

Case Study

Pinpointing the DURKIN

Genetic Homeland

www.irishorigenes.com



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

Dr Tyrone Bowes
12th December 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 a common male ancestor, 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 'Durkan' was living in close proximity to others with whom he was related but who assumed other Surnames like Corcoran, Jordan, and McIntyre. 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 commercial ancestral Y-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 (within a 5 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 placenames 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. This Case Study details how I used the test subject 'Durkin's' Y-DNA results to pinpoint his 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 ancestors were originally 9th Century Viking raiders, 12th Century conquering Normans, or 16th Century Planters, 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

The process of pinpointing a ‘Genetic Homeland’ is dependent upon both the ‘quality’ and quantity of Y-DNA matches. Mr Durkin matches another individual called Durkin/Durkan who has only tested at the 12 Marker level. This single match indicates that the test subject is part of the 50% of individuals who after an estimated 1,200 years have retained the surname of their founding ancestor, the first to call themselves Durkan (the Durkan ‘Adam’).

Mr Durkin had only four Y-DNA matches at the 37 Marker level, see **Figure 1**. Crucially three of these surnames; Corcoran, Jordan, and McIntyre are associated with Ireland, being of Gaelic Irish, Norman, and Scots-Gallowglass ancestry respectively.

SURNAMES THAT OCCUR AS A GENETIC MATCH TO TEST SUBJECT DURKIN FROM 37 MARKER Y-CHROMOSOME DNA TESTING

37 MARKERS - 4 MATCHES						
Steps	Name		Most Distant Ancestor	Y-DNA Haplogroup	Terminal SNP	Match Date
2	Bernard Wm. Corcoran		Bernard Corcoran	R1b1a2	M269	11/16/2012
3	Charles Herbert Jordan		John Jordan d 1850 Pike, Wyoming Co, NY	-		11/16/2012
4	Ms. Thomas McIntyre		Michael McIntyre, bc 1830	R1b1a2a1a1b	P312	11/16/2012
4	Ronald Allan Malcolm		George Malcolm, b. abt. 1675, Scotland	R1b1a2	M269	11/16/2012

Figure 1: Screenshot of Mr Durkin’s Y-DNA 37 surname matches.

Durkin is a spelling variant of the Gaelic Irish surnames ‘Durkan’ which is associated exclusively with County Mayo on Ireland’s west coast, see **Figure 1**. Similarly when one examines the surname distribution pattern of the Corcoran, Jordan, and McIntyre surnames throughout the 32 Counties of Ireland (in 1911) an association amongst all of these surnames with County Mayo is particularly evident, see **Figure 2**. The chances of all four surnames being randomly associated with the same County within Ireland is quite remote.

Land, like the surname and Y chromosome is typically passed from father to son. Given the importance of land to the Irish psyche and the fact that Ireland was still an overwhelmingly agrarian society in 1911, farmers in Ireland could still be found farming the same land that their ancestors had settled hundreds if not thousands of years ago. Surname distribution mapping revealed that the surname Corcoran was used by at least 4 distinct Irish Clans found throughout Ireland, it also reveals that the Norman Jordan’s settled in various locations throughout the Country after their arrival in 1169AD. Similarly the Scottish Gallowglass family called McIntyre were employed by various Clans and Norman families eventually settling in various locations throughout Ireland. In contrast the Durkan’s are associated with a single geographical area within County Mayo where farmers with that surname still cluster. When one places pins on the locations of these farming communities in 1911 what is particularly striking is that Corcoran, Jordan, and McIntyre farming communities can be found in close proximity to the Mayo Durkan’s, see **Figure 3**.

An examination of the Irish Origenes Clan Territories of Ireland Map typically reveals a shared ancestry (of the test subjects Clan or Family) to prominent Clans or Families that once ruled over one’s Genetic Homeland. An examination of County Mayo reveals that the area where Today’s Durkan’s cluster is located within the medieval

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territory of the Norman Jordan's, see **Figure 4**. The surname Jordan appears as one of his closest matches at the 37 marker level (see **Figure 1**).

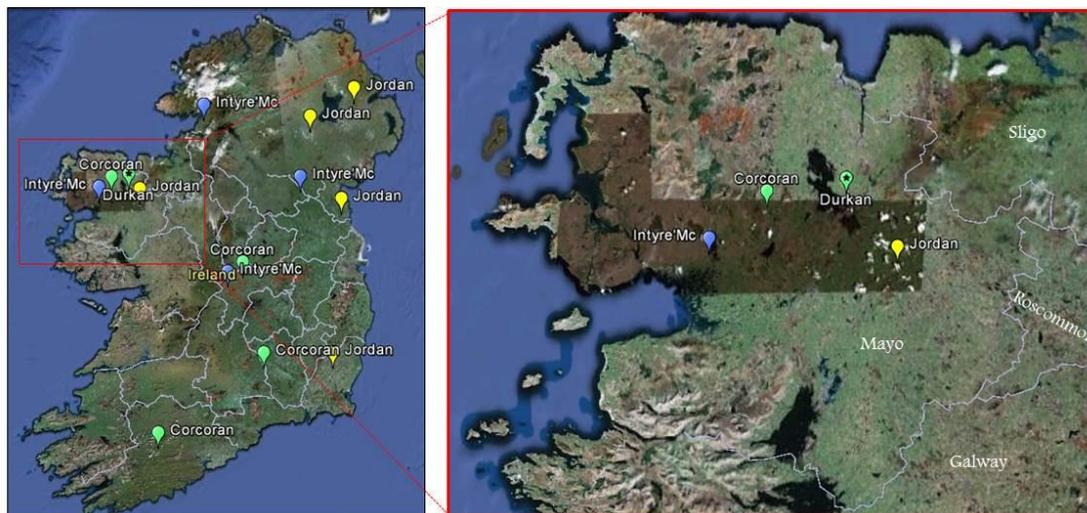


Figure 3: Farming communities associated with Mr Durkin's Y-DNA results cluster in County Mayo. The process of plotting where farmers with the surnames Durkan, Corcoran, Jordan, and McIntyre cluster throughout Ireland in 1911 reveals that these surnames are only found close to one another in County Mayo (red box). Green pins = Gaelic Irish surnames, Yellow pin = Norman surname, Blue pin = Scottish Gallowglass surname. A starred pin indicates that the surname/farming community is exclusive to this area.

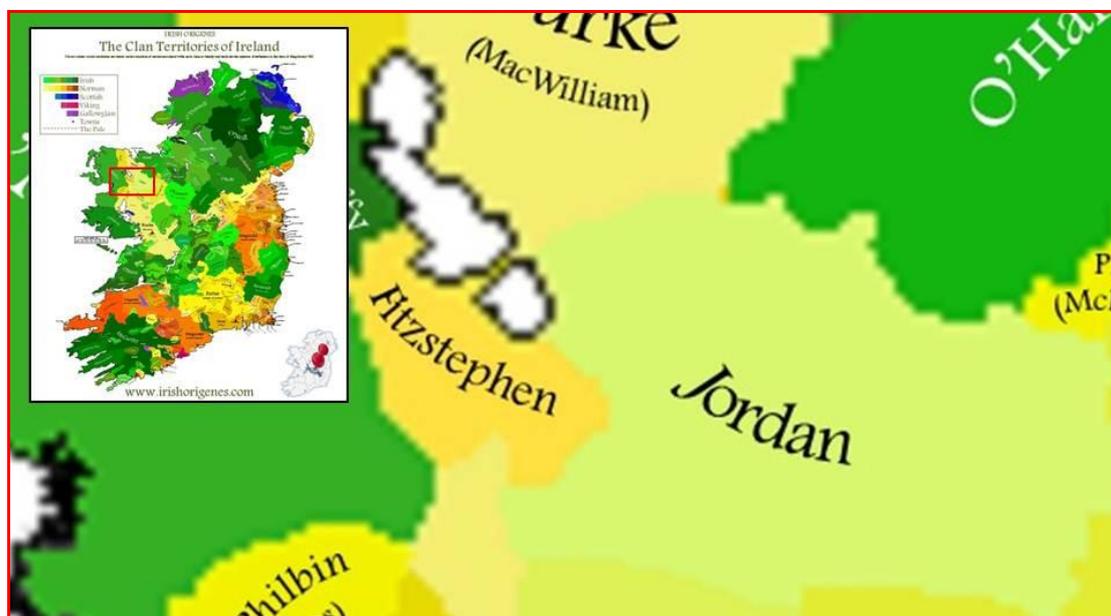


Figure 4: The Clan territories of Medieval County Mayo. This map was reconstructed based upon the location and known historical association of 1,375 castles found throughout Ireland. When one examines the area where the Durkan, Corcoran, Jordan, and McIntyre farming communities cluster on this Irish Origenes Clan Territories of Ireland Map one can see that this area was controlled by the Norman 'Jordan' family who appear as one of Mr Durkin's closest Y-DNA matches.

The Genetic Homeland

Ireland is quite unique in that many of its placenames reflect the Clans and families that lived there. The Townland is the smallest unit of geographical land division in Ireland. The entire country is divided into an estimated 62,000 ancient Townlands which predate the arrival of the Normans in Ireland in 1169AD. An examination of the Townlands found close to where the Durkan farming community clusters in 1911 reveals a Townland called *Laghtmacdurkan* which translates as 'MacDurkan's burial heaps or mounds,' see **Figure 5**. This ancient reference to the Durkan's is evidence this Clans long association with this area and given that the modern Durkan farming community can be found concentrated close by, it can be assumed that the area surrounding Laghmacdurkan is Mr Durkin's Genetic Homeland.

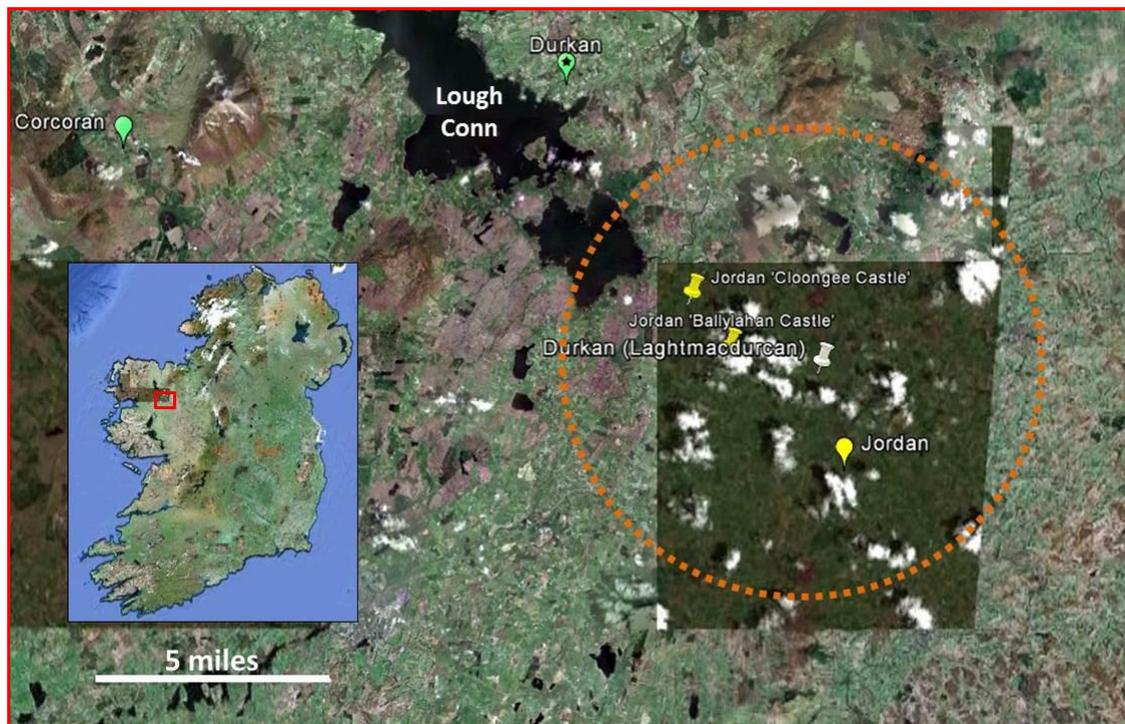


Figure 5: Mr Durkin's Genetic Homeland. Mr Durkin's Genetic Homeland is centred upon the Townland 'Laghtmacdurkan.' It is situated just south of Lough Conn where the Durkan farming community clustered in 1911. Within Mr Durkin's Genetic Homeland (orange broken circle) one finds the Jordan farming community clustering close to two Jordan castles (Ballylahan and Clongee). The Corcoran and McIntyre communities are found further west.

'Laghtmacdurkan' Resting Place of the MacDurkan Chieftains?

An examination of the townland of Laghtmacdurkan (which constitutes an estimated 511 acres) as mapped in 1842 reveals at least 7 mounds that are referred to in the title of this townland, see **Figure 6**. This area may well have held special meaning for the MacDurkan Clan, the proliferation of mounds may indicate that the townland was the burial site of MacDurkan chieftains, which may have included the 'MacDurkan Adam' the first to take that surname and to whom at least 50% of all male Durkan's alive today (which includes the test subject Mr Durkin) can trace direct descent. An aerial view of the same Laghtmacdurkan reveals that at least 4 of

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the mounds are still in existence, with at least 3 of these visible in Google Earth Street view, see **Figure 7**.

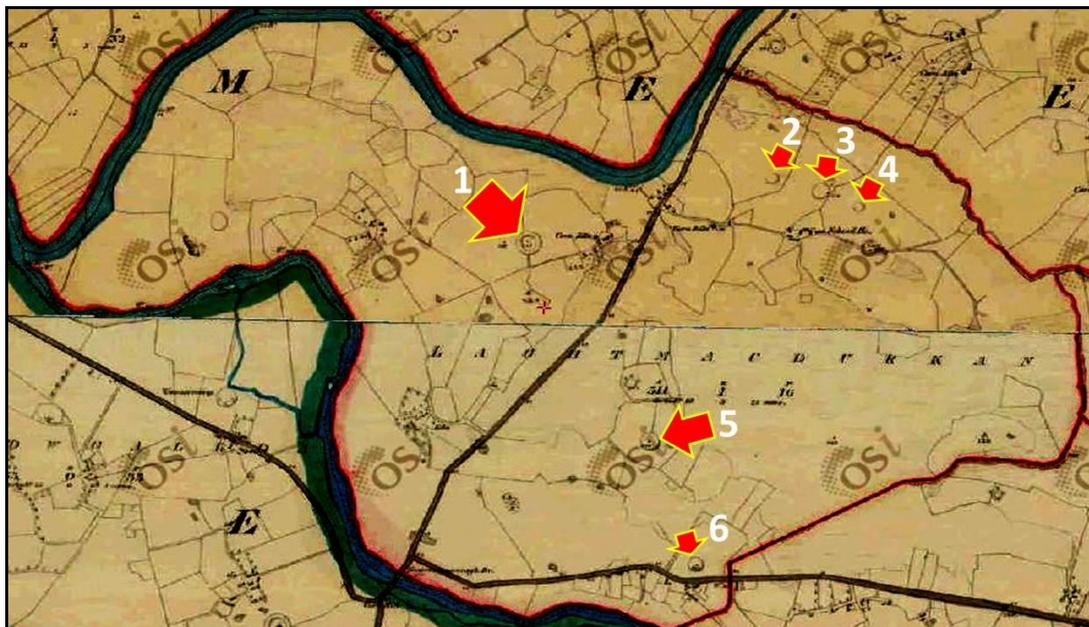


Figure 6: Laghtmacdurkan Townland in County Mayo. This 1842 map of Laghtmacdurkan reveals at least 6 mounds that give this townland its 'MacDurkan's burial mounds/heaps' name. This may well have been the ancient burial ground of MacDurkan Chieftains.



Figure 7: Google Earth view of Laghtmacdurkan. Four of the six mounds recorded in the 1842 map are still visible. Three of these structures are visible from the roadsides. These may well mark the burial place of prominent MacDurkan's.

How to confirm a pinpointed 'Genetic Homeland'

Confirmation of the area surrounding Laghtmacdurkan as Mr Durkin's Genetic Homeland will require the recruitment of 'Durkan' farmers that still live and farm in the surrounding area for commercial ancestral Y-DNA testing.

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

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.