

Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project – Article 11

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This is the eleventh in a series of articles about the Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project. The previous ten articles have appeared in the last ten issues of the *Journal of Clan Ewing*. They are also available online through links at the *Clan Ewing* web site (www.ClanEwing.org). Extensively cross-linked results tables, project participant lineages, group relationship diagrams and network diagrams are also available on the *Clan Ewing* web site.

The Ewing Homeland

The last sentence in the statement of purpose of the Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project is:

We will also be trying to collect samples from Ewing men in Ireland and Scotland, and this may allow us to identify the elusive homeland of the original Ewing immigrants to America.

The deep ancestry and origin of the Ewings has been a sort of Holy Grail for some Ewing genealogists, whose zeal has unfortunately resulted in a considerable degree of confusion.¹ The founder of *Clan Ewing*, Rev. Ellsworth Samuel Ewing, thought he had found the relationships among many Ewing lines and published a set of charts in 1990 that showed descent of these lines from one “William Ewing of Stirling [Scotland],” who was presumably born early in the seventeenth century and is supposed to have had three sons, William, James and Robert, born in Glasgow, and numerous grandsons in Londonderry and Donegal (Ireland), many of whom immigrated to America. At the last gathering, *Clan Ewing* still had a number of copies of these charts, which had been offered for sale to members, but the Board decided to withdraw and dispose of these in a rather belated and doubtlessly ineffectual effort to prevent further propagation of numerous errors that the charts contained.

We know from history that James I of England established plantations in Ulster beginning in 1609, with the aim of “planting” English and Scottish Protestants there as a kind of beachhead against the Catholics in Ireland. There is no doubt that the Presbyterian Ewings in Ulster were among these settlers, and little doubt that all or almost all of us have ancestors in Scotland, whether our immigrant ancestors came to America from Ireland, directly from Scotland, or via some more circuitous route. Precisely where these ancestors originated in Scotland is not such an easily answered question.

In my last article, I promised to write this time about what our DNA results have to say about “the elusive homeland of the original Ewing immigrants to America.” I thought that it would be a relatively straight-forward project to see which of the two main theories about the original home of the Ewings was best supported by the DNA evidence. In a nutshell, the two theories are:

¹ I should be clear at the outset that I mean no disrespect to any previous Ewing genealogist or historian, and especially not to Rev. Ellsworth Samuel Ewing, R.S.T. MacEwen or E.W.R. Ewing. I often find myself wishing that I could discuss these issues in person with these three, and with many others who have gone before. I am doing my best to be accurate and to “move the ball forward” with this research, but it is difficult, and I, too, am surely making mistakes. My fondest wish is that a long series of Ewing researchers into the future will identify and correct these mistakes and build on this work.

- Ewing is derived from Clan McEwan of Otter, one of the Dál Riata Clans that at one time occupied the eastern shore of Loch Fyne on the Cowal peninsula of Argyll, as argued by R.S.T. MacEwen,² or
- Ewing has no relation to Clan McEwan of Otter or any other Highland Clan and derives instead from an Anglicized³ version of Ewen, which is a name of great antiquity among the Brythonic Celts of Strathclyde, as argued by E.W.R. Ewing.⁴

Others have unconvincingly suggested that the name may have Anglo-Saxon or Scandinavian roots. In a book chapter that was recently posted on our web site,⁵ C. L'Estrange Ewen pretty well disposes of any notion that the name had other than Celtic derivation on philological grounds, though he does allow that the Celtic languages may have received the root of the name from a more ancient source, perhaps the language ancestral to Celtic, Greek and Latin. He gives numerous examples of forms of the name from Irish, Welsh and British sources, and also reports its existence in Manx, Cornish and Breton.

As you know if you have been following this series of articles, I previously concluded that the majority of the Presbyterian Ewings who came to Ulster from the lowlands of Scotland in the seventeenth century were in a sense returning to the homeland of their remote ancestors, who had originated there and had probably come to Scotland in the fifth century or so with the Dál Riata. I reached this conclusion because roughly two thirds of the Ewings⁶ tested so far fall into a relatively closely related group within haplogroup R1b1c7, which corresponds to the so called "Uí Néill" or "NW Irish" cluster, and seems almost certainly to have originated in Ulster, though probably long before it was known as such. I did a little more research in getting ready to write this article, and discovered the truth of a saying Linda Merle recently shared with me, claiming it was an old Chinese proverb:

"Man who reads one book on subject knows it all. Man who reads two is afraid to open mouth."

² MacEwen, R.S.T. *Clan Ewen: Some Records of Its History*, *The Celtic Monthly*, Glasgow, 1904. This is available online courtesy of *Clan Ewen, USA* at their excellent web site, www.ClanEwenUSA.org. A link directly to the paper is www.ClanEwenUSA.org/rstmacewen.html.

³ "-ing" is a Germanic patronymic ending, having the same meaning as "-son" added to Scandinavian names or "-ski" added to Slavic names. This has led some to claim that Ewing means "son of Hugh," and others to claim that it is just a translation of McEwen from Gaelic into English (the "Mc-" and "Mac-" prefixes are Celtic patronymics), so means "son of Ewen." I think using "-ing" was originally just a mistake or an effort to make the name sound a little more English, and I do not think this has any bearing on which of the theories is more accurate.

⁴ Ewing, Elbert William R. *Clan Ewing of Scotland*, Corben Publishing Co., Ballston, Virginia, 1922, out of print. The article on the Origin of the Ewing Name posted on our web site at www.ClanEwing.org/documents/Ewing_name01.html consists mostly of a transcription of Chapter 9 of this book, which presents Ewing's conclusions based on material that he covers in his Chapters 4 through 8. Facsimile copies of the book are available in hardback or paperback from www.HigginsonBooks.com. The text of the entire book will soon be posted in the Ewing Reading Room (www.ClanEwing.org/ReadingRoom.htm) on the *Clan Ewing* web site.

⁵ Ewen, C. L'Estrange. *A History of Surnames of the British*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1931. A transcription of his Chapter 14 is available on the *Clan Ewing* web site (www.ClanEwing.org). Ewen also published a genealogy of his family, which I have not seen, but if I am not mistaken it was centered in East Anglia and probably has no relationship with the Ewings.

⁶ In previous articles, I have referred to this group as "the large group of closely related Ewings." In the Results Pages on the *Clan Ewing* web site at www.ClanEwing.org/DNA_Project/DNA_ProjectResults/Y-DNAprojectresults.htm.

These Ewings are those in Groups 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9.

As it turns out, the situation with the Dál Riata is not so clear-cut and well established. Some folks have even argued that this kingdom started out and stayed mostly in what eventually became Argyll (in Scotland), and had only an outpost in northeastern Ireland. In any case, even if R.S.T. MacEwen and those he was relying on were right and MacEwan descended from the Irish Dál Riata, the ancestors of the MacEwans did not come to Argyll in the fifth century, but in the eleventh century, sometime shortly after the death of Anradan's father, Aedh Athlaman in 1033 AD. Furthermore, there are numerous conflicting pedigrees of the families involved, including two in the 1450 manuscript that Skene discovered and translated (and in some places mistranslated) and used as the basis of his theories,⁷ which appear to be the ultimate source of R.S.T. MacEwen's information.

Man-o-man. I feel like the tourist from back east who thought he would take a quick stroll over to the pretty mountain by the side of the road in New Mexico, only to discover after two hours of hiking through the sagebrush that the mountain was still another twenty miles away and he forgot to bring water and a hat. In my case, the clear air that makes it difficult to judge distances accurately is statistical genetics and the sagebrush tearing at my trousers is Celtic genealogy. This whole business reminds me of my favorite Zen saying: "Don't believe everything you think."

Clan MacEwan of Otter

R.S.T. MacEwen tells us,⁸ citing John S. Keltie, *History of the Highland Clans, vol ii.*, that one of the sons of Anradan, Aodha Alain d.1047, had three sons: Gillachrist, Neill and Dunslebhe. Gillachrist had a son, Lachlan, who was the founder of Clan Maclachlan; Neill was the founder of Clan MacNeill; and, Dunslebhe had two sons—Ewen, who founded Clan MacEwen, and Ferchard, who founded Clan Lamond. He says nothing about Clan MacSweeney. I believe this pedigree is based on one of the versions from Skene, but if there is anything like a consensus on the matter, it would be that this version is mistaken. I have spent more hours than I care to think about trying to summarize the pedigrees of the Anradan kindred for this article but now realize that I cannot do that without pages of caveats and footnotes. To get a taste of this, take another look at John McLaughlin's article in the November 2006 issue of the *Journal of Clan Ewing*.⁹ Suffice it to say that the inclusion of Clan MacNeill in this kindred is the result of Skene's mistranslation of a passage that actually speaks about the supposed descent of this kindred from Nial of the Nine Hostages, and has nothing to do with the MacNeill's of Scotland.¹⁰ To make matters worse, it now appears not to be the case that the Anradan kindred is related to Nial of the Nine Hostages. Nevertheless, the Maclachlan, MacEwan, Lamond and MacSweeney clans¹¹ are generally held to be descended from Anradan and to be fairly closely related to one another. The differences in the sundry alternative pedigrees have mainly to do with the specific names and number of

⁷ Skene, William Forbes. *The Highlanders of Scotland, Their Origin, History, and Antiquities; with a Sketch of Their Manners and Customs, and an Account of the Clans into which They Were Divided, and of the State of Society which Existed Among Them*, 1837. I believe there is also a 1902 edition, edited by Alexander MacBain.

⁸ MacEwen, R.S.T. Clan Ewen: Some Records of Its History, *The Celtic Monthly*, Glasgow, 1904, Chapter II, paragraph 3.

⁹ McLaughlin, John D. The Clan Ewing of Loch Lomond—An Alternate View, *J. Clan Ewing*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (November 2006), pp 20-23 (www.ClanEwing.org/documents/McLaughlinAlternate.pdf). Even more detailed information and discussion is available on his web site at <http://members.aol.com/lochlan/anradan.htm>.

¹⁰ McLaughlin, John D., personal communication, July 10, 2007.

¹¹ McSorley probably should be considered here, too, perhaps, but I did not get around to that.

generations separating the various clan founders and Anradan, but we are talking at most about differences of two or three generations, which should have negligible effect on the DNA evidence.

So what sort of DNA data is available that might bear on this question? I suppose we could dig around in the ruins of the old clan castles hoping to turn up a few teeth that still have some analyzable DNA in them, but the prospects of that are dim, and even if we found some samples, it would be hard to be sure who they belonged to or to know how to connect them with us. It would be impossibly cool to get specimens from several individuals still living near the clan castles and having well-worked out genealogies connecting them with these clans. This is arguably possible only with some of the MacNeills on the Isle of Barra, but not with the Maclachlans, the MacEwans, the Lamonts or the MacSweeneys. Working backward from modern descendants of this group, genealogic records always peter out by the seventeenth century or so, and many of us have hit brick walls before that. Instead, we are left to examine the DNA of men whose names make us think they may be descended from these clans. Most of these men are Americans; DNA testing by genealogy hobbyists has not really caught on in Europe. The good news is that such data as we have is readily accessible on the Internet.

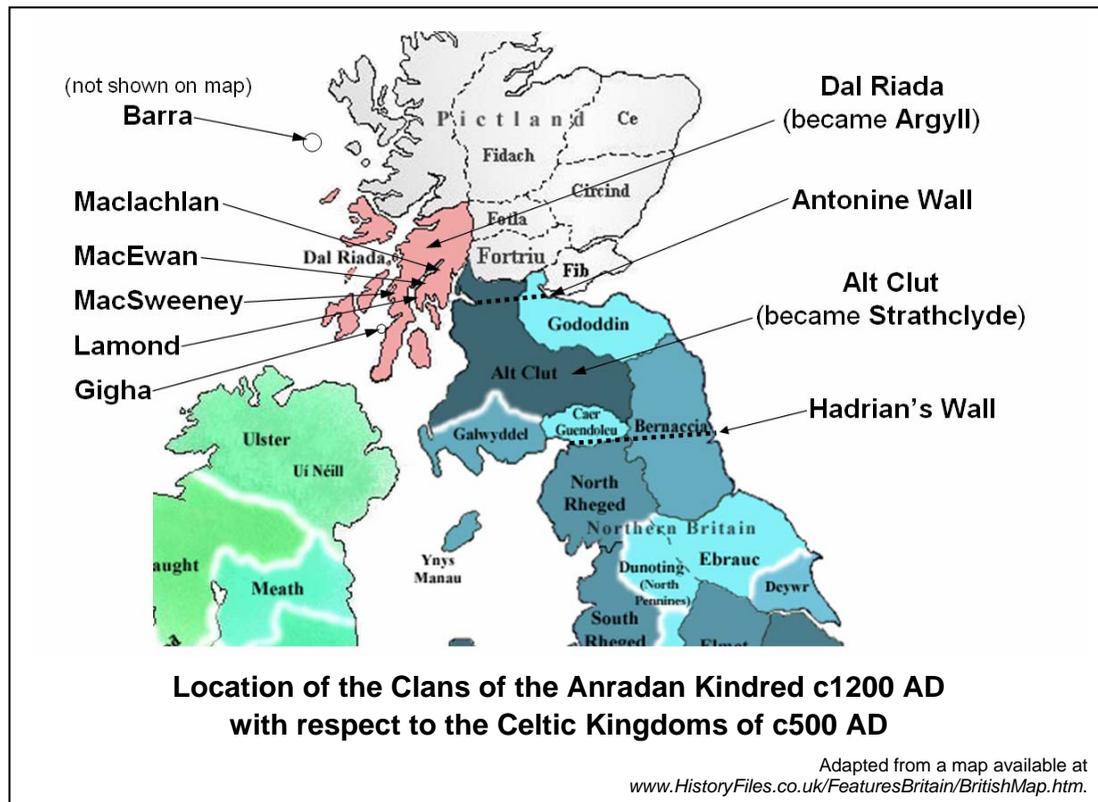
I have prepared the map on the following page¹² showing the relative positions of these clans' homelands, as well as some areas and landmarks discussed later in the article, by adding some notations on a map of Celtic kingdoms from around 500 AD. Keep in mind that this is a good 500 years before these clans are supposed to have actually arrived in Argyll (shown on the map as Dal Riada). The Maclachlans, MacEwans and Lamonts had possession of the greater part of the Cowal peninsula of Argyll, along the eastern side of Loch Fyne. The Lamonts were on the south, separated from the MacEwans by the river Kilfinnan, and the MacEwans were separated from the Maclachlans to the north by the stream that divides the parishes of Kilfinnan and Strath Lachlan. The territory of the MacSweeneys centered on Castle Sween (or Castle Suibhne, as it is also called), which is on Loch Sween, in modern-day Knapdale, on the west coast of the next peninsula to the west of the Cowal peninsula where the other three clans were located. The MacNeills had possession of the two widely-separated islands of Barra and Gigha. The Isle of Barra is near the southern end of the Outer Hebrides, due west of the Isle of Rum; Gigha is about fifteen or twenty miles south of Castle Sween, just off the west coast of modern-day Kintyre.

Maclachlan

The McLaughlin Y-DNA project¹³ has 49 members, and has also collected some data from the Sorensen Molecular Genetic Foundation. The situation here is complex, because a good number of the project participants are descended from Irish McLaughlins who did not go to Scotland. John McLaughlin has identified a DNA signature that is roughly as specific to the MacLochlainns of Tirconnell (Donegal) as the Ewing signature is to the large group of closely related Ewings. Based on Irish genealogies, this branch is more distantly related to the Anradan kindred (if such even exists); the common ancestor of the MacLochlainns of Tirconnell and the Dál Riata Maclachlans lived something like five generations before Anradan, give or take a couple of generations depending on which of several alternative

¹² To see a Google Map with these and other important locations marked, go to <http://tinyurl.com/ywjabb>. This online map will allow you to navigate around and zoom in and out so as to look at the areas of interest more closely.

¹³ www.WorldFamilies.net/surnames/m/mclaughlin



pedigrees one believes. The MacLochlainn of Tirconnell modal is genetic distance 8¹⁴ from the Ewing modal, which does not convey much more information than that they are both R1b1c7, and no particularly close relationship can be adduced.

The McLaughlin project has one man descended from “Thomas Butler MacLachlan, m 1872, Glasgow,” the only man in the project that spells the name “MacLachlan.” He was tested at only 32 of the 37 markers that the Ewing men have been tested at, and matches the R1b1c7 modal at all but one of these.¹⁵ Another McLaughlin who thinks his ancestor originated in Scotland was tested at only 25 markers and matches the R1b1c7 modal exactly at all of these. We might be able to accept these

¹⁴ We must know how many markers we are comparing when we speak about genetic distance. In these DNA articles, when I do not mention how many markers are being compared, it is to be understood that we are comparing the 37 markers of the standard FtDNA panel. If we wanted to spell that out in this specific case, we would write “genetic distance 8/37.” If we are comparing fewer, or more, or different markers, something will always be said to indicate this. For example, if we are comparing 25-marker panels we will not report a genetic distance as 2, but rather as 2/25, meaning that there is a difference at two of the twenty-five markers compared.

¹⁵ He has DYS 458 = 18, where the R1b1c7 and Ewing modals have DYS 458 = 17. The Ewing modal differs from the R1b1c7 modal at three other markers of this group of 32, so he is at genetic distance 4/32 from them.

genetic distances and still argue for a relationship with the Ewings, but without a match on any of the markers that characterize the difference between the R1b1c7 and Ewing modals, it is really too far a stretch.¹⁶ There are only two other men in the McLaughlin project who claim ancestry originating in Scotland; a Locklin is in haplogroup I1c, and a McLaughlin is in R1b, but not R1b1c7, so both are far from the Ewing modal, and definitely not related to us.

To summarize, the McLaughlins are diverse, and though there is a large group of closely related Irish McLaughlins, there are also many McLaughlins not related to them or to one another, and none of the McLaughlins appears to be particularly closely related to any of the Ewings.

MacEwan

As far as I can tell, the only McEwan on the planet to have had DNA testing is John McEwan in our project. He lives in New Zealand, but his ancestors come from Lower Killeyan, Argyll and Bute, which is on the southern-most end of the Isle of Islay, maybe 60-70 miles southwest of Castle MacEwan, so not so close, but closer than Donegal or even Glasgow. His DNA is a little hard to interpret because an ancestor had a special kind of mutation affecting several markers simultaneously called "a recLOH event" that is a bit too complicated to explain here. John is genetic distance 11 from the closest Ewings (a couple of men in Group 6 plus PT and RL2) and genetic distance 23 from the Ewing modal. He is definitely not in R1b1c7 and probably is not related to any of the Ewings in a genealogical time frame. But we cannot make too much of the results from one man.

I might mention as a little aside in this connection an interesting disparity in the distribution of the McEwan and Ewing names. In the 1881 census of all of Great Britain (excepting Northern Ireland, where the census was lost) there were 2764 Ewing and 4607 McEwan individuals. Most of these were in Scotland: 2018 and 4153, respectively. The largest number of individuals with these names lived in Lanarkshire, but this is the county where Glasgow is located, and by 1881 it was the major industrial center in the region and had a relatively large population compared to the surrounding areas. Many people had undoubtedly moved there from elsewhere (including a good many from Ireland, if I am not mistaken). More telling are the concentrations of individuals with each of these surnames in various counties (see the figure on the next page). Ewing was found in concentrations exceeding 100 Ewings per 100,000 people (100/100k) in Kinross-shire, Dunbartonshire, Clackmannanshire, Stirlingshire and Renfrewshire. These counties lie in a band extending across the narrow waist of Scotland, from the Firth of Clyde to the Firth of Forth. McEwan was found in comparable concentrations in these counties as well, but in much higher concentrations than the Ewings in the Highlands to the north and west in Perthshire and Argyllshire.¹⁷ For example, in Dunbartonshire Ewing was found in a concentration of 202/100k and McEwan was found at 142/100k, while in Argyllshire McEwan was found at 295/100k while Ewing was found at 37/100k. In the Irish Primary Valuation property survey of 1848-64, there were 124 Ewing households in Ireland, mainly in Ulster, and no McEwans, though there were 43 McCune

¹⁶ The markers that best distinguish the Ewing modal from the R1b1c7 modal are: DYS 442 = 11, DYS 19 = 15, DYS 456 = 18, and DYS 449 = 31 in order of specificity. The Ewing men in our Group 5 also have DYS 391 = 10, where the R1b1c7 modal is 11.

¹⁷ I derived these data from Surname Atlas v1.05, a nifty little program available for twenty bucks from Archer Software at www.ArcherSoftware.co.uk. A similar, but less flexible tool that has data from both the 1881 and 1998 censuses is available online for free use at www.Spatial-Literacy.org/UCLnames/Surnames.aspx.

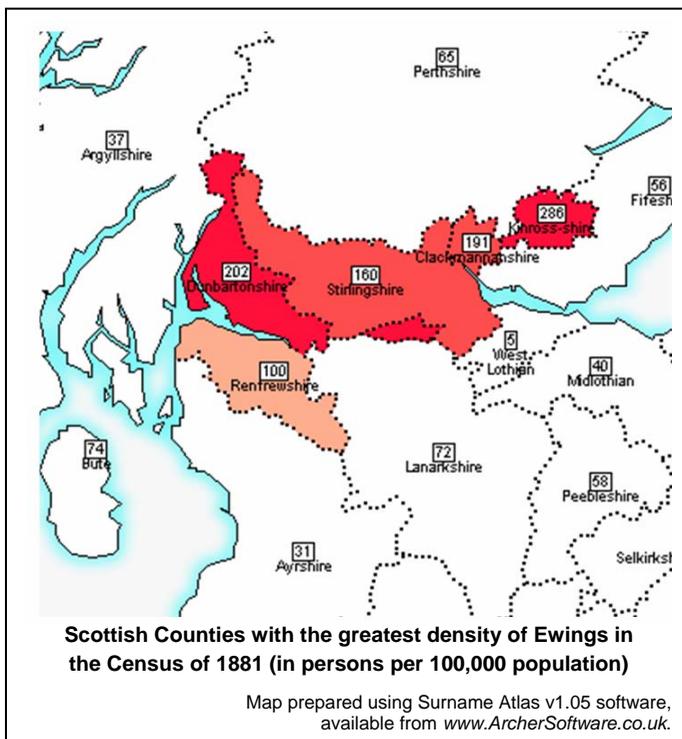
and 16 McEwen households.¹⁸ Interestingly, Ewing is far and away more common in modern-day America—in the 1990 US Census, Ewing was the 852nd most common name, whereas McEwan was the 13,958th most common name.¹⁹

Lamont

The Lamonts have a small Y-DNA project²⁰ with twenty participants. Men with a number of different surnames are represented. Evidently, the Lamonts were massacred and dispersed by the Campbells in 1646, and a number of them fled and took other surnames to conceal their identities. Their DNA is more diverse than the Ewing DNA, and only one clearly falls into the R1b1c7 subclade, but even he is genetic distance 11 from the Ewing modal. George Young, the group administrator for the project thinks that maybe his own haplotype could represent the original Lamonts. He is in R1b1, but not R1b1c7. His haplotype is not so far from the R1bSTR47-Scots cluster, a cluster better represented in Scotland than Ireland or elsewhere, and is thought by many to have originated in Scotland thousands of years before Dál Riata. The short story is that none of the men in Lamont project can be related to “the large group of closely related Ewings” in the time frame we are considering.

MacSweeney

If we are to believe the Irish pedigrees, MacSweeney was a part of the Anradan kindred that went back to Ireland in the thirteenth century as gallowglass, Scottish mercenaries who supported some of the Gaelic clan chiefs in Ireland, and for a long time served the O'Donnells of Donegal. At the time of the plantation, they were regarded by the English crown as Irish Catholics, but they had managed to stay to



¹⁸ These data are available broken down by county for free on the www.Ireland.com web site at <http://tinyurl.com/26oy3m>. Data broken down to the parish level is available for a fee at the same web site.

¹⁹ www.Census.gov/genealogy/www/freqnames.html

²⁰ www.Lamont-Young.com/lamont

the “right” side of the rebellions that resulted in the escheating²¹ of the lands of most of the Irish clans, and they were among the relatively few Irish who received grants of land and ended up powerful landowners in Donegal. The Sweeney FtDNA project²² has only 10 members. One participant has a 67-marker panel, three have 37-marker panels, two have 25-marker panels and the remaining four have only 12-marker panels. Three of these men appear to be in R1b1c7, but they do not have matches at the markers characteristic of the Ewings. One Sweeney is in haplogroup I, and the others in R1b1 outside of R1b1c7. I understand that there are a number of McSweeney haplotypes on Y-Search, but I have not found time to download and analyze these, though John McLaughlin tells me he has had a look at them and that no striking resemblance to the Ewings is evident. I added consideration of the MacSweeneys to this article after I had already prepared the network diagram that appears on page 41 so they do not appear there. Without more thorough analysis, I cannot say with certainty that there is no relationship between the MacSweeneys and the Ewings, but preliminary indications are that there is none.

MacNeill

As mentioned above, the MacNeills are not a part of the Anradan kindred, and there is no reason to suspect that they might be related to the MacEwans or Ewings, but there is a large MacNeill project,²³ and I thought it would be interesting to include their data in this analysis as a kind of control group. There are at least four distinct groups of MacNeills. One of these is a distinctive haplotype cluster including most of the MacNeills who trace their ancestry to the Isle of Barra. This is not R1b1c7 and is nowhere close to the Ewing modal, but by maddening coincidence, it shares with the Ewing modal the unusual marker DYS 442 = 11. If they were within even genetic distance 7 or 8 of the Ewings and had this marker, we would be tempted to call this evidence of a relationship, but their overall genetic distance is 19—much too long a stretch. Three McNeil participants are R1b1c7, so closer in genetic distance, but they do not have the distinctive Ewing markers. The other MacNeills are diverse types in R1b outside of R1b1c7. None of the MacNeills appear to be related to any of the Ewings.

Ewen of Strathclyde

The area of Scotland known as Strathclyde since the late ninth century had previously been a Celtic kingdom known after the Brythonic name of its capital, Alt Clud (Rock of the Clyde, in Cymric), which later became Dumbarton. The extent of its territory varied through the years, but for much of its history it occupied roughly the area of the modern-day counties of Renfrewshire, Dunbartonshire, Stirlingshire, Lanarkshire, Ayrshire and northern Dumfriesshire. It lay north of Hadrian's Wall²⁴ and was not occupied

²¹ *Escheat* is a common law doctrine that ensures that property is not left in limbo and ownerless. It originally referred to a number of situations where a legal interest in land was destroyed by operation of law, so that the ownership of the land reverted to the immediately superior feudal lord. In this article, it implies that the English crown took title to lands that it claimed had belonged to rebellious Irish Earls, neglecting to respect that in the Irish system, land did not belong to individuals, but to clans, and though the Earls decided who could use the land, they did not own it. Basically, James I used the rebellion of a few as an excuse to take everybody's land.

²² www.WorldFamilies.net/surnames/s/sweeney

²³ www.FamilyTreeDNA.com/public/MacNeil

²⁴ Hadrian's Wall was built by the Romans beginning in AD 122 in an effort to help defend occupied Britain from raids by the unconquered tribes to the north. It extended completely across Britain a distance of 73 ½ miles, from the

in the original Roman conquest of Britain, but a good part of it lay south of the Antonine Wall²⁵ and it came under Roman administration for a time.²⁶ There is little in the way of historical records of the region until the seventh century AD or so, but one of the earliest records records the defeat of the Dál Riata Scots at Strathcannon in 642 by King Ywain (Eugenius), who some have argued is one of the earliest known ancestors of the Ewings.

History²⁷

This region was for centuries at the fulcrum of a struggle between competing cultural and linguistic groups. When the Romans first came to the region, it was occupied by a British Celtic tribe, the Dumnonii, who probably spoke Cymric, a p-Celtic language more closely related to modern-day Welsh than to Gaelic. By the seventh century, Alt Clud already had long, complex and often contentious relationships with several neighboring peoples. To the northwest in Argyll lived the Dál Riata Scots, who spoke Gaelic, a q-Celtic language also spoken in much of Ireland. To the north lived the wild Picts of Caledonia, whose language is lost, but was probably also a p-Celtic tongue and may have been mutually intelligible with Cymric. To the west was the sea, a highway for Scots raiders on which the Vikings would also arrive beginning in the ninth century. To the east were the Germanic Angles, later supplanted by and intermixed with the Danes. To the south, at first there were Brythonic cousins of the people of Alt Clud, but they were soon supplanted by and intermixed with the Saxons, and several hundred years later, ruled by the Normans.

E.W.R. Ewing writes,

“Upon every border of Strathclyde the volcano had rumbled, and often the deadly eruption had laid her plains in waste and filled her streams with the bodies of her people; armies had marched and counter-marched over her fields, leaving only ruin and bleak desolation in their wakes.”²⁸

Ywain was the brother or brother-in-law of the Pictish King Bruide, and the Britons of Alt Clud and the Picts were allies in the seventh century and early eighth centuries against the Scots of Argyll—or at least against most of them, as there seems to be some evidence for an alliance between Alt Clud and Cenél Comgaill, a branch of the Dál Riata Scots on the nearby Cowal peninsula. There were four major battles between Alt Clud and the Scots in 678, 704, 711 and 717. Alt Clud won the first two and the Scots the next two, but Alt Clud managed to maintain independence. By the middle of the eighth

Solway Firth on the west to the mouth of the River Tyne on the east. Its ruins lie entirely within the boundaries of modern-day England, south of the border with Scotland by about 9 miles on the west and 68 miles on the east. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hadrian%27s_wall)

²⁵ The Antonine Wall was built by the Romans beginning in 142 AD a hundred miles north of Hadrian's Wall in a short-lived and largely ineffectual effort to extend the area of Roman control northward. It extended 37 miles across modern-day Scotland from the Firth of Clyde to the Firth of Forth. The wall was abandoned after only twenty years, when the Roman legions withdrew to Hadrian's Wall in 164 AD, and over time reached an accommodation with the Brythonic tribes of the area, who they fostered as buffer states. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonine_wall)

²⁶ By the time period we are focusing on here, these “walls” would have long been in ruins.

²⁷ Most of this history is taken from two articles in *Changing Identities, Ancient Roots: The History of West Dunbartonshire from Earliest Times*, Ian Brown, ed., Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2006. The two articles are: *The Early History and Languages of West Dunbartonshire* by Simon Taylor, pp 12-41; and *Highland and Lowland, Gael and non-Gael: West Dunbartonshire from the Thirteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries* by Edward J. Cowan, pp 42-66.

²⁸ Ewing, Elbert William R. *Clan Ewing of Scotland*, Corben Publishing Co., Ballston, Virginia, 1922, pp. 44-45

century, the Alt Clud's alliance with the Picts had ended and the Picts made an alliance with the Angles of Northumbria. Alt Clud dealt the Picts a major defeat in 750 (which may have paved the way for the eventual triumph of the Scots), but while they were at it, Northumbria took over a good part of Alt Clud territory in the south. In 756 Alt Clud surrendered their capital to the Picts and the Northumbrians, but nine days later they nearly wiped out the Northumbrian army. The *Annals of Ulster* state that Dumbarton "sufferd [sic] a burning" in 780. Usually a 'burning' signifies capture, and it is possible that another of our imputed royal ancestors, Owen,²⁹ was killed in this event. It is not clear which of their three adversaries at the time perpetrated this 'burning.'

The records are mostly silent for this period and it is not even clear that a Briton king ruled in Alt Clud for nearly a hundred years after the surrender of Alt Clud in 756, but it seems to have retained some degree of autonomy, and in 849, the Britons were back on the warpath against the Picts, perhaps in alliance with the Norse, who were also attacking Pictland at the time. This alliance, if such existed, did not last for long, and Vikings, based in their settlement in Dublin, sacked Alt Clud in 870. Though the Vikings did not stay and establish settlements or a government as they did in eastern Britain, they captured Arthgal mac Dumnagual, king of Alt Clud at that time. His ambitious son, Rhun mac Arthgal, persuaded his brother-in-law, King Constantine of the Scots, to arrange for the Vikings to kill their hostage, his father Arthgal, and so became the first in a series of sub-kings of Strathclyde, which now became a sort of client state of the Scots. It was then that the region came to be known as Strathclyde, the Gaelic name for what had been called Alt Clud by the Britons. Similarly, the capital of Alt Clud came to be called Dumbarton, from the Gaelic *dùn breatann* (Fort of the Britons). There was a shift of the center of power from Dumbarton south and west up the Clyde valley to beyond where Glasgow now lies, and Gaelic-speaking Scots began moving into the part of Strathclyde north of the Clyde, completely supplanting the Britons, culturally and linguistically, if not genetically. The Scots occupied what became the earldom of Lennox, a large area of modern-day Dunbartonshire and Sterlingshire surrounding Loch Lomond, which remained thoroughly Gaelic linguistically and culturally through the thirteenth century. Place names in Lennox today are overwhelmingly Gaelic, whereas in Lanarkshire survival of Brythonic place names is markedly higher.

The men of Strathclyde were defeated by the West Saxon King Athelstan in 934 and 937, but Strathclyde continued semi-independent. There was a major invasion of Strathclyde in 946 by the West Saxon King Edmund, who E.W.R. Ewing says "ravaged" Strathclyde.³⁰ In 1018, Owen the Bald, another of our eponymous ancestors, was killed in the battle of Carham, notwithstanding that he was fighting on the winning side with the Scots King Malcolm against the Northumbrians. The significance of this battle in retrospect is that it established the border of Scotland with England that has persisted to the present day. Strathclyde finally merged with Scotland in 1034 when its last king, Duncan mac Crinan, became also King of Scotland.^{31,32}

²⁹ Owen is one of our putative ancestors, who was King of Strathclyde at that time (see the King list on the next page). As confusing as it is, we must get used to seeing Ywain, Ewen, Owen, Owain, Eoghain, Eugenius, Eugien and many other spellings used interchangeably as variants of the same name.

³⁰ Ewing, Elbert William R. *Clan Ewing of Scotland*, Corben Publishing Co., Ballston, Virginia, 1922, p. 45

³¹ www.HistoryFiles.co.uk/KingListsBritain/BritainStrathclyde.htm (Incidentally, www.HistoryFiles.co.uk is a terrific web site for British History, which also contains a series of historical maps showing how the political landscape of Britain changed through the centuries. I encourage anyone interested in the subject to browse around this web site.)

I have summarized these several hundred years of history to give the reader a sense of how many armies marched back and forth across this country, and of how often the winds of shifting alliances and conquests must have forced our ancestors to move about and shift loyalties to survive, as well as how much the bloodlines of these various peoples must have mixed. We should also mention the development of Scots, the language they came to speak. Some consider Scots to be a dialect of English, others a distinct language. Early in the last millennium, there were many local versions of "English" that were not even mutually intelligible, and traces of these have survived in regional accents. Our ancestors spoke Scots. This was slow to take hold in Lennox and much of the Highlands, which remained Gaelic through the thirteenth century, but it began to develop and to be spoken in the twelfth century in Strathclyde south of the Clyde and other parts of the lowlands. Cymric died out in Scotland, but survived in Wales. Scots developed from the language of the Angles (the "Anglo" part of Anglo-Saxon), perhaps also influenced by Danish, and by some few borrowings from the Celtic tongues. In the twelfth century, those who spoke it called it *Inglis*, but by the early sixteenth century it came to be known as *Scottis*, and folks began to call it *Scottish Gaelic*, which had previously been called *Scottis*, *Erse* (Irish).³³ By the beginning of the fifteenth century, surnames had come into common use in the lowlands of Scotland, so we can see that Ewing developed as the Scots language was developing.

E.W.R. Ewing's Logic

E.W.R. Ewing makes much of the fact that there were a number of kings of Strathclyde that had names thought ancestral to Ewing. He lists a few; I think this is a more comprehensive list:

633 – 645	Eugenius (Ywain / Hoah) / Owen meb Beli
760 – c.780	Eugein / Owen
916/925 – 937	Eogan / Owen mac Donald (son of Rhun's nephew)
962 – 971	Donald III mac Eoghain
973 – 997	Malcolm mac Donald mac Eoghain
997 – 1018	Eoghain II / Owen the Bald ³⁴

He also cites references to several non-Briton kings with similar names: a couple of Dál Riata Scots kings of Argyll;³⁵ at least one Pictish king;³⁶ three BCE "Scots" kings (as this was long before Dál Riata, these should be Irish, but the context suggests E.W.R. Ewing thought that they were in "pre-Scottish Scotland," if you will);³⁷ and a descendant of Somerled,³⁸ who was of Norse descent, but does not let this divert him from his thesis that the Briton Ewens of Strathclyde were our progenitors.

³² This is the historical Duncan who was killed by the historical Macbeth, in a story that otherwise has little resemblance to Shakespeare's play.

³³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Scots_language

³⁴ Also known variously as Eógan II, Eugenius and Owain the Bald. Eógan II was killed during the Battle of Carham, in which he helped Malcolm and his other allies defeat the Northumbrians (Northumbria was by this time again an Anglo-Saxon kingdom, the Danes having been defeated).

³⁵ Ewing, Elbert William R. *Clan Ewing of Scotland*, Corben Publishing Co., Ballston, Virginia, 1922, pp. 55-56

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 56

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 57

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 58

Ewing also makes much of the story that Saint Kentigern was supposedly the son of a Ewen; indeed, he devotes his Chapter VII to a discussion of this, and I believe erroneously claims that the name "Kentigern" is somehow an alternate form of the name "Ewen."³⁹ In making his case for a Brythonic origin of the Ewings, E.W.R. Ewing quotes a "recent" writer he does not name:

"St. Kentigern was the son of Ewen ap Urien or Eugenius, a prince of the Britons of the Strathclyde—according to some the king of Cumbria—and Thenew (or Themin, as Baring-Gould spells it) daughter of Loth, king of Northumbria, or, according to others, king of the Lothians, to whom he is supposed to have given his name."⁴⁰

Assiduous genealogist that I am, I thought it might be interesting to check his sources. Mainly, I looked at *The Life of Kentigern (Mungo)*, written by Jocelyn, a monk of Furness in the twelfth century, in a translation by Cynthia Whiddon Green,⁴¹ and at references in her footnotes to a fragmentary earlier *Life of Kentigern*, which I think is probably the ultimate source of E.W.R. Ewing's information. Kentigern's mother was Thaney, the young, unmarried daughter of the pagan Briton King Leudonus.⁴² In what may have been the granddaddy of all non-paternal events, she was unexpectedly found to be expecting. Jocelyn tells us that when she learned from Christian missionaries of,

"...the son of justice having appeared through the star of virginity...Immediately her heart burned within her, and in her meditation that fire kindled within her...and she vehemently wished to be inflamed."

She was "inflamed" all right enough, and she thought her wish had come true. The King was not amused. He wanted to know who was the father of her child. She insisted she had become pregnant while still a virgin. In fact, and unbeknownst to her (so the story goes), Ewen, son of Erwegende (in the *Gestes of the Histories* he is called Ewen, son of King Ulien) had courted her, and when rebuffed because she wished to remain a virgin, dressed himself in female attire and impregnated her by stealth. It is unclear whether the King was more upset by her pregnancy or her conversion, but he was not buying her alibi, and

"Therefore, the above-mentioned girl was led on the command of the king to the brow of the highest mountain... so that she could be cast headlong downward from there and be broken bit by bit into pieces and torn limb from limb...[but] she descended in the fashion of a winged bird falling gently to earth."

More proof of divine intervention being needed, she was next put to sea in a small boat with no paddle, but the

"...little boat, in which the pregnant girl was held, rode the eddies whirling up and down, and being turned towards the opposite shore, ploughed with a much quicker passage than if it had been borne along by blown sails...[and] guided the woman safe to the harbor of deliverance, for the sake of the child she carried in her womb."

³⁹ Ibid., p. 81

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 71

⁴¹ Jocelyn, a monk of Furness *The Life of Kentigern (Mungo)*, twelfth century. A 1998 translation by Cynthia Whiddon Green is available online at www.Fordham.edu/halsall/basis/Jocelyn-LifeofKentigern.html. Note that Kentigern lived in the sixth century, so this biography, such as it is, was written some 600 years later.

⁴² Also sometimes rendered as Lot or Loth. I quote from Ms. Green's footnote 11: "However, in the first of the lectures devoted to Kentigern in the *Aberdeen Breviary*, Kentigern is said to be the son of 'Eugenius, King of Cumbria,' and 'Thennew, daughter of Loth, King of Lothian' is his mother. This legend would place Kentigern in the margins of the King Arthur legends as Lot is said to be the father of Gawain and Mordred, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth."

Thaney gave birth to Kentigern on the beach, perhaps near Culross in eastern Fife, on the north shore of the Firth of Forth, where they were rescued and cared for by St. Serf.⁴³ Kentigern lived a long life and performed many miracles, including a good many after his death in AD 603. He is supposedly buried in a crypt beneath the cathedral in Glasgow.

Well, now. I scarcely know what to say. I have an idea the keepers of the crypt will be slow in letting us try to extract DNA from the bones of Kentigern, and even if they would, that we would be able to do so. I do not think it will be difficult to persuade the reader that there are at least some legendary insertions into this purportedly factual account of Kentigern's origin, but perhaps you will have doubts about whether there could be any useful facts in the story at all. What is of the most interest to me is that the tangle of genealogic and spiritual threads in the story of Kentigern are spun from the fleeces of all of the cultural/linguistic groups that have contributed to our ancestry.

DNA Data Considered

So, if Kentigern is not available, whose DNA do we test to check on E.W.R. Ewing's hypothesis? It would be terrific if we could run down some lineal descendants of one or another of the Kings of Strathclyde, but being a king in those days was a rather hazardous occupation, what with all their relatives standing in the wings waiting to gouge their eyes out or worse. I have an idea that they have no lineal descendants, and even if they do, there are no records to establish just who they may be. Next best, and I still have high hopes that we will eventually be able to take this approach, would be to identify Ewings in Scotland who have their conventional genealogies worked out back far enough that we can be reasonably certain of the county where their Ewing ancestors lived in 1500 or so. So far, we have recruited the grand total of one Ewing who was born in Scotland into the project: James McCartney Ewing (JM3), who was born in Glasgow, but does not know where his grandfather may have come from. We also have a couple of project participants who are descended from recent enough immigrants that they have a good paper trail to Scotland, but we simply do not have enough data of this kind to allow fruitful analysis.

Since we have been talking about a period in which surnames were not really in consistent use anyway, I thought maybe it would be interesting to compare Ewing DNA to that of some other surnames that are likely to have originated in the same general area. If I were as fastidious as I might wish, I would have figured out what other names are most common in just the same areas as the Ewings, and tracked down their DNA. As it is, I took another approach, and just took some data from two readily-available sources that included a lot of individuals who undoubtedly have roots in the area.

Campbell is a large clan with many branches, and a goodly number of them were in the general area of Scotland where Ewing names were concentrated, but especially also to the north and west in Argyll. The Border Reivers lived along and on both sides of the border of Scotland with England, predominantly south and east of the area where we think the Ewings lived. Speaking generally, the Campbells were on one side of the Ewings and the Border Reivers were on the other. It made sense to me to ask which of these groups the Ewings most resemble. Finally, Owen is the Welsh version of Ewen, and some have

⁴³ Also rendered in Latin as *St. Servanus*. It seems that the historical St. Serf, if he existed, probably did not live in the same century as Kentigern, though it is not clear to me whether he lived before or after.

argued for a remote kinship between us on that basis, though I have previously shown that this is not so.⁴⁴

There is a big Campbell project⁴⁵ that has data readily available, and a Border Reiver project,⁴⁶ which also has gathered quite a fair amount of data on a long list of names from the Scottish Borders, including Armstrong, Beattie, Bell, Burn, Charlton, Crosier, Dixon, Elliot, Ellwood, Fenwick, Forster, Graham, Hall, Hetherington, Hume, Hunter, Irvine, Johnstone, Kerr, Little, Maxwell, Musgrave, Nixon, Noble, Robson, Scott, Simpson, Storey, Selby, Tait, Taylor, Turnbull, Watson and Wilson, to name a few. There is also a good-sized Owen project,⁴⁷ and though their data is not available online, their group administrator kindly sent it to me when I asked him to do so some months ago

Network Analysis

I took the 25-marker data from the Lamont project, the subset of the McLaughlin project most closely related to the Ewings, the McNeil project, the Owen project, the Campbell project and the Border Reiver project, and then plotted them with our Ewing data in the network diagram on the next page.

The ovals give a rough idea of the boundaries of some haplogroups and the R1b1c7 subclade. The circles are proportional in size to the number of individuals with each haplotype and the lines connecting them are proportional to the genetic distance between the haplotypes. You can see “the closely related group of Ewings” as the darkest circles near the middle of the R1b1c7 oval (in the online version of this article, Ewings appear in red). The R1b1c7 McLaughlins are the next darkest cluster of circles (blue, in the online version) to the right, at about four o’clock. It is a bit hard to distinguish the difference in shading, but the large circle just touching the closely related group of Ewings at two o’clock consists of R1b1c7 McNeills (green), and the smaller circle at about five o’clock has some Reivers (cross-hatched). The R1b1c7 oval also contains five-or-six Campbells (yellow) and a Lamont (lavender).

The R1b oval outside of the R1b1c7 subclade contains representatives from all of the groups considered. You should remember that something like 80% of all men of Western European extraction are R1b. Near the middle of the oval, the cross-hatched circles are all Reivers. To their left, above the R1b1c7 oval, are the Barra McNeills. At about two o’clock is a cluster of Campbells, though Campbells are also scattered around the rest of the diagram as well. There are also four Owens and four Lamonts scattered here and there in the R1b oval, and thirteen Ewings who are not in the “closely related group,” if I am counting right.

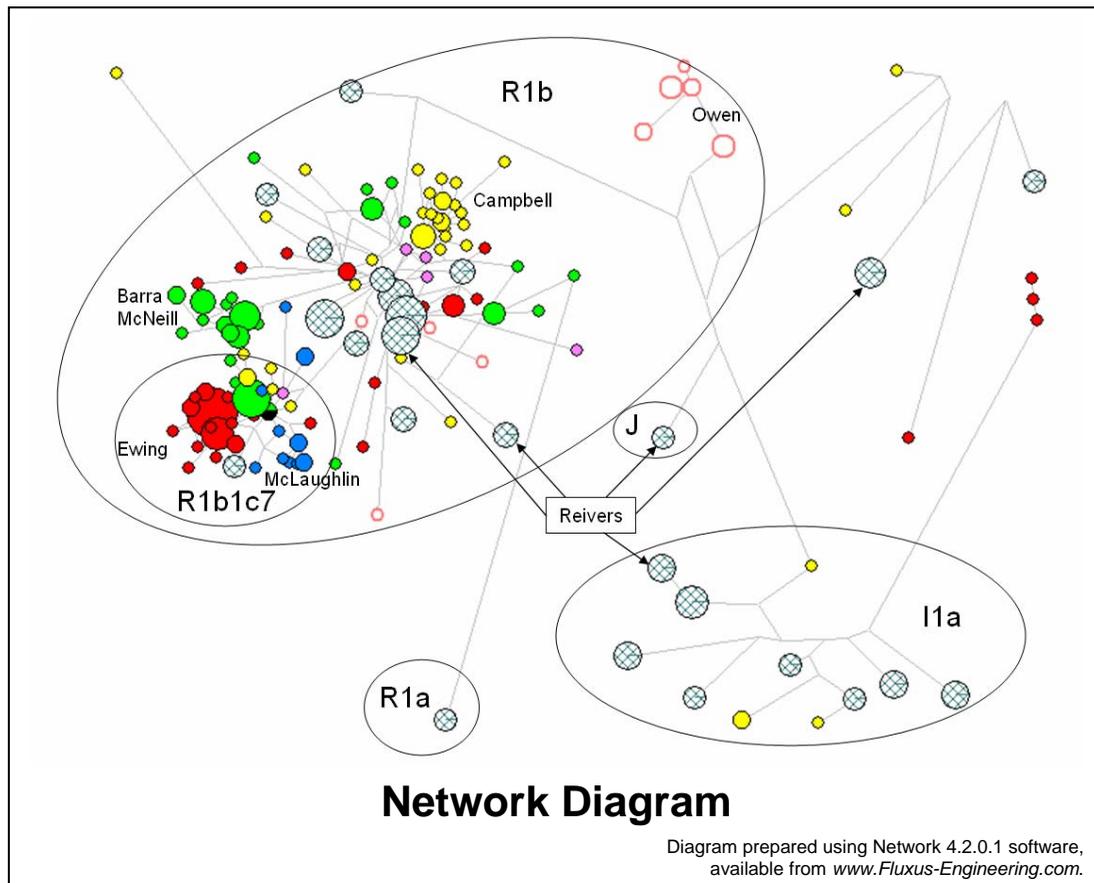
Below and to the right of the R1b oval are ovals containing haplogroups R1a, J and I1a—all predominantly Reivers in this diagram. R1a is more characteristic of Eastern Europe and I1a of Germanic as opposed to Celtic types. J is thought to descend from Middle Eastern farmers who came into Europe with the Neolithic spread of agriculture. You can also see a cluster of eleven Owens represented by the open circles at the top of the diagram just right of center. They are also supposedly in R1b; I am not clear why they should be so far from the others. As I review my work in trying to figure

⁴⁴ Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project Article 6, *J. Clan Ewing*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (May 2006).

⁴⁵ www.FamilyTreeDNA.com/public/Campbell

⁴⁶ http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~gallgaedhil/elliott_border_reivers_dna.htm

⁴⁷ www.geocities.com/~owenfamil



this out, I see that I somehow included only fifteen Owen haplotypes in the diagram even though I have over three times as many, and that among those I left out are nine in haplogroup J2, one in haplogroup I, and one in haplogroup E3b.

Finally, notice also the Ewings on the far right of the diagram. The one by himself is lonesome old JD, who is probably in haplogroup I1b2*,⁴⁸ and the cluster of three is Ewing Group 9, the descendants of William Ewing of Rockingham, who are probably in haplogroup I1b2a1.

The Answer

We began by asking whether Ewing was more likely derived from the Gaelic Clan McEwan of Otter or from Ewen among the Brythonic Celts in Strathclyde. So, what is the answer? To me, the network

⁴⁸ When an asterisk follows a haplogroup designation, as I1b2*, it means, "that part of I1b2 that cannot be assigned to a specific subclade of I1b2."

diagram makes it perfectly clear that nothing is perfectly clear. There are some provocative clusters within several of the surnames, including the MacLochlainns of Tirconnell, the Barra McNeills, and a cluster of Owens in addition to the group of closely related Ewings. But every surname we have considered has representatives just about all over the map.⁴⁹ Actually, this is not surprising. What James V. Elliot says on the Border Reiver web site⁵⁰ about the heritage and genealogy of the Border Reivers applies equally to all of our families.

"The intermingling of peoples along the Anglo-Scottish border produced a tough, hybrid culture claiming many lines of descent. Individual clans often explained their own origins with stories as grand as any creation myth. A chieftain of the Armstrongs once recounted that the Elliots and the Armstrongs were descended from two brothers whose mother was a Viking woman and whose father was a bear, and that the Icelandic Sagas had extolled their mighty deeds. (Most of the time, however, the Armstrongs attribute their origins to the mere son of a Danish nobleman, or to a brave Norman squire named Fortinbras who saved his master's life in battle.)

"It is unlikely that all the members of any Border family were descended from the same ancestor. The pervasive social upheaval increased the chances that men sired by members of one clan might be born or raised under the surname of another. So did the matrimonial customs of Border families, which encouraged trial marriages and allowed wives to keep their maiden names. Moreover, the clans themselves were political entities as much as families, and many men adopted the surnames of other clans to obtain their protection and a franchise on their power.

"There is particular uncertainty in the case of the Scotch-Irish, as much of their genealogy was lost or scrambled when they were forced to resettle in Ulster. There is even a rumor that the name 'Elliott' was generically applied to many of these emigrants because of its sheer notoriety, whether they were really 'Elliotts' or not.

"It is a contention of [our] DNA Project that many of these clans have multiple progenitors, possibly of quite different ancestry, and that many of them may also share some of the same ancestors."

What is more, I suspect that some of the apparent clustering results from sampling artifact. Haplotypes were not collected from men with each of these surnames at random. For example, in the Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project we have actively solicited specimens from men we know to be related, because one of our objectives is to find genetic markers for branch points in known Ewing lineages. To the extent we succeed in this to the exclusion of Ewing men who are not related, we will find clusters that show our sampling bias rather than the data structure in Ewing men at large. That said, if you will permit me to express an opinion not based on any hard data, I am now more favorably disposed toward the conclusions of E.W.R. Ewing than to those of R.S.T. MacEwen.

It remains to explain why so many of the Ewing men in our project are in R1b1c7, the so-called NW Irish cluster. The DNA evidence adduced in this article does not even weakly support the notion that the Anradan kindred was R1b1c7, independently of the question of whether Ewing derived from MacEwan. Perhaps some of the other Dál Riata clans or individuals were R1b1c7. Though recent historians have come to doubt that the Dál Riata were Uí Néill, there may very well have been a few R1b1c7 individuals among them—there is no reason to assume that tribal groups even from this early period were genetically homogeneous. Or perhaps an Irishman ventured into Strathclyde long before there was any

⁴⁹ The only reason you do not see McLaughlins away from the cluster is that we chose to include only McLaughlins that were in the cluster. The Owens also appear more tightly clustered than they actually are, because I neglected to enter all the Owen data.

⁵⁰ http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/%7egallgaedhil/elliott_border_reivers_dna.htm#Question2

such thing as Dál Riata or Uí Néill. Or perhaps the commonly accepted notion that R1b1c7 originated in Northwest Ireland is mistaken.

What would be surprising indeed is to find a consistent haplotype in all of the men who share a British surname. My suspicion is that the relatively tight surname clusters we have found do not have the antiquity that calculations of TMRC (time to most recent common ancestor) based on estimated average mutation rates suggest, but rather that these clusters represent groups of men descended from relatively recent ancestors—in the case of the Ewings in the large closely related group, perhaps less than 500 years.

This is actually good news for genetic genealogy, though. Early in our project, I was becoming discouraged because it was so hard to distinguish the various Ewing lines that were so similar. But recently, we have had quite a number of new participants in the project whose haplotypes are clearly distinct. This is going to make it much easier to match future project participants with lines they may be related to. I think a good topic for my next Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project article may be fuller discussion of the results of participants I have referred to as “Singletons” in previous articles.

To Join or Get More Information

If you are ready to join the project, go to www.FamilyTreeDNA.com/public/ewing and click on *Join this group* at the top of the blue section at the left of the page. Participation by Ewing women is also welcome; they can get valuable genealogic information by persuading a male relative to submit a specimen. You can see results tables showing participant haplotypes on the *Clan Ewing* web site. There are also links on the *FamilyTreeDNA* web site to articles and FAQs. If you want to ask questions, call me at +1.505.764.8704 in the evening, or EMail me at DavidEwing93@gmail.com.

David Neal Ewing has been a member of Clan Ewing in America since 1996 and has served as its Chancellor since 2006. He previously served as Chair of its Board of Directors from 2004-2006. He is also Administrator of the Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project, which he founded in 2004, and he is a regular contributor to the Journal of Clan Ewing. Dr. Ewing has a private practice in clinical geriatric neuropsychiatry in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He received his M.D. degree from the University of New Mexico and did his residency training at the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan.