

A PAPER-TRAIL GENEALOGIST INTERPRETS THE RESULTS OF Y-DNA TESTING

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It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words and that seeing is believing. Let's see if there is any truth to these two proverbs. Please follow the link given below. You'll find that there are two pages at this website. Don't worry about the second page, which lists all the Y-chromosome signatures that have been assigned to R1b subclades, but concentrate on the first page. Scroll slowly down the page and then get back to me here in this document. It should only take a few minutes to soak in the information that the Stewart Y-DNA results page gives concerning the genealogy of the Stewart (Stuart) family. See you in four or five minutes!

<http://www.familyreedna.com/public/Stewart/default.aspx?section=ycolored>

Welcome back. I'm sure the first thing you became aware of was the relatively large number of participants in this particular surname project. If you check out some of the other surname project websites that are sponsored by Family Tree DNA—I would suggest that you restrict yourself to searching for project sites that pertain to other surnames of Scottish Lowlands origin, names like Douglas, Crawford, Leslie, Murray, and Montgomery—you'll find that seven hundred and sixty-one is an almost astronomical number of participants. And when it comes to genetic surname research, as many participants as possible is the ideal, although considering the fact that there are more than four hundred thousand people in the world today who answer to the surnames Stewart and Stuart, you might suspect that not even the Y-DNA test results of more than seven hundred and fifty participants is enough to allow us to draw any significant conclusions regarding the ancestry of the family; that is, if it were not for a certain mutation. I beg your indulgence to follow another link, study the page, go to the Y-results page, and then get back to me here in this document.

<http://www.familyreedna.com/public/Stuart>

The Y-chromosome signature of Walter Stewart of Dundonald (c. 1198-1246) has apparently been discovered, but fortunately without the disinterment of Walter's skeletal remains in Paisley Abbey for the purpose of extracting a DNA sample. (I have considered the possibility of digging up one of my own family's ancestors for just such a purpose, but I now realize that such a desecration would probably serve no purpose whatsoever. For genealogical purposes, we have all the DNA we need aboveground.) Walter Stewart, who was the third hereditary High Steward of Scotland, is generally considered to have been the actual progenitor of the Stewart surname, being the third steward, but the first Stewart. May he continue to rest in peace. But notice how Walter's Y-haplotype is represented in the main Stewart surname project by the significantly largest group of participants with matching haplotypes. This suggests that the line of the High Stewards is the most ancient of the diverse paternal lineages that occur among the participants in the project. The earlier the ancestor, the more the progeny. However, there remain hundreds of participants who apparently are not related to Walter—in any case, not in the male line of descent—despite their Stewart surname. How do we account for these lineages? Was Walter not the only steward to call himself Stewart? Or did vassals of the High Stewards sometimes adopt the Stewart name for their own families? No, from what we know of feudal society, we can reasonably assume that established hereditary surnames, especially those borne by families of high social status like the early Stewarts, were simply not up for grabs by anyone outside of the family. Is it then so far-fetched to conclude that the Stewart surname represents a single extended family that genetically has one ancient progenitor lineage, and that all the smaller groups of matching haplotypes or the solitary haplotypes with no matches in the Stewart table of Y-DNA test results are the results of relatively recent instances of

adoption, illegitimacy, and marital infidelity within the Stewart family itself? From what we know of human sexual behavior—we are, after all, not strictly monogamous and contraceptives have not been around for that long—is it surprising that so many of us should be the descendants of bastards? It's certainly nothing to be ashamed of. If it were possible to follow the paper trail far back in time from any one of these present-day Stewarts who are not “real” Stewarts, after a long and winding road we should eventually come face-to-face with Walter Stewart, the High Steward, sitting in his magnificent oaken chair at Scone Abbey. Walter is the ancestor of all Stewarts because he was the man after whom all Stewarts have been named. Walter's father, Alan fitz Walter, is the ancestor of only those who have inherited his Y-chromosome.

And now, once again, I beg your indulgence to follow one last link: to the Fleming surname project, which is, perhaps understandably, somewhat closer to my heart than the Stewart project. Bear in mind, as you examine the Y-DNA test results, that the earliest members of the Fleming family to live in Scotland enjoyed the same high social status as the ancient Stewarts. Baldwin Flammang, grandson of that Erkenbald Flandrensis who was a companion of the Conqueror, was appointed Sheriff of Lanarkshire by Malcolm IV of Scotland. Baldwin's son, Waldeve of Biggar, and Baldwin's second cousin, Jordan Flammang, were both captured along with William I of Scotland during the Battle of Alnwick in 1174. Who says Fleming was the name taken in Scotland by Flemings who came from Flanders? Baldwin and Jordan were Flemings who went to Scotland from England. I could go on telling stories of the ancient Flemings “till the cows come home,” as they say in Scotland, but perhaps it is best that you now follow the link and then get back to me. I have a story to tell you that has unfolded much more recently than any of my stories of the ancient Flemings.

<http://www.familyreedna.com/public/fleming/default.aspx?section=ycolored>

You will, of course, have noticed that the participants in the Fleming project are few compared to those in the Stewart project, 81 compared to 761, and yet the overall pattern of the results is the same as in the Stewart project: one relatively large group of genetic cousins (haplogroup R1b1a2) and several smaller groups. Another thing, which you may have noticed, is that among the R1b1a2 signatures are those of nine participants whose earliest known ancestors were surnamed Scott, and not Fleming. What can this signify? Out of fifty-two R1b1a2 signatures, nine are Scott signatures! And now for that story I promised you.

About a month ago I received an email from Gary Gianotti. He began his email by complementing me on the books I have published concerning the early history of the Fleming family. He further wrote that he had found good use for some of the information in these books while conducting his own research into the origins of the Border Clan Scott. He thought it might interest me to learn that Anselm le Fleming was the true forefather of the Scotts of Buccleuch, and not Uchtred, son of Scott, who is usually claimed to have been the first Scott. I must say that I was initially skeptical. I knew that Anselm le Fleming was a grandson of Michael Flandrensis of Furness in Cumbria, who was himself a grandson of Erkenbald Flandrensis, progenitor of the Fleming family. Anselm was married to Agnes, the daughter of Edgar of Dunbar. Edgar was the youngest son of Gospatrick II, Earl of Lothian. Okay, here we did have a palpable Scottish connection, but Anselm himself lived in Cumbria, and he had four daughters, but no son. However, I decided to carefully check the sources that Gary had given me. Indeed, various charters of Kelso Abbey undoubtedly confirm that Richard Scott (*Ricardus Scotus*) of Molle (present-day village of Morebattle in the Scottish Borders) was the son of a certain Anselm and a certain Agnes. (It must be stated that neither the surname “le Fleming” nor the surname “de Dunbar” is mentioned in the charters; but I ask you: What is the likelihood of there having been a second Anselm and Agnes husband-and-wife team in the twelfth century?) It is odd that so many historians of the Scott family, through the years, have studied the text of these charters without ever noticing the fact that Anselm (*Anselmus de Molle*) had been the

father of Richard Scott of Molle? Sir Walter Scott, novelist and poet, probably examined the charters of Kelso Abbey in the early nineteenth century while researching his family history. He came to the conclusion that Uchtred had been the father of Richard, who was the father of Richard Scott of Molle. Still, we do not know for sure that Richard Scott, who we now know for sure was the son of Anselm, actually was the first Scott in the line of the Scotts of Buccleuch. The charters of Kelso Abbey have nothing to say concerning any son of Richard Scott. Is there any way to know for sure? There is. Provided that the male line of descent from Erkenbald Flandrensis was preserved as far down the line as Anselm le Fleming, and that the names Anselm le Fleming, Anselm de Furness, and Anselm de Molle all refer to a single individual, and that Richard Scott actually was the first Scott, we should expect to find a substantial number of matches between the Y-DNA test results of Flemings and Scotts. If we should find these matches—and there are indications that we shall—we shall also have discovered the Y-chromosome signature of Erkenbald Flandrensis, a discovery that should enable us to delve even more deeply into the past with the help of genetic genealogy. After all, once you have reached as far back as the eleventh century, it is not that much further back to Carolingian or even Merovingian times.