

THE Y-DNA PROJECT

July 2008

Quarterly report from Elizabeth O'Donoghue, the Society's Group Administrator

The latest compilation of figures shows that there are 91,962 participants in 4,058 surname projects at Family Tree, and the O'Donoghue Society's yDNA Project ranks 143rd with 112 participants. Considering that, relatively speaking, the O'Donoghue surname is not a numerous one compared to Murphy or McCarthy, I think it shows the above average curiosity O'Donoghues have about their heritage. Interestingly, there are 427 participants in the Scottish Clan Donnachaidh project, where we do see relatively close matches to some of their members. This is to be expected if you consider the tradition that the Scottish clan originated from Munster Eoghanacht.

This quarter we have two new Glens members, an upgrade of a Dunphy and a bit of a puzzlement with a new member, John, whose family came from Kerry but matches our possible Ninussa tribe. Since John matches Dwaine (who knows his family comes from Clare) exactly at 12 markers with some unique allele values and shows a TMRCA of only 600 years, we are inclined to consider them both as possible Ninussa, with John's family probably migrating to Kerry at some point in time.

A bit of a turnaround resulted from another recent upgrade. Philip O'Donoghue was an exact match with Eóin Ó Donnchadha (who has an article in this month's Journal) at 12 markers. He upgraded to 67 to see how close they might be. I had anticipated the possibility that Philip would also have the unusual null value at DYS425 as does Eóin. As it turned out, rather than confirm an apparent closeness, their haplotypes digressed markedly past the 12 markers, creating a much greater distance than had been anticipated. Philip's results showed him to be most closely related to the Mór tribe, so he has been added to that group.

As I had indicated in the past Spreadsheet B of the Results, Eóin and Kurtis Dunphy shared that null value at DYS425, and I noted their TMRCA in Spreadsheet E – about 950 years. While we do not have a place of origin for Kurtis, Eóin has researched his genealogy to find that his great great grandfather comes from North Wexford near the plain of Mag Máil, which is the lands of the Osraighe O'Donoghues. This has initiated a rethink of our designation for the Osraighe/Ruis Airgit tribe that we previously attributed to the four participants who match the Irish Type III haplotype. Since the two tribes are geographically quite close, we considered that they may have actually been the same peoples – remnants of Ruis Airgit becoming Osraighe - but Eóin's research of the Osraighe tribe has made us reconsider.

We are now of the opinion that the Irish Type III participants might be the Ruis Airgit, since that tribe is historically present in Clare as well, which coincides with the O'Brien group who are also Type III. Checking the O'Mahoney's surname project – who are also Eoghanacht Raithlind – there are several who are Irish Type III.

The latest yDNA study published by the School of Genetics and Microbiology at Trinity College focuses on the Munster Eoghanacht. Their findings are that there is no specific homogeneity amidst the historical Eoghanacht tribes as there is in the significant group of the Northwest Irish Modal Haplotype. I tend to agree somewhat, but am still pursuing my own researches with databases containing significantly more markers than the 17 that Trinity used. It is still plausible to consider that the O'Mahoney/Cinel Aodh sept of the Eoghanacht Raithlind could have been the source of the Eoghanacht Ruis Airgit, both in their short lived rule over the Osraighe and their later presence in Clare. This would mean that the O'Briens, who have been dismissed by historians as making a false claim of being sons of Cass, brother to Eoghan Mór, could in fact be of Eoghanacht/Milesian lineage.

I will have more details of this theory shortly in the Interpretations link when the spreadsheets are also updated.