Irish Census

This presentation is about the Irish Census.

Historical Background

To date there only two complete censuses of Ireland – 1901 and 1911. There are census fragments for 1821, 1831, 1841, and 1851. The censuses for 1861, 1871, 1881, and 1891 were destroyed by the Irish government.

Resources

[*National Archives Census*](). We will access the Irish Census by googling – Irish Census. The National Archives is the government unit that created the Irish Census web site. Click on -Search the census records for Ireland 1901 and 1911.

Our ***case study*** is ***Hugh Kelly*** born about 1858 in County Tyrone, he was a Catholic and he was employed by the English government. Select 1901 and enter Hugh Kelly, County Tyrone, his approximate age -43, and sex. Then click on search.

The result is Hugh Kelly age 40 living in Drumnafern Townland in County Tyrone. Next click on Hugh Kelly which shows his family. He has a wife, Margaret and six children. Hugh's religion is shown as Presbyterian. To get further information, we click on Show all information. This shows his occupation as a farmer.

Our conclusion is that we have the wrong Hugh Kelly. His occupation and religion do not match our Hugh Kelly. We conclude that Hugh Kelly may have been born in Tyrone but lives elsewhere.

We will approach this problem by using more search options. We start by changing the county of residence in our previous search to All Counties, and then selecting the County of Origin as Tyrone. Note, that we might have selected his religion as well. Next, we click on search.

The result of our search is two Hugh Kelly's. The second is the same Hugh Kelly living in County Tyrone that we previously examined. However, the first Hugh Kelly is 43 years old and living in County Cork. Clicking on his name brings us to the family page. This page reveals a family of six children and a wife, Annie. It also shows his religion as Roman Catholic. Again, we click on -Show all information.

This page shows he was born in County Tyrone and is employed by the English Government's Customs Office. Note that his wife and his children were born in England.

Ancestry **and** *FindMyPast*. Next, we shall explore a new development. Ancestry and Findmypast have contracted with the National Archives of Ireland to allow them to access the National Archives Data Base for the 1901 and 1911 censuses. This allows the user to access the Irish Census with the input interface of these two organizations. This enables a user to search for two individuals in the same household e.g., husband and wife, or father and child.

Our **case study** is **Bartly O'Donnell**, born in 1900 in County Galway. And his father is Thomas.

To access the Irish Census in Ancestry, click on Search, then on the dropdown menu -click on Card Catalog. In the Keywords space enter 1901 Census Ireland and click on search. Select – Web: Ireland, Census, 1901.

The data entry for our search is Bartly O'Donnell, year – 1900, Galway Ireland, and father – Thomas. Then search

The result is Bartly O'Donnell, no birth date, Poulnaclough townland, Moycullen parish, his father, Thomas.

Click on Bartly O'Donnell. The result displayed is the O'Donnell household. Why is there no age for Bartly? Probably because he had not reached a 1st birthday. Bartly's mother is Mary, and his brother is Thomas. Next, we click on Sarah Lydon to determine her relationship with the head of the family, Thomas.

Sarah Lydon's relationship to the head of the household is shown as the Sister-in-law. This suggests that Mary's birth name was Lydon.

FindAGrave. We will now change our focus to the suggested records for Bartly O'Donnell. The first is a FindAGrave record for a Bartley O'Donnell. This record shows he was born in 1900 and died in 1978 in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. His spouse was Ellen O'Donnell. We will have to look at further records to determine if this is Bartly O'Donnell born in 1900 to Thomas O'Donnell and Mary Lydon in Galway.

Continuing our exploration of suggested records, we access the 1940 U.S. Census. This record is for Bartly O'Donnell living in Pittsburg, born in Ireland about 1902. His children's names are Thomas, his father's name, Mary. His mother's name, and Bartley, his name.

Next, we click on his wife, Ellen to explore her suggested records. The first is a death record from Pittsburg. It is for Ellen's son, Joseph O'Donnell. It shows her maiden names as Ellen Synan and her husband as Bartley O'Donnell, Sr.

Next, we explore the suggested record for Ellen Synan which is the 1911 Irish Census. This record shows a grandmother, her son, his spouse, and five grandchildren including Ellen age 8.

We have not proved conclusively that this Bartly O'Donnell is the Bartly from Galway but there is good evidence from the suggested records. Hopefully, this demonstration shows the utility of suggested records.

Our *case study* for Findmypast is ***Bridget Murphy***, from County Roscommon, her mother, Maria, and born about 1871. Google Findmypast and click on Findmypast.com. On Findmypast's home page click on Census, Land, and Substitutes.

Enter Bridget Murphy, 1871 as birth year, County Roscommon, and mother, Maria. Click on view 1 result.

The result shows a single mother, Maria, and her four children and three grandsons.

Findmypast has easier access to the 1901 and 1911 census but lacks the feature of suggested records.

Census Fragments

Finally, we are going to address the subject of census fragments. The Four Courts Fire destroyed most of the 1821, 1831, 1841, and 1851 Censuses. There are fragments of these censuses which have been recovered. The largest of these is the 1821 Census. The largest fragment for the 1821 Census is County Cavan. Our *case study* is ***Patrick Dolan*** born about 1817 in County Cavan.

Go to the National Archives Census home page. Enter 1821 as the Census year, Dolan, Patrick, County Cavan, and age 4. Then click on Search. The results show three Patrick Dolans but two of them are duplicates.

Patrick's family on this census consist of his father, James, his mother, Bridget, a brother, Edward. A servant, Thomas Gibney is also in the household. Next, we click on the image of the 1821 Census.

This reveals a next-door family of Dolans. The head of this family is Patrick Dolan, age 63. His spouse is Margaret Dolan, age 52. The evidence is circumstantial but suggests that these two families are closely related.

The **1821 Census** fragment is a total of 238,495 records of which County Cavan is slightly more than two thirds. The 1821 Census is by far the largest. The 1831 Census fragment is 79,020 records of 99.99% is County Londonderry. The 1841 Census fragment is 15,893 records and is 97.9% County Cavan. The 1851 Census fragment is 58,862 records and is 99.4% County Antrim.

Census substitutes are frequently used in the absence of census records in Ireland. They do not show the structure of families, usually just the head of the family. The most frequently used census substitute is [Griffith's Valuation](#). It was a nationwide valuation of properties for tax purposes taken between 1848 – 1864. It lists the head of the household and the county, parish, and townland.

The [Tithe Applotment](#) (1823-1837) was taken to determine a tax for supporting the poor. It also identifies the county, parish, and townland. However, it is estimated that only 40% of households were included.

Our *case study* for Griffith's Valuation is ***Henry Butler***, who lived in County Wexford, in Kiltennel Parish

To access Griffith's Valuation we google Ask About Ireland. Then click on Griffith's Valuation. On the Ask About Ireland data entry page enter – Butler, Henry, Wexford, and Kiltennel.

On the result page click on the *detail icon*. This shows that Henry Butler occupied a plot of ground in Banoge Townland, in County Wexford. The Landlord was the Earl of Courtown and the report was published in 1853.

Next, we click on the *Original Page icon* which shows the number of the plot occupied by Henry Butler is 1, the acreage of the plot is 33+ acres, and the valuation of the plot is 14+ pounds, and the valuation of the house is 6+ pounds.

Finally, we click on the *map icon* and a map appears. This map requires some effort to find the townland and the plot occupied by Henry Butler. Next, we show an enlargement of the map. Henry Butler's plot is identified. The oval identifies the name of the townland, Banoge.