The distribution of ecclesiastical elements in Irish placenames

Dáileadh eilimintí eaglasta i logainmneacha na hÉireann

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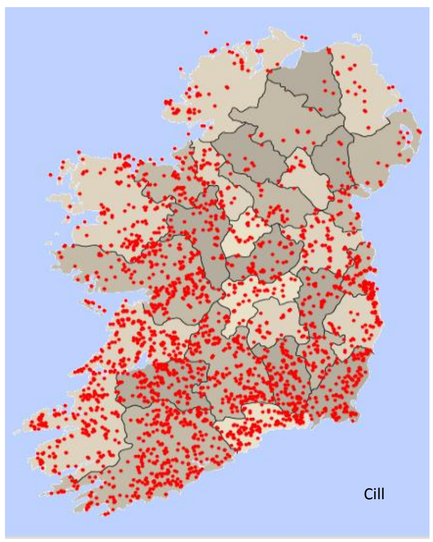
Introduction

The distribution maps featured on this poster are part of a series of 147 distribution maps which have been created as part of the ongoing development of the Placenames Database of Ireland (logainm.ie). This series of maps illustrate the distribution of commonly recurring elements in Irish placenames. Their development was made possible by a synchronisation project between the logainm.ie database and Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi) mapping data. Along with this collaborative synchronisation project, the maps are also a further development from a glossary of common placenames elements which was added to logainm.ie in early 2013. The maps were launched on 16 May 2014 as part of the latest redesign of the website, which now features an integrated OSi mapviewer, among a number of other new features. A selection of 9 of the distribution maps, which feature **ecclesiastical elements**, are displayed below.



Cill 'church' also 'churchyard, monastic settlement or foundation, cell'

Genitive: *cille*

Occurs in 3182 placenames in logainm.ie

Cill may be found as single element [An Chill/Kill – Co. Kildare]

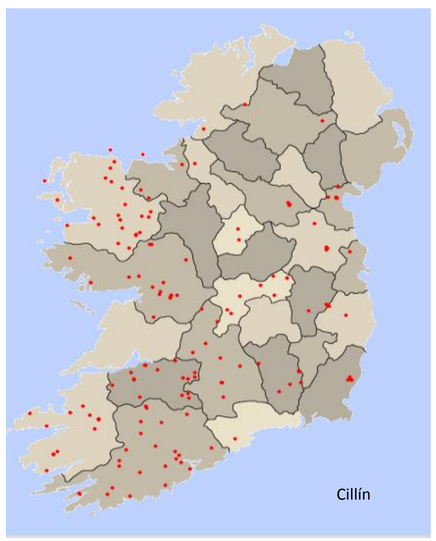
In compounds	Seanchill/Shankill ,Co. Dublin
Qualified by a saint's name	[Cill Chainnigh/Kilkenny, Cill Chormaic/Kilcormac, Co. Offaly
Noun + qualifying genitive	Cnoc na Cille/Knocknakilly, Co. Kerry
In the plural	Na Cealla Beaga/Killybegs, Co. Donegal

As in all Irish placenames, a similar nameform in Irish may be anglicised in different ways:

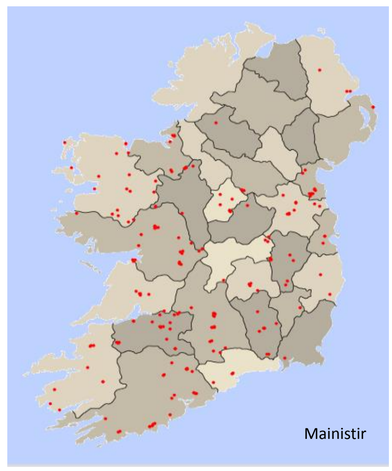
Cnoc na Cille	Knocknakill [Co. Tipperary]
Cnoc na Cille	Knocknakilla [Co. Cork]
Cnoc na Cille	Killhill [Co. Kildare]
Cnoc na Cille	Knocknakilly [Co. Kerry]

A further complication is the difficulty of distinguishing *cill* from *coill* 'wood' as both are often anglicised *kil*, *kill* or *kyle*.

An Chill Mhór	Kilmore [Co. Tipperary]
An Choill Mhór	Kilmore [Co. Leitrim]



Cillín 'little church'
Occurs in 154 placenames in logainm.ie



Mainistir 'monastery, abbey'.

Genitive: *mainistreach*

Occurs in 218 placenames

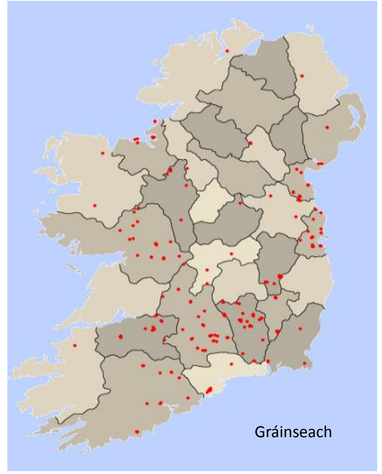
Most frequently anglicised [by translation] as *abbey*. Occasionally as *monaster* etc.

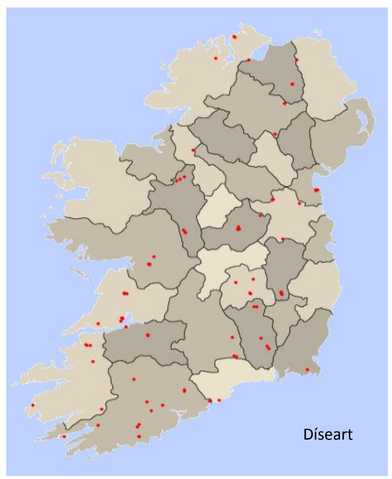
Gráinseach 'grange, monastic farm'

Genitive: *gráinsí.* Dative: *gráinsigh*

Occurs in 203 placenames.

Derived from Norman-French *grange* & usually anglicised as such.
Occ. as *gransha, granshy, granshagh* etc.





Díseart 'hermitage'

Genitive: *díseart*

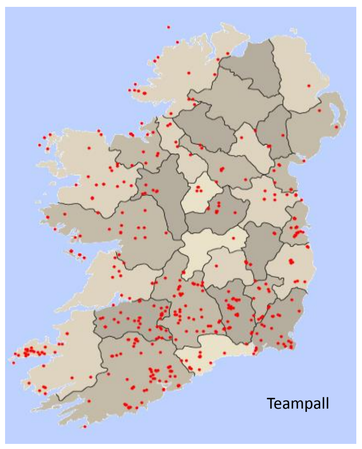
Occurs in 84 placenames

Usually anglicised as *dysart* or *desert* or *isert*

Examples: Díseart Nuan/Estersnow [Co. Roscommon], Díseart Mhártain /Desertmartin [Co. Down]. Often occurs as a single element.

Methodology

These distribution maps are based on automated text searches of the logainm.ie database. Editorial checks have been carried out in the case of elements such as *coll* 'hazel' and *coill* 'wood' where a text search cannot distinguish the elements from one another in inflected form. Editorial checks have also been carried out in the case of elements such as *coimín, fionn*, *dearg* etc., in order to distinguish the occurrence of these elements as personal names, surnames or qualifying adjectives. As 90% of Irish placenames have their origin in the Irish language, the Irish form of the placename is taken as the base form for the purposes of generating these distribution maps. An exception to this is the map of the element *glebe* (below right). *Glebe* [Irish: *gléib*] is originally an English element, and the spelling *glebe* occurs consistently in the anglicised form of placenames. Including the English form in the text searches allows for a more accurate representation of the occurrence of this element in Irish placenames.



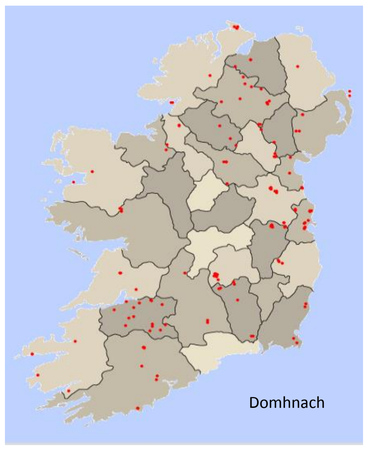
Teampall 'church', usually post-Reform (12th c.)

Genitive: *Teampaill*

Occurs in 472 placenames

It is usually anglicised *temple*, or, in translation *church*

Examples:
Teampall an Chalaidh/Templeachally [Co. Tipperary]
Teampall an Ghleanntáin/ Templeglentan [Co. Limerick]
Teampall Phádraig/Templepatrick [Co. Antrim]
Ceathrú an Teampaill/Churchquarter [Co. Roscommon]



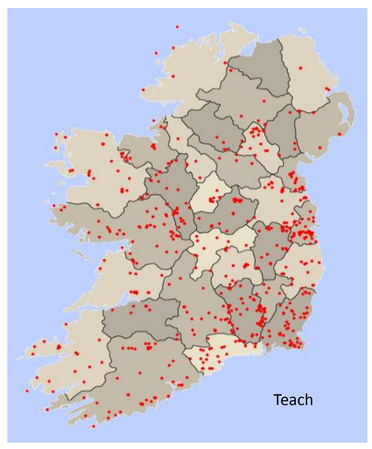
Domhnach 'church' usually Patrician

Genitive: *domhnaigh*

Occurs in 149 placenames

It is anglicised variously *dona, donagh, downey, donny, doney, downig, dunna* etc.

Examples:
Domhnach/Donagh [Co. Fermanagh]
Domhnach Broc /Donnybrook [Co. Dublin]
Domhnach an Eich/Donaghanie Upper [Co. Tyrone]
Drom Domhnaigh/Dromdowney [Co. Cork]



Teach 'house', but often in placenames refers to a saint's house (i.e a church)

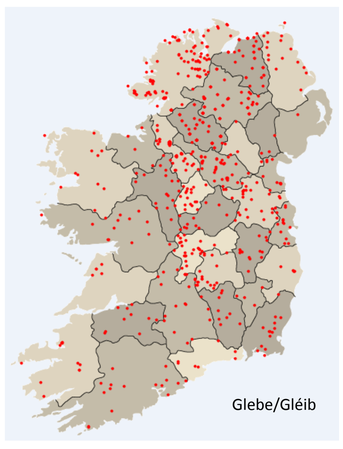
Genitive: *tí*

Dative: *tigh*

Variants: *steach, stigh*

Occurs in 626 placenames, though many of these placenames are not eccesiastical.

Examples: Teach Naithí/Taney [Co. Dublin], Tigh Damhnata/Tedavnet [Co. Monaghan], Stigh Lorgan/Stillorgan [Co. Dublin].
Non-ecclesiastical: Áit Tí Chathail/Attical(Co. an Dúin)



****Gléib***
'glebe'
Genitive: *gléibe*

Also: *Glaidhb*

Occurs in 137 placenames (in its Irish form in logainm.ie)
There are **631** examples of ***glebe*** in the database.

An English element

OED: 'A portion of land assigned to a clergyman as part of his benefice … glebe-house n. a parsonage, manse (now only in Ireland)'

Examples: An Ghléib/Glebe [Co. Mayo], Gléib Shoird/Swords Glebe [Co. Dublin]

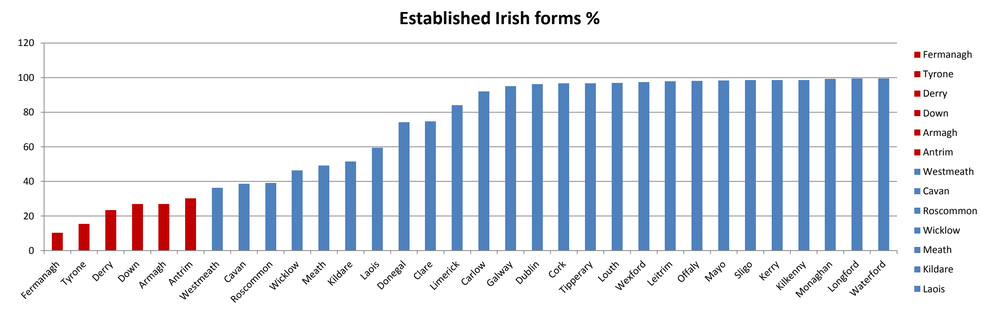
*All maps are based on 75% data coverage

Excluding streetnames, **75.1%** of the placenames in the database have an established Irish form [63,874 out of a total of 85,106].
In the case of townlands, **69.4%** now have an established Irish form [42,489 out of a total of 61,205].

These distribution maps are to be considered **indicative** rather than definitive and should be interpreted accordingly.
In almost all cases it will be noted that there is a distributional bias against the northern part of Ireland, this is due to the significant relative deficiency of data in the database for counties **Fermanagh (10%), Tyrone (15 %), Derry (23%), Down (27%), Armagh (27%),** & **Antrim (30%).** Work is also substantially incomplete on a number of other counties. See graph to the right.

10,000 placenames in the Northern Ireland Place-Name Project's database (**www.placenamesni.org**) were matched with their counterparts in www.logainm.ie as part of matching project carried out in Fiontar in 2014, allowing the creation of clickable links between entries in both databases. Further development of this linkage between the two databases may be of assistance in filling some of the gaps in logainm.ie with regard to placenames in Northern Ireland.

It should be noted that logainm.ie is primarily a database of administrative placenames (townlands, parishes , names of urban centres etc.). Some minor feature names and other local placenames are also included, but it is likely that many thousands of these names remain unrecorded in the database. As the research of the Placenames Branch (Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht) progresses more authoritative Irish forms of townland and other administrative names will be added, along with some further work on the inclusion of minor names. This work will allow the provision of more representative distribution maps over time. Fiontar are also examining the possibility of hosting local collections of minor toponyms on a distinct platform within the website.



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Acknowledgements
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