

Celtic Connections Conference 2020

Wednesday, August 26th, 2020

Question & Answer Log: Chat with David Rencher: Irish Websites / Migration

QUESTION: Tracking ancestor's likely route to America. Born c. 1797 (Ballylongford, Kerry) near Tarbert on the Shannon, migrated between 1830-1835 with family, settling in Bulloch Co, Georgia. A Tarbert historian suggested they traveled on a trading vessel out of Tarbert to the US, possibly Savannah GA. To what extent did migrants sail on trade ships from smaller ports like Tarbert to the States? Where to look for information on routes and/or records about small ports?

ANSWER: Since there were no regularly scheduled sailings of ships, immigrants used a variety of solutions for their transportation out of Ireland. In some ways, trading vessels were an advantage as they had fewer people. That said, they may have been less accommodating in the overall experience. The route suggested is certainly possible. It is also possible that they took a direct route to upper North America and then caught another trading vessel to Savannah or even Charleston, SC.

QUESTION: Estate records at the National Library of Ireland located a woman who immigrated to North America from Ballynatona, Kilbeheny, Limerick with 10 children in the 1840s. They list:

- 1840: Patrick Hennessy owed a half-year payment of 25, 17, 3 (pounds, shillings, pence).
- 1841: Catharine Hennessy starts the year owing 83, 5, 9. Her year-end balance was 157, 17, 3, with no payments made during the year.

What resources can I check regarding assisted emigration?

ANSWER: Many of the estate owners kept their own lists of assisted immigration, the Wandersford Estate is an excellent example. The National Library of Ireland categorized many of the estate records by record type, i.e. "rentals," "estate papers," "account books," and even "emigration." Search specifically the estate owner in that context and see if there is a detailed inventory of the estate records. In some instances, they were evicted for lack of payment of rents and may have ended up in the Poor Law system and been assisted by them as well. The poor law records are generally to be found at the County Libraries.

QUESTION: Two brothers (Hannigan) born in Ireland (1830 & 1837) spent some time in Ormskirk, Lancashire, England prior to eventual emigration to Philadelphia, PA USA. One stayed in Ormskirk about 3 years (arriving by 1857), the other about

20 years (arriving about 1885). Their time in Ormskirk did not overlap. Is there any relevance to this pattern of migration from Ireland to the US?

ANSWER: Yes, this is not uncommon and the wonderful thing about it is that it opens up English record possibilities, especially census and church records. There were numerous Catholic Church records in Lancashire and many of those are to be found on FindmyPast. In some instances, the census enumerators would insert the name of the county in Ireland for the birthplace rather than just "Ireland."

QUESTION: Thomas Lauchlin, was in Boston by 1721. He is listed in the book, Immigrants to New England from Ireland by Ethel Stanwood Bolton, but that only records his marriage in Boston in 1723. He had a merchant ship based in Boston Harbor 1724 -1734 when he disappears from records. His wife, Anne Allen was named as his widow in 1735. What resources can I check for finding his origins in Ireland?

ANSWER: This is a very complex question with numerous possibilities. He may have served in the British Merchant Marines before coming to the Americas – these records are in The National Archives, London and FamilySearch has copies of the records in the collection. If he is part of the Mac Loughlin family, then he is likely from the Inishowen peninsula in County Donegal and may have sailed out of Londonderry. If he is from the O'Loughlin family, then he may be from County Clare.

QUESTION: Great grandfather, Thomas Dew Rybolt, b. 20 March 1841 Milford, OH. Married 16 December 1867 in Clermont Co OH to Wineford Morris, who likely was b. Ireland, but don't have a location. AncestryDNA shows Connacht, (West Roscommon and East Mayo), possibly South Sligo / North Roscommon. The marriage license lists Wineford Morris. The 1880 census has Winefred Morrison. The grave marker is Wineford. She died 13 Nov 1886. How or why did she come to Clermont, Co Ohio (near Cincinnati)? Attached a photo we believe is of her.

ANSWER: The Morris surname is one of the tribes of Galway; Morrison is almost exclusively in Ulster. In this instance, someone or something pulled her to Clermont Ohio – this is a classic instance of needing to employ the FAN club methodology and see with whom she is interacting.

QUESTION: How much faith would you put in a family bible that has been transcribed? We've not seen the original pages, and do not know the original owner, nor where the bible currently resides. But the names and (roughly) the dates seem to be fairly accurate. Do you feel like this is something worth pursuing? (Note: the handwriting is in pencil and all in one penmanship.) Attached are photos of the Bible pages.

ANSWER: A transcription is always subject to error, but if it is all that you have, you seek to verify it in other ways. While not an "original" source, you may

certainly cite it as a transcription with the provenance of the record and look for the original. It is worth pursuing in my opinion.

QUESTION: An ancestor, James, b. Ireland, was buried in 1928 next to Richard of the same surname in a Catholic cemetery in an Illinois coal mining area 1892. Census records show Richard and his siblings were born in England (their parents b. Ireland). We are in contact with descendants of that family and have yet to make a connection. Ideas welcome!

ANSWER: This is a typical migration from Ireland to England to the Americas. Where they were in the coal mining industry, there is a chance that they were miners in England as well. Another case requiring the FAN methodology to see what or who pulled them to Illinois.

QUESTION: What should one do with artifacts that may have historical interest? E.g., a manuscript (c. 1940) with 70+ year history of three generations of Irish immigrants from Monaghan to Iowa. Not a genealogy, but a socio-cultural narrative of moving as a group to settle in Iowa, create a community... and families forced to move on during the Depression. Would genealogy or historical libraries want this document? Which libraries should I contact? Where to start?

ANSWER: Allen County Public Library takes historical manuscripts such as the one you describe. If you want it to remain in the local vicinity, then either a University Manuscript Library or a nearby historical society.

QUESTION: I liked the probability analysis described in your Methodology presentation. In the first example that was shown titled, Table of Weighted Ranking, columns were labeled "G" and "T". "G" was Griffith's, but what was "T" for?

ANSWER: "T" is for the Tithe record which was taken in the early 1820s, and was a tax on land, as well. I was extracting both: Griffith's for the number of occurrences of the surname, and Tithe for whether the surname was in the parish 30 years earlier.

QUESTION: Parish Mothell and Parish Rathcoole, County Kilkenny, are about half -ay between the Towns of Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny and Carlow, Co. Carlow, and are near my known family lines in Castlecommer and Old Leighlin Bridge. Mothell is in the Barony of Fassadinin and Rathcoole is in the Barony of Gowran. Do Baronies play a part in research, using today's search terms or conditions?

ANSWER: Baronies are an important search term for record sources that were created at that level, the most common being lists of freeholders, usually the 40 shilling freeholders. For a good description of these, see Joseph Byrne's Dictionary of Irish Local History under the term "franchise" which was the right to vote.

QUESTION: Related to previous question: Both Parishes have 2 parts - the two Mothell's are separated by the parish Muckalee, and Rathcoole's by Kilmadum. I have

Celtic Connections Conference 2020 – Q&A Log – Rencher Chat Log 26 August 2020

© 2020, copyright Celtic Connections Conference. All rights reserved.

Page | 3