

# GRIFFITH'S VALUATION – BACKGROUND & USAGE FOR GENEALOGY

Rochester Chapter –  
Irish American Cultural Institute

[www.iaci-usa.org](http://www.iaci-usa.org)

7 pm November 8, 2011

St. John Fisher College

Wegman School of Nursing Room 100

Dennis Hogan, [www.dennisAhogan.com](http://www.dennisAhogan.com)

## 2) Handouts are Online

- At [www.dennisAhogan.com](http://www.dennisAhogan.com), click on Lectures and Handouts tab
- Select a handout and save on your computer
- Then you can click on links to try out websites

### 3) Why Griffith's is important when researching Irish families

- The "products" of Griffith's cover about 1825 through 1865
- No civil registrations (bmd began in 1864, non-Catholic marriages in 1845)
- Almost no census remain for 1821-1891
- Church records do exist, but usually you need to know precisely where your family lived (Griffith's can help you)

# 4) Researching Irish Church Records

- For detailed info see Ryan, Grenham, and Mitchell's book (see next screen).
- ~90% of Irish were Catholic
- Rural Catholic records begin ~1820, while some urban records begin ~1760.
- Heritage Centres have indexes of church records for their county - mostly Catholic. **Several Centres offer free searches of their databases.** See file at <http://www.dennisahogan.com/lecturesandhandouts.cfm>
- Church sources by county at <http://www.irishtimes.com/ancestor/browse/counties/index.htm>
- Annual Irish Catholic Directory lists dioceses, parishes, churches including historic & current parish names. Published annually since 1835, several past directories can be found on [Google Books](#).
- For current info: <http://www.catholicireland.net/church-in-ireland/dioceses>

# 5) Books for Irish Genealogy

- These books are sometimes cited as go-to resources for Irish research, including church locations & records.
  - **Mitchell, Brian.** *A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland.* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1986). Probably the best aid to sorting out Administrative Division issues - includes maps.
  - **Grenham, John.** *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors: The Complete Guide* (3rd ed. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, Ltd., 2006). Significant free content is available at <http://www.irishtimes.com/ancestor/sitemap.htm>
  - **Ryan, James G.** *Irish Records: Sources for Family & Local History* (rev. ed. Salt Lake City, Utah; Ancestry, 1997).

# 6) Background

- Reilly, James R. *Richard Griffith and His Valuations of Ireland*. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2000).
- "It has been almost a hundred and fifty years since Sir Richard Griffith completed his monumental undertaking of valuing the island of Ireland to secure an unbiased and equitable tax base for the wealthy and the poor alike."

# 7) Outcomes of the Valuation

- More consistent taxation from townland to townland
- Boundaries were defined and marked
- Standard spellings of Townland names were established

# 8) Chronology of Sir Richard Griffith

- 1784, born in Dublin the son of a member of Parliament
- 1799, commissioned in the Royal Artillery
- 1801, began study of geology and mineralogy at Edinburgh University in Scotland
- 1808, studied bog drainage in Ireland for the House of Commons
- 1812, appointed a mining engineer by the Royal Dublin Society
- 1822, Inspector of Irish Mines and superintendent of road construction in southwest Ireland
- 1825, Townland Valuation Act of 1825
- 1825, named head of Boundary Department of Ireland
- 1830, named Commissioner of Valuation
- 1846, Tenement Valuation Act of 1846
- 1852, Tenement Valuation Act of 1852
- 1858, created a baronet
- 1865, last valuation completed & published
- 1878, died in Dublin



## 9) Taxes in early 1800s in Ireland

- **Tithe**. ~10% in kind of production from rural acreage. Proceeds went to the Church of Ireland. Tithe was charged regardless of denomination. (Tithes were abolished in 1838.)
- **County Cess**. Each county had a Grand Jury made up of its largest land owners who administered collection of taxes for such things as roads, courthouses, jails, etc. Rates of taxation could vary widely from one townland to another.
  - Although the commoners bore the brunt of the tax inequities, even the largest land owners were upset with the taxation. This forced the institution of a valuation project in 1825.
- **Poor Rate**. This additional tax resulted from an 1838 Act to support Poor Law Unions (~163) and their workhouses. Each PLU was administered by a Board of Guardians. It was discovered that destitute people have a hard time paying taxes, so in 1843 the Poor Law Act was modified to require landlords to pay the rates for occupiers of holdings valued at 4 pounds or less. The Poor Law Act remained in effect until the 1920s.

# 10) 3 Different Valuation Acts

(which resulted in 3 different valuation processes)

## 1. Townland Valuation Act of 1825

Problem: difficult to tax individuals when valuation is for the whole townland

## 2. Tenement Valuation Act of 1846

Problem: still 2 different taxes, cess and poor rate.

## 3. Tenement Valuation Act of 1852.

This valuation was used for 1 combined tax. This act was followed until 1982.

# 11) Prerequisites to a Valuation

- Every county's grand jury prepared a list of administrative divisions - civil parishes (2,508), townlands (~60,000), baronies (270), etc.
- Boundaries needed to be marked for every barony, civil parish, and townland (Richard Griffith and his Boundary Department).
- Once boundaries were established, measurements could be taken and topographical maps produced (Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Colby and the Royal Engineers - Ordnance Survey Team).
- [the process seems clean and straightforward - it wasn't]

# 12) Process

- Griffith's staff would interview locals, view any existing maps and walk all boundaries marking them as they went. There were stiff penalties for any change made to the boundary markings. The first year, there were about 6,000 legal challenges to the boundaries. Griffith's staff was accompanied by an Ordnance officer, two enlisted men, and a hired local called a "meresman." Griffith's staff would provide fairly accurate boundary sketch maps to the Ordnance officer which often included locations of houses and the occupier names. The Ordnance officer recorded detail notes about measurements and produced topographical maps.
- There were so many name variations for administrative divisions, that they hired an Irish scholar, John O'Donovan, to help sort out the variation issues. The Ordnance Officers produced Name Books which detailed the townland name variations and their sources.

# 13) The actual valuation did not begin until 1830

- Valuation teams
  - Consisted of 3 valuers/applotters, the baronial valuator and 2 assistants. All three would individually assess and rate the land and buildings. The team would discuss the ratings and decide on the baronial rating. Griffith required that valuers be native-born Irish.
  - After the Act of 1846, consisted of 1 valuator/applotter and 1 surveyor.

# 14) Land & Buildings Valuation

- Soil quality & acreage
  - Recorded details of soil quality & acreage in field books.
- Buildings
  - Recorded details of buildings in house books, including dimensions, building materials, and condition.
    - 1830 - October 1831, all houses were included
    - October 1831 - August 1836, houses were excluded whose value was less than 3 pounds
    - August 1836 - 1846, houses were excluded whose value was less than 5 pounds
    - 1846 - 1864, all houses were included

# 15) When did your ancestors leave Ireland?

- To state the obvious,
  - Griffith's "products" (and other resources) created **before** your ancestors left, may include your ancestors
  - Griffith's "products" (and other resources) created **after** your ancestors left, probably will not include your ancestors (but may have valuable info about family members that stayed behind)
- The Reilly book has a list for start and publish dates for each county (p75). Also see a map of valuation dates at <http://www.swilson.info/wp/?p=1645>
- Note that NOT finding your ancestors in Griffith's does not prove they had already left Ireland.
- US Census & other US resources can help determine when a family immigrated (1900-1930 include year of immigration).

# 16) Timeline of Griffith's "Products"

- 1825-1840, Ordnance Survey Memoirs
  - Portions of Counties Londonderry, Tyrone, Antrim, Down, Donegal, Fermanagh, Armagh, Leitrim, Louth, Sligo, Monaghan, and Cavan. Available at Queen's University in Belfast
- 1831-1838, House Books & Field Books \*
  - Counties Londonderry, Tyrone, Antrim, Down, Donegal, Fermanagh, Monaghan, and Cavan.
- 1838-1844, House Books & Field Books \*
  - Portions of Counties Louth, Meath, Leitrim, Roscommon, Sligo, Longford, Westmeath, Wicklow, Mayo, Carlow, Kildare, Galway, Queens, Kings, Kilkenny, Wexford.
- 1844-1864, House Books, Field Books, and others \*
  - All counties
- 1844-1864, Griffith's Primary Valuation (see later slides)
- 1860s-present, Revision Books or Cancelled Books. Available at FHC, Valuation Office (Dublin), and PRONI (Belfast).
- \* More detailed info than on the printed forms. Available at FHC (order microfilm - see [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)), NAI (National Archives of Ireland in Dublin), PRONI (Public Record Office of Northern Ireland in Belfast), and Valuation Office (Dublin). Subsets may be found on internet.



# 17) Sample

VALUATION OF TENEMENTS.  
PARISH OF TEMPLEPORT.

33

No. and Letter of Reference to Rep.	Name.		Description of Tenement.	Area.	Rateable Annual Valuation.				Total Annual Valuation of Rateable Property.
	Tenements and Occupiers.	Immediate Lessors.			Land.	Buildings.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
<b>CAYANAQUILL.</b> (Ord. S. 8.)									
1	William Murray.	William Blashford.	Office and land.	21 1 4	13 0 0	0 5 0	13 5 0		
2	Anne Brady.	Same.	House and garden.	0 0 0	0 3 0	0 5 0	0 8 0		
3	James Brady.	Same.	House, offices, and land.	20 2 18	13 5 0	1 5 0	14 10 0		
4	Daniel Shannon.	Same.	House, offices, and land.	21 3 27	15 17 0	0 13 0	16 10 0		
5	Richard Kells.	Same.	Land, Herd's house and land.	7 2 28	5 0 0	—	5 0 0	28 5 0	
			Total.	101 3 27	70 5 0	2 11 0	72 16 0		
<b>CLARBALLY.</b> (Ord. S. 8.)									
1	Thos. M'Govern (Frank).	George Finlay.	Office and land.	1 3 39	0 10 0	0 4 0	1 0 0		
2	Elizabeth M'Goolrick. Patrick M'Govern (Dorothea).	Same.	House and land. House, offices, & land.	19 3 28	1 1 0	0 4 0	1 5 0		
3	Thos. M'Govern (Tom).	Same.	House, offices, and land.	18 0 2	6 15 0	1 5 0	8 0 0		
4	Paul M'Govern (Tom).	Same.	House, offices, and land.	15 2 22	6 0 0	0 15 0	6 15 0		
5	Hugh M'Govern (Hugh).	Same.	House, offices, & land. Office and land.	23 2 18	8 10 0	1 0 0	7 10 0		
6	Hugh M'Govern (Pat.).	Same.	House, offices, and land.	28 0 30	9 15 0	1 5 0	11 0 0		
7	Paul M'Govern (Hugh).	Same.	House, offices, and land.	35 2 0	14 0 0	1 10 0	15 10 0		
8	Hugh M'Govern.	Same.	Land.	2 1 34	1 2 0	—	1 2 0		
			Total.	145 2 34	53 14 0	8 3 0	61 17 0		
<b>CLONGURKNEY.</b> (Ord. S. 13 & 9.)									
1	Peter M'Goolrick. Michael M'Manus.	J. H. & R. Hassard.	House, offices, & land. House, offices, & land.	22 2 0	8 0 0	0 15 0	8 15 0		
2	Peter M'Goolrick. Michael M'Manus.	Same.	Bog (no value).	25 1 23	—	—	—		
3	Mary Dolan.	Same.	House and garden.	0 0 10	0 1 0	0 9 0	0 10 0		
4	Deborah M'Govern. J. H. and R. Hassard.	In fee.	House & small garden. Land (plantation).	5 0 7	1 15 0	—	1 15 0		
5	Felix Dolan. James Dolan.	J. H. & R. Hassard.	House, office, & land. House, office, & land.	19 2 30	6 15 0	0 10 0	7 5 0		
6	Felix Dolan. James Dolan. Francis Slevin.	Same.	Bog (no value).	10 0 0	—	—	—		
7	James O'Brien. Hugh Handen. Charles M'Brien.	Same.	Land.	3 0 34	0 18 0	—	0 18 0		
8	Felix Dolan. James Dolan.	Same.	Land.	—	0 6 0	—	0 6 0		
9	Bridget M'Goolrick. John M'Cauffrey. Edwidge M'Goolrick.	Same.	House, offices, & land. House, offices, & land. Bog (no value).	39 3 0	13 10 0	1 10 0	15 0 0		
10	John M'Cauffrey.	Same.	Land.	13 2 50	13 10 0	1 15 0	15 5 0		
11	Rev. — Fr. Patrick.	Ecclesiastical Commr.	Water.	1 0 21	0 15 0	—	0 15 0		
12			Land.	10 3 23	—	—	—		
			Total.	151 1 18	57 15 0	0 14 0	64 2 0		
<b>CLONEBARY.</b> (Ord. S. 13.)									
1	Michael M'Kiernan.	John Gambley.	House, offices, & land.	70 1 11	23 15 0	1 15 0	25 10 0		
2	Peter M'Kiernan. William Gibson.	Same.	Herd's house, office, & land. House, offices, and land.	21 2 28	23 15 0	1 0 0	24 15 0		
			Total.	143 0 9	50 10 0	2 0 0	52 5 0		
<b>CLONTYGARNAHAN.</b> (Ord. S. 8.)									
1	Right Hon. and Most Rev. Lord John G. Boreland.	In fee.	Land (pasture). Land (plantation).	70 3 21	0 10 0	—	—	2 0 0	
2				14 0 37	1 10 0	—	—	—	

10

# 18) Definitions

- *Acre* column heading: A R P. The unit of measure used by Griffith was statute acre (4840 square yards), rood (1210 square yards), and perche (30 square yards). 1 acre = 4 roods, 1 rood = ~40 perches.
- Occupier - a person responsible for the taxes on a parcel regardless of whether they own, lease or rent a parcel
- Tenement - any taxable property
- *Value* column heading: £ s d for pounds, shillings, and pence. 1 pound = 20 shillings, 1 shilling = 12 pence

# 19) Columns of the Primary Valuation

- Number and letter of Reference to Map
  - Number is the lot number
  - Capital letters indicate non-contiguous lots held by the same person
  - Lower-case letters indicate houses
- Names of Townlands and Occupiers (Ord. S. # refers to maps)
- Names of Immediate Lessors
- Description of Tenement
  - *House* could refer to dwellings, churches, courthouses, etc.
  - *Office* could refer to barns, pubs, factories, mills, etc.
- Area in Acres, Roods, Perches
  - Cottier, Less than 5 acres, "yearly tenancy"
  - Small Farmer, 5 to 30 acres
  - Large Farmer, More than 30 acres, "lease of years or life"
- Rateable Annual Valuation of Land
- Rateable Annual Value of Buildings
- Total Annual Value

## 20) If only the Occupier is listed, how do I learn about my family?

- Many people have the same name in Ireland.
- In order to collect taxes, it's necessary to identify the responsible person.
- Agnomens (additional names) were included for occupiers whose name was found multiple times in a townland.

## 21) Agnomens in the Occupier Column

- Junior - Senior, may indicate age difference rather than father/son. Also used for women (Junior is likely not daughter - likely daughter in law). Usually abbreviated jun or sen. Either Junior or Senior may be omitted.
- Father's first name in parens
- Widowed Mother's first name in parens
- Maiden names in parens for widows
- When the occupier did not live in the current townland, his home townland was included in parens
- Occupation, hair color, topography (hill vs hollow) included in parens
- When an agnomen is added to a name for which there is no other match in the townland, it may indicate 2 adults with the same name live in the same household.

## 22) Legal Terms in the Lessor Column

- *In Chancery* or *Court of Chancery* - there is a pending legal issue (court records may contain genealogical info).
- *In fee* - The occupier is the legal owner.
- *Free* - The occupier has no lessor - probably a squatter.
- *Freeholder* - Church of Ireland rector or church.
- *Reps of* - The named lessor is deceased and the legal matters are pending.

# 23) Beware

- Surnames are indexed exactly as they were typeset in Griffiths
- For O names & Mc/Mac names, search indexes with & without the prefix
- Inconsistent punctuation in indexes:
  - O'Flynn, OFlynn, O Flynn, O\_Flynn, O.Flynn
  - McGrath, MacGrath, Mc Grath, M'Grath, Mgrath, Magrath

# 24) Accessing Griffith's Primary Valuation (Tenement Act of 1852)

- Free at Ask About Ireland
  - <http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation>
- "Free" at ancestry.com
- For Fee at Find My Past/Ireland
  - <http://www.findmypast.ie>
- For Fee at Irish Origins
  - <http://www.irishorigins.com>
- Why pay? Better features



# 25) Accessing Griffith's Primary Valuation (Tenement Act of 1852)

- Other sites that may be useful:
  - Heritage Centres,  
<http://dennisahogan.com/files/Heritage-Centres.pdf>
  - GenWeb type sites,  
<http://www.irelandgenweb.com/>  
<https://sites.google.com/site/northernirelandworldgenweb/>  
[www.genuki.org.uk](http://www.genuki.org.uk)

# 26) Local Resources

- **Subscriptions made available by Monroe County Library System:**
  - Heritage Quest, Free at [www.libraryweb.org/heritage.html](http://www.libraryweb.org/heritage.html) with a Monroe County library card
  - **Ancestry.Com**, Free at the Rochester Public Library, Rundel Bldg, Local History Room (also Brighton, Fairport, Henrietta, Ogden, Greece and Penfield Libraries) with Monroe County library card
  - AmericanAncestors.org (for New England research), Free at the Rundel Bldg, Local History Room with a library card
- **Subscriptions available at Family History Centers** (including Brockport, Rochester, Perinton, Palmyra – to find locations see <https://library.familysearch.org/>):
  - US Research: Heritage Quest, Fold3.com, Godfrey Memorial Library, American Civil War
  - UK Research: FindMyPast.co.uk, British Newspaper Archive, The Genealogist
  - World Research: Historic Map Works, World Vital Records, genline.com
  - NEW: **Ancestry.com** - FHC Version

# 27) Griffith's Valuation Usage

- Free site Ask About Ireland
- <http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/>

# 28) Select *Family Name Search* I entered Thomas McGovern from County Cavan

Ask about Ireland

Search  GO

• About Us • Links • Contact Us

Reading Room Learning Zone Libraries ENFO

## Griffith's Valuation

The Primary Valuation was the first full-scale valuation of property in Ireland. It was overseen by Richard Griffith and published between 1847 and 1864. It is one of the most important surviving 19th century genealogical sources.

Home | Griffith's Valuation

[Family Name Search](#) [Place Name Search](#) [Name Books Search](#) [Search Tips](#) [Upload](#) [About GV Maps](#) [Read More](#)

Use this form to search for a particular family name in Griffith's Valuation

### Step 1 - Mandatory

First, enter a family name (and a first name, if you wish)

Include similar names ?

### Step 2 - Optional

Then choose a county, and (optionally) a Barony, Poor Law Union, and/or Parish

and/or  ?

?

?

For a more powerful placename search, and to find everyone who lived in a particular place, use the [Place Name Search](#) option.

# 29) There are 69 Thomas McGovern's in County Cavan

The screenshot shows the 'Ask about Ireland' website interface. At the top, there is a green navigation bar with the text 'Ask about Ireland' and a search bar with a 'GO' button. Below the navigation bar, there are four main menu items: 'Reading Room', 'Learning Zone', 'Libraries', and 'ENFO'. A secondary navigation bar contains 'Home | Griffith's Valuation | Search Results' and a 'Search Again' button. The main content area displays instructions for using the search results table, followed by a table of results. A large blue arrow points to the 'Original Page' column header.

In the results table below ...  
Click the **details** icon to see all the details of that valuation record and any user-contributed additional materials.  
Click the **page** icon to see a scan of the original document page.  
Click the **map** icon to see a Griffith's Valuation map

Results 1 to 20 of 69 [next]

Occupier Surname	Occupier Forename	County	Parish	Details	Original Page	Map Views	Upload your content for this record
MCGOVERN	THOMAS	CAVAN	TEMPLEPORT				

# 30) I'm going to switch to the *Place Name Search* & search for *Clarbally* in *Cavan*

**Ask about Ireland** Search  GO

[About Us](#) [Links](#) [Contact Us](#)

[Reading Room](#) [Learning Zone](#) [Libraries](#) [ENFO](#)

## Griffith's Valuation

The Primary Valuation was the first full-scale valuation of property in Ireland. It was overseen by Richard Griffith and published between 1847 and 1864. It is one of the most important surviving 19th century genealogical sources.

[Home](#) | [Griffith's Valuation](#)

[Family Name Search](#) [Place Name Search](#) [Name Books Search](#) [Search Tips](#) [Upload](#) [About GV Maps](#) [Read More](#)

On this form, you can search for particular place-names.  
You may narrow your search by searching only within a particular county, barony, union or parish.

If you do not enter a place-name, the search will return all the place-names in the county, barony, etc. that you select from the pull-down menus. The search will take a few moments if you ask for all the place-names in a county.

The results will show you a list of places that match your search, and will give you the option to view a map or to see who lived there.

**Step 1 - Mandatory**  
Enter a place-name

**Step 2 - Optional**  
Within a particular region (optional)  
CAVAN and/or TULLYHAW  
BAWNBOY  
TEMPLEPORT

# 31) All Occupiers of the townland are listed. Select the Map View

The screenshot shows the 'Ask about Ireland' website interface. At the top, there is a green navigation bar with the site logo and a search bar. Below this, there are tabs for 'Reading Room', 'Learning Zone', 'Libraries', and 'ENFO'. The 'Libraries' tab is selected, and a large blue arrow points down to the 'Map Views' column in the search results table.

Home | Griffith's Valuation | Search Results

Search Again

In the results table below ...  
Click the details icon to see all the details of that valuation record and any user-contributed additional materials.  
Click the page icon to see a scan of the original document page.  
Click the map icon to see a Griffith's Valuation map.

Results 1 to 10 of 10

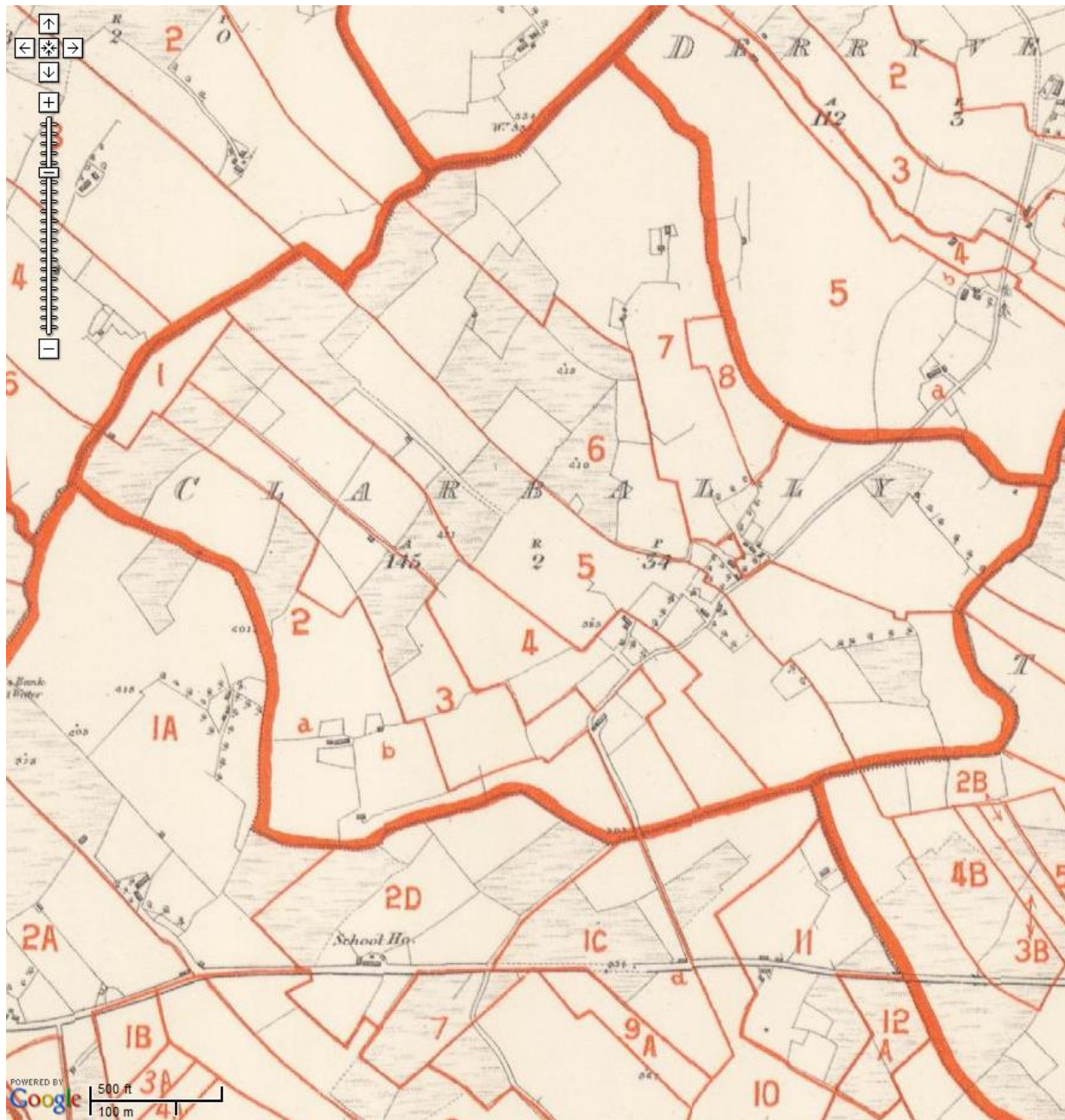
Occupier Surname	Occupier Forename	County	Parish	Details	Original Page	Map Views	Upload your content for this record
MCGOVERN	THOS.	CAVAN	TEMPLEPORT				
MCGOLRICK	ELIZABETH	CAVAN	TEMPLEPORT				
MCGOVERN	PATRICK	CAVAN	TEMPLEPORT				
MCGOVERN	THOS.	CAVAN	TEMPLEPORT				
MCGOVERN	PATK.	CAVAN	TEMPLEPORT				
MCGOVERN	HUGH	CAVAN	TEMPLEPORT				
MCGOVERN	OWEN	CAVAN	TEMPLEPORT				
MCGOVERN	HUGH	CAVAN	TEMPLEPORT				
MCGOVERN	PATK.	CAVAN	TEMPLEPORT				
MCGOVERN	HUGH	CAVAN	TEMPLEPORT				



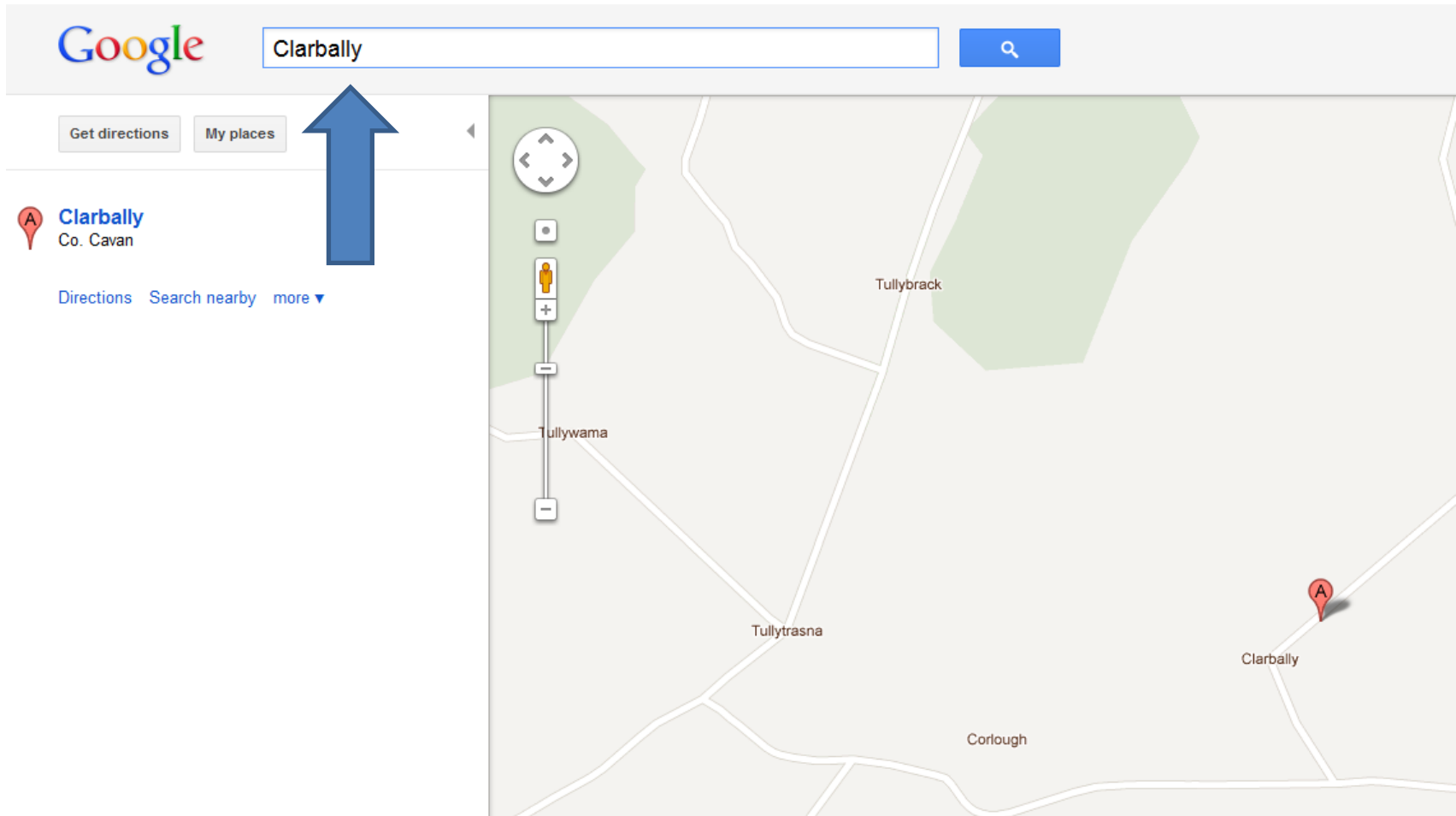
**32) The Clarbally townland will be in the orange box. Use the plus sign in upper left hand corner to zoom in.**



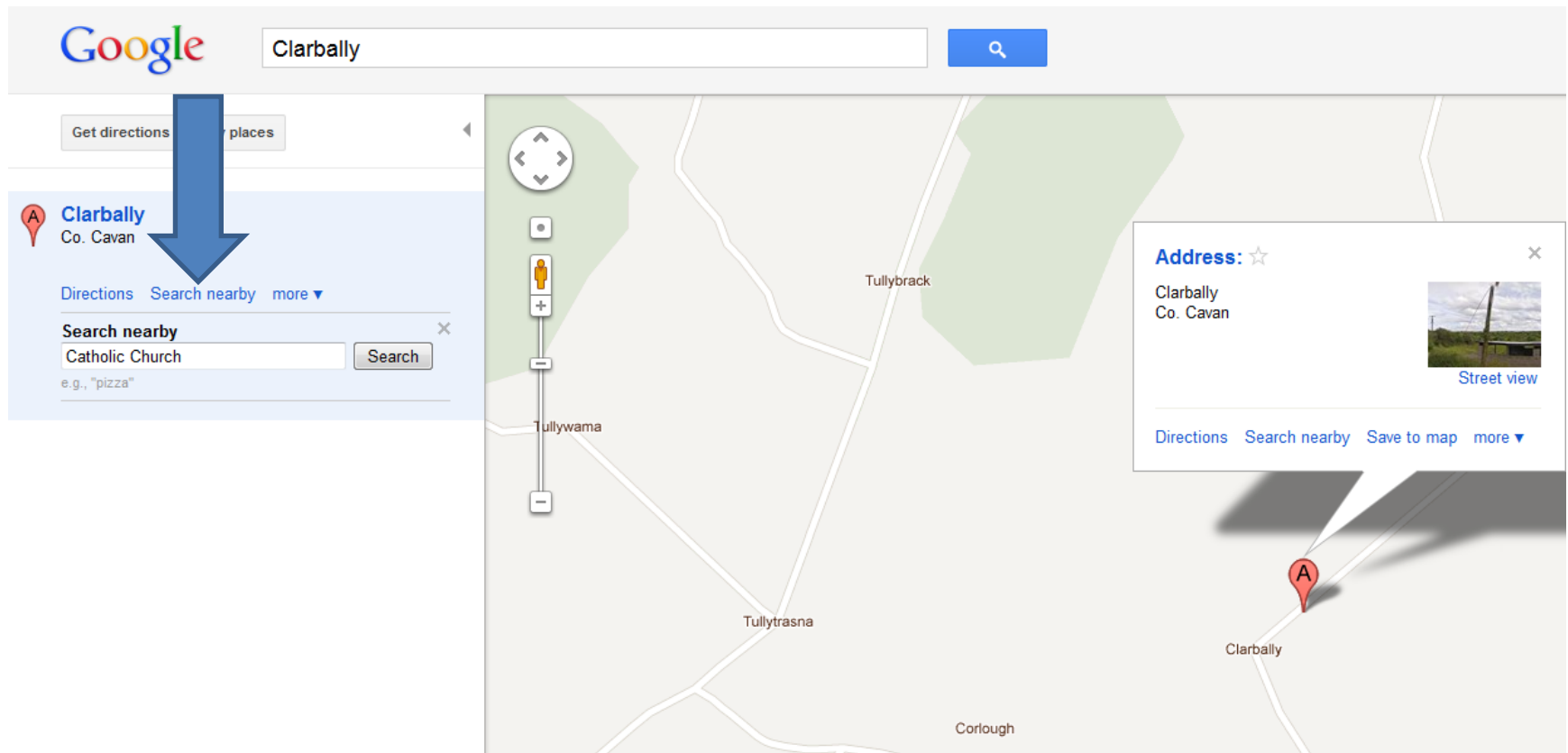




# 34) Bring up <http://maps.google.ie> & Enter *Clarbally*



# 35) Click on *Search Nearby*, Enter *Catholic Church* & click *Search*



# 36) Green arrow = Clarbally, A & B are the closest Catholic Churches per Google

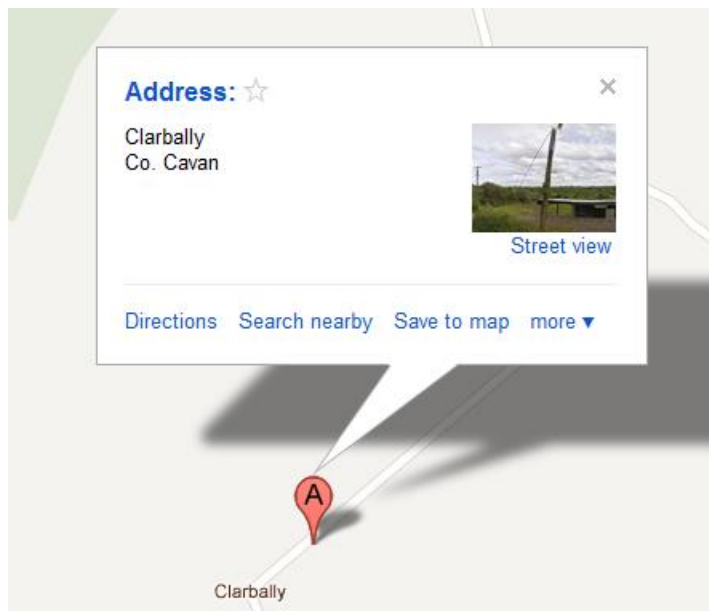
Google Catholic Church loc: Clarbally, Co. Cavan

Get directions My places

### Catholic Church near Clarbally, Co. Cavan

- A** [Cavan Cathedral of Saint's Patrick & Felim](#)  
45 Farnham St, Cavan, Co. Cavan  
30 km SE  
Category: Catholic Church
- B** [St Clare's Church](#)  
New Line, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim 34 km NW  
(071) 985 5042 · [kilmorediocese.ie](#)
- C** [Church of Our Lady Star of the Sea Bundoran](#)  
Church Road, Bundoran 52 km NW  
(071) 984 1290 · [magheneparish.ie](#)  
parochial house · ramon munster · diocese
- D** [St Michael's Church, Castlepollard](#)  
Church Street, Castlepollard, Co. West Meath  
58 km SE  
(044) 966 1126 · [blogspot.com](#)
- E** [St John's Church](#)  
R284 49 km W  
(071) 916 2136 · [carrarochurchsligo.com](#)

## 37) Backarrow to previous view & Click on *Street View* if available





## 38) Arrows at bottom of screen (not displayed) & the wheel in the upper left allow you to “walk” down the street



# Thanks Dick!



Sir Richard Griffith