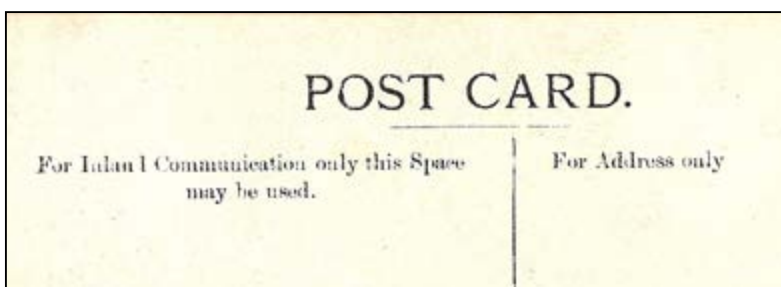


Dating Family Photographs:- 1900 - 1930

In the third part of 'Dating Family Photographs' we cover the early twentieth century, a tumultuous time for Ireland and her people. The population was falling and the poor could not afford professional photographs, but some were pictured by touring photographers who recorded local life. It was becoming easier to take photographs outdoors on location, benefiting both commercial operators and amateur hobbyists. Whether Irish forebears were photographed within Ireland, or overseas, their images at this time reflect the transition from formal studio-based photography to more natural open-air scenes.



As outlined in the last issue, the main techniques for dating old family photos are: identifying the photographic format (type of photograph); researching photographers/studios; dating photographic card mounts; dating visual images, especially fashion clues.

Photographic Formats

Being able to identify the format of a photograph can aid successful dating. Traditional Victorian card-mounted photographic prints remained in circulation in 1900, the *carte de visite (cdv)* (c.10 x 6.5cms) now less fashionable than the larger cabinet card/print (c.16.5 x 11.5cms) which dominated the early-1900s. Both were rare by 1910, however, and obsolete by WW1, being effectively superseded by the new postcard photograph (or 'real photo postcard'), a photographic portrait printed on a postcard mount. A novel postcard with divided back providing separate spaces for recipient's address and written message was authorised for postal communication in 1902 and soon became popular for presenting portrait photographs. Well-established with studio photographers by 1906/07, postcards were also used by some amateurs. Enjoying their heyday 1910s-1930s, they were common for much of the period covered here.

Besides the old cdv and cabinet formats and new postcard photographs, the nineteenth-century ferrotype/tintype photograph was also current in 1930. Tintypes (images on thin pieces of iron) were often set outdoors, for example on the beach or in the street. Studio tintypes

were rare in the UK but highly popular with American photographers, so may portray Irish ancestors resident in the United States. Tintypes also continued to be produced elsewhere, for instance Australasia, but in smaller numbers.

Amateur Photographs or 'Snapshots' also became significant during the early twentieth century. Privileged ancestors had been practising photography since the mid-1800s but by the 1910s/1920s, more ordinary households were acquiring affordable portable cameras. Family photographers recorded everyday domestic scenes and special occasions, his/her pictures at this period usually set outdoors in natural light. The dimensions of surviving snapshot prints can suggest an approximate date, early examples essentially contact prints that reflect the size of the film and particular camera used, while various developing-out or printing papers also offer clues. For more details, I recommend Robert Pols' *Dating Twentieth Century Photographs* (Federation of Family History Societies, 2005).

Researching Photographers/ Studios

Many traditional cdvs and cabinet prints bore studio details that can potentially be researched. This also applies to some postcard photographs, although frustratingly many were not identified. Wherever a professional card mount gives a studio name/address, it is worth conducting an internet search, to discover any dates or other free-to-view information recorded on websites/databases. Several key Irish photographic collections are housed in the National Library of Ireland, Dublin <https://www.nli.ie/en/homepage.aspx> and Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Belfast <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni>. Of the main printed books on historic Irish photography, one covers this period: *A Century in Focus: Photography and Photographers in the North of Ireland, 1839-1939* by WA. Maguire (Blackstaff Press, 2000). Naturally there are also printed and digital sources for photography and named studios operating outside of Ireland, so research should focus on areas of the world where ancestors travelled.

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni> and Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Belfast <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni>. Of the main printed books on historic Irish photography, one covers this period: *A Century in Focus: Photography and Photographers in the North of Ireland, 1839-1939* by WA. Maguire (Blackstaff Press, 2000). Naturally there are also printed and digital sources for photography and named studios operating outside of Ireland, so research should focus on areas of the world where ancestors travelled.

Dating Card Mounts

Professional cdvs and cabinet prints of the early-1900s usually display sturdy card, rounded corners and are often grey in colour, from pale silver-grey to dark slate-grey. Embossed patterns below the picture and reverse designs may display ornate floral motifs or sinuous Art Nouveau lines. Concerning divided-back postcards (1902 until post-WW2), their origins are typically unclear unless printed in a foreign language, but some can be broadly dated from their precise wording, font style(s), postage stamp (if posted) or the empty stamp box logo. For more details, see my *Tracing Your Ancestors through Family Photographs* (Pen & Sword, 2014).

Dating The Visual Image

The visual image is all-important, especially in the case of amateur snapshots with no studio name or mount design to assist with dating. The appearance of our ancestors in photographs always provides a realistic time frame and this brief guide covers fashion clues, 1900-1930.



Researching Your Irish Clan

By Dr. Maurice Gleeson

Where did your surname come from? How did it arise? Who was the first person to carry the surname? Is it connected to an Irish “clan”? What is the history of this clan?

These might be some of the questions you have asked yourself when pondering the origins of your surname. You might be surprised by the amount of information available in this regard as Ireland has the oldest genealogies in Europe and they paint a very interesting picture going back to the origins of Irish surnames and the clans (septs) from which they arose.

The first port of call is one of several surname dictionaries and I find Woulfe (1923) the most informative. It helps considerably that it is readily available online.¹ Here you can see the meaning of your surname and where it occurs in Ireland, giving clues to its geographic origins.

Next is O'Hart's Pedigrees (1892, also available online) which goes back beyond the formation of your surname to the ancient clans (septs) and genealogies with which it is potentially associated (not all surnames go back to a specific clan).² Further information on specific clans can be found via the List of Irish Clans on Wikipedia³, the Clans of Ireland website⁴, and individual surname projects (and others) at FamilyTreeDNA (FTDNA).⁵

The trouble is that some surnames may be associated with several different and distinct clan origins. And secondly, how can you be sure that your particular Y-DNA signature goes all the way back to the man who originated it? We know that, over the course of time, surname switches happened where the surname carried by the biological father is not

passed on to the biological son. Thus, there is roughly a 30-50% chance that your Y-DNA signature does not go back in an unbroken line to the person who originated your surname.⁶ This is where DNA comes in – it can help clarify where your surname came from and from which clan (if any) it originated.

The initial test you should do is the Y-DNA-37 test from FamilyTreeDNA (usually \$119 but \$20 cheaper in their frequent sales). Just like your surname, Y-DNA is passed along the direct male line from father to son. This makes it excellent for Irish surname research and there are thousands of Irish surname projects hosted on the FTDNA website and run by volunteer administrators (like myself). Anyone can start a project and learn how to be an effective administrator. The Administrator uses the Y-DNA results of group members to identify specific genetic signatures that characterise specific genetic groups within the project. These groups can then be analysed and the following questions addressed:

- Where is the group from? Is it from Ireland? Which part?
- How old is the group?
- Where does it sit on the Tree of Mankind?
- Who are its nearest genetic neighbours?
- Does this tie in with a particular Irish clan?

The administrators of your surname project will advise you to join additional

projects that may shed further light on these questions. These additional projects may include haplogroup projects (which focus on a specific branch of the Tree of Mankind), geographic projects (which focus on the Y-DNA signatures of people from a particular geographic area) and even Clan projects (which focus on the surnames purportedly associated with a specific ancient clan).

For example, people in Group 2 of my Farrell DNA Project sit on a sub-branch of the Z253 branch of the Tree of Mankind and are therefore encouraged to join the Z253 DNA Project (a haplogroup project). They should also join the Ireland geographic project, and also the Longford geographic project as this is most likely the area from where the group originated. Similarly, members of Group 3 of my O'Malley project should join the Sons of Aodh (pronounced Ay as in “hay”) clan project – this takes one of the ancient Irish genealogies as its starting point, namely that of Conn of the Hundred Battles. Born about 125 AD, he was High King of Ireland and had many descendants, who in turn were progenitors for a variety of clans and surnames in the north-west of Ireland (including the O'Neill's and the O'Malley's).⁷

It is quite a challenge to definitively identify that a specific DNA signature belongs to a specific clan. In many circumstances the research is ongoing and all that currently exists is a working theory that a particular signature defines a particular clan. The identification of a clan DNA signature relies on a variety of circumstantial evidence taken

A Question Of Genealogy Nicola Morris



with

Dear Nicola,

Our family needs your assistance tracing our Fortune ancestors of Co. Wexford. What we know is: Our line of Fortune's came from Kellystown, Rathaspeck, Wexford. They owned and operated a long-abandoned Water Mill at Rathaspeck. Our great grandfather was John Joseph Fortune. He was born 21st April, 1844 in Wexford, one of nine children of Lawrence Fortune and Elizabeth Duggan (b. 1st August 1814, Cork, d. 26th January 1864 Wexford), who were married on 5th August 1841.

We are seeking details of the ship on which John Joseph Fortune left Ireland or England and whether he travelled via America to Australia?

Thanking you in anticipation.

Kind regards,

Ted Fortune, Australia.

Dear Ted,
Thank you for your enquiry. In order to identify the ship on which John Joseph Fortune arrived in Australia you need to establish approximately where and when he landed and start investigating passenger and crew registers in the port of arrival, where these records were deposited. The passenger record will tell you the ship's port of origin.

John Fortune was baptised in the Catholic parish of Piercetown, which corresponds with the civil parish of Rathaspick. At the time of Griffith's Valuation, a land survey, published for Rathaspick in 1853, there were several Lawrence Fortune land holdings in Kellystown; Lawrence Fortune (Rathaspick), Lawrence Fortune jun. and Lawrence Fortune (Brookfield). The only occupier of a property that included a residence was Lawrence Fortune jun, who leased a house, offices, corn mill and land. This was likely John Joseph's father. He was named Lawrence Fortune junior suggesting that his father was also Lawrence.

A search of the civil death registrations at www.irishgenealogy.ie for men named Lawrence or Laurence Fortune, registered at Wexford, found the death of Lawrence Fortune of Kellystown. He died on 26th

February 1899, an 84 year old widower and farmer. His death was registered by his son, Matthew. Lawrence was born ca. 1815, although his given age at death may not have been entirely accurate.

Lawrence Fortune was found leasing the house, farm buildings and corn mill at Kellystown in the Valuation Office Field and House books, dated 1844 and 1845, which are freely available at genealogy.nationalarchives.ie. However, by the time of the Tithe Applotment books, published for Rathaspick in 1833, Kellystown was not enumerated. A Lawrence Fortune was recorded as an occupier of property at Rathaspick townland in 1833. Could this be Lawrence Fortune senior?

The Catholic parish registers for Piercetown date from 1811 and the original registers can be accessed at registers.nli.ie. A manual search of the parish registers should be undertaken for the baptism of a child Lawrence, possibly born to a father also named Lawrence. These records have also been indexed at Findmypast and www.rootsireland.ie but online indexes are not always reliable.

The baptism of John Joseph Fortune in 1844 recorded one of the sponsors (Godparents) as John Dugan. John Dugan was likely a sibling or cousin of Elizabeth Duggan. This suggests the possibility that the Duggan family lived nearby. Marriages usually took place in the parish of the bride. Do you know where the 1841 marriage of Lawrence Fortune and Elizabeth Duggan took place? The location of the marriage is a guide to where Elizabeth originated. Interestingly, an Elizabeth Duggan was baptised in Piercetown on 1st August 1814 and her family address was given as Kellystown. She was the daughter of Roger Duggan and Elizabeth Walsh. Although possibly a coincidence, this record indicates that there was a Duggan family, with a daughter Elizabeth, at the same address where Lawrence Fortune settled following his marriage. This Duggan family certainly bears further investigation.

Dear Nicola,

I am from Peru. My dad's grandfather was Irish. His name is Fredrick Francis Thompson, he was born in Ireland between 1890 to 1895. The hypothesis is in

Dublin, but the problem is the district or place. We are looking for his birth certificate which is a mystery. Father's name is Henry Thompson and his mother's name is Sarah Sally Dartnell.

Sincerely,
Petar.

Dear Petar,

A Civil registration in Ireland commenced in 1864, when it became compulsory to register all births, deaths and marriages. However, it is estimated that up to 15% of births went unregistered and Frederick's birth may be included in this number. The civil birth registers are freely available online at www.irishgenealogy.ie where you can search for the birth of Frederick Thompson or Thomson. Check the image of each birth registration to identify the parents of the child. It is quite possible that Frederick's birth was registered under the first name Francies or even without a first name, in which case, check all 'unknown' Thompson or Thomson births.

Have you tried searching for the Thompson or Thomson family in the 1901 census for Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales? I have not found evidence of a family in the census in Ireland, but there is a family in Leicester in 1901 headed by Henry Thompson, with his wife Sarah A. and a son, Fred, age 5, although Fred was born in Leicester rather than Ireland, the family names certainly match. His birth certificate, which can be purchased from the General Register Office of the UK, should state his mother's maiden name.

I have tried searching for the marriage of Henry Thompson and Sarah Dartnell in Ireland, England and Wales without success. Is it possible that Frederick's mother's maiden name is incorrect? Did any of his siblings also emigrate to South America? Their records might help to confirm Frederick's parents' names and provide alternative places of birth. Hackett families, which would bear further investigation. Further research of digitised Irish newspapers at the https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/ might also reveal more information on the Hackett family of Piercetown and identify the other sisters of Johanna Hackett.

Nicola Morris M.A.G.I. is a director of Timeline Research (www.timeline.ie).