

Celtic Connections Conference 2020

Saturday, August 19th, 2020

Question & Answer Log: Chat with Tina Beaird and Pam Holland: Irish

QUESTION: My Scots-Irish ancestors settled in western Pennsylvania in about 1800. Do you have any specific experience with Presbyterian settlements in Westmoreland County? (Beaird)

ANSWER: I feel like that question was a softball question to start me out. Absolutely! At FGS when it was in Pittsburgh in 2017 I gave a whole lecture about Presbyterians in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. So if you ever go to the FGS website you can purchase a copy of that presentation. I put together a little cheat sheet at my website Tamarack Genealogy (https://tamarackgenealogy.com/uploads/3/4/8/9/34896329/ccc_presbyterian_records_websites.pdf) Thomas will include it at the end of the chat. But I put together a link of websites. He pulled up my website and at the bottom of the website you'll see the Covenanter Flag – if you click on the actual flag itself right there in the center you'll be able to find the websites I am going to talk about tonight. Just to save time and there are so many questions I just don't want to eat up a lot of time talking about specific websites. So Pennsylvania specifically, in that handout, are 8 or 9 websites specific about Pennsylvania and Presbyterians. Lucky for us in Westmoreland County the Presbytery started about 1740 and there was a traveling minister – his name was Mr. Cuthbertson. And Mr. Cuthbertson kept a detailed diary on his circuit of all the baptisms and all the marriages he performed from the 1740s to the 1790s. And that has been digitized and the transcript is available on FamilySearch and the link is in the handout above. That is probably the best place to start specifically for Westmoreland but some other fantastic resources you have in Pennsylvania for Pennsylvania Presbyterians would be the Presbyterian Historical Society which is based in Philadelphia. And they have some amazing resources. That is a site you can go to whether you are searching Covenanters or Reformed or Cumberland – they have things on all of those different denominations. There is a Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh that has Rev. Cuthbertson's original handwritten diary as well as some really amazing records for that area surrounding Pittsburgh. So those would be my top two resources for you. And the list in the handout above give you a whole bunch of other places to check.

QUESTION: My understanding is that there are two versions of Griffiths maps, an early one and another around 1880. Are the original Griffith's maps available for viewing, either online or at the Valuation Office in Dublin? Is there much difference

between them? I usually use the Ask About Ireland website (<http://www.askaboutireland.ie/>), are these the later maps? (Holland)

ANSWER: Yes, the maps at Ask About Ireland are the later *per se*. They are not the originals which are at the Valuation Office in Dublin so you would have to visit there in person or hire someone to go there in person. I did not check to see if they are open yet but probably not yet. The ones on Ask About Ireland can actually be very useful because they do have a number of map variations. So if you go to the website and you look way up in the corner where the maps are there are a number of variations that you can click on to cycle through. And each place is going to be different. I have seen some places where there is just one or two maps and I've seen places where there are five or six. So I can't say how many there will be for a particular area you are interested in. Cycle through those maps and see if you can find a map that is an older one. Often they are not as pretty looking and are darker or just black and white. Sometimes you can see where numbers have been crossed off and changed which can be very useful as you try to figure out places if you can't get to Dublin.

QUESTION: I am researching the Guffey/Guffy family, who came to Pennsylvania ca 1770, likely from Scotland. Records show M'Guffock's and M'Guffog's in the Wigtonshire area. Other places I find are Airlick, Chippermoir (Chippermore), Mochrum and Galloway. At one time in the early 1600's, Mochrum was owned by the Dunbars, who intermarried into the M'Guffock line. Where might I find info about these families in Wigtonshire or Galloway? (Beaird)

ANSWER: I can't give you specifics on those two individual families, but I can give you some generalities. So, in that handout I created places where I would start looking ... I hate to throw you right to Scotland's People, but you cannot do Scottish research or resources without using Scotland's People at one time or another. Other really good sites I recommend are GENUKI which is a free website with birth, marriage, and death records available. You can search by county and I would highly recommend researching there. Some other sites would be Scotland's Places which is often overlooked as a resource. They have a lot of tax lists, early modern records that are pre-1707, they have a lot of late 17th century tax records. Also, there is what's called the SCANnetwork which shows you the collections of the National Archives and which are open to the public. And then almost each county has its own genealogical and historical society. Where I do my research in Ayreshire or Renfrewshire they have their own societies. Galloway and Dumfries have records that merged so you would find records together so look at their local resources and archives and local libraries. A lot of times if you have a general idea and have the names of cities, I would start looking for local histories just like we use local histories here in the US. So you can easily find the history of Galloway or Wigtonshire to see if those family names come up. But even if those family names don't come up, there are a lot of resources your family would have used. Perhaps the church, the school, or some other type of public entity so it is worth investigating those organizations to see if records still exist. School records can be pretty robust in