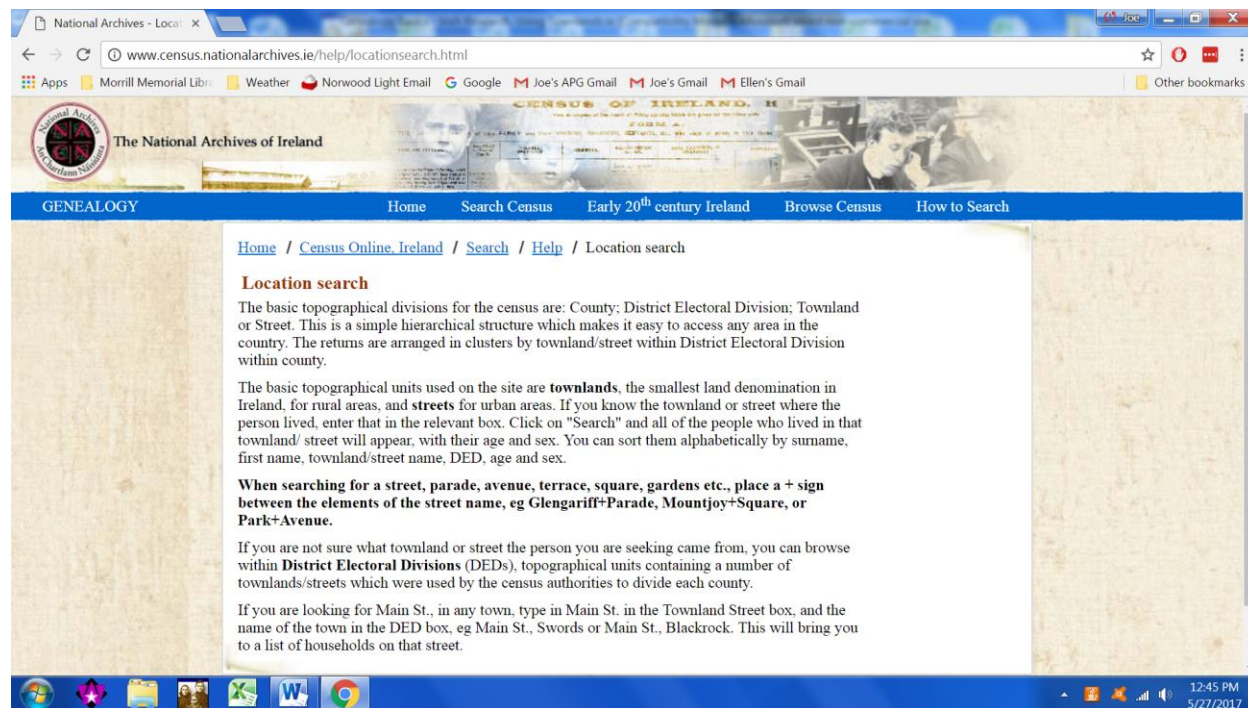


# Genealogy Basics – Irish Research, Using Townlands.ie

By Joe Petrie

## BACKGROUND:

Townlands.ie is in my Irish Genealogy toolkit. Early in this century, I used Townlands.ie a lot. For example, I use Townlands.ie when searching the free on-line National Archives of Ireland's Censuses of 1901 and 1911. Townlands.ie was especially helpful to focus on locations. Also, I always refer clients to the Archives location search to explain how to search the census database. In addition, I have used Townlands.ie extensively when doing voluntary individual consultations at: the local Morrill Memorial Library in Norwood MA; the Irish Cultural Centre of New England in Canton MA and the Friends of Irish Research in Brockton MA. The Archives describes the locations including the DEDs (the District Electoral Divisions) on the following screen print. DEDs are identified on the Censuses of 1901/ 1911.



Finally, Townlands.ie was really useful when the National Library of Ireland released the Irish Catholic Parish Registers for free on-line use. Users had to search for registers for a Community or Civil Parish. For example, for my wife's Galway ancestors whose townlands included Tuam, Glengowla and Bunnagippaun, I had to search for Kilcummin or Oughterard to find her ancestors' Parish records.

When Ancestry and Find My Past versions of the Ireland, Catholic Parish Registers were released, I was ready to take Townlands.ie out of my toolkit. I stopped when I read John Grenham's March, 2016 blog entitled "How good are the new Ancestry/FindMyPast Catholic transcripts?" John Grenham is either the foremost of Ireland's genealogists or one of the foremost.

He wrote:

I was looking for a family called "Lonergan" in Mitchelstown baptismal records between 1825 and 1845. There are good transcripts for Mitchelstown on [rootsireland.ie](http://rootsireland.ie), courtesy of the Mallow Heritage Centre, so I extracted all their Lonergans (and variants) over those years, 46 records in total. (Mitchelstown baptisms 1833, from the microfilm.) ... I have subscriptions to both Ancestry and FindMyPast and couldn't resist the chance to compare what they would find. The results were hair-raising. Using the broadest surname variant options on each, the same search produced 24 records on FindMyPast and just 16 on Ancestry.

John Grenham's statistics (46 records from the microfilm, 24 records in Find My Past and 16 records in Ancestry) bothered me so much, that for my research I now use the National Library of Ireland (NLI.ie), Irish Catholic Parish Registers; Townlands.ie; Ancestry; and Find My Past.

## USING TOWNLANDS.IE:

The following screen print is full of options. There are four languages. I use English. In the Search block, I have used Gaelic once to search for a client's ancestor's townland.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the website 'Townlands in Ireland' (www.townlands.ie). The browser address bar shows the URL. The page features a search bar with the text 'Search for a townland, civil parish, barony, electoral division or county' and a 'Search' button. Below the search bar, there is a list of counties in Ireland, each with a link to see baronies, civil parishes, and townlands. The page also includes a language selection menu with options for English, Gaelige, Deutsch, and Français. The footer contains copyright information and links to download data, help, and other resources.

Based on data in [OpenStreetMap](#), here is a list of counties in Ireland.

Click on each county to see baronies, civil parishes and townlands in the respective county.

This page should be updated (roughly) daily. The OpenStreetMap community is adding more data regularly. [See how much we have done and how much we have left to do, how long it'll take us to finish and townland mapping activity.](#)

[Alphabetical index of townlands](#)

### Ireland

326 baronies, 2,503 civil parishes, 3,438 electoral divisions, 60,943 townlands currently mapped on OpenStreetMap.

### Counties

- [Antrim](#). 14 baronies, 93 civil parishes, 0 electoral divisions, 1,714 townlands , 20 subtownlands
- [Armagh](#). 6 baronies, 43 civil parishes, 0 electoral divisions, 955 townlands , 182 subtownlands
- [Carlow](#). 7 baronies, 48 civil parishes, 54 electoral divisions, 603 townlands , 5 subtownlands
- [Cavan](#). 8 baronies, 36 civil parishes, 93 electoral divisions, 1,980 townlands , 62 subtownlands
- [Clare](#). 11 baronies, 81 civil parishes, 154 electoral divisions, 2,257 townlands , 16 subtownlands
- [Cork](#). 24 baronies, 238 civil parishes, 390 electoral divisions, 5,416 townlands , 233 subtownlands
- [Donegal](#). 8 baronies, 53 civil parishes, 146 electoral divisions, 2,711 townlands , 1725 subtownlands
- [Down](#). 12 baronies, 78 civil parishes, 0 electoral divisions, 1,277 townlands , 2 subtownlands

Note the links for each county. Also, note that Cork has the largest number of townlands.

The following statistics for all the counties amazed me: 326 Baronies; 2503 Civil Parishes; 3438 Electoral Divisions and 60943 Townlands. There was no count for the subtownlands.

The mapping is a work in progress. The maps are expected to be completed by 2025.

Last week I searched for Dowra for a client. The client had a postcard sent to her grandmother by the grandmother's brother. It led the client to seek help in determining whether the family was from Dowra. The resulting screen print follows.

The screenshot shows the search results page for 'Dowra' on the website 'Townlands in Ireland'. The browser address bar shows the search URL. The page features a search bar with the text 'Dowra' and a 'Search' button. Below the search bar, there is a section for 'Electoral Divisions' and a section for 'Townlands'. The 'Electoral Divisions' section shows one result: 'Dowra (aka Dowra Electoral Division) , Co. Cavan'. The 'Townlands' section shows one result: 'Dowra (An Damhshraith) , Killinagh Civil Parish, Barony of Tullyhaw, Co. Cavan'. The footer contains copyright information and links to download data, help, and other resources.

### Search

Dowra

### Electoral Divisions

We found 1 ED matching your search of "Dowra".

- [Dowra](#) (aka Dowra Electoral Division) , Co. Cavan

### Townlands

We found 1 townland matching your search of "Dowra".

- [Dowra \(An Damhshraith\)](#) , Killinagh Civil Parish, Barony of Tullyhaw, Co. Cavan

© Copyright | [Download Data](#) | [How up-to-date is Townlands.ie?](#) | [Who's mapping townlands?](#) | [Townland mapping activity](#) | [Townland Index](#) | [Help add Logainm data to OSM](#) | [Maps](#) | Last update:

US Census information shows that the the woman's family arrived in 1912. I think that I found the family in the Census of Ireland in 1911 living in DED Dowra. More work is required.

### **SUMMARY:**

Searching for records in the NLI.ie Registers (Catholic Parish Registers) is a chore that I had hoped never to repeat. The database contains about 11000 pages. But based on John Grenham's advice, I feel that I need to review the appropriate Register pages – maybe even all the Parish Register's pages.

Also, I fear using only Ancestry's Ireland Catholic Parish Register records. On May 28, 2017, I found a transcription error in Ancestry's Ireland, Catholic Parish Registers for my wife's great grandmother's baptismal record. The transcript said that her mother's given name was Margaret. The image contained the name Hona which may be the priest's shorthand for Honora. I concluded that the transcriber strayed onto the line above which identified parents named Patt and Margaret for a different child.

#

Your corrections, comments and suggestions are appreciated. Please Email me at:

[joe-apg@norwoodlight.com](mailto:joe-apg@norwoodlight.com)

Joseph F. Petrie, AB (Economics and Business – St. Anselm College, 1962)  
MA (Economics – Boston College, 1967)  
Doctoral Program, (Economics – Boston College, 1963 – 1967)

Founding Member, Friends of Irish Research (FIR)  
Faculty, Friends of Irish Research School of Irish Genealogy  
Member, Cape Breton Genealogy and Historical Association (CBGHA)  
Member, Family History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador (FHSNL)  
Member, Association of Professional Genealogists (APG)  
Member, New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS)  
Volunteer Research Correspondent, Cape Breton Genealogy and Historical Association (CBGHA)  
Member, Friends of Morrill Memorial Library, Norwood, MA  
Resident Genealogy Volunteer, Morrill Memorial Library, Norwood, MA  
Genealogy Volunteer, St Anselm College, Manchester NH  
Genealogy Volunteer, Fiske Library, Wrentham MA  
Genealogy Volunteer, Irish Cultural Centre of New England for the Friends of Irish Research,  
Genealogy Volunteer, Irish Cultural Centre of New England, Irish Fest, 2016 and 2017, Canton MA