



EARLY SNODGRASS

By Norman Snodgrass Jr.

The Village Snodgrass is located on the last bend of the river Garnock in Ayrshire, Scotland before it joins the river Irvine at the town of Irvine and immediately enters the Irish Sea.

Archaeologists indicate that the town site was inhabited as early as the Mesolithic times and certainly in the Neolithic times. The origin of the people who lived there in Mesolithic times is unclear, but some scholars believe that the people were “aboriginal Britons”, who sparsely populated the vast connected lands of the northern hemisphere before and during the last ice age but disappeared under the advance of the Celtic races following Neolithic times. No trace of races other than these appear in early Britain and no earlier Neanderthals have been found near there. (Mesolithic and Neolithic refer to the developmental and cultural sophistication of the races, and not the races themselves).

The site (later known as the “smooth grassy place”, Snod Gress and other versions in Scots Gaelic, (Snod Grass in later Anglicized versions) was at upper tidal reach of the river but protected from the sea by a large sandy berm several miles long that lay between it and the sea as the river paralleled the shore for its last mile and a half. That berm is now part of the town of Stevenston that extended into the area and includes the Nobel Chemicals factory across the Garnock river from the Snodgrass village, connected by a foot bridge as in photos. We have several maps of the village location showing configuration of the river at various times. It was an ideal spot for beaching early ships, fishing for salmon in the Garnock, and farming the fertile low lying ground and digging up the underlying coal.

The Snodgrass families lived in their name village during the 13th century (1200-1300) and in Glasgow and other environs through the 16th century (1500-1600). Eventually, the port of Irvine was built two miles south at the river mouth with the sea and the port was active in the middle ages, but it never came to long prominence because the channel into the shelter of Irvine bay habitually sanded up. In modern times it has been replaced by other ports north of it on the west coast of Ayrshire between Irvine and Glasgow on the Firth of the Clyde river (30-40 miles north). This area is known as the Scots Lowlands.

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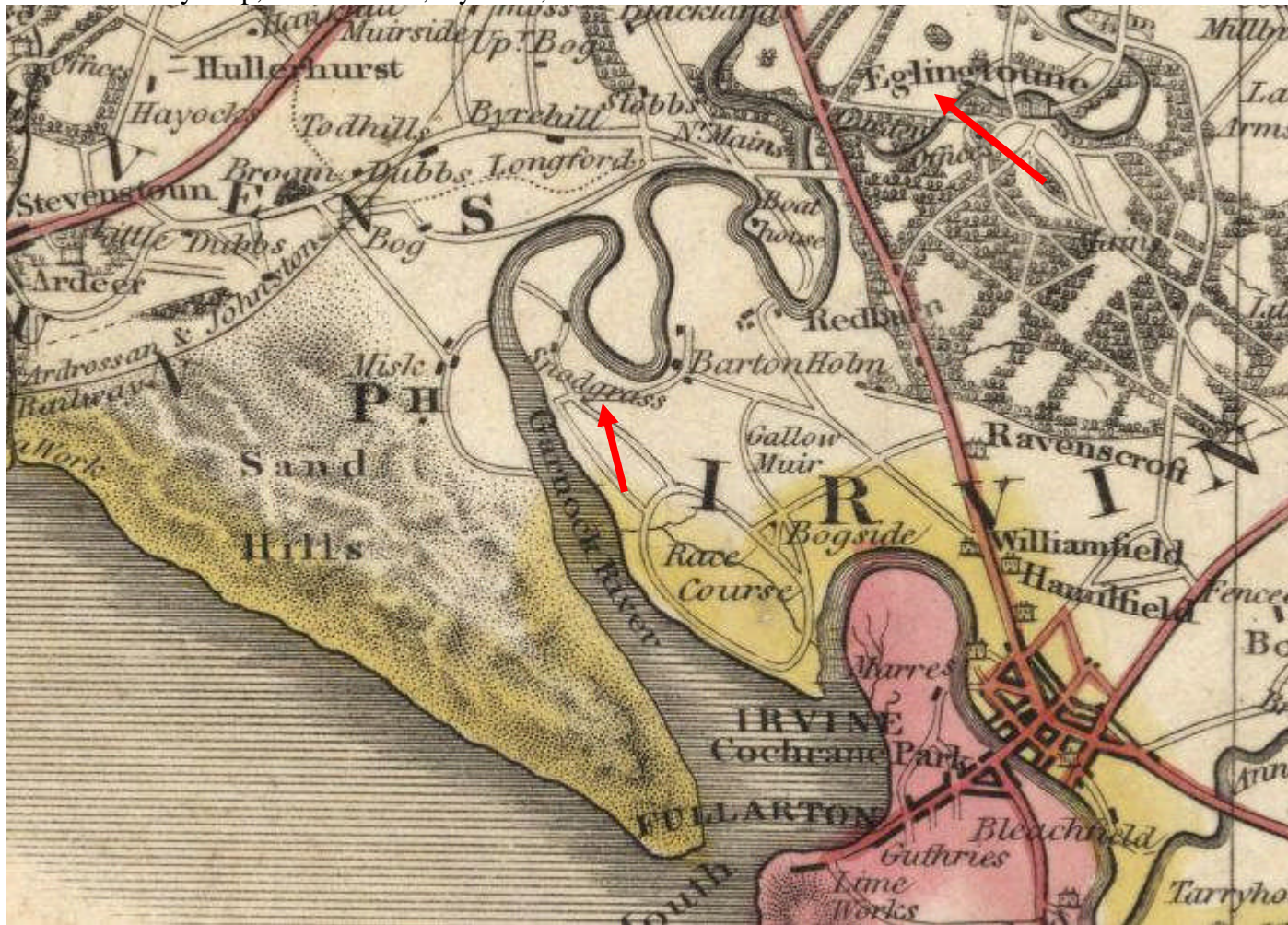
Isabelle Clarke, Chieftain of the St. Andrew Society of Colorado is from nearby Kilmarnock and she told me, “The Lowlands are hardly thought of much by people who think of Scotland as being all Highlands. Actually, most of the people of great fame and regard were Lowlanders, such as poet Robert Burns, author Sir Walter Scott, and (later King) Robert DeBruce and patriot William Wallace who led the Scot’s revolt against the English.” ALL THESE MEN WERE FROM AYRSHIRE. Wallace was raised by his uncle at Riccarton castle, only a few miles from Snodgrass. He started his revolt against the English at Ayr, county seat of Ayrshire, after the murder of his father and brother by English King Edward 1st.

At the time of Christ there were NO Scots in Scotland, NO Romans in Scotland, and certainly no Angles, Saxons, or Jutes that came eight-ten centuries later. There was, however, a race of people known as the Picts who wandered the Highlands north of the river Clyde and sometimes took possession of places in the Lowlands until they were driven out and/or absorbed by the invading Brythons, a Celtic race from Brittany in France who set up the Kingdom of Strathclyde in what is now Ayrshire. This included the site of Snodgrass and the entire 30 plus mile length of the Garnock river. The capital of Strathclyde was Dumbarton, a beautiful hill overlooking the river Clyde and now part of the Glasgow metroplex.

There are numerous histories of the Kingdom of Strathclyde, which was incorporated into Scotland in 1034 when the king of Strathclyde took over the Kingdom of Scotland from his father and joined the two nations. One of the more colorful histories of the era is one by Croman mac Neesa, a modern-day Druid scholar (CromansGrove@Groups.msn.com, <http://groups.msn.com/CromansGrove/theceltsversion3page3.msnw>)

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British Artillery Map, Irvine Parish, Ayrshire, Scotland 1775



Mac Neesa's prime contribution is a detailed description of the ethnic structure of Britain as related to the Celts, and specifically the Brythonic Celts who populated Strathclyde. He gives details on how the Celts were divided into two groups that left Europe for what is now Ireland and Britain, the Brythonic Celts who populated Cornwall, Wales, and the "Scots" Lowlands, and the Gaelic Celts who populated Ireland and much later, the Scots Highlands (4-5th century). The migration of the Brythonic Celts from Europe (mainly France) to what is now Britain began about 800 BC, first to Cornwall, then Wales, and later to the Scottish lowlands. This was before the Vikings (Danes) landed in Normandy and established themselves there and later (1066AD), took over England. The Brythonic (Kymeric race) people living in Wales called themselves Walleys and the people who moved to the (now Scottish) lowlands continued to call themselves Walleys and were also known as the Northern Kingdom of the Welsh (Strathclyde). The ancestors of the national hero, William Wallace, called themselves Wallensis, the Latin version. Wallace started his revolt against the English in the town of Ayr, capital of lowland Ayrshire a few miles south of Snodgrass. He never sought nor received the aid of the Highland Scots in his struggles.

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A good description of early “Scotland” and the various peoples who came there to live is contained in *The Scottish Highlanders*, by Charles MacKinnon of Dunkin, Marboro Books, Div. of Barnes & Noble Books, N.Y., 1992. Though mostly about the clans of the north, the book has a complete and excellent account of the Scottish Royal succession and the struggles to remain independent of England and some cogent facts about the differences between the highland clans and the lowland clans and families and their struggles with each other.

If you are wondering why the Snodgrass were never a Scots Clan or a “sept” (division) of any clan, it is because we are Brythonic Celts, not Gaelic Celts and therefore did not follow Gaelic customs, including wearing kilt and working land owned only by our chief and the whole clan (as in Ireland). You can learn all you want to about this as there are numerous books on the subject. There are those who claim the Snodgrass are actually Saxons driven north by the Norman invaders of England. Very unlikely. Strathclyde was never conquered by the Saxons who took Northumbria (the NE corner of England) part of which was east of the Clyde as it turns southward through Ayrshire, now known as Midlothian, Scotland. Besides, Snodgrass were probably in “Scotland” before the Saxons left continental Europe for Britain. Nearly every mention in literature and documents that mentions the Snodgrass includes the words “ancient lands.” When you inspect the remains of our village on the Garnock River you will not wonder if it was occupied in “ancient” times. The “smooth grassy place” as it is known lies on the western end of one of the richest farmlands in Scotland and is truly beautiful even today where part of it is incorporated into the Irvine Golf Course as the “Snodgrass Hole”, thirteenth green.

Given the location of the village Snodgrass in the last bend of the river Garnock before it enters the Irish sea, and the fact that its an extremely attractive location for farming a rich bottom land and taking salmon from the river and coal from shallow pit mines, coupled with the fact it was known to be populated from Neolithic times, it is entirely possible that the Snodgrass family, referred to as having “ancient lands” as early as the 13th century (1200s), actually could have come up the river from the sea a mile away and settled or taken the place during the great Brythonic migrations to “Britain” centuries before the Romans came (1st century BC and 1st Century AD). When Roman Julius Caesar came to Britain from France in the first century BC he clearly believed the (in Latin, “Gauls” or “Gaels” in Gaelic) he met were the same race he had fought in French Brittany. Centuries before Christ. The “Gauls” who lived in western Europe, including Spain and France, split into two groups, one going to Ireland (the Gaelic Celts) and the other, Brythonic Gaels also of the Celtic race who migrated into what is now Wales, Cornwall, and the “Scottish” lowlands” where they formed a pagan kingdom known as Strathclyde. It was in pre-Christian Ireland that the Gaelic Celts followed clan culture which they took with them to the “Scottish” highlands of Britain previously called Caledonia by the Romans.. However the Brythonic Celts followed the old Kymeric culture of earlier times in Europe and they did not become “Scots” until Strathclyde was incorporated into a Scottish kingdom in the 11th century and some of the highland clans (like the Cunninghames) came to the lowlands bringing clan culture to which all Scots now more or less accede. The Snodgrass did not become a clan until 1984 when they were awarded arms by the Chief Herald of Ireland for our services to the crown in Ulster

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as Scots-Irish, also known as the Northern Irish. From there many Snodgrass came to America in early 1700s.

St. Patrick of fame as the Bishop of Ireland was born and raised in the Dumbarton area of Strathclyde and was a Brythonic Celt and not a Gaelic Celt such as the “native” Irish. . A definitive account of how he was kidnapped by pagan Gaelic Irish Celts still living in Ireland is contained in *A Cultural History of The Scots Irish* by Charles A. Hanna, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc. 1902, reprinted 1995 (Vol. 1, pgs. 162-168). Therein is also a definitive description of the ethnic composition of Strathclyde. Although Saxons, Normans, and other Nordic races came to Strathclyde after it had been incorporated into “Scotland” by King David I, (1124-33). It was originally settled by people of Kymeric descent, an ancient race of Britons (Brythonic), not Saxon as some would have us believe. These were the race that gave Britain its name. They were Celts who came to “Britain” from Brittany in France a thousand years before the Normans. They settled in what is now Wales, Cornwall, (land of King Arthur, the most famous “Brit”), western “England”, and formed the Kingdom of Strathclyde in what are now the Scottish lowlands (predominantly in Ayrshire) whence came the Snodgrass.

The inhabitants of Strathclyde were the first Christians in “Scotland” some having been converted from the pagan Druid religion by a native of Strathclyde, Ninian, the first Christian missionary to Scotland known by name. Hanna (op. cit page 163) says “Ninian was a native of Christian Britain, probably of the northern kingdom of the Welsh” (known as Cumbria or Strathclyde). He was trained at Rome as a missionary but found SOME Christians already in Strathclyde when he returned there in 373 AD. This statement confirms two things. First, the people of Strathclyde were originally Welsh (William Wallace’s family were originally named “Wallays”, which became the synonym for Welsh in the north, or Strathclyde) Second, they were Christians five centuries before the Saxons came there and never converted to the Roman Christian Church like the Saxons but rather the Scots-Irish church (see the writings of the famous Monk, The Venerable Bede). Also, the word *snod* (smooth) is Gaelic and NOT Saxon. Check it out in your Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language.

Although we are not Highland Scots so famed in Hollywood films, we were Celts in Scotland before anyone had ever heard of the Celtic *highland* “Scots.”

In America and Canada descendants of the *Highland* Scots like to claim they are the “true Scots” who fought for freedom from the English, (twice), once under William Wallace in 1299 (Mel Gibson in the movies) and again at Culloden in 1745. If this arrogance gets on your nerves, read them what MacKinnon says about the Highlanders (op cit. Page 45) who were NOT involved in fighting the English for the most part as they knew the English could not get at them in the highlands, and at Culloden there were only 21 highland clans (if you count the MacDonald septs as four). Today there are over 100 recognized Scottish clans, of which the Snodgrass are NOT one, our arms being awarded in Ireland in 1984) and no lowlander in his right mind would have supported the “Young Pretender” Bonnie Prince Charlie Stewart (*Stuart* who took on the most powerful army and navy in Europe with no idea of how to win., certainly not John Snodgrass who had

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bought the entire estate and holdings of the Cunninghammehead Clan located near Kilmarnock five miles east of Snodgrass, tore down the castle keep, and built the most splendid house in Scotland there in 1748, three years after the English under King George II had decimated the highlanders and forbidden them to wear tartan or display any arms. Bonnie Prince Charlie spent most of his life in France and was certainly no George Washington and Scotland is no vast land like America with an endless supply of men, lead, powder, forest, and the French navy who sank or drove away many of the British ships blockading entrance to the Chesapeake Bay and Yorktown.

If that doesn't deflate them, tell them to look at the gates of Edinburgh castle that opens onto the large parade ground where the annual Edinburgh Tattoo is held. Whose statues stand on either side of the gates? William Wallace and Robert DeBruce, (King of Scotland 1306-29), both lowlanders! Then tell them that if they had spent more time defending the country from the English instead of killing each other and stealing their cattle, Scotland would STILL be a free country instead of a poor part of England. WE don't know what role the Snodgrass played in the struggles against the English, but it was mostly LOWLAND Brythonic Celts who fought them, led by William Wallace who came from Riccarton merely five miles away from Snodgrass and who was also a Brythonic Celt, not a Highlander, *most of whom refused to join him..* But it was the Lowland Scots who were recruited by King James VI of Scotland (who also became King James I of England when Elizabeth I died) to go to Ireland and establish Ulster because they were the *civilized* part of the Scottish people.

A more definitive genealogy of early Snodgrass may be supplied by the good ladies of the Ardrossan Genealogic Society whom I have asked to work on that project. However, we are talking about cultural movements that happened as long before the Norman invasion of England (1066) as the time elapsed between then and Columbus (1492). I am confident that the story of our family and its area exists someplace in the Scottish records and university researches, but getting it out will take a generation or more of research and researchers that will come after you and me.

As you will see below, the Snodgrass connection with Ardrossan is close. Like America, the Lowlands of Scotland became a heterogeneous collection of peoples over the years between 4th and 11th centuries. Many people of mixed heritage live in the area now, however the strong Brythonic Celtic heritage is still dominant in Ayrshire. The two great heroes of Scotland, William Wallace and Robert DeBruce, were both from Ayrshire and not far from Snodgrass village. They were both certainly Brythonic Celts, Bruce still bearing part of his name from Brittany in France whence came the Brythonic Celts.

If you are not familiar with the Celts, you should know that before 500 BC they were a large and powerful race of warriors and artisans who lived in an area all the way from Turkey to French Brittany. They sacked Rome about 500 BC and probably set the precedent for innumerable "sackings" that plagued Rome right up until the middle of the last (20th) century when three armies fought for that city state. The Celts left a large amount of artwork in carvings and jewelry that have come down to us virtually

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unchanged. Europe is replete with these artifacts, not the least of which are in a museum across the street behind the Zurich, Switzerland rail station.

The Romans who invaded what is now Britain never controlled Strathclyde (1st-5th centuries AD) though they built several forts in Ayrshire, some ruins of which still can be seen. You can read letters written by the Romans to friends back home complaining about how the local population tolerated but did not obey them. They simply ignored the Romans for the most part except for selling them food and wool. Sometimes the locals ambushed and killed Roman patrols and would-be tax collectors (St. Patrick's father, Calpurnius, was a Romanized Celt and was a tax collector for the Romans. He survived to die in bed).

After Roman General Agricola gave up the idea in 80AD of conquering Strathclyde and Scotland and never really got as far as Ireland, the Roman withdrawal from Britain began in earnest. By 412AD the Roman army had no serious presence there. About then St. Patrick left his parents and went back to Ireland. He had been held a slave in his youth there for years before he escaped and returned to Strathclyde. He went back to Ireland as the Roman Catholic Bishop of that country commissioned by the Pope himself. He started converting the pagan Gaelic Celts in Ireland, some of whom moved to the land the Romans called "Caledonia" (Scottish highlands) and became the Scots. They formed the "Celtic" Christian church as opposed to the Roman Catholic Church and followed St. Brendan.

In 476AD Rome itself fell to the "Barbarians." The barbarian king refused the crown of Rome and the old Western Roman Empire fell apart. Its only influence in Britain lay in the Roman Catholic Church manifested at Canterbury.

Oddly, Ireland, that had spawned Patrick's Celtic brand of Catholicism, eventually became a venue of the Roman Catholic Church. Eventually, Canterbury overpowered the Celtic Christian Church in Scotland and became dominant, only to eventually become the seat of the Protestant Reformation in Britain.

Sorry, King Henry VIII of England did NOT invent the Protestant Reformation as Rome would have us believe. Although his personal avarice was legendary, he DID put the screws to monastic domination of the farmland of England in his dissolution of the monasteries. Huge tracts of farmland were returned by the Roman Catholic Church to the farmers and their new Lords, the Nobility. The practice of selling "Indulgences" that later inflamed Martin Luther in Germany also was banned in Britain. If you get your history from Hollywood, see an old Errol Flynn film, "Robin Hood" where he prods the ample-waisted Friar Tuck with his dagger and says, "So that's where the wealth of the English Yeoman is stored!"

The Brythonic Celts who had been Druids and followed that "pagan" religion were converted to the Celtic Christian church in the era covered by the "Venerable Bede", a monk who wrote what has to be the first definitive history of what is now Scotland. Bede was done in by the invading Vikings from Norway and Denmark (who sacked and burned all Christian churches they could find, killed the priests and most of the parishioners. (9th

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Century AD), but the Celtic Christian church lived on while the Druids disappeared, until recently anyway.

And what does this have to do with Snodgrass? There are early references to Snodgrass in Paisley (now a chartered part of Glasgow) and elsewhere in 1368. Adam Snodgyrs (a patrinome of Snodgrass) was bailie (sheriff) of Ayr in 1372. The family probably had moved far out from the original village site. The Snodgrass property came into possession of John Spark who sold that and other property to William Cunninghamme, 17 Sept., 1496, the sale confirmed by King James IV. It was in the possession of the Cunninghammehead estate for 228 years until it was regained by a Snodgrass when John Snodgrass purchased the entire estate of Cunninghammehead at a distress sale from its last Chieftain in 1724. John Snodgrass of Paisley and other spaces he owned, bought out the estate and took over the ruins of Cunninghammehead Castle, located a few miles east of the Snodgrass village.

(see Patterson , *History of the Counties of Ayr and Wigton*, published 1863-66). John Snodgrass regained the “ancient” lands of Snodgrass, Bartonholm, and other places that were a part of the Cunninghammehead estate (1724), tore down the castle keep, the last remaining part of it, and built a magnificent manor house (1748), the stable of which “well-builded of brick” yet stands.

The Cunninghammes of America show pictures of the manor house stable and tell everyone the manor was built by them. Not true! No Cunninghamme ever lived in it. I wonder if John Snodgrass bought the estate so he and Lord Fullerton could sit in the ruins of the castle and toast the end of the 100 year war started when the Cunninghames burned Eglington Castle, “slaughtered” the Chief of clan Montgomery, and chased the Montgomery’s (and their friends the Snodgrass?) to Ardrossan Castle, an alternate Montgomery stronghold. After 1746 the entire clan system was abolished until the reign of George IV. As Brythonic Celts, the Snodgrass were not part of the clan system. (We had no clan until 1984).I have not been able to discover the political orientation of John Snodgrass in 1745, but it may be significant that three years after the clans were brutally suppressed, he built a new manor house renowned for its beauty and prospect on the site of the old Cunninghamme castle keep that he had torn down. Many lowland Scots supported the British crown and John may have been one of them. But that is speculation.

The Lowland Scots were influenced by English culture and were considered “civilized” whereas the Highland Scots retained their Irish Gaelic culture of clan feuds, cattle stealing, and murder which was referred to as “slaughter” by the Scottish crown that admittedly could not control or punish it You can see the ruins of Eglington castle from the “ancient” lands of Snodgrass. The castle grounds are now a large “public” park. The Montgomery moved to Ardrossan castle on the seacoast a few miles N.W. which they said was more defensible. The Cunninghammes stayed in their castle at Cunninghammehead until the chief went broke and the castle and all its lands were sold to John Snodgrass.

Take note of this: Prominent members of both the Montgomery and Cunninghamme Clans became “Undertakers” under the Irish Plantation Scheme of British King James I,

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circa 1609. It required the undertakers to take to Northern Ireland some of the farmers of Ayrshire approved by the crown, that wanted to go, and settle them on lands the British king had eascheated (that means left or abandoned but actually taken) from Erols Tyrone and O'Neil and other Irish nobility who fled after their disastrous war with the British in the late 1500s. There were Snodgrass in the eastern counties of N. Ireland in the late 1700s who were tenants of the Montgomery and Cunninghamme clan septs in Ireland. Some of those farmers were tenants unrelated to the Montgomery or Cunninghamme clans and some tenants were genetic clan members. The Snodgrass were NOT a part of any clan before 1984 when the Chief Herald of Ireland recognized us and granted us our present arms.

THIS MEANS that some Snodgrass probably went to Ireland with either one or both of those Undertakers. Find a Cunninghamme or Montgomery in Ulster and you may find a Snodgrass. I am not a genealogist so PLEASE do not ask me to do this for you. The Irish made it hard for us to research our roots in Northern Ireland (Ulster) when the Irish Republican Army burned all the records at Belfast in 1925.

Probably the most prominent recent member of the Montgomery clan group that moved to Ireland was Sir Bernard Law Montgomery, Field Marshall of the British Army and called "Montgomery of El Alamein" in World War II.

Some years later one of John Snodgrass' progeny married a daughter of the Buchannan Clan and inherited that estate, renaming himself Snodgrass-Buchanan. This is hardly the act of a Saxon who would not be allowed by the Scots. NOTE- There are still Cunninghamme and Buchannan Clans other than those involved here. They are both large groups and retained their own septs. The entire north end of Ayrshire was called "Cunninghamme" and the land also held many other groups and clans including the Snodgrass family and the Montgomery Clan ,originally the Montgomerie from Normandy. They came to England with William the Conqueror and were awarded land in Scotland, though William The Conqueror did not own or control it, but that made no difference to him. He bribed or bought off anyone who would help him and killed those who couldn't or wouldn't. The Montgomery were situated at Eglington Castle near Snodgrass. I will let you discover the history of the war between the Cunninghamme and the Montgomery clans yourself. It lasted over 100 years.

Obviously, in the centuries the Snodgrass lived on, farmed, and mined their village site at its fine position at the last bend of the Garnock river before it joined the Irish sea, they could not continue to support ever increasing numbers of children, so the Snodgrass must have become migrants at an early time. By the time the village and farm were sold in 1476 a Snodgrass, Adam Snodgyrs, had already served as Sheriff of Ayr (1372) and Snodgrass had run their own distillery in Glasgow (1368). Feudalism introduced by the Normans had died out and had never been replaced by clan society in the Lowlands. But increasing family sizes probably prompted many Snodgrass to leave when the land could no longer support all of them.

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The Snodgrass apparently may not have been the only inhabitants of the village from the mid-1400s until 1724 when John Snodgrass bought the entire estate of the last Chief of Clan Cunninghamme at Cunninghammehead Castle. Snodgrass, Bartonholm, and other holdings were included. The census of 1880 showed only two families living in the Snodgrass village, neither of them Snodgrass. One family were farmers and the other coal miners. The last buildings, including a manor house, were demolished by 1990 by the present landowner Nobel Industrial Chemicals Industry, maker of many explosives used by Britain in World Wars I, and II.

A son of John Snodgrass, Neil Snodgrass, was a fast friend of the Montgomery clan Chief, Lord Fullerton, with whom he introduced a meaningful crop rotation scheme that became the first in Scotland.

Eventually the Cunninghammehead estate, including the lands of Snodgrass, Bartonholm, and others, were sold by the Snodgrass to provide estates for the many children and kin of the Snodgrass family. Possession of the Snodgrass village and farm passed to the Earl of Eglington where it was held until the Snodgrass land was sold to the Nobel ICI Chemical Company that holds those parts now. In 1925 Nobel sold a part of the land to the Irvine Golf Club. It forms the 13th Hole Green (known as the, Snodgrass Hole,) and is still in operation. During that period in the early 1800s when Eglington owned the land he drained the Garnock river water that had covered parts of the property for over thirty years. This was mainly to regain access to the several open pit coal mines on the Snodgrass land.

Eventually some Snodgrass migrated to Ireland as part of the Plantation Scheme (1610) and it was from there that several families of Snodgrass emigrated more-or-less together to America (landing at Philadelphia, the lower Delaware river area, and Pennsylvania) and began our history in this country.

For many years some American Snodgrass displayed the arms of William James Snodgrass as those of the Snodgrass family. That was highly incorrect (as the Lord Lyon, Chief Herald of Scotland told me in 1981) and the Snodgrass Family Clan Society arms we now use were awarded upon application in 1984 to the Chief Herald of Ireland by the members of the Snodgrass Family Clan Society led by the late Laurence Elder Snodgrass (1918-1978) of Albuquerque and others of Snodgrass heritage. This was in recognition of the contributions to Ireland made by the various family members (circa 1610-1720).

For several years Dr. Phillip Snodgrass of Little Rock, Arkansas and I researched the literature in both the USA and Scotland in an attempt to find the site of the Snodgrass village that was mentioned therein. It was no longer shown on any current map. A description of the celebration of the Festival of Marymass, held annually in August (and still active) in the environs of the town of Irvine and in the Parish of Irvine which was mentioned in very early texts connected with Snodgrass, was found by Dr. Phillip and, by a stroke of luck, I described the known facts to a lady who works for the Ardrossan Genealogical Society located in that town about eight miles north of Irvine on the west coast of Ayrshire fronting the Irish Sea. She produced a British Artillery Map of 1775

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that shows the village Snodgrass located on the Garnock River only two miles or less N. of the town of Irvine. These old maps are available as part of the website of *Ayrshire Roots*.

In 2000 Dr. Snodgrass went to Scotland with his daughter Jessica and located the village, helped by another stroke of luck, a man living near the doctor in America who was from the Snodgrass village area. They photographed it and familiarized themselves with the site.

The village could very easily have been long ago erased by the extension of the other towns in the area, but it was saved by the low lying nature of the ground along the river which made it unsuitable for heavy construction, and the coincidence that the Nobel Chemicals Co., (maker of Dynamite) had bought some of the land (1870s) and built some earthen revetments on the N. end of the Snodgrass property on the Garnock river bank containing storage buildings for explosives. That land is still retained by the Company but is now for sale by a Nobel Co. subsidiary that wants to develop the Snodgrass land and some of the unused Nobel plant space for hotels, houses, and other profit making enterprises. Some of the balance of the old Snodgrass farm is now bordering a very old Bogside Racecourse (now unused) mentioned in the books describing the Marymass Festival. The south end of the racecourse abuts the Irvine river estuary where it and the Garnock enter the sea at the port of Irvine.

All of this is bordered on the East by the railway line to Glasgow that crosses the oldest railway bridge in Scotland and is bordered by a wildlife refuge, Eglington Castle Park, and a very large area of new houses. A remarkable survival.

For more information or to see photos of Snodgrass Village and our tartan clothing and the clan badge, contact Norman Snodgrass, Seneschal, Snodgrass Clan NA, on our e mail address summitrain@yahoo.com

This pdf file was created by ElectricScotland.com on 24th April 2009