

## Summary 15: Clouties on the Family Tree

In genetic genealogy, as in paper-trail family history, it is essential to flesh out names and dates of ancestors with at least a little of the history of the times in which they lived. Many family historians spend a great deal of time discovering names and birth, marriage and death dates of their ancestors and hang these, like *clouties*, on their family tree. That is NOT family history but merely constructing pedigrees and a pedigree is only useful if it establishes your right to something of value — a title, a lost fortune or a castle in Spain somewhere. It is also important, as were the "begats" in the Book of Genesis, if it established your membership of a tribe.

To demonstrate what I mean by "fleshing out" I summarised the information I have about my great-great-great-great-grandfather George Hay who married Janet Watson in Nairn on 17 September 1777. This included information about regional conditions in the parish as recorded in the Statistical Account of Scotland for the Parish of Nairn 1791-99 and the Parish of Ardlach in 1845. Since George and Janet lived only a couple of miles from Culloden Moor, the events of the Jacobite defeat there in 1745 could have been important factors in their lives. Those are just a few examples.

Similarly, what profit is there in knowing that I am, for example, y-Haplogroup R1b1c10? Genetic genealogy is all very well, but you need more than cryptic numbers! Clearly you cannot get details of individuals at such a time distance but broad sweeps of pre-history and history, migrations and so on help you to imagine what lives your ancestors might have lived. In my case, this Haplogroup R1b1c10 connects me to a Celtic people who belonged to a well-known tribe, the Cimbri, who moved about a great deal in Europe but whose homeland seems to have been the Jutland Peninsula from whence my ancestors probably came to Britain during the so-called Dark Ages. I have a lot more to discover about these people and where my ancestors could have been and when, particularly how they eventually reached Scotland and the Clan Hay territory in the North east of the country. This was probably some time after 793 AD when the Vikings attacked the monastery at Lindisfarne. Although originally they were looking for plunder, quite quickly the Jutes and of course, the Angles and Saxons to whom I am not related, came to stay.

