



EDGAR EVENTS

**Researching and sharing Edgar family history
No. 6 July 2007**



Editor's note: The following was received from Richard Edgar of Tandragee, Northern Ireland as an email on 2007 June 6.

I have been as surprised as anyone by the fact that there is not a common ancestor from which all Edgars are descended, I have been reading up on surnames recently and now this is my theory, please feel free to feedback if you agree or disagree.

Why all these different origins? Surnames only became common in England in Norman times (11th Century) At this time manor courts were established, these were created to help control the local people, part of the control they imposed was written records on the ownership of land and property, because of this it was important to be able to identify yourself as the person the records referred to, this resulted in people taking what we now know as surnames. This was important if you wanted to ensure that property and land was passed on from one generation to the next within your family; and so it was that the surname was also passed from father to son.

In England these names were at first simple references to the either the person's profession, *e.g.* Fletcher (the arrow maker), Cooper (the barrel maker), Taylor, and Baker. Another version was the reference to

the father's name, William's ancestors would have surnames like Williamson, Williams, Wilkinson, Wilkins, and Wilkes, all different ways of saying my William's children.

In Scotland many families adopted a different approach to this surname selection. Many Scots lived in clans, these were not necessarily a single related family group, often they were a social community grouping of unrelated families that survived by coming together to help and protect each other, very much a safety in numbers approach.

When it came to surname selection many of these Scots took on the name of the clan leader or chief. It is my theory that this is what the Edgar family did, because of this we can have individuals who are descended from Celts, Norsemen, Saxons, Romans, and Normans. The Edgar family does not have a common genetic ancestor, I believe it has a single common namesake ancestor, this individual was the head of the clan at the time of the introduction of surnames, his clan took on his name and it was Edgar.

It must be remembered that the people of Britain are mix of many people who have come to these shores since the dawn of mankind, there is no pure British race, rather a social mix of elements of all the peoples who have settled in the British Isles over the years.

Richard Edgar

New DNA Results

by Steve Edgar

Thanks to the three random tests we did in Ireland we're starting to see some sense in the DNA results.

We centred our tests on Kilkeel, Co. Down. It has more Edgars than you can "shake a stick at," they are everywhere. We know that the Edgars in Benagh, near Kilkeel are I1a, but other Edgars in the town stated that they were not related. This seemed like a good place to start, we can prove them right or wrong.

We tested Lee, David, and John on the basis that they also denied any common relationship to each other, in fact David's sister married John Edgar, who was no relation.

The first set of results are I1a the Vikings.

Steve in Toronto is a direct descendant of Crinan in 1000 AD. James, Bill, and Jacky are related to him in about 1200 AD.

Bill and Jacky share an ancestor, Arthur, in 1780/1800 and James's ancestor, Charles, will be a cousin/uncle to Arthur. Because of our written records, we can be pretty certain of these predictions.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Match%</u>	Haplogroup
I1a James Edgar (Melville, Can)	100%	I1a
I1a Bill (WS) Edgar (Australia)	95.40%	I1a
I1a Jacky Edgar (Benagh N.I.)	93.10%	I1a
I1a (Steve)John Edgar (Toronto, Can)	81.40%	I1a

Next we come to the I and I1b

There is some confusion as to the haplogroup origins, but most likely they are central European. Looking at the results, David and Ellen share an ancestor in around 1780/1800; Alfred and Robert Allen are also related, but way back in the 1400/1500s. We will need more tests to tighten things up. I have data from David and I will compare it with Ellen's data — perhaps we can find the match.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Match%</u>	Haplogroup
I David Edgar (Annalong, N.I.)	100%	I
I1c Ellen Walker	95.40%	I
I1b Alfred Edgar (Argentina)	83.80%	I1b
I1c Robert Allen Edgar	82.40%	I

Alfred and Robert connect back to a link which would have been cousins; or 2nd cousins in maybe 1700/1750 or so

I1b Alfred Edgar (Argentina)	100%	I1b
I1c Robert Allen Edgar	91.20%	I

Thirdly the R1b group

The result at first looks confusing as they are all the same haplogroup but unrelated. But how can this be? The simple answer is that they are all R1b, but this group is the oldest; they were the original people of Europe, they all share a very old common ancestor who is too far back in time to show matching on our data.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Match%</u>	Haplogroup
R1b Gwen Edgar (NSW, Aus)	100%	R1b
R1b Richard Edgar (Tandragee N. I.)	< 70%	R1b
R1b Roland Lee Edgar (Kilkeel N.I.)	< 70%	R1b

Finally E3b, Stavros the lonely Greek — that's me!

As the table of results show, I still have no matches. I was concerned that I may have an illegitimate or adopted ancestor in my past, but to my knowledge this can't be so after 1780. Until I make contact with the Edgars in Ohio, I won't know for certain if my ancestor was a clan member or not.

E3b Steve Edgar (Crewe, UK)	100%	E3b
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I1a James Edgar (Melville, Can)	<70%	I1a
I1c Robert Allen Edgar	<70%	I
I1a (Steve) John Edgar (Toronto, Can)	<70%	I1a
I1c Ellen Walker	<70%	I
R1b Gwen Edgar (NSW, Aus)	<70%	R1b
R1b Richard Edgar (Tandragee, N.I.)	<70%	R1b
I1b Alfred Edgar (Argentina)	<70%	I1b
I1a Bill (WS) Edgar (Australia)	<70%	I1a
I1a Jacky Edgar (Benagh, N.I.)	<70%	I1a
R1b Roland Lee Edgar (Kilkeel, N.I.)	<70%	R1b
I David Edgar (Annalong, N.I.)	<70%	I

If we work from Richard's theory of the clan system, in the 1100s, surnames were starting to be used in England, but in Scotland, groups of people sorted themselves by local groups *i.e.* Clans.

It seems more than reasonable that the local clan leader, an Edgar of I1a haplogroup, was the landowner in the area. The clan formed from his tenants / neighbours / friends, and it seems logical that there were three Celtic folk, a mid European, and a Greek. Bear in mind that 1000 years earlier, the Romans had brought their soldiers in from all over Europe to occupy Britain. The Clan Edgar homeland is at Wedderlie; this area was the front line, Hadrian's Wall is only 20 miles south. In fact the three Celts could be a Spanish, a French, or an Irish origin. My Greek ancestor arrived this way. Richard's theory of a Kebab Shop on Hadrian's Wall might not be as daft as it sounds!

The Edgars in Kilkeel are unrelated, as they stated, but they are not unique to the overall Edgar clan we know of. It is literally a re-gathering of the old clan.

Where next?

What we need to do is advertise the DNA project as best we can and get more input. The more input we get, the stronger the results will be.

We have to persuade other Edgars out there that DNA is the way forward; Steve in Toronto is unique in that he can trace back to 1000 AD; every other researcher dreams of doing the same, but it is a dream. Unless you were of royal or noble stock, you will not be able to trace back beyond 1750 or so – the records are sparse or non-existent.

We spent \$600 on the three random tests, which has depleted our funds somewhat and I am appealing for some more donations please.

I think our next "attack" should be Scotland; our roots are there, so it seems logical.

The Edgars in America, Australia, and Canada need sorting out as well, we need more volunteers.

Every week I get at least two enquiries for the DNA but I can't persuade them to pay the \$195 for the test. We can't go on paying this money out from our own donations; we have to somehow get new Edgars to pay for their own tests. I look at the forums on the Web sites, at all the Edgars clutching at straws, hoping for a link, a clue, anything. How do we get these folk to listen to us? Any ideas would be gratefully received.

Steve Edgar

Editor's Note: Late-breaking news is that (Archibald) John Edgar, David Edgar, Ellen Walker, Alfred Edgar, and Robert Allen Edgar are all related!

LATEST VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND

LATEST VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND

by James Edgar (Melville)

Steve Edgar (from Crewe) and I met up once again for a quick visit to the Newry, Kegall, Camlough, Forkhill, and Kilkeel areas of Northern Ireland – “Bandit Country,” to some.

We set out to find living relatives related to either Steve or myself. And we did. For example, before we even started our trip, we knew that Jacky in Kilkeel was my relative – the DNA told us that.

Steve, on the other hand, has no living males that we know of who can provide a DNA sample for analysis. It's interesting that all the males either stayed single or only raised girls. There just are no living male Edgars from the Camlough area. So, in that case, we have to start making assumptions, which can lead us down thorny paths – we've been there before and we know it leads to trouble.

Nevertheless, the first door we knocked on led us straight to Roberta (Bertie) McMullan, her husband Sammy, and a few of their children. They farm near Beleek. Bertie's father is buried at Kingsmills, a central churchyard where all her family are buried. The puzzle pieces were starting to fit – Bertie's father, Bertie Edgar, was on one of the gravestones we had visited in Kingsmills Presbyterian Church the year before.

It turns out that Bertie's aunts are the very same Violet McCutcheon and Irene Edgar who we met last year!

Bertie was kind enough to lend us a copy of her History of Kingsmills Presbyterian Church, which Steve and I both read and have since mailed back to her.

When we went to see Jacky he welcomed us like the prodigal son. He was genuinely pleased to see us and we got the royal welcome! A sad affair marred our visit – the young girl of 19 years next door had taken her own life the night before we arrived. It was a very low time in that neighbourhood.

Nevertheless, we were invited to meet some of Jacky's family on the Sunday morning of our visit. He took us around to his father's home in Kilkeel for the regular family gathering. The tradition is that they all meet at Willie Edgar's for Sunday brunch.

“They” being Jacky and his brother, Samuel, his sisters, Doreen and Sandra, and various husbands and wives. It was a good photo



opportunity, to say the least! Two brothers were missing.

Willie and Molly (McKee) Edgar



So, it's all coming together. In dribs and drabs, but coming together, just the same.

Where do we go from here? Scotland! We need to find connections now to Charles' lot, those that left Scotland to settle in Ireland. We need a male Edgar from Dumfriesshire to supply a DNA swab and get it tested. Does anybody have a living relative in Scotland named Edgar who will give us a DNA sample?

James Edgar
Melville, Saskatchewan, Canada

Jacky, Samuel, Doreen, and James Edgar

The next day, we arranged to meet up with Aunt Martha, Willie's sister; Jacky's aunt. She was a wealth of information.

One burning question we had, and which she solved, was who was Aughtry



Edgar. She said, "That's simple, Aughtry is a local dialect of Arthur!" Talk about knocking us out of our boots – the penny dropped!!

Arthur Edgar is named in the 1803 land registry for Kilkeel and Benagh (as Aughtry Edgar), and I'm willing to bet money that my gr-gr-grandfather, Charles Edgar, is Arthur Edgar's uncle. Now that we've seen some more old land registries, I'll go even further to say that Charles' father was James Edgar, the one who is showing renting land in Benagh in 1782!! That makes even more sense, knowing that Arthur named his firstborn male "James."

Who was Charles' brother (Arthur's father)? That we don't know – conjecture tells me that it is likely William; particularly when Jacky's father is Willie. That name seems to run on in their family.

Edgar DNA Project

The results of our project have not met the original thoughts of our Project Leaders, Steve and James. They initially thought most of us would have similar DNA. We have instead a number of different Haplotypes, ranging from Steve with his Mediterranean or Greek E3b to the R1b of Richard, Gwen, and Roland but they are well separated in terms of years. This is a Gaelic Haplotype that probably starts in Scotland. We then have the Viking or thereabouts "I" groups, which in the main are not close except for James, Jacky, and Bill that are within 200 years. Bill's forefather turns up in Australia but no travel record can be found. Verbal records and recorded parents in records found the family in Kilkeel but there was always that doubt is this link correct? DNA has proved it is correct with Jacky & Bill having a documented common relative. We think James family starts one generation earlier; we have the names on our lists we just have to prove who it is with documentation.

This sort of result will give our Project energy, what we need is more people involved in our group. The easiest is to have those Edgars that have already had their DNA taken but are not on our lists. We have a unique opportunity with Ancestry.com recording all our records on their database. Sorenson Genomics <http://smgf.org>, the parent company of Relative Genetics has a database with a number of Edgars and variants showing, but is 12 months behind in transferring our details on to it. They were probably in negotiations with Ancestry, so did not consider it urgent. Ancestry usually has costs so I hope they will exempt us at least.

Two free DNA databases are www.ybase.org & www.ysearch.org. If all of our project users record their Y-chromosome results on these sites we will create more interest in our project. Some results are already recorded but the more the better.

On FamilyTreeDNA project site they say they have five Edgars. This site also has a forum that users of other DNA providers can use www.familytreedna.com/forum Can we have all of you Edgars submitting items to this

forum about our project? We may get some interest, especially if you mention our details are included on Ysearch, as it is part of FTDNA.

www.yhrd.org is an interesting site, as you enter 11 of your Locus/Marker details and it will give results of matches and one-off matches. This does not help with finding relatives but gives you an idea how common your numbers are and with matches where they are now located.

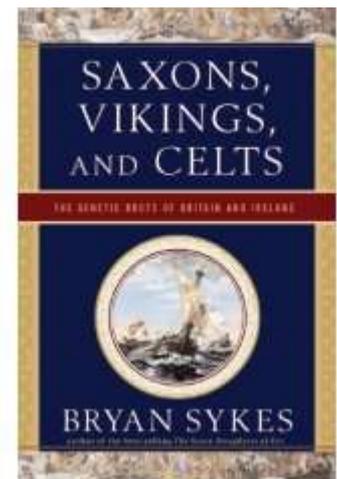
A book "DNA and Family History" by Chris Pomery published 2004, changed my opinion on DNA really working to find out where we came from.



Another book, "The Genetics Roots of Saxons, Vikings and Celts" by B.C. Sykes had a large amount of early UK history. They also collected

information at blood-donor areas for basic blood analysis, then graduated to small-marker DNA while collecting information for the Oxford Genetic Atlas Project.

My wife was keen on the UK history and learnt a bit on the DNA side in this very readable book. I am currently reading, "Trace your Roots with



DNA" by Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak and Ann Turner, published 2004. This book, purchased by our local library May 2007, seems to highlight how recent DNA progression has been as they only mentioned

up to 20+ markers as against our 43 we are tested for. This gives an idea how fast development is. One DNA testing company asks for details of known variations within fairly close families as they are still looking for reasons and any things that will help them explain variations. Which markers are more important than others also seems to be still in the melting pot.

Our project is small in numbers at present; with more participants we will all see the results, even for Stavros (Steve Edgar of Crewe UK) our “Greek” Project Co-ordinator who had the “surprise” Haplotype of E3b. Surnames were created to help taxation so the names were not initially restricted to only brothers but may have related to an area. There are also name changes to fit into an area as happened in the USA. Wrong spelling or misunderstanding an accent has changed many surnames especially with illiterate immigrants or foreign speaking officials. This does not mean that DNA is useless or that our aims are incorrect. It means we have to find different starting points for

each set of Haplotypes, and DNA can show the way.

We need to have more family groups submit a DNA sample so we can make this project work. Splitting the cost of a DNA test over a group of family members can help. Pointing out to senior male members of the family that, if they had fully interviewed their paternal father and grandfather, would have helped your research greatly; which may help gather a DNA sample and perhaps the cost of testing.

Edgar surnames and variants of Eagar (my GG had this name recorded, as he was illiterate and whoever recorded the name did not extend the line on the d), Agar (We have proof of registrations in one family in both names.) Variant spellings with Edger, Ager, and any other name which could be a variant. Adair is said to be associated. If you know anyone who has these types of names, let them know of our DNA Project.

We need all the help we can get to make this DNA Project work well.



Overlooking Camlough in beautiful Northern Ireland