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NEW RECORDS! • NEW RECORDS! • NEW RECORDS!

Since our last newsletter we have uploaded the following records to our database at www.rootsireland.ie:

- East Galway: 6000 RC baptismal records from various parishes;
- Monaghan: 529 lease abstracts for the manor and lordship of Monaghan (1679-1810);
- South Tipperary: 11,500 RC baptismal records for the parish of Boherlahan & Dualla;
- South Mayo: 380 CI baptismal records from AGLISH parish;
- Kerry: 3332 RC marriage records for the parishes of Annascaul and Lixnaw.

We have also uploaded the following Limerick records: 36,313 Roman Catholic baptisms and marriages in the early twentieth century, Church of Ireland and Roman Catholic gravestone inscriptions, eighteenth century lists of Catholic and Protestant heads of household, indexes to wills, lists of freeholders, electoral registers and more, as well as 1806 RC marriage records for Dromtariffe in County Cork (diocese of Kerry). This means that we have uploaded almost 60,000 new records to the Roots Ireland database so far this year, with many more to come this year!

You can read more about these various records to have been uploaded in 2023 on our blog at www.rootsireland.ie/category/blog/

We will notify those on our mailing list when new records are uploaded and available, so make sure to register to our mailing list to keep abreast with new additions to www.rootsireland.ie!

EYE ON COUNTY CENTRES

US President Joe Biden's Visit to the North Mayo Heritage Centre to discuss his Irish Ancestry and his Mayo roots

The North Mayo Heritage Centre was delighted to welcome US President Joe Biden and his family to the centre on Friday 14 April for a private visit to discuss his genealogy. The President spoke with our Researcher, Brendan Walsh, about his Irish ancestry and the origins of his maternal lineage, that of the Blewitts of County Mayo. Thanks to research carried out by the North Mayo Heritage Centre, we were able to secure the visit of a sitting US President to the

Centre and to shine a light on the importance of genealogical research.

President Biden was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania. His family connections in the local area there stretch back to the 1850s. Scranton is also Ballina's twin town. The President's visit underlines the strong ties between Scranton and its surrounding area with Ballina and North Mayo. The contribution these Mayo emigrants



made to the fabric and society of Scranton and its surrounds can never be overlooked. Even today, it is a part of the world shaped by its links back to North County Mayo. The North Mayo Heritage Centre helps clients from all over the United States whose ancestors' first home in America was this part of north-eastern Pennsylvania. Our Irish clients frequently have someone in their family tree who emigrated to the same location.

The President's visit was a huge honour for the North Mayo Heritage Centre, but it was also a really special event for everyone who has been involved with the Centre over the years and for the local people of Crossmolina, Addergoole and across all of North Mayo. Without their support and custom over the years, we would not be able to continue the work that we do.



President Joe Biden with North Mayo Heritage Centre Researcher, Brendan Walsh

LIMERICK GENEALOGY MOVES TO CROOM!

Limerick Genealogy has moved to Croom Civic Centre in the lovely village of Croom, county Limerick. In addition to an online database of over one million genealogical records for Limerick searchable on RootsIreland, Limerick

Genealogy provides a professional research service for Limerick city and county, offering advice, online or in person consultations, hourly rate of research and comprehensive family history reports. For more details, see our website www.limerickgenealogy.com or email Catriona Crowe with your query at research@limerickgenealogy.com. Visitors by appointment to the Centre.



Catriona Crowe of Limerick Genealogy at Croom Civic Centre

Croom Civic Centre on Main Street in the village offers free parking, a space to meet, library and restaurant opening onto Croom Town Park overlooking the scenic River Maigue. In 1865, Maurice Lenihan described the town of Croom as 'a place of importance and high antiquity'. Croom Castle, in existence from the 1200s, became the ancestral home of the Kildare Fitzgeralds. The ancient war cry and motto of the Fitzgerald family was 'Crom Abú' meaning Croom forever!

ULSTER HISTORICAL FOUNDATION 2023 CONFERENCES

Book Now with £100 Deposit!

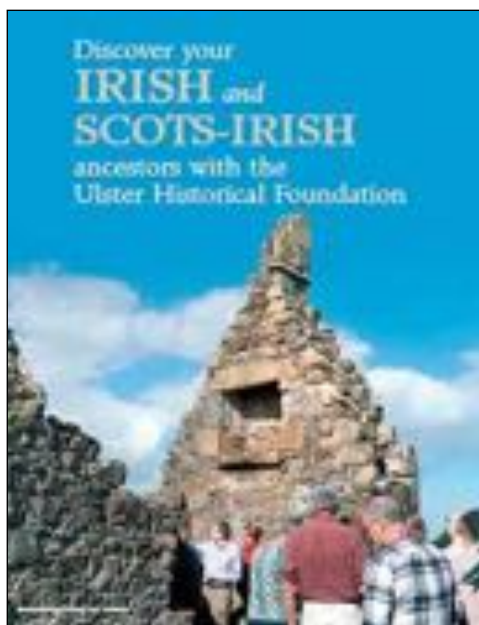
Are you wishing to find out more about your Irish ancestors? Have you been thinking of what to do or where to go for your 2023 Summer vacation? Have you always wanted to visit some of Ireland's famous landmarks and journey through the country's beautiful landscape? Unlock your family story Ulster Historical Foundation's 2023 Conference.

TRACING YOUR IRISH ANCESTORS

September 2023

Running from 06 until 13 September 2023, this programme will include brand new tours to famous historic sites across the island of Ireland and crucially for the research enthusiast, all your time can alternatively be spent researching in the archives of Belfast with the Foundation's team of researchers (or a mix of the two).

Assisted personal research, talks, tours and sightseeing are all part of the eclectic, friendly and fun mix of Tracing Your Irish Ancestors.



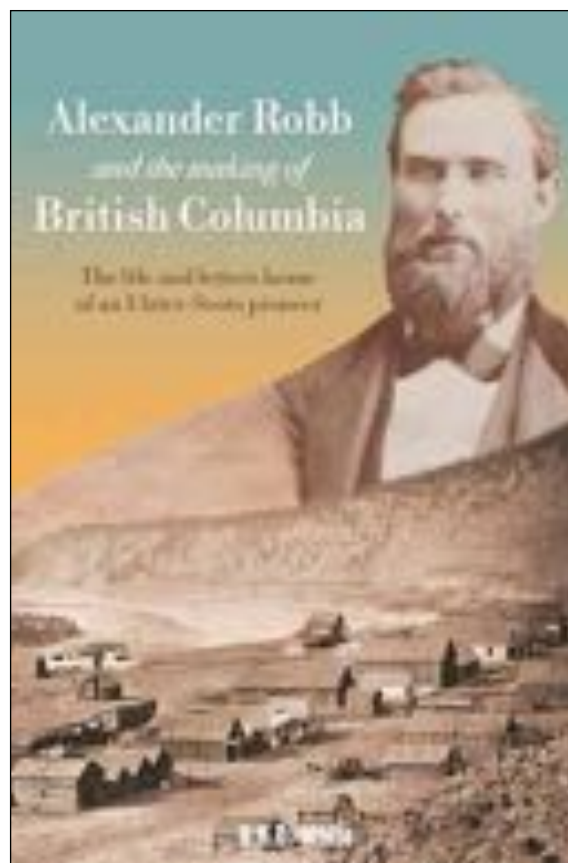
Register now –
<https://www.ancestryireland.com/family-history-conference/summer/>

ALEXANDER ROBB AND THE MAKING OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Now Available

In 1862 Alexander Robb (1839-1910) was one of a group of young men from County Down, Ireland, who travelled to British Columbia. They were among the thousands seeking to make their fortunes in the goldfields of the Cariboo.

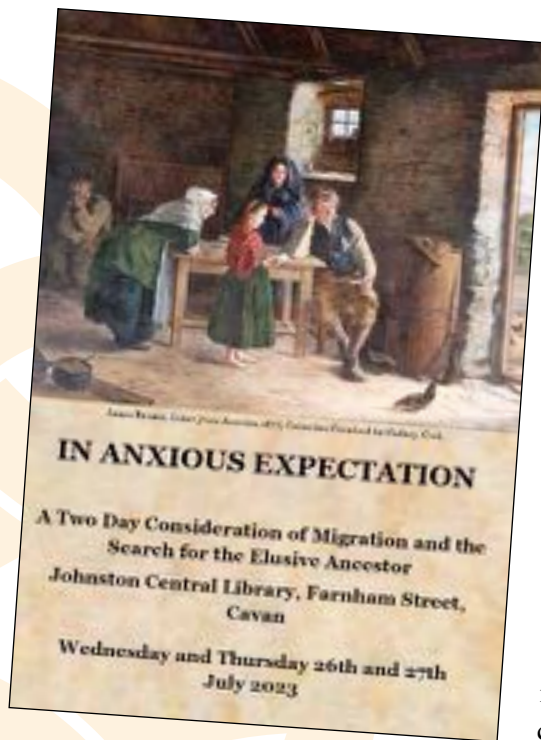
Illness and death in his family took him back to Ireland where he steered the Robb farm successfully through a period of agricultural recession and major political change while continuing his commitment to public service. Alexander Robb's remarkable story of hardship and perseverance is told along with a full revision of his unique letters.



Order Now for just £14.99
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CAVAN CALLING



Cavan Calling, the global homecoming festival for the Cavan Diaspora, will take place from 26th to 30th July 2023 here in County Cavan, with the global Cavan family coming together for a four-day celebration of the county, its people, culture, heritage, landscape, sport, and the achievements of its Diaspora. Cavan people living at home and overseas, those with Cavan ancestry, and those with an affinity for the Breffni County, are invited to answer Cavan's call and join in the celebrations.

As part of this celebration, Cavan Genealogy and the Mellon Centre for Migration Studies, Omagh, are running in the Johnston Central Library, Cavan, on 26-27 July, a two-day conference entitled 'In anxious expectation', which deals with migration and the search for the elusive ancestor. Speakers include Dr William Roulston (Ulster Historical Foundation), Mary Sullivan and Concepta McGovern (Cavan Genealogy), Dr Patrick Fitzgerald (Mellon Centre), Lábhras Ó Murchú (Irish Family History Foundation/Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann), Dr Brendan Scott (Irish Family History Foundation), and more. For more details, contact Cavan Genealogy at concepta@cavangenealogy.ie or mary@cavangenealogy.ie.

57,500 CORK BURIAL RECORDS NOW ONLINE

Over 57,500 burial records from 112 graveyards around County Cork are now available to access online free of charge on www.skibbheritage.com. The team at Skibbreen Heritage Centre have been digitising Cork County Council burial registers for some time, creating a database of records that cover most of the graveyards around west Cork and this now extends into the east Cork and Macroom areas too.

The records are searchable either by individual name or graveyard and the original pages of the registers can also be viewed for each burial. This latest upload includes the very poignant records for the Lusitania victims buried in mass graves in Cobh in May 1915, many of them unidentified.

As well as the burial records, the Skibbreen Heritage Centre website features video tours of some west Cork graveyards,

which give a brief history of each graveyard alongside some of the stories of those buried there as well as a 'virtual tour' of the monuments. The Cork Graveyards database and videos are available to view free of charge on Skibbreen Heritage Centre's website www.skibbheritage.com alongside an interactive map of all the graveyards covered and a tutorial video on how best to use the database.



Interactive map of Cork graveyards



by Karel Kiely & James Durney

On Thursday, 4 May 2023, American rock legend Bruce Springsteen dropped into Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge, County Kildare, to meet with Cathaoirleach of Kildare County Council, Cllr. Fintan Brett, local councillors, Council staff and members of Kildare Library and Arts Service. Kildare County Archivist Karel Kiely, and Executive Librarian Mario Corrigan gave a presentation to Bruce on his Rathangan, Co. Kildare, roots, beginning with the emigration c.1850 from Mount Prospect, Rathangan, of Christy Geraty and Catherine Kelly, his great great great grandparents. Bruce was also shown the original parish registers, which record his ancestors' marriage and baptisms. Asked where his musical influence came from, Bruce replied that it was from his Southern Italian ancestors but was surprised and delighted when Karel pointed out that Christy Geraty played the fife, with a drum accompaniment, at the head of all Democratic Party processions in his adopted hometown of Freehold, New Jersey. Bruce was presented with a Co. Kildare flag, a St. Brigid's Cross wreath, a framed photograph of the Grand Canal, some local publications, including Seamus Kelly's *'Rambles in Rathangan,'* as well as copies of the research carried out by Karel, which he accepted graciously.

Christy and Anne Geraty's daughter Ann married her second husband Patrick Farrell in 1873. Their daughter Jane 'Jennie' Farrell is the maternal great grandmother of Bruce Springsteen, as she married John McNicholas in 1897. They had three daughters, one of whom, Lena McNicholas, was the grandmother of Bruce, who born in 1949. Bruce recalled his great grandmother, Jennie Farrell, dying in 1961 when he was eleven and that his Irish grandparents, who lived on the same block, had a major influence on him. After the presentation Councillor Mark Stafford brought Bruce on a trip to Mount Prospect, Rathangan, and showed him the location of the two possible sites of the Geraty homestead guided by local resident Fergus Burke. Bruce visited Wilson's Bridge on the Grand Canal where Christy Geraty worked, the old graveyard in Rathangan, the former St. Patrick's Church now the community centre where Christy Geraty and Catherine Kelly were married, and where Annie Geraty was baptised. Bruce enjoyed an impromptu performance from the CPA Dance Academy and seemed at home at his last stop, the Burrow Pub.



Armagh's Robinson Crusoe – has he any descendants?

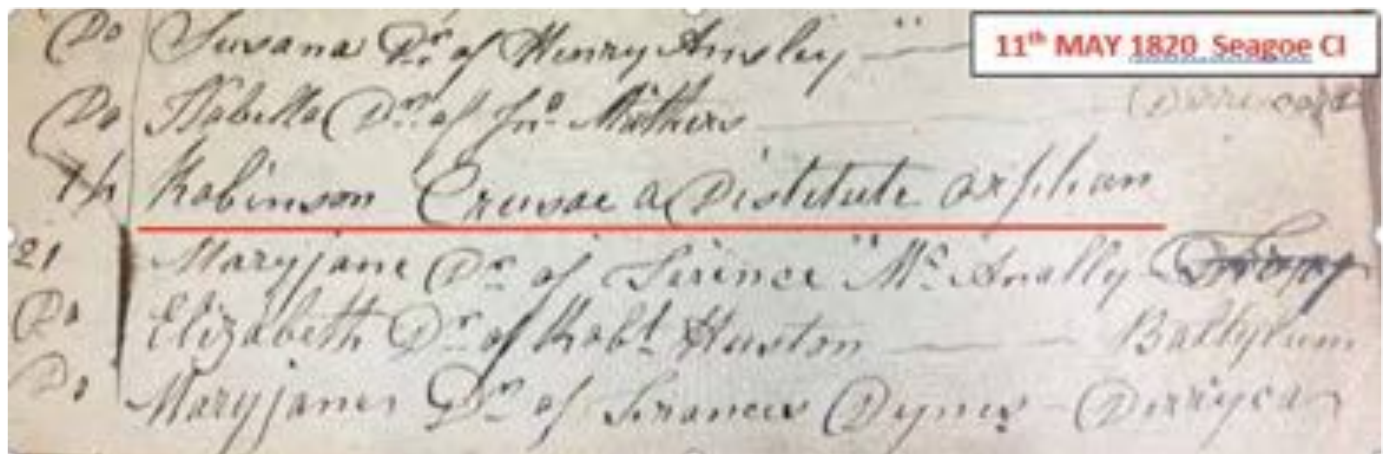
by Feargal O'Donnell (Armagh Ancestry – Genealogy Ireland)

Everybody is familiar with the exploits of Daniel Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe* which was first published in 1719 and many query if the main character was actually based on a real person. Many have since asserted that he was indeed based on a real person as were his exploits. As the old saying goes, 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder' and you can conduct your own research of the various theories and make up your own mind. Defoe was a Puritan, a group of English Protestants in the 16th and 17th centuries who sought to purify the Church of England of Roman Catholic practices, maintaining that the Church of England had not been fully reformed and should become more Protestant. With a Puritan ethos, the novel shares a religious theme and the time which Crusoe spends reading his Bible (the only book available to him at the time) and with nature portrays a growing closeness to God. The novel draws a Christian notion of providence, penitence, and redemption, characterizing Crusoe with the follies of youth. Some refer to it as not Crusoe's deliverance from the island, but his spiritual deliverance, his acceptance of Christian doctrine, and his intuition of his own salvation.

Fast forward 100 years and as part of Armagh Ancestry's computerization program, in conjunction with Genealogy Ireland, we are introduced to the baptism in Seagoe Church of Ireland Church, near Portadown, County Armagh, of a child being christened Robinson Crusoe on 11 May 1820. The

Crusoe surname is certainly not one associated with the historic 'orchard' county of Armagh and a search of Armagh Ancestry's vast genealogy database failed to locate another Crusoe birth, marriage, or death. A search of the all-Ireland Civil Registers 1845-1922 found only one other recorded Crusoe, named Dan in 1886 in County Westmeath and Roots Ireland's database only held four Crusoe entries. So how or why did the child end up with such a 'monicker'? The Robinson Crusoe in question is described as 'a destitute orphan' and no additional family details are recorded.

We can only assume the child was abandoned and being referred to as an orphan rather than a foundling would suggest the child to be older than a recently born baby. While a foundling is sometimes an orphan, they normally refer to new-born babies whose parents are not able to care for them. In cases like this, parents sometimes abandon their babies in safe places like hospitals or churches. Perhaps 'our' Robinson Crusoe was a toddler and for unknown reasons, he was abandoned close to Seagoe Church in a place where his parents would know he would be found and they possibly watched over him from a distance until he was safely discovered. We cannot guess the social status of his parents or the situation they may have been in at the time, however, we can feel relieved that he was found safe and well. Experience of using Church records would allow me to assume the young Robinson Crusoe would



have been named by either the person who found him or by the local clergyman and that shortly after he would have been transferred to the Anglican Foundling Hospital in Dublin. Our computerized database for County Armagh has numerous foundlings being baptized and the record usually states they were sent to the Hospital in Dublin. Foundlings are often baptized with the surname of the person who found them or by the place they were found; Hall, Hill, Green, Lonan, or Drummond. With 'our' Robinson Crusoe, we can only surmise the clergyman who baptized him may have had Puritan ideology or may have been referencing Robinson Crusoe in his sermons and felt such a monicker would be fitting for the child.

We did try to follow our Robinson Crusoe through our County Armagh databases, and indeed Roots Ireland's extensive databases, however, we could not locate a marriage or death for him. It is quite likely that he was sent to Dublin's Anglican Foundling Hospital and then abroad to one of the British Colonies or Anglican Missions like some of the orphans of the period. Sean O'Riordan in his excellent piece in the *Irish Examiner* on 8 August 2021 notes that

Dublin's Anglican Foundling Hospital had quite a horrid reputation in the period between 1728–1828 and it served the purpose of removing unwanted infants from the view of Irish society. With a stated aim 'to make good Protestants of the foundling children', conditions were bleak, often resulting in illness and death and once inside the doors, the fate of the infants was determined by chance — healthy children sent out 'to nurse' and, if they survived, raised in the tradition of the established Protestant Church. However, infants deemed 'unhealthy' were dispatched to the infirmary where they died in a systematic manner, of 5,213 infants admitted to the infirmary part of the Dublin Foundling Hospital between 1791 and 1796, only three survived — all the rest died.

For our County Armagh Robinson Crusoe, we can only hope he found peace and happiness in life and that he lived a good life outside Ireland. Hopefully, he married and had children and you never know some of his Crusoe descendants may be trying to locate their Irish ancestry and their spiritual home.



Thank you for reading, and please let us know if you have any queries or comments about our site and/or centres by emailing enquiries@rootsireland.ie.



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