

Report on A1 Clade / R-L193

Introduction

The R-L21 haplogroup (ISOGG: R1b1b2a1a2f) contains a distinct cluster of individuals identifiable by the following marker values that are rare in R1b as a whole:

<u>Value</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
607=16	14% of R1b
406S1= 11	11% of R1b
534=14	13% of R1b
617=13	6% of R1b
572=12	4% of R1b
640=12	5% of R1b

Several researchers have identified this cluster as being part of a larger cluster of L21 defined by 406S1=11 and 617=13. In November 2009, Mike Walsh began [a project at FTDNA](#) dedicated to this larger cluster, dubbed the R-L21* 11-13 Combo Group. He also started [a Yahoo Group](#) dedicated to the 11-13 cluster. Mike refers to the clade that is the subject of this paper as R-L21* 11-13 A1. I will maintain a shortened version of his usage throughout this paper, referring to the clade as simply A1.

R-L193

The A1 clade overlaps to a great extent with the population of men who have tested positive for the L193 SNP. This haplogroup is classified as R1b1b2a1a2f5 by ISOGG. A more convenient shorthand is R-L193, or simply L193. At least one individual who has 4 of the 6 defining markers of the A1 clade has tested negative for L193, indicating that L193 may be a subclade of A1.

The attached spreadsheet contains [all the haplotypes I have identified as being probable members of the A1 clade](#) as of 01/11/2011.

Age

Tim Jantzen's MRCA utility yields an average age estimate for the A1 clade of 35 generations. Using a generation length of 30 years, this estimate would place the progenitor of the A1 clade at around 950AD. As a rough rule of thumb, a margin of error of about 30% is appropriate for probabilistic estimates like this, which would entail a broader time period of 650AD – 1250AD about which we can probably have more confidence.

For R-L193, Tim Jantzen's utility yields an average age estimate of 30 generations, or around 1100AD. With a 30% margin of error, the range expands to roughly 830AD to 1400AD. It seems clear that the MRCAs of A1 and L193 were probably close to each other in time and that they lived probably at some point in the middle ages.

Geography

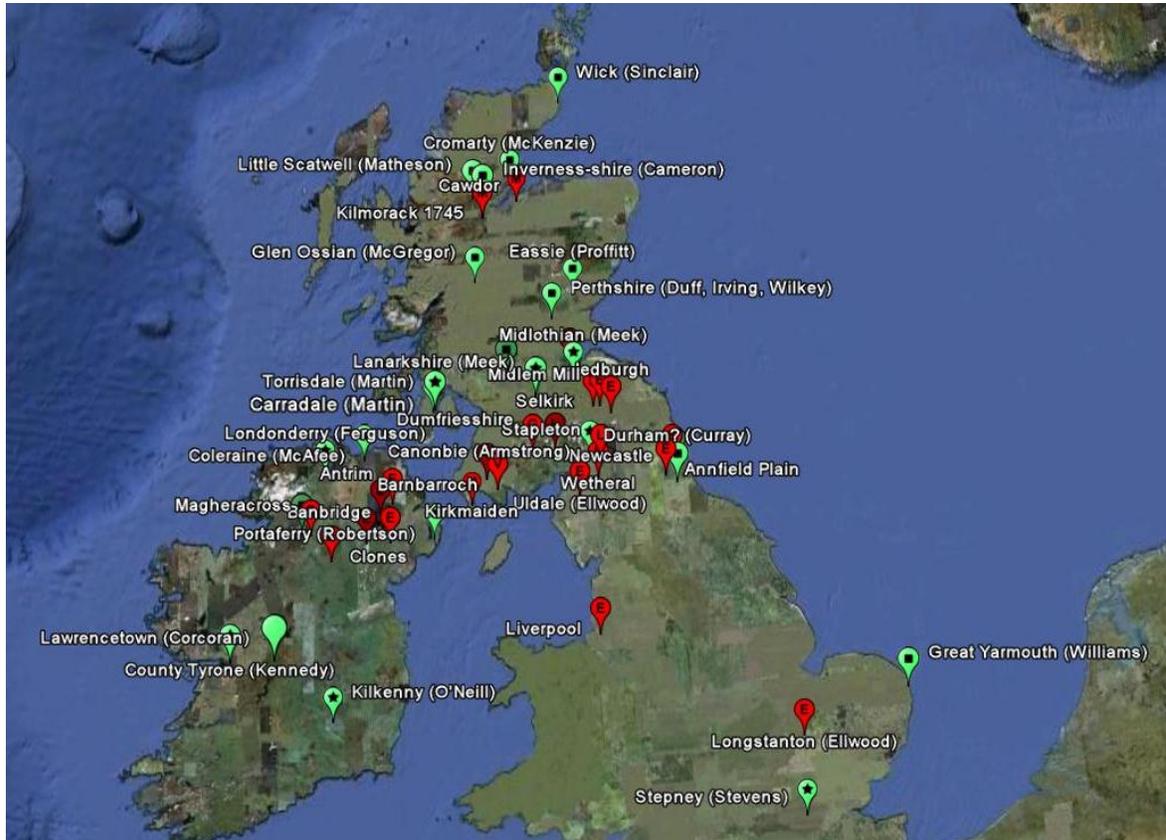
When removing duplicate surnames, A1 clade members with stated origins in Europe break down geographically as follows:

Scotland=27
Ireland=17
England=10

The geographical distribution is heavily tilted towards Scotland, especially considering that some of the English clade members appear to be from Scotland border families and that many of those who trace back to Ireland appear to be from lineages that may have arrived there during the Plantation of Ulster in the 17th century. Although several A1 descendants have traditions of Norman ancestry, there are no members who are able to trace back to continental Europe via a reliable paper trail.

The following map illustrates the geographic distribution of the earliest known ancestors of A1 clade members. Red markers represent members of the Elliott, Glendenning/Clendenin, Little, McClain, and Vans/Vance families, which together make up about 62% of the clade. The green markers represent other surnames. Note the heavy concentration in the borders/lowlands region:

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Five Scottish Families

Probably the most striking aspect of the A1 clade is the preponderance within it of individuals from just five surname groups: Elliot, Glendinning, Little, McClain, and Vance (or variants of these names). Thus far, they constitute a stunning 62% of all the A1 clade members I have identified. While there are other families represented by more than one individual, these particular 5 families stand out because they all constitute the largest single group of tested individuals of their surname. Some of them additionally represent the mainstream group within the surname, assuming the surname has a mainstream tradition of origin. Together they constitute a kind of superfamily within A1, and also within L193, since members of each family have tested positive for L193. The bulk of this paper will be about them, because examining their origins provides the best opportunity for learning something concrete about the progenitor of the whole clade.

For the sake of consistency and brevity, in my discussion of the families from here on out I will refer to them by a single variant. I will call the McClain/McLain/McLean family simply **McClain**, since that appears to be the most common spelling in the group. Likewise I will refer to the Elliot/Elliott/Ellwood family as **Elliott** and to the Little/Lyttle/Litel family as **Little**, since those are by far the most common spellings in those families. I will refer to the Clendaniel/Clendenen/Clendenin/Clendennen/Clendenon/Clendinen/Clendening/Clendinning/Glendenning/Glendenin family as **Glendonwyn**, since that is how the name was originally spelled when it first appeared and may serve to encompass all the later derivations. I will refer to the Vance/Vans family as **Vaus**, since that is the spelling most often seen among the earliest documented ancestors of the Vans/Vance family at their estate in Galloway. Following is an overview of the A1 families' relative size or importance in their surname group:

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Elliott

Jim Elliott, administrator of the Elliott surname project, reports that the Elliots of the A1 clade are those of Clan Elliott, the ones thought to descend from the border Elliots of Liddesdale and Roxburghshire. They constitute about 37% of all Elliots who have tested at least 25 markers and are by far the largest single group among Elliots.

Glendonwyn

The A1 clade contains an overwhelming 70% of all men of Glendonwyn-derived surnames who have had their Y DNA tested, which supports the tradition that this is a surname group with a single origin.

Little

The A1 Littles appear to be the largest single group in the Little DNA project at 24% of the whole. In an April 16, 2006 post to the Little surname message board at Ancestry.com, the late Leo Little, former administrator of the project, described this group as descending from “a common Little ancestor in the borders region of Scotland and England.”

McClain

As befits a highland clan surname, the universe of McClains is very diverse, with only a few small pockets of individuals who appear to descend from some common ancestor in the last 1000 years. Almost half have no close matches, but about 56% of the tested McClains seem to be related to other McClains within a genealogical timeframe. The largest single cluster belongs to the A1 clade, which consists of roughly one third of tested McClains.

Vaus

The Vaus group contains the heir of Barnbarroch, who traces back to Robert Vaus of Barnbarroch (d.aft.1459). Thus, the A1 Vaus represent the mainstream group among the Scots-Irish Vances, who have a shared tradition of descent from Barnbarroch. They are also the largest single group in the Vance surname project, constituting 27% of those tested.

When these five Scottish families are isolated from the other surnames in the A1 clade, Tim Jantzen’s spreadsheet yields an average age estimate of 32 generations, which is more or less comparable to the estimates obtained for A1 (35 generations) and L193 (30 generations).

To bring the picture more into focus I generated estimates for the TMRCA between the families. Although these interfamily estimates may not be precisely correct, their relative ages should theoretically be revealing as to when the lineages split off from each other. They are listed here along with single-family MRCA estimates in order of the antiquity of the average estimated age (for the year estimates, a generation length of 30 years is assumed).

Glendonwyn-McClain: 32 generations (1040AD)
Elliott- Little: 32 generations (1040AD)
Elliott-Vaus: 31 generations (1070AD)
Elliott-McClain: 27 generations (1200AD)
Glendonwyn-Vaus: 27 generations (1200AD)
Vaus-Little: 27 generations (1200AD)
McClain-Little: 26 generations (1220AD)
Glendonwyn-Little: 26 generations (1220AD)
Elliott/Elwood: 25 generations (1250AD)
Glendonwyn-Elliott: 23 generations (1310AD)
Vaus-McClain: 23 generations (1310AD)
Little: 22 generations (1340AD)
Elliott (without Elwood): 17 generations (1490AD)
Glendonwyn: 16 generations (1520AD)
Vaus: 15 generations (1550AD)
McClain: 14 generations (1580AD)

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From these estimates it appears that probably not many generations after the superfamily MRCA, his descendants had split into three branches: one leading to Elliott/Glendonwyn, one leading to Little, and one leading to McClain/Vaus. Subsequently, the Elliott/Glendonwyn branch and the McClain/Vaus branch split into branches leading to the separate families. The Elliott branch estimate is 25 generations with the Ellwoods, but 17 without, which suggests that the Elliotts and Elwoods occupy distinct branches. In fact, the evidence suggests the the Elliott/Elwood split may be roughly as old as the Elliott/Glendonwyn split, and possibly older. The MRCAs of the present-day Elliott, Glendonwyn, McClain, and Vaus all appear much more recent, around 14 to 17 generations.

One could argue that the margin of error that should apply to these estimates swamps the small differences between them. Still, the above interpretation of how these family lineages may have branched away from each other does have some support from the genetic and historical evidence. Genetically, Elliott and Glendonwyn really do appear to be more closely related to each other, and they are also extremely close to each other geographically. There is also an intriguing possibility of a connection between McClain and Vaus in the north of Scotland.

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Genetic Characteristics of the Families

Each of the five families has one or more defining STR values that set them apart from the others and from the A1 clade as a whole.

Elliott

The Elliott branch is characterized by 459b=9. Although this value is present in only 17% of R1b, it is held by virtually every Elliott who may be identified as a member of the A1 clade.

The Elliott modal value on CDY is 40,41, a two-step distance from the A1 modal of 38,39.

The Elliott modal on 458 is 17. This isn't unusual, since 17 is the modal value of R1b on that marker. However, unlike in R1b, the Elliott branch is roughly bimodal on 458, with 55% having the value 17 and 40% having the value 18. This bimodality is unusual, since R1b as a whole tends to reflect a more natural progression away from the modal, with 17 at 50%, and 16 and 18 at 18% and 22%, respectively.

Glendonwyn

The Glendonwyn group tends to share the Elliott group's high CDY: the Glendonwyn modals are 39,41, while the Elliott modals are 40,41. If there were only a one-step difference between their shared modal on CDYb and the R1b modal, this might easily be imputed to random variation within the family; but the persistence of this two-step difference suggests that it might be a shared mutation held by the progenitor of both families. If that is the case, then it would favor a scenario where Elliott and Glendonwyn are more closely related to each other than to the other families. This interpretation is supported by the interfamily MRCA estimates given above.

There is a divide within the Glendonwyn group based on 444 and 446. Roughly half of the Glendonwyn group who have tested 67 markers have the rare 444=11 (11% of R1b) and 446=12 (6% of R1b). Further, there is an almost perfect correlation between these two markers among the Glendonwyn, with the exception of a single individual who has 444=11 and 446=13. This high correlation indicates a robust branching of the group. The 444=11/446=12 probably constitutes a later branch off the main Glendonwyn root, since these alternate values appear nowhere else among the five families. It may or may not be significant that those who have the rare values (i.e., those who are from a later branch) uniformly use the spelling Clendenen/Clendenin/Clendennen, whereas those who have the modal values use the spelling Clendaniel/Glendenning.

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Little

The Little branch is characterized by a few rare values not found elsewhere in the A1 clade and also rare in R1b as a whole:

Value	Frequency in A1 Littles	Frequency in R1b
385b= 11	95%	2%
464a=14	90%	15%
568=8	67%	less than 0.5%

Not only are the Little values on 385b and 568 rare; together these two markers represent a genetic distance of 6 from the rest of the A1 clade. Thus, one's interpretation of these mutations has a large effect on the date estimates generated for the clade as a whole, and for the interfamily MRCA estimates involving the Littles. In all the dating estimates for this paper, I have assumed that the Little values on 385b and 568 are the result of 2 multi-step mutations rather than 6 single-step mutations. My primary reason for doing this is the lack of any A1 population that has the intervening values. At least some of the A1 Littles actually have the R1b modals on these markers, which indicates that the mutations may have happened after the progenitor of this Little family. If you assume that the genetic distance is the result of 6 separate mutations, it makes the age estimate for the entire A1 clade many generations greater and it also results in interfamily estimates that suggest an initial split into a Little branch and a branch containing everybody else.

The Little branch is also characterized by 449=30 (32% of R1b), which is also the modal value of the Vaus branch. All the other branches have the R1b modal 449=29.

McClain

The McClains are characterized by 389-2=30. Every single McClain in the A1 clade has this value, which is present in just 23% of R1b as a whole and in 12% of the non-McClain members of the clade.

The McClain branch is characterized by a bi-modality on 458, with a roughly 50/50 split between the values 17 and 18: 17 (42%), 18 (53%) and 19 (5%). This bimodality is unusual, since R1b as a whole tends to reflect a more natural progression away from the modal, with 17 at 50%, and 16 and 18 at around 18% and 22%, respectively.

Vaus

The Vaus branch has the rare offmodal 458=19. Though it is just 6% of R1b, 458=19 is present in roughly 67% of this family.

Like the Littles, the Vaus branch is also characterized by 449=30, which is present in the entire branch.

The Vaus group are also characterized by the modal values 607=15 and 572=11. These are actually the modal values for R1b, but not for the A1 clade; the other four families all have very strong modals of 607=16 and 572=11, which are two of the defining markers of the whole A1 clade. Within the Vaus group there is a perfect correlation on these markers, indicating a significant branching within the group, with the entire family on one side or the other of a large 2-mutation divide on fairly stable markers. Given the estimated age of the Vaus group (younger than the five families together), and given the modal values of the five families on those markers, it is likely that both 572=11 and 607=15 are back mutations and that the MRCA of the Vaus group had the values 607=16/572=12. Any other interpretation would seem to suggest that the two branches of Vaus split off from each other and that later the Elliott, Glendonwyn, Little, and McClain branches all split off from the 607=16/572=12 Vaus group. But the relative ages of the different families in relation to the whole strongly suggest that this is not the case, as does the 458=19 that is held on both sides of the Vaus divide.

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Surname Origins

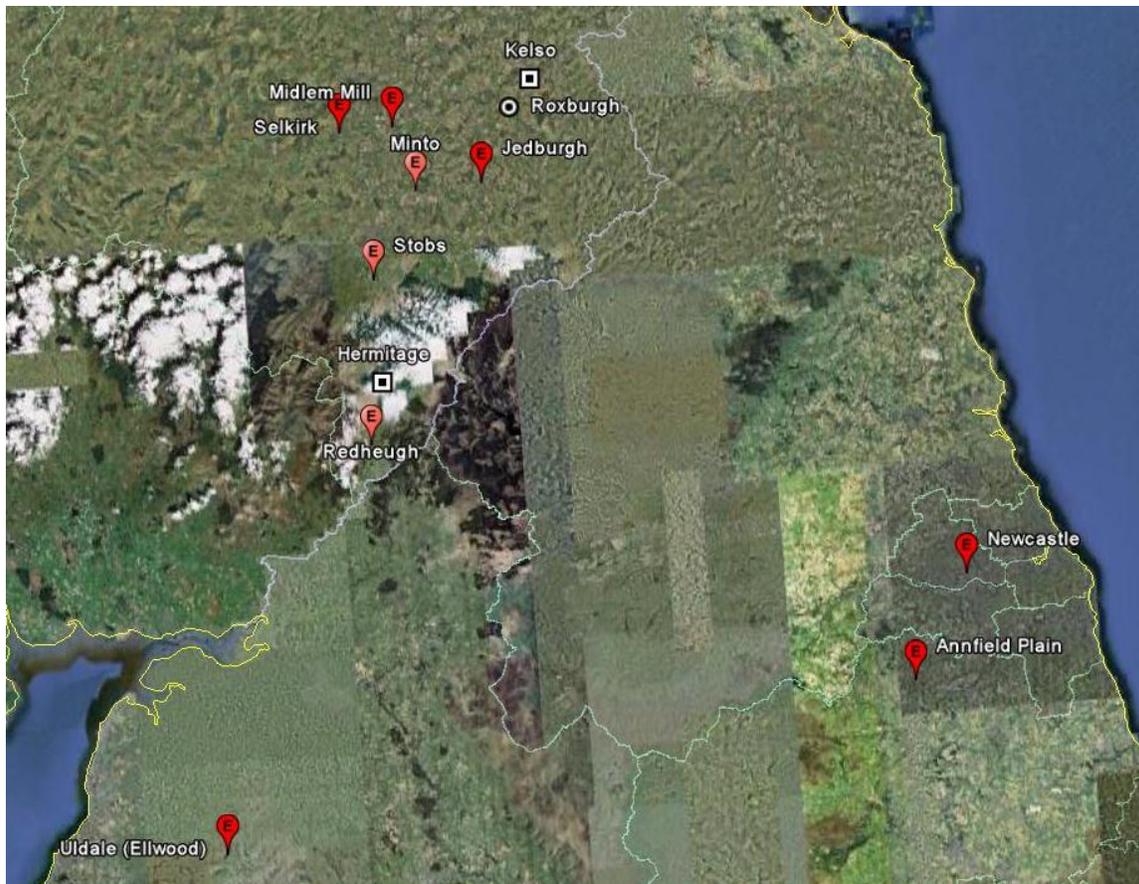
Having examined the genetic evidence relating to the five families, it's time to turn to the genealogical and historical traditions relating to the earliest origins of the surnames.

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Elliott

The earliest documented progenitor of the Elliotts was Robert Elwald or Elwold of Redheuch, who was granted land in Liddesdale in 1476 by Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus. Based on the writings of Scott of Satchels in 1688, the Elliott Clan Society further states that Redheugh was originally granted to the Elliotts around 1320 by Robert the Bruce; the lack of more reliable information about the family's earlier history is imputed to the burning of the Elliott castle at Stobs in 1712, when most of the family documents were destroyed. There is a tradition that the Elliotts came from northern Scotland, but this appears to rely on a spurious etymological connection with the river Ellot in Forfarshire. Documentary evidence indicates that the name Elliott is a later derivation and was not present in the earliest generations of the family. When they originally appear, the name is consistently spelled Elwald or Elwold, and it was not until the end of the 16th century that the spelling Ellat or Elliot took hold.

Another name derived from Elwald, but found on the English side of the border, is Elwood. In the Elliott surname project, there are 5 Ellwoods. Though they have only tested 37 markers, four of them may be placed in the A1 clade based on their close match with the A1 Elliotts and also on the fact that they carry the characteristic 459b=9 and tend to have high values on CDY. The following map depicts some UK locations that are either associated with historical Elliotts/Elwoods (light red) or where specific living A1 Elliotts/Elwoods claim an earliest known ancestor (deep red).



The MRCA estimate for the Elliott group is 25 generations (c.1250 AD), which would make the group older than both Robert Elwold (1476) and the supposed original charter of Redheuch (1320). But if we remove the Elwoods, the MRCA estimate for the remaining Elliotts shrinks to 17 generations (c.1490), in line with the time of Robert Elwold. The overall impression is of a very old borders family that early on split into two branches, an English branch that became Ellwood and a Scottish branch that became Elliott. This genetic evidence fits with what G.F.S. Elliot wrote on the subject in his 1898 work, *The Border Elliotts*:

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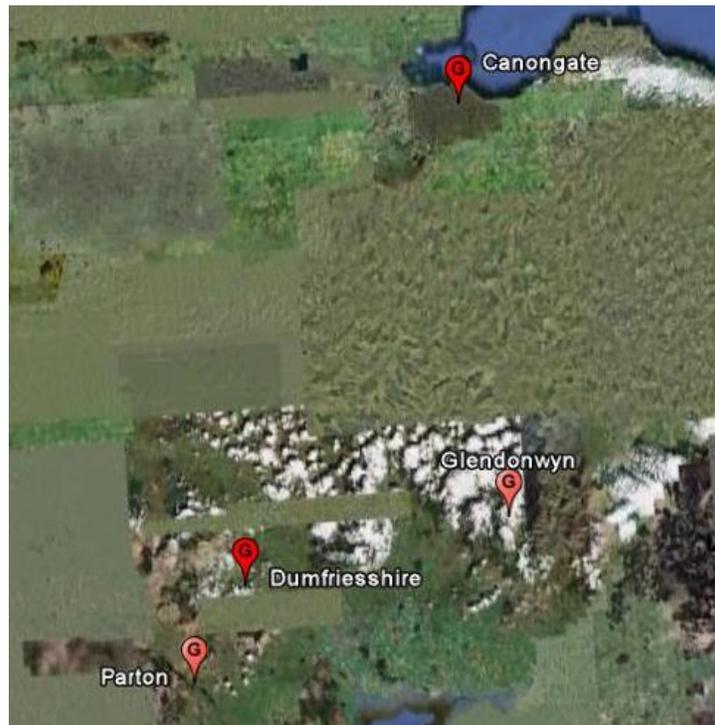
“Elwald,” with slight deviations, continued to hold its own as the most ordinary spelling till towards the middle of the 16th century, when considerable changes begin to appear. The English, who had been in the habit of using "Elwold" as well as "Elwald" now adopted the form "Elwood," which became the usual one with them. In Scotland, about the same time, or a little later, "Ellot" began to take the place of "Elwald," and soon obtained the predominance

Glendonwyn

Adam de Glendonwyn, the first known carrier of the name that eventually became Glendenning, Clendenin, and variants, was in possession of Glendonwyn in Eskdale during the reign of king Alexander III of Scotland (1249-1286). There is no certain information as to where he or his ancestors came from prior to this. Glendonwyn is a local place name, so it is possible that Adam de Glendonwyn had a different surname, or no fixed surname, before being granted property at Glendonwyn.

The Glendonwyn seat in Eskdale was about 20 miles from the later Elliott seat at Redheugh. If it is true that the Elliots were established at Redheugh by Robert the Bruce around 1320, then their origin would be about 40 to 80 years after the first Glendonwyn origin in the reign of Alexander III (1249-1286). The interfamily MRCA estimate for the split between Elliott and Glendonwyn is exactly in this period: 23 generations (c.1310AD).

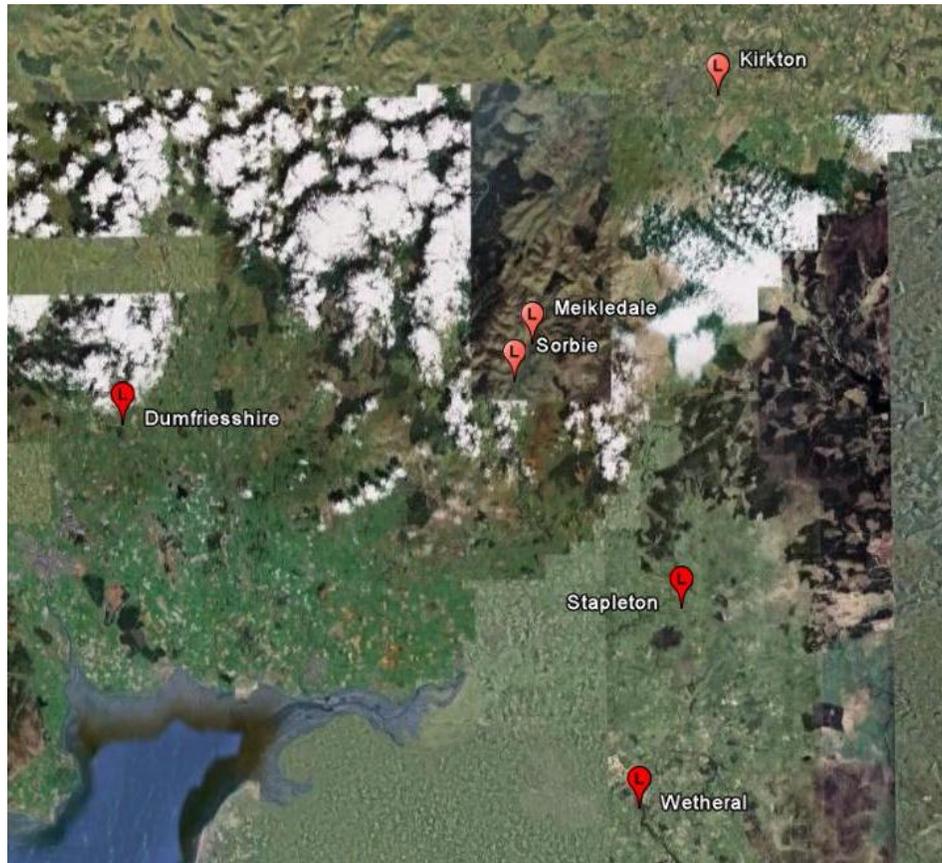
The following map depicts locations that are either associated with historical Glendonwyn (light red) or where specific living A1 Glendenning/Clendenins claim an earliest known ancestor (deep red)



Little

The Littles of the border region claim a descent from Edward Little of Meikledale, who was active in the border wars around the turn of the 13th century and was supposed to be a companion and nephew of William Wallace (d.1305). In 1426, Simon Little, the 1st confirmed Little laird, was granted the lands of Meikledale, Sorbie, and Kirkton in Ewesdale. Our MRCA estimate for the present-day A1 Littles is 22 generations (c.1340AD), which fits well with a shared descent from Edward Little of Meikledale or from someone close to him. The following map depicts locations that are either associated with historical Littles of the border region (light red) or where specific living A1 Littles claim an earliest known ancestor (deep red)

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The Elliott, Glendonwyn, and Little branches all have traditions of descent not just to the borders region, but to the same small area of the borders around Eskdale, Ewesdale, and Liddisdale. The following map, which depicts the earliest locations associated with the Elliots, Glendonwyn, and Littles, should give an idea of just how small the area was in which they all are supposed to have originated. Larriston in the east and Glendonwyn in the west are within 30 miles of each other.



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McClain

Only a handful of the A1 McClains list a location for their most distant ancestor. Three are in Scotland, two in the northeast around Inverness and one in the far southwest of Galloway. An origin near Inverness would be supported by McClain tradition, since a significant branch was established there in the year 1398. According to Charles Fraser-Mackintosh's *Invernessiana*, in that year "Charles Macgilleane of the very ancient house of Maclean settled in the North under the protection of Donald, Lord of the Isles. He held lands from Urquhart and was Constable of the Castle. From him sprung all the Macleans in the North, known as Clan Thearlaich." They had a "long connection with Inverness and its neighborhood, first in Urquhart, afterwards at Bona and Dochgarroch," the latter two locations being adjacent suburbs of present-day Inverness.

The original founder of the clan was Gillean of the Battleaxe, (c.1174–1249), whose great-grandfather was Old Dugald of Scone (b.c.1050), a councilor to King David of Scots. Prior to that, there is a legend of descent from Loarn mac Eirc, a 5th century king of Dal Riata. The following map depicts locations that are either associated with historical McClains (light red) or where specific living McClains claim an earliest known ancestor (deep red). [The McClain who traces to Galloway has been left off the map owing to considerations of space.]



Vaus

The A1 Vaus group contains the lineal heir of Barnbarroch, who has a reliable pedigree based on documentary evidence to Robert Vaus of Barnbarroch (fl.1450s). Robert is thought to have been a descendant of a certain John Vaus, who is said to have married an heiress around 1384 and to have obtained the lands of Barnbarroch around that time. There are gaps in the pedigree of the Vaus of Barnbarroch back to the original de Vaux of Normandy, but it is generally accepted that the name comes from the Norman family of de Vaux that dates back to the time of the Conquest in 1066.

Barnbarroch's first link is with the de Vaux of Dirleton. Although the precise connection is unknown, there is reliable heraldic evidence connecting the two families: their arms were the same, with the Barnbarroch line originally differenced by a mollet as befitting a cadet branch descending from a younger son. The Dirleton line ended with William de Vaus, who married Catherine Douglas. He had no surviving sons, so Dirleton passed into the family of Sir John Haliburton, who married William's daughter. The guidebook for

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Dirleton castle states that the Vaus first acquired the land in the 12th century under the patronage of King David I (1125-1153) and that the first to hold Dirleton was William de Vaux, who was a favorite of William the Lion, King of Scotland from 1165 to 1214. There is also a common Douglas thread running between the Vaus of Dirleton and Galloway in the 14th century. Not only did the last Vaus of Dirleton marry a Douglas, but the first confirmed Vaus to hold Barnbarroch, Robert, was referred to by Earl James Douglas in a Barnbarroch charter as “delecto consanguineo nostro”, our beloved kinsman. The earliest recorded Vaus of Galloway, an Andrew Vaus of Galloway, fought under Sir William Douglas at Poitiers in 1356; he is described in a French source as a “brother in arms” of Lord Archibald Douglas of Galloway, who also fought at Poitiers.

Other Vaus families, known from charters to be related to the Barnbarroch line, were in the north of Scotland (one at Menie/Aberdeen and another at Lochslin/Inverness) beginning at least in the early 1400s; these families were prominent in both areas, being barons on their estates (Menie and Lochslin) and burgesses in their towns (Aberdeen and Inverness).

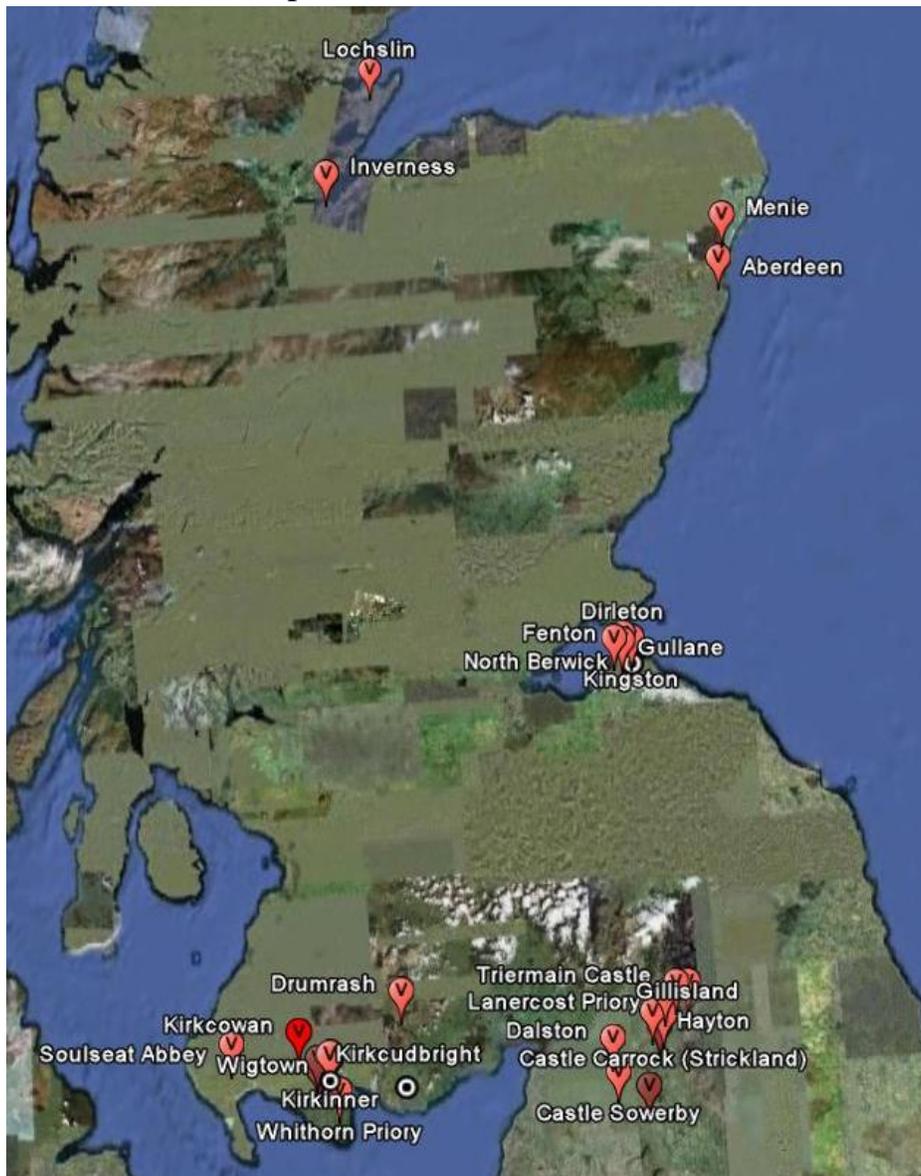
Before Dirleton, it is generally accepted that the Scottish Vaux were from the same family as the Vaux of Gillisland in Cumberland, England. The Vaux were established at Gillisland by King Henry II of England. Hubert de Vaux was the first of the line there and one source states that his son Rundolph settled in Scotland after 1130, and that Rundolph’s son Philip held “great possessions” on the borders in 1160 and married Elizabeth Comyn. As with the Dirleton-Barnbarroch connection, the specifics are unclear, but there are two items of circumstantial evidence that suggest the Dirleton and Gillisland Vaux were related. First, John de Vaux of Dirleton was one of the hostages granted to King John of England for the good behavior of King William the Lion of Scotland in 1213; during his stay in England, he was kept in the custody of Robert de Vaux of Gillisland, suggesting a kin relationship. This same John de Vaux also endowed Lanercost Priory (founded in Cumberland by Robert I de Vaux of Gillisland) with land from his possessions around Dirleton.

There were several other English offshoots, the most notable branch being found in Norfolk; they were in place there at least by the time Domesday Book was compiled in 1086. Their connection to the Gillisland Vaus of Cumberland is suggested by the fact that Lanercost Priory (founded by the Gillisland Vaus) looked to Pentney Priory (founded by the Norfolk Vaux) as its mother house.

A Barnbarroch family manuscript quotes an old history of tournaments to the effect that the de Vaux came to Normandy at the invitation of Duke William Longsword (son of the first Norman duke Rollo) from their seat at Baux in Provence. Beyond that, there is a legend of descent from the Visigoths.

The following map depicts locations in the borders and northward that are either associated with historical Vaus (light red) or where specific living descendants claim an earliest known ancestor (deep red).

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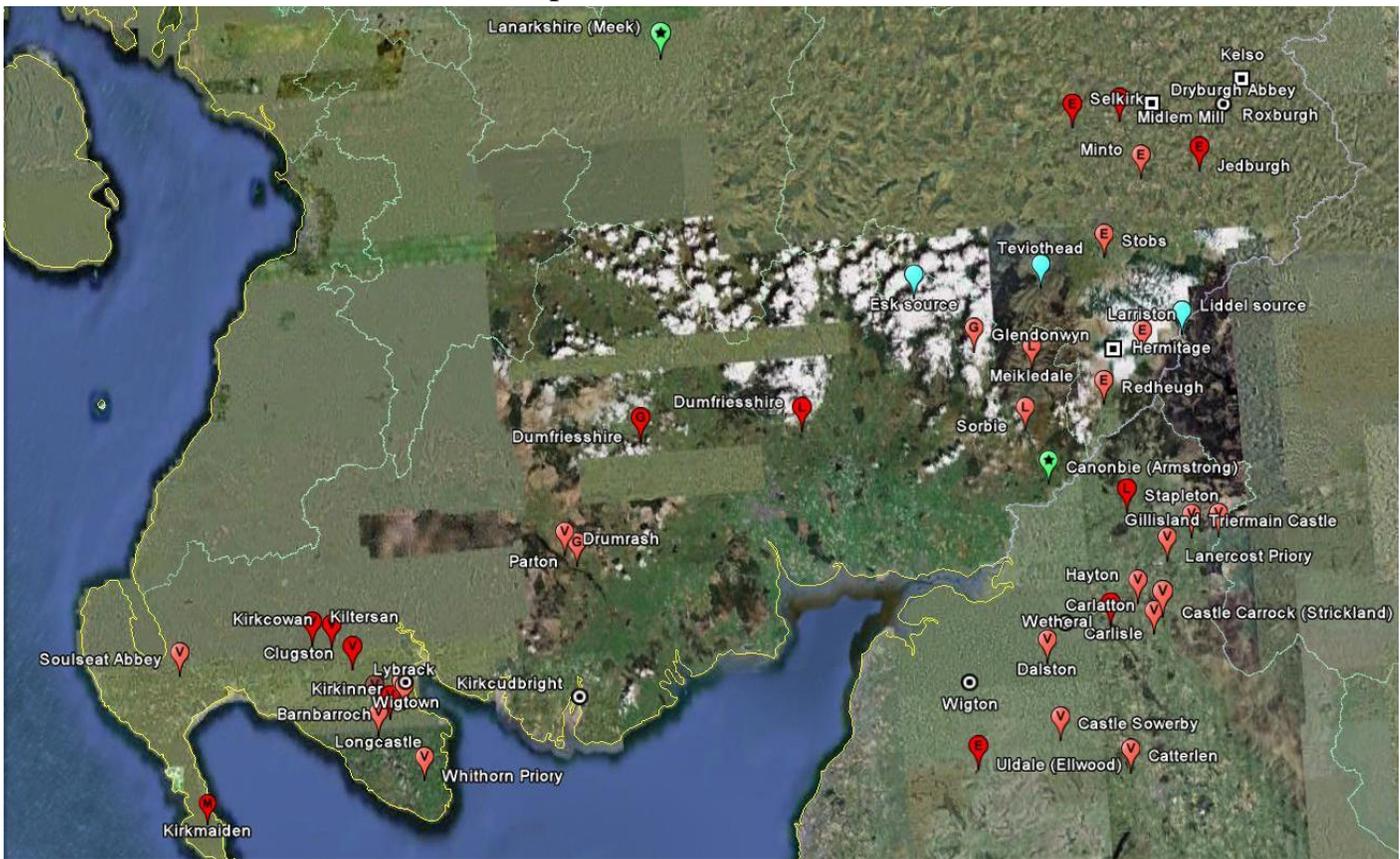
Speculation on Origins

Lowland/Borders Concentration

The center of gravity of the entire A1 clade is decidedly Scotland, which has 3 times as many earliest known A1 ancestors as England. The genealogical/historical traditions of four of the five major A1 family groups also point towards an origin in Scotland, particularly the lowlands.

The following map depicts the border area where the greatest concentration of A1 datapoints are located. Non-superfamily surnames are noted with a green star. As with the other maps, light red markers signify locations historically associated with the families and dark red markers signify actual earliest known locations of superfamily lineages, with E for Elliotts, G for Glendonwyn, L for Little, M for McClain, and V for Vaus.

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A Douglas Thread

Although its relevance is open to question, there happens to be a prominent Douglas thread running through those branches of the superfamily that have a tradition of descent from the border region.

Elliott: The first documented appearance of any Elliott, Robert Elwald, was a grant of land in Liddesdale in 1476 from Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus.

Little: In 1351, Martin Litill was a witness to a charter of William Douglas at Hermitage Castle. Simon Little, who was granted lands in Ewesdale in 1426, was a tenant of the Douglases.

Glendonwyn: The first documented Glendonwyn, Sir Adam, held his lands from the house of Douglas. His eldest son, Sir Adam, was general receiver of the earl of Douglas' rents. His descendant Simon Glendonwyn was married to Lady Mary Douglas, daughter of Archibald, earl of Douglas. In 1398, Simon was surety to the English for keeping the peace in the earl of Douglas' land on the borders. In 1408, he gave himself up as a hostage for Archibald's return as a prisoner to England. Glendenning and its variants actually constitute an official sept of the clan Douglas.

Vaus: As with Elliott and Glendonwyn, the first documented Vaus of Barnbarroch, Robert Vaus, held his land from the Douglases. In a charter from 1453, James Douglas refers to Robert as "delecto consanguineo nostro", our beloved kinsman. The earliest known Vaus of Galloway, one Andrew Vaus of Galloway, fought under Sir William Douglas against the English at Poitiers in 1356; he is described in a French source as a "brother in arms" of Lord Archibald Douglas of Galloway. The last of the Dirleton Vaus line (predecessor of the Barnbarroch Vaus) married Catherine Douglas.

The Douglas connection is most striking with respect to the Glendonwyn and Vaus, especially when viewed from the perspective of the Douglas family. It begins with Sir James Douglas, who was the trusted deputy of Robert the Bruce, king of Scotland from 1306 to 1329. One source describes Sir Adam de

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Glendonwyn as a “constant companion” to James. Sir James’ son William was captured at the battle of Neville’s Cross (1346) along with King David II and several others, including William Vaus of Dirleton. Later, William Douglas and his brother Archibald fought with the French at Poitiers (1356); Andrew Vaus of Galloway fought with them and is described as a “brother in arms” of Archibald. Archibald was the first Douglas to receive the lordship of Galloway, and a century later we find Robert Vaus of Barnbarroch described by Archibald’s grandson as a “kinsman.” Simon Glendonwyn was a close companion of Archibald’s son Archibald, whose daughter he married.

With respect to Glendonwyn, there is even some room to suspect that the name itself may have come from the Douglases. According to David Hume of Godcroft’s *history of the house and race of Douglas*, the first Lord Douglas, William (c.1061), “did leave behind him two Sons, John and William, both Knights, The eldest was Sir John of Douglas-burn. . . The other was **William of Glendenning, which is about the upmost Parts of West-Teviotdale near to Eusdale.**” [emphasis mine] Sources critical of family legends suggest that the Douglas Clan originated later. The following is from Wikipedia:

The true progenitor of Clan Douglas was almost certainly "Theobaldus Flammatius" (Theobald the Flemming), who received in 1147 the lands near Douglas Water in Lanarkshire in return for services for the Abbot of Kelso.

Although the Douglases were first recorded in the 1170s, the Douglas family names consisted of Arkenbald and Freskin, and were undoubtedly related to the Clan Murray, and to be of Flemish origin. The Clan Murray were descended from a Flemish knight called Freskin. Though the Flemish origin of the Douglases is not undisputed, it is often claimed that the Douglases were descended from a Flemish knight who was granted lands on the Douglas Water by the Abbot of Kelso, who held the barony and lordship of Holydean. However this is disputed, it has been claimed that the lands which were granted to this knight were not the lands which the Douglas family came from.

In 1179 William Douglas was Lord of Douglas and it seems likely that he was Theobald the Flemming’s son and the first to take the surname Douglas

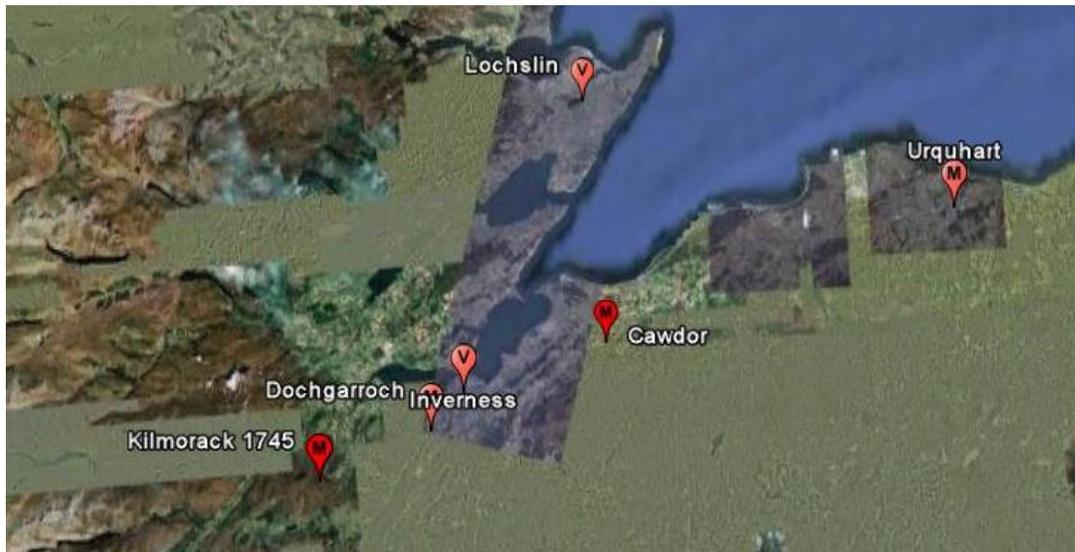
Without more research, it’s hard to know what to make of these Superfamily/Douglas connections. The Douglas family held great possessions on the borders and in Galloway, so it may all just be coincidence. However, it’s worth keeping in mind.

What About McClain?

McClain is the only one of the five major surnames with no tradition of descent from the borders region or even the lowlands in general. It is clearly a highland surname with a tradition of indigenous descent. Two of the three McClains who can actually trace back to Britain happen to trace back to the area around Inverness, which suggests that the A1 McClains may have originated among the Clan Thearlaich, which was in Inverness from 1398. There is also the interesting, though tenuous, possibility of a genetic tie-in with Argyll, where the Clan MacLean traces its ultimate origin: the A1 clade contains a Martin family from Kintyre in Argyll that is genetically very close to the McClains, with the characteristic 389ii=30.

With respect to the McClain presence in the north, it is interesting to note that there was a branch of Vaus located in Inverness at an early date. In addition to being burgesses of Inverness, they held the estate of Lochslin to the north and were followers of the Clan Ross. They are mentioned in area records as early as the mid-1400s and the name is frequently found in the north under the spelling Vass/Wass, which is considered a sept of clan Ross. This Lochslin connection is relevant to a discussion of the A1 clade, because the Lochslin Vaus were definitely related to the Barnbarroch Vaus. One of the earliest surviving Barnbarroch charters (from Robert Vaus to his son Blaise in 1456), refers specifically to John Vaus of Lochslin as Robert’s brother. The following map takes in the McClains of the north as well as the Vaus branch around Lochslin/Inverness.

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The genetic evidence does indicate that the McClain and Vaus branches of the superfamily are more closely related to each other than to the other families. A Lochslin/Thearlaich connection ought to be kept in mind as a possible explanation.

* * *

A Last Word

Since the five surnames in the superfamily are associated with gentry or noble lines, it is a fair assumption that the progenitor of these lineages was likely a member of the nobility. One of the implications of this for our study is that the progenitor of these lineages may have been a man who appeared in the historical record. This means he is theoretically identifiable, or at least that theories about his identity are not inconceivable on their face.

As a corollary to this issue, it's natural to wonder whether the progenitor of the 5 families might have held one of the 5 surnames of the superfamily. We are unable to answer that question, and may never be able to answer it. As it stands, there are cases to be made for each of the families. There is also a case to be made for none of them. The progenitor's surname, assuming he had a fixed surname, may not have survived. It is well known that surnames among highland clans were fluid and that any clan follower was likely to adopt the name at any time. But even among the Anglo-Norman nobility surnames were changeable, especially in the period after the Conquest. Younger sons often adopted new surnames as they struck out on their own. There is a documented example of this happening with one of the Gillisland Vaux, a landless younger son who came into the property called Strickland and adopted that as his surname. In more recent years, a member of the Vans line of Barnbarroch married an Agnew heiress and adopted her surname.

The following passage, from *Collins Peerage of England*, provides an excellent illustration of how different surnames could proliferate among a man's descendants:

Not long after the Conquest, William Belward, lord of the moiety of Malpas, had two sons, Dan David, of Malpas, surnamed Le Clerke, and Richard. Dan David had William, his eldest son, surnamed de Malpas; his second son was named Philip Gogh, one of the issue of whose eldest sons took the name of Egerton; a third son took the name of David Golborne; and one of his sons the name of Goodman. Richard, the other son of the aforesaid William Belward, had three sons, who took also divers names; viz. Thomas de Cotgrave; William de Overton; and Richard Little, who had two sons; the one named Ken Clarke, and the other John Richardson. Herein you may note alteration of names in respect of habitation, in Egerton, Cotgrave, Overton. In respect of colour, in Gogh, that is, Red, in respect of quality, in him that was called Goodman; in respect of stature, in Richard Little; in respect of learning, in Ken-Clarke; in respect of the father's Christian name, in Richardson: all descending from William Belward.

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Note that the original surname, Belward, disappeared, and in a mere three generations those descendants carried over 10 different surnames. Something like this may have played out in the generations following the MRCA of the superfamily. The original surname of the progenitor of the five families may be one of the predecessor surnames of the five families or it may be some completely different surname that, like Belward, was lost through the vagaries of inheritance. We can only hope to eventually resolve this question.