > Genealogy > Using The Genealogical Research System (GRS).

[4] More information about databases, such as "Ancestor," "Member," and "Descendant," is available within the GRS system at: (https://services.dar.org/public/dar_research/search/?tab_id=0), Home > GRS [blue tab at top of page].

[5] Supplemental apps are indicated by an entry in the "Add Vol" column; new-member applications will not have an entry there. DAR members' identities are not available to the public (except long-deceased members, whose names and states of membership may be shown).

[6] Additional information on what is considered accepted Revolutionary War Service can be found at (https://www.dar.org/national-society/accepted-revolutionary-war-service), Home > GRS [blue tab at top of page] > Ancestor [red tab] > Overview & Help [blue tab with an "i" in the blue circle].

Gigi Hickey has twice served on the IGSI board and as IGSI blog editor since 2011. She currently volunteers as Co-Managing Editor of The Septs. *Finding the name of her 4X great-grandfather on Pennsylvania muster rolls in 2008 motivated her to prove both her lineage and his Revolutionary War service on an application to the Daughters of the American Revolution. Gigi has held leadership positions in the Lake Minnetonka (MN) DAR Chapter and at the state level.*



The Military Archives (An Chartlann Mhíleata)

The Military Archives (https://www.militaryarchives.ie), located in the Cathal Brugha Barracks in Dublin, Ireland, boasts 21.6 kilometers of shelving and houses records of the Irish Defence Forces, the Department of Defence, and Ireland's Army Pensions Board. In addition to collections accessible in the Archives' on-site Reading Room, online collections include:

- The Collins Papers (1917-1922),
- Military Service Pensions Collection (1916-1923),
- The Irish Volunteer (1914-1916), and
- The Oral History Project (20th Century).

Additionally, the Archives' Bureau of Military History [BHM] Collection, (1913-1921), includes photographs, voice recordings, contemporary documents, and over 1,700 witness statements (https://www.https://bmh.militaryarchives.ie/). The Archives' remit is to collect material dating from the launch of the Irish State; together, the BMH and the Military Service Pensions Collection are considered two of the most valuable primary sources available for this period.

Military Record Sources for *The Septs*

by Kim Gehrman White, Assoc. Editor

	Description	Years	Original Data, Info., Etc.	Author
Ancestry	Ireland, Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC)	1816-1921	*FamilySearch* microfilm, Index to the Royal Irish Constabulary; *Findmypast.com* and *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	Ireland, Royal Hospital Kilmainham Pensioner Discharge Documents	1724-1924 (WO 118)	Certificates of Service, TNA; *Fold3*	Housley
	UK, British Army Records and Lists	1882-1962	Images at *Fold3*	Housley
	UK, British Army World War I Pension Records	1914-1920 (WO 364)	The "Unburnt Collection" at The National Archives, Kew (TNA); *Findmypast.com* and *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	UK, British Army World War I Service Records	1914-1920 (WO 363)	The "Burnt Documents" at TNA; also, at *Findmypast.com* and *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	UK, Naval Medal and Award Rolls	1793-1972 (ADM 171)	TNA	Housley, Mackin
	UK, Naval Officer and Rating Service Records	1802-1919 (ADM 29)	Admiralty: Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Coastguard and related services: Officers' and Ratings' Service Records (Series II) at TNA	Housley, Mackin
	UK, Officer Service Records, index	1764-1932 (WO 76)	TNA; images at *Fold3*	Housley
	UK, World War I Pension Ledgers and Index Cards	1914-1923	The Western Front Association, England; images at *Fold3*	Housley
Findmypast	British Royal Navy Allotment Declarations	1795-1852 (ADM 27/5)	TNA; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Mackin
	British Army, Army Lists	1839-1946	*Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	Royal Hospital Chelsea: returns of payment of Army and other pensions	1842-1883 (WO 22)	TNA; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	Royal Hospital Chelsea: admission books, registers, and papers	1702-1876 (WO 23)	TNA; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	Regimental records of officers' services	1775-1914 (WO 76)	TNA; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	Militia service records	1806-1915 (WO 96)	TNA; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	British India Office Collection		Births & Baptisms, Deaths & Burials, Marriages, Army & Navy Pensions, Wills & Probate, Assistant Surgeons, Index of Civil Engineers; see Families in British India Society (FIBIS) and *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	Chelsea: pensioners British Army service records	1760-1913 (WO 97)	TNA; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	Chelsea: pensioners' discharge documents	1760-1887 (WO 121)	TNA; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	Chelsea: pensioners' discharge documents, foreign regiments	1816-1817 (WO 122)	TNA; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	Chelsea: documents of soldiers awarded deferred pensions	1838-1896 (WO 131)	TNA; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	British Armed Forces and Overseas Banns and Marriages	1796-2005	Records from the General Register Office (GRO) and TNA; Subcategory: Civil Marriage & Divorce; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley

	Description	Years	Original Data, Info., Etc.	Author
Findmypast	British Armed Forces and Overseas Deaths and Burials	1796-2005	Records from the General Register Office (GRO) and TNA; Subcategory: Civil Deaths & Burials; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	British Armed Forces, Roman Catholic Registers	1836-1975	Digitised from The Scottish Catholic Archives; Subcategory: Parish Baptisms, Parish Burials, Parish Marriages, Religious Ceremonies; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	British Royal Navy & Royal Marines Service and Pension Records	1704-1939	TNA; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley, Mackin
	British Armed Forces and Overseas Births and Baptisms	1761-2005	Records from the General Register Office (GRO) and TNA; Subcategory: Civil Births; *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	Ireland, Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) Service Records	1816-1922 (HO 184)	TNA; Subcategory: Occupations; *Findmypast.ie* and *Findmypast.co.uk*	Housley
	British Army Service Records		Discover > Military, armed forces & conflict > Regimental & Service Records	Doerfler
FIBIS	Families in British India Society		Millions of names indexed *Fibis.org*; The British Library is the repository of the original records	Housley
Fold3	US, Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files	1800-1900	National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), M804, record group 15	Doerfler
	US, Compiled Service Records (CMSR) of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served in Organizations From the State of Missouri	1861-1865	NARA, M405, record group 94	Doerfler
	US, Case Files of Approved Pension Applications of Widows and Other Dependents of Civil War Veterans	c. 1861-1910	NARA, record group 15	Doerfler
	UK, War Office: British Army Records of Officers' Services	1764-1932 (WO 76)	TNA; indexed at *Ancestry*	Housley
	United States, Revolutionary War Pensions	1800-1900	Research Guide	Doerfler
FamilySearch	Muster/Payrolls, and Various Papers (1763-1808) of the Revolutionary War	1763-1808	Massachusetts and Rhode Island	Doerfler
	War Office 25: Registers, various [free index]	1756-1878 (WO 25)	WO 25: Description & Succession books, Returns of Officers' Services, Casualty Returns, and Regimental entry books; TNA	Housley
	War Office 67: Depot description books	1803-1892 (WO 67)	WO 67: Non-commissioned officers and enlisted men; TNA	Housley
	Record of Officers Services	1770-1919	WO 76, supplemental to WO 25; TNA	Housley
	Land Records of Lanark County	1802-1921	Registrar's Office, Perth, Ontario, Canada	Doerfler
	Abstract Index Books	c. 1800-1959	Registrar's Office, Perth, Ontario, Canada	Doerfler
	United States, Revolutionary War Rolls	Research Guide	Family Search Historical Records; *FamilySearch Wiki*	Doerfler
National Archives (NARA)	Military Records Research at The National Archives	Research Guide	*www.archives.gov* > Home > Research Our Records > Military Records Research	Doerfler

	Description	Years	Original Data, Info., Etc.	Author
National Archives (NARA)	Compiled Military Service Records (CMSRs)	Research Guide	*www.archives.gov* > Home > Research Our Records > Military Records Research > Army Records at the National Archives > Compiled Military Service Records	Doerfler
	Requesting Copies of Older (pre-WWI) Military Service	Records Guide	*www.archives.gov* > Home > Veterans' Service Records > Military Service Records > Requesting Copies of Older Military Service Records	Doerfler
The National Archives - UK (TNA)	Ordnance Office, Military Branch, and War Office: Royal Artillery Records of Service and Papers	1755-1917 (WO 69)	The National Archives, Kew; *nationalarchives.gov.uk*	Housley
	Royal Navy Ratings' Service Records	1853-1928	ADM 139, 188, 362, 363	Housley, Mackin
	Royal Navy Officers' Service Records	1756-1931 (ADM 196)		Housley
	Admiralty: Royal Navy Continuous Service Engagement Books	1853-1872 (ADM 139)		Mackin
	Admiralty: Ships' Musters (Series III)	1793-1878 (ADM 38)		Mackin
	Admiralty: Ship Record and Establishment Books	1853-1879 (ADM 115)		Mackin
	British Army Soldiers up to 1913 Research Guide			Doerfler, Housley, Mackin
Web Archive (webarchive.gov.uk)	British army regiments, names, and numbers	Research Guide (archived)	See page 2, paragraph 1 of the Housley article for the URL	Housley
Internet Archive (archive.gov)	Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War: A Compilation from the Archives, 17 volumes	1896-1908	Also available at Google Books and Internet Archive; Massachusetts, Sect. of the Commonwealth, ed.	Doerfler
Library and Archives Canada (LAC)	Land Petitions of Upper Canada	1763-1865	*Library-archives.canada.ca*	Doerfler
National Army Museum – UK (NAM)	Soldiering Wives	19th century	Historical Perspective	Housley
	49th (Princess Charlotte of Wales's) (Hertfordshire) Regiment of Foot	c. 1743-1881		Doerfler
Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)	General Research System (GRS)	Research Guide	*www.dar.org*; Home > Research > Genealogy > Using The Genealogical Research System	Hickey
American Ancestors	American Ancestors: Civil War Research: Tracing Union & Confederate Ancestors (5 course sessions)	Research Guidance	Presented by David Allen Lambert and Melanie McComb, June 2024; www.americanancestors.org	Doerfler
YouTube	Friend or Foe: Researching Colonial Ancestors During the American Revolution	Research Guidance	Search on *YouTube*	Doerfler
Royal Museums Greenwich	Royal Navy: First World War – Lives at Sea	1914-1918	Free resource derived from transcribed service records; *royalnavyrecordsww1.rmg.co.uk*	Housley
National Park Service (NPS) nps.gov	National Park Service > People > Soldiers and Sailors Database > Battle Units	c. 1861-1864	The Civil War > Battle Unit Details > Union Missouri Volunteers > 3rd Regiment, Missouri Infantry	Doerfler

Book Review of *Townland Atlas of Ulster*, by Andrew Kane

by Ann Eccles

With the publication earlier this year of the *Townland Atlas of Ulster*, Andrew Kane offered a genealogical gift for anyone researching Irish ancestors in the province of Ulster. My first impressions when paging through the book included marveling at the attractive and strikingly colorful maps — 64 of them, one for each barony in each of the nine counties — as well as the numerous and extensive indexes (340 pages of them) to aid the researchers among us.

So, where to start? Why such a significant interest in a book covering only one Irish province of nine counties? It is all in the details provided. Many people outside of Ireland know the six counties of Northern Ireland yet forget that nine counties make up the Ulster province…and each one is covered in this volume.

Introductory Pages

Just 17 pages of introductory notes provide a sound explanation to enhance our research experience in using this volume. They are well worth reading for their critical explanations, and perhaps even re-reading mid-research.

For Americans, the details of Irish geographic history can be confusing. For those of us researching Ulster ancestors, finding an ancestor's townland — the plot of land on which they resided — is the goal. Here, the introductory notes tell us that the term for a townland changed over the centuries, as well as the spellings of location names. So, there's even more to learn and use in our research.

The introduction also contains snapshot explanations of the history and terms used in Irish land administration, such as barony, county, and civil parish, providing a historical backdrop for the maps and the indexes. We'll also find explanations of tithes, religious parishes, estates and manors, and land (acreage) measures related to the atlas maps.

The Maps

Andrew Kane describes how he prepared the maps for this book. Starting with a freehand tracing of an Ordnance Survey map, then using the Bodley map or other seventeenth-century maps for the region, he overlaid it with the current townland names used in the Ordnance Survey maps of the 1800s. The names of seventeenth-century estates are color-coded information within each map. The end result provides context within the maps. Quite a bit of information from the earlier centuries survives — e.g., the continuity of townland as a unit of Irish life, and an awareness of estate landlords and tenant migrations. The names can be found on the maps and in the index.

With the *Townland Atlas of Ulster*, Kane delivers a reference work of undeniable value for both Irish researchers and for novice or American family historians. Maps of each of the 78 baronies have every one of the 16,000 townlands named; they show civil, Anglican, and Roman Catholic parish boundaries and identify the estates. The numerous indexes provide information for tagging the entities on the maps and searching topics for further investigation in other resources.

Indexes

The indexes are copious and luxuriant in detail, containing lists of townlands, Anglican Church parishes, Roman Catholic parishes, landed estates, and civil parishes — all with brief details. References are to the maps, but information from the names and dates can lead us to further research in other historical resources. In taking the time to study the book's maps and indexes, we could well discover more about the places in Ulster where our ancestors lived.

More About the Author

Andrew Kane, author of the *Townland Atlas of Ulster*, is a Research Consultant for the Ulster Historical Foundation, a Trustee of the North of Ireland Family History Society, and a member of several other local history groups in the Coleraine area, where his family has lived for at least 12 generations. He is also the author of

In Memory of Sheila Cunningham

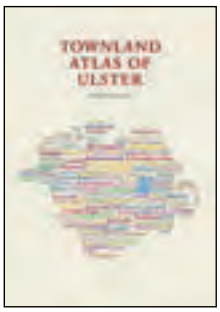
by Donna Jones

Walt and I were saddened to learn that longtime IGSI member Sheila Cunningham passed away on May 15, 2025. While researching this memorial, I found a beautiful poem published in *The Septs* that Sheila wrote after finding a photo of a cousin who'd just turned 100 years old.

In her introduction, Sheila shared that seeing the picture "led me to compose the following poem about the inevitable passage of time." This poem is available in *The Septs* back issues list on our website at: (https://www.irishgenealogical.org/upload/files/the-septs/2000214.pdf). Sheila's poem is on page 123.

Town Book of Coleraine and has contributed to several genealogical journals and magazines.

Dave Miller, an IGSI member and a genealogist, interviewed Andrew Kane for the March 2025 IGSI Podcast episode (https://www.youtube.com/@IrishGenealogyIGSI). In this interview, Kane describes the preparations for and resources contained in the volume.



The Townland Atlas of Ulster is part of the IGSI collection [IR 911.416 KAN] and available for research use at the Hoffman Library in Mendota Heights, Minnesota. Brendan Scott of *RootsIreland* offered this summary in his review of the book: "This is an essential reference guide for both newcomer and serious researcher, showing exact locations and where to look for related records. This material has never been collated for the entire province before."

Ann Eccles is a longtime active member of IGSI and is currently co-chair of the IGSI Library Committee. She served a few terms as president of the Society and was editor of this publication for 16 years. Ann has traced four of her great-grandparents to counties Armagh and Tyrone; another four are from the Republic of Ireland.



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2025 Webinar Series — Save the Dates!

Saturday, July 19 | *New Tools & Tricks with Maps for Genealogy Research* | Joe Hunter, Presenter
Genealogists have long used maps to aid in their research. Using maps can add context and depth to family history research in addition to helping solve brick walls. In his webinar, Joe Hunter will demonstrate how to employ various tools and strategies to better understand or customize maps, thus unlocking their secrets.

Saturday, August 23 | *Researching Presbyterian Ancestors in Ireland* | Dr. William Roulston, Presenter
Do you have Presbyterian ancestors? Are you having difficulty locating them in Ireland? Dr. William Roulston, who holds a PhD in Archaeology and has been a researcher, author, and lecturer with the Ulster Historical Foundation for nearly thirty years, will give his talk virtually from Belfast. Join us as the renowned Dr. Roulston shares his expert insight on researching Presbyterian ancestors in the Emerald Isle.

Saturday, September 27 | *NUCMC & its Newer Cousins: Free Keys to "Lost" Ancestral Manuscript Records* |
Paula Stuart-Warren, Presenter
Have you ever wondered where to find Great Aunt Sadie's diary or the records of a Midwestern circuit rider? What about an ancestor's business records or files for a DAR application? As families migrated westward, they left many records in their wake. Paula Stewart-Warren will introduce us to the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC), founded in 1962. One of the most important finding aids available today features manuscript descriptions from nearly 2,000 manuscript collections across the United States. This webinar will be hybrid.

If you have questions about any of our webinars or classes, contact Trish and Walt, IGSI Education Co-Chairs, at Education@IrishGenealogical.org.

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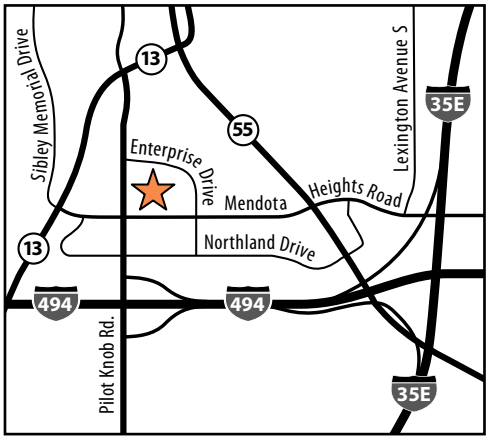
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During severe weather, or if traveling a long distance, please call before coming to the library to check if open.

The library is a self-supporting research library staffed by volunteers. If you are a member of the IGSI and are coming from out of town, contact Librarian@IrishGenealogical.org so we can have an Irish researcher available to meet you.

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The Septs

OCTOBER (DEIREADH FOMHAIR) 2025 $10.00

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IRISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Genealogy Library Open

The Hoffman Research Library, located in the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, is open for research. Full service times are scheduled for 2025.

The Hoffman Research Library is a private genealogy research library created for members of the organizations in the MGS Partners' Group. Access to the library materials is free to members of IGSI and other MGS Partner societies. Non-members and the general public are requested to pay a per visit $10 donation for use.

The Hoffman Library will be open only if there are two volunteers available to staff the building. (Won't you consider becoming a MGC/library volunteer to help ensure research access for all?)

Hours of service:

Monday	10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Wednesday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Irish Saturdays

Stop by the library on the second Saturday of the month between 10 AM and 4 PM for Irish research help from IGSI volunteers.

NOVEMBER 8, 2025
DECEMBER 13, 2025
JANUARY 10, 2026
FEBRUARY 14, 2026
MARCH 14, 2026
APRIL, 11 2026
MAY, 9 2026
JUNE, 13 2026
JULY, 11 2026
AUGUST, 8 2026

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Scan with your phone to view IGSI's website

The Septs, the quarterly journal of the Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc., is one of the primary benefits of IGSI membership and is published in January, April, July, and October. Members receive a printed version of the journal unless they have chosen to receive it electronically.

Irish Genealogical Society International, Inc.

2025

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Write for *The Septs*

Each issue of *The Septs* is built around a core theme. Research articles on the theme should be 1500-2500 words in length and include no more than 2-4 images. Issues may also include articles on topics unrelated to the theme, e.g., family stories submitted by IGSI members and non-members, etc. Articles unrelated to the theme should be 750-1500 words.

If you wish to write on the theme or share case studies, family research, or articles on general Irish culture and history and genealogy resources, please contact the Managing Editors of *The Septs* at SeptsMnged@IrishGenealogical.org or the Editor at SeptsEditor@IrishGenealogical.org in advance of deadlines to ensure your article is considered for the proper issue.

Contributions and ideas are welcome. Decisions to publish and/or edit materials are at the discretion of the editorial staff.

Themes of Upcoming Issues

2026 | January | Documenting Death

Discover more about your ancestors through sources like death certificates, obituaries, probate records, funeral homes, cemeteries, and even gravestone symbols. Techniques for accessing and interpreting death records are also recommended.
Deadline for articles: November 15, 2025.

2026 | April | Irish Tapestry

Contribute stories or resources focused on genealogy that explore topics not typically covered by standard Septs themes. All submissions will be reviewed.
Deadline for articles: February 15, 2026.

2026 | July | Using Historical Newspapers

Learn when and how to use newspapers or journals to trace ancestors beyond obituaries and provide context about their lives. Articles on newspaper archives or case studies are welcome.
Deadline for articles: May 15, 2026.

2026 | October | Immigration

The most requested topic from our 2023 Reader Survey was Immigration. Articles may explore passenger lists, naturalization records, alien registration, one-step webpages, and more, to provide updated information since our last Immigration-themed issue in 2019. Deadline for articles: August 15, 2026.

Cover Photo: *Alice in Ponderland — Alice Milligan pondering the meaning of life. Who was Alice and where was Alice?*

National Library of Ireland on the Commons

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Thank You, Mary Stuart

by Donna Jones and Walt Rothwell

Our colleague Mary Stuart has decided to step down as Editor of *The Septs*. She joined *The Septs*' proofreading committee in 2022. She became editor in January 2023 and has done an amazing job publishing eleven issues of the journal. Mary served as a skilled editor, producing an outstanding journal for nearly three years. The publication received frequent positive feedback from readers for the high caliber of its articles.

Kim Gehrman White joined *The Septs* in 2022 and became Associate Editor in 2023. She has volunteered to serve as the journal's editor. The October 2025 edition will be Kim's debut as editor. Mary has indicated she will remain on staff as a coach and resource during the transition. Thank you, Mary, for your significant contributions to IGSI. Mary will continue serving on the IGSI Board of Directors.

Welcome, Kim, and thank you for taking on this primary role. Kim has been reviewing past issues of *The Septs* and creating a spreadsheet of articles and authors. IGSI is developing a new master index for *The Septs* to provide a single index of articles dating back to 1981. This effort, based on the spreadsheet Kim started, will consolidate 44 separate yearly indexes into one comprehensive index.

The Irish Genealogical Society International has over 40 years of experience publishing a scholarly journal. There is a fantastic group of people who volunteer many hours to publish each edition of the journal. I want to thank the other members of the editorial team: Managing Editors Gigi Hickey and Rita McNabb; Layout/Design, Megan McLean; and Proofreaders, Janelle Asselin, Dr. Patricia Coleman, Wendy Delery Hills, Peggy Peters, Jane Halloran Ryan, and Cathy Smart.

In Other Society News

Fall is a busy season for the Board. We will launch our annual fundraising campaign in October. Our goal this year is $15,000. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and for those of you eligible to make Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD), we hope you consider making a gift to IGSI.

As we upgrade our technology and equipment, our costs increase. Donations enable us to continue offering excellent education programs and provide resources that support members in researching their family history. We aim to expand the library's databases, enhance library services, and expand our Irish research collection. Additionally, donations support our acclaimed publications, including *The Septs*, *Ginealas (our e-newsletter),* the blog, and so much more. One-third of our income comes from the generosity of our members.

We had announced a year ago that the Board had approved upgrading our website to a responsive system. This means that the content on a page automatically adapts to fit the screen of a computer, tablet, or mobile phone. Our statistics continue to show that an increasing number of people are viewing our website on devices other than computers.

The project was paused because the membership management module needed further development. Meanwhile, we have been working on solutions to improve search capabilities across back issues of *The Septs*, the blog, and the e-newsletter *Ginealas*. Our blog editor, Gigi Hickey, has been working on removing old posts that are no longer relevant to streamline the conversion process.



After retiring from Oxford University Press, Co-President Donna Jones finally has more time to research her heritage and ancestry. She is passionate about genealogy education and is a member of the IGSI Education committee and the Board of Directors. IGSI provides her the opportunity to learn more about Irish research as she continues to search for where in Ireland her great, greatgrandparents lived.



Co-President Walt Rothwell is an IGSI board member and co-chair of the Education Committee. He is also affiliated with the Yankee Genealogical Society and the Canadian Interest Group of the Minnesota Genealogical Society. He is endlessly researching family lines across North American, Ireland, and England.

To Be a Legend, a Woman Needs to Be Written About…

by Kim Gehrman White

As days get shorter, you might consider which genealogy project to pursue. Summer often involves week-long courses, leaving little time to practice new skills. This issue focuses on finding female ancestors lost to history. We hope you discover new methods to improve your research and see this as a great opportunity to practice genealogy skills during the season for staying indoors, at computers, and locating elusive female ancestors.

Shelly Bishop investigates family ties to connect Elizabeth Dugan, wife of Patrick, to her maiden name and family. A family that immigrated to America in the mid-1800s, arriving in New Orleans and later appearing in Ohio, where Elizabeth married less than a year afterward.

Sharon DeBartolo Carmack skillfully explains why it is important not only to research female ancestors but also to write about them and give them a voice. She provides a step-by-step plan for how to start writing their stories, honoring their contributions, and ensuring they are no longer left silent.

Lois Mackin explains the benefits of using X and mtDNA in your genealogical research. With logic and a straightforward approach, she provides information on how to choose the right DNA test and understand the different types of DNA and their inheritance from ancestors.

Women with few or no records are often overlooked. Susan McKee discusses methods for using Irish naming conventions to identify female relatives of Kate (Delaney) Burge in nineteenth-century Ireland. Teasing out which Thomas Delaney, among several in one county, is possible by analyzing predicted names based on traditional naming patterns.

Stephanie O'Connell explains how to bring to life and illuminate the importance of the women we research. Armed with only fragments of their lives from limited records, she demonstrates how we can add historical context to our work and responsibly reclaim the stories of female ancestors, honoring their contributions.



The title in the (library) catalogue is "Man shrouded in a cloak standing on a tiled floor," which is not nearly as scary as the image itself. So, from ghosties and ghoulies and long legged beasties and things that go BUMP in the night, dear Lord deliver us! Photo by Dillon Family Photographers, c. 1890. National Library of Ireland on the Commons.

Over the past three years, I have had the privilege of working with our outstanding editor, Mary Stuart. She has done a remarkable job upholding and promoting the ambitious standards that define *The Septs*. Mary has an exceptional command of the English language, from ensuring that the author's voice remains clear in each article to using her voice all the more when managing less eloquent tasks, such as herding cats.

I am especially thankful for the grace, compassion, and support Mary has shown me. Although I often joke that I prefer communicating with the dead rather than the living, Mary has given me the courage to take on the role of editor, engage with the living, and continue delivering quality content. I wish her all the best as she focuses on her health. Mary will need every ounce of strength she can gather to handle the flood of "how do I do this…?" and panic attacks I might throw her way at any hour of the day (since I'm on the West Coast and she's on the East).

A fourth-generation Californian, Kim Gehrman White holds a certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University (OL22) and completed ProGen 55 in 2022. She has an M.A. in International Studies and a B.A. in History and International Relations. Her research is focused on Spain, Portugal, and Ireland.



An (Almost) Irish Goodbye

by Mary Stuart

Every winter, a few genealogy friends and I go on pilgrimage to do some research at the FamilySearch Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. We share an Airbnb, a car, and take turns cooking dinner and sharing tales of our discoveries du jour. Each of us became connected through one of the others in our group via a "Six Degrees of [Genealogy] Separation" (sorry, Kevin Bacon).

I met one of these dear friends, Abby, when we were both in the Boston University genealogical certificate program in the fall of 2017. Abby has a reputation in our little group for making frequent "Irish goodbyes," also known as an "Irish Exit." An Irish Goodbye simply means that one vacates a social event quietly, without drawing attention to oneself, rather than rudely demanding attention by making a dramatic or noisy exit. When the group is hanging out on Zoom, as we often did early in the pandemic, Abby would be there one minute, then suddenly gone without a word. Bedtimes in the Airbnb go much the same way.

If you've already read the President's and Editor's Letters, you'll know by now that I have stepped down as Editor of *The Septs*. While my three-year tenure is not atypical for editors of genealogical journals (most tenures run three to five years), rest assured, my decision was made neither lightly nor easily, but instead out of necessity. Fortunately for all of you, Kim Gehrman White has agreed to take on the formidable challenge of leading *The Septs*; my faith in her abilities is absolute, and I have little doubt she will soon prove to be a better editor than I ever was. (New Editor's note: unlikely to excel as Mary Stuart.) [Previous Editor's note: Beg to differ.]

When provided the option to pen an adieu (or not), I kept thinking of my friend Abby. Tempting as an Irish Goodbye was, I felt I owed the IGSI community, especially *The Septs* staff, one last expression of my appreciation. To all who read the journal, thank you for continuing to do so through all the years and our growing pains. You are our foundation. To the Board, thank you for your inestimable support and generosity these three years. You gave us room to take flight. To Co-Managing Editors Gigi Hickey and Rita McNabb (with a shoutout to former Co-Managing Editor Mary Wickersham), thank you for helping secure material and for your forbearance, particularly when you couldn't see our mad scrambles behind the scenes to get everything pulled together. You kept the wheels on the editorial bus turning. To Megan McLean, our unflappable layout editor, a million thanks for your endless patience while I learned the layout ropes and for indulging my nitpicky updates during the run-up to each issue's publication. Your brilliant eye for design and graphics will always astound me; I can only hope that the IGSI community recognizes what a treasure they have in you.

Lastly, to Kim Gehrman White, my "sister from another mister," thank you for your perseverance and tireless dedication, for your always wise counsel, and for your exquisitely sharp editing and wit. Thank you especially for always, *always*, having my back. I hope you know I will always have yours as well.

Thank you for all the support these last three years. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as your editor.

Mary LaRue Stuart serves on IGSI's Board of Directors. A native Hoosier and former university writing teacher with an MA in English, Mary is now a professional genealogist whose specialties include Indiana research, military repatriation, and DNA. Her Irish ancestors hail largely from Donegal/Northern Ireland. Mary is currently working on her BCG certification port-folio and is pursuing an AFA in Glass Arts. She enjoys singing, sewing, reading, and blowing glass in her non-existent spare time.



May peace be within you and may your heart be strong,
May you find what you're seeking wherever you roam.

No Longer Silent

Why You Should Write Your Female Ancestors' Life Stories

by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, MFA, CG

I'm guessing you've read the quote by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "well-behaved women seldom make history." But have you seen her other quote, "well-behaved women make history when they do the unexpected, when they create and preserve records, and when later generations care"?[1] Well, what if you have well-behaved women who didn't do the unexpected, who didn't create and preserve records? Does this mean later generations shouldn't care?

In my latest book, *Telling Her Story: A Guide to Researching and Writing about Women of the Past*, I write, "*Every* woman led a life worth researching and recording; but not every woman created voluminous records."[2] So how do you write about a woman who didn't leave letters, diaries, or voluminous records about her life? Here is my step-by-step approach:

Step 1. I research as much as I can about her in the usual genealogical sources, putting what I find either in chronological order or written as a compiled or narrative genealogy. A compiled genealogy is a report of all genealogical findings, often with just bare bones information, such as births, marriages, and deaths. The compiled genealogy is fully documented, with a source citation for every fact. A narrative genealogy is a similar report of all genealogical findings, incorporating biographical, historical, and social information, record abstracts and/or transcriptions,[3] along with your analysis of records and information that supports and explains ancestral/generational links. It's written in complete sentences as a narrative and is also fully documented, with a source citation for every fact, quote, summary, paraphrase, abstract, and transcription.[4]

I recommend you write these using a word processor, not a computer genealogy program where you merely enter data, then "create" a narrative report. Trust me, while you are writing from scratch, you notice holes in the research, inconsistencies, and things that just don't make sense.

Step 2. I research all available traditional sources about the men involved in her life: father, husband(s), brothers, and sons-in-law. The men typically created far more records, and sometimes revealed information about the woman I'm researching. I add that information to the timeline or genealogy. I also research the other women in her life. Sometimes they left letters, diaries, or more voluminous records that might mention the woman I'm interested in.

Step 3. I review what I have, then look for information that can be expanded with *social history*. Social histories describe the everyday lives of ordinary people, as opposed to military histories that discuss wars, political histories that detail politics, or even traditional histories that focus on national events and old dead white men. I look in particular for women's social histories that detail the typical experiences and daily activities of ordinary women. Three examples dealing with Irish women are *Erin's Daughters: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century*, *Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland, 1885–1920*, and *The Irish Bridget: Irish Immigrant Women in Domestic Service in America, 1840–1930*.[5]

I also look for books and articles about Irish immigrants in general, and depending on where the Irish woman settled, I look for county histories and neighborhood histories. An excellent book examining the neighborhoods of New York City where many Irish settled is *The Unbounded Community: Neighborhood Life and Social Structure in New York City, 1830–1875* by Kenneth A. Scherzer.

Also, look at other family histories to see how they are written and how social history is woven into the story. *Forgetting Ireland: Uncovering a Family's Secret History* by Bridget Connelly is a fine example.

When I was writing my family history about my Irish female ancestors as a collection of essays, *If We Can Winter This: Essays and Genealogies: The Gordon Family of County Leitrim, Ireland*, and *The Norris Family of County Tyrone, (now) Northern Ireland*, my ladies, who worked as Irish domestics, had settled in Greenwich, Connecticut. I used sources such as Ray Bendici's "Shades of Downton Abbey: Irish Domestics in Connecticut," published in *Connecticut Magazine*, and Neil Hogan's "Connecticut's Irish Domestics," found at *Connecticut Explored*.

Even though I have no letters or diaries to tell me their personal experiences, I was able to learn about the general, typical experiences in these social histories and then speculate on aspects of my ancestors' lives.

Step 4. I start writing. Writing is scary for some, but if you remember that even best-selling authors begin with an awful first or

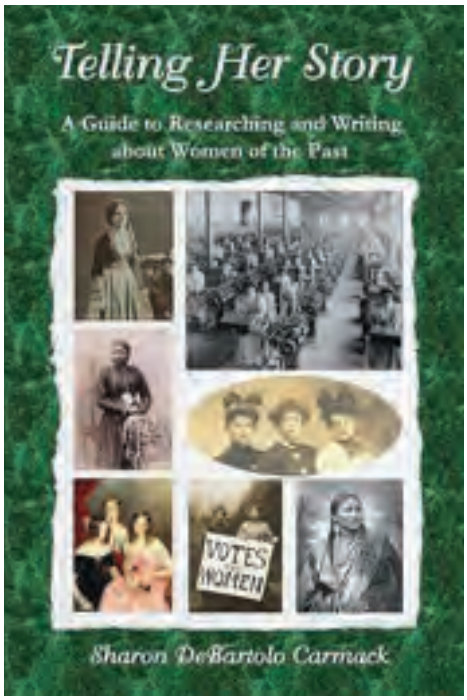
second or even third or more draft, you realize that you can begin like that too! You can always edit and revise.

Here's a paragraph from I*f We Can Winter This* (p. 19) to show you how I wrote about my great-grandmother Delia Gordon and her fraternal twin sister, Mary, who both settled in Greenwich, Connecticut:

> Delia and Mary Gordon might not have chosen Greenwich, Connecticut, as the place to settle; it might have chosen them. Greenwich boasted large homes and estates, and such famous owners as Mark Twain and P. T. Barnum who hired cheap Irish labor. Many single Irish women worked as laundresses or domestics. They came from rural places in Ireland and had no skills.[6] "Between two-thirds and three-quarters of all the women leaving Ireland between 1885 and the early years of the First World War chose 'servant' as their occupational choice on emigration reports."[7] By the time the Gordon sisters arrived in Connecticut, nearly 5,000 Irish-born women worked as domestic servants.[8]

Notice how I began with my female ancestors, then wrote the relevant social history, and concluded the paragraph with the Gordon sisters again to tie it all together.

What do you think? Do you think you can write about your female ancestors regardless of whether they left voluminous records or not? I know you can! Every woman led a life worth researching and recording. After all, half of all your ancestors were women! Their life stories deserve to be told, too!



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Book Review: *Telling Her Story*
A Guide to Researching and Writing About Women of the Past

The women of our history led fascinating lives. Not only were they mothers and teachers who shaped their families' identities, but they were also moral reformers and pioneers in their own right. However, compared to the men of our past, researching women is uniquely challenging.

In this comprehensive and distinctive guide, renowned professional genealogist Sharon DeBartolo Carmack teaches you how to uncover not only the details about a woman's life from common records such as censuses, vital records, and cemetery records but also how to learn the social history of everyday women's lives and how to write their stories.

For genealogists, historians, or anyone interested in researching women of the past, this one-of-a-kind guide offers special strategies and rare resources to help you overcome the obstacles of researching and writing about women. You'll learn how to conduct research on multiple levels, going beyond names and dates to discover who these women truly were and how historical events impacted their lives. Additionally, you'll discover how to craft non-fiction stories that place women within their historical context.

Moreover, Carmack presents three of her published essays on women, annotated to demonstrate the writing techniques she used to tell their life stories, so you can "Learn by Example' and present your own nonfiction narratives about the women in your past.

Recovering the Lives of Irish Women Through Context

Sparse Records and Rich Historical Context Illuminate Women Hidden in the Past

by Stephanie O'Connell, CG

Historical records often overlook women, focusing instead on the men who owned property, paid taxes, or headed households. In Ireland, the devastating fire at the Public Records Office in 1922 destroyed nearly a thousand years of records, further obscuring the lives of Irish women.[1] By shifting our focus to social history sources that highlight women, we can uncover their stories.

This article explores how limited information from traditional records — a listed occupation, a street address, or a workhouse admission — can shed light on a woman's lived experiences when combined with sources such as social history studies, property histories, and historical context research. Through the experiences of Mary Ann Monks, we examine the resilience of working-class Irish women and demonstrate how context-based genealogy can reveal their narratives.

The Challenge: Why Irish Women Disappeared

The invisibility of Irish women is not a reflection of their insignificance in our history. Instead, it stems from cultural and legal structures that have rendered them nearly invisible. Some effective strategies for locating evidence of women's lives include tracing their male relatives, using cluster research to explore their social networks, and considering the laws that dictated when and how women appeared in historical records.

The absence of women from historical records reflects broader patterns in how their experiences have been documented and preserved over time. As historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich noted, "well-behaved women seldom make history." This statement does not imply that women were passive; instead, it highlights that they operated in different spheres of influence, which are often not recorded in official records. Ulrich originally made this observation in her 1976 scholarly article about Puritan funeral sermons, aiming to emphasize how historians have frequently overlooked the lives of ordinary women.

The challenge of recovering Irish women's stories is made even more difficult by the development of Irish historical scholarship itself. Prior to 1990, Irish historians had been trained to view women as historically insignificant and therefore unworthy of sustained scholarly attention. This academic neglect meant that even when records survived, they were often overlooked or dismissed as unimportant by researchers focused on political and economic narratives dominated by men.

In 1988, the Irish Association for Research in Women's History marked a significant turning point by promoting scholarly engagement with women's experiences for the first time. Since then, there has been considerable progress in the field of women's history in Ireland, resulting in the development of contextual sources that genealogists can now use to shed light on the lives of their female ancestors.

Today, numerous projects are aimed at recovering the lived experiences of Irish women. Resources such as the Irish Manuscripts Sources for Women's History and the National Archives (of Ireland) collection Sources for Women's History offer excellent starting points for accessing this growing body of scholarship.

Understanding both the historical challenges and the available resources sets the stage for examining how contextual methodology can recover these hidden stories.

Contextual Genealogy: Method and Sources

The power of incorporating women's history lies in its ability to transform sparse genealogical facts into a vivid understanding of daily life. When traditional records tell us only that Mary Ann Monks worked as a domestic servant, women's history sources reveal what that actually meant: separation from family at a young age, cramped attic sleeping quarters, and a half-day off every second Sunday.[2] This transformation from fact to personal experience is the heart of contextual genealogy.

Recovering Irish women's stories requires a shift in how we research. Rather than viewing vital records as endpoints, contextual genealogy treats them as questions to be explored: What did it mean to be born in a specific place at that particular time? What economic and social realities shaped a marriage? What religious or cultural traditions led to a particular death or burial location? By integrating genealogical facts with rich historical context, we can reconstruct not just what happened to our female ancestors, but how they experienced and responded to their world.

Effective contextual research extends beyond traditional genealogical sources to include materials that illuminate the historical world in which our ancestors lived. Alternative sources help us recover women's experiences that were often recorded in unexpected places. The 1798 Rebellion Papers in the National Archives, Dublin, may not initially appear relevant to women's history, but contain a wealth of material on women's lives. These documents include witness statements, interrogations, and compensation claims that reveal women's roles during the rebellion, including messengers, suppliers, and participants. For genealogists, these records provide detailed descriptions of domestic situations, family relationships, and community networks. Women appear in these records not as rebels, but as witnesses to events, victims of violence, and claimants for property damage — roles that illuminate their daily lives and social connections in ways that traditional records rarely capture.

Integration Strategy

The key to effective contextual research is layering sources systematically. Starting with social history sources to establish the broad historical context, then narrowing the focus with women's history sources that reveal women's specific experiences within that context. Finally, revisit traditional genealogical sources with this enhanced understanding, reading them as evidence of how individual women navigated the specific world these contextual sources have revealed.

To ensure this layered approach maintains accuracy, researchers should:

- Verify through multiple sources: using different types of sources to confirm interpretations
- Match time periods: ensuring contextual sources align with the subject's era
- Research specific locations: focusing on neighborhoods, parishes, or regions where women lived
- Consider local differences: acknowledging how class, religion, and region shaped women's experiences

Mary Ann Monks' story demonstrates this methodology in practice, beginning with her birthplace of Dublin.

Recovering the Hidden

Mary Ann's Dublin

To understand what Dublin was like in 1830, the year Mary Ann Monks was born, we can look to historical sources beyond her Catholic baptismal record.[3] By examining accounts that vividly describe the physical, social, and cultural environment of her time, we gain insight into the world she lived in. Books such as *Dublin: The Making of a Capital City* reveal that early 19th-century Dublin was incredibly poor and disease-ridden, despite its elegant Georgian architecture.[4] Seán Duffy's *Atlas of Irish History and The Concise History of Ireland*, which uses a combination of text, color maps, photographs, and illustrations, provide further background for the conditions Mary Ann was born into.[5]

After the completion of St. Andrew's Church in 1837, it became the parish for Mary Ann's family.[6] Searching academic databases on the history of the church revealed that Daniel O'Connell, known as the Great Liberator of Catholics, contributed £10 to the construction efforts and donated his wine cooler to be used as the baptismal font.[7] These are more than interesting facts — they provide important details about Catholic pride and political empowerment in post-Emancipation Dublin, transforming parish records into symbols of the changing world into which Mary Ann was born.

These insights help place Mary Ann's early life within a historical narrative that would otherwise be lost.

The Reality of Domestic Service

Records tell us that Mary Ann worked as a domestic servant, but that alone reveals little about her world. To understand the nuances of her life, we must look beyond the title of her job. Books such as *Below Stairs: Domestic Service Remembered in Dublin and Beyond, 1880–1922*, and *Women Surviving*, offer detailed accounts of the conditions faced by domestic workers. These sources describe their working conditions, the wages they earned, and the rules they needed to follow.

The social constraints of this work shaped women's relationships. Long hours and limited free time often resulted in feelings of isolation, leaving little opportunity for courtship.[8] Employers typically discouraged "followers," which referred to a servant's boyfriend, and some households enforced "no follower" rules.[9] If they married, it was usually to tradesmen they met in the course of their work, such as milkmen, breadmen, or butchers, who were regularly around the household.[10] Understanding this prompts us to consider how Mary Ann met coachmaker Michael Bevan, whom she married in 1854.[11] This demonstrates the skill required to interpret and integrate facts with historical context. Even the smallest details, when treated as potential sources, can extend research beyond official records.

Tracing Mary Ann's Journey

Once married, Mary Ann and her family lived at 5 Fitzwilliam Lane, an alley behind the grand homes of Merrion Square.[12] Today, this location is a parking garage. However, during a visit, the architecture of a building known as Merrion Mews suggested it might date to Mary Ann's time there.

An internet search revealed that the Irish Landmark Trust owns the property, which is regarded as one of the most significant surviving examples of an 18th-century townhouse. When contacted, the Trust confirmed that, although extensive restoration has been done, most of the original layout remains. The property consisted of a primary residence facing Merrion Square, followed by private gardens, then a walled garden for the coachman's family, leading to the mews or stables with living quarters above. A large, cobbled courtyard in front of the stables served as the carriage assembly area.[13]

Records show 5 Fitzwilliam Lane as a "tenement," a term with multiple meanings, but in the context of Dublin at this time, it referred to a once single-family home now filled with multiple families — often one family to a room.[14] Oral histories preserved in works such as *Dublin Tenement Life and Dublin's Lost Heroines* capture the overcrowding, poor sanitation, illnesses, and social stigma that residents faced. Women's voices emerge vividly in these accounts, highlighting the spirit, resilience, and close-knit nature of these communities.[15] The oral history method is crucial for reliably recording these women's experiences.

Through these accounts, we can picture Mary Ann raising her children in the cramped quarters of their room. Her eldest may have fetched buckets of water from the yard tap for baths, while the shared lavatory nearby served dozens of other residents in the building. Inside, the five children likely shared a single bed.[16] This insight reveals elements of Mary Ann's physical surroundings that traditional sources might overlook.

This cramped but stable family life would soon be shattered by tragedy. Soon after the death of her husband, Michael, in 1862, Mary Ann and her young children were destitute. In what would have been a last resort, the family entered the South Dublin Workhouse.[17]

The workhouse was one of the most feared institutions in 19th-century Dublin. The admission registers contain a single line for each inmate, recording vital information along with the discharge date. However, these sparse entries become meaningful when combined with social history materials. Drawing on academic research, institutional histories, and digital archives, we can reconstruct the daily routine within the workhouse with distinct and vivid detail.[18]

Upon arrival, inmates were bathed and given a grey woolen uniform, which included a shawl for women.[19] Families were intentionally separated: Mary Ann was sent to the women's building while her children were divided between the girls' and boys' quarters.[20] This separation effectively stripped her of her role as a mother — they were not permitted to see one another during their stay. The food provided was monotonous and basic, consisting primarily of watery soups with limited vegetables and minimal meat.[21]

Used together, the admission record and contextual sources open a window onto this significant six-year chapter in Mary Ann's life — a time she endured with resilience, struggling to maintain relationships with her children despite being physically separated.

Conclusion: No Longer Hidden

Through Mary Ann Monks, we see that Irish women's stories are not truly lost; rather, they are hidden and waiting to be uncovered. The baptismal record that first introduced us to Mary Ann provided only the most basic information. Now we can envision her world: the impoverished Dublin of her childhood, the isolation of domestic service, her marriage to Michael, the cramped tenement room where she raised five children, and her resilience during six years of enforced separation in the workhouse. We have recovered not just what happened to her, but how she navigated her world. Social histories, property records, oral histories, and institutional studies can reveal the voices previously absent and silent. The key lies in seeking out sources that focus specifically on women's experiences, transforming genealogical fragments into the rich narratives our female ancestors deserve.[22]

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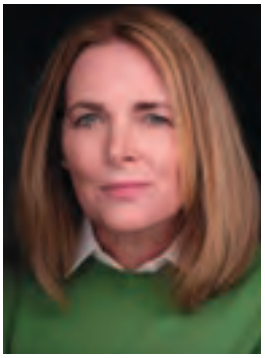
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Using Irish Naming Convention to Identify Female Relatives of Kate (Delaney) Burge in Mid-Nineteenth Century Ireland

by Susan McKee, M.A.

The Challenge of Conducting Research in Mid-Nineteenth Century Ireland

Tracing ancestors in Ireland in the mid-nineteenth century presents unique difficulties. This era predates civil registration, and nearly all nineteenth-century census returns have been lost or destroyed.[1] Researching church records for births and marriages can be tricky due to limitations arising from record availability, legibility, and many same-named people appearing in the registers. In addition, in some areas of the country, no church records exist for the early 1800s.[2]

The Obstacles to Researching Irish Females

Researching female ancestors presents challenges beyond record content or scarcity. Irish women are underrepresented in historical documents.[3] Cultural customs and legal constraints restricted their rights to own or inherit property.[4] This disparity in documentation proves challenging since land records are heavily relied upon to compensate for the loss of nineteenth-century census records.[5]

The Challenge of the Irish Naming Convention

A traditional naming convention, as shown in table 1, often guided Irish parents from the 1700s into the 1900s, with dwindling consistency in the latter century.[6] While this naming tradition resulted in many individuals sharing the same names and living in close geographical proximity — complicating ancestor identification in records — it also provides valuable predictive information for genealogical research.[7]

Table 1: Irish Naming Convention

Naming Sons	• First son usually named after the father's father
	• Second son usually named after the mother's father
	• Third son usually named after the father
	• Fourth son usually named after the father's eldest brother
	• Fifth son usually named after the mother's eldest brother
Naming Daughters	• First daughter usually named after the mother's mother
	• Second daughter usually named after the father's mother
	• Third daughter usually named after the mother
	• Fourth daughter usually named after the mother's eldest sister
	• Fifth daughter usually named after the father's eldest sister

Strategies for Searching for Females in Irish Research

There are several strategies for making the most of available sources and navigating how and where to look for information about female ancestors in Ireland.

Investigate Male Relatives

When there is little or no known direct information about a female relative, begin by identifying and researching her male connections.[8] Fathers, brothers, and sons can lead to the discovery of records that contain names of female family members, such as mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters.

Investigate Extended Family

In addition to male relatives, examine records for known female connections, including daughters, sisters, aunts, and cousins.[9] Catholic church records, for example, often list baptismal sponsors and marriage witnesses who were close family members, providing valuable leads for identifying the female who is the primary focus of your research.

Research Geographic Connections

Understanding locations associated with both immediate and extended family members can reveal direct and indirect information about elusive female ancestors.[10] A geographic approach helps identify record collections and illuminate the social context of women's lives during this period. Learning about others living at the same time and in the same places may illustrate what life was like for the unknown female. Location-based research includes historical and geographical context, cultural traditions, religious practices, and the economic realities that shaped women's experiences.

Build Her Community Through Cluster Research

Cluster research involves the people connected to an unknown female, extending to those who were likely her friends, associates, and neighbors - together known as her FAN club.[11] When personal records

and information are scarce for a woman, it may be found in the documents created by members of her community. Reconstruct an ancestor's life by recreating the lives of the people in her social circle.

Utilize Naming Pattern Conventions

Fortunately, despite its challenges, Irish naming convention can provide insight into the names that are likely to be found when researching Irish ancestors. By examining the names parents chose for their children, it is possible to successfully speculate about the siblings and parents within a three-generation family unit.[12] This approach expands on cultural traditions, emphasizing the importance of naming and established research practices.

Apply Systematic Research Methods

Harnessing Irish naming convention as an effective research strategy requires a solid grounding in thorough research. Systematically progress from the known facts to the unknown connections. Evaluate every document and information item for reliability. Extract every possible clue as evidence. Only after a thorough investigation can naming analysis be reliably applied to guide your search for specific names in records.

Case study – Identifying a Mother and Siblings for Kate (Delaney) Burge

Initial Evidence and Research Considerations

A review of research into four generations of Kate's female line (from her great-granddaughter's generation back to Kate) produced the following summary of known facts relevant to the case study:

- Kate's mother's name was unknown, and no siblings were identified. However, baptismal sponsors for Kate's children, who were born in Dublin, included Mary Delaney and Joseph Delaney.[13] In keeping with Irish baptism traditions, these may have been Kate's siblings or cousins.
- Kate was born around 1860-62 in Queen's County (present day County Laois).[14] Kate's 1878 civil marriage record identified her father as Thomas Delaney, a farm laborer.[15]
- Kate and her husband, Henry Burge, moved to Coolrain in Queen's County in December 1880.[16] Shortly after, on Christmas Day, their daughter Mary was born in Derryduff, an adjacent townland.[17]

Applying Naming Convention Analysis

Following the strategy of searching for women by researching the men in their

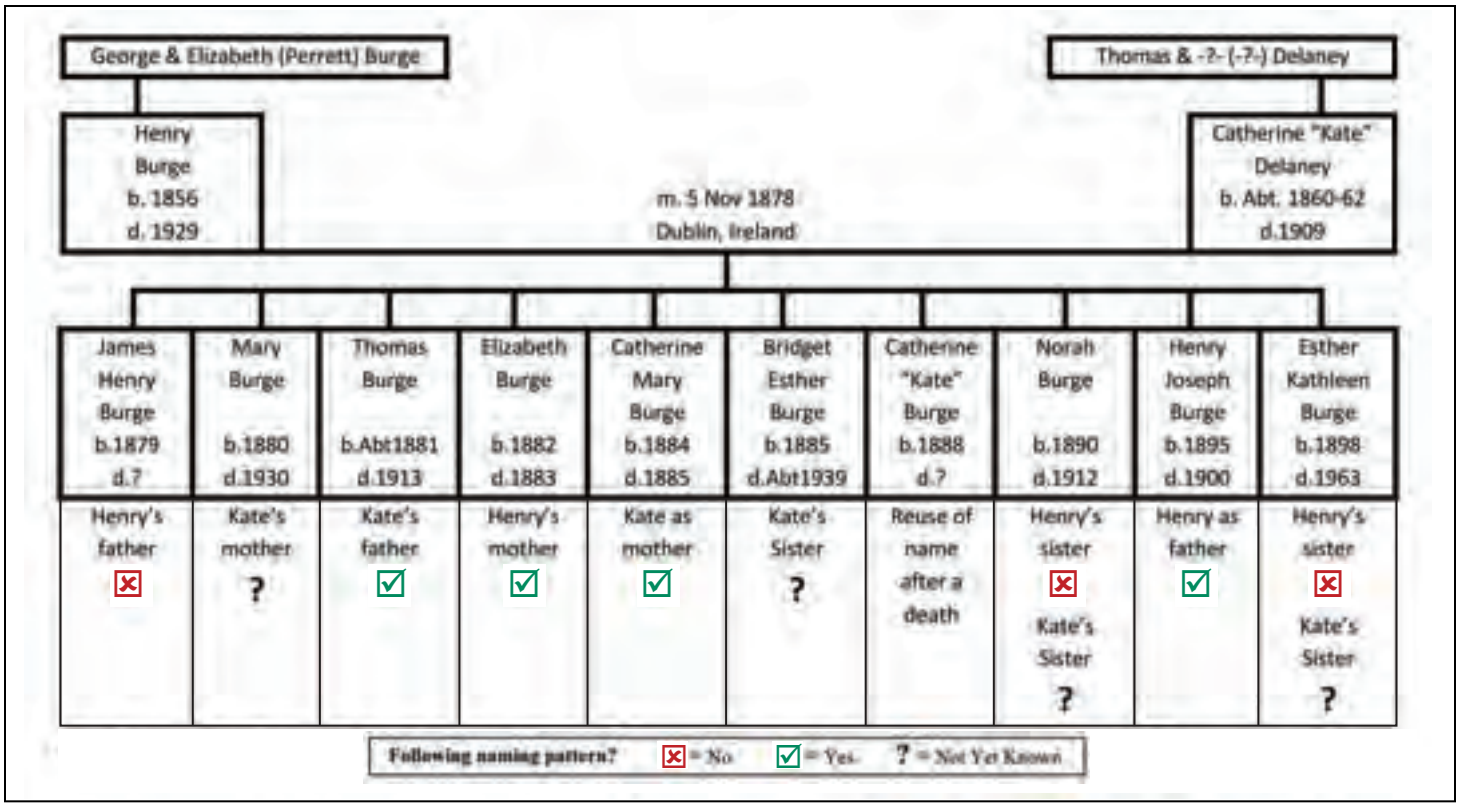


Fig. 1 The family of Henry and Kate (Delaney) Burge

lives, uncovering the names of Kate's mother and possible siblings began with researching her father, Thomas Delaney.

By examining the given names of the Burge children, predicting the names for Kate's mother and potential siblings can guide research by concentrating on specific names that appear in records from the relevant timeframe and locations.

Figure 1 lists the names of Kate and Henry Burge's ten known children. The naming of these children followed traditional conventions, although there was a break in the pattern.

Disruptions could occur if something unusual happened at the time of naming a child.[18] For example:

- One of the couple's siblings either died or emigrated, and they wanted to honor or preserve the name.
- The family lived in a parish with a dedicated saint, or the child was born on a saint's feast day, so the child was given the saint's name.
- There is an important first name (founder's name) that was passed down.
- An important first name may be given officially, but the child was known by another first name or nickname – for example, a daughter named Mary or Bridget but called by a different first name.

Name Pattern Investigation

Four of Kate and Henry's children - Thomas, Henry, Elizabeth, and Catherine - follow naming conventions. The question arises: why was the first son named James Henry instead of George? Kate's husband, Henry, was not raised in the Irish traditions.[19] He was born and raised in England, and his religion was the Church of England. Henry was the eldest child in his family; yet he was not named after his father, grandfathers, or other known male relatives.

Interpreting the Names of Kate and Henry's Children

- Their firstborn son, James Henry, may have been named after an important male family member on Henry's side. Henry had both a brother and an uncle named James.
- Additionally, Sarah, the name of Henry's only sister, was not chosen for one of the known Burge daughters. Perhaps because Henry was raised outside of Irish tradition, he deferred to his wife's strong Catholic and family customs, which influenced the names they chose for their children.
- Kate and Henry's eldest daughter was named Mary. Naming tradition suggests that this is the name of Kate's mother.
- The third daughter, Catherine Mary, fits with the anticipated name of her mother, Catherine, aka Kate.

Reuse of a Child's Name After the Child's Death

The name Catherine was used for two of the seven known daughters. This is consistent with Irish family traditions of reusing an important family name if the first child with that name dies.[20] Catherine Mary's death in 1885 led to her name being reused for their fifth daughter, Catherine "Kate."

Understanding Name Variations Within Traditional Conventions

Ireland is a predominantly Roman Catholic country.[21] Mary is a very popular name associated with the Mother of Jesus.[22]

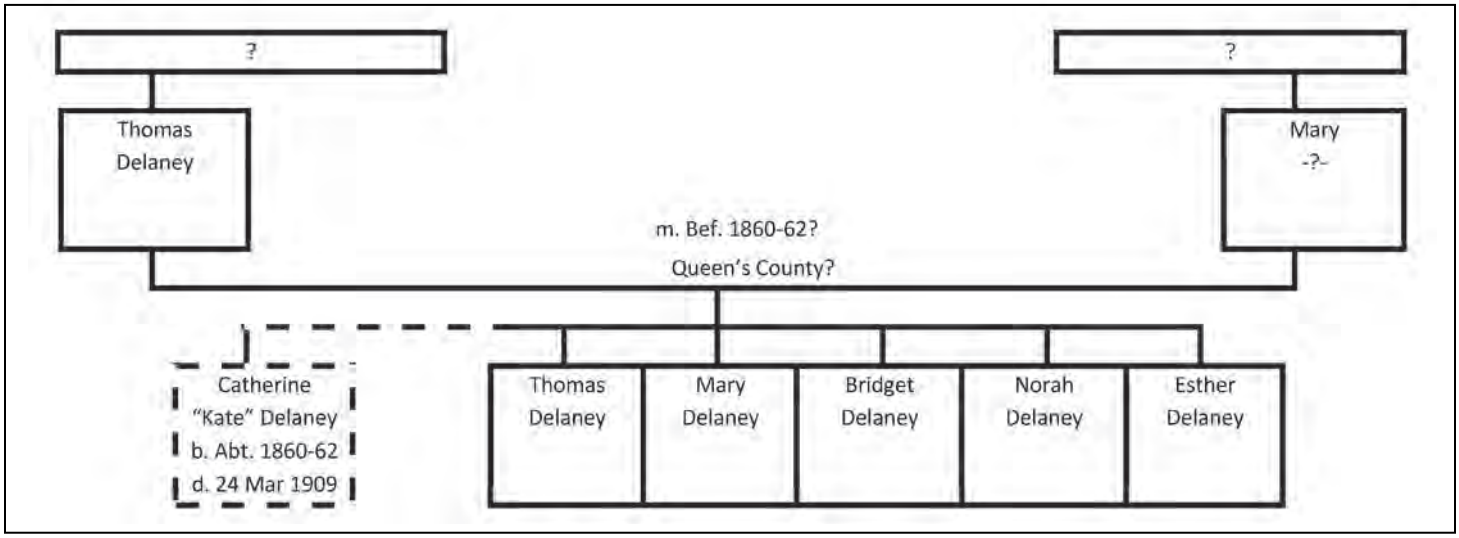


Fig. 2 The predicted family of Kate (Delaney) Burge based on Irish naming convention

Few instances of the name were found in Ireland before the seventeenth century, but by 1923, one in four women in Ireland was named Mary.[23] The Latin version of the name is Maria, and the Irish form is Máire.[24] The names Mary and Maria may be seen interchangeably in Irish records when researching a woman named Mary.[25]

The names Catherine and Kathleen were often used interchangeably in Ireland.[26] Kathleen is a variant of Catherine, with Caitlín being the Irish equivalent.[27] The use of Catherine and Kathleen as first or middle names for Henry and Kate's daughters was probably because Kate's name was Catherine.

Predicting Family Names Through Analysis

It was reasonable to expect that Kate's family might have included:

- a mother named Mary
- a brother named Thomas
- and sisters named Mary, Bridget, Norah, and Esther

Using analysis and predictive naming conventions, it was expected that Kate's immediate family members would be identified as shown in figure 2. This could help distinguish her family members from those related to several Thomas Delaneys who lived in nearby townlands and parishes in Queen's County. Record searches guided by family name predictions focused on church and civil records for townlands near Derryduff.

Church Records

Searching For Kate's Baptismal Record

Kate was likely born before civil registration began in 1864, and there are very few surviving census records from the 1800s.[28] Therefore, Catholic church records were an important initial resource in this research. Traditionally, Irish women returned to their home parish for the birth of their first or second child, which was a plausible scenario for the birth of their daughter, Mary.[29] It seems likely that Derryduff or a nearby townland was also Kate's place of birth.

Coolrain and Derryduff fall within the Catholic parish of Offerlane, along with another associated parish, Camross.[30] A search was conducted of the baptism records for these parishes using indexes on *Findmypast* and *RootsIreland.ie*. The search covered the years from 1856 to 1865, along with a thorough review of images of the original baptism registers digitized on the National Library of Ireland's website, *nli.ie*. By examining each page of a parish register, patterns can be identified and names related to family connections might be found. A baptism record for Kate was not found.[31]

Investigating Baptismal Sponsors

Baptism sponsors, Joseph Delaney and Mary Delaney, were likely of the same generation as Kate.[32] Conducting targeted searches for baptism records of the sponsors, whose parents match or align with predictable naming patterns, requires careful investigation. Searches were conducted for baptism records in Queen's County for the relevant time period for this generation. No relevant records were found for Joseph.[33]

Building on the understanding of given names, nicknames, and alternate middle names discussed earlier, the names John and Joseph are often used together, with

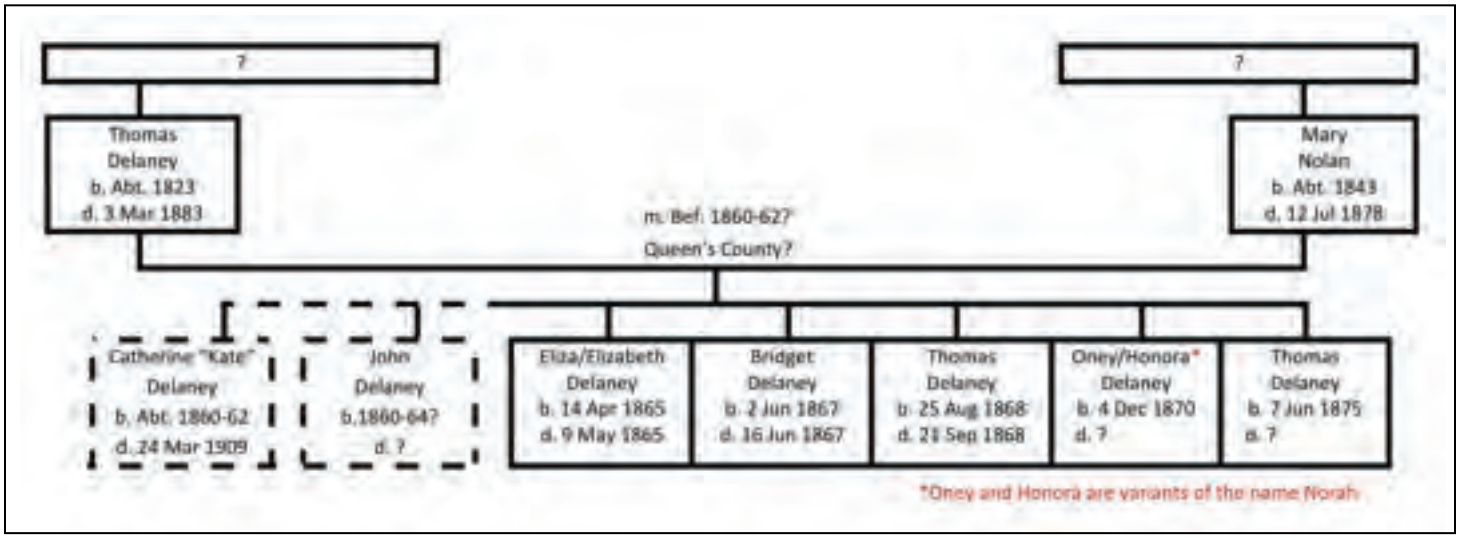


Fig. 3 The candidate family for Kate (Delaney) Burge based on Irish naming convention, Catholic church records, and civil records

one as the first name and the other as the middle name. A Joseph listed in marriage or death records may have been baptized as John.

Two children named Mary Delaney were baptized in the parish of Camross. One Mary, baptized in 1859 in Glancondra townland (within four miles of Derryduff), to parents Thomas Delaney and Mary (Cuddy), seemed particularly promising since Kate's predicted family included a mother and sister named Mary.[34] The other Mary was baptized in 1865, to parents Les and Margaret (Cuddy) Delaney, in Ballyhorahan townland (2.6 miles from Derryduff).[35] The surname, Cuddy, emerges as a name connected with Kate's family.

Searching for Thomas Delaney's Children

Searching baptism registers, including those for Catherine, Kate, Mary, and Joseph, revealed seven couples with children baptized within roughly ten years of Kate's birth. All lived within a 23-mile radius of Derryduff. Records were also searched for their children. However, none of the mothers seemed to be likely candidates for Thomas's wife, based on names, birthdates, and locations.

Irish naming conventions suggest that Thomas likely had a namesake son. Of the eleven Thomas Delaneys baptized in Queen's County between 1850 and 1870, one baptism was recorded in 1868 in Camross parish, with a mother named Mary Nolan.[36] The family's address in Derrynaseera townland is just north of Derryduff.[37] The register noted Thomas as "baptised conditionally," meaning the baby might not have been expected to survive.[38]

Discovering the Delaney-Nolan Family

A search of Camross parish baptism registers revealed three additional children born to Thomas Delaney and Mary Nolan, as shown in figure 3. Eliza, baptized in 1865, and Bridget, in 1867, were born in Coolrain.[39] "Oney" (a nickname for Norah / Honora) was baptized in 1870 and was born in Derrynaseera, adjacent to Coolrain.[40]

The connection between the predicted names and the uncovered identities further supports the use of traditional naming conventions in Irish research. The birth dates and townland addresses fall within the projected timeframe and specific geographic area where Thomas's family was likely to be located.

Delaneys and Cuddys

One of Bridget Delaney's baptism sponsors was Michael Cuddy. His surname is the same as the surnames of the mothers of the two Mary Delaneys baptized in the parish of Camross, previously noted. This suggests a possible link between the Delaney and Cuddy families worth future exploration.

No Marriage Record for Thomas Delaney and Mary Nolan

No marriage record was found during an exhaustive search of Camross parish registers from 1845 to 1870.[41] The absence of a marriage record, or negative finding, suggests that Mary might have been born in a different parish or county. This could explain why a baptism record for Kate was not found. Irish tradition often involved marriages taking place in the bride's parish, with women frequently returning to their family home for the birth of their first children.[42] It is possible that both records might be found together in another parish.

Building on findings in church records, civil records were searched to gain further insight into Thomas, Mary, and their children.

Civil Records

Civil Registration Context and Districts

Civil registration began in 1845 for non-Catholic marriages and expanded in 1864 to include all births, marriages, and deaths. Indexes and digital images of civil records for all of Ireland are available (free) on the website, *IrishGenealogy.ie*.[43]

The records are subject to privacy restrictions. Records are available for births over 100 years old, marriages over 75 years old, and deaths over 50 years old. Images of death registers for the 1864-1870 are not yet on the site. They must be ordered from the General Records Office (GRO) through a link on the death record's index page.

Civil records are helpful for research in the early and mid-nineteenth century. They help fill in some information gaps from the late 1700s through 1864. This gap results from the loss of nearly all nineteenth-century censuses, as well as many church records from the late 1700s and early 1800s, which have also been lost. Civil death records provide the age at death, indirectly providing approximate birth years for individuals, for these years with limited sources. Birth and death records often include the names and relationships of the informants. Witness names appear in marriage records. Townland and street addresses are included in all three types of records.

Derryduff and Coolrain townlands are located within the Mountmellick registration district. Civil registration districts can be identified using:

- A list of districts by county is available at the *Irish Genealogy Toolkit*, https://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com [44]
- A Registration District Map, which can be browsed by county, is available on Shane Wilson's website, *SWilson.Info*, https://www.swilson.info [45]

Birth Record Corroborations

Records were located for each of Thomas Delaney and Mary Nolan's children.[46] These records provided Eliza's birthdate and confirmed those of Bridget, Thomas, and Oney.

- Eliza's entry in the baptism register did not include a record of her birthdate, although subsequent registers did list the date of birth for her siblings.
- In the civil registration, Honora, not Oney as listed in the baptism register, was recorded. Honora is a variant of Oney.
- A second Thomas Delaney was born in 1875.[47] This supported the likelihood that the first son, also named Thomas and "baptised conditionally,' had died. The informant for Thomas's birth was John Delaney. Although no relationship was identified, subsequent searches of civil death records led to the discovery that he was another sibling.

Oney and the second Thomas's birthplaces were recorded as Derryduff. Their civil birth records situate the Delaney-Nolan family in the precise townland where Kate's daughter, Mary, was born in 1880.

Civil Marriage Record Search

It is possible to find Catholic and mixed marriage records among the non-Catholic marriage records before 1864, making them worth checking. Separate searches were conducted for Thomas Delaney and Mary Nolan. No marriage record was found.[48]

Death Records and Family Timeline

Civil records confirmed the death of the firstborn son, Thomas, one month after his birth.[49] Death records were also found for daughters Eliza and Bridget, who died at three weeks and two weeks old, respectively.[50] Eliza died from bronchitis; Bridget and Thomas died from debility (physical weakness). No death records were found for Oney and the second son named Thomas (searches conducted up to 1900).[51]

Mary (Nolan) Delaney died on 12 July 1878 in Derryduff at age 35, suggesting she was born around 1843.[52] The cause of death was mentritis [sic] (metritis), an infection of the uterus associated with childbirth or miscarriage.[53] No birth or death record was found for a child born in 1878, which is not surprising.[54] Before the Stillbirths Registration Act of 1994, a child had to be born alive for both birth and death to be registered.[55] Thomas was the informant for his wife's death. "Widower" became a useful identifier when searching for his death record after 1878.

Thomas Delaney's death record

Thomas died of "General Decay" on 3 March 1883 in Derryduff, at age 59.[56] Born around 1823, he was about 20 years older than Mary. The record listed him as "widower." His occupation was "herd." Herds were responsible for the moving and managing of livestock; in the Midlands, it was likely cattle or sheep.[57]

The informant for Thomas's death was his son, John Delaney, also a resident of Derryduff. No baptism record was found for John when searching Camross parish registers (1856-1870). He may also have been the informant on the civil birth record for the second son, Thomas. The discovery of this son raises the question of whether John is the Joseph mentioned as the baptism sponsor of Kate's son.

Mary and Thomas's death records further confirm the presence of the Delaney-Nolan family in Derryduff during the years just before and after 1880, when Kate was known to be living in the townland.

Conclusions

Evidence Correlation, Verification, and Family Reconstruction

Evidence indicates that Kate's mother, sisters, and brothers have been identified, as shown in figure 3. The names of these family members correlated with those predicted by naming patterns and analysis. They lived during the timeframe and in the specific locations of Derryduff and Coolrain townlands (and nearby Derrynaseera), as initially hypothesized.

Next Steps

Future research could resolve unanswered questions:

- Where is the marriage record for Thomas and Mary?
- Where are the baptism records for Kate and John and what is their birth order?
- Did Thomas and Mary have a daughter named Mary?

Based on naming patterns, it's reasonable to expect the existence of a daughter with the same name. It is likely that Mary Nolan was born in a different parish or county. If that's the case, these missing records might be found in Mary's parish of birth.

Incorporate DNA Research

Kate's great-granddaughter has taken an autosomal DNA test, which is useful for tracing back 4-6 generations from the test-taker. Analyzing DNA matches can help identify extended Delaney-Nolan families. It involves building a robust family tree for Thomas Delaney and Mary (Nolan) Delaney to link DNA matches to their close and extended relatives. Genetic research is a logical next step after the genealogical research steps outlined above.

***Editorial Note:** This article, authored by Susan McKee, is an excerpt from a comprehensive research report. She has provided a concise, customized segment of her report to exemplify how naming conventions can be utilized in the research of female Irish ancestors. While adapting the research to accommodate the spatial limitations of *The Septs*, certain portions of the original case study have been omitted.

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[57] John Cunningham, "A Class Quite Distinct: The Western Herds and their Defence of their Working Conditions," in Carla King & Conor McNamara (editors), *The West of Ireland: New Perspectives on the Nineteenth Century* (Dublin: The History Press, 2011), 137-160, specifically p138; *Academia* (https://www.academia.edu/7935920/A_class_quite_distinct_the_western_herds_and_their_defence_of_their_working_conditions).

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Book Review: *The Irish Bridget*

Irish Immigrant Women in Domestic Service in America, 1840-1930

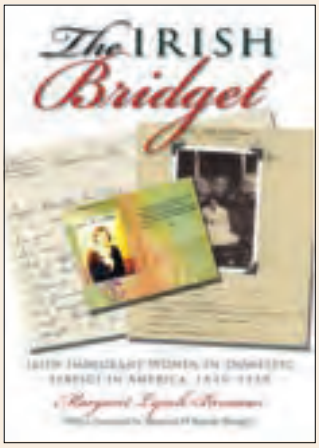
by Rita McNabb

In her well-researched book *The Irish Bridget – Irish immigrant Women in Domestic Service in America, 1840 - 1930*, Margaret Lynch-Brennan provides a thorough account of Irish immigrant women's experiences in domestic service, mainly in the northeastern U.S.

Lynch-Brennan provides context by exploring women's lives and conditions in Ireland before immigration, detailing the limited opportunities for women and focusing on their backgrounds in domestic service. This background informs our understanding of their motivations for seeking domestic work in America.

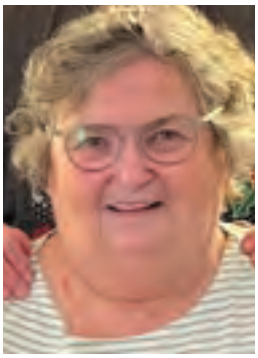
The book offers excellent detail, portraying the daily life of Irish domestic servants in American households. Lynch-Brennan draws upon extensive documented sources to inform the reader about the demanding work: the long hours, cramped living conditions, all-encompassing household responsibilities, and the process of adapting to their employers' homes culturally.

Lynch-Brennan's analysis of how Irish domestic servants played a valuable role in changing American perceptions of Irish immigrants is essential. This book offers valuable insights for family historians whose female ancestors arrived in America during this period and entered domestic service. The work provides the social and cultural context needed to understand the experiences lived by these immigrant women.



Margaret Lynch-Brennan, The Irish Bridget: Irish Immigrant Women in Domestic Service in America, 1840-1930 *(Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009). Part of the Irish Studies series, James MacKillop, Series Editor.*

Rita McNabb took up genealogy in 2013 after retirement from the IRS (37 years). Her paternal grandparents immigrated in the early 1900s from Ireland. The McNabbs made their first trip to Ireland in 2022, where they connected with three different family lines. Rita is especially proud that her search for her husband's birth family resulted in Jim being accepted into the Sons of the American Revolution and the Society of Mayflower Descendants as of December 2023.



Women's Given Names & Their Common Nicknames

Most of our given names are linked to at least one nickname, sometimes to our chagrin. When civil registration became mandatory nationwide in 1864 in Ireland, a nickname might have been recorded instead of the formal name. Many nicknames are easy to recognize, but some are not. For example, the nicknames for Bridget range from Bedelia to Biddy, from Breeda to Cordelia, and from Dilly to Phidelia.

To make things more complicated, some names were used for both males and females. Florence was one of those names. In this case, using nicknames might have helped clarify the gender – boys with Flo, Florrie, and Flurry, and girls with Flo, Flora, and Flossie. Except for Flo, which seems to have been used for either gender.

The table shows some given names and their common nicknames for females. This list is not comprehensive.

Formal Name	Nicknames
Abigail	Abbie, Abby, Gail, Libby, Nabby
Agnes	Aggie, Nancy, Nessie
Aileen / Eileen	Ellen, Ellie, Lena, Nel, Nellie
Alice	Alley, Allie, Ally, Elly, Alisha, Elisha
Ann / Anne / Nancy	Anna, Annie, Nan, Nancy, Nanny
Bridget / Brigid	Bedelia, Bess, Biddy, Breda, Briddy, Cordelia, Delia, Fedilia, Phidelia
Catherine / Katherine	Cassie, Cathy, Catty, Kate, Katie, Katy, Kay, Kit, Kitty
Cecilia	Cecily, Cis, Sheela, Sheila, Sia, Sis, Sissy
Charlotte	Lotta, Lottie, Shar
Christina / Christine	Chris, Chrissy, Christy, Tina
Debora / Deborah	Debbie, Debra, Gubbie
Dorothea / Dorothy	Dolly, Dora, Dot, Dotty
Edith	Eddy, Edie
Eleanor	Elena, Ella, Ellie, Lena, Nora
Elizabeth	Bess, Bessie, Beth, Betsy, Betty, Eliza, Libby, Liz, Lizzie, Sheela
Ellen	Ella, Elly, Lena, Nel, Nellie
Esther	Essie, Hessie, Osther
Florence (female)	Flo, Flora, Flossie
Frances	Fanny, Fran, Frankie
Gertrude	Gerry, Gertie, Trudy
Hannah / Hanorah	Ann, Anna, Honor, Nora, Noey, Norry, Onny
Helen / Helena	Elena, Ellie, Lena, Nel, Nelly
Isabel / Isabella	Bel, Bella, Shibby, Sibby
Jane	Jan, Janey, Jeanne, Jenny
Janet / Janette	Etta, Jane, Jenny, Nettie
Joanna / Johanna	Ann, Anna, Hanna, Joan, Johan, Josephine
Lilian / Lillian	Lelia, Lil, Lilly, Lily
Louisa / Louise	Lou, Louie, Lu, Lula, Lulu
Margaret	Greta, Madge, Mag, Marge, Meg, Minnie, Molly, Peggy, Polly, Rita
Martha	Marta, Martie, Martle, Martly
Mary	Mae, Maeve, Mame, Maria, Maura, Maureen, Moira, Molly, Polly
Penelope	Finola, Flora, Nappy, Nell, Nuala, Penny
Philomena	Mena, Mina, Phil
Rose	Rosie, Rosy, Roseanna, Rosetta
Sabina / Sibina	Bina, Sally, Sibby
Sarah / Seragh	Sadie, Sal, Sally
Susan	Sue, Susanna, Susannah, Susie, Susy, Shovaun
Sybil	Bel, Belle, Sibella, Sibby
Teressa / Theressa	Terry, Tess, Tessie, Tressa
Winifred	Fred, Freddie, Onna, Onny, Oona, Una, Vinnie, Winnie, Unity

For more information about naming conventions, the resource list below may be helpful. Some references are available as free e-books.

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Using DNA to Find Female Ancestors

by Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D.

Genetic genealogy is one of our most valuable methods for identifying female ancestors! We can use results from both mitochondrial and autosomal testing. To select the type of DNA we want to use, we need to understand these different types of DNA and how they are inherited from our ancestors.

Mitochondrial DNA – Following the Maternal Line

What it is. Mitochondrial DNA is non-nuclear DNA (that is, DNA housed outside the nucleus of a cell). It resides in the cell's mitochondria, the tiny powerhouses that convert nutrients into energy. Figure 1 shows a representation of the cell structure.

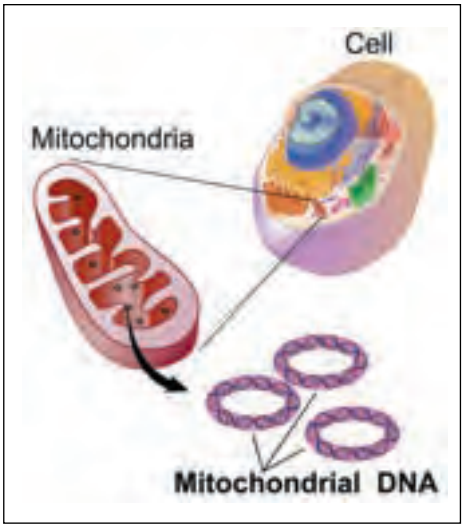


Figure 1. Mitochondrial DNA[1]

How it's inherited. Mitochondrial DNA is passed from a mother to both her male and female children, but only the female children pass their mother's mitochondrial DNA to their children.

Therefore, if we look at our own five-generation pedigree, taking a mtDNA test provides information about only five (counting yourself) ancestors out of the thirty shown in a standard pedigree chart, as demonstrated in figure 2 below.

Mitochondrial DNA Testing Options

Full Mitochondrial Sequence testing. Only one genetic genealogy testing company, *FamilyTreeDNA* (FTDNA), offers specialized mitochondrial testing. Currently, the recommended test is the full mitochondrial sequence (FMS), which sequences the two Hypervariable Regions (HVR1 and HVR2), along with the Coding Region, testing all 16,569 locations.[2] The FMS test retails for $159 but frequently goes on sale. In the past, FTDNA also offered sequencing of the HVR1 and HVR2 regions. If you or someone whose kit you manage has done this, you may benefit from upgrading to the FMS test.

As Blaine Bettinger explains, "testing the HVR1/HVR2 regions is like reading the abbreviated study guide for *Moby Dick*, while testing HVR1/HVR2 and the coding region is like reading the entire novel."[3]

What You Get from FMS Testing

In genetic genealogy, the FMS test provides the most accurate matching among test kits. People who opt for the Full Mitochondrial Sequence (FMS) test receive:

- A haplogroup assignment
- A haplotype
- A list of matches

Mitochondrial Haplogroups

Mitochondrial haplogroups are "collections of similar haplotypes defined by combinations of single nuclear polymorphisms (SNPs) in mtDNA inherited from a common ancestor. These haplogroups are formed as a result of the sequential accumulation of mutations through maternal lineages."[4] If you want to learn more about your specific haplogroup, a good place to start is the *Wikipedia* article "Human Mitochondrial DNA Haplogroup."[5]

Estimated Mitochondrial Haplogroups

The testing companies *23andMe* and *Living DNA* estimate mitochondrial haplogroups for their autosomal DNA testers using

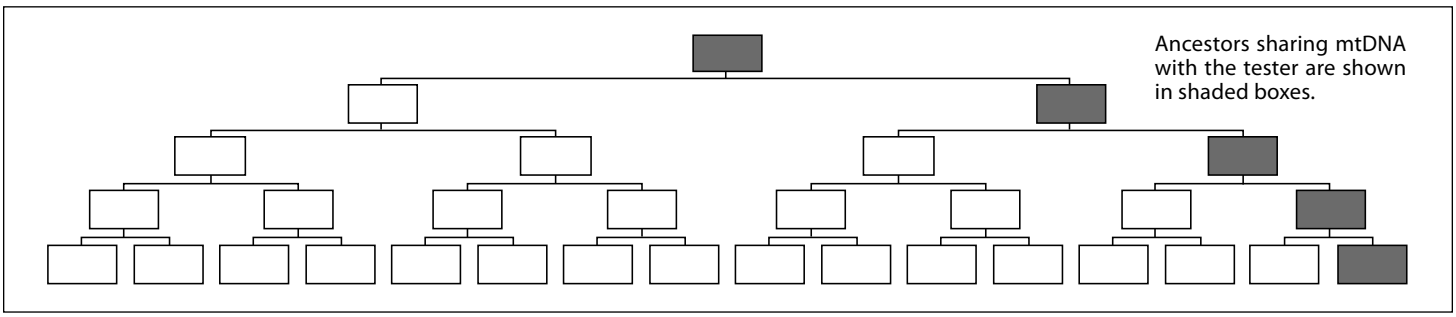


Figure 2. Mitochondrial inheritance. Chart drawn by the author.

SNP (single nucleotide polymorphism) sequencing rather than mitochondrial genome sequencing.[6]

My Mitotree mitochondrial haplogroup, as reported by FTDNA, where I tested with the Full Mitochondrial Sequence (FMS), is H405'406; while my confirmed mtDNA haplogroup is H.[7] *23andMe* reports my maternal haplogroup as H,[8] while *Living DNA* reports it as H18b.[9]

While less precise than FMS testing, estimated haplogroups can still help rule in or rule out hypotheses. For example, a tester believes that their mitochondrial line leads to a known or unknown Native American, Jewish, or African ancestor. If their estimated mtDNA haplogroup is not among those associated with their target ethnicity, they can rule out this hypothesis. (This outcome does not mean that they do not have ancestors from this ethnic group; it only means that those ancestors are not on their mitochondrial line.)[10]

In another example, a researcher suspects that two women in colonial Kentucky are daughters of the same mother, and the researcher has access to the estimated haplogroups of several autosomal DNA testers descended from both daughters. If the estimated haplogroups are the same (such as H18b and H18b), this supports the possibility that the daughters share the same mother (although additional testing is advisable); if the estimated haplogroups are different (for example, H18b and U5a1b1), the possibility that the daughters share the same mother can be ruled out.

Research Strategies with Mitochondrial DNA

Finding Target Testers

If mitochondrial DNA is to be used in the research, start by identifying female target ancestors of interest and then find target testers (male or female) who are descended from those ancestors through an all-female line of descent. This involves researching forward in time from the target ancestor, but can also include researching backward, then sideways, then forward again from known descendants in the mitochondrial line.

It is always possible that the target ancestor may not have any living female-line descendants, let alone those willing to participate. This could prevent the use of mitochondrial DNA testing in the research.

Understanding Mitochondrial Mutations

Mitochondrial DNA is extremely stable and is passed down intact from mother to child. While mutations can occur, they are infrequent.[11] As a result, mtDNA testers with identical haplotypes might be related very recently or several thousand years ago.

When You Have No Close Matches

Even with exact mitochondrial matches, you may not find genealogical connections within a reasonable timeframe. FTDNA's new Mitotree haplogroup assignments, introduced in early 2025, are supported by the FamilyTreeDNA Discover™ platform (currently a free beta version), which helps testers see how closely they are related to their mitochondrial DNA matches.[12]

My FMS results at FTDNA show 28 exact matches sharing the Mitotree haplogroup H405'406. Of the 28, 17 share my haplotype F9576069.[13] I do not share autosomal DNA with any of these exact matches and have no private mutations. The tree and information about the earliest known female ancestor for these matches do not suggest convergence in surname or geography with me, except for one match whose earliest known female ancestor is from a neighboring English county to my earliest known female ancestor. FTDNA Discover™'s Match Time Tree indicates that H405'406 and haplotype F9576069 originated around 392 BCE.[14] Despite the close mitochondrial DNA results, this match and I are unlikely to find a common ancestor within a genealogical timeframe!

Mitochondrial DNA Success Stories

Below are links and references to DNA articles and blog posts revealing mitochondrial DNA success stories:

Roberta Estes, "Mitochondrial DNA Bulldozes Brick Wall," *DNAeXplained – Genetic Genealogy*, 10 January 2019 (https://dna-explained.com/2019/01/10/mitochondrial-dna-bulldozes-brick-wall/).

Judy G. Russell, "Finding Margaret's Mother: The End," The Legal Genealogist, 31 January 2021 (https://www.legalgenealogist.com/2021/01/31/finding-margarets-mother-the-end/).

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Autosomal DNA — Casting a Wider Net

Understanding Autosomal DNA

What it is. Autosomal DNA is DNA contained in the 22 pairs of autosomes found in the nucleus of human cells. (Autosomes are the numbered chromosomes, as opposed to the X and Y sex chromosomes).[15] Figure 3 shows the human male karyotype.

How it's inherited. Unlike mitochondrial and Y-DNA, which follow specific inheritance patterns, we can inherit autosomal DNA from ancestors in any part of our pedigree. We receive approximately 50 percent of our DNA from each parent, 25 percent from each grandparent, and so on.

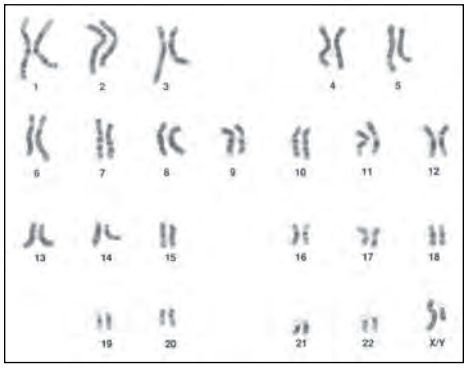


Figure 3. Human Male Karyotype[16]

However, our genetic pedigree begins to differ from our genealogical pedigree around the seventh generation, plus or minus two, and we no longer inherit DNA from all the ancestors in our pedigree chart.[17]

The Role of Recombination

Another key difference between autosomal DNA and mitochondrial DNA is that autosomal DNA is subject to recombination. While mitochondrial DNA is passed intact from mother to child, with the child inheriting virtually 100 percent of their mitochondrial DNA from their mother,[18] autosomal DNA comes from both parents. The child inherits approximately 50 percent of their autosomal DNA from each parent, and it is recombined before being passed on. It's as if each parent shuffles the deck of autosomal DNA they inherited from their own parents on each chromosome before splitting the deck in half and passing one of the halves to their child.[19]

Autosomal DNA Testing – Available Tests

Autosomal tests for genetic genealogy are available from five testing companies: *AncestryDNA*, *23andMe*, *MyHeritage*, *FamilyTreeDNA*, and *Living DNA*. Prices generally range from about $79 to $119, with frequent sales, particularly around holidays.

Database sizes:

- *AncestryDNA* has the largest database, with 27 million testers
- *23andMe* comes in second with 15 million
- *MyHeritage* rounds out the top three with 9.5 million

For a detailed comparison of the tests, see the ISOGG wiki's comparison of autosomal DNA tests.[20] Testers can download their raw data files from all five companies; however, only two sites, *FamilyTreeDNA* and *Living DNA*, currently allow uploading raw data files from other testing companies.

Testers at all companies receive estimates of their ethnic heritage, lists of other testers whose results match theirs (match lists), and varying sets of tools for analyzing matches.

Testing Strategies

Since autosomal DNA tests can potentially identify matches descended from anywhere in our pedigree chart, most autosomal testers have large numbers of matches and may struggle to find common ancestors.

Where to test. *AncestryDNA* has the largest database of testers and therefore the greatest potential for finding matches. However, its database tends to be dominated by testers from the United States. If you are looking for European matches, many Europeans test at *MyHeritage* and *FamilyTreeDNA*. Those interested in British ancestry may want to explore *Living DNA*.

Maximizing your reach. To maximize your chances of finding the DNA matches you're looking for, it is wise to upload your results to as many databases as possible. It is more economical to test with a company that does not accept uploads from other sites (such as *AncestryDNA*, *MyHeritage*, and *23andMe*), then download those results, and upload them to *FamilyTreeDNA* and *Living DNA*.

Who to test. Due to the effects of recombination, all descendants of an ancestor or ancestral couple do not inherit the same DNA. As a result, it can be very helpful to test multiple siblings and cousins to maximize the chances of finding all available DNA matches connected with a particular ancestor.

Analyzing Autosomal Results

There is a wealth of material available to help autosomal testers interpret their results.[21] Techniques that can be especially helpful in finding female ancestors include:

- Identifying shared matches
- Creating clusters of shared matches from the female ancestor's part of your family tree
- Using tools like the Leeds Method for manual clustering

Case Study: Identifying Parents of an Adopted Great-Grandmother

To identify the parents of an adopted great-grandmother, I conducted autosomal testing on five great-grandchildren of the target ancestor, my husband Jere Mackin, and three of his four siblings, along with their second cousin Glenda, another great-grandchild of the target whose grandmother was a sibling of the Mackins' grandmother. All five tested at *AncestryDNA*; two tested at *23andMe*; and all tests were transferred to *FamilyTreeDNA*, *MyHeritage* (which is no longer supported), and *GEDmatch*.[22]

The analysis began with identifying 46 matches shared in common between the Mackin siblings and their cousin Glenda, 21 of which had public trees. I then used the Leeds Method to manually cluster these matches, resulting in four clusters: Blue, Orange, Gold, and Green. Research revealed that the Blue and Orange clusters represented the parents of the target's husband, while the Gold and Green clusters represented the target's parents.[23]

X-DNA — Following Inheritance Patterns

Understanding X-DNA

What it is. X-DNA refers to the DNA of the X chromosome, one of the sex chromosomes (the 23rd chromosome pair) found in the nucleus of human cells. Figure 3 showed the nuclear DNA of a male, with one X and one Y chromosome in the 23rd chromosome pair.

How it's inherited. X-DNA is inherited differently by men and women. Figures 4 and 5 show how males and females inherit X-DNA:[24]

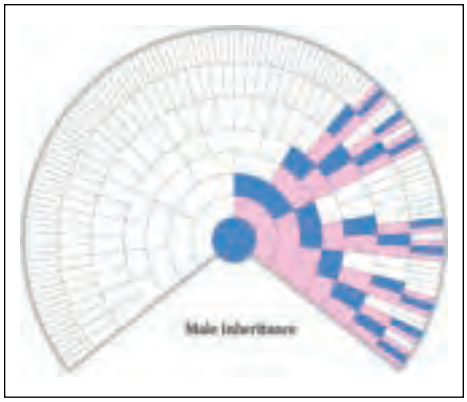


Figure 4. Blaine T. Bettinger, Male Inheritance.

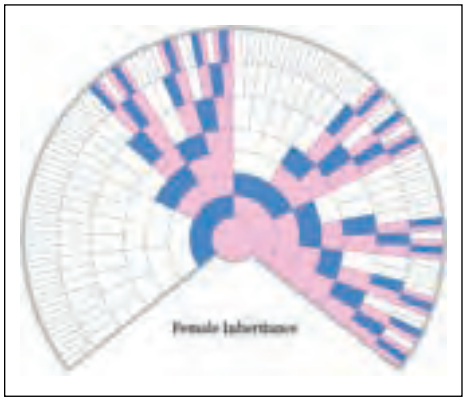


Figure 5. Blaine T. Bettinger, Female Inheritance.

- Men have only one X chromosome, which they inherit from their mothers (see figure 4)
- Women have two X chromosomes, one inherited from each parent (see figure 5)
- A woman's paternal X chromosome is inherited intact, but her maternal X chromosome may be recombined

X-DNA Testing and Analysis

X-DNA is included in autosomal DNA testing. Currently, only one testing company, *FamilyTreeDNA*, reports X-DNA matches. *23andMe* previously displayed X-DNA matches on its chromosome browser, which is no longer available. However, if you took a screenshot of *23andMe* X-matches or downloaded match data while it was available, you can still access those in your files. X-DNA matching is available on *GEDmatch*, making it a good hunting ground for finding X-matches.

Research Strategy

Both men and women have X-DNA. If you find an autosomal match sharing X-DNA with one of your testers, fill in an X-DNA inheritance chart for that tester. The matching X-DNA will come from one of your tester's shaded areas, and the matching autosomal DNA likely will also. This helps narrow your search for a common ancestor. Keep in mind that it is possible to inherit matching X-DNA from one ancestor and matching autosomal DNA from a different ancestor.

Special Considerations

It is often recommended that genetic genealogists avoid working with X-DNA segments smaller than 10 cM. These small segments can originate so far back in time that documentary research cannot determine their origin.[25]

Case Study: Identifying a Mexican Branch of a Pennsylvania German Family!

An *AncestryDNA* match sharing 8 cM contacted me almost ten years ago. Our ethnicity showed almost no overlap except for Germanic Europe (37% for me, 9% for the match). Based on his well-documented tree, he thought our connection might be through the surname Krause, linked to an ancestor of whom he knew little, except that he was born in Pennsylvania.

There are no Krauses in my direct lineage; however, an ancestor's sister, who was born in Pennsylvania, married a man named Krause and had several sons also born in Pennsylvania. Both the match and I, along

with our mothers, had kits on *AncestryDNA*, *FamilyTreeDNA*, and *GEDmatch*.

GEDmatch comparisons revealed that while my match and I shared only 8.6 cM of autosomal DNA, we shared 75.4 cM of X-DNA, and our mothers shared 70.5 cM of autosomal and 95 cM of X-DNA. Plotting the X-inheritances and conducting additional documentary research uncovered our common ancestors.[26]

The most effective approach often involves combining multiple testing strategies and analyzing results across different platforms to maximize your chances of success in identifying elusive female ancestors.

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Endnotes

[1] National Institutes of Health, National Human Genome Research Institute, "Talking Glossary of Genetic Terms," 17 November 2016, *Wikimedia Commons* (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mitochondrial_DNA_lg.jpg).

[2] A base pair is two chemical bases—adenine (A) and thymine (T) or cytosine (C) and guanine (G)—bonded to one another. Base pairs form the "rungs" of the DNA "ladder." See "Base pair," *International Society of Genetic Genealogy Wiki* (https://isogg.org/wiki/Base_pair). See also Katy Rowe-Schurwanz, "Exploring the Full Mitochondrial Genome: Understanding the Inheritance of Mitochondria, *FamilyTreeDNA* (https://blog.familytreedna.com/exploring-mitochondrial-genome). All URLs were checked 23 August 2025.

[3] Blaine T. Bettinger, *The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy*, 2nd ed. (Cincinnati, OH: Family Tree Books, 2019), 194.

[4] Sabrina L Mitchell, Robert Goodloe, Kristin Grown-Gentry, Sarah A Pendergrass, Deborah G Murdock, and Dana C Crawford, "Characterization of Mitochondrial Haplogroups in a Large Population-based Sample From the United States" *Hum Genet*. 2014 July (https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4113317/), 133(7):861-8. For haplo-

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[5] "Human mitochondrial DNA haplogroup," *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_mitochondrial_DNA_haplogroup), last edited on 27 August 2025.

[6] Bettinger, *Family Tree Guide*, 206.

[7] *FamilyTreeDNA*, "screenshot of 'Badges,' indicating Haplogroup, Lois Mackin, home page, *FamilyTreeDNA* (https://www.familytreedna.com/); author's files.

[8] *23andMe*, "screenshot of 'Maternal Haplogroup,' *23andMe* (http://23andme.com/); author's files.

[9] *Living DNA*, "screenshot of 'Maternal Ancestry,' *Living DNA* (http://livingdna.com/); author's files.

[10] For African mtDNA haplogroups, see "Tracing Your Maternal Roots: The Power of African mtDNA Haplogroups," *FamilyTreeDNA* (https://blog.familytreedna.com/african-mtdna-haplogroups). For Native American mtDNA haplogroups, see Roberta Estes, "New Native American Mitochondrial DNA Haplogroups," 2 March 2017, *DNAeXplained – Genetic Genealogy* (https://dnaexplained.com/2017/03/02/new-native-american-mitochondrial-dna-haplogroups/).

[11] For an explanation of mutations in mitochondrial DNA, see Bettinger, *Family Tree Guide*, 203–205.

[12] See "FamilyTreeDNA Discover," *FamilyTreeDNA* (https://discover.familytreedna.com/), also Katy Rowe-Schurwanz, "mtDNA Discover™: New Reports to Uncover Your Maternal Ancestry," 25 February 2025, *FamilyTreeDNA* (http://g.familytreedna.com/mtdna-discover-haplogroup-reports/).

[13] FTDNA, screenshot, Mackin mtDNA matches, *FamilyTreeDNA* (https://www.familytreedna.com/).

[14] FTDNA, screenshot, Discover™ Match Time Tree, Mackin, *FamilyTreeDNA* (https://www.familytreedna.com/).

[15] "Autosomal DNA," *ISOGG Wiki* (https://isogg.org/wiki/Autosomal_DNA).

[16] NIH, Nat'l Human Genome Research Inst., "Human Male Karyotype.gif," 21 November 2005, *Wikimedia Commons* (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Human_male_karyotype.gif).

[17] Blaine T Bettinger and Debbie Parker Wayne, *Genetic Genealogy in Practice* (Arlington, VA: National Genealogical Society, 2016), 83–84.

[18] For information on atypical inheritance of mitochondrial DNA from fathers, see "Fathers Can Pass Mitochondrial DNA to Children," *National Library of Medicine* (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/search/research-news/6639/).

[19] For more detailed explanations of autosomal inheritance and recombination, see Bettinger, *Family Tree Guide*, 81–97, also Bettinger and Wayne, *Genetic Genealogy in Practice*, 82–88.

[20] "Autosomal DNA Testing Comparison Chart," *ISOGG Wiki* (https://isogg.org/wiki/Autosomal_DNA_testing_comparison_chart).

[21] For example, see the author's *Septs* articles "Working with Autosomal DNA Results, Part 1: Ethnicity Analysis," The Septs 43 (April 2022): 51–54; "Working with Autosomal DNA Results, Part 2: Your Match List," *The Septs* 43 (July 2022): 80–84; "Basic DNA Tools, Part 1: Visualizing Your Chromosomes," *The Septs* 43 (October 2022): 109–114; "Basic DNA Tools, Part 2: Shared/In Common With Matches," *The Septs* 44 (April 2023): 58–62; "Basic DNA Tools, Part 3: Grouping and Clustering," *The Septs* 44 (July 2023): 88–93.

[22] *GEDmatch* is a third-party site independent of testing companies where testers can upload their DNA results to use *GEDmatch*'s suite of tools and compare results of testers from other testing companies.

[23] This case has been presented several times to the Minnesota Genealogical Society's DNA Interest Group, most recently in February 2025. It is documented in "Parents for Jessie," a slide presentation and syllabus; author's files.

[24] Figures 4 and 5 are reproduced courtesy of Blaine T. Bettinger, blog post, "Unlocking the Genealogical Secrets of the X Chromosome," 21 December 2008, updated 17 June 2015, *The Genetic Genealogist* (https://thegeneticgenealogist.com/2008/12/21/unlocking-the-genealogical-secrets-of-the-x-chromosome/).

[25] See Bettinger, *Family Tree Guide*, 128.

[26] This case was presented to the Minnesota Genealogical Society's DNA Interest Group in 2018 and 2021. It is documented in the slide presentations "X-Chromosome DNA" and "X-Chromosome DNA 2018," author's files.

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Uncovering Maiden Names of Irish Women:
Records, Strategies, and the Cuddigan Family of County Cork

by Shelley Bishop

Women comprise fully half of all family trees, yet many genealogists struggle to fill in their maternal branches. Researching women who immigrated from Ireland can be particularly challenging. Historically, a woman's surname changed when she married, concealing her connection to her family of birth. Other difficulties arise because women appear in fewer historical records compared to men. This is especially problematic in time periods before the official registration of births, deaths, and marriages took effect in a given area.

This deficiency is rooted in English common law, the foundation of the legal systems in the British Isles and much of the United States and Canada. Until the mid-19th century, a woman became a *femme covert* when she married — literally, a "covered woman" whose legal and financial affairs fell under the control of her husband. This meant married women couldn't buy or sell property on their own. They could not file lawsuits, sign contracts, or serve as legal guardians or executors of an estate.[1] Even after these laws evolved to grant women independent control over their property and affairs, restrictive social customs lingered. As a result, generations of women remained hidden from view.

Finding a woman's maiden name is often the key to uncovering her unknown side of the family. It reveals a new surname to research, potentially leading to the identification of her parents. It often points to new ancestral localities, which could help you determine where in Ireland she came from. Discovering more about the life of your foremother also provides fascinating social history to add richness to written accounts.

To start learning about the Irish women in your family, first contact older relatives or anyone who may possess family information or keepsakes. What stories do they know? Have they inherited photographs, letters, scrapbooks, or newspaper clippings? What about a family bible? While you will need to confirm any stories with other sources, the clues you glean from talking with relatives can be invaluable to your research.

From this launching point, develop a plan to explore different types of records pertinent to the search for your Irish ancestor's maiden name. Several commonly used sources are discussed below. Connecting females with their birth families — like many genealogical challenges — often requires extended family research, correlation of multiple sources, and other strategies. The case of Irish-born Elizabeth Dugan, who settled in Nebraska in the 1870s, illustrates how combining various resources and strategies can be used to solve a long-standing family mystery.

Resources for Researching Females

- **Death records:** Civil death records may give the names of a woman's parents and/or her birthplace. Church records can also yield this information. Because birth information on a death record is usually second-hand, it should be checked with other sources.
- **Cemeteries:** The gravestones of Irish immigrants may indicate their place of origin in Ireland, as this was a common way of honoring ties to the home country. Look at people buried near your ancestor, as she could have relatives in the same cemetery.
- **Marriage records:** Civil and church marriage records should directly state the bride's maiden name. Some offer age or date of birth, place of birth, and parents' names. If a woman was underage, the record might name the person giving consent for her to marry.
- **Birth and baptism records of children:** Look for birth records for all the children a woman bore, not just the one you descend from — including any from other marriages. Search church records for baptisms of all the children. In addition to the mother's maiden name, they may note godparents or sponsors for you to research. When searching for church records in Ireland, knowing the name of the parish is crucial to locating them.
- **Marriage and death records of children:** Some marriage records note the maiden names of the bride's and groom's mothers. Again, look for both civil and church marriage records for all children. Death certificates can also provide this information. Children who died before their parents were sometimes buried with grandparents or other family members.
- **Census records:** Note age, birthplace, and the birthplaces of parents across census years. The 1900, 1910, and 1920 United States censuses asked for the year of immigration, which can help you find passenger records. Try to identify other people living in the same household as

your ancestor. You may discover an elderly parent, unmarried sibling, or other relative. Also, consider your ancestors' neighbors, as they could be related.

- **Probate and deed records:** A woman who inherited land, money, or household goods from her father could appear in estate or deed records under her married name or in conjunction with her husband. These tend to be less helpful for families who lacked the financial resources to own land, however.
- **Newspapers:** Marriage notices are an excellent source for finding maiden names. Obituaries may include marriage information, names of parents, or a list of surviving siblings. Social notes, pioneer remembrances, and various other types of articles can also be helpful. When searching historic newspapers, try the woman's married name as well as her husband's name or initials, as notices might have been published under any of these.
- **Passenger lists:** Immigrant passenger lists from the Famine era typically show each passenger's name, age, sex, occupation, and country of origin (Ireland). The scarcity of details and lack of standardized spelling can make it difficult to identify the right person. *FamilySearch* provides a free collection, "United States, Famine Irish Passenger Index, 1846-1851" at https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/collection/2110821. Passenger lists after September 1906 contain significantly more detail, including the city of residence, name of a relative or friend in Ireland, the final destination, name of a contact in America, and place of birth.
- **Naturalization records:** Before 1922, a husband's naturalization automatically granted citizenship to his wife, who may not even be mentioned in his documents. After 1922, married women had to apply for citizenship independently. These records are available from the Genealogy Program of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) at https://www.uscis.gov/records/genealogy.
- **Pension records:** Irish men who served for the Union in the Civil War should have service records and possibly pension files created at the federal level. Pension files may contain a wealth of personal information, particularly if his widow applied. Indexes are available on several websites, and the files can be ordered from the National Archives.
- **Homestead files:** Pioneers eager to settle and cultivate land in western territories after the Civil War could apply for a Homestead patent. Many immigrants who had begun or completed the naturalization process seized this opportunity. To find out if your ancestor received land from the federal govenment, search the Bureau of Land Management's General Land Office database at https://glorecords.blm.gov. Land files can also be ordered from the National Archives.

A particularly valuable American resource for clues about Irish immigrants is the collection of "Missing Friends" advertisements in the nationally distributed Boston Pilot newspaper published before, during, and after the Famine. These ads were placed by people both in Ireland and America seeking information about friends and family members who had immigrated but whose current whereabouts were unknown. Over a century later, they can provide unique insights to help genealogists make family connections. The ads span the years 1831-1920 and were published in several volumes. Boston College has digitized the entire collection, which is now available at *Ancestry*, https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5060/, and *American Ancestors*, https://www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/510/boston-pilot-irish-immigrant-advertisements-search-for-missing-friends-1831-1920.

Strategies for Researching Females

Solving complex genealogical problems requires critical thinking. Useful strategies for determining a woman's maiden name and identifying her parents include:

- **Investigate unknown people.** When you do not recognize the names of people who appear in your ancestor's records, find out who they were. If witnesses to a marriage appear in other marriage records in a register, they likely worked at the court. But if they appear only in your ancestor's record, they were likely relatives or friends of the bridal couple.
- **Research the entire family.** Examine all suspected relatives or close associates, especially potential siblings, just as thoroughly as your own ancestors. Look for their vital records and census records. Get to know the in-laws, too. Widows often relied on their brothers or brothers-in-law for assistance with financial and legal matters.
- **Consider variant names and spellings.** Spellings were flexible, and surnames were written as they sounded. Don't discount a record just

because the surname looks entirely misspelled. First names can also vary, as many women went by nicknames or used first and middle names interchangeably. Try different combinations when performing searches.

- **Organize and correlate your evidence.** Keep a written log or report of your research, and analyze each new piece of information as you go. Once you have multiple pieces, start comparing and contrasting them. A timeline helps identify discrepancies and gaps. Creating a chart or table to compare information from different records also helps you see how they agree or disagree.
- **Write down your findings.** Documenting what you have determined, along with all the pieces of evidence that support it, is integral to reaching a conclusion. If there was conflicting information, show how you resolved it. Even if you were not able to reach a conclusion, writing a summary of what you found can help you resume the search again in the future.

The following case study illustrates how many of the resources and strategies discussed here can be used to explore questions about an Irish woman's identity. Starting with limited information, what can be learned about Elizabeth Dugan's origins? What was her maiden name? Who were her parents? And where was she born in Ireland?

Finding the Irish Origins of Elizabeth Dugan

Between 1852 and the mid-1870s, Elizabeth traveled with her husband, Patrick, as he followed railroad work across what was then called the American West. The birthplaces of ten of their known children show the family's journey from Illinois to Iowa and then to Nebraska.[2] Eventually, the Dugan family settled near Platte Center, Nebraska, where Patrick purchased land in the hamlet of O'Connor and took up farming.[3] There, they joined the Church of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose centennial history notes that Patrick was born on 17 March 1830 in County Cork, Ireland.[4]

Patrick died on 14 March 1891. His gravestone indicates he was born in County Cork.[5] Elizabeth remained in the area as a widow for 32 years until her death on 2 January 1924. Her gravestone shows she was born on 3 October 1837.[6] An obituary in *The Columbus Telegraph* offers clues about her origins: "Mrs. Dugan…was a native of Ireland, having been born in County Cork 87 years ago. When she was 15 years old, she came with her parents to America, locating in Seneca, Ill. There she was married to Mr. Dugan, and together they came to Nebraska in 1878…"[7]

A Maiden Name

The 1892 marriage record for Margaret "Maggie" Dugan, daughter of Elizabeth and Patrick, provides a clue to Elizabeth's maiden name. On the marriage license for the union of John Gibbons and Maggie, she listed her father's name as Patrick, and her mother's maiden name as Elizabeth Cuddigan. Maggie's age on the marriage record, 23, indicates she was born about 1869, and suggests that her parents probably married before her birth.[8]

A search of online records for Patrick and Elizabeth's purported marriage near Seneca, LaSalle County, Illinois, yielded no results. Expanding the search nationwide revealed dozens of men named Patrick Dugan/Duggan who married within five years of 1855. However, only a few of them were paired with a bride named Elizabeth. Among these, one stood out: Patrick Duggan [sic], who married Betsy Coddingin [sic] in Ohio.

On 28 August 1852, the Hamilton County Probate Court issued a marriage license to "Patrick Duggan" and "Betsy Coddingin."[9] Two days later, Patrick and Elizabeth were wed. The parish register of St. Francis Xavier Church in Cincinnati shows that "Patricium Dugan" and "Elizabetham Caddington" were married by D. Kenny, priest, on 30 August 1852. John Caddigan [sic] was a witness to their marriage.[10]

Was the couple married in Hamilton County, Ohio, the same "Mrs. Dugan" [Elizabeth] and her late husband [Patrick], as mentioned in her obituary, who married in Seneca, Illinois? The first known residence for Patrick and Elizabeth Dugan was in LaSalle County, Illinois, in 1860. Patrick, age 30, was listed as a railroad laborer, while Elizabeth, 24, was the mother of two.[11] The town of Seneca straddles the line between LaSalle and Grundy counties.[12]

As the head of household in 1900, Elizabeth Dugan reported being born in October 1836 and immigrating to the United States in 1852.[13] The information listed below, based on evidence collected from census, cemetery, obituary, and marriage records, was used to search for passenger arrival records.

- Given name: Elizabeth or Betsy
- Surname: Cuddigan or its variants
- Age: about 15 years old
- Native country: Ireland
- Possible travel companion: John "Caddigan"
- Year of arrival: about 1852

- Port of departure: likely Cork or Queenstown [now Cobh]

One passenger list stood out: the manifest for the *Swan*, which arrived in New Orleans on 30 December 1851. The ship had departed from the port at Cork. Listed consecutively were eleven people with the surname "Carigan" as seen in table 1.[14]

Although no relationships are stated, this appears to be a family group, including a father, named Thomas, his presumed wife Mary, eight children, and an adult woman sharing the same surname. A 15-year-old girl named Elizabeth is among those listed. Notably, there is a 19-year-old male named John who appears to be an older brother. He may be the John who witnessed Elizabeth's marriage to Patrick Dugan in Cincinnati in August 1852.

Hypothesis

The discovery of the passenger list led to a hypothesis: that Elizabeth was the daughter of Thomas and Mary Carigan [sic], who arrived in New Orleans from Cork on 30 December 1851, and that she married Patrick Dugan in Cincinnati on 30 August 1852.

Name	Age	Occupation	Country
Thos Carigan	54 (Abt. 1797)	Labr	Ireln
Mary Do	40 (Abt. 1811)		
Willm Do	21 (Abt. 1830)	Labr	
John Do	19 (Abt. 1832)	Do	
Elizh Do	15 (Abt. 1836)	Sert	
Mary Do	13 (Abt. 1838)		
Bridt Do	11 (Abt. 1840)		
Patk Do	9 (Abt. 1842)		
Michl Do	6 (Abt. 1845)		
Thos Do	4 (Abt. 1847)		
Noray Do	43 (Abt. 1808)	Sert	
*The use of "Do" signifies the word ditto meaning "the same."			

Table 1

Thomas Cuddigan and Mary Upton Children's Baptisms			
Name	**Date of Baptism**	**Baptism Place**	**Residence**
Abigail	4 October 1826	Cloyne, Co. Cork	Tollogh [sic]
William	6 August 1828	Do	Tullough [sic]
John	19 May 1830	Do	Tullogh [sic]
Ansty*	19 January 1834	Do	
Bess*	11 October 1835	Do	
Bridget	8 February 1840	Do	
John Pat	19 March 1842	Do	
Micl	22 June 1844	Do	
Thos	31 July 1846	Do	
Henry	25 April 1849	Do	
*Ansty is a variation of Anastatia. *Bess is a variation of Elizabeth.			

Table 2

Cincinnati was home to several established immigrant communities in the mid-1800s and benefited from regular steamboat service from New Orleans. Thomas Cuddigan and family did not appear to be living in Cincinnati as they were not found in Cincinnati city directories of 1853, 1855-1856, or 1857.[15] Neither were they found in Cincinnati at the time of the 1860 census enumeration.[16]

Fortunately, someone was searching for the Thomas and Mary Cuddigan family. An ad published in the "Search for Missing Friends" section of the *Boston Pilot* on 2 October 1852 reads: "Of THOMAS CUDDIGAN & wife, MARY, and family, natives of Tallough, parish Cloyne [co. Cork]. When last heard of they were in Cincinnati. Any information respecting them will be thankfully received by their brother, HENRY UPTON care of MICHAEL H. GRIFFIN, R. R. Contractor, Easton, Pa."[17]

The newspaper notice supports the theory that the family of Thomas and Mary Cuddigan went to Cincinnati after they arrived in New Orleans. In doing so, it associates the family in the passenger arrival record with Elizabeth's marriage record in Cincinnati. It also provides their place of origin in Ireland: Tallough [sic] in the parish of Cloyne in County Cork.

Another important clue provided in the "Missing Friends" entry is the name of the person who placed the ad, Henry Upton. Henry identified himself as "their brother." Since his last name wasn't Cuddigan, Henry was likely Mary's brother rather than Thomas's brother. This suggests that Mary Cuddigan's maiden name was Upton.

Irish Catholic Parish Registers are accessible on *Findmypast* and *Ancestry*, both

of which are indexed and digitized. Specifically, the parish register of the Catholic parish in Cloyne, County Cork, records the marriage of Thomas Cuddigan and Mary Upton on 18 July 1825. They were married in the presence of William Upton and Michael Cuddigan.[18]

The Baptisms of children born to Thomas Cuddigan and Mary Upton appear in the same collection, see table 2[19]:

The baptism entry for Bess Cuddigan, dated 11 October 1835, corresponds with Elizabeth "Carigan," age 15, listed on the 1851 passenger list. The nicknames Bess and Betsy are variations of the given name, Elizabeth. Therefore, the baptism record for Bess aligns with the civil marriage license in Cincinnati for Betsy. By comparing the names taken from the Cuddigan/Upton baptism records and the passenger list from the *Swan* the known children of Thomas and Mary remain consistent, see table 3.

Correlation of Individuals – Baptisms and Passenger List
Thomas Cuddigan / Carigan Family

Name	Baptism Date	Name	1851 Passenger List
Abigail	4 Oct 1826		
William	6 Aug 1828	William	21 (Abt. 1830)
John	19 May 1830	John	19 (Abt. 1832)
Ansty	19 Jan 1834		
Bess	11 Oct 1835	Elizabeth	15 (Abt. 1836)
NF	NF	Mary	13 (Abt. 1838)
Bridget	8 Feb 1840	Bridget	11 (Abt. 1840)
Pat	19 Mar 1842	Patrick	9 (Abt. 1842)
Michael	22 Jun 1844	Michael	6 (Abt. 1845)
Thomas	31 Jul 1846	Thomas	4 (Abt. 1847)
Henry	25 Apr 1849		

Note: NF is not found. Daughter Abigail was married on 2 Nov 1850. Henry would have been two years old at the time of passage; he likely died in infancy.

Table 3

Timeline for Elizabeth (Cuddigan) Dugan – Correlation of Evidence

Event	Name on Record	Date of Birth	Notes
1835 Baptism	Bess Cuddigan	Implied birth, early October 1835	Parents: Thomas Cuddigan and Mary Upton
1851 Passenger List	Elizh Carigan	15 (Abt. 1836)	Implied parents: Thomas and Mary Carigan
1852 Marriage Record	Betsy Coddigan		Witness: John Cuddigan
1860 Census	Elizabeth Dugan	24 (Abt. 1836)	Born in Ireland
1880 Census	Mrs. Eliza Dugan	40 (Abt. 1840)	Ireland
1892 Marriage Record	Elizabeth Cuddigan		Daughter, Maggie Dugan
1900 Census	Elizabeth Dugan	64 (October 1836)	Immigration year, 1852
1910 Census	Elizabeth Dugan	71 (Abt. 1839)	Noted as Mother-in-Law
1920 Census	Elizabeth Dugan	82 (Abt. 1838)	Noted as Mother-in-Law
1924 Obituary	Elizabeth Dugan	87 (Abt. 1837)	Immigrated from Co. Cork, at age 15
Headstone	Elizabeth Dugan	3 October 1837	Unknown informant

Table 4

Conflict Resolution

Elizabeth's gravestone indicates that she was born on 3 October 1837, while the Cloyne parish record shows she was baptized on 11 October 1835, creating a two-year discrepancy.[20] The fact that her birth date and baptism date are within a few days of each other suggests they are for the same child; however, the birth years do not. The baptism record was created by the parish priest, likely within days of the child's birth. The birth date on the gravestone, however, was provided by someone — likely one of Elizabeth's adult children — who was not present at her birth eight decades earlier. As a result, the baptism record provides a more reliable year of birth. Elizabeth Cuddigan was probably born in October 1835, days before her baptism.

Considering the "Missing Friends" ad, parish records from County Cork, the passenger list, the Ohio marriage record, and United States census records have led to confirmation of the proposed hypothesis. Analyzing the evidence chronologically, as seen in table 4 provides a collection of details that connect to confirm the identity of one individual.

Conclusion

The evidence shows that Elizabeth Cuddigan, daughter of Thomas Cuddigan and Mary Upton, was baptized in the parish of Cloyne, County Cork, on 11 October 1835, immigrated to America

with her family, arrived in the United States in December 1851, and married Patrick Dugan in Cincinnati, Ohio, on 30 August 1852. Elizabeth died in Greeley County, Nebraska, in January 1924.

Discovering Elizabeth's maiden name, Cuddigan, was a key piece of information that led to evidence of her family in both American and Irish records. This, in turn, revealed her mother's maiden name, Upton.[21] Two generations of women born in Ireland who died in America were successfully uncovered through extensive research involving the entire family, a wide variety of resources, and careful correlation of evidence.

Endnotes

[1] Marylynn Salmon, *Women and the Law of Property in Early America* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), p. 14-15.

[2] 1860 U.S. census, LaSalle County, Illinois, population schedule, Marseilles, page 241 (penned), dwelling 1739, "family" 1751, lines 34-37, Patrick Dugan, Elizabeth, John, 6, and Ellen 4, both children born in Illinois; imaged *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7667/). And 1880 U.S. census, Platte County, Nebraska, pop. sched., enumeration district (ED) 92 (penned), page 6 (penned), dwelling 49, family 49, Patrick Dugan, Mrs. Eliza, Hanah, 16, Michael 14, Margret, 12, William, 10 [children born in Illinois], Daniel, 9, Iowa, Elizabeth, 6, Illinois, Mary, 3, Iowa, and Mathew, 1, Nebraska; imaged *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/6742/).

[3] 1880 U.S. census, Platte County, Nebraska, agricultural schedule, page 6 (penned), line 7, Patrick Dugan, owner; imaged, "U.S., Selected Federal Census Non-Population Schedules, 1850-1880," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1276/).

[4] "1880-1890 Centennial of the Church of the Visitation at O'Connor, Nebraska" (publication details unavailable), p. 23-24. Digital copy of Dugan entry held by the author.

[5] *Find a Grave*, database with images (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/43430455/patrick-dugan), "Patrick Dugan" (1830-1891) memorial created by "Anonymous," with gravestone image by "Fitz"; citing Saint Patricks Cemetery, Platte Center, Platte County, Nebraska. The gravestone lists place of birth and date of death, "Born in Co. Cork Ireland," and "Mar. 14, 1891" "Aged 61 Yrs.," implying an unsourced birth year of 1830.

[6] *Find a Grave*, database with images (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/43430444/elizabeth-dugan), "Elizabeth 'Eliza' *Cuddigan* Dugan" (1837-1924) memorial created by "Anonymous," with gravestone image by "Anonymous"; citing Saint Patricks Cemetery, Platte Center, Platte County, Nebraska. The gravestone lists date of birth "Oct. 6, 1837" and date of death "Jan. 2, 1924," implying an age of 86.

[7] "Pioneer Woman Dies," *The Columbus* [Nebraska] *Telegram*, 4 January 1924, page 2, column 6; imaged, *Newspapers.com* (https://newspapers.com/image/428598659).

[8] "Nebraska, U.S., Select County Marriage Records, 1855-1908," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61335/) > Platte County > 1886-1897, unidentified volume, page 506, John Gibbons and Maggie L. Duggan, marriage 27 June 1892; citing "Nebraska, Marriage Records."

[9] "Ohio, U.S., County Marriage Records, 1774-1993," database with images, Ancestry (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61378/)>HamiltonCounty>1852-1853, vol. B2, page 88, no. 511, Patrick Duggan and Betsy Coddingin, marriage license, 28 August 1852; citing "Marriage Records. Ohio Marriages. Various Ohio County Courthouses."

[10] Parish marriage registers, St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, "Patricium Dugan and Elizabetham Cuddington," marriage, 30 August 1852; copy of register page held by author.

[11] 1860 U.S. census, LaSalle Co., Ill., pop. sch., Marseilles, p. 241 (penned), dwell. 1739, fam. 1751, Patrick Dugan.

[12] *Wikipedia* (http://www.wikipedia.org), "Seneca, Illinois," rev. 00:49, 24 September 2025.

[13] 1900 U.S. census, Greeley County, Nebraska, population schedule, Center, enumeration district (ED) 106, sheet 11, Elizabeth Duggan; imaged, "1900 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7602/).

[14] Passenger list manifest, S.S. *Swan*, arrival in New Orleans, 30 December 1851, Thos. Carigan group; digital image, *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/443593:7484), citing *Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New Orleans, Louisiana, 1820-1902*; Record Group 85: Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

[15] Browsing the 1853, 1855-1856, and 1857 Cincinnati city directories at *FamilySearch.org* for Thomas or John Cadigan/Coddingin/Cuddigan or variants yielded no results.

[16] Searches in the 1860 census collections at *Ancestry.com* and *FamilySearch.org* for Thomas (born about 1798) or Mary (born about 1810) Cadigan/Coddigin/Codington/Cuddigan, born in Ireland and residing in Ohio or Illinois, were negative.

[17] Ruth-Ann Harris and B. Emer O'Keeffe, *The Search for Missing Friends: Irish Immigrant Advertisements Placed in the Boston Pilot 1831-1920*, v. 2 (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1991), p. 283, entry for Thomas Cuddigan; database and digital images, *American Ancestors* (https://www.americanancestors.org/search/databasesearch/510/boston-pilot-irish-immigrant-advertisements-search-for-missing-friends-1831-1920).

[18] National Library of Ireland, "Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI," digital images, *National Library of Ireland* (http://registers.nli.ie), Cloyne Parish (County Cork), "Marriages July 3, 1791 – Nov. 26, 1831," p. 136, Thomas Cuddigan and Mary Upton, marriage 18 July 1825; digitized from NLI microfilm 04990/04.

[19] National Library of Ireland, "Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI," digital images, *National Library of Ireland* (http://registers.nli.ie), Cloyne Parish (County Cork), "Baptisms Jan 2, 1821 – Dec 29, 1831," p. 34, Abigail, 4 Oct 1826, p. 43, William, 6 Aug 1828, p. 53, John, 19 May 1830; digitized from NLI microfilm 04989/07. And, Catholic Parish Reg., NLI, Cloyne, Co. Cork, "Baptisms July 1, 1833 – Dec. 29, 1878," p. 10, Ansty, 19 Jan 1834, p. 20, Bess, 11 Oct 1835, p. 45, Bridget, 8 Feb 1840, p. 59, "Pat," 19 Mar 1842, p. 72, Michael, 22 Jun 1844, p. 84, Thomas, 31 Jul 1846, p. 95, Henry, 25 Apr 1849; digitized from NLI microfilm 04989/08.

[20] *Find a Grave*, imaged gravestone for "Elizabeth 'Eliza' Cuddigan Dugan" (1837-1924). And, Catholic Parish Reg., NLI, Cloyne, Co. Cork, "Baptisms July 1, 1833 – Dec. 29, 1878," p. 20, Bess, 11 Oct 1835; digitized from NLI microfilm 04989/08.

[21] *Find a Grave*, database with images (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/96479867/mary-cuddigan), "Mary *Upton* Cuddigan" (1809-1889) memorial originally created by "Sneffels," with gravestone image by "Sneffels"; citing Cedar Hill Cemetery, Ouray, Ouray County, Colorado. The memorial page references "Elizabeth 'Eliza' *Cuddigan* Dugan" as one of her children.

Shelley Bishop is a genealogical researcher, writer, and speaker with a passion for finding and preserving the stories of ancestors. She writes for Family Tree Magazine, NGS Magazine, *and other publications. As the owner of Buckeye Family Trees, www.buckeyefamilytrees.com, she focuses on midwestern research. While still searching for her own Irish origins, she enjoys researching her husband's ancestors in County Antrim. Shelley is based in Columbus, Ohio, and St. Pete Beach, Florida. She is a past president of the Great Lakes Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists.*



The Irish Pronunciation of IGSI's e-Newsletter, *Ginealas*

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Ann Eccles, former editor of *The Septs* and IGSI Librarian, recently sent an email about the history of our newsletter, *Ginealas*. Ann wrote, "History: The e-newsletter, *Ginealas*, started in 2008 under Diane Lovrencevic's promotion efforts. After some conversations about a name for the publication, nothing came of it. Diane checked into names further. She came up with Ginealas, an Irish word for genealogy, but no one really knew how to pronounce it. And it came to be pronounced phonetically: gin ee al as ."

Two of the five members of the *Ginealas* committee knew that the society was pronouncing it incorrectly. I had no idea that we were mispronouncing it. I also learned that different regions of Ireland have their own pronunciations of some words.

The Irish pronunciation of Ginealas is: Gin (hard 'g' as in gun or Guinness) - uh – lis. Other regions may pronounce it with slight variations, but people would understand what you are saying. Ann included a website where you can listen to the Irish pronunciation of Ginealas (by area of Ireland) at: https://www.focloir.ie/en/dictionary/ei/genealogy

The three areas you can choose from are C=Connacht, M=Munster, and U=Ulster. While the pronunciation difference is subtle, it becomes more noticeable when you change the word to genealogical.

Thank you, Una, Ann, Peggy, John, and Pat for your help with this. In the meantime, I am still practicing the pronunciation of our newsletter as Gin – uh – lis.

2025-2026 Webinar Series — Save the Dates!

Saturday, November 15

Irish Research in the Public Records Office (PRONI): In Belfast or Online, It's More Than Just Ulster! | Dave Miller

Join Dave, a professional genealogist with deep Irish roots and host of "This Month at the IGSI" podcast, as he shares his expert insights and practical tips for exploring PRONI's extensive archives. Discover why your Irish ancestral records might be located in Belfast — or even Britain — regardless of your family's origins across Ireland's ever-changing historical boundaries and political divisions.

Saturday, January 17, 2026

Title to be announced | Mark D. Thompson

Following his successful presentation in January 2025 on "Research Documents and Letters with Artificial Intelligence," Mark will focus on leveraging AI for genealogical research.

If you have questions about any of our webinars or classes, contact Trish and Walt, IGSI Education Co-Chairs, at Education@IrishGenealogical.org.

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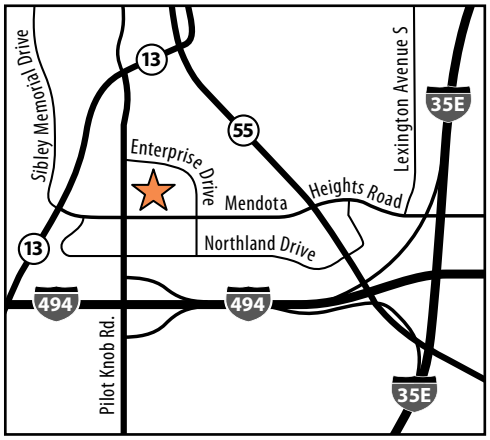
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