

# Case Study

# Pinpointing the HAND

# Genetic Homeland

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



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

**Dr Tyrone Bowes**  
**13<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

### Introduction

A commercial 37 marker Y chromosome DNA test will potentially provide one with the names of many hundreds of individuals with whom one shares ancestry, but what often perplexes people is how one can match many individuals with different Surnames? The answer is quite simple. Roughly 1,200 years ago one's direct medieval male ancestor, the first for example to call himself 'Hand' was living in close proximity to others with whom he was related but who assumed other Surnames like McGuire, McManus and Donohoe. Given that 1,200 years have passed since Surnames were adopted, there will be many descendants of these individuals some of whom today will undergo DNA testing. Hence the Surnames of one's medieval ancestor's neighbours will be reflected in today's DNA test results.

In Ireland Surnames can still be found concentrated in the County from which they originate. In this manner one can examine the individual Surname distribution maps on the [Irish Origenes](#) website and pinpoint a '**Genetic Homeland.**' The Genetic Homeland is the very small area, usually within a 5km (or 3 mile radius) where one's ancestors lived for hundreds if not thousands of years. It is the area where one's ancestors left their mark in the place names of that area and in the DNA of its current inhabitants. Since modern science can pinpoint a Genetic Homeland it can also be used to confirm it by DNA testing individuals from the pinpointed area. The Case Study below will detail how I made sense of my own results and at the end provide a checklist on how to proceed in identifying your own Genetic Homeland.

### Notes of caution!

1. In Ireland each of the estimated 1,500 distinct Clans have a single founding ancestor, that's an estimated 1,500 Adam's from whom one can trace direct ancestry. 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 infidelity.
2. Often people are looking for their DNA results to trace back to a specific area. One must remember that the results reflect one's ancestor's neighbours from around 1,200 years ago. As a result if your recent Irish ancestor was originally a 9<sup>th</sup> Century Viking raider, 11<sup>th</sup> Century conquering Norman, or a 16<sup>th</sup> Century Planter, your DNA results will reflect earlier 'English, Scottish, Welsh and possibly Scandinavian origin. I have estimated that only 60% of those with Irish ancestry are related to the pre-Christian Celtic tribes of Ireland. One must approach this process with an open mind!

## Pinpointing the GENETIC HOMELAND

To identify one's Genetic Homeland one must first find the surnames that continually appear as genetic matches. These reoccurring surnames are less likely to be a result of non-paternal events (adoptions/infidelity) and reflect the surname of a medieval ancestors neighbour. Results for test subject Hand are shown in **Table 1**.

### **SURNAMES THAT REOCCUR AS A GENETIC MATCH FOR TEST SUBJECT HAND FROM 37 MARKER Y-CHROMOSOME DNA TESTING**

Test subject	37 Marker Y-DNA test								
	37 marker level					25 Marker level			
	exact	-1	-2	-3	-4	exact	-1	-2	
Hand	no match	Hand (x1)	no match	no match	McCauley (x2)	no match	McMahon (x3)	Buchanan (x2)	Corrigan (x3)
					McManus (x6)			Springer (x2)	
					McGuire/Maguire/McGuyer (x23)		Donohoe/O'Donoghue (x11)	Darcy (x3)	
								Kinney/McKenney (x2)	
								Crawford (x2)	

**Table 1:** In this table are listed the surnames that continually reoccur as a genetic match. Each surname appears at the earliest point at which it occurs, for example the first match occurs with McManus in 33 of 37 markers, but not all of the other individuals with the surname 'McManus' will match at this level. Surnames in black font are the closest genetic matches with more than 3 different individuals.

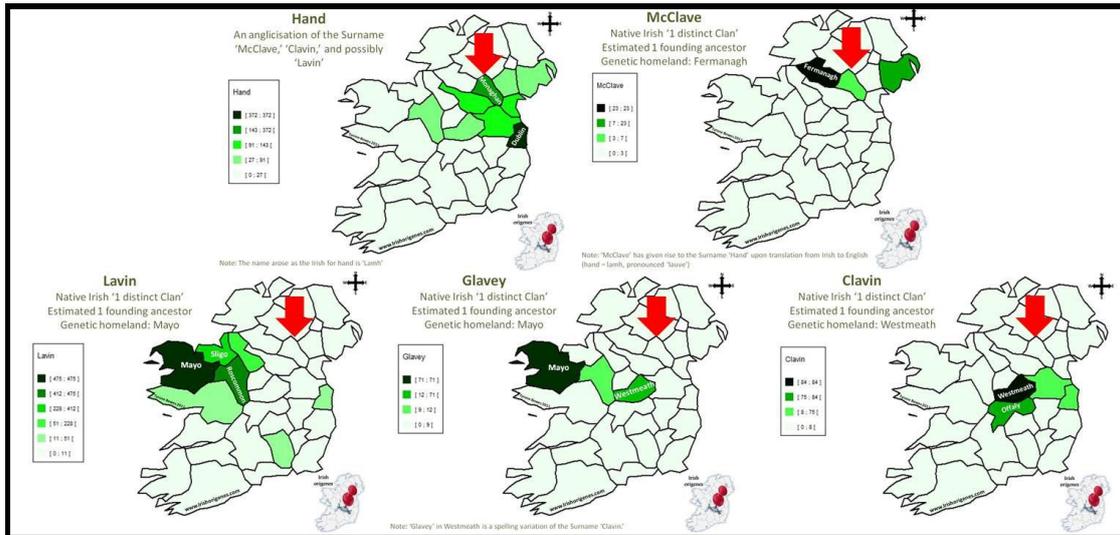
Firstly there is a close genetic match to another individual called Hand. This indicates that the test subject is part of the 50% of individuals who after 1,000 years has retained the Surname of the founding ancestor, the first to call themselves 'Hand.' Secondly there is association with a number of prominent Irish surnames, McManus, McGuire, McMahon, and Donohoe (or their variants).

However, Hand as a surname is obviously not Irish, and has arisen as a result of the anglicisation of Irish Surnames that began in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. In MacLysaght's Surnames of Ireland, the surname Hand has potentially been used as a pseudo-translation of a number of Irish surnames that includes McClave, Lavin, Glavey, and Clavin, see **Figure 1**. Surname variants typically arise in the Counties that border the County where the original surname stems from. By examining Figure 1, one can see that the surname Hand is overwhelmingly associated with County Monaghan (**red arrow**). Only the surname McClave from MacLysaght's list of possible variants is associated with a neighbouring County (**Fermanagh**) a strong indication that the majority of Hand's are derived from the surname McClave. The Irish for hand is 'lámh' pronounced Lauve. McClave was reportedly originally spelt MacLaithimh, before that MacFhlaithimh, derived from flaitheoimh, or lord.

But what of the reoccurring surname matches found in Table 1? Are they associated with Fermanagh where the McClave's originate? The answer is yes! All of the surnames (with greater than 3 matching individuals) McGuire, Donohoe, McManus, McMahon, Corrigan and Darcy are associated with either Fermanagh or surrounding Counties, see **Figure 2**.

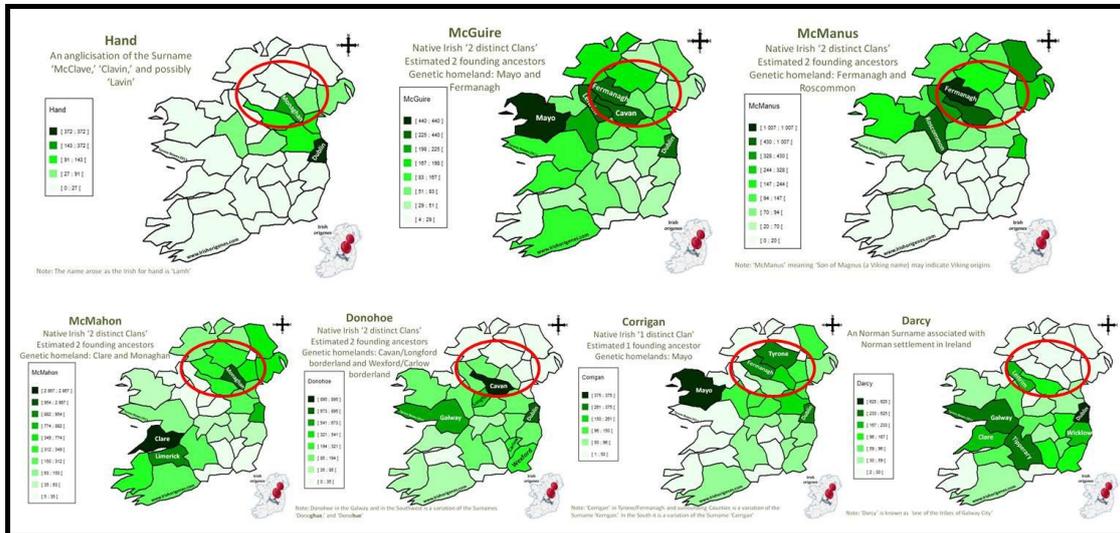
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## WHERE DOES THE SURNAME HAND ORIGINATE WHEN FOUND IN IRELAND?



**Figure 1:** The Surname Hand in Ireland. Hand has reportedly been used to anglicise (often erroneously) the surnames McClave, Lavin, Glavey, and Clavin. However surname distribution maps show an overwhelming association with Monaghan and surrounding Counties (red arrow). Since Surname variants arise in the Counties that adjoin the County of origin, this indicates that most Irish Hand's are Fermanagh McClave's in disguise.

## WHERE DO THE SURNAMES THAT OCCUR AS THE CLOSEST GENETIC MATCHES; MCGUIRE, DONOHOE AND MCMAHON ORIGINATE?



**Figure 2:** Surname distribution maps for test subject 'Hand's' reoccurring Genetic Matches listed in Table 1. Red circle shows the location of county Fermanagh and Monaghan where Hand/McClave originate. All of the Surnames; McGuire, McManus, McMahon, Donohoe Corrigan, and Darcy are associated with Monaghan, Fermanagh, or bordering Counties. Green colour intensity reflects the areas where a surname concentrates.

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By sticking coloured pins on Surnames of Ireland Map where the reoccurring surnames from Table 1 occur, one sees a clear pattern emerge, see **Figure 3**. The closest genetic matches; McGuire and McManus (**green pins**) both fall within County Fermanagh close to McClave (**red pin**). In turn these are surrounded to the South by Donohoe, Darcy and McMahan (**yellow pins**).

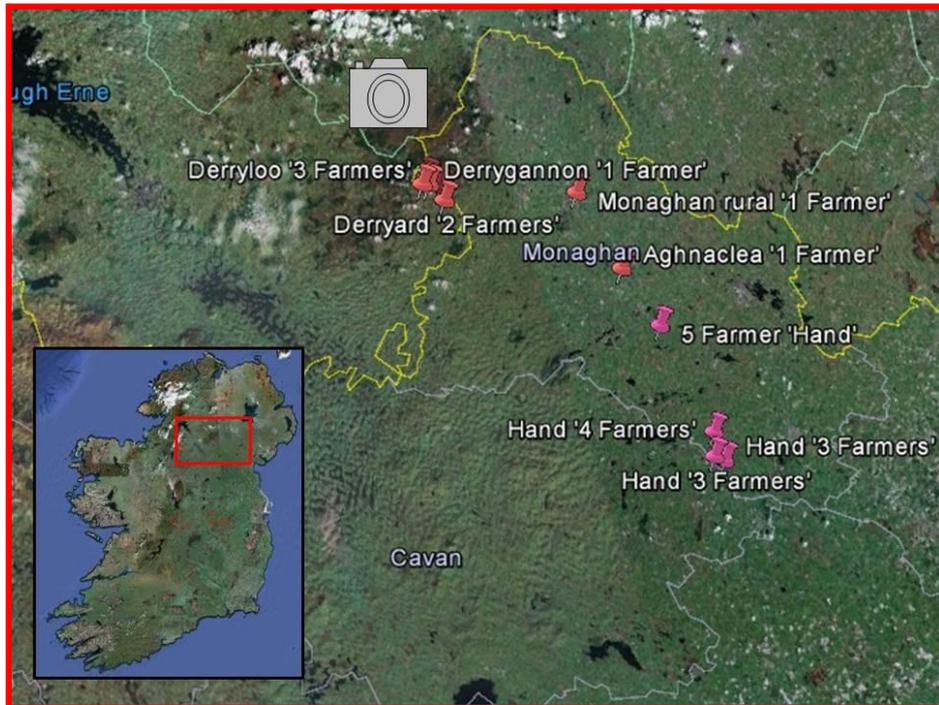
Fermanagh is the Genetic Homeland of the McClave's from whom the Monaghan Hand's derive. When one examines the distribution of Farmers (heads of household) with the surname McClave/McLave and Hand in 1911 one can see them spread in an arc from the northeast corner of Fermanagh through Monaghan. While the McClave's cluster close to Rosslea in County Fermanagh, the Hand's cluster around Shercock on the Cavan-Monaghan border, see **Figure 4**.

Given the preference for the surname Hand in County Monaghan this may suggest that these represent McClave's who settled in the area as a result of the availability of land after the destruction of the McMahan's as a viable Clan in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Century, presumably some McClave's (including the test subjects ancestor, since they too took the 'Hand' surname) became tenants in Monaghan and either voluntarily or were coerced into adopting the anglicised surname Hand by their new Plantation landlords.



**Figure 3:** The Irish Origenes Surname distribution map showing where **Farmers** associated with each Surname are clustered based upon the 1911 census of Ireland. By sticking a pin on the surnames of the Hand genetic matches one can see these surnames cluster in or around County Fermanagh. **Red pin** shows the position of McClave, **Green pins** the McGuire and McManus surnames (that occur as the next closest matches) and finally **Yellow Pins** show the location of the MacMahan, Donohoe, and Darcy Surnames. Note Hand is not on the map as it is considered a variant.

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**Figure 4:** Localisation of Farmers (heads of household) with the McClave/McLave (red pins) and Hand surnames (purple pins) in 1911. The camera icon shows the location where the Google Earth roadside snapshot in **Figure 5** was taken.

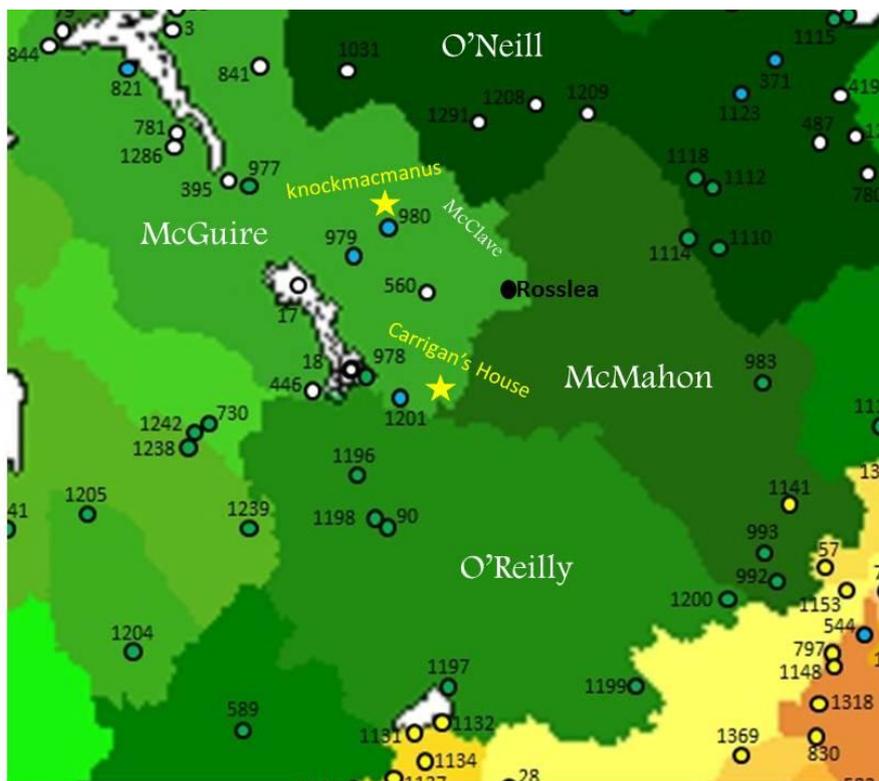
### How to confirm a pinpointed 'Genetic Homeland'

The test subject 'Hand's' Genetic Homeland is found north of Rosslea in the foothills of the Sliabh Beagh mountains close to County Monaghan border, see **Figure 5**. The prevalence of the townland names beginning with 'Derry' within this area indicates that it was once a heavily wooded environment. The area lies within the ancient territory of his genetic cousin's the McGuire's who controlled all of County Fermanagh. A few of the McGuire Castles still exist today, see **Figure 6**. There are also place names in Fermanagh associated with the surnames that occur as close genetic matches, including McGuire, McManus, and Carrigan (Corrigan), see **Figure 6**.

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**Figure 5:** View from the edge of the Sliabh Beagh mountain range looking south east towards Rosslea over the area where the Farmers with the McClave surname cluster in 1911. The Monaghan border lies to the left.



**Figure 6:** The Medieval Clan Territories of Ireland. The modern Counties of Fermanagh, Monaghan, and Cavan, correspond to the medieval territories of the McGuire, McMahon, and O'Reilly Clans respectively. The green circles in McGuire territory are their castles, blue circles are castles associated with McGuire and Plantation families, white circles are plantation Bawns built in the 1600's. McClave territory is situated north of Rosslea, near place names also associated with Surnames that occur as genetic matches, Knockmacmanus (MacManus's hill) and Carrigan's House (Corrigan).

## CHECK LIST FOR DISCOVERING YOUR OWN GENETIC HOMELAND

1. First you must order a Y-DNA37 test from Family Tree DNA. To order follow the 'are you a warrior' link from the [Irish Origenes](#) homepage.
2. [Irish Origenes Surnames database](#)
3. [Irish Origenes Surnames map](#) Stick a pin on your Surname and on the Surnames of your genetic matches (as revealed by DNA testing) to discover your Genetic Homeland.
4. Google Earth.
5. [Irish Origenes Clan Territories Map](#). This map details the territories of over 400 of the most prominent Irish Clans and Norman families and is based on the location of nearly 1,500 castles and their known historical association to these Clans/Families.
6. [Irish Origenes Castles of Ireland Map](#). This map details the names and precise location of nearly 1,500 castles in Ireland. Input the co-ordinates into Google Earth and view the castles on street view.
7. Your Genetic Homeland can be confirmed by recruiting male volunteers with the Surname of interest from the identified area for Y-DNA37 testing.

**ALTERNATIVELY ORDER YOUR OWN CASE STUDY BY CONTACTING ME DIRECTLY [tyronebowes@gmail.com](mailto:tyronebowes@gmail.com)**

**The consultation for your own Case Study is free. At present there is an 86% success rate. If in the unlikely event that I cannot pinpoint your Genetic Homeland I will explain why and I will not charge you.**

***Every successful Case Study customer also receives an Irish Origenes Surnames of Ireland, Clan territories of Ireland, and the Castles of Ireland map.***