

**Have Scots Irish links and trying to identify their Scottish origin? If you have an ancestral surname and earliest known location within Ireland, then Email [tyronebowes@gmail.com](mailto:tyronebowes@gmail.com) for a FREE CONSULTATION**

**Hemphills or Semples in your Family tree? You can contact Jo Story who commissioned the report [malakoff1@ozemail.com.au](mailto:malakoff1@ozemail.com.au)**

## **Pinpointing the Hemphill Ancestral Homeland**

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[www.scottishorigenes.com](http://www.scottishorigenes.com)



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19<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

### INTRODUCTION

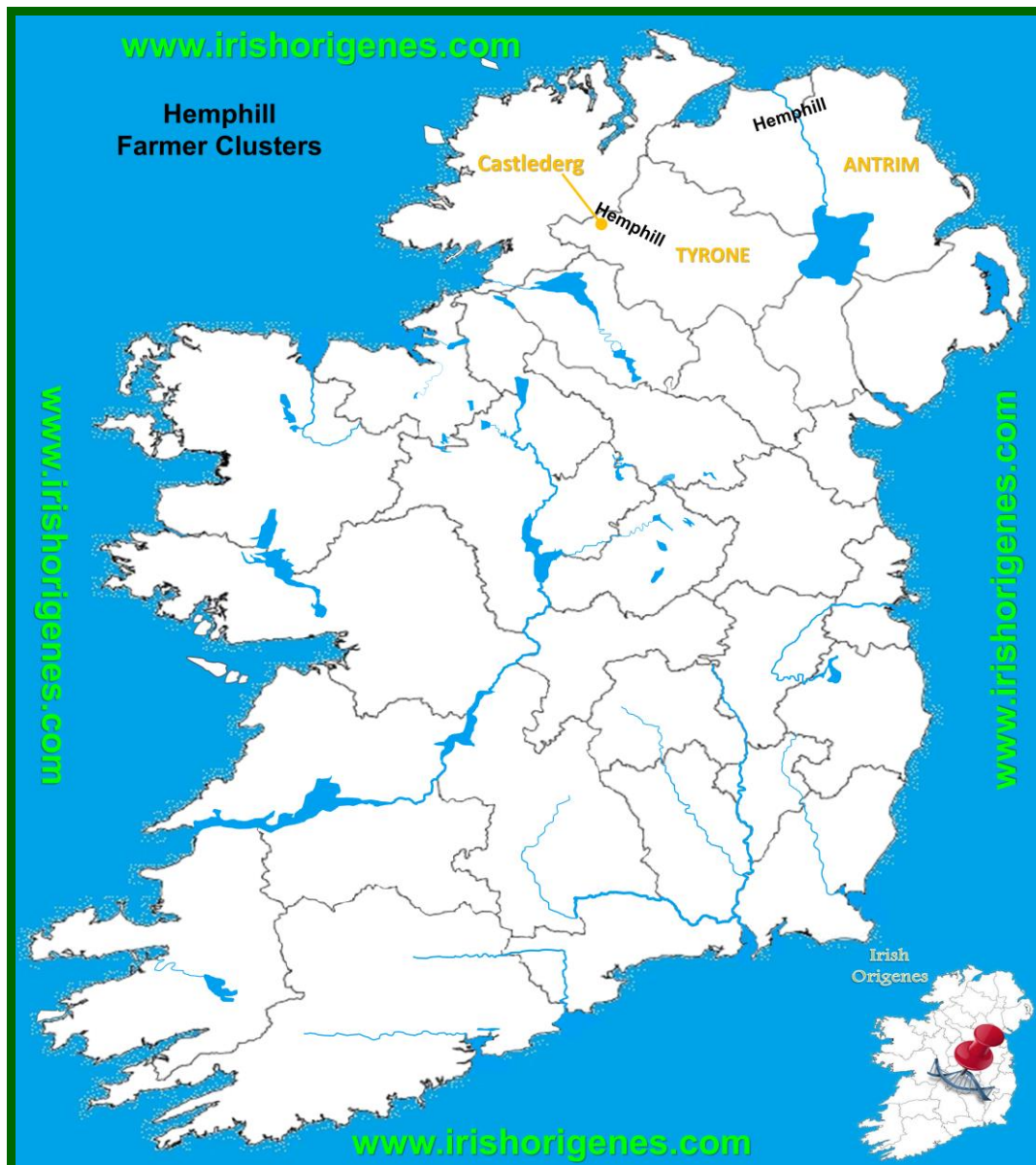
The Plantation of Ireland that officially began in 1610AD was a highly organised affair. It saw the arrival of thousands of Scots and English who were attracted by the availability of land forfeited by Gaelic Irish Chieftains. The Scots and English would repeat a pattern of migration and settlement as more land became available until almost all of Ulster in the north of Ireland was colonised. Research at Irish and Scottish Origenes has revealed that the Plantation surnames in each location often mirror those of their Scottish or English origin, indicating that whole communities had departed, travelled, and settled together within Ireland. As a results one can examine the Plantation Scottish and English surnames in each location on the Irish Origenes Plantation Surnames of Ireland map and identify their origin within Mainland Britain.

### The Hemphill Surname in Ireland

The test subject's earliest Hemphill ancestor was a 'John Hemphill' who died in 1864 in Castledearg in County Tyrone in Ulster in Northern Ireland. In Ireland, the descendants of Gaelic Irish, Normans, and Scottish mercenary 'Gallowglass' were overwhelmingly Catholic in early census data, while those descended from 17<sup>th</sup> Century Plantation Scots and English were overwhelmingly Protestant. Irish census data reveals that the Hemphill surname is associated with 17<sup>th</sup> Century Scottish and English Plantation settlement, and distribution mapping reveals 2 distinct groups in Ulster, one of which lies close to Castledearg in County Tyrone, see **Figure 1**.

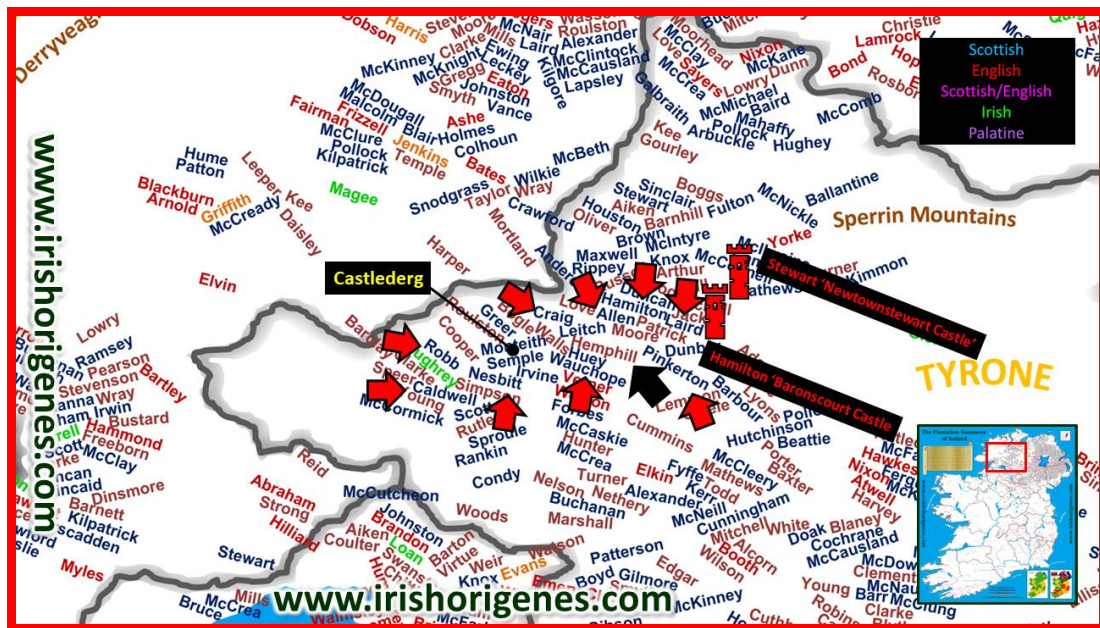
Irish Origenes produced the first ever Plantation Surnames of Ireland map. That map details where farmers with each surname concentrated in early census data, and an examination of the surnames that surround Castledearg reveals an area completely dominated by Scottish surnames, see **Figure 2**. To the east of Castledearg one finds Plantation Bawns associated with the Scottish 'Hamilton' and 'Stewart' Families who were prominent landowners in Scotland and indicates that the test subject's Hemphills were recruited from the Scottish lands of either the Hamiltons or Stewarts, see **Figure 2**. To identify the Scottish origin of the Hemphills one can examine the distribution within Scotland of a sample number of Scottish surnames which surround Castledearg to see if a common area of association within Scotland emerges, see **Figure 3**. Distribution mapping of Castledearg-associated Scottish surnames reveals that they are all associated with bordering Ayrshire, Lanarkshire, and Renfrewshire in West Central Scotland, see **Figure 3**.

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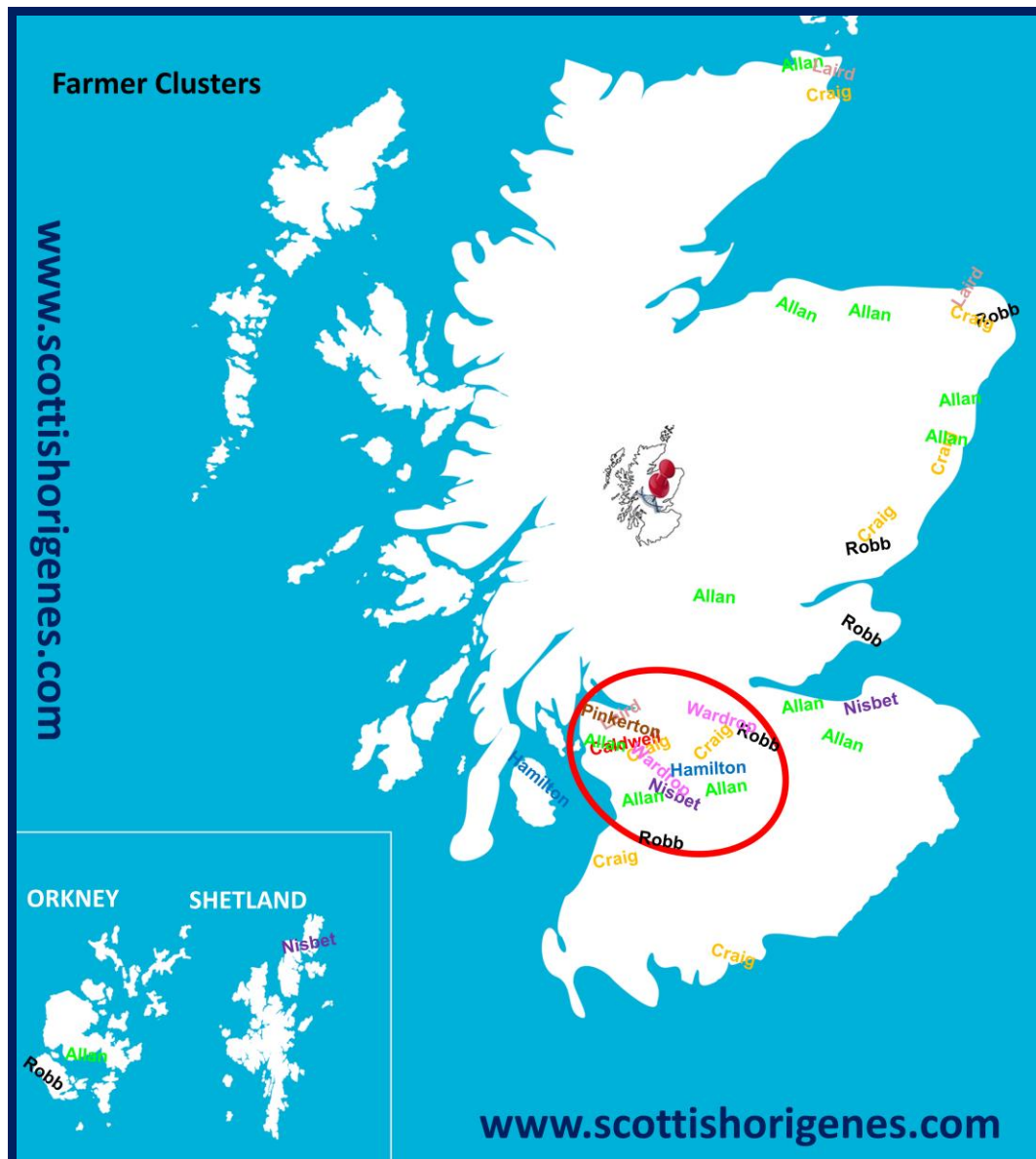
**Figure 1:** The Irish Plantation Hemphill farming community. Census data reveals that individuals with Gaelic Irish, Norman, or Scottish Gallowglass surnames were overwhelmingly Catholic, while those with 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Century Plantation Scottish or English surnames were overwhelmingly Protestant. Early census data reveals that the Hemphill surname is associated with Plantation settlement within Ireland. Distribution mapping of farmers (Protestant, male, heads of household) named 'Hemphill' reveals 2 distinct groups concentrated in Ulster, one of which lies close to Castledearg. Each surname is positioned as it appears on an Irish Origenes Plantation Surnames map, the most common spelling is detailed in each location, free to view: <https://www.origenesmaps.com>

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**Figure 2:** The Plantation community surrounding Castlederg in Southwest County Tyrone. Irish farmers with each surname still concentrated in early census data in the area where their surname first appeared or in the area where one's ancestors first settled, and an examination of the Plantation community that surrounds Castlederg reveals the test subject's Hemphill ancestors (**black arrow**) in an area completely dominated by Scottish-associated surnames. To the east of Castlederg one finds Plantation Bawns associated with the Scottish Hamiltons and Stewarts. One can examine a representative sample of the Scottish surnames (**red arrows**) that surround Castlederg to determine the origin of these Scottish colonisers. Each surname is positioned in the location where farmers with each surname concentrate in early census data. The most common spelling is detailed in each location. Each surname is positioned as it appears on the Irish Origenes Plantation Surnames map, free to view: <https://www.origenesmaps.com/>

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**Figure 3:** Overlay mapping reveals an origin for the test subject's Hemphills within West Central Scotland. An examination of Castlederg reveals settlers with Scottish surnames like Allan, Caldwell, Craig, Hamilton, Laird, Nisbet, Pinkerton, Robb, and Wauchope (Wardrop). Distribution mapping of Scottish farmers named Allan, Caldwell, Craig, Hamilton, Laird, Nisbet, Pinkerton, Robb, and Wardrop reveals that they only occur together within the borderlands of Ayrshire, Lanarkshire, and Renfrewshire in West Central Scotland (red circle). Each surname is positioned in the location where farmers with each surname concentrated in early census data. The most common spelling is detailed in each location. Surnames are positioned as they appear on the Scottish Origenes Surnames map, free to view online <https://www.origenesmaps.com>

### From 'Scottish' Semple to 'Irish' Hemphill

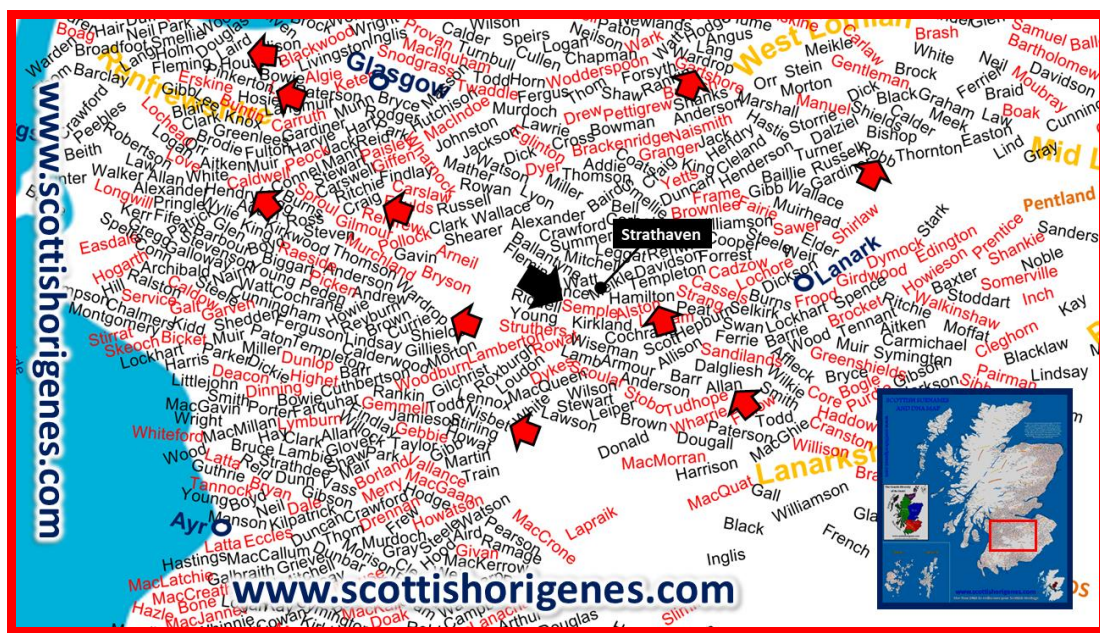
The Hemphill surname is rare in Scottish census data, with many Hemphills revealing an earlier origin within Ireland. This indicates that the Scottish 'Hemphills' have almost gone extinct in their native Scotland as a result of the Plantation of Ulster, something not uncommon, as many Scottish surnames only survive among the Plantation community of Ireland. Alternatively, Hemphill may have arisen as an Irish



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spelling variant of another Scottish surname, much like Irish ‘Wauchope’ is a variant of Scottish ‘Wardrop,’ see **Figures 2 and 3**.

An examination of the Scottish surnames of West Central Scotland as it appears on the Scottish Origenes Surnames of Scotland map reveals Scottish ‘*Semple*’ near Strathaven town and surrounded by many of the Plantation Scottish surnames that surround Castlederg in Southwest County Tyrone, see **Figure 4**. An examination of the Scottish Origenes Clan Territories of Scotland map reveals that these Scottish Semples lived on the lands owned by the Hamiltons and Stewarts who are also associated with Plantation settlement in Southwest County Tyrone, see **Figures 2 and 5**. These results indicate that in around 1610AD the Hamiltons and Stewarts of Strathaven recruited tenants with surnames like Allan, Caldwell, Craig, Hamilton, Laird, Nisbet, Pinkerton, Robb, Wardrop, and ***Semple*** to settle their newly acquired lands in Southwest County Tyrone. This is confirmed by a re-examination of the Plantation surnames associated with Castlederg which reveals the neighbouring Semple and Hemphill surnames, together with a placename known as ‘Ganvaghan (*Semple*),’ see **Figures 6 and 7**. These results indicate that the test subject’s ancestor was originally a Scottish ‘*Semple*’ from Strathaven in Lanarkshire who was recruited by the Hamiltons or Stewarts to settle in Ganvaghan townland near Castlederg at some point after 1610AD. At some point after 1610AD a clerical error gave rise to his ancestor acquiring the ‘Hemphill’ spelling variant.

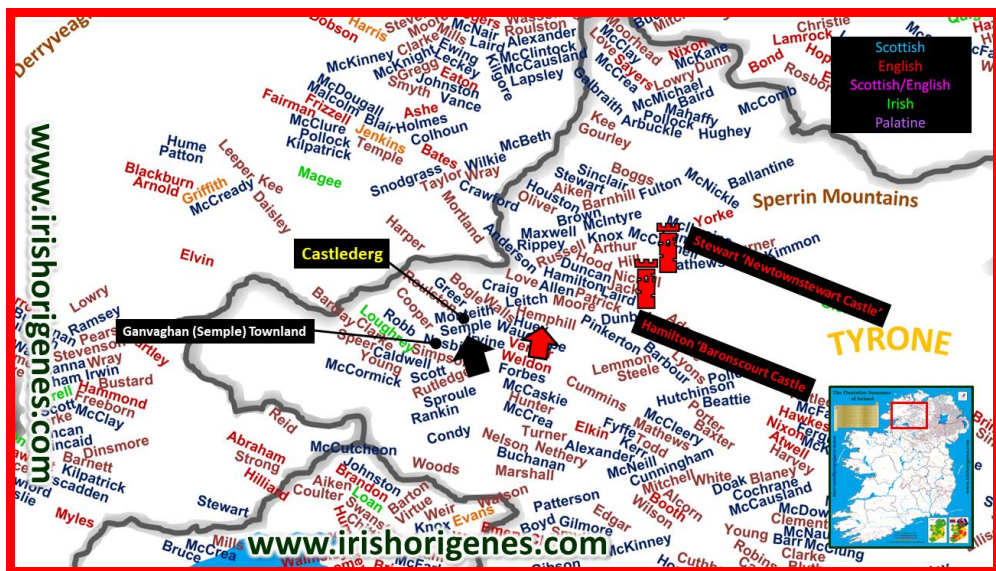


**Figure 4:** The Surnames of the Ayrshire, Lanarkshire, and Renfrewshire borderlands. Scottish farmers still concentrated in early census data in the area where their surname first appeared or in the area where one’s ancestors first settled. An examination of the surnames associated with the Ayrshire, Lanarkshire, and Renfrewshire borderlands reveals the ‘*Semple*’ surname (**black arrow**) near Strathaven town and surrounded by many of the surnames found among the Plantation community of Castlederg (**red arrows**). Each surname is positioned in the location where farmers with each surname concentrate in early census data. The most common spelling is detailed in each location. Surnames in **red font** (like *Semple*) are exclusive to a single Scottish location. Each surname is positioned as it appears on the Scottish Origenes Surnames of Scotland map, free to view: <https://www.origenesmaps.com/>

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**Figure 5:** The principal Medieval Clans and Families of the Ayrshire, Lanarkshire, and Renfrewshire borderlands. An examination of the clans and families of West Central Scotland reveals a diverse mix of clans and families of Brythonic Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, Viking, Scottish and Irish Gael, and Norman origin. The map reveals that the area surrounding Strathaven was dominated by the Hamilton and Stewart families (yellow arrows) who were prominent in the Plantation settlement of Southwest County Tyrone. The Hamiltons and Stewarts recruited tenants with surnames like Allan, Caldwell, Craig, Hamilton, Laird, Nisbet, Pinkerton, Robb, Wardrop, and Semple to settle their newly acquired lands in Southwest County Tyrone. The clan map was reconstructed based on the location of castles and towerhouses and their historically associated clans and families. Image taken from the Scottish Origenes Clans of Scotland map, now free to view: [www.origenesmaps.com](http://www.origenesmaps.com)



**Figure 6:** The Semples of Castleberg. An examination of the Plantation community of Castleberg reveals both Semple (black arrow) and Hemphill (red arrow) surnames near Castleberg. The surrounding area also reveals a 'Ganvaghan (Semple)' townland named after a Plantation Scottish Semple from Strathaven. The test subject's ancestor was originally named 'Semple' and acquired the 'Hemphill' spelling variant at some point after 1610AD in Southwest County Tyrone. Each surname is positioned in the location where farmers with each surname concentrate in early census data. The most common spelling is detailed in each location. Each surname is positioned as it appears on the Irish Origenes Plantation Surnames map, free to view: <https://www.origenesmaps.com/>

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*Figure 7: Ganvaghan (Semple) townland near Castlederg in Southwest County Tyrone.*

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