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# **Pinpointing the Sloan Scottish Paternal Ancestral Genetic Homeland**

**A Scottish Y-DNA Case Study**

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A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Tyrone Bowes', is written above the typed name.

**Dr Tyrone Bowes**  
**15<sup>th</sup> August 2019**

### Introduction

A simple painless commercial ancestral Y chromosome DNA test will potentially provide one with the names of many hundreds of individuals with whom one shares a common male ancestor, but what often perplexes people is how one can match lots of individuals with many different surnames? The answer is quite simple. Roughly 1,000 years ago one's direct medieval male ancestor, the first for example to inherit the 'Sloan' surname was living in close proximity to others with whom he was related but who took other surnames like Stewart, MacAdam, MacCorquodale and Rankin. Given that 1,000 years have passed since paternally inherited surnames became common, there will be many descendants of those individuals some of whom will today undergo commercial ancestral Y-DNA testing. Hence the surnames of one's medieval ancestor's neighbours will be revealed in today's Y-DNA test results.

Early 19<sup>th</sup> century census data demonstrates that Scottish surnames could still be found concentrated in the areas from which they originated. One can therefore use census data to determine the origin of the surnames that appear in one's Y-DNA results, identifying an area common to all, and reveal ones '**Paternal Ancestral Genetic Homeland.**' The genetic homeland is the small area (usually within a 5 mile radius) where one's ancestors lived for hundreds if not thousands of years. It is the area where one's ancestor first inherited his surname surrounded by relatives who inherited others. It is the area where ones ancestors left their mark in its placenames, its history, and in the DNA of its current inhabitants. Since modern science can pinpoint a paternal ancestral genetic homeland it can also be used to confirm it by DNA testing individuals from the pinpointed area.

### Notes of caution!

1. In Ireland, each of the estimated 1,500 distinct surnames had a single founding ancestor, that's an estimated 1,500 Adams from whom anyone with Irish ancestry can trace direct descent. But science has demonstrated that only 50% of individuals with a particular Irish surname will be related to the surnames founding ancestor, the other 50% of people will have an association that has arisen as a result of what are called 'non-paternal events' usually a result of adoptions or maternal transfer of the surname. Since Scotland adopted a similar Clan based society these scientific findings can be applied to Scotland and people with Scottish ancestry.
2. Often people are looking for their DNA results to trace back to a specific area. One must remember that the results typically reflect one's ancestor's neighbours from around 1,000 years ago. As a result, if one's Scottish ancestor was descended from an Irish or Anglo-Saxon settler, Viking raider, or 12<sup>th</sup> Century Conquering Norman, one's DNA results will reflect earlier Irish, English, Welsh, French, and possibly Scandinavian origin. One must approach this process with an open mind!

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### Interpreting the Y-DNA test results

To pinpoint a paternal ancestral genetic homeland one must first identify the surnames that appear as one's closest genetic matches upon commercial ancestral Y-DNA testing, see **Figure 1**. Those surnames, particularly one's that *recur* among one's closest genetic matches, will typically reflect the surnames of one's medieval ancestral neighbours. Mr Sloan's closest genetically recurring surname matches as revealed by commercial ancestral Y-DNA STR testing are detailed in **Figure 2**.

| 111 Marker Matches |           |   |                  |              |            |
|--------------------|-----------|---|------------------|--------------|------------|
| Genetic Distance   | Last Name | Earliest Known Ancestor                           | Y-DNA Haplogroup | Terminal SNP | Match Date |
| 2                  | Sloan     | Creighton Sloan 1842-1916                         | R-S425           | S425         | 6/26/2017  |
| 7                  | Duff      | Alexander Duff, b.1819 and d. 1898                | R-M269           |              | 2/2/2018   |
| 7                  | Sloan     | Wm Sloan bc1755 Ballynaugh, Antrim, IRE           | R-S425           | S425         | 12/5/2017  |
| 7                  | Stewart   | John Wyatt Stewart 1784-1817 Virginia             | R-BY103024       | BY103024     | 6/26/2017  |
| 8                  | Sloan     | Robert Sloan b:1809 d:1894                        | R-BY103024       | BY103024     | 1/27/2019  |
| 8                  | Adams     | William William Fitz Adam II, b. 1195 and d. 1252 | R-M269           |              | 6/26/2017  |
| 8                  | KINNY     | John KENNA (KINNY), (17-- -18--)                  | R-M269           |              | 6/26/2017  |
| 8                  | Sloan     | George Franklin Sloan, b.1818 KY and d.1888 TN    | R-M269           |              | 6/26/2017  |
| 9                  | Sloane    | John Sloan  | R-S425           | S425         | 6/26/2017  |
| 10                 | Gresh     |   | R-M269           |              | 6/10/2018  |
| 10                 | Sloan     | John Sloan/Slewan, b. 1630 and d. 1684            | R-M269           |              | 9/28/2017  |

**Figure 1:** Snapshot of test subject Sloan's closest genetic surname matches at the 111 marker level as revealed in the FTDNA Y-DNA STR database. The more Y-DNA STR markers two people share the more recent their shared paternal ancestor once lived. The test subject's closest Y-DNA STR genetic surname matches are **NOT RANDOM**; he matches many others named Sloan/Sloane (red arrows), together with individuals with other Scottish-associated surnames like Stewart and Duff that recur throughout his Y-DNA results. Coloured font indicates the ethnicity associated with each surname; Scottish, Scottish-associated, Irish.

| Test Subject | Haplogroup | Y-DNA Test Results |              |            |                              |               |                          |                          |                         |               |               |                    |  |
|--------------|------------|--------------------|--------------|------------|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|--|
|              |            | 111 Marker Matches |              |            | 111 Marker Matches           |               |                          |                          |                         |               |               | 111 Marker Matches |  |
|              |            | Genetic Distance   |              |            | Genetic Distance             |               |                          |                          |                         |               |               | Genetic Distance   |  |
|              |            | 2                  | 7            | 8          | 3                            | 4             | 5                        | 6                        | 7                       | 3             | 4             |                    |  |
| Sloan        | R-M269     |                    |              |            |                              |               | Boggs (x34)              | Black (x3)               |                         |               |               |                    |  |
|              |            |                    |              |            |                              |               | Brown (x2)               | Buchanan (x2)            | Akin/Eakin (x4)         |               |               |                    |  |
|              |            |                    |              |            |                              |               | Doig (x2)                | Clark (x2)               | Ingils (x2)             |               |               |                    |  |
|              |            |                    |              |            | Grant (x2)                   | Mclean (x3)   | Ferguson (x2)            | Ewing/McEwan (x5)        | Kelly (x6) <sup>1</sup> |               | Mills (x2)    | Smith (x3)         |  |
|              |            | Sloan (x36)        | Stewart (x6) | Adams (x5) | McCandless (x7) <sup>2</sup> | Mitchell (x4) | Hall (x16) <sup>1</sup>  | Gilreath (x4)            | Kidd (x3)               | O'Hanlon (x2) | Thornton (x6) |                    |  |
|              |            |                    |              |            | McCorkle (x14) <sup>3</sup>  | Taylor (x3)   | McNabb (x4) <sup>1</sup> | Johnston (x2)            | Levinstone (x3)         | Weld (x2)     |               |                    |  |
|              |            |                    |              |            | Rankin (x2)                  |               | Thompson (x2)            | Kilgore (x29)            | McClaren (x4)           |               |               |                    |  |
|              |            |                    |              |            |                              |               | Walter (x2)              | Miller (x5)              | Short (x2)              |               |               |                    |  |
|              |            |                    |              |            |                              |               | Williamson (x10)         | Shaw (x4)                | Sparks (x2)             |               |               |                    |  |
|              |            |                    |              |            |                              |               | Wilson (x2)              | Stark (x14) <sup>1</sup> |                         |               |               |                    |  |
|              |            |                    |              |            |                              |               |                          | Ward (x2)                |                         |               |               |                    |  |

**Figure 2:** Mr Sloan's closest genetically recurring surnames reveal a most recent paternal ancestral link with Scotland. Surnames appear at the point at which they first appear as a genetic match, for example, the first match to an individual named Sloan shares 109 of 111 markers, but not all Sloan/Sloanes will match at that level. Figures in brackets represent the number of individuals with each surname that appear as a genetic match at the 111, 67 and 37 marker levels. The test subject's closest genetically recurring surname matches are dominated by either **exclusively Scottish** or **Scottish-associated** surnames; those Scottish surnames arose among a group of related males living in a specific part of Scotland an estimated 1,000 years ago. <sup>1</sup>Members of the same close family recruited for DNA testing which may be excluded from further analysis. <sup>2</sup>McCandless is a Scots-Irish surname which has become almost extinct in its native Scotland. <sup>3</sup>McCorkle is a spelling variant of Scottish 'MacCorquodale.'

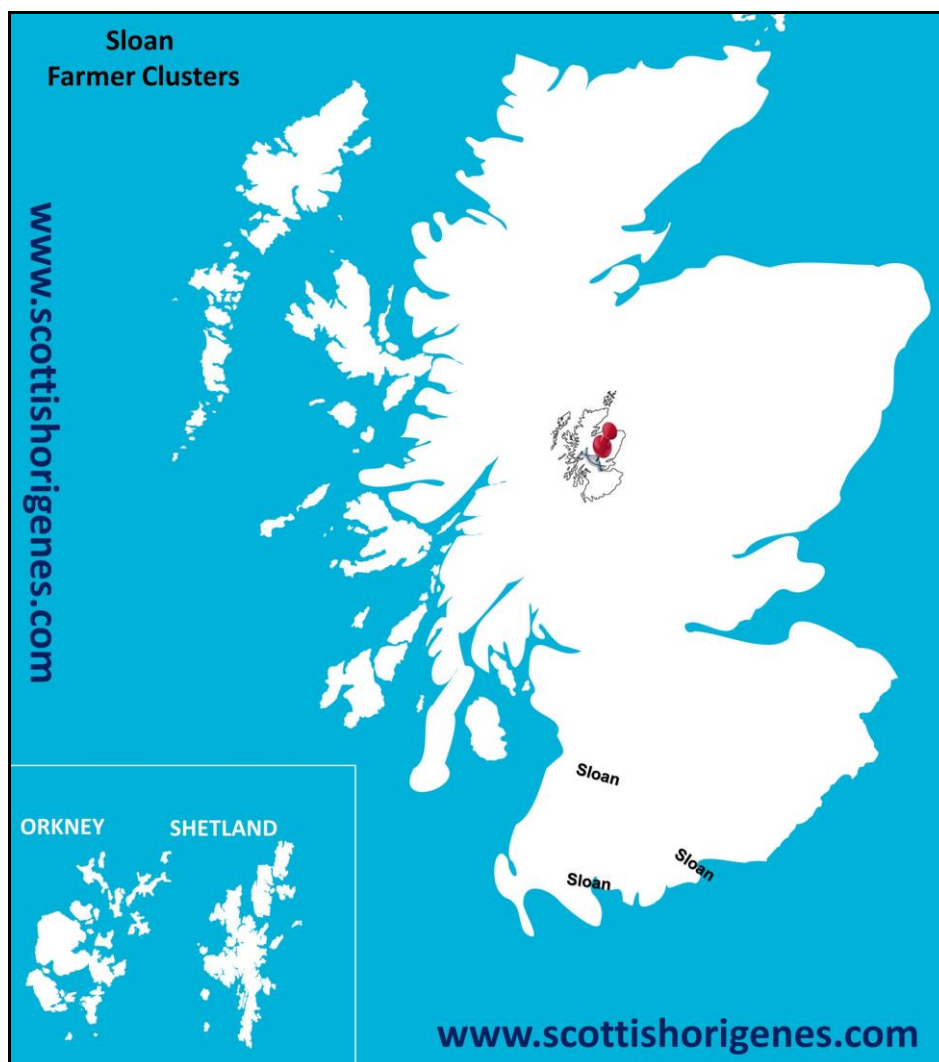
Upon commercial ancestral Y-DNA testing the test subject matched many others named Sloan/Sloane who tested independently, see **Figure 1** and **2**. This indicates that the test subject is directly descended from a Sloan/Sloane-Adam; literally the first male ('Adam') to take that surname who lived approximately 1,000 years ago when paternally inherited surnames became common. The complete dominance of

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Scottish-associated surnames among the test subject's closest recurring genetic matches indicates that the test subject's most recent paternal ancestry (as revealed by his DNA) is linked with Scotland, and hence that he is directly descended from a 'Scottish' Sloan-Adam.

### The Scottish Sloan Surname

Since farmers in early census data concentrated in the area where their surname first appeared, or in the area where one's paternal ancestors first settled, one can examine the distribution of farmers named 'Sloan' to estimate how many Scottish Clans used the Sloan surname. Early census data reveals at least 3 distinct clusters of Sloan farmers within Scotland; which indicates the existence of potentially at least 3 genetically distinct Scottish Sloan Clans; one of whom the test subject (as revealed by the Y-DNA test results) shares common paternal ancestry with, see **Figure 3**.



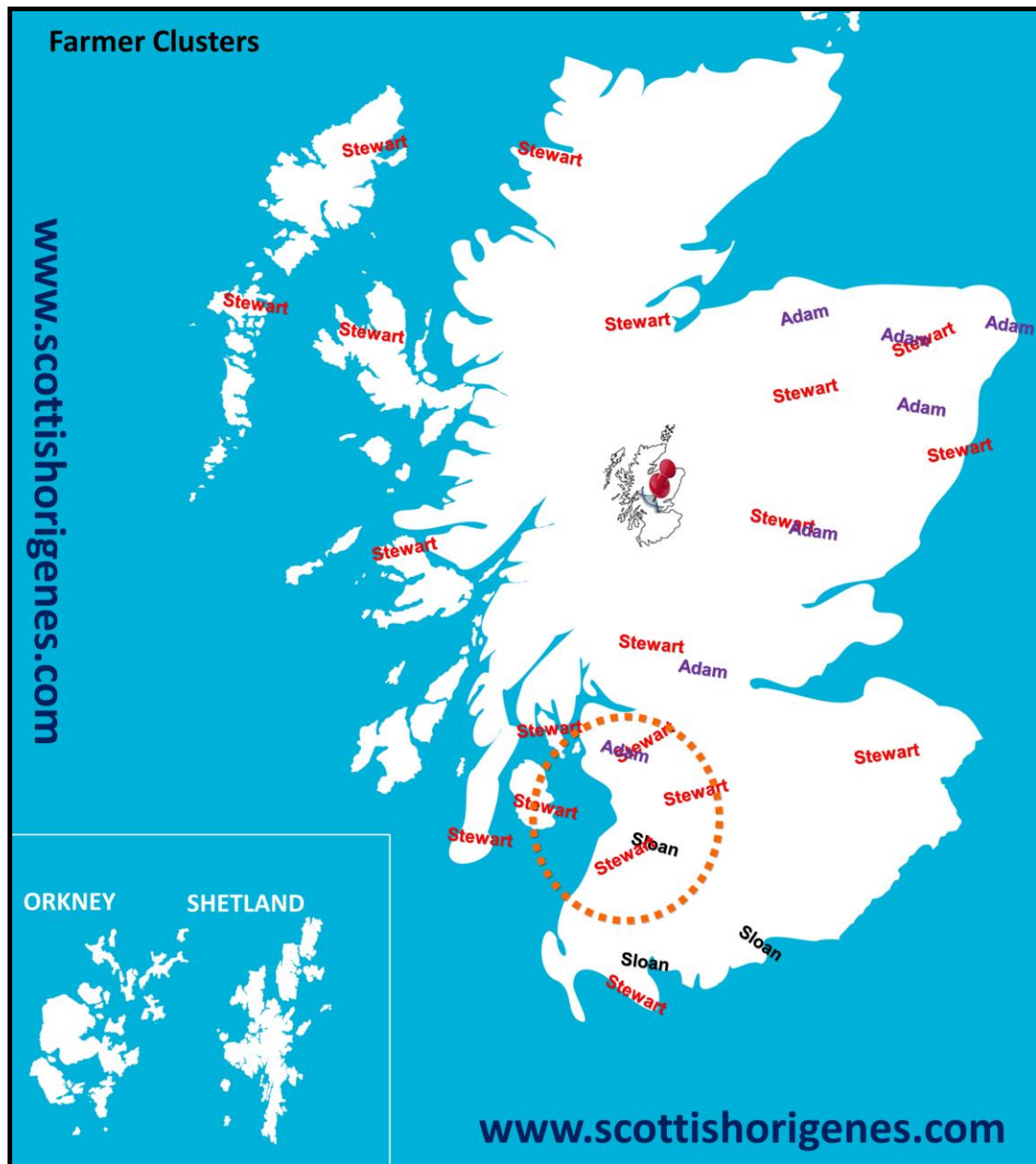
**Figure 3:** The Scottish Sloan farming community. By examining the distribution in early census data of farmers named Sloan/Sloane, it reveals 3 distinct clusters within Southwest Scotland. This indicates the existence of potentially 3 genetically distinct Scottish groups that are the source of Scottish Sloans. Since the test subject's Y-DNA results reveal that he is descended from a Scottish Sloan-Adam; his paternal ancestry is connected to one of these three Sloan groups. Each surname has been placed on the map in the area where farmers with that surname concentrate in early census data. The most common spelling is detailed in each location.

### A most recent Paternal Ancestral link with Central Ayrshire

The method of using genetic surname matches as revealed by commercial ancestral Y-DNA testing to pinpoint a paternal ancestral genetic homeland works by exploiting the link between the Y chromosome, surname and land; which are typically passed from father to son through the generations. In the absence of a link to the land the process becomes more challenging. The link with the land is greatest among the farming community, and since farmers can still be found farming the land where their ancestor lived when he first inherited his surname, or where one's ancestor first settled, one can plot where farmers with the surnames that appear in one's Y-DNA results originate and identify an area common to all. This means that upon Y-DNA testing a Sloan from Wigtownshire will be a Y-DNA genetic match to males with surnames like MacHarg, MacDowell and MacCrindle; surnames associated with the far Southwest of Scotland. In contrast, a Sloan from County Down will be a Y-DNA genetic match to individuals with surnames like MacVeigh, O'Neill and McCann; surnames associated with Southeast Ulster in Northern Ireland.

An examination of the test subject's Y-DNA results reveals that the Stewart and Adam surnames appear as his closest recurring Scottish-associated genetic surname matches in the FTDNA Y-DNA STR database, see **Figure 2**. Overlay mapping reveals that farmers named Sloan, Stewart and Adams occur in closest proximity to one another within Southwest Central Scotland, see **Figure 4**. An examination of the surnames associated with Southwest Central Scotland reveals the Scottish Sloans in Central Ayrshire, surrounded by the surnames that appear among the test subject's closest Y-DNA genetic relatives, see **Figure 5**.

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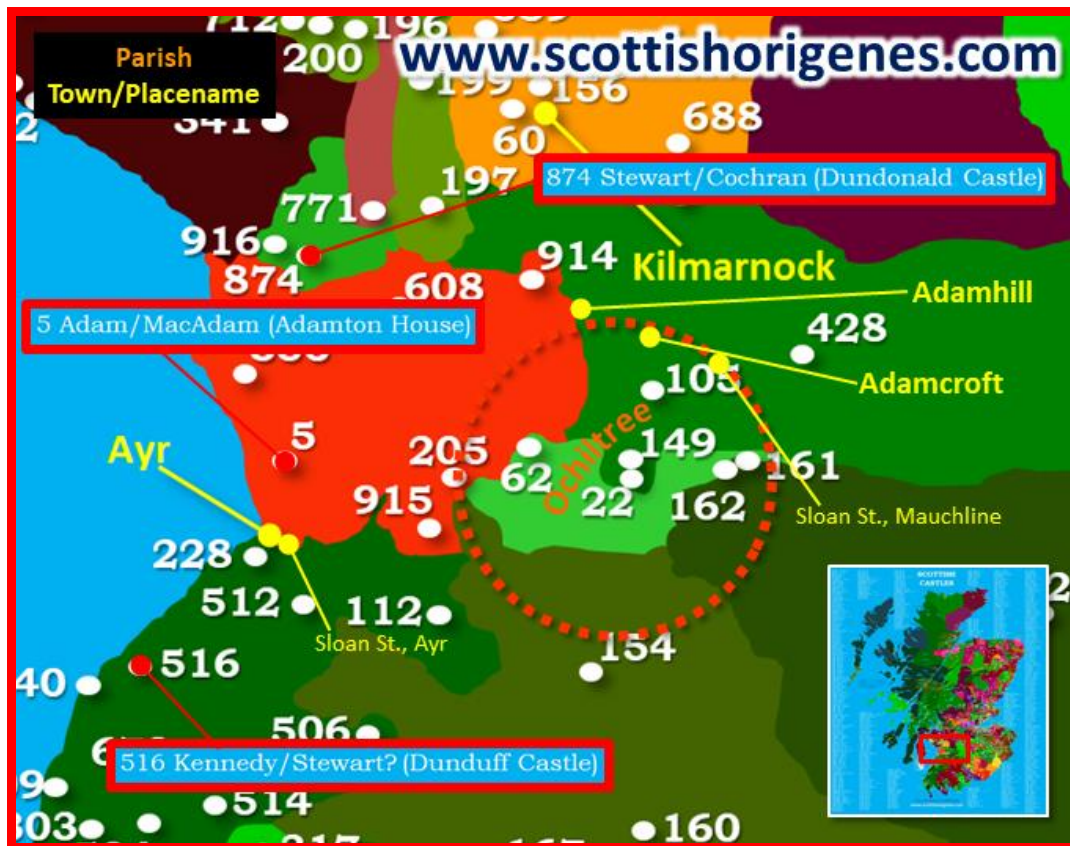


**Figure 4:** Overlay mapping reveals a most recent paternal ancestral link with Southwest Central Scotland. Overlay mapping reveals that farmers named Sloan, Stewart and Adam(s) occur in closest proximity to one another within Southwest Central Scotland (*orange broken circle*). Each surname has been placed on the map in the area where farmers with that surname concentrate in early census data. The most common spelling is detailed in each location.









**Figure 7:** Mr Sloan's Scottish Paternal Ancestral Genetic Homeland. The Ayrshire Sloans concentrate in the parish of Ochiltree; and it is there that Mr Sloan's Scottish Paternal Ancestral Genetic Homeland (orange broken circle) is to be found. It was there that the test subject's direct male ancestor lived when he first acquired the Sloan surname. His Sloan-Adam lived surrounded by genetic relatives who took other surnames like Stewart, Rankin and MacAdams among many others. In the surrounding area one finds 'Sloan St' in both Mauchline and Ayr town. The Ayrshire Sloans will also have left evidence of their ancestral links with this area in its history, but also in the DNA of the current inhabitants.

### Vikings?

Modern Scottish males are a mixed bunch who descend from the pre-historic inhabitants, Celtic-Picts, -Ancient Britons and -Gaels, Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, Norse-Gaels and Normans. However, clues to the ethnic origin of the test subject's paternal ancestors can be found in his Nordic I-M223 Haplogroup and his more distant genetic surname matches (which reflect older shared paternal ancestry) which include individuals with Scandinavian surnames and locations. These results indicate that the test subject's paternal ancestor was a Scandinavian Viking who had settled near Ayr town.

### How to confirm the Sloan Scottish Paternal Genetic Homelands

One must keep in mind that this is a scientific DNA approach to identifying an origin.

As such, the connection to an identified area can be confirmed by Y-DNA testing males with the surname of interest from the identified location. The most recent paternal ancestral origin within Central Ayrshire can be confirmed by Y-DNA testing males named Sloan from the farmland in Ochiltree parish.

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