



EDGAR EVENTS

**Researching and sharing Edgar family
history No. 9, October 2007**



DNA and family history

by Steve Edgar (of Crewe, England)

I've had a few emails recently asking the question, "What are the ethnic origins of the Edgars?"

The answer is complicated. The Edgars are a clan from Scotland, that's an undeniable fact. The clan was formed in or around AD 1250 and was more than likely formed around a descendant of Edgar, the son of the Cospatricks, the 3rd Earl of March and Dunbar. That descendant is the very likely ancestor of John Stephen, James, Bill, and Jacky. The line is descended from Crinan, the Thane of Dunkeld, in AD 1000. To prove this we need another descendant of Crinan to produce a DNA sample showing the same Viking source. We other Edgars are descendants of males that lived in the area, married into the family, or possibly just assumed the clan name to prove their allegiance and identity.

So who are we as individuals? What are our real ethnic origins?

Many of us have done a DNA test to trace one male line back in time. This male has been traced to a known source. Let's say that this source proves to be Celtic. Is that what you are — Celtic? No, I don't think so. If you also trace back all your other ancestors, let's say 25 generations (assume 25 years for each generation), that is 625 years ago. OK, we have two parents each, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, etc, etc. Go back 25 generations and the number equals 33,000,000 ancestors! (Try it on a calculator, 2×2 , then press = 24 times.) Obviously 33 million seems an enormous number and is in fact not real, as an awful lot of these ancestors are shared more than once in the past. Families intermarry over the years. These people are shared by most of the world's population as well, but tracing them accurately by the X chromosome DNA from the female line is inaccurate. Females carry two X chromosomes and only pass one to their offspring, but which one? In effect, from the female line, everybody is interrelated to everybody else.



There is another test you can opt for (if you wish, but this is not part of our research). This is a DNA test that measures the proportions of all the DNA varieties that you carry. (Racists, bigots, and ethnic fundamentalists need not apply! I watched a TV programme about this last year and there was a “white supremacist” (swastikas, tattoos, attitude, the full works) did the test and he proved to be 15% north African (oops), 20% Middle Eastern (oops again), 40% southern European (another oops), and 25% north European, which is what he professed to be! The man was only a quarter of what he wanted to be. (It must be a major mind shock to be racially against 75% of yourself!) Bearing in mind that all of mankind migrated out of Africa 500,000 years ago, he can comfort himself in the knowledge that he is 100% of what he hates. (If he wasn’t an evolutionist and believed in the biblical creation philosophy, i.e. that he and everyone else are descended from Adam and Eve, he’s still in the same dilemma.)

If you had a pedigree dog, and cross bred it down and crossed each of its pups down 10 generations is it still pedigree? I don’t think so, you could try it with the Kennel Club but I don’t think they would agree either.

So who are we?

Don’t know, is the answer! You can, in all honesty, be who or what you want to be! Because the chances are that in your overall DNA makeup it’s there! Did you know that Genghis Khan has over 6,000,000 descendants? Are you one of them? (It might explain those urges to go out with your hordes and conquer vast areas of Asia!)

I’m English. Born and live here in England, fact — so that makes me English. Ethnically though, who am I? Well, physically I’m probably a high proportion of north European (fair hair, grey eyes, my son has red hair); I will have varying percentages of African, Asian, Middle Eastern, and south European. I have definite traces of Irish, Scottish, and one bit of Greek. Basically, I’m a British mongrel. Just like most of the Britain’s population.

Very few people can define themselves a pure bred. Probably the closest race that can say this are maybe Australian aborigines. They’ve been cut off for 30-40,000 years and must be a “pure breed.” Intermarriage since the 1800s has diluted this pure stock recently. This is where our unique Haplogroups come from. In the past, small communities got separated and were isolated, these tribes carried one particular chromosome and became unique. As they expanded, this uniqueness became concentrated. They married amongst themselves and concentrated their racial characteristics. Celts are noted for their dark hair, fair complexions, and blue/grey eyes for instance. So in reality, racial definition is hard to trace or prove.

The best bit about all this is you can select any (or all) of your traits and use them to your advantage. I can join the Caledonian Society, the Hibernian Society, and also do Zorba’s dance whilst wearing a bowler hat and carrying an umbrella!

Steve Edgar

Do any of you wish you had a wall plaque bearing the Edgar crest and motto, with a clan tartan? Well, now you can have one! Check out the images of wooden wall plaques, plus etched whiskey glasses, decanters, tankards, and glasses – all emblazoned with the Edgar crest. The site is www.collinscrystal.com/index.php

Here is an example of a wooden wall plaque (that's the Clan Maxwell tartan!):



For those of you who are unfamiliar with the motto, it stems from the history of Robert the Bruce. Here's the story:

In 1304, John Comyn II, known as the Red Comyn after his grandfather, moved his allegiance over to England's Edward I and sat on his "Scottish Council."

When Robert the Bruce set his plans to resume the War of Independence in 1306, he and Comyn met together in southerly Dumfries at the isolated Franciscan priory Church of the Minorite Friars. Either because he would not back Robert, or because he threatened to expose his intentions, Bruce stabbed Comyn to death at the altar rails.

As well as the military benefits, Comyn's death that 10th of February also favoured Bruce by removing another competitor to the throne of Scotland.

When Robert the Bruce was about to stab the Red Comyn, his aide, Richard Edgar, spurred him on by saying, in effect, "What are you waiting for, get on with it!" or, in the Scottish tongue, "Maun dae it!" Sometimes we see the motto as "Man Do It!"

If you want to get the wall crest, it is £35, plus postage (£5). You can get the plaque in dark walnut or natural chestnut wood.

Phone Collins Crystal at: **(+44) 01250 876600** (they're in Perthshire, Scotland),

or email Robin Berry at: robinberry@btconnect.com (he's one of the representatives).

MARE'S CONDENSED VERSION OF OUR TRIP THROUGH ONTARIO

by Marylen McKenzie of Chelmsford, Ontario, with minor corrections by her brother, Steve Edgar (and final editing by another brother, James), written on 2007 September 24.

Here is a "short" version of what Steve and I did on our Ontario Tour.

I just got back yesterday from a tour of Ontario with my brother, Steve...he had only been as far east as Thunder Bay before September 2.

My husband, Terry, and I picked him up in Toronto, stayed overnight at a hotel. Then, next day we headed north to Sudbury. We stopped in Nobel (near Parry Sound) so Steve could meet Terry's sister, Noreen, and husband, Neil Madigan.

Drove up to Chelmsford (a suburb of Sudbury) spent until the 12th showing him around...he and Terry did some pub-crawls plus visits to meet some of our friends and some of Terry's family. We didn't make it up to Kirkland Lake so he didn't get to see Terry's sister, Anne.... He had met her once years ago in Kamloops. One of my friends was in Edmonton and another was in Newfoundland, so he missed meeting them.

Steve and I left on the morning of September 13 and drove to Manitoulin Island, down the east side to catch the Chi-Cheemaun ferry for the Bruce Peninsula, met a new distant cousin we had just learned about on the Internet at the end of August, who lives near Owen Sound (her aunt and uncle from Paisley drove up to meet us as well — he is also our cousin, of course) had an hour-and-a-half visit, then on to Cambridge to see our 88-year-old cousin, Naomi, and her 92-year-old husband, Alf Studd - who still drives!!! Steve stayed at their 62-year-old daughter Joan's house and I stayed with Alf & Naomi (*Nomi* the way Alf says it). On Friday, another daughter, Wendy, came to meet us, had a visit, then Steve and I headed off to Niagara Falls... I told him he was not going to be two hours away and NOT see the falls... we got there on a beautiful, sunny day and he started snapping pictures — all he could say was, "Wow... WOW!" Back up to Cambridge for the night and then off to Georgetown to see another cousin, Roy Schoonover, and his wife, Jean. Had a lovely visit and stayed over-night with them.

Sunday morning drove down to Oakville to meet Steve Edgar... we are related but we don't know how just yet... but thru the DNA testing that James and this other Steve have done we are related somewhere from 750 to 800 years ago. We are the Viking Edgars! No wonder I am so crazy — I come from a line of crazy!!!

After our brief visit with Steve and his wife, Jo-Ann, we drove to Cornwall to visit our cousin's 90-year-old widower, John Fourney. He was so happy to see us; he and his girlfriend, Joyce Buckingham, took us on a tour of Lancaster (where my father was raised) and showed us the school my dad went to, the farm he lived on, the place where they would go swimming in the St. Lawrence River, plus a stop at his own farm (his grandson, Scott, now runs it); then we had a lunch at his cousin's restaurant with his youngest son's widow, Linda. (His youngest son, Edgar, born March 1949 died from a lung fungus when he was 44... he was a really great guy. How could he not be great with a name like that!!!) John's other two sons, Lloyd and Robert, were both ministers in the Presbyterian Church... both retired now.

Monday afternoon we made our way up to Martintown, Vankleek Hill, and then to my daughter's (Christina's) place, where we stayed until Friday morning.

In Ottawa, we visited one of the retired Presbyterian ministers, Robert Fourney, and his family; we saw my nephew, Nick, his wife, Eileen, and Sarah 7, Brian 5, and a niece, Lauren, 10 (who is so precocious it is funny! I showed her a pic of Owen and she looked at it, kind of did a double take — I don't know if it meant she liked what she saw or what! Then she said to her Uncle Nick and my brother... "Please don't be offended by what I am about to say... but boys are DIRT and awful and don't know how to brush their hair!").

We next visited my brother Bob and his wife Radija (prefers Zdenka), and my second cousin, Penny Harju, on my Mom's side, and all of her family. (The first time I met Penny, born June 1949, was when Mom and I went to Ontario in 1964 for the summer - she was our 14-year-old tour guide in Ottawa, and she took us to the Parliament buildings, museums, the Rideau Canal, and more.)

During the off-times we were with Christina and her family in Wendover, one of Ottawa's extreme outer suburbs.

Friday was my grandson Owen's 10th – yes, I said 10th birthday – and so we waited around and took him out for lunch at McDonald's, then took off for Toronto... arrived around 6:30 p.m., out for supper, checked our emails... we both had our laptops with us... how sick is that?!

Yesterday, September 22nd, we had breakfast, Steve caught the shuttle to the airport and I drove back up to Chelmsford — a little more than 3000 kilometres in three weeks!

Love,

Marylen

Breaking news ---

I wrote briefly about this last month, and the news is that Ancestry.com has joined forces with Sorenson Genomics, the parent company of Relative Genetics, to take over the business of soliciting memberships, advertising, and maintaining the Web presence, while Sorensen continues to do the DNA analysis – the actual testing.

Not only does this free up some of the people at Sorenson, it gives the Ancestry.com subscribers access to the DNA analyses of numerous other individuals and groups that they would not have otherwise. Here's the way they put it from various quotes:

Your gene pool just got deeper!

Relative Genetics has teamed up with Ancestry.com to provide the most powerful genealogy site in the world! Together, the unique combination of Ancestry.com member's family trees, millions of searchable historical documents, and the power of [Sorenson Genomics](#)' DNA testing, will help you explore your family genealogy like never before.

[What's in a Name?](#)

Once we decided to fully enter the genetic genealogy space, we spent a great deal of due diligence researching appropriate service providers. In the end, we chose [Sorenson Genomics](#) as our laboratory of choice.

Sorenson Genomics is one of the world's foremost laboratories for genetic genealogy testing services. They were the first laboratory to become ISO certified and also hold the AABB accreditation. Sorenson

is a trusted name in the industry and has excellent quality controls consistent with The Generations Network's own internal standards. The integration of Sorenson Genomics' DNA testing is a natural and powerful extension of Ancestry.com's mission to connect families across distance and time by offering users another tool to develop and expand their family trees. We felt it was a natural choice. Throughout our beta release, DNA Ancestry will utilize Sorenson Genomics' ISO accredited laboratory for all of our DNA test choices. For more information on our featured test, [click here](#).

[Relative Genetics](#), a business unit of Sorenson Genomics, and until recently a provider of genetic genealogy services, will discontinue providing genetic genealogy testing to end users. Relative Genetics' customers were provided an easy way to migrate their data to DNA Ancestry if they so chose. Automatic data transfer cuts down on the error rate due to manual entry and helps ensure a more solid database.

[But I want it NOW!!](#)

*Some of you are wondering why we've chosen to release a beta site before offering Surname Project functionality. We are aware of the great advantages DNA Projects provide to the community at large and to the specific members they serve. We also recognize the galvanizing power of project coordinators and commend you all for your accomplishments in that capacity. However, we also wanted to ensure that basic test ordering was rock solid before implementing the more complex project coordination features; thus, the emergence of our beta version at present **without** functionality for surname projects.*

By the end of the year, we will release the first installment of our DNA Groups. We are taking the input we have received from Project Coordinator surveys and customer focus groups, and are using it to build DNA Groups in a way that we hope will take surname projects to the next level. Specifically, we are looking to expand the definition of current Surname Projects to a more inclusive "DNA collaboration groups" approach. Not all group projects are strictly "surname" related (e.g. mitochondrial, geographic, etc.).

Very soon you'll be able to add your DNA test results to your online family tree. This will make it even easier to connect to the 3 million other Ancestry.com member trees on the site and tap into thousands of hours of completed genealogical research.

It will be interesting to see if the hopes and dreams will come true...

James Edgar

MORE Breaking News

Mel Edgar of Cincinnati, Ohio, sent his DNA swab in for analysis and he's my cousin – another Haplogroup I1a!

At first the results showed him not even close – maybe in the past 1000 years – but a cousin, just the same. A more recent posting on the Relative Genetics site over the weekend shows him even closer than Jacky and Bill at a 95.4% match. To my mind, this makes him descended from my gr-gr-grandfather Charles' brother (James Edgar), whereas Bill and Jacky are probably descended from Charles' nephew Arthur.

Piecing this mystery together is so much fun - it just gets better and better!

James Edgar

Finally, a couple of pictures from our travels in Ireland.



This is St. Patrick's Church of Ireland in Newry, burial place of Jane Edgar, with nine of her children. She was the great-great-grandmother of Steve Edgar of Crewe. St. Patrick's is the oldest Protestant church in Ireland.

A rainbow taken through the side-view mirror of our rental car. Steve and I were on our way in May 2007 from Killeel to Armagh to see a cousin and her family (another Edgar descendant), Steven and Ruth Ann Semple. There must be a pot of gold there somewhere!

