



# CUINTIR MATHUNA – The O'Mahony Society

## Traditional Genealogy Workshop

16 January 2021

**“If you do not know where you came from,  
you do not know where you’re going.”**

**-Chicken George / Alex Haley's Roots**



# **REMEMBER**

## **Research Tools in the Digital Age**

**Nora M. Hickey**

# From the Known to the Unknown

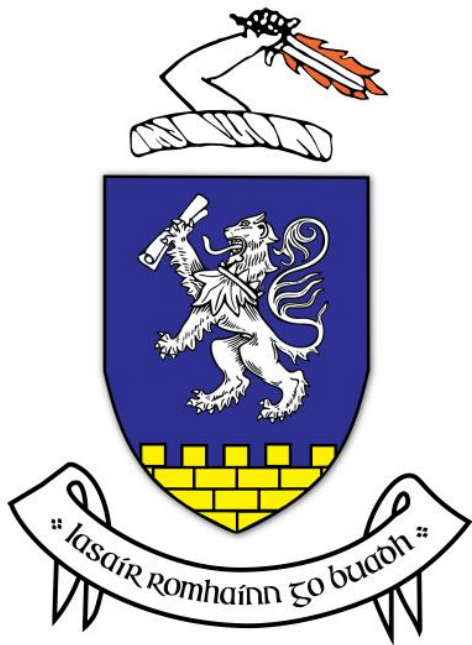


YOU

step by step...

to your...

**Emigrant ancestor**



# A Unique Search

Following the trail YOUR  
ancestors left behind



# Your Particular Search

Good - an easy-to-follow trail:  
royalty/landed gentry/merchant/strong  
farmers

Harder work - small  
farmers/labourers/town dwellers

# **TALK to all relatives and friends...**

...again and again. More will be remembered from your first conversation.

Video/tape a discussion with everyone who “knows” anything.

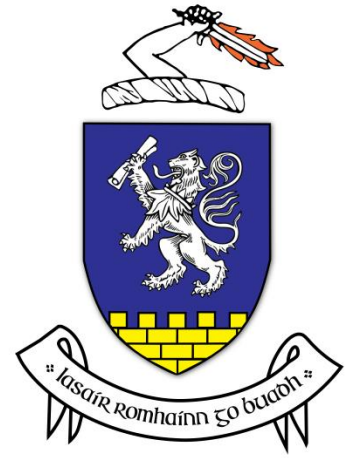
Do not ignore all in-laws and neighbours.

Query the contradictions.

## **THERE WILL BE CONTRADICTIONS.**

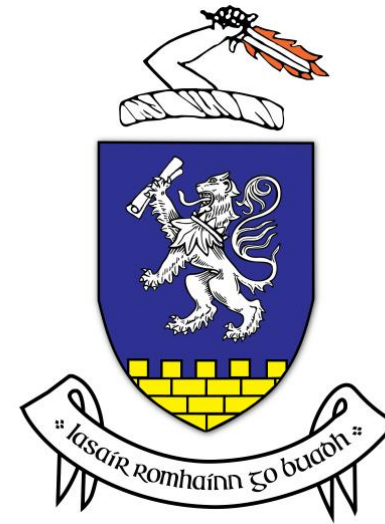
# LOOK FOR EVERYTHING

- ▶ **CHECK** - all possible family documents, photographs, wills, leases, family Bibles, all religious connections
- ▶ **MAKE COPIES** - so easy today
- ▶ **LOOK** - at all possible records



# Look for **EVERYTHING**: Both **CHURCH** and **LEGAL** or **LEGAL** and **CHURCH**

- ▶ Legal records are more informative
- ▶ Marriage records are more reliable than death records
- ▶ The information was given by the person, not by somebody else







# Do not concentrate on your ancestor only

**Were there any siblings?**

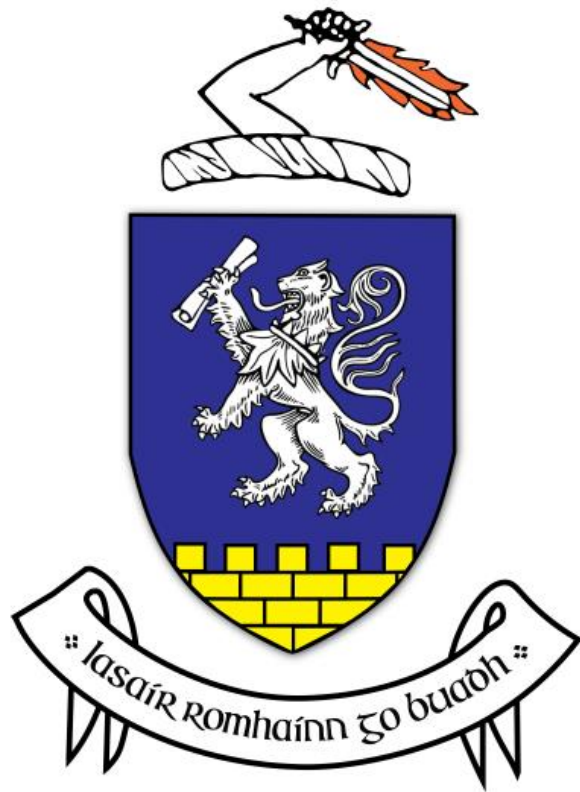
Remember, the ancestral information is the same.

**Were there any cousins?**

Half of the ancestral information is the same.

**Anyone who entered a Religious Order?**

# Search for all POSSIBLE Clues



Family poems, songs, stories, letters from Ireland?

Any talk about visitors from Ireland?

Pronunciation of words, e.g., surnames or locations

Mangan/Mannion/Manning

Deloughery/Diloughery

Montgomery/Magumery

Coughlan

# IGNORE SURNAME VARIATIONS

Mahony - Mahoney - O Mahony - O'Mahony - O Mahoney -  
O'Mahoney - Maney - Mahoona, just to name a few!

Beware of secondary surnames:

Donovan: Rossa, Roe, Farshing

Mahony: Skimillihane, Ban

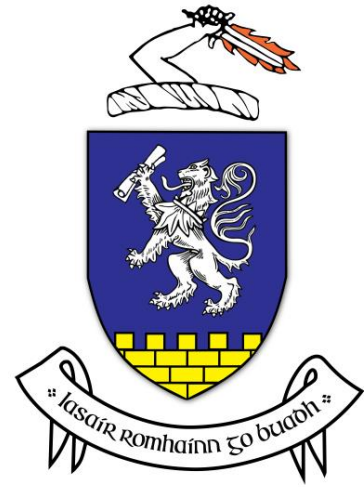
Crowley: Bue, Keohane

Driscoll: Cadogan

# Do NOT rely on Indexes

- ▶ Go through ALL research documents line by line
  - ▶ e.g., Surname/Forename variant spellings
  - ▶ Misreading by transcriber
    - ▶ E.g., Cronin/Cremin in the North Cork registers

**THERE ARE ERRORS IN ALL INDEXES.**





# Census Records

Look at all possible census records for ALL possible locations.

**Census questions differ from census to census.**

For example, the 1901 census does not ask what was asked to wives on the 1911 census: How long married? How many children? How many still alive? Often, the widow/widower answered this, and the entry was crossed out but is still legible.

**NOTE:** Most of the Irish censi, 1831 to 1891, are missing.

There are some substitutes, e.g., OAP Applications (the “Green Forms”)

# Do not believe **EVERYTHING** you hear!

“All the records were burnt” is still being said in Ireland

YES - there was a fire in the Registry Office at the beginning of the Civil War

NO - there were no Roman Catholic registers, those of the majority of the population

Not all Church of Ireland registers were lodged there, and NO registers of other denominations



# Do not believe **EVERYTHING** you see!

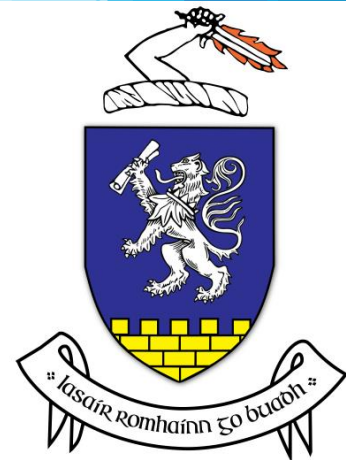
One Donovan sister travelled to Lowell, Massachusetts instead of her sister...all the emigration documents were in her sister's name.

Was this deception continued throughout her life (marriage, children, death)?

Was the forename changed for some reason? Surname change? Spelling change? Phonetic version?

The age recorded may not be accurate. Ages recorded are very variable.

In the UK, they are more consistent with the data in Irish Registers.  
GENERALLY, this is not true in the USA.



# Who is writing down the information?

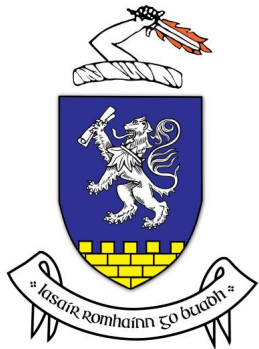
Priests

Landlord Agents

Ticket Booking Officers

Emigration and Immigration Officers

*Do they ask how your name is spelt?*





# Shipping/Emigration Lists

- ▶ The belief is that the emigrants left forever. Did they?
- ▶ Many journeyed across the Atlantic many times. Others were visited by Irish relations.
- ▶ Castle Garden <http://www.castlegarden.org>
- ▶ Ellis Island - from 1892
- ▶ Canadian emigration information
- ▶ Emigrants also land at Boston, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and via Canada



# Emigration Publications

Examples include:

William Filby's Passenger and Immigration Lists Index volumes

Glazier's Famine Emigrants (New York arrivals only)

Missing Friends (now online from Boston College <http://infowanted.bc.edu>)

Irish Relatives and Friends: From "Information Wanted" Ads in the *Irish-American* 1850-1871

Much of this material is now online

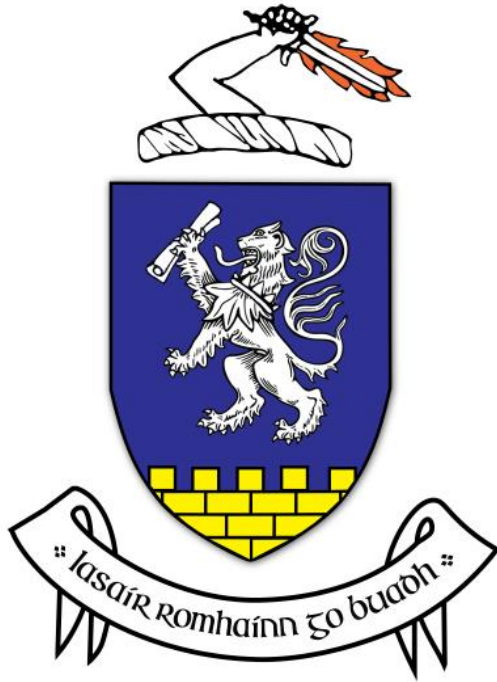


# Other Sources

Newspaper Obituaries - check all issues

Graves and Headstones - often the only place where the locality of origin is shown.

If headstones are damaged, repair them (believe me, this has worked!)



# Boundary Changes

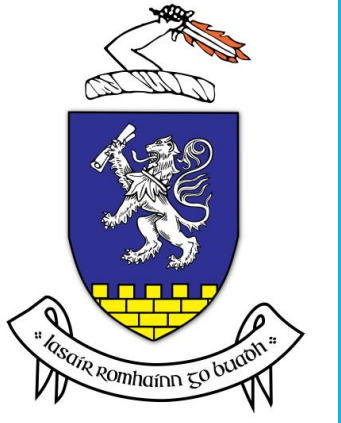
Parishes: The more priests, the more parishes.

Always search neighbouring parishes.

## Local Government

Areas: Check time period.  
Note Poor Law Unions were not based on parishes, but on areas around towns.

*The Legal Registration was based on these 19<sup>th</sup> Century boundaries.*



# Last Warnings

Be sure the information you are collecting concerns YOUR ANCESTOR and not someone with the same name.

Check your information with all other possible sources.

Do NOT trust indexes

Make a copy of ALL documents you find.

**If it seems easy, it ain't. AND – think outside the box!**