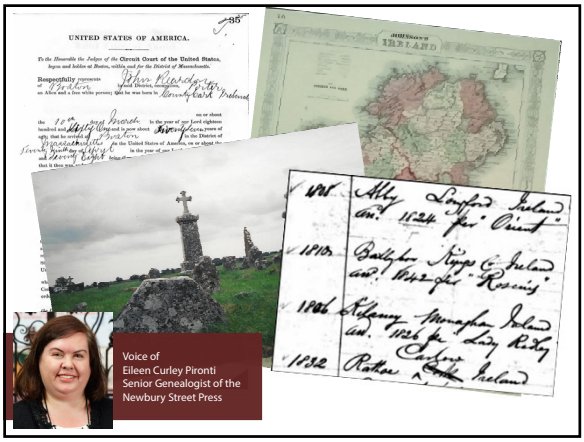
1

2

3

©American Ancestors, AmericanAncestors.org; produced by The Brue Family Learning Center



4

Lay the Groundwork for Success

- Place name in Ireland
- Time period
- Parents of immigrant ancestor and maiden name of mother
- Religion of family
- Online indexed records

5

Key Strategies

- Identify the records you will need
  - Church records
  - Civil Registration
- Where do you find them
  - Your search will begin online
- Before jumping online learn more about Irish records and how to use them

Four Courts Fire, 1922, Dublin

6

[eɪ
Learn about
Irish History

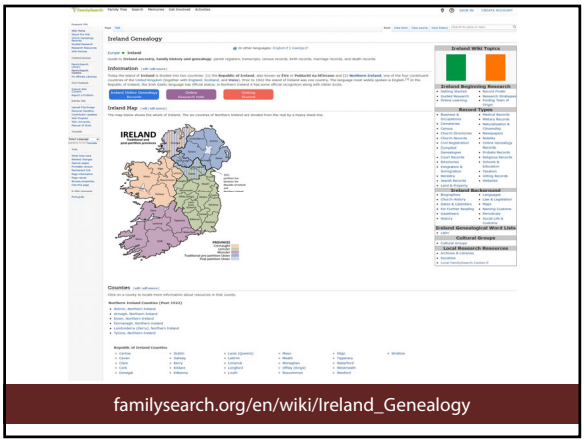
7

Why did my ancestor leave?

(Source: Paul Milner's *Irish Emigration to North America: Before, During and After the Famine*)

"Push"	"Pull"
• Economic – Rack-renting – Drought/famine	• Economic – Land – Business
• Religious persecution	• Religious tolerance
• Political refugees – 1798 rebellion – 1922 Irish Civil War	• Chain migration – follow one's family and friends

8



familysearch.org/en/wiki/Ireland_Genealogy

9

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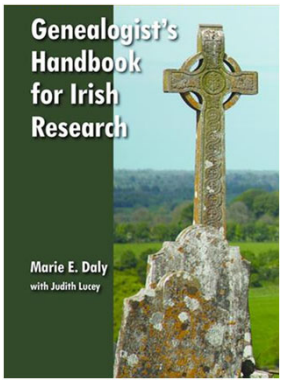
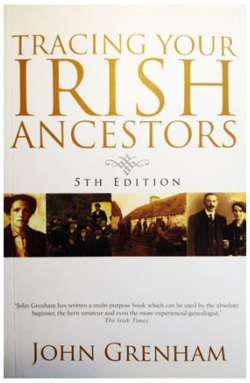
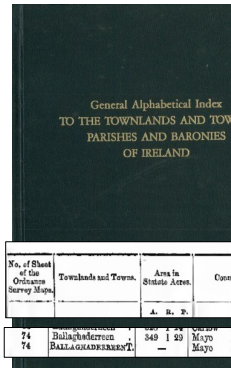
Create a list of "Go to" sources for information

10





11



Entry for Ballaghaderreen, County Mayo

No. of Sheet of the Ordnance Survey Maps.	Townlands and Towns.	Area in Statute Acres.	County.	Barony.	Parish.	Poor Law Union in 1857.	Townland Census of 1861. Part I.
		A. R. P.					Vol. / Page
74	Ballaghaderreen	349 1 29	Mayo	Costello	Kilcolman	Castlerea	IV. / 141
74	BALLAGHADERREEN T.	—	Mayo	Costello	Kilcolman	Castlerea	IV. / 141

12

Seek out local resources

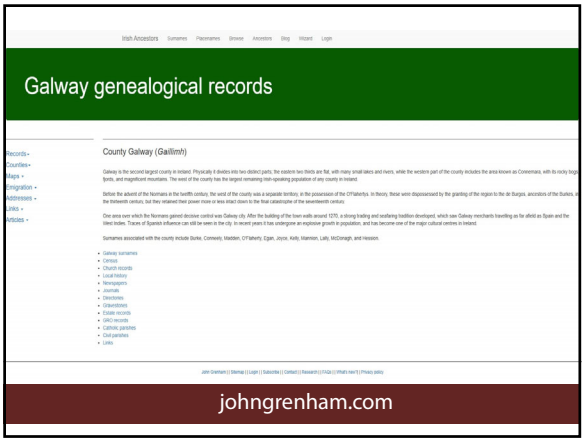
- Local histories and genealogical sources

13

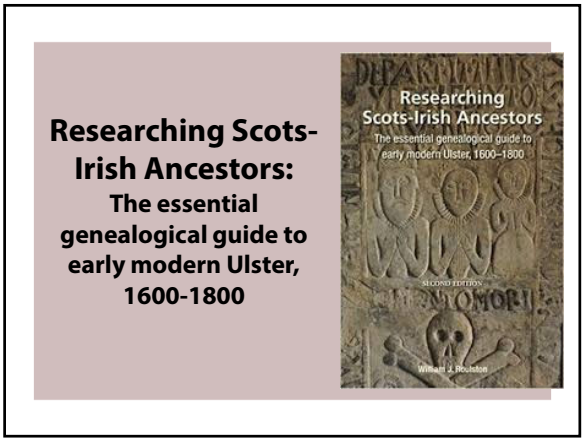
14

Irish Ancestors: Browse

15


Galway genealogical records
County Galway (Gaillimh)
johngrenham.com

16


Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors:
The essential genealogical guide to early modern Ulster, 1600-1800
Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors
The essential genealogical guide to early modern Ulster, 1600–1800
SECOND EDITION
William J. Roulston

17

The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) is the official archive for Northern Ireland.
Search archives online
Will calendars
PRONI Historical Maps viewer
eCatalogue
more ...
What's on at PRONI
Talks and events at PRONI
PRONI on YouTube
Image gallery
more ...
Resources and learning
Ireland 1916
First World War resources
Plantations in Ulster
more ...
Your visit
Getting to PRONI and opening hours
Registration and preparing for a visit
Subscribe to PRONI's eNewsletter
more ...
Your research
PRONI enquiry service
Family and local history records
Information leaflets
more ...
PRONI: nidirect.gov.uk/proni

18

Ulster Historical Foundation
Discover your family history in a whole new way
Start your journey
Start Your Search
Search name, town, area, profession...
ulsterhistoricalfoundation.com

19

irish genealogy TOOLKIT
Discover your Irish ancestors and heritage
Welcome to Irish Genealogy Toolkit
Your free and independent guide to finding your Irish ancestors
Genealogy Bargains
irish-genealogy-toolkit.com

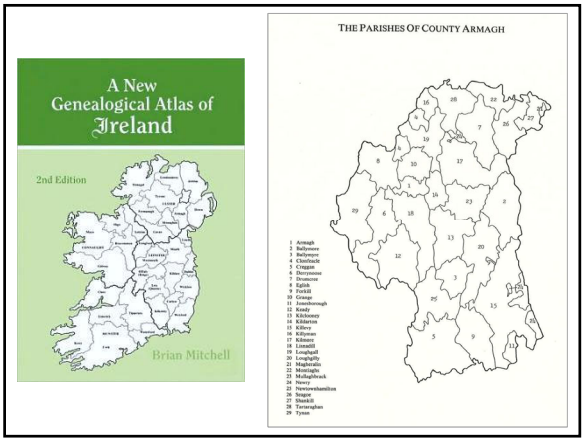
20

Ask about Ireland
Reading Room
Libraries
Learning Zone
Search
askaboutireland.ie

21

[eI
Use maps when searching in records

22

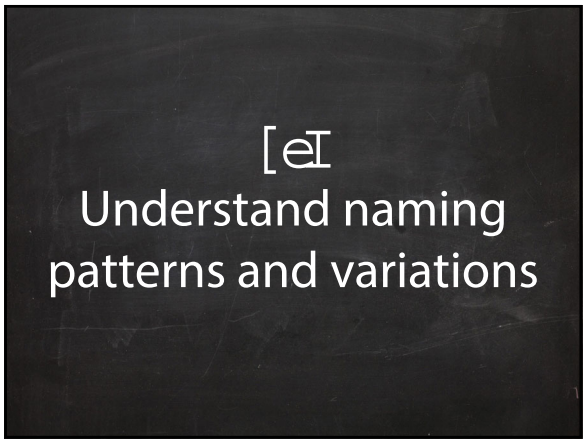


23

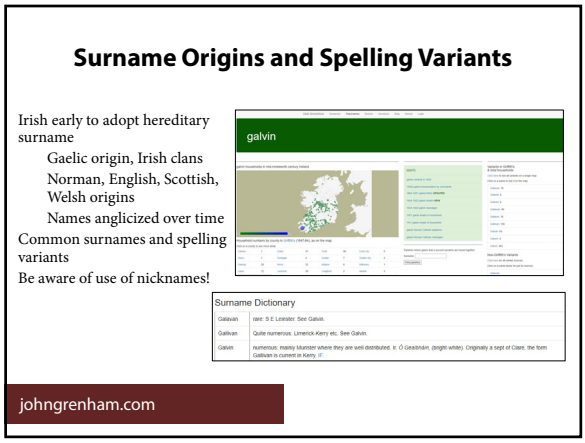
24

Irish Townlands
Search for a townland, civil parish, barony, electoral division or county
Search
Ireland
Counties
Access maps at townlands.ie

25


Understand naming patterns and variations

26


Surname Origins and Spelling Variants
Irish early to adopt hereditary surname
Gaelic origin, Irish clans
Norman, English, Scottish, Welsh origins
Names anglicized over time
Common surnames and spelling variants
Be aware of use of nicknames!
galvin
Surname Dictionary
Galavan
Gallivan
Galvin
johngrenham.com

27

Given Name Alternatives for Irish Research

Name	Abbreviations	Nicknames	Synonyms	Irish	Latin
				Hannivol	
Harriett		Harry, Hat, Hattie, Hatty	Hargate, Hargot		
Harry			Harold, Henry	Annraoi, Anrai	Henicus
Helen	Hel	Elena, Elene, Ella, Ellen, Ellie, Elly, Elsie,	Aileen, Eileen, Elaine, Eleanor,	Ailbhlin, Eibhlin, Eibhlinn,	Helena
		Lean, Lena, Nell, Nellie, Nelly	Ellen, Evelyn, Helena	Eileen, Lean, Leana	
Henry	He, Hen, Henr,	Hal, Hank, Har, Harry, Hen, Henny, Hence	Harold	Annraoi, Anrai, Einri,	Hendricus, Henrici, Henricus
	Heny, Hey, Hry, Hy				
Herbert	Herb, Herbt	Bert, Bertie, Herb	Bertran, Hab, Haribert, Hubert	Hoireabaird	Heribertus, Hubertus
Hester	Hest	Essie, Essy, Hessie, Hessy, Hettie, Hetty	Esther, Hesther	Eistir	Heribertus, Hubertus
Honora	Hon	Hanara, Hanorah, Hon, Honey, Honny, Nano,	Hannah, Honorah, Honnour,	Honora, Nora, Onora	Honoria, Onoria
		Noey, Nonie, Nonor, Nora, Norah, Norrie,	Honor, Honour, Honora,		
		Norry, Onny	Honorah, Johanna		
Hugh		Aden, Aedh, Aidan, Aiden, Huey, Hughey, Hughie,	Eoghan, Gene, Herbert, Hubert,	Aed, Aodh, Eoghan,	Eugenii, Eugenius, Hugo, Hugones, Hugonii,
		Hugo	Owen	Hoibeard, Uga, Uisdean	Hugonis
Humphrey	Hum,Humph,Humy				Homfridus, Homfridus, Onmfridus, Umfridus
Hyacinth		Cinty			
Ignatius		Iggie, Iggy, Nace, Nate, Natius, Naz, Nazi		Ignaid	Agnetivus, Ignafi, Ignativus, Ignatius
Irene	Ir	Reenie, Rena, Rene, Resie, Rennie		Sionha, Sionnaith	
Isabel	Isab, Isb	Bel, Bell, Bella, Belle, Bessie, Cybilla, Ib, Issy,	Anabel, Arabella, Bell, Bella,	Isibeal, Sibeal	Elisbetha, Isabella
		Nib, Nibbie, Nibby, Sabe, Sabra, Sibbby,	Belle, Eliza, Elizabeth, Isabella,		
		Sibba, Sibella, Tibbie	Sybil		
Isadora		Dora, Issy, Izzy	Isidora	Dora, Isadora	Isadora
Jacob	Ja, Jac, Jak	Jaap, Jack, Jake, Jay	James	Seamus, Seamus	Iacomus, Jacobus
James	Ja, Jalbus, Jac,	Aime, Jamesie, Jamesy, Jamey, Jamie, Jem,	Jacob, Seáinín, Seumus,	Giúsine, Seamus, Seamus,	Gelasius, Iacobus, Iacoba, Jacobi, Jacobo,
	Jas, Js	Jemmie, Jim, Jimmie, Jimmy, Jimsor, Josh, Seamy	Shamus, Shemus, Siacas	Shamus, Simidh, Siomaidh	Jacobus
Jane		Ginny, Jan, Janey, Janie, Joanne, Jon, Jonnie,	Janet, Joan, Joan, Joanna, Johanna,	Seadna, Sine, Sinead,	Ioanna, Iana, Johana, Johanna
		Jenny, Jessie, Jincy, Jinsey	Sheena, Shena, Susan, Virginia	Siobhan	
Janet		Etta, Jan, Janie, Jen, Jennie, Jenny, Jessie,	Ginette, Jane, Janette, Janine,	Sine, Sinead, Sineaid,	Janeta, Janetta, Johanna
		Netta, Nettie, Netty	Jean, Jeanette, Jeanine, Joan	Siobhan	
Jemima		Baimey, Bomme, Bina, Jemma, Jemmie,	Gemima, Gemina		
		Meemie, Mima, Mina, Mirah, Minnie			
Jeremiah	Je, Jer, Jera, Jere,	Derby, Jem, Jemmy, Jer, Jereme, Jeremy,	Darby, Dermot, Digby, Jeremias,	Darby, Dermot, Diarmaid	Darbius, Demetrius, Dermicius, Hieirimia,
	Jerah, Jerh, Jerreh	Jerry	Jerome		Hieremias, Jeremia, Jeremias
Jess (Ml)		Jesse		Ieise	
Jessica (F)		Jess, Jessi, Jessie, Sica		Iecea	
Joan	Jone	Jessie, Jo, Joanie, Joanne, Jonet, Jonny,	Jane, Janet, Jean, Joanna,	Siobhan, Sian	Ioanna, Joanna, Johana, Johanna
		Nonie	Johanna, Jone		
Johanna	Joh	Ann, Hanna, Joan, Jo, Jody, Joe, Johan, Nonie	Anna, Hannah, Jane, Joan,	Shovaun, Siobhan	Ioanna, Johana, Johanna
			Joanna, Judith, Julia, Susan		
John	Joh, Jh, Jhn, Jno,	Dean, Hans, Ian, Ivan, Jack, Jean, Jehu,	Eoin, Eugene, Jonathon, Owen,	Eoghan, Eoin, Seaghan, Sean,	Ioannes, Ioannis, Joannes, Joannis,

dennisahogan.com

28

Naming Customs

- First born son named after his father's father
- Second born son named after his mother's father
- Third born son named after his father
- First born daughter named after her mother's mother
- Second born daughter named after her father's mother

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30

Taking the leap into Irish Records

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Irish Genealogy Online

ancestry.com

ROOTS IRELAND www.rootsireland.ie

findmypast

Irish Genealogy.ie

FamilySearch

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Church records

33

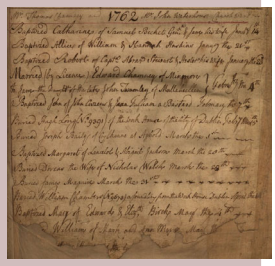
Three Major Groups

- Anglo-Irish
  - Professional and landed class
  - Members of the Church of Ireland
- Roman Catholics
  - Gaelic clans and Sept system
  - English plantation of Ireland and penal laws
- Scots Presbyterian
  - Dissenters
  - Subject to same penal laws as Catholics

34

Church of Ireland Records

- Established Church until 1869
- Half of the parish registers were destroyed in the Four Courts fire in 1922
- The baptism records don't typically include mother's maiden name



35

Where to find them?

- Repositories
  - Representative Church Body Library, Dublin
    - Use their online church guide
  - National Archives of Ireland
  - Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)
- Websites
  - RootsIreland.ie
  - FindmyPast.com
  - Irishgenealogy.ie

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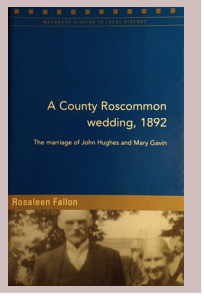
Roman Catholic Records

- Most records begin 1820s-1830s
- Records are in Latin or English
- Lack details of family relationships (witnesses, sponsors)

37

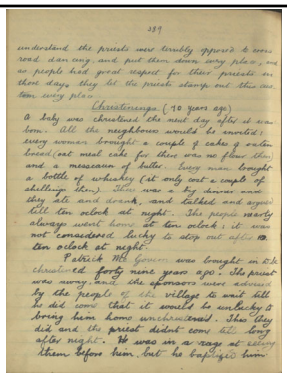
Customs and traditions

- Bride married in parish where baptized
- First child (children) baptized in mother's parish
- Burial sometimes outside the area where they actually lived
  - Local knowledge
  - Resources like Ireland Reaching Out



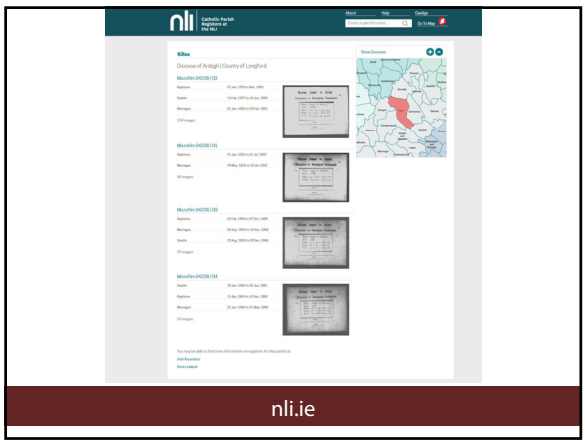
38

Submission from a school in Tircahan, Kinawley Parish, County Cavan, Ireland, 1938, National Folklore Commission



dúchas.ie

39


nli.ie

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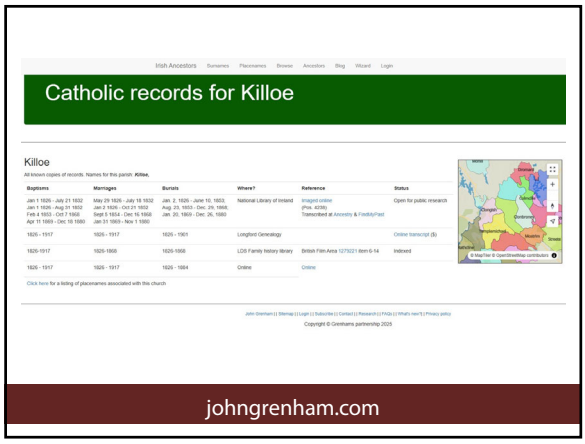
Catholic records for Killoe
Killoe
johngrenham.com

41

ROOTSIRELAND.ie
Get a Special 25% Discount on Annual Subscriptions
Search All Ireland Records
Search for your Ancestors
rootsireland.ie

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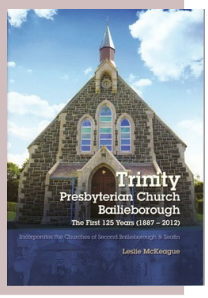
Presbyterian Records

- Most records begin 1820s, 1830s
- Illegal until 1782 for ministers to perform marriages
- Search in Church of Ireland parishes for marriages
- No set parish boundaries
  - Brian Mitchell's *New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland*



45

Where to find them

- Repositories
  - Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)
  - Presbyterian Historical Society, Belfast
- Websites
  - Rootsireland.ie *has transcripts only*
  - Findmypast.com

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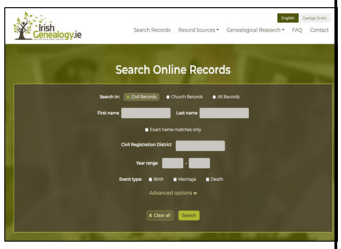
Civil Births, Marriages and Deaths

Free indexes and register images at irishgenealogy.ie

- Births: 1864 to 1923
- Marriages: 1845 to 1948 (Non-Roman Catholic marriages from 1845, Roman Catholic marriages from 1864)
- Deaths: 1871 to 1973 (General Register Office working on updating collection of deaths to bring it back to 1864)
- Northern Ireland records available up to 1921



irishgenealogy.ie

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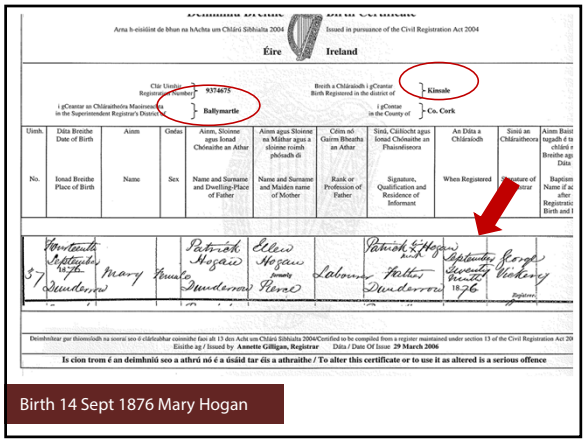
Two copies exist online!

- General Registrar Office copy
  - Online at Irish Genealogy.ie
  - FamilySearch Library
- Local Registrar copy
  - Rootsireland.ie
    - Transcripts only
    - Not full coverage for all counties
  - Northern Ireland

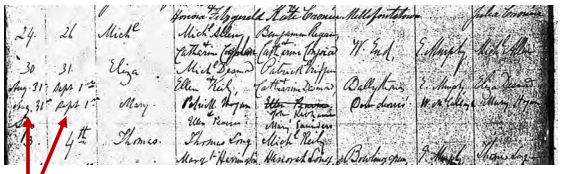
50



Birth 14 Sept 1876 Mary Hogan

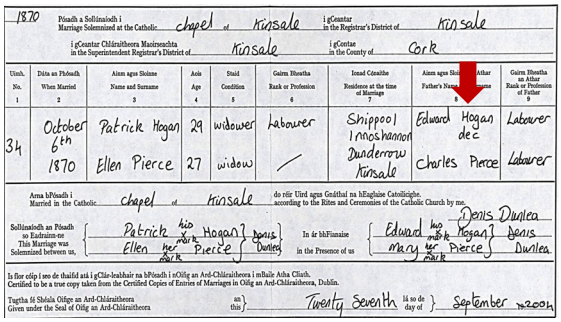
51

Baptismal record for Mary Hogan



Actual date of birth August 31,
Baptismal date Sept. 1st

52



1870 Póadh a Solúnaíodh i Marriage Solemnized at the Catholic chapel of Kinsale i gContae in the Registrar's District of Kinsale

i gCeantar Chláraitheora Maoirseachta in the Superintendent Registrar's District of Kinsale i gContae in the County of Cork

Uimh. No. 1	Dáta an Phóadh When Married 2	Ainm agus Sloinne Name and Surname 3	Aois Age 4	Staid Condition 5	Gairm Bheatha Rank or Profession 6	Ionad Cónaithe Residence at the time of Marriage 7	Ainm agus Sloinne an Athar Father's Name and Surname 8	Gairm Bheatha an Athar Rank or Profession of Father 9
34	October 6th 1870	Patrick Hogan	29	widower	Labourer	Shippool Innoshannon	Edward Hogan dec	Labourer
		Ellen Pierce	27	widow	/	Dunderrow Kinsale	Charles Pierce	Labourer

Arna bPóadh i Married in the Catholic chapel of Kinsale do réir Uird agus Gnáthal na hEaglaise Catoilicighe, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Catholic Church by me, Denis Dunlea

Sollúnaíodh an Póadh so Eadraim-ne This Marriage was Solemnized between us, Patrick his mark Hogan Denis Dunlea; Ellen her mark Pierce

In dr bhFiosaise In the Presence of us Edward his mark Hogan Denis; Mary her mark Pierce Dunlea

Is fíor cóip í seo de thaifid atá i gCláe-leabhair na bPóadh i nOifig an Ard-Chláraitheora i mBaile Atha Cliath. Certified to be a true copy taken from the Certified Copies of Entries of Marriages in Oifig an Ard-Chláraitheora, Dublin.

Tugtha fé Sheala Oifige an Ard-Chláraitheora Given under the Seal of Oifig an Ard-Chláraitheora an this Twenty Seventh lá so de day of September 2004

Civil Marriage record

53

Steps to take

- Search online indexes and records
  - Start with www.irishgenealogy.ie
  - Use www.johngrenham.com to identify district names and maps
- Obtain certificate from General Registrar Office
  - GRO - Republic of Ireland (up to 1921), https://www.gov.ie/GRO
  - GRONI - Northern Ireland (Post 1922), https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/

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Expand your Search

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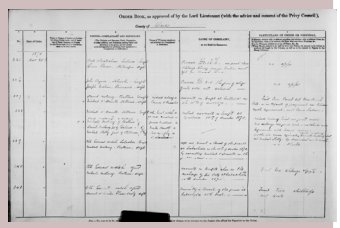
Valuation Office Records

- Griffith's Valuation, 1847-1864
- Covers from 1830 to 1856
- Complete set of records with original maps on Findmypast.com
- PRONI

56

Petty Sessions Court Records

- Courts for minor crimes
- Provides glimpse of everyday Irish life



57

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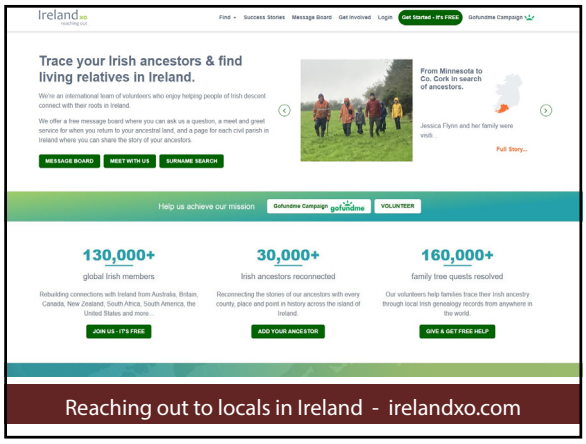
Make connections with locals

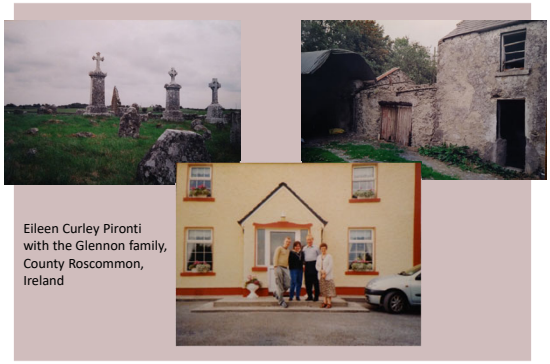
58



59

[eI
Persistence pays off!

60



Eileen Curley Pironti with the Glennon family, County Roscommon, Ireland

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Recap

- Gain a better understanding of the history
- Put together a list of websites and published sources
- Remember – there are many records that have not been digitized, and there are gaps in record availability
- Don't get discouraged, keep at it!

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QUESTIONS?

Schedule a consultation
consultations@nehgs.org

Hire Research Services
research@nehgs.org

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American Ancestors
A National Center for Family History, Heritage & Culture
Bookstore
About Us
MY ACCOUNT
Search
Events
Join
Give
10 Million Names
Publications
Expert Help
Tools
Signature Projects
Centers & Initiatives
Finding Irish Origins: A County is Not Enough! 2025
Thank you for registering for the online conference, Finding Irish Origins: A County is Not Enough!
When it comes to Irish research, knowing the county your ancestor came from is not enough! To succeed in Irish research and work in Irish records, you need to know the townland and parish. Discovering that information, however, is at times the biggest challenge in Irish family history research. Join Irish experts at American Ancestors for an online seminar that will help you navigate the basics of Irish migrations to America and Canada, lead you to key records, provide strategies for finding origins when records fall short, and demonstrate how DNA can help. Finally, we'll talk about next steps in making the leap across the pond. This online seminar will cover both Ireland and Northern Ireland.
This course includes five 90-minute classes and exclusive access to handouts and recordings of each presentation. These recordings and all course materials will be available for the foreseeable future.
JOIN THE LIVE BROADCAST
AmericanAncestors.org/finding-irish-origins-county-not-enough-2025

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THANK YOU!
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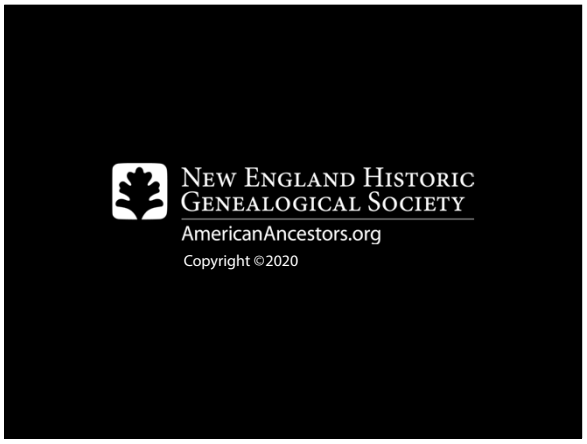
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