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Email: [tyronebowes@gmail.com](mailto:tyronebowes@gmail.com)

## **Case Study**

# **Pinpointing the Holland Irish Paternal Ancestral Genetic Homeland**

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyrone Bowes'.

**Dr Tyrone Bowes**

**7<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

### 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. Approximately 1,000 years ago, one's direct medieval male ancestor, the first for example to name himself 'Ó Maolchalann' was living near others with whom he was related but who inherited other surnames like Ó Domhnaill, and Mac Domhnaill. Given that 1,000 years have passed since paternally inherited surnames were first adopted, 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.

Surnames in Ireland can still be found concentrated in the areas where they first appeared or in the area where one's ancestors first settled. 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 one's '**Paternal Ancestral Genetic Homeland**.' The paternal ancestral 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 one's 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. Each of the estimated 1,500 unique Irish surnames had a single founding ancestor, which is an estimated 1,500 'Adams' from whom anyone with Irish paternal ancestry (and with one of those unique surnames) can trace direct descent. But science has demonstrated that only 50% of individuals with a unique Irish surname will be related to their surnames founding ancestor (*the surname-Adam*), the other 50% of males will have an association that has arisen due to 'non-paternal events,' usually a result of adoptions or maternal transfer of the surname.
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 Irish paternal ancestor was descended from a Viking raider, Norman, or Plantation settler, then one's Y-DNA results may reflect earlier English, Welsh, French, and possibly Scandinavian origin. One must approach this process with an open mind!

## Holland – An Irish Origenes Y-DNA Case Study

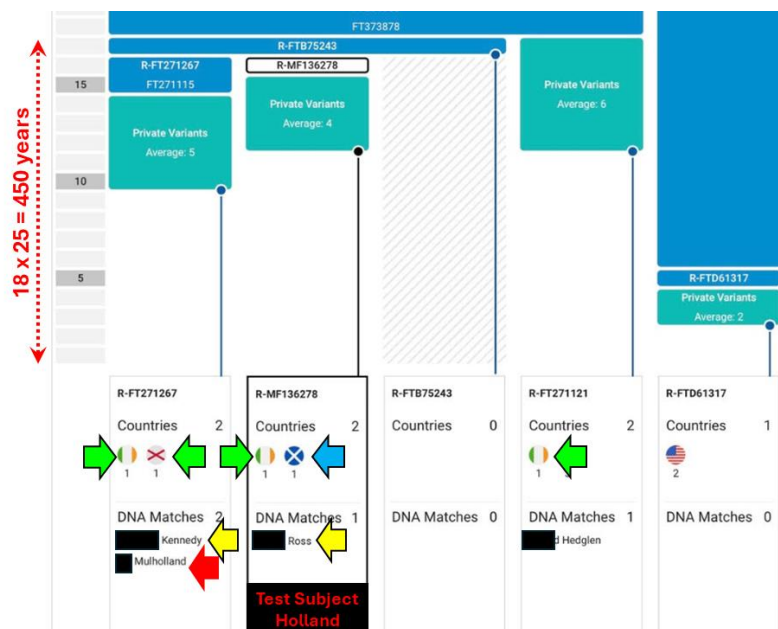
### Interpreting the Y-DNA test results

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. Those surnames, particularly ones that recur among one's closest genetic matches, will reflect the surnames of one's ancestral neighbours. Mr Holland's closest genetic surname matches as revealed by commercial ancestral Y-DNA STR and SNP testing are revealed in **Figures 1 and 2**.

Name	Markers Tested	Genetic Distance	Big Y STR Diff	Y Haplog	Paternal Country of Origin	Paternal Earliest Known Ancestor	Actions
Kennedy	to 700	5 steps <a href="#">Link on Family Tree</a>	9 of 663	R-FT271267	Northern Ireland	William Mulholland b. abt 1830 and d. 1897 in PA	
O'Donnell	1 to 111	6 steps <a href="#">Link on Family Tree</a>	Not Available	R-M269	Ireland	Michael O'Donnell b. about 1820 Ireland D. 1889 Wa	
Mulholland	1 to 700	8 steps <a href="#">Link on Family Tree</a>	12 of 604	R-FT271267	Ireland	James Mulholland Died April 1836. Littleton, County	
Millhollin	1 to 111	9 steps <a href="#">Link on Family Tree</a>	Not Available	R-M269	Unknown Origin		
Kennedy	to 700	9 steps <a href="#">Link on Family Tree</a>	Not Available	R-Z2534	Unknown Origin		
Ross	1 to 700	10 steps <a href="#">Link on Family Tree</a>	9 of 672	R-MF136278	Scotland	John Ross, b. 1750	
McDaniel	1 to 111	10 steps <a href="#">Link on Family Tree</a>	Not Available	R-M269	Unknown Origin	John McDaniel 1800-1852	

**Figure 1:** Snapshot of Mr Holland's closest genetic surname matches as revealed in a commercial ancestral Y-DNA STR database. The more Y-DNA STR markers two males 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 others with the similar 'Mulholland' and 'Millhollin' surname (red arrows) together with others with surnames like 'Kennedy' (yellow arrows) that also recur among his Y-DNA STR matches. In addition, many Y-DNA STR genetic relatives record earliest paternal links with Ireland (green arrows) or Scotland (blue arrow).

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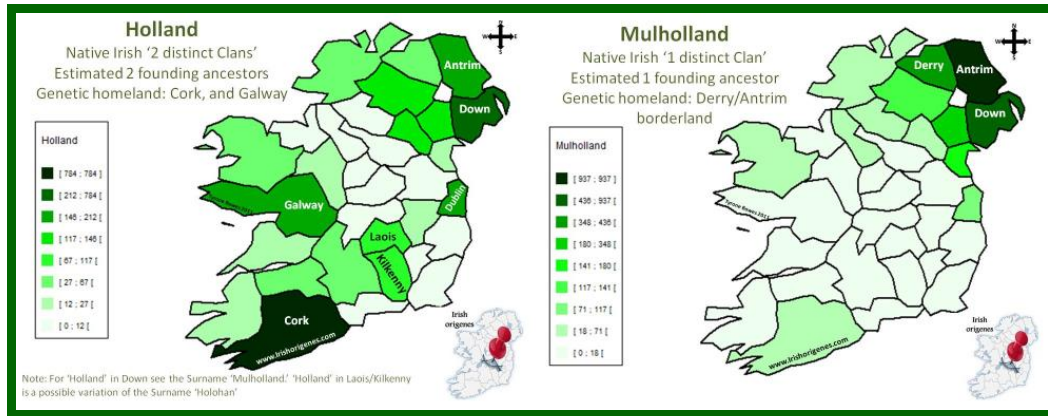
**Figure 2:** Block display of Mr Holland's closest Y-DNA SNP matches. Research at Irish and Scottish Origenes has revealed that a Y-DNA SNP mutation will occur on average every 75 years in a patrilineal relationship, which means that a grandson can expect to differ from his grandfather in a single SNP mutation on the Y chromosome. However, the relationships revealed in a Y-DNA SNP test are not linear, which means that each SNP mutation can represent a generational difference (25 years) at the very least. Block display of the test subject's closest SNP matches reveals that individuals named Holland, Mulholland (red arrow), Ross and Kennedy (yellow arrows) share a common paternal ancestor who lived somewhere within Ireland (green arrows) a minimum of 450 years ago. The dominance of Holland/Mulholland indicates that the Scottish-associated (blue arrow) Kennedy and Ross surnames were acquired by Irish males named Holland/Mulholland via non-paternal events that occurred within Ireland within the last 450 years.

Upon commercial ancestral Y-DNA testing the test subject matched others with the similar Mulholland and Millhollin surnames, see **Figures 1** and **2**. This indicates that the test subject is directly descended from his surnames founding ancestor, a Holland/Mulholland-Adam. Holland/Mulholland is an Irish surname, and the dominance of Irish-associated surnames, and individuals with earliest recorded inks with Ireland among the test subject's closest Y-DNA matches confirms a paternal origin within Ireland, see **Figures 1** and **2**. The Y-DNA STR markers are short repetitive sequences of DNA that can be amplified or deleted with each generation, in contrast to SNPs which are far more permanent mutations. Block display of the test subject's closest Y-DNA SNP results reveals that the Holland/Mulholland, Kennedy, and Ross surnames arose among related males in Ireland who shared a common paternal ancestor who lived a minimum of 450 years age, see **Figure 2**.

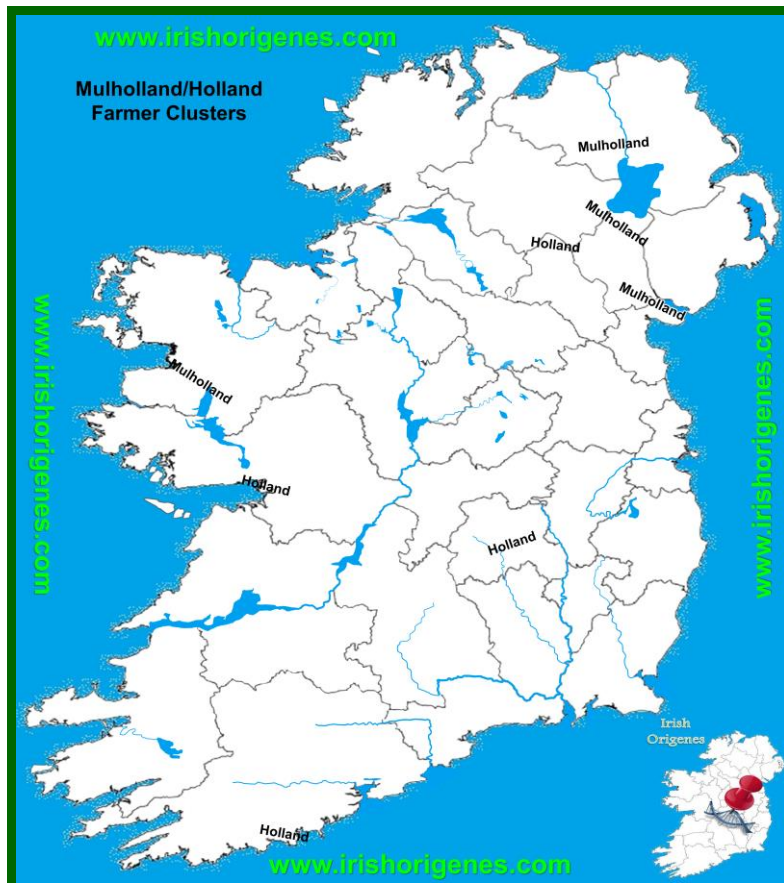
### The Holland Surname in Ireland

The 1911 census of Ireland revealed 4,780 individuals named Holland/Mulholland. Those individuals were not scattered uniformly throughout Ireland but concentrated within specific counties, see **Figure 3**. An examination of the distribution of Irish farmers named Holland/Mulholland reveals at least 8 distinct groups spread throughout Ireland, see **Figure 4**. Since the test subject's Y-DNA results reveals that he is descended from an Irish Holland/Mulholland-Adam, his paternal ancestry is linked with 1 of 8 locations within Ireland.

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**Figure 3:** Distribution mapping of the Holland/Mulholland surname in Ireland. Distribution mapping reveals that the Holland/Mulholland surname was not distributed evenly throughout Ireland but concentrated in specific Irish counties. Image taken from the Irish Surnames database, free to view [www.irishorigenes.com/surnames-database](http://www.irishorigenes.com/surnames-database)



**Figure 4:** The Holland/Mulholland farming community in Ireland. 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. The Holland/Mulholland surname is associated with Pre-Plantation Gaelic/Norman Ireland. An analysis of the distribution of Irish farmers named Holland/Mulholland in 1901 reveals 8 geographically distinct groups indicating the existence of potentially 8 genetically distinct Holland/Mulholland clans. Y-DNA testing reveals that the test subject's paternal ancestry is linked to 1 of these 8 locations within Ireland. Each surname is positioned in the location where farmers (Catholic, male, heads of household) with that surname concentrated in early census data. The most common spelling is detailed in each location. Surnames are positioned as they appear on the Irish Origenes Surname maps, free to view online [www.origenesmaps.com](http://www.origenesmaps.com) a surname search function is available at <https://analysis.irishorigenes.com/surnames>

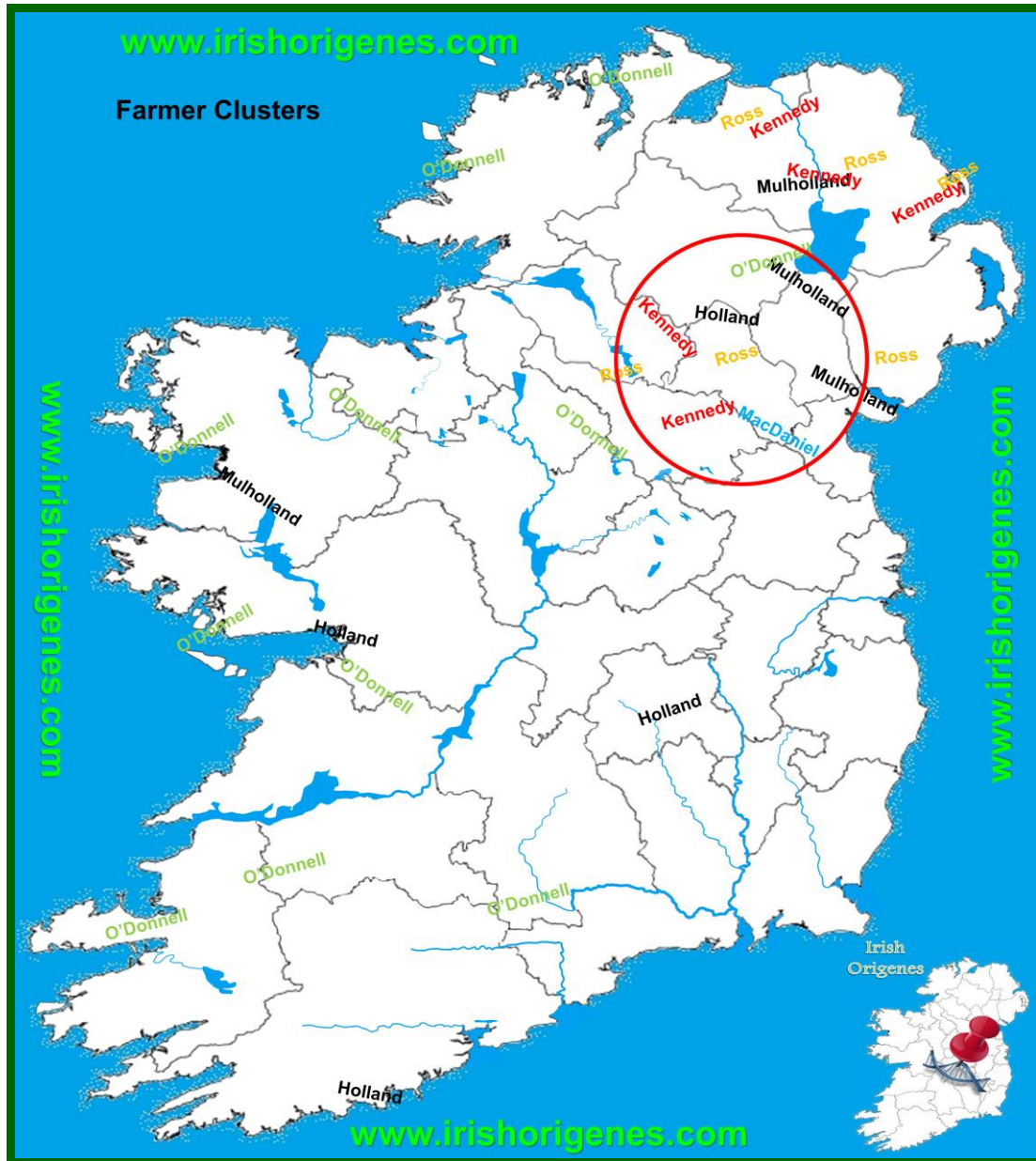
### A Paternal Ancestral Origin within Southern Ulster

The method of using genetic surname matches as revealed by commercial ancestral Y-DNA testing to pinpoint one's 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 amongst the farming community, and since farmers in Ireland can still be found farming the lands where their ancestor lived when he first inherited his surname or where one's ancestor first settled within Ireland, 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 a Holland male from County Mayo will upon Y-DNA testing be a match to individuals with surnames like Sharkey, Mulrenan and Morrisroe, surnames associated with the west of Ireland. In contrast, a Holland from County Cork will be a Y-DNA match to males with surnames like O'Sullivan, McCarthy, and Donovan, surnames associated with Southwest Ireland.

Commercial ancestral Y-DNA testing reveals that the Mulholland, Kennedy, Ross, O'Donnell, and McDaniel surnames appear among the test subject's closest Irish-associated surname matches and hence arose among a group of Gaelic Irish males living in a specific part of Ireland, see **Figures 1** and **2**. Overlay mapping of the Holland/Mulholland, Kennedy, Ross, O'Donnell, and McDaniel farming communities reveals that they only occur together within Southern Ulster, see **Figure 5**. An examination of the surnames associated with Southern Ulster reveals a mix of Pre- and Post-Plantation surnames, including the test subject's closest Y-DNA revealed surname matches in the borderlands of Armagh, Monaghan, and Tyrone, see **Figure 6**. The mix of Gaelic and non-Gaelic Scottish surnames is a result of the Plantation of Ulster that began in 1610AD which led to the arrival of Scots and English settlers. The Y-DNA results reveal that some native Gaels named Mulholland/Holland acquired new surnames like Kennedy and Ross during the turbulent 1640's, see **Figure 6**.



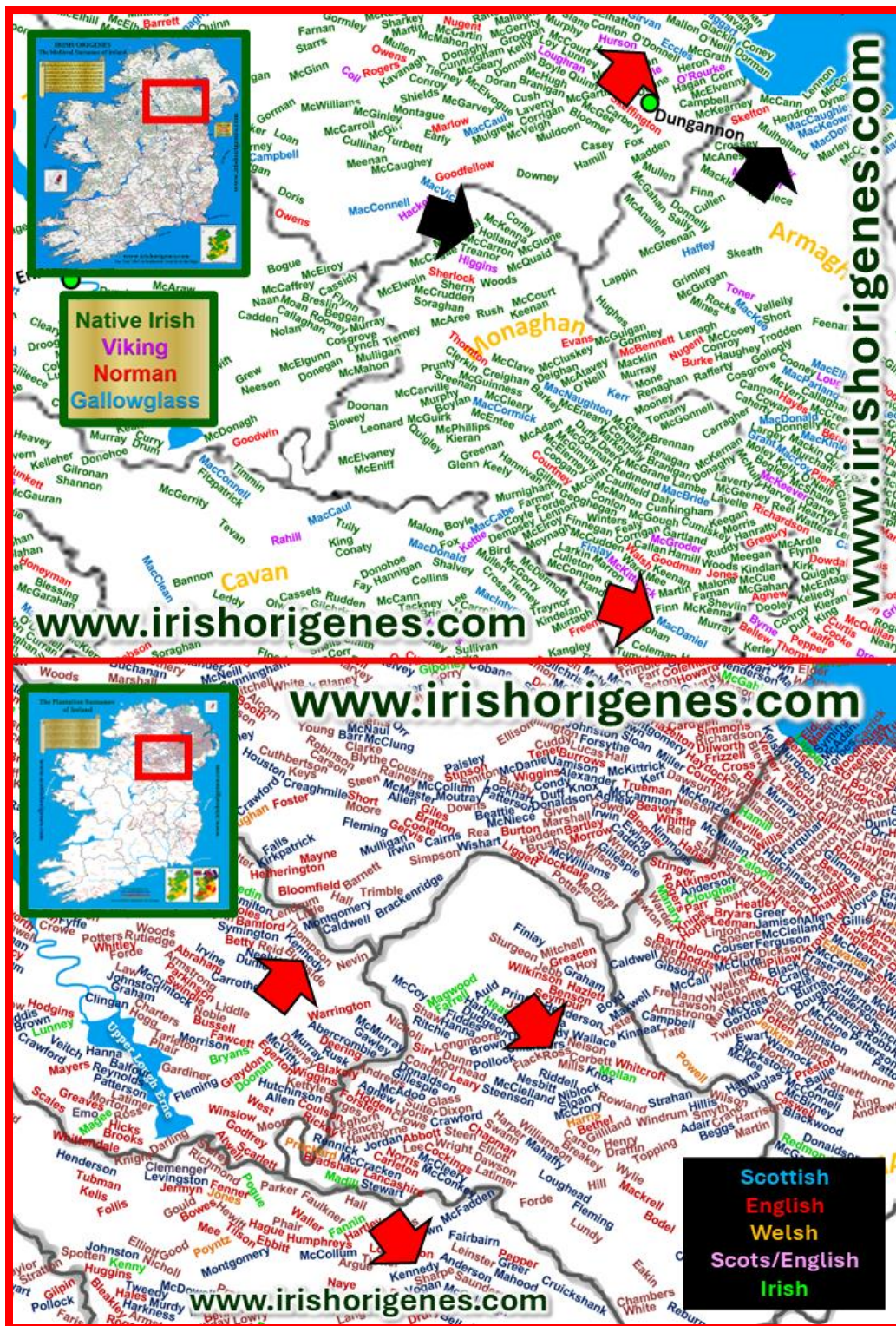
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**Figure 5:** Overlay mapping reveals a paternal ancestral origin within Southern Ulster in the north of Ireland. Y-DNA testing reveals that the Holland/Mulholland, Kennedy, Ross, O'Donnell, and McDaniel surnames arose among related Gaelic Irish males. Overlaying mapping of the Holland/Mulholland, Kennedy, Ross, O'Donnell, and McDaniel farming communities reveals that they ONLY occur together within Southern Ulster (red circle). Each surname is positioned in the area where farmers with that surname concentrate in early census data. The most common spelling is detailed in each location. Surnames are positioned as they appear on the New Updated Irish Origenes Medieval Surnames map, free to view online [www.origenesmaps.com](http://www.origenesmaps.com) a surname search function is available at <https://analysis.irishorigenes.com/surnames>



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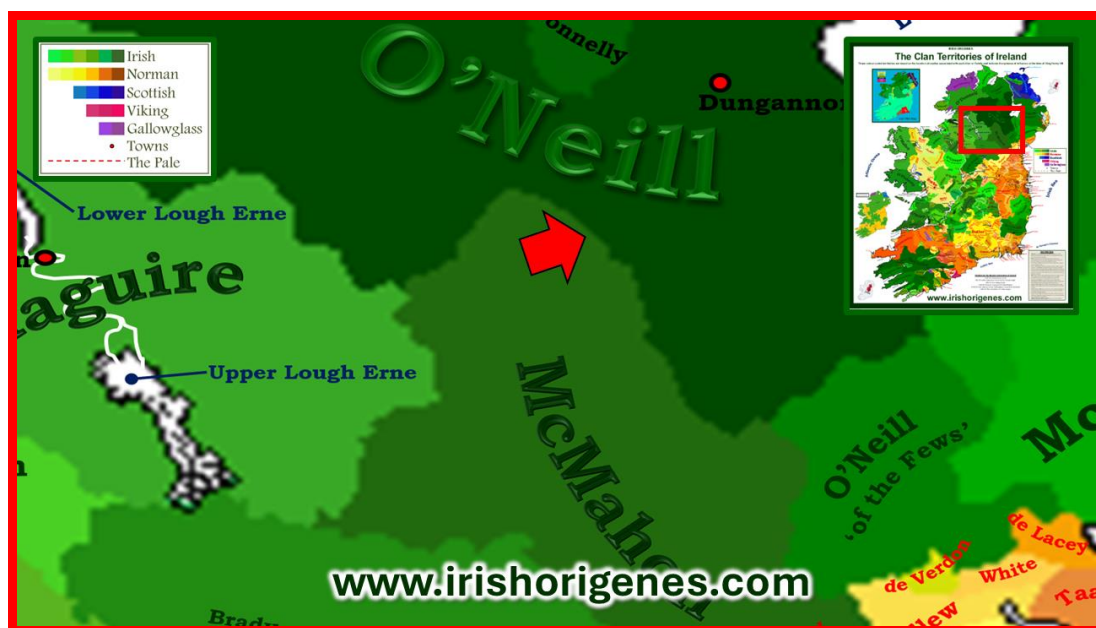


**Figure 6:** The Surnames of Southern Ulster. An examination of the Medieval (top panel) and Plantation (bottom panel) surnames associated with Southern Ulster reveals the test subject's Holland/Mulholland ancestors (black arrows) surrounded by Gaelic Irish and Plantation surnames (red arrows) that appear among the test subject's closest and most frequent Y-DNA matches. 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. Detail taken from the Irish Origenes Surname maps, free to view at [www.origenesmaps.com](http://www.origenesmaps.com) Surname search function available at <https://analysis.irishorigenes.com/surnames>



### The Clan Territories of Southern Ulster

By the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Centuries Ireland was a patchwork of territories which were dominated by over 400 of the most notable Irish clans and Norman families. The Irish Origenes Clan Territories of Ireland Map was reconstructed based on the location of castles and towerhouses and their known historical link to a particular clan or family. Commercial ancestral Y-DNA testing and research at Irish Origenes has revealed that one will often exhibit shared paternal ancestry with one or more of the prominent clans or families that once ruled over one's paternal ancestral genetic homeland. An examination of Southern Ulster as it appears on the clan map, reveals an area completely dominated by the Gaelic Irish clans, see **Figure 7**. The map reveals the O'Neill, McGuire, and McMahan clans dominated Southern Ulster, all of whom would forfeit their lands for subsequent settlement by a mix of Scots and English who arrived over 400 years ago, see **Figure 7**.



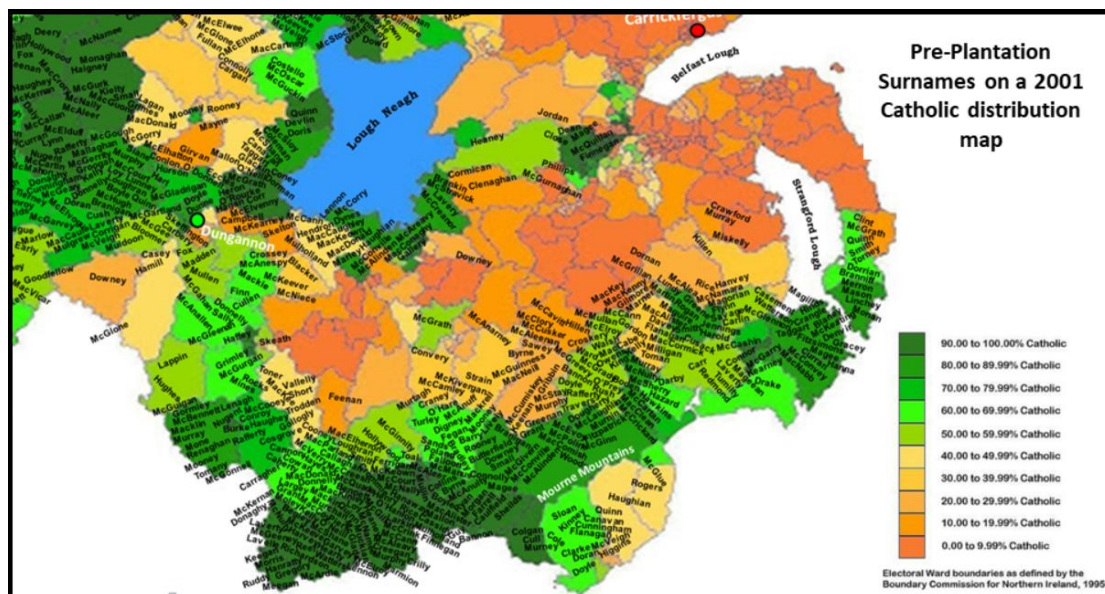
**Figure 7:** The Clan territories of Southern Ulster. An examination of Southern Ulster as revealed by the Irish Origenes Clan Territories map reveals an area dominated by Gaelic Irish clans. The map reveals that the test subject's Holland/Mulholland ancestors (red arrow) lived near lands dominated by the O'Neill, McGuire, and McMahan clans, all of whom would forfeit their lands for subsequent settlement by a mix of Scots and English who arrived approximately 400 years ago. The clan territories map was reconstructed based on castle locations and their historically associated clans and families, free to view at [www.origenesmaps.com](http://www.origenesmaps.com)

### Mr Holland's Irish Paternal Ancestral Genetic Homeland

The Plantation of Ulster was a highly organised affair that led to tens of thousands of overwhelmingly Protestant English speaking Scots and English colonising Ulster from around 1610AD onwards. Over time, this resulted in significant displacement of Gaelic Irish clans/surnames, see **Figure 6** and **8**. The NEW Irish Origenes 'Gaelic Surnames map' set out to rectify the displacement that occurred the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, see **Figure 9**. Research at Irish Origenes reveals that the test subject's Gaelic Irish 'Ó Maolchalann' paternal ancestors were centred upon the village of Benburb on the Armagh and Tyrone border, and it is there that the test subject's

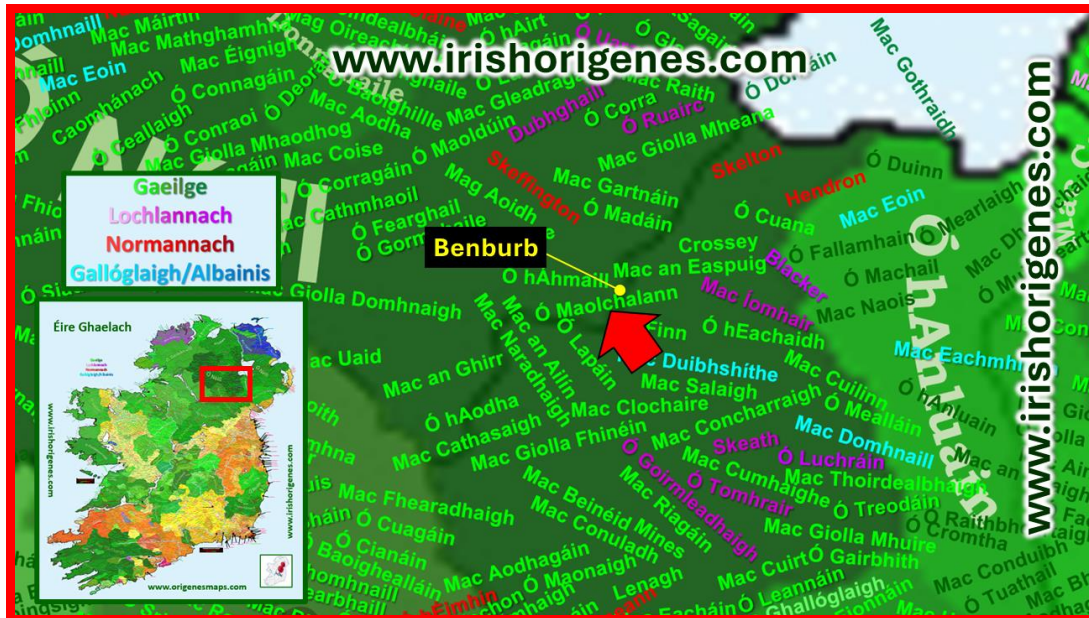
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Irish Paternal Ancestral Genetic Homeland is to be found, see **Figure 10**. It was there that the test subject's paternal ancestor lived when he first took the 'Ó Maolchalann' (*Grandson of the devotee of Saint Calann*) surname when paternally inherited surnames first appeared in Ireland approximately 1,000 years ago, see **Figures 10** and **11**. His paternal ancestor lived surrounded by paternal genetic relatives who took other surnames like Ó Domhnaill and Mac Domhnaill among many others. With the destruction of Gaelic Ireland in the turbulent 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the test subject's paternal 'Ó Maolchalann' ancestor left Benburb to settle near Scotstown in neighbouring North Monaghan, a process that saw his surname anglicised to 'Holland/Muholland,' and where a subsequent number of non-paternal events occurred that resulted in some Holland/Mulholland relatives acquiring Planter Scots surnames like Kennedy and Ross, see **Figures 10** and **11**.

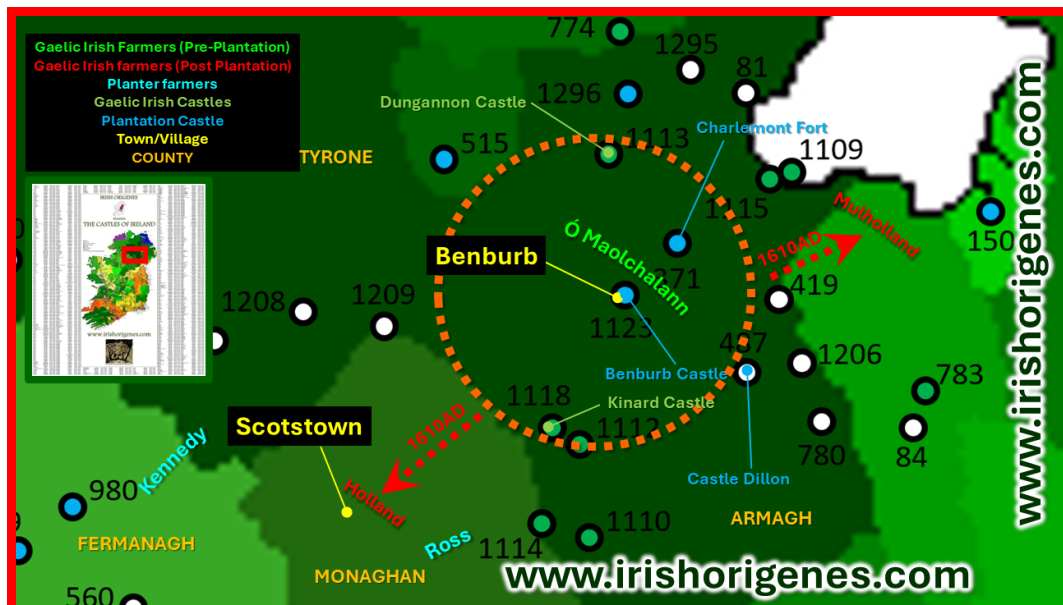


**Figure 8:** The effects of the Plantation of Ulster on the distribution of Gaelic Irish Surnames. By overlaying the Medieval Surnames of Ireland on a background map that shows the distribution of Catholics in 1995 it illustrates the drastic effects that the Plantation of Ulster that began in 1610AD had on the native Gaelic Irish who for several historical reasons were gradually displaced from their homelands.

## Holland – An Irish Origenes Y-DNA Case Study

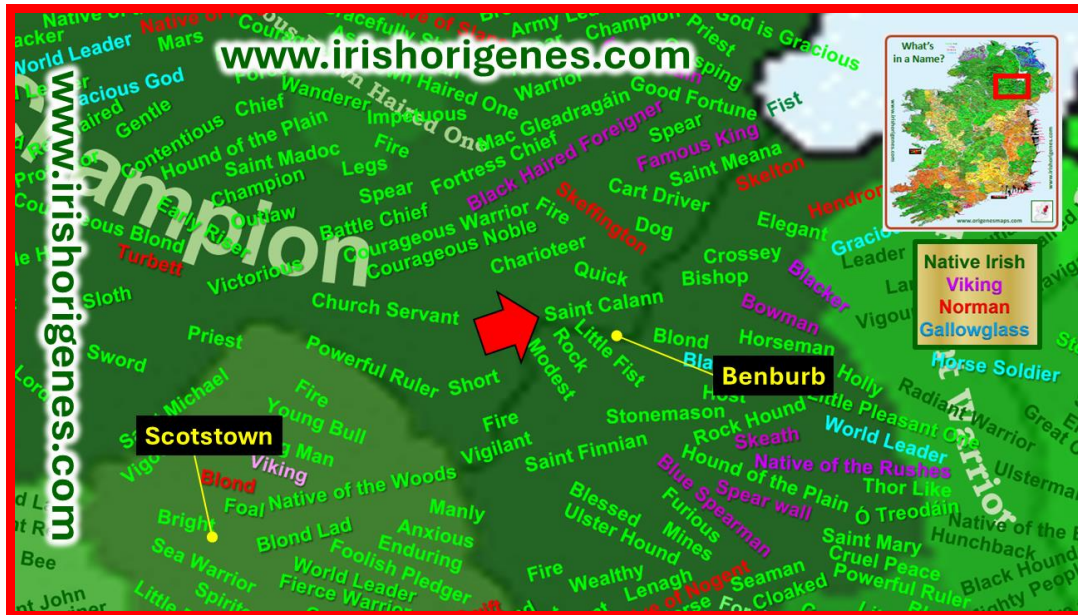


**Figure 9:** The Pre-Plantation Gaelic Surnames of the borderland of Counties Armagh, Monaghan, and Tyrone. Research at Irish Origenes has facilitated the reconstruction of the Pre-Plantation surnames of Ulster. An examination of the borderlands of Armagh, Monaghan, and Tyrone as it appears on the NEW Irish Origenes Gaelic Ireland map reveals that the test subject's 'Ó Maolchalann' ancestors originated near Benburb (red arrow). Detail taken from the Irish Origenes Gaelic Ireland map, which will soon be free to view at [www.origenesmaps.com](http://www.origenesmaps.com) Surname search function available at <https://analysis.irishorigenes.com/surnames>



**Figure 10:** Mr Holland's Irish Paternal Ancestral Genetic Homeland. Research at Irish Origenes reveals that the test subject's 'Ó Maolchalann' paternal ancestors originated in the area surrounding Benburb, and it is there that the test subject's Irish paternal ancestral genetic homeland is to be found (orange broken circle). It was there that his paternal ancestor lived when paternally inherited surnames became common in Ireland approximately 1,000 years ago. His 'Ó Maolchalann' ancestors lived surrounded by genetic relatives who would acquire other surnames like Ó Domhnaill, and Mac Domhnaill among many others. With the Plantation of Ulster that began over 400 years ago, the test subject's 'Ó Maolchalann' ancestors settled near Scotstown among Planter Scots neighbours named Kennedy and Ross. Over time, the 'Ó Maolchalann' surname was anglicized as 'Holland/Mulholland.' Image taken from the Irish Origenes Castles of Ireland Map. free to view online [www.origenesmaps.com](http://www.origenesmaps.com)

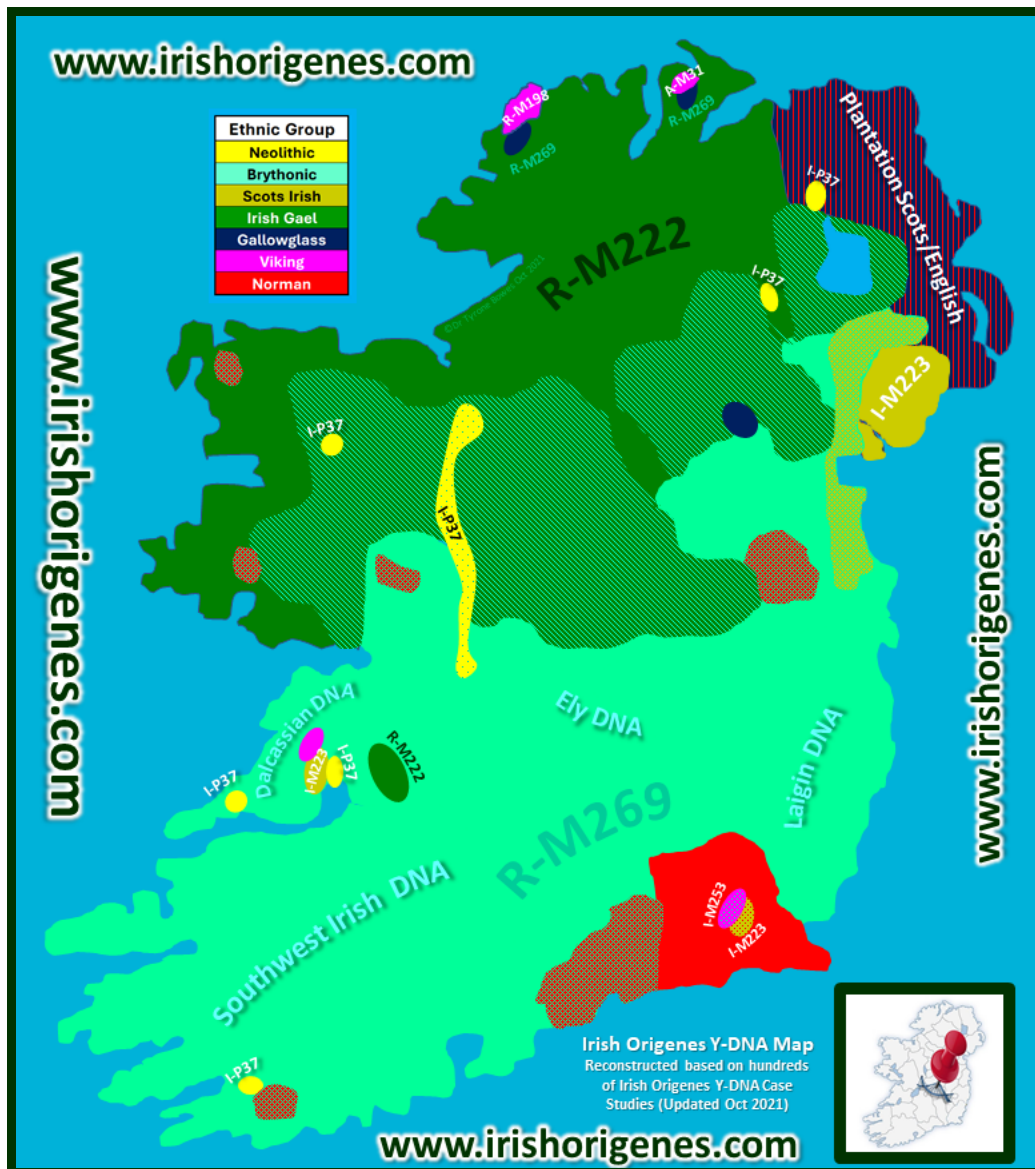




**Figure 11:** What's in a Name? Surnames were earned in Medieval Ireland, and those surnames denote a notable trait of a founding ancestor. An examination of the meaning of each surname in the borderlands of Armagh, Monaghan, and Tyrone as it appears on the NEW Irish Origenes 'What's in a Name' map reveals that the test subject's founding paternal ancestor was known as the 'Grandson of the devotee of Saint Calann' (red arrow). Detail taken from the Irish Origenes What's in a Name map, which will soon be free to view at [www.origenesmaps.com](http://www.origenesmaps.com) Surname search function available at <https://analysis.irishorigenes.com/surnames>

### Ancient Britons

Commercial ancestral Y-DNA testing and research at Irish Origenes has revealed that the modern Irish males are a mixed bunch descended from Neolithic farmers, Celts (Ancient Britons and refuge Gauls), Vikings, Normans, and 17<sup>th</sup> Century Plantation settlers, see **Figure 12**. The test subject's M-269 Haplogroup, together with his more distant Y-DNA matches (at the 25 and 12 marker levels) which are a diverse mix of Irish, Scottish, Welsh, English, and Mainland European surnames, indicate that his paternal ancestors were Brythonic Celts whose Y-DNA genetic signature dominates both Britain and Ireland. The test subject is descended from the Indo-European Celts who began arriving in Ireland in waves from around 800BC.



**Figure 12:** The Irish Origenes Y-DNA Map of Ireland. Y-DNA Case Studies at Irish Origenes reveals an ethnicity map of Ireland. The test subject's paternal ancestors were descended from Brythonic Celts whose Y-DNA signature dominates Southern Ireland.

### How to confirm the Holland Paternal Genetic Homeland

One must keep in mind that this is a scientific 'DNA' approach. The DNA does not lie, and a simple painless commercial ancestral Y-DNA test of a male named 'Holland' who farms the lands surrounding Scotstown in North Monaghan would confirm the ancestral link to Southern Ulster.

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