

## Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project

## Article 6

This is the sixth in a series of articles about the Ewing surname Y-DNA project. The first five articles have appeared in the last five issues of the *Journal of Clan Ewing*. They are also available on-line at the Clan Ewing WebSite (go to [www.ClanEwing.org](http://www.ClanEwing.org) and click on *Project Articles*).

### Prices Reduced and New Tests Available

There is good news for the project. Family Tree DNA, which does our testing, has reduced the price of the recommended 37-marker panel to \$189 for project participants, and the upgrade from 12 markers to 37 is now \$99. Family Tree DNA has also made an expanded panel of tests available, to a total of 59 markers. We do not recommend the 59-marker panel for most purposes, though it may be useful for fine tuning some branches of the family once we have the basic structure worked out. At the present stage of development of the project, we won't be able to tell you any more with a 59-marker panel than we can with a 37-marker panel. There is also now available some "deep clade SNP testing," but I haven't given enough background on this in previous articles to go into it, yet. The short story is that it is essentially certain that all members of the project would have identical results on this test, and since I have ordered it on myself, no one else needs to do so. We will have a report on that in the August Journal.

### New Results

We have new results on four participants with 37-marker panels and three with 12-marker panels. Results are pending for two 37-marker panels, one 12-marker panel, and two upgrades to 37 markers. We now have a total of 36 men who have joined the project, including three whose names are variant spellings. We have results on 33 men, 31 of whom are Ewings. The pending results are due out in May. We hope this will encourage many of you who have been on the sidelines to join the project!

The results we have received so far are posted on the Clan Ewing WebSite (go to [www.ClanEwing.org](http://www.ClanEwing.org) and click on *Ewing Y-DNA Project Results*). We have decided not to include results tables in the print version of the Journal because of the expense of making color copies. If you have no access to the web and would like for me to mail you a copy of the results tables, call me at the phone number shown at the end of this article and I will do it.

### Related Surnames

#### Variant Spellings: McEwan, Ewen and Ewan

In addition to men named Ewing, we now have a total of three "non-Ewing" men who have joined the project: one McEwan, one Ewen and one Ewan. We know from our own conventional genealogic research that our Ewing ancestors' names were often spelled or misspelled in a variety of ways, so we are expecting to turn up some relatives with alternate spellings of the name. Ewan's results are still

pending, but we have results on the other two. Interestingly, neither of them is related to any of the Ewing men in the project, nor to one another. We have only 12-marker data on Ewen. He is at genetic distance seven from the Ewing modal haplotype, and McEwan is at genetic distance four (using only his 12-marker data). A distance of more than one or two on 12-marker data means probably not related. On the other hand, Ewen is genetic distance three from McEwan and from JM Ewing (who are also genetic distance three from one another), which is considerably closer, but probably still not close enough to be considered cousins. Now, we can't make too much of this, because we have results on only one man of each of these surnames. We have been in touch with the Clan Ewen Society, USA ([www.clanewenusa.org](http://www.clanewenusa.org)), and have invited participation in the project by more of their members, so maybe we will learn more as time goes along.

Meanwhile, you may recall that one of the goals of the project was to determine whether we can see a genetic relationship between modern day Owens, Youngs and Ewings as might be expected if some of the reasoning in the *Origin of the Ewing Name* article posted on our website is correct. There are Family Tree DNA Surname projects for Young and for Owen, and we have obtained their data for analysis and comparison.

### **Young**

The Young project has 43 participants who are genetically quite diverse. Members fall into at least five different haplogroups—recall that “haplogroups” separated from one another on the order of ten thousand years ago. Everyone in the Ewing project, including the “unrelated” folks, is in a single haplogroup, R1b. If we consider just the 24 Youngs who are in haplogroup R1b, we find several pairs of men who seem to be related to one another, but no larger families of the kind we have found in the Ewing data, and only 2 Young men with 25-marker data are within genetic distance three of the R1b Young modal haplotype. Mostly, these guys are not related to one another. Interestingly, one Young man with 25-marker data is only at genetic distance two from the Ewing modal haplotype. We can at least speculate that he is descended from a Ewing somewhere along the line.

### **Owen**

The Owen project has 56 participants in four haplogroups; 40 of them are in the same R1b haplogroup that everyone in the Ewing project belongs to. Within the R1b data are four distinct family groups. The closest any Owen comes to the Ewing modal haplotype is genetic distance five on 25-marker data—so, not related. Further, it looks like no participant in the Ewing project has anything like a close match with anyone in the Owen project.

The bottom line is that though Young and Owen may have some linguistic or historical connection with Ewing, we have enough DNA data now that we can say with some confidence that most folks with these surnames today are not related to us.

## Analysis of the Ewing Data

The most striking and robust result of the project continues to be that such a large fraction of the Ewing men tested appear to be in one family. This now includes 27 men of the 31 tested, and one of the four men we have not included (TD) is a borderline case on whom we presently have only a 25-marker panel. He has just ordered an upgrade to 37 markers, which we hope will allow us to get clear about this. Within the 27-man Ewing group, we have conventional genealogic evidence that nine of them are descended from John Ewing of Carnashannagh (RL, GW, RB, FE, WK, BE, RD, RP and EG2<sup>1</sup>), three of them from "I think his name was William" (JN, DG and WR), and three from James Ewing (b. c1720/25, m. Mary Shellenbarger) (WC, SC and DC). At least three more men have genetic profiles that suggest they could be in the John of Carnashannagh group (DN, FI and RA) and four more have profiles that suggest they could be in the "I think his name was William" group (EN, EG, RC and JM2<sup>2</sup>). We have been unable to classify several participants genetically, yet, but we have conventional genealogies on all of them.

Though DN (yours truly) has a haplotype that perfectly matches two men in the John of Carnashannagh group, we have conventional genealogic evidence that he is NOT in the group. We think DN is descended from James Ewing of Inch Island; 37-marker results are pending on a new participant also descended from this family (GR), so it is going to be very interesting to see those results. Meanwhile, we were very interested to see that there is a very close match (a difference of two steps at a single marker) between EG2, a new participant in the John of Carnashannagh group, and WC, whose relatives, Clan Ewing stalwarts Jill Spitler, Eleanor Swineford, Betty Whitmer and Barb McGuinnis, had thought was descended from James Ewing (b. c1720/25, m. Mary Shellenbarger). This is going to generate a fair amount of head scratching.

Some Y-DNA surname projects have difficulty working out family relationships because their participants are so dissimilar that it is clear they are not in one family. The Ewing project is running into a different kind of difficulty, because the different branches of the family are so closely related that their genetic profiles seem to overlap. The fact that my 37-marker haplotype is identical to those of two men in the John of Carnashannagh group does not prove that I am descended from John of Carnashannagh (though it is not impossible, my conventional genealogy may be mistaken), but it does prove that my ancestor was his close relative. The fact that WC and EG2 have haplotypes more similar to one another than either has to haplotypes of others in the groups they thought they belonged to suggests that one of them may have a mistake in his conventional genealogy, but it does not prove this.

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<sup>1</sup> We are calling Edward Glenn Ewing "EG2" to distinguish him from Edward Gibson Ewing, another project participant who we shall continue to refer to as "EG."

<sup>2</sup> We are calling John Matthew Ewing "JM2" to distinguish him from James Morgan Ewing, another project participant who we shall continue to refer to as "JM."

## John of Carnashannagh

There are a couple of controversies in the genealogy of the descendants of John Ewing of Carnashannagh. The first concerns whether he is actually the father of James Ewing of Pocahontas, as Margaret Fife and Jim McMichael have concluded. This is a reasonable conclusion that has some sources, but universally convincing documentary evidence is lacking. The second concerns whether Pocahontas James married a second time to Sarah Edwards and fathered more children with her. Fife listed this marriage and some descendants in Chapter XI of *Ewing in Early America*, but she recognized that this may be an unrelated family, as Jean McClure has argued. We are hoping that the DNA project can cast some light on these controversies, and we just received a piece of evidence bearing on the first of these questions.

**Partial Y-DNA data from descendants of John Ewing of Carnashannagh**

ID	...	DYS439	DYS389-1	DYS392	DYS389-2	...	DYS460	GATA-H4	YCA-11a	YCA-11b	DYS456	DYS607	DYS576	DYS570	CDYa	CDYb	DYS442	DYS438
mod	...	13	13	14	29	...	11	11	19	23	18	16	18	17	37	38	11	12
RL	...	12	13	14	29	...	10	11	19	23	18	16	19	17	37	38	11	12
GW	...	13	13	14	29	...	11	11	19	23	18	16	19	17	37	38	11	12
RB	...	13	13	14	29	...	11	11	19	23	18	16	19	17	37	38	11	12
FE	...	13	13	14	29	...	11	10	19	22	18	16	18	17	37	38	11	12
RP	...	13	13	14	29	...												
WK	...	13	13	14	29	...	11	11	19	22	18	15	18	17	37	38	11	12
BE	...	13	13	14	29	...	11	11	19	22	18	16	18	17	37	37	11	12
RD	...	13	13	14	29	...	11	11	19	22	18	16	18	17	37	38	11	12
EG2	...	14	13	14	29	...	11	11	19	23	18	16	17	17	37	38	11	12

Data is in FtDNA (Ysearch) order, but 20 loci are omitted

### Line of Descent

- RL William, through John (1754-1832, m. Alice Caswell), then Milton
- GW William, through John (1754-1832, m. Alice Caswell), then James M.
- RB William, through John (1754-1832, m. Alice Caswell), then Elijah
- FE Pocahontas James, through Indian John, then John S.
- RP Pocahontas James, through Swago Bill, then Thomas
- WK Pocahontas James, through Swago Bill, then Enoch
- BE Pocahontas James, through Swago Bill, then George
- RD Pocahontas James, through Swago Bill, then Andrew
- EG2 John Jr., through Joshua, then John S.

Have a look at the table. This shows the first and middle initials of project participants down the left side and marker loci across the top. The marker loci are all in their customary order, but twenty of them have been left out to simplify the table, because they are identical to the Ewing modal haplotype in all of these men.<sup>3</sup> As you can see, we could have left out another nine loci, which are also identical in all of these men. Below the table is a list of the men in the table showing their lines of descent from John of Carnashannagh. The first three are

<sup>3</sup> This was true when the table was prepared, but we didn't have complete results at that time. It turns out that EG2 has another mutation in one of the markers that were left out, but reworking the table would be a lot of trouble, the Journal deadline is upon us, and this does not affect the reasoning in this article, so we have left the table as it is.

all through his son, William, and grandson, John, but then through different great grandsons. The fourth (FE) is through his son, Pocahontas James, grandson, Indian John, and great grandson, John Smith Ewing. You get the drift.

Our new piece of evidence comes from a new participant, Edward Glenn Ewing (EG2). He is a descendant of John of Carnashannagh's son, John, Jr. The argument goes like this. All three of the descendants of William have the mutation  $DYS\ 576 = 19$ . All four of the descendants of Pocahontas James who have been checked for it have the mutation  $YCA-IIb = 22$ .<sup>4</sup> If William and Pocahontas James are in fact both sons of John of Carnashannagh, then it looks like they each got a different mutation from him. This is certainly not impossible; but, it is a little surprising. Mutations are relatively rare events, and here is a crucial ancestor who has conveniently passed on different mutations to two of his sons.<sup>5</sup> Now what can we learn from the results of EG2? If he had  $DYS\ 576 = 19$  and not  $YCA-IIb = 22$ , we would have concluded that John of Carnashannagh himself had  $DYS\ 576 = 19$  and that William and John, Jr. are his sons, but that Pocahontas James is probably not.<sup>6</sup> Why? Because Pocahontas James would have to have received two mutations—losing  $DYS\ 576 = 19$  and gaining  $YCA-IIb = 22$ —and two mutations is a lot to expect for one reproductive event.<sup>7</sup> But since EG2 has neither of these mutations, we can continue to think that all three of these putative sons of John of Carnashannagh are brothers. EG2 also has three new mutations not shared by others in this group— $DYS\ 439 = 14$ ,  $DYS\ 437 = 14$  and  $DYS\ 576 = 17$ .

Why aren't we concluding that these new mutations must have occurred in John of Carnashannagh's son, John Jr., being incredulous that there could be three, and claiming that they can be used as markers for the descendants of John Jr.? This is because EG2 is the only project participant in this line and he is eight generations from John of Carnashannagh. These mutations are markers for the descendants of EG2, to be sure, but they probably occurred at different times sometime in the eight generations leading up to him. One of them could be a marker for all the descendants of his fifth great grandfather, another for all the descendants of his grandfather and the third just for his descendants. To know when these mutations occurred, we would have to have results on more men in this line. Now, especially attentive readers will be noticing that EG2 is no closer than genetic distance four from any other men in this family (except possibly RP, on whom we have only 12-marker data), is at distance five from most of them, and is distance seven from RL. This could be used to argue that EG2 is not in this line at all. We have other project participants known not to be descended

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<sup>4</sup> Raymond Peyton Ewing (RP) has a 12-marker panel, which does not include  $YCA-IIb$ . All of the others in this group have 37-marker panels.

<sup>5</sup> We have glossed over the fact that all three of the descendants of William are through one of his sons, so this mutation could have occurred either when William was born or when his son John was born, but that doesn't change the argument to speak of.

<sup>6</sup> More strictly, we should say that Pocahontas James is not the brother of John, Jr. and William.

<sup>7</sup> If EG2 had  $YCA-IIb = 22$  and not  $DYS\ 576 = 19$ , then we could have made a similar argument that William is not the brother of Pocahontas James and John, Jr.

from John of Carnashannagh, who appear on genetic grounds to be more closely related to these men than EG2 is. The same could be said of RL. I believe the conventional genealogy, though, and think rather that this is evidence that mutations are occurring in this line somewhat faster than the average rates that are generally suggested by DNA researchers.

### **I think his name was William**

We have a new set of results (on John Matthew Ewing, JM2), which show the mutation DYS 391 = 10 that we think may be a marker for this family. So far, we have only 12-marker results, so we can't determine if he also has the mutation CDYa=35 that all three of the conventionally proven members of this family share, but he has ordered the upgrade to 37-markers, and we should know soon. This will be an interesting result, because John Matthew is descended from Robert Ewing (b. 1800, m. Mary Williamson 24 Nov 1820 in Cumnock, Muirkirk, Ayrshire, Scotland). US Census records show both of these folks as having been born in Ireland, so they must have immigrated about 100 years after the other immigrant descendants of William?, who are the ancestors of the three participants known to belong in this group on conventional genealogic grounds. This piece of genetic evidence may very well produce a lead connecting the very early American Ewings with relatives who remained behind in Ireland and Scotland.

### **Unclassified New Participants**

We have a new 37-marker panel on David Lee Ewing (DL), who has hit a brick wall at Oscar Ewing (b. c1870 in MD, d. 1942, Harford Co., MD). Oscar was living as a "servant" with another family at ten years of age, and it was not clear whether he may have been an orphan, or even an illegitimate child who took his mother's name. DNA results convincingly identify DL as a Ewing—he is at genetic distance three from the Ewing modal haplotype—but two of his mutations are not shared by any of the other Ewing participants. His third mutation (DYS 570 = 18) also turns up in another of our new participants, William Leigh Ewing (WL), who may be descended from Alexander Ewing (b. c1730 in Scotland, d. 1790) through James Ewing and Benjamin James Ewing in Massachusetts and Vermont, and certainly from Henry (Harry) Ewing (b. 1798 in VT, m. Hannah Irish, d. 24 Jul 1841 in Ontario, Canada). He differs from the Ewing modal haplotype at only this marker, so the two of them are at genetic distance two from one another. DL is the only Ewing project participant who shares DYS 570 = 18. This suggests that the two of them might be from the same sub-branch.

We are waiting on results of another new participant (Michael Thomas Ewing, MT), who is descended from Samuel Alexander Ewing who emigrated from County Donegal to Australia with his wife and seven children in 1853. Two of his sons subsequently immigrated to Iowa from Australia. I'm excited that we are beginning to get wider participation in the project, and hope that we can eventually get some participants who are still living in Ireland and Scotland.

## To Join or Get More Information

If you are ready to join the project, go to  
<http://www.familytreedna.com/public/ewing>

and click on “Join this group” at the top of the blue section on 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, genetic distances and time to the most recent ancestor estimates expressed as number of generations on the website of Clan Ewing. There are also links on the FamilyTreeDNA website to articles and FAQs. If you want to ask questions, call me at 505-764-8704 in the evening, or e-mail me at  
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