

## ***A Chief for Clan Ewen?***

**David Neal Ewing, Chancellor (+1 505.764.8704, *DavidEwing93 at gmail dot com*)**

There has been no official chief of Clan Ewen<sup>1</sup> for many generations. The last formally acknowledged chief of Clan Ewen of Otter, Swene McEwen, died in 1493. Thor Ewing has made a plausible case that the chiefship was reestablished something less than a hundred years later when William Ewing of Ladytoun was granted arms by Mary Queen of Scots, and led his clansmen in her forces at the Battle of Langside in 1568 against the Earl of Lennox, who had been their feudal lord.<sup>2</sup> The details of the genealogy of the descendants of William Ewing of Ladytoun are not known, but at least two American Ewing families have traditions that they were descended from Ewings who had coats of arms very similar to those granted to William Ewing of Ladytoun. Many of you will have received a message that Thor Ewing sent January 17<sup>th</sup> to our Google Group's *EFA* discussion list<sup>3</sup> announcing that the Lord Lyon in Scotland is organizing a Family Convention<sup>4</sup> to determine whether the chiefship of Clan Ewen should now be reestablished and perhaps to appoint a chief. Thor has set up a separate Google Group discussion list to facilitate the discussion of this issue.<sup>5</sup>

Some of you have followed the discussion on the new list, which has become spirited and is beginning to get lengthy. I had thought to publish the whole discussion thread in this issue, but it has become too long for that. Instead, I have selected a few messages that speak about the main points of contention.<sup>6</sup> John McEwen is the current Chairman of the Clan Ewen Society. Thor Ewing is a member of both the *EFA* and the Clan Ewen Society, of which he is webmaster. And of course I am David Neal Ewing, Chancellor of the *EFA*. You may also be interested to read my posting on the implications of the Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project on these questions, which is reprinted in this issue of the *Journal* as a Y-DNA Article (see page 15).

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<sup>1</sup> 'Ewen' is just one of many ways to write in English the Celtic name that is usually transcribed as *Eoghain*. The prefix Mac- or Mc- signifies 'son of' so, for example, the members of Clan Donald are often named McDonald. When our ancestors began speaking Scots and other dialects of English, many of them dropped the prefix, and the root name came to be spelled in dozens of ways – mainly as Ewin, Ewen, Ewan and Ewing, or any of these with a terminal 's' added, but also many others. For a partial list of these, see [www.clanewen.org/variants](http://www.clanewen.org/variants). The spelling Ewing may have developed because of a regional difference in pronunciation, but I am inclined to think rather that the 'g' was added because Anglo-Saxon patronymics end in –ing. If you want to read more about these matters, have a look in the Reading Room of our web site at:

[www.EwingFamilyAssociation.org/documents/Document\\_BritishSurnames.html](http://www.EwingFamilyAssociation.org/documents/Document_BritishSurnames.html).

<sup>2</sup> [www.EwingFamilyAssociation.org/documents/Ewing\\_Thor/Ewing\\_Thor\\_WhoWere.html](http://www.EwingFamilyAssociation.org/documents/Ewing_Thor/Ewing_Thor_WhoWere.html) and [www.clanewen.org/histories](http://www.clanewen.org/histories).

<sup>3</sup> Anyone may post a message to our *EFA* list by sending EMail to [EwingFamilyAssociation at googlegroups dot com](mailto:EwingFamilyAssociation@googlegroups.com). If you would like to join the EMail list and receive messages of this kind, send a request for an invitation to Martin Ewing at [M.Ewing at snet dot net](mailto:M.Ewing@snet.net).

<sup>4</sup> You can read the Lord Lyon's *Guidance as regards the holding of a Derbhfine or Family Convention* at [www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/656.html](http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/656.html).

<sup>5</sup> If you would like to subscribe to this Clan Ewen list, send an email to [clanewen+subscribe at googlegroups dot com](mailto:clanewen+subscribe@googlegroups.com).

<sup>6</sup> You can read all of the messages that have been posted to this list at <http://groups.google.com/group/clanewen?hl=en&pli=1>.

Please also refer to my Chancellor's Message in this issue (page 49), where I ask whether the *EFA* should take a position on this and whether we should send a delegation to the Family Convention in Scotland to participate in the proceedings. Time is of the essence, so please post any thoughts you may have about this on the *EFA* discussion list. Please be clear that there are two lists – the *EFA* discussion list (<http://groups.google.com/group/EwingFamilyAssociation>) is the proper place to discuss whether the *EFA* should take a position and what this should be, and the Clan Ewen discussion list (<http://groups.google.com/group/ClanEwen>) is the proper place to discuss your ideas about whether a chief should be chosen and how.

### **January 17, 2011 – From Thor Ewing (*Thor at HistoricalArts dot co dot uk*)**

Currently, Clan Ewen is classed as an 'armigerous clan' - that is, as a clan without a chief.

The Lord Lyon is now organizing a Family Convention at which prominent clansfolk will have the opportunity to discuss the issue of Chiefship in Clan Ewen. This could lead to the appointment of a new clan chief; if a decision on a new chief is reached, it will stand for all future generations.

Obviously, it's impossible for everyone to meet in the flesh to discuss this question, but nonetheless many clansfolk have their own views, and this forum is the place to make them heard.

So, would our clan be better off with a chief or not?

Modern MacEwens, MacEwans, McEwens, McEwans, McEwings, Ewens, Ewans, Ewings and other variants of the name probably originate in at least three separate historical clans. What is more, there are two separate armigerous traditions within these families, one associated with the surname 'Ewing' and another with surnames beginning with the prefix 'Mac-' or 'Mc-' (and it's possible that one tradition is linked with Clan Ewen of Otter, and the other with a separate MacEwen clan). So, should there be more than one chief? If so, should the new chiefships reflect: - the different clan origins of the modern names? - the different modern surnames? - the different armigerous traditions of the clan?

And of course, if we are to have a chief or chiefs, how do we decide who it's to be?

Don't put your answers on a postcard. Post them at <http://groups.google.com/group/ClanEwen>.

### **January 18, 2011 – From John McEwen (*JRHMcEwen at btinternet dot com*)**

Thank you to Thor for setting up this group.

As Chairman of the Clan Ewen Society I should first of all point out that the Society decided, as long ago as 1995, that the Clan should seek to elect a Chief. That was when the Chiefship fund etc was set up, not to discuss the matter further but to put in motion the mechanism which would lead to our Clan joining those Clans represented at the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs.

There had indeed been talk of our finding a Chief since at least the 1950s but when it came to our notice, in 1994, that the MacLachlans were advertising for members of their society, and implying that the McEwens could join as we were merely a sept of the MacLachlans, and we were powerless to prevent this untruth being disseminated – because we had no Chief – the then Chairman of the Society, Lt. Col. Alan Ewing, began to make the strenuous efforts required for the election of a new Chief.

Those efforts are now, at last, bearing fruit in the form of this Family Convention which the Lord Lyon is currently working out how to organise. The purpose of this convention is to make the first moves toward electing a Chief. The Lord Lyon is the final arbiter, the provider of legitimacy.

We are indeed a 'scattered Clan'; the Chiefly line is indeed lost; we do perhaps have many and various historical origins. These are all considerations, one might well argue, which stand in support of our quest for a Chief. No one will deny that Clan Ewen is an important Clan and, if the Clan system has meaning (surely it does), then our Clan should have a voice and the best way, the only way, to be a Clan which is able to make a contribution to the general good and to look after all those who feel they belong to it, is to be a clan with a Chief.

The Clans are a vital presence in the life of modern Scotland and the Scottish diaspora; and they are set to be yet more vital in the future. Our Clan must play its part. Despite our possibly various origins, we do seem to have a distinct identity, with far more than our share of, for example, musicians, doctors, historians, politicians. (All four of those professions might be thought to derive from our traditional role as bards.) We are distinct, we cannot help it, and our unique voice should be heard in such an increasingly important forum as The Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs.

Of course, the past is important and the Clan Society will never lose sight of its task to facilitate investigations into Clan Ewen ancestry etc, but it must be remembered that ...

#### THE PRESENT IS THE PAST OF THE FUTURE!

This is our opportunity to provide future McEwens, Ewings, Ewens, Qns etc with a landmark in history. This could be the year when this ancient, diverse, scattered, vast Clan comes together, bonds, puts aside any differences, unites and gives a sense of belonging and legitimate pride to any Clansfolk who want them, whether in Winnipeg, Wyoming or New South Wales, now, in the 22<sup>nd</sup> century or in the centuries to come.

This is a serious matter but it is also, after all, a matter of romance. The pride one feels in one's family, one's name, one's Clan, should be a force for good and a pretext for good fellowship. Nothing bad can come from our finding ourselves a Chief. We will lose nothing and gain much.

The possibility that many of us who belong to the Clan Ewen Society originate from different strands gives extra impetus to the quest: with a Chief, those strands will be entwined, be more than the sum of their parts.

Does anyone really believe that those Clans which already have Chiefs comprise Clansfolk with unvarious historical origins? Of course not! How much did luck, opportunism, bad spelling, muddle, compromise, adultery, dishonesty contribute to that particular MacDonald marching up the Royal Mile so proudly behind his MacDonald banner? No one will ever know – but he has every right to feel his pride as a MacDonald and as a Scotsman. Our fascinating and complicated history will continue to fascinate but should not stand in the way of our giving all our Clansfolk the opportunity to belong to a top-rank, Chiefly, Clan.

My own position in this is slightly awkward in that my branch of the Clan, the McEwens of Marchmont and Bardrochat, has been mentioned as Chiefly in spirit for a number of years, and Lt. Col. Ewing first got me involved with the Society with the Chiefship in mind. Because of this, I tried to avoid too-close involvement with the Society but, when the question of disunity became so apparent that there were two

McEwen tents at the Gathering in 2009, I decided to put myself forward as Chairman in order to try to help to bring peace to the situation.

So, when this Family Convention occurs, it is possible that I shall be a candidate for the Chiefship. However, I do believe that I am being honest when I say that the arguments I have put forward, as Chairman of the Society, in favour of our electing a Chief, would be identical were I not a candidate.

No one, not even the Lord Lyon, knows quite what to expect of this Family Convention and there is as yet no indication of when it might occur. But, please, do lend it your support, even in theory, and accept the fact that a Chief (even a complete nobody!) will confer great benefits on all Clansfolk, now and in years to come, here in Scotland, as elsewhere. The election of a Chief will also be the best illustration yet of the truth of our motto, generally translated as "We Shall Rise Again!"

REVIRESCO!

### **January 28, 2011 – From Thor Ewing (*Thor at HistoricalArts dot co dot uk*)**

In my previous posts on the subject of chiefship, whilst I haven't tried to hide my own beliefs, I have concentrated on setting out what I see as the facts of the case. In brief, I have pointed out that we are descended from several unrelated historical clans, and that the two separate armigerous traditions suggest that there are at least two clans sharing the name of Clan Ewen even today. If you want to learn more about the historical Clans Ewen, I have now posted an article online which is to be published in the much-delayed Clan Ewen Society Bulletin: [thorewing.net/clans/ewen/clan-or-clans](http://thorewing.net/clans/ewen/clan-or-clans).

This post is a more personal statement.

My main concern is not whether there's a new chief or not, but what the new chiefship represents. I'm a fan of the clans not because they give us chiefs and tartans, but because they are a living embodiment of our family roots.

The clan is a part of who we are. It's not something we have much choice about. You never have to join your own clan because you're already a member, even though many people think that joining the clan society is joining the clan. As a descendant of the clan, you're in it whether you know it or not unless you repudiate your links. As we look back into our families' pasts, there it is growing stronger the further back we go. It's written into our very names. Accepting your clan identity is a matter of owning up to who you are.

As a Ewing, I know I'm descended from Clan Ewen of Lennox. There is no room for reasonable doubt on this, but it happens that Ewing is the only surname derived from MacEwen which can confidently be traced to a single clan. Other surnames, including Ewan, Ewen, McEwan, McEwen, MacEwen, MacEwan and so on, might sometimes originate in the same historical clan as my family. Just as often though, these names will have their roots in Clan Ewen of Galloway, or in the Clan Ewen that split from the Camerons, or perhaps in some other yet-unidentified MacEwen clan.

Each of these clans has its own unique and distinctive history. They are not interchangeable. Neither are they 'all one clan really'.

We have recently heard a proposal that all these clans should be united under a single chief with a single motto. This would do away with the real clans that gave us birth, and replace them with a new super-clan.

I'm aware that many MacEwens might not know which clan they come from, and for these people there might be some appeal in lumping us all together as if we were one clan. Over the coming years, as Y-DNA tests yield more data this will steadily become less of a problem, since our clans are written in our Y-DNA just as surely as they are in our names. This is something we can all help with, especially if you know what part of rural Scotland your ancestors originated in (please contact David Neal Ewing to learn more and find out whether you might want to take part).

Some of us have grown up believing that we are all descended from a single clan, and I realise that there's a certain sentimental attachment to the myth that we are all the scattered remnants of Clan Ewen of Otter. Without doubt, some of us are descended from that clan, since at least one of the later MacEwen clans was established by the clansfolk when they left their old lands in Cowal for a new home. But elsewhere there was already a MacEwen clan even before the time of Ewen of Otter, while many MacEwens might be descended from a breakaway branch of Clan Cameron.

I do know my clan, and I'm slowly piecing together the story of my ancestors. Our lot were Covenanters with a history of fighting for what we believed in even when it meant fighting against the king. I'm proud of my heritage. It might be your heritage too, but other MacEwen clans will have had very different histories. Some of you might have had ancestors fighting against us; some of you will have been Jacobites. If that's your story, it's one to be proud of too. But to mix these histories together undermines the very thing that gives them meaning, the very thing that gives meaning to the clan.

I don't want to swap my ancestral clan with its roots in the 1300s, for a manufactured confection founded in 2011. If I have a chief, I want to know he's from my clan – but I'd never expect him to claim rights over anyone else's clan. My clan has its own individual motto, AUDACITER; it's been around for the best part of 500 years and I don't want it changed for a new blended variety. When you discover your own clan, I'm fairly sure you'll feel just the same.

You might be part of a clan society which is open to everyone who shares your surname, no matter what your ancestral origins or affiliations. That's as it should be, but the clan is different. The clan society is not the clan, but a bunch of people who are interested in the clan or clans.

You're also in a clan, and that's a very different animal. Unlike the clan society, you've been a member since the moment you were born. The wonder of the clan itself is that it takes us back through our fathers and our fathers' fathers to a common point in the past which we share with our fellow clansfolk. The clans to which our ancestors belonged give us our surnames to this day. But when two unrelated clans give rise to the same surname it does not follow that their descendants belong to the same clan. To pretend otherwise is disrespectful to the memory of your ancestors and mine.

To redefine the clan along the lines of a clan society would make it no more than a club for people with similar names. We have one of those already in the clan society.

As I have written in the Introduction to *New Notes on Clan Ewen*,<sup>7</sup> "if we feel pride in our past, it is because it is our ancestors who have made us what we are – let it be a pride in our real ancestors! To falsify the story of our ancestry is to be dishonest about who we are ourselves. To acknowledge the true story of our ancestors is perhaps the greatest service we can do them."

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<sup>7</sup> Ewing, Thor. *New Notes on Clan Ewen*, The Clan Ewen Society, 2009. [www.clanewen.org/shop/newnotes](http://www.clanewen.org/shop/newnotes)

That's why I see any attempt to gain overlordship of the entire name as a hostile takeover bid, and I will oppose it no matter who it comes from.

New clans for old? No thank you!

**January 28, 2011 – From David Ewing (*DavidEwing93 at gmail dot com*)**

...The *EFA* is an organization very like the Clan Ewen Association. The first two sentences of the *EFA* web site home page are:

*Ewing Family Association* is dedicated to fostering and facilitating the development and dissemination of accurate, verified and well-documented histories and genealogies of Ewing families around the world.

We welcome the participation of families with variant spellings of the name, including Ewen, Ewan, Ewin, McEwan, McEwen and many others.

The Clan Ewen Society and the *EFA* are basically surname interest groups, and I believe they have a very important role to play, but they are not Clans. I agree with Thor Ewing that it would be a mistake to try [to] turn either of them into a Clan wholesale, because doing this would require ignoring what we know about the history of several distinct family groups that were never members of the same Clan, notwithstanding that they have surnames that are basically orthographic variants of one another.

This does not mean that I accept all of Thor's ideas. I believe that his evidence and arguments are very convincing that William Ewing of Ladytoun, who was awarded arms sometime in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century by Mary Queen of Scots (let us call these the 'Audaciter' arms), and his close kin are the ancestors of many present-day Ewings in the Scottish Lowlands and especially in Ulster and America. Y-DNA data, recurrence of similar arms in several different family traditions and oral traditions among several emigrant lines strongly support this. We do not presently have documented genealogical proof of this connection earlier than the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, but we are not satisfied that it will be impossible to develop this. I am also persuaded that William Ewing of Ladytoun had at least the status of a Clan Chief, because otherwise it would be hard to explain how he could have led his clansmen in battle against their feudal lord.

Thor is convinced that this family descended from remnants of Clan Ewen of Otter. There is a fair amount of circumstantial evidence that this could be so, and though I once followed E.W.R. Ewing in doubting it, I am now inclined to believe it. But I think even Thor would agree that the evidence for this is not as strong as the evidence of continuity from William Ewing of Ladytoun to a large fraction of modern-day Ewings. (One problem for this theory is explaining why the Y-DNA signature of this family is in the haplogroup characterized by R:M222+, which is strongly associated with NW Ireland and the Scottish Lowlands, and not with Argyll or the rest of the Highlands. Perhaps Thor would suggest that this is because Anradan's descendants are supposed to have come to Argyll from Ireland – but it would take us too far afield from the matter at hand to discuss this in depth here.) Further, even if it is true that some remnants of Clan Ewen of Otter settled in Lennox and became Ewings, this doesn't mean that there could not have been other remnants of Clan Ewen of Otter that ended up elsewhere in Scotland and established branches with surviving modern-day descendants.

Finally, though this is not material to the present discussion, I think Thor believes that Clan Ewen of Otter is in fact a part of the Anradan kindred, and therefore blood kin of their neighbors the Lamonts and the MacLaughlins who all had lands on the Cowal Peninsula along the eastern shore of Loch Fyne in

Argyll. As Thor well knows, I do not believe this. I have never seen credible evidence, but neither do I have anything like proof that it is not so. And I am doubtful that we will ever have a definitive answer to the question. Where the MacEwens were before Castle McEwen on Loch Fyne, I do not know. I have never raised this possibility before and do not know that anyone has, but if the Y-DNA characteristic of a majority of the Ewings in the Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project really did come from McEwens of Otter, an argument could be made that the folks who built Castle McEwen had gone there from the Lowlands. Goodness knows there was trouble enough in the Lowlands for long enough prior to the time Castle McEwen was built to make any sensible family want to get far away and build a fort. Of course, that is true of practically any place on planet Earth and certainly every place in Britain.

My opinion is that most of the arguments I am hearing to have 'one Clan Ewen' are really arguments for having a surname interest group. I made the very same arguments before we changed the name of *Clan Ewing in America* to the *Ewing Family Association*. Indeed, I would like very much for our two organizations to become more closely allied and integrated. In spite of our best efforts, both of our organizations are a little parochial. We recognize that we have kinsmen all over the world and we would cherish their participation and fellowship, but up to now each of us has only token participation from other countries...

#### **January 30, 2011 – From John McEwen (*JRHMcEwen at btinternet dot com*)**

Greetings everyone...

Here are a few words to stick up for the proposal that we find ourselves a single Chief.

I do not think that this proposal shows disrespect to our ancestors and I am not sure why it might even be thought to do so. No one's history would be rubbed from the record; on the contrary, as this discussion demonstrates, the more we come together to consider these matters, the more information is shared, the more we all learn, the more respect is shown.

At the same time, there are of course McEwens, Ewings etc who will have no chance of discovering who their ancestors were. Must they be excluded from membership of a Clan because their Clan has various origins and they will never know which origin is theirs? Do women get to play a proper part when the emphasis is so much on [Y-DNA]? And what about the adopted and the illegitimate and so on. Can they not participate?

Of course a Clan is, indeed, as Thor Ewing writes, "a living embodiment of our family roots" but The Gathering in 2009 showed that it is a lot more than that as well. The Clan network is proving an ever-increasingly important presence in the life of Scotland and the Scottish diaspora, and folk rightly want to get involved. Our Clansfolk will not be able to play their full part in the contribution that the Clans are set to make unless we provide ourselves with the strong unified identity which would come from appointing a single Chief.

The notion that we should be thought of as several different Clans is disputed by the very language that we are using. Even the title of Thor's booklet, *New Notes on Clan Ewen*,<sup>8</sup> would suggest to the passing reader that a single Clan was the subject under discussion; and so I believe it is. Yes, we are distinct,

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

have various origins etc. So does every other Clan! Differences have been put aside, a new beginning made, history respected, recharged, renewed ...

When Thor and I marched shoulder-to-shoulder up the Royal Mile in 2009 in the Clan Parade, we marched behind a banner proclaiming MACEWAN. Thor is a Ewing, I am a McEwen but we were happy to represent all those whose surnames might roughly resemble ours, to represent, indeed, our Clan.

All those watching (including the millions who might have glimpsed us on Neil Oliver's TV show, *The History of Scotland*) and all those participating (I thought) were happy to consider us, and our fellow marchers, as representatives of a single Clan. Thor and I both carried flags, announcing to the world the existence of separate heraldic traditions within a single Clan, and, with the folk from the other MacEwan tent sulking elsewhere, it was a joyous occasion and an occasion which felt *authentic*.

As far as I was concerned, this was the moment when our Clan took its rightful place at the table, and now we just need to make our status official. The Clan Parade was not called the Clan Society Parade, it was nothing to do with Clan societies. We marched together because we belonged together, Ewings and McEwens and all the other spellings, we marched together because, unlike the MacDuffs and Mackenzies in front and the MacFees behind, we were the MacEwans, the Clan Ewen, a distinct and proud band of brothers and sisters, a Clan.

I honestly cannot see why the appointment of a single Chief would threaten in any way the growing awareness we have of our origins. As was so plain to me that evening in July 2009, we belong together.

And I can only hope that the Family Convention leads to some official recognition of that. Of course, there might be a call for some imaginative solutions to matters of heraldry etc but what we do not want, surely, is for all this trouble to be taken and then nothing happen at all, no change in the *status quo*, no enhanced prestige for Clansfolk everywhere. Surely no one wants that!

Let us, indeed, rise boldly once more!

### **January 30, 2011 – From David Ewing (*DavidEwing93 at gmail dot com*)**

I am very concerned that the usefulness of Y-DNA studies in raising and answering questions regarding our family histories not be exaggerated or misunderstood.

John McEwen's articulate message from earlier this morning raises these questions:

"Do women get to play a proper part when the emphasis is so much on Y-DNA? And what about the adopted and the illegitimate and so on. Can they not participate?"

Please recall what I said in my January 19<sup>th</sup> posting:

"Please be clear that I do not mean to suggest that the Chiefship should be decided on the basis of Y-DNA evidence, or even on conventional genealogic evidence ..."

And in my January 25<sup>th</sup> posting:

"Genetic testing certainly must not be used as a litmus test for who is properly qualified to be a member of the Clan or its chief, but it can give us a very much richer understanding of the roots of and relationships among the many families that bear variants of the surname Ewen."

By no means should there be any undue 'emphasis' on Y-DNA studies, or on genealogy, or on family traditions, or on heraldry, or on history, or on any of the numerous threads of evidence that we have

available to us. Nor should there be undue emphasis on the emotional feelings of connection that John speaks about when he says such things as, "... it was a joyous occasion and an occasion which felt *authentic*." Rather, any levelheaded, fair-minded approach to the matter under discussion should consider all of these, evidence and feeling, knowledge and wish, and then make a decision about how to proceed.

My understanding is that Clan membership can come about automatically by heredity or by choice when a person declares allegiance to the Clan, and that once one is a member of a Clan, he or she can cease to be a member only by formally renouncing allegiance to the Clan. All clans include individuals and families who are not genetically related in the paternal line. All clans have as many women as men. This has been so since the first clans were established and no one is arguing that this should be changed.

The present state of Y-DNA studies is that we know there is a large group of Ewings (and Ewins) who have a common ancestor in the paternal line, who lived something like 500 years ago, and we do not have enough evidence to determine whether or how many other groups like this exist among families with orthographically similar surnames or what their relationships might be to the related Ewings or to one another. Plainly, this evidence is inadequate to base any decisions about Clan Ewen upon. What would be interesting is to have enough Scottish McEwen's [Y-DNA] tested to determine whether there are similar groupings among them and whether any of these appear to be genetically related to the large group of related Ewings.

Consider that most (but certainly not all) of the McEwens of Otter were probably genetically related. It is possible that when the Clan was broken they were disbursed and established themselves in several branches in various places in Scotland and lost touch with one another. If so, we would expect in principle to be able to find groups of genetically related individuals with roots in each of these places, and perhaps even be able to calculate a time depth for how long ago the branches separated. The fact that each of the groups would certainly now also have members who are not genetically related in the paternal line would make identifying the 'signal' a little more difficult and would require that we test a larger number of individuals, but would not make it impossible. If the time depth of separation as calculated on the basis of genetic distance happened to agree with the time we know that the Clan was broken, then we would have something approaching 'proof' that each of these groups were descended from Clan Ewen of Otter. Further, if they did not appear to be related to the large group of related Ewings, this would raise serious doubts that the Ewings came from Otter. There are dozens of other possible scenarios, but I just want to make the point that it is possible to learn interesting things about family history from Y-DNA testing that in no [ways] exclude anybody from membership in whatever Clan they choose to identify with.