

James MacLeod from the Isle of Raasay, Scotland

Using DNA to gain insights into our family history and ancestors

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Abstract

Using DNA results from several MacLeod family members, we've discovered some new information on our family's history and ancestors.

We found that that the progenitor of our MacLeod family - James MacLeod - came from the Isle of Raasay in Scotland. His parents were Norman MacLeod and Isobel MacKenzie and most of the family emigrated to Prince Edward Island, Canada in the summer of 1839. James had many siblings including Alexander, John and Lachlan according to paper records and links to many 'DNA relatives' found online.

We also found that Margaret Emma Barnes, James' 2nd wife, was born in 1844 in Wellesley, Ontario and had 11 siblings including Mary, Catherine, and Anna. Their parents were Edward Barnes and Catherine Duffy and they emigrated from Ireland and settled in the Ontario farming community in about 1843. There are many DNA relatives alive today that descend from Margaret's sisters.

Finally, we've uncovered some additional family details about Mary Glynn, the first wife of Ernest James MacLeod, and Margaret Driscoll, wife of Gordon Kenneth MacLeod.

Introduction

The story of our MacLeod family descending from James MacLeod¹ (c. 1824-1899) is very well told by Jen MacLeod Koller in her comprehensive work called 'The History of the MacLeods through the Generations'. From Jen's work we learn that James MacLeod likely emigrated from Inverness-shire in Scotland to Prince Edward Island (PEI) around 1839 when he was 15 years old. James became a tailor in Charlottetown and always declared himself a Presbyterian despite marrying twice, each time to a Catholic woman. Jen mentions the prospect of DNA analysis and even includes email correspondence with folks who turn out to be our relatives and are included in this study.

However, we don't know specifically where James was from – Inverness-shire is a very large area – and we're not certain if he had siblings except, as Jen reports, he may have had a brother named Alexander. Did James emigrate to PEI with his family or by himself? Who were his parents? Is our long-assumed tie to the Isle of Skye and the MacLeods of Dunvegan with their 'Hold Fast' motto correct?

Also, perhaps because we tend to focus on our male ancestors, relatively little is known about James' second wife Margaret Emma Barnes. Jen points to census data, her death certificate and other information that shows Margaret to be of Irish descent, born in Ontario in about 1846, with a father possibly named John and a much younger sister or sister-in-law named Elizabeth who is buried with Margaret in the MacLeod family plot in Boston. Is this information correct? What more can we learn about Margaret and her family?

We know quite a bit about James' son Ernest but relatively little is known about Ernest's 1st wife Mary Glynn beyond that she was from St. John's, Newfoundland, born in 1870, and moved to Boston as a teenager. Who were her ancestors, parents, and siblings? Did she go alone to Boston or with family?

Building on Jen’s work, here we use DNA results from several MacLeod family members, coupled with conventional genealogical research, to try to answer these questions and expand our knowledge of our ancestors and their origins. We use the online genealogy and DNA analysis tools provided by Ancestry.

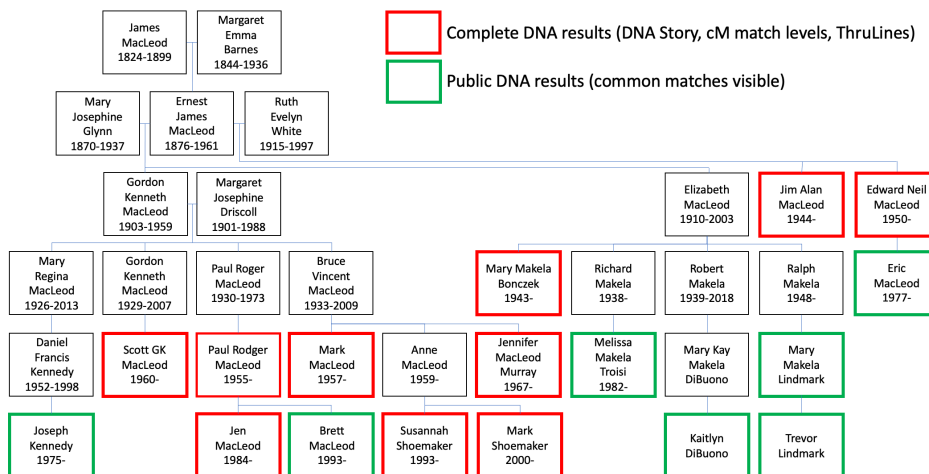
Using DNA in genealogical research is relatively new – it was first offered to consumers in 2000 – and it’s growing in popularity and sophistication. Through DNA analysis, we might find previously unknown relatives and ancestors by carefully reviewing our genetic matches, a process called genetic genealogy.

In this paper, we start by reviewing the MacLeod family DNA data that is available in Ancestry. We then describe the tools provided by Ancestry to help decipher the DNA results from our family. Next, using our DNA results, we try to learn more about James MacLeod and his immediate family. Finally, spurred on by finding other ‘DNA relatives’ in Ancestry’s database, we delve into the Irish families of Margaret Barnes, Mary Glynn and Margaret Driscoll.

1. The MacLeod Family DNA data

We are very fortunate that 17 close MacLeod relatives have had their DNA analyzed by Ancestry. Nine of these relatives have shared their complete DNA results with me. For the other 7 relatives shown with green outlines in the chart below, we can see their DNA matches that they have in common with another family member or Ancestry user. Having such a large dataset allows us to explore our ancestors with greater confidence.

As the chart below shows, Jim Alan MacLeod, first born of Ernest James MacLeod and his 2nd wife Ruth E. White, is a *grandson* of James MacLeod! As a result, his DNA results provide a great source of information and a close link to our ancestors. Jim is therefore used as the benchmark for most of the work that follows. Jim’s brother Edward also had his DNA analyzed by Ancestry; his results were then added to this study, and they have served to validate the findings from his brother Jim.



Partial MacLeod family tree showing family relationships for the 17 DNA results found in Ancestry. Jim Alan MacLeod’s DNA results are used in this study as the ‘benchmark’ in most cases because he is very close to James MacLeod.

A later addition to the MacLeod DNA dataset is the complete DNA results for Derek Cook and Neil McLeod. Their tie to our family is described in the ‘Newfoundland’ section below.

2. DNA results provided by Ancestry

If you are an Ancestry user, you are likely interested to learn of your family origins and any unknown relatives. Ancestry provides several tools, techniques and displays to help you gain insight into these questions. From your DNA test, Ancestry produces 3 main results: the so-called DNA Story, DNA Matches, and ThruLines.

DNA Story This is a very rough estimate of your ethnicity, generally in terms of your family origins as a percentage of your DNA makeup. Ancestry also produces maps showing your likely family origins and where your ancestors may have initially settled after leaving their homeland.

ThruLines This tool is Ancestry’s attempt to automatically figure out how some of your DNA matches fit into your family tree. However, because ThruLines relies only on family trees created by other Ancestry users, incorrect relationships are proposed when ThruLines uses a family tree that contains errors. Most trees in Ancestry contain errors, both big and small.

DNA Matches These are the people – called matches – whose DNA is some level of a match to you. The DNA match list is a veritable gold mine of family information! But, like any mining operation, it’s challenging to find the valuable nuggets. Your matches are all related to you even though most matches will be very distant relatives. Ancestry uses what’s called an autosomal DNA test which leads to matches on both your maternal and paternal side. So, the first challenge is to figure out which side of your family the match is from. The goal is to find the common ancestors you share with your DNA match.

Ancestry will find that you have tens of thousands of DNA matches and so your matches are presented with the strongest matches first. The strength of a DNA match is measured in centiMorgans (cMs). In simple terms, the higher the number of cMs, the closer the relative. Siblings will share over 2000 cMs, first cousins will share 550-1200 cMs, 2nd cousins can share between 50-500 cMs, etc. Match levels below about 15 cMs imply a very distant relative. An online tool called DNA Painter can easily translate a cM match level into possible relationships and their probabilities.

We can get a sense of the range and variability of shared centiMorgan values if we look at some of the family members who have had their DNA tested by Ancestry. For example, my sister Jen Murray and I share **2534** centiMorgans whereas second cousins Jen MacLeod and Mark Shoemaker share only **73** centiMorgans.

	JAM	EM	MB	PM	SM	MKM	JMUR	JMAC	MS	SS
JimAlan MacLeod (JAM)	---	2354	1226	440	542	408	454	259	157	199
Edward MacLeod (EM)	2354	---	1164	426	590	326	359	190	160	239
Mary Bonczek (MB)	1226	1164	---	597	610	422	302	373	236	156
Paul MacLeod (PM)	440	426	597	---	906	685	634	3439	444	313
Scott GK MacLeod (SM)	542	590	610	906	---	783	881	511	374	342
Mark MacLeod (MKM)	408	326	422	685	783	---	2534	286	1722	1997
Jen Murray (JMUR)	454	359	302	634	881	2534	---	306	1627	1942
Jen MacLeod (JMAC)	259	190	373	3439	511	286	306	---	73	149
Mark Shoemaker (MS)	157	160	236	444	374	1722	1627	73	---	2680
Susannah Shoemaker (SS)	199	239	156	313	342	1997	1942	149	2680	---

The DNA match levels between known family members, in centiMorgans.

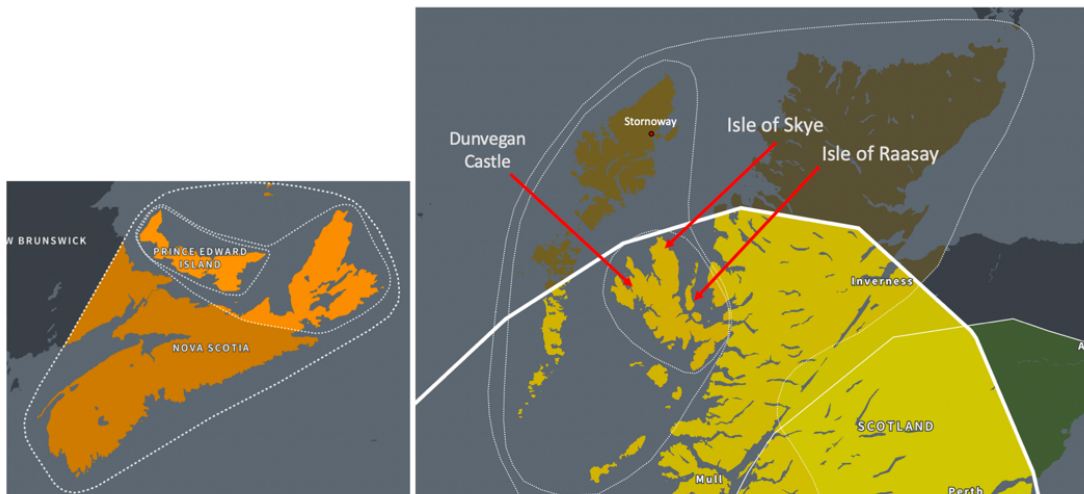
Ancestry allows you to view only the matches that you have in common with another user. This helps narrow the list of matches to specific parts of your family, for example the paternal or maternal side. And Ancestry allows you to look in detail at another user's family tree if it is developed, unlocked and open to the public. However, the names of living people in all trees are blocked from public view.

3. James MacLeod and his immediate family

As we look for more information on James MacLeod and his family, we find that Jim Alan MacLeod's DNA results are extremely helpful because he is a *grandson* of James. We'll compare Jim's results to other family members to test our observations and build confidence in the match. Finally, we connect the DNA and other evidence to draw conclusions about James and his family.

Jim Alan MacLeod's DNA Story

Jim Alan MacLeod's 'DNA Story' shows that he is 50% English and 50% Irish/Scottish (Jim's mother has family origins in England.). Ancestry specifically highlights Jim's possible Scottish roots to be in an area around the Outer Hebrides, Isle of Skye and neighboring Isle of Raasay, which are parts of the much larger Inverness-shire (Edward MacLeod and Scott GK MacLeod's ethnicity maps of Scotland look very similar). Jim's DNA Story results highlight Prince Edward Island as an area where Jim's European ancestors initially settled, consistent with what we already know about James MacLeod.



Areas where Jim Alan MacLeod's European ancestors may have initially settled in North America.

Zoom in of Jim Alan MacLeod's ancestral origins derived from DNA.

Jim's 'MacLeod-side' DNA Matches

Jim Alan MacLeod currently has over 36,000 DNA matches in Ancestry's growing database of DNA results from over 20 million people! The first step to getting our arms around such a large dataset is to focus only on the MacLeod-side matches. We can do this by looking only at matches that Jim has in common with his MacLeod-side relatives, for example Mary Makela Bonczek. In the partial family tree above, we see that Jim's father and Mary's paternal grandfather is Ernest James MacLeod. Conversely,

Jim's mother, Ruth White, is not the same as Mary's grandmother, Mary Glynn, so any DNA matches they have in common must be relatives in the MacLeod bloodline.

Many strong DNA matches lead to Alexander MacLeod

When reviewing the MacLeod-side DNA matches for Jim Alan MacLeod and other family members, we find a few strong matches who have their own well-developed family tree with **Alexander MacLeod**, born on the **Isle of Raasay** in 1822, near the top of their tree. More often, a DNA match's family tree is relatively undeveloped but contains enough information to allow us to build their tree back to the early 1800s. Again, their trees point back to the same Alexander MacLeod (see 4 such trees in the Appendix). So far, we've found over 30 DNA matches/living relatives who we've traced to Alexander MacLeod!

DNA match/Ancestry Username	Jim Alan MacLeod	Edward MacLeod	Mary Bonczek	Paul MacLeod	Scott GK MacLeod	Mark MacLeod	Jen Murray	Jen MacLeod	Mark Shoemaker	Susannah Shoemaker	Other family ties
Ronald Steven Perry	182	43	107	21	24	35	*	19	25	42	EM
Neil Charles McLeod	175	173	93	33	70	13	*	26	*	*	EM, MT, ML, TL
Diana Haaranen	150	214	110	124	113	12	*	11	8	*	EM, ML, TL
Derek Cook	131	52	37	29	46	9	*	24	*	*	EM, MT
Twootter	105	58	21	23	14	*	8	9	*	*	EM

Five strongest DNA matches in Ancestry who lead to **Alexander MacLeod**, born 1822 on the **Isle of Raasay**. In all cases, several family members are a match to the Ancestry user, supporting the case that they are a MacLeod-side relative of ours. * = not a match. Other family ties: EM = Eric MacLeod, MT = Melissa Troisi, ML = Mary Lindmark, TL = Trevor Lindmark.

The family of Alexander MacLeod

So, who is Alexander MacLeod? We found the answer in a book called 'The MacLeods of Prince Edward Island', a key reference by Harold S. MacLeod (see References). This book provides details for many thousands of MacLeods starting with the early settlers of the late 1700s. One section provides genealogical detail on the family of 'John or Norman MacLeod' who came to PEI in 1839² after marrying a woman from the **Isle of Raasay**. Their children are listed as John, Norman, Neil, and Alexander. The descendants of Alexander and his wife Isabella MacLeod are thoroughly documented up through the 20th century. Every DNA match we found leading to Alexander is part of this well-documented family and therefore we can be certain that we are closely related to this family.

Additionally, we found a note in Ancestry written by Archie Johnston (1919-2010) that provides both corroborating and important additional information on this family from Raasay. Archie names Isobel MacKenzie as Norman MacLeod's wife and William, John, Norman and Lauchlan as brothers to Alexander. He also names John's wife as Elizabeth Ross and notes that Lauchlan lived in Lot 31 (in PEI) and was 70 years old in 1881. There is no mention of James except that 'there were others unidentified'. One of Archie's sources was his grandfather, Alexander Jr., son of Alexander and Isabella MacLeod.

From census paper
MACL ITEM 031, F 1/0 H

- 1. Norman MacLeod m Isobel MacKenzie of Raasay
- 2-1 William MacLeod - ?
- 2-2. Alexander MacLeod m Isabella MacLeod of Raasay 1822 - 1904 m Isabella MacLeod of Benvegan 1829 - 1908. Buried in the MacLeod West Caledonia Cemetery
- 2-3. John MacLeod m. Elizabeth Ross
- 2-4 Norman MacLeod -- ?
- 2-5 Lachlan MacLeod -- 1881 Lot 31 70 years and there were others unidentified.

Notes: 1. This MacLeod family came to Prince Edward Island in 1839, settling west of Charlottetown in the Brookfield - Montserrat area.

2. My sources of information: My grandfather MacLeod who lived with us for several years; Mary MacLeods, who lived to be 102 years of age; my mother; etc.

3. I must find a copy of the 1861 census of PEI to check on the MacLeods.

4. The information received from the St. Johns Clearing

2/2/03

Note by our cousin Archie Johnston describing the family of Norman MacLeod and Isobel MacKenzie, likely parents of James MacLeod.

We then found over 20 strong DNA matches to our family members that lead back to **John MacLeod** and his wife Elizabeth Ross, consistent with Archie Johnston's note above. John and Elizabeth were farmers on Lot 20 in PEI and raised a family of 7 children. Six of these children lead to DNA matches to our family. The details on some of these matches and their family trees can be found in the Appendix.

Finally, we found 30 DNA matches that point to **Lachlan MacLeod**, born about 1811 in Raasay. The path to Lachlan was more difficult to find as he was not part of any other well-developed family tree. But the number and strength of DNA matches and census and other genealogical data support the case that Lachlan is part of our family. For some reason, Lachlan did not leave Raasay with the family in 1839. Lachlan, his wife Ann MacLeod, and 2 children are included in the first census on Raasay in 1841. In 1881, we find this same family living in Lot 31 in PEI, consistent with Archie Johnston's note. At least thirty of their descendants are alive today who are related to our family.

1841 Scotland Census, Manish, Raasay

PLACE Here insert Name of Village, Street, Square, Close, Court, &c.	HOUSES		NAME and SURNAME, SEX and AGE, of each Person who abode in each House on the Night of 6th June.	AGE	
	Uninhabited or Building under Construction	Inhabited		Male	Female
Mainish	1		Lachlan MacLeod	30	
			Ann do	25	
			Christy do	4	
			Donald do	10	

1881 Canada Census, Lot 31, Prince Edward Island

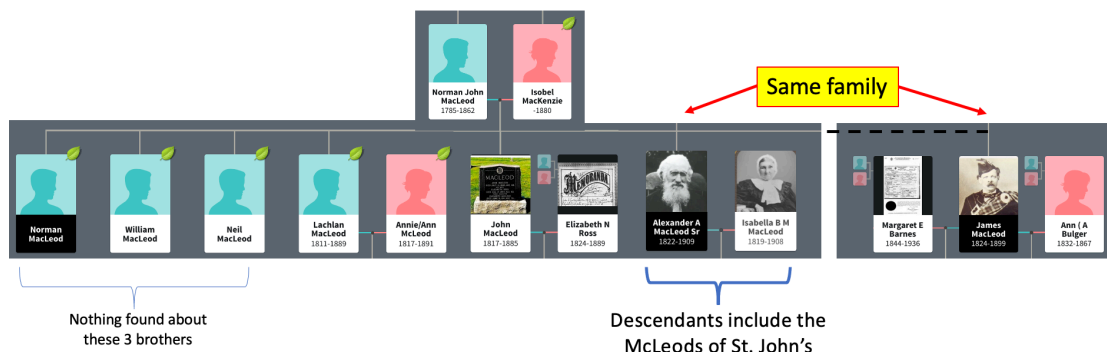
No. of Persons	No. of Males	No. of Females	NAME	SEX	AGE	No. of Years in Canada (foreign born)	Place of Birth	No. of Persons in Family
222	913		Wm MacLeod	M	71		Scotland	
			" do	F	64		"	
			" Christy	F	12		"	
			" Donald L	M	26		"	
			" Alexander	M	26		"	
			" Anne	F	11		"	
			" Isabella	F	6		"	

The family of Lachlan and Ann MacLeod in 1841 living in Manish, Raasay and then in 1881 living in PEI, Lot 31. Their son Donald who was 10 months old in 1841 is married and living in New Brunswick in 1881. A younger son, also named Donald, has a twin named Alexander. A daughter named Annie was born in PEI in 1851 but is married and living in Massachusetts in 1881. DNA matches to our family link to descendants of the older Donald and Annie.

Unfortunately, we have yet to find primary supporting documentation on either parent Norman MacLeod or Isobel MacKenzie. Formal record-keeping on Raasay began after they emigrated to PEI in 1839. The strongest evidence for the parent's names is Archie's note.

Alexander, John, Lachlan, and James MacLeod were brothers

In the Appendix, we show a partial family tree for Jim Alan MacLeod placed side-by-side with trees from selected DNA matches that lead to either Alexander, John, or Lachlan. The trees compare the MacLeod bloodline family members up through our common ancestors – Norman MacLeod and Isobel MacKenzie. The centiMorgan match levels³, number of shared matches, and the number of MacLeod family members who are DNA matches to the individual all strongly support our contention that **Alexander, John, Lachlan, and James were brothers**. The matches themselves are from geographically diverse areas and tie back through many different branches of the various family trees, strengthening the case that our common ancestors are Norman MacLeod and Isobel MacKenzie.



Top of our family tree showing James MacLeod's parents as Norman MacLeod and Isobel MacKenzie. **DNA evidence supports our contention that Alexander, John, Lachlan, and James were brothers**. Note that they are close in age, typical of siblings. No records have been found for Norman, William or Neil MacLeod or their parents.

There is a telling anecdote about James' brother Alexander and their relationship. Jim Alan MacLeod recalls a story his father Ernest told him many times. The story goes that one day in Charlottetown James' wife Margaret was at the sink washing dishes when she heard a banging noise at the front door. Margaret thought the noise was caused by their dog Sandy. Without checking the door, Margaret yelled 'Sandy, get the hell out of here!'. In fact, it was James' brother Alexander, aka Sandy, who was knocking on the door. Alexander was so indignant that he was yelled at by a woman who was once a maid (and a Catholic?) that he didn't return to the house for 10 years!



James MacLeod (left) and his brother Alexander 'Sandy' MacLeod in Prince Edward Island.

We can only speculate as to the reason James is never mentioned in the family records we found. Clearly, based on the anecdote, James and Alexander weren't close. Perhaps marrying 'out of the faith' caused a family rift - Alexander's obituary suggests he was a very devout Presbyterian.

Summary of the findings related to James MacLeod and his immediate family

We believe the forgoing information provides compelling evidence that Alexander, John, Lachlan and James MacLeod were brothers who came from the Isle of Raasay. Their parents were Norman MacLeod and Isobel MacKenzie. And James likely had other siblings which will be a subject of future research!



Jim Alan MacLeod at his home in Brunswick, Maine, Oct 2018, with Mark MacLeod, his great half nephew.



Chief John MacLeod of Raasay, on Raasay, wearing one of the MacLeod of Raasay tartans.



MacLeod of Raasay crest
'I shine, not burn'

Future research

In terms of future research, there are hundreds of additional DNA matches to our family members that appear to lead to distant ancestors from Raasay. Their family trees must intersect our family tree somewhere back in time because DNA matches are our relatives⁴!

It's very likely that new discoveries will come when these DNA matches are resolved, and more DNA data and family trees are added to Ancestry and other databases. We may find descendants of Neil, Norman or William MacLeod, or members of the MacKenzie side of the family. Using DNA, we may also find descendants of James MacLeod's numerous other children; only one has been found so far.

It's reasonable to expect that new tools and algorithms will be developed that will automatically evaluate matches in situations like ours where we have DNA samples of many known family members and a well-developed family tree.

Finally, many years ago the Associated Clan MacLeod Societies initiated a world-wide DNA project to find the origins of the MacLeod clan⁵. Aspects of the study are ongoing. I submitted Jim Alan MacLeod's and my DNA sample to the study for Y-DNA analysis at a company called FTDNA, focusing on the male side of the MacLeod family. Ross McLeod, a descendant of John MacLeod, and Neil Charles McLeod, a descendant of Alexander MacLeod, are also part of the study (see their trees in the Appendix). These four Y-DNA results independently confirm that James, John, and Alexander were brothers and point to very distant links to MacLeods from the Isle of Lewis, and ultimately to the founder of the clan.

The McLeods of Newfoundland

Except for 2½ years living in Oslo, Norway, I lived with my family in St. John's, Newfoundland from 2004-2019 and it was therefore exciting and fun to discover that many descendants of James' brother Alexander MacLeod ended up in St. John's. I've become friends with some of my 'newfound' relatives in St. John's and one in Ottawa named Derek Cook.

The story of how these MacLeods ended up in St. John's is interesting. A butcher named Matthew Peckham was living in St. John's and he travelled far and wide to procure beef. His travels included Prince Edward Island where he met and married Susanna MacLeod, first born of Alexander and Isabella

MacLeod. Matthew and Susanna had three sons in Charlottetown before moving to St. John's in about 1879. They had 6 more children in St. John's.



Susanna MacLeod in white hat. Ernest Frederick McLeod in middle, back row. Photo courtesy of Barbara McLeod.



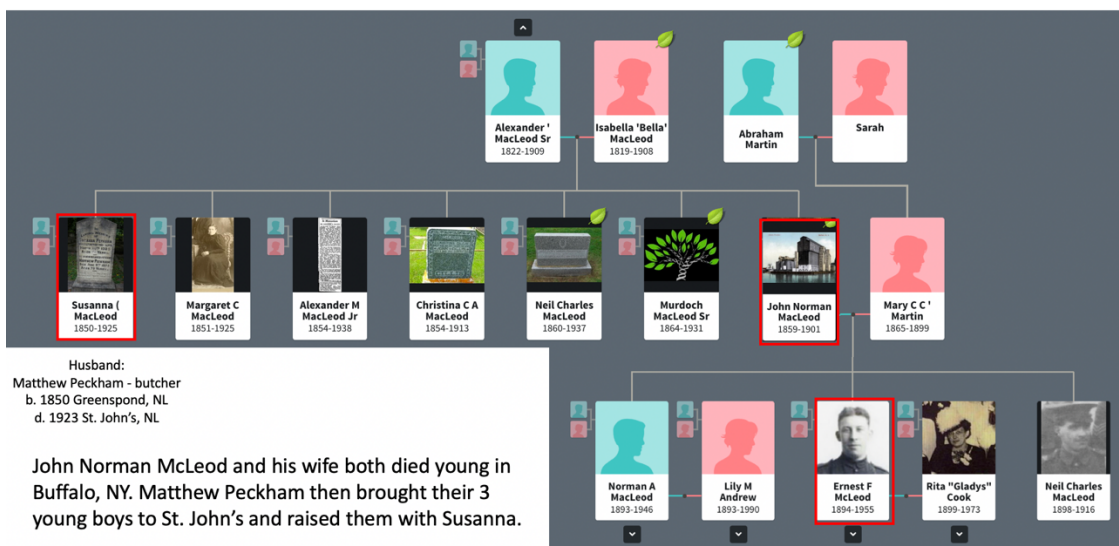
149 Gower St, downtown St. John's, NL where Susanna MacLeod and Matthew Peckham raised their 9 children and John MacLeod's 3 boys.



Gravestone of Susanna Peckham (nee MacLeod) and Matthew Peckham, Anglican Cemetery, St. John's, NL.

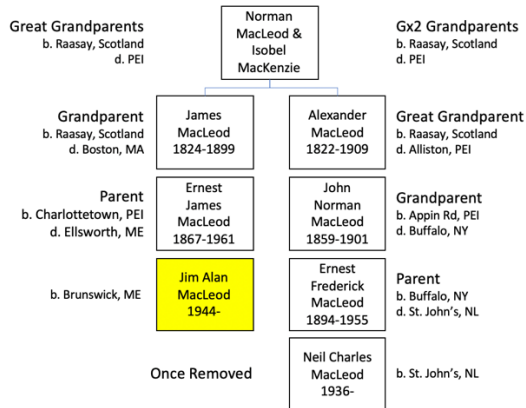
Susanna had a younger brother named John Norman, born in PEI in 1859. The story is that John was estranged from his parents, and he left home at young age and later settled in Buffalo, New York. John and his sister Susanna were close, and John met Carrie Martin while visiting Susanna in St. John's. John and Carrie married and had 3 boys in Buffalo – Norman, Ernest, and Neil. Sadly, both John and Carrie died when their boys were very young. Susanna's husband Matthew then travelled to Buffalo in 1901 and brought his wife's orphaned nephews back to St. John's and raised them as part of their own large family. Ernest McLeod also became a butcher and had 10 children including Ruby, Barbara, and Neil McLeod.

How did the McLeods end up in St. John's, Newfoundland?



The descendants of Alexander and Isabella MacLeod who lead to the McLeods of St. John's, Newfoundland.

Neil McLeod recently had his DNA analyzed by Ancestry. The results show that Neil and his nephew Derek Cook (son of Ruby McLeod) are amongst the strongest 'unknown' DNA matches to our family, again supporting the sibling relationship between James and Alexander. We found 8 living descendants of Ernest McLeod who are DNA matches to members of our MacLeod family.



Neil and Barbara are Jim Alan's second cousins once removed



Barbara and brother Neil McLeod with Mark MacLeod
St. John's, NL, October 27, 2019

DNA match between Jim Alan MacLeod & Neil Charles McLeod: 175 cM and 10 other known family members (Edward, Paul, Scott, Mark, Eric, and Jen MacLeod, Mary Bonczek, Mary and Trevor Lindmark, & Melissa Troisi).

Barbara and Neil McLeod organized a small McLeod-MacLeod family reunion in St. John's in November 2019 where we explored the connection between our families. We had lots of fun learning about our respective families!



Except for me, these are descendants of Alexander MacLeod, living in St. John's, Newfoundland.

4. Margaret Emma Barnes, Mary Josephine Glynn, and Margaret Josephine Driscoll

It's perhaps understandable that we focus our efforts on finding the roots of our male ancestors who carry the family name. However, when reviewing the so-called autosomal DNA results in Ancestry, relatives from both the male and female lines are listed. In this section, we explore three female (and Irish!) ancestors in our MacLeod family tree.

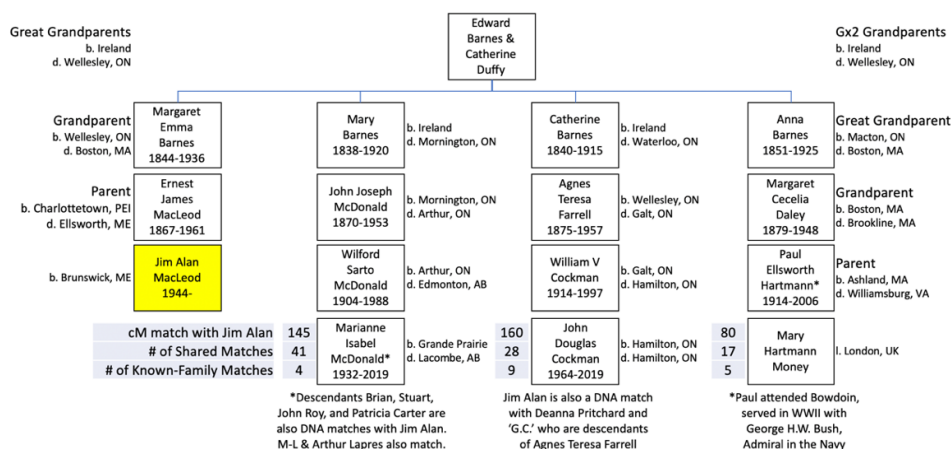
Margaret Emma Barnes

Margaret Emma Barnes was James MacLeod's second wife. She was Catholic, of Irish descent and born in Canada. She married James in 1869 in Charlottetown, had 9 children, and then moved to Boston around 1894. She died in Boston in 1936.

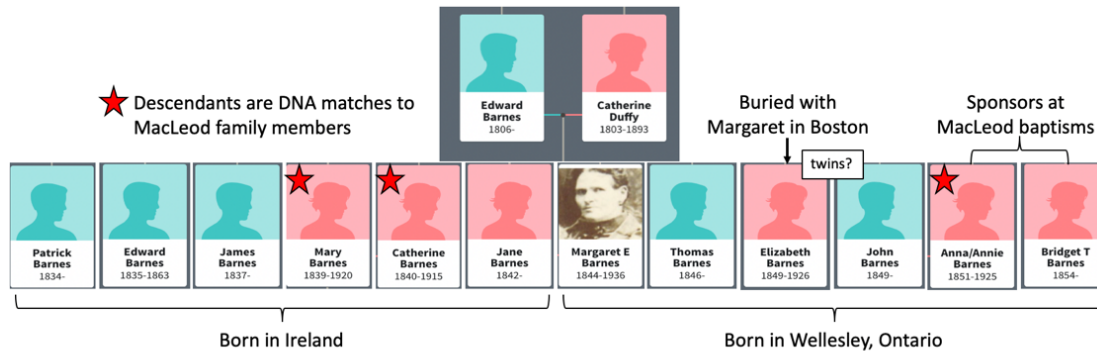
To learn more about Margaret we searched for relevant DNA matches to MacLeod family members. We found 19 matches who have ancestors from the mid 1800s named either Mary, Catherine, or Anna Barnes. Then, from Canada census records, we found that Mary, Catherine, and Anna were Margaret's sisters, and their parents were Edward Barnes and Catherine Duffy from Ireland. Edward and Catherine had 12 children. An additional 5 DNA matches link to ancestors with the surname Duffy from Birr, Offaly, Ireland which is possibly where Margaret's family was from.

Margaret was born in Wellesley, Ontario in 1844 where her father Edward was a farmer. Margaret's sisters Anna and Bridget are listed as sponsors at baptisms of some of James and Margaret's children, and Elizabeth was Margaret's sister who is buried in the MacLeod plot in Boston. Interestingly, Anna, who lived in Boston at the same time as Margaret and Elizabeth, married Michael P. Daley from St. John's, Newfoundland and they had a grandson named Paul Hartmann who attended Bowdoin College. Paul later became an Admiral in the US Navy and served with George H.W. Bush. On another note, it seems likely that Margaret and James' first-born son, Edward Barnes MacLeod, was named after Margaret's father.

In their early years, we can imagine that Margaret and some of her sisters left the flat farmlands of Wellesley for the city of Charlottetown seeking work, possibly as 'domestics'.



Partial family trees for several DNA matches to MacLeod family members. The trees show that our common ancestors are the parents of Margaret, Mary, Catherine, and Anna Barnes, namely Edward Barnes and Catherine Duffy.



Primary references: 1851 and 1861 Canada census records

Siblings and parents of Margaret Emma Barnes, James MacLeod’s second wife and our ancestor.

Mary Josephine Glynn

Mary Josephine Glynn, Ernest James MacLeod’s first wife, was born in St. John’s, Newfoundland in 1870. To learn more about Mary, we searched local records in St. John’s and availed of extensive Glynn family research by the father of a family friend named Robert Glynn⁶. Building on this work, we found numerous DNA matches that shed light on how the various branches of the Glynn family are related.

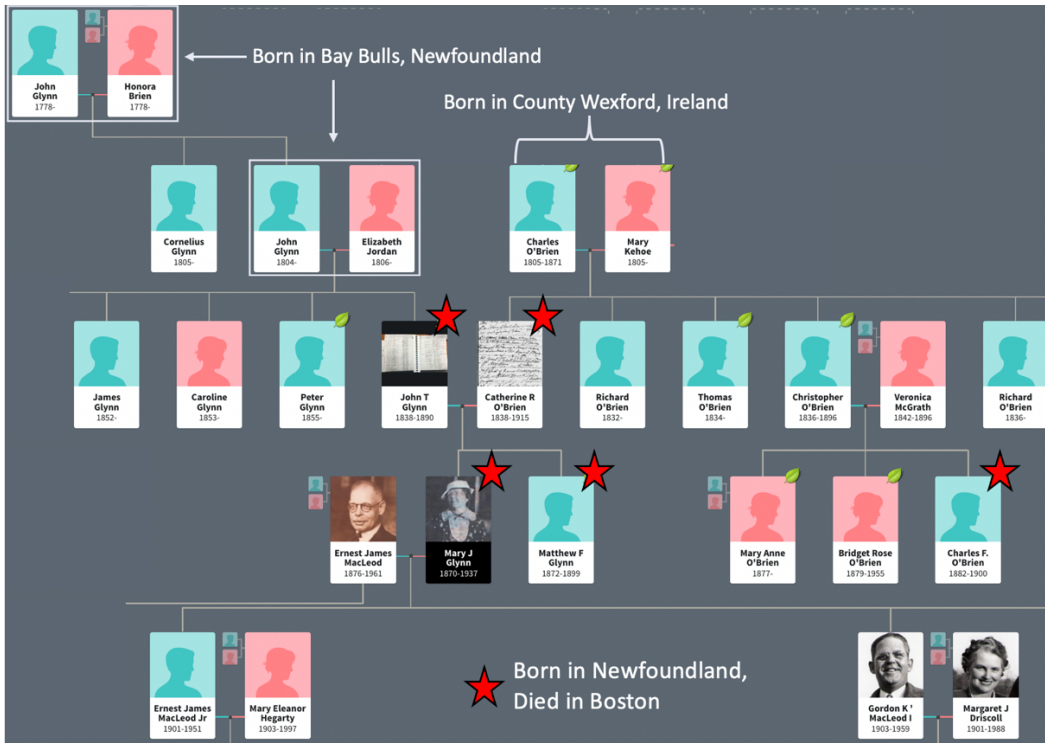
Mary’s mother was Catherine O’Brien from St. John’s and Catherine’s parents were Charles O’Brien and Mary Kehoe from County Wexford, Ireland. Mary’s father was John T. Glynn, born in 1838 in a fishing village 20 miles south of St. John’s called Bay Bulls. His parents were John Glynn and Elizabeth Jordon. John and Elizabeth started their family in Bay Bulls but later moved to St. John’s.

Mary Glynn’s father left St. John’s for the ‘Boston States’ in September 1888. A few months later, Catherine, Mary, and her only sibling Matthew made the trip to Boston. They were joined later by Mary’s 1st cousin Charles O’Brien after his parents died in St. John’s in 1896. We found no record of John’s death but Catherine is listed in Boston city directories as John’s widow starting in 1890.

Mary’s brother Matthew died of TB in July 1899 when he was just 26. A year later, on August 5, 1900, Mary and Ernest James MacLeod got married. Just weeks after the wedding, Mary’s cousin Charles died at 18, also of TB. It could not have been a very happy time in Boston!

In the 1910 census, Mary’s mother Catherine, who is listed as blind, is living in Boston with Mary, Ernest and their 5 boys. Catherine lived with Mary and Ernest until her death in 1915.

We wonder if Ernest ever knew or visited his 1st cousin Susanna MacLeod. She once lived in Ernest’s hometown of Charlottetown and now lived in Mary’s hometown of St. John’s!



Part of our family tree showing relatives and ancestors of Mary Josephine Glynn.

We found over 30 distant cousins in the Glynn family who are DNA matches to our MacLeod family (see Appendix). The matches show relatively low cM values implying a more distant common relative. Based on shared matches between our DNA relatives and their family trees, our yet-to-be discovered Glynn common ancestors were likely born in the mid 1700s in Ireland.

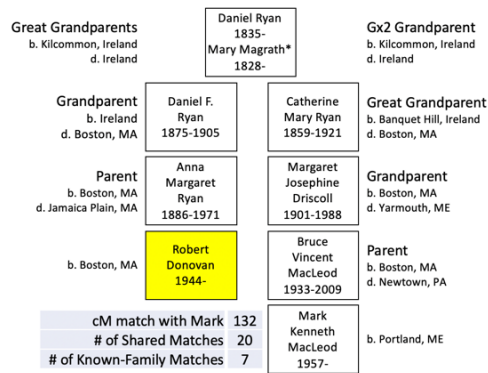
Margaret Josephine Driscoll

Several Ancestry users with surnames Donovan and Tucker are DNA matches to many MacLeod family members. For example, Robert Tucker is a DNA match to 6 family members and Robert Donovan is a DNA match to 7 family members. The family trees for Robert Donovan and Robert Tucker lead back to Daniel Ryan, b. 1835, who is also Margaret Josephine Driscoll's grandfather. As the tree below shows, Margaret Josephine Driscoll was my grandmother; she married Gordon Kenneth MacLeod in 1924.

Unknown relationship/relative

DNA match between Mark MacLeod & Robert Donovan: 132 cMs, 20 shared DNA matches

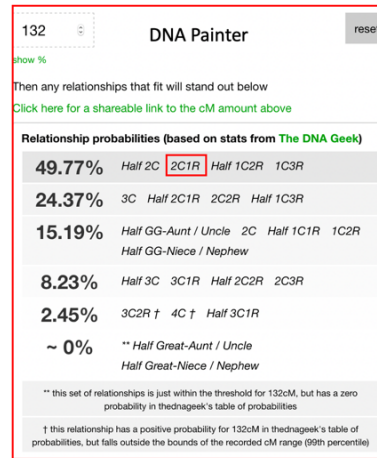
Also a match to Scott, Jen Murray, Mark S, Joseph K, Brett M, Michael Wick



*It's possible that Mary Magrath is mother of Daniel F. Ryan and Mary Ryan is mother of Catherine Mary Ryan

Mark is Robert Donovan's second cousin once removed (2C1R)

Robert Donovan and Mark MacLeod share a common ancestor in Daniel Ryan. DNA Painter result for 132 cMs supports the relationship of second cousin once removed (2C1R).



Summary

With the benefit of DNA data, we can now say that James MacLeod was from the Isle of Raasay in Inverness-shire, Scotland. His parents were Norman MacLeod and Isobel MacKenzie. James had at least three brothers – Lachlan, John, and Alexander. Most of the family moved from Raasay to Prince Edward Island in 1839. Lachlan, John and Alexander were farmers on PEI and had large families; today there are many living descendants of these brothers, including some in St. John's, Newfoundland who descend from Alexander.

DNA matches have helped us discover that James' second wife Margaret Emma Barnes was born in 1844 in Wellesley, Ontario. Her parents - Catherine Duffy and Edward Barnes - were from Ireland. Edward was a farmer in Wellesley. Margaret had 11 siblings including Bridget and Anna who attended family baptisms in Charlottetown, and Elizabeth who is buried in the MacLeod family plot in Boston.

DNA has also helped us find previously unknown parents and relatives of Mary Josephine Glynn, 1st wife of Ernest James MacLeod, and Margaret Josephine Driscoll, wife of Gordon Kenneth MacLeod.

DNA analysis will almost certainly lead to more insights into our family tree as new analysis techniques are developed, more DNA results and family trees are added to Ancestry and more time is spent analyzing the large amount of data we have already.

Footnotes

1. James MacLeod's middle name is often listed as Edward. I am certain that this is incorrect and that he had no middle name. I have not found any official record for James showing this middle name and I've never seen 'Edward' in thousands of Raasay census records I've reviewed. Furthermore, Norma MacLeod, a genealogist who specializes in MacLeods from Raasay, said Edward would be a highly unusual name for that area and time. I think James' first son Edward Barnes MacLeod was named after his wife's father Edward Barnes.
2. Assuming the arrival year of 1839 is correct, our MacLeod ancestors likely arrived on the ship named Pekin out of Liverpool since it is the only ship listed as coming from Scotland that year (Campey, 2007). Unfortunately, there is no ship manifest. The notes indicate that some of the 266 passengers ('30 or 40 families') settled in Lot 67 which is near where Alexander MacLeod initially settled in PEI. A bible from John MacLeod's family says they departed Scotland on July 20, 1839 and arrived in PEI on August 21, 1839.
3. The centiMorgan match level is an indicator of the relationship between two individuals. With an extensive database, the online tool DNA Painter lists the range and average cM values for three relationships as follows:
 - a. Second cousin, once removed (2C1R), range: 14-353 cMs, average: 122 cMs
 - b. Second cousin, twice removed (2C2R), range: 0-244 cMs, average: 71 cMs
 - c. Second cousin, thrice removed (2C3R), range: 0-154 cMs, average: 51 cMs

A spreadsheet of DNA matches linking to Jim Alan MacLeod (and other family members) to descendants of John, Lachlan and Alexander MacLeod shows the following observed range and average cM values:

- a. 2C1R: range: 139-175 cMs, average: 157 cMs (number of matches=2)
- b. 2C2R: range: 11-182 cMs, average: 73 cMs (number of matches=15)
- c. 2C3R: range: 9-98 cMs, average: 42 cMs (number of matches=41)

These observed values are in very close agreement with the DNA Painter predicted values which supports the sibling relationship. Any other assumed relationship (e.g., James is a cousin of John, Lachlan, and Alexander) would not be supported by the observed cM match levels.

4. An issue to be aware of is called endogamy. This is the practice of marrying within a specific social, ethnic or cultural group (e.g., Jews, French Canadians, Amish). Raasay, PEI, and Newfoundland could be described as endogamous societies, particularly before the 20th century. This would lead to more DNA matches and centiMorgan values that are difficult to untangle.
5. There are two main branches of the MacLeod clan: 1) the MacLeods of Harris and Dunvegan and 2) the MacLeods of Lewis and Raasay. We descend from the MacLeods of Raasay who descend from the MacLeods of Lewis. Today, the Clan MacLeod of The Lewes, Clan MacLeod of Raasay, and Clan MacLeod are represented by Associated Clan MacLeod Societies, and the chiefs of the three clans.
6. One motivation to study the Glynn family genealogy is that our daughter Claire is good friends with her former classmate Alex Glynn who lives in St. John's. Recently, Alex's father Robert had his DNA tested and he's a match to 8 MacLeod family members! Looks like Alex and Claire won't be getting married after all 😊

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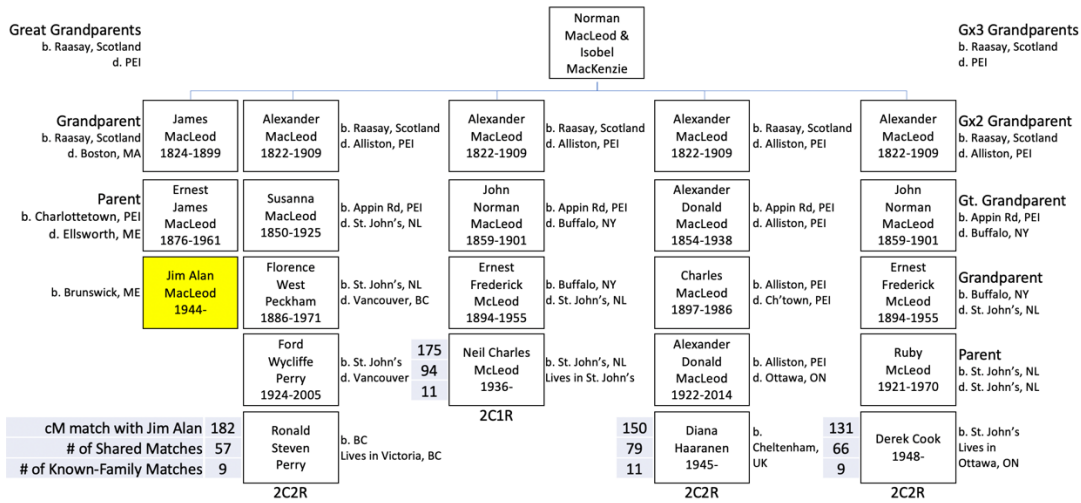
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Acknowledgements

My sincere thanks to those who shared their DNA results and made this study possible: Jim Alan MacLeod, Edward MacLeod, Mary Bonczek, Paul MacLeod, Scott GK MacLeod, Jen Murray, Jen MacLeod, Mark Shoemaker, Susannah Shoemaker, Ross Clinton McLeod, Neil Charles McLeod and Derek Cook. Also, thanks to Jim Alan MacLeod, Gerry Kennedy, Derek Cook, Barbara Dooley (née McLeod) and Neil Charles McLeod for the many stories, photos and documents that help make a dry subject much more interesting. Genealogist Norma MacLeod provided crucial help with research into Lachlan MacLeod and other questions. Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the many Ancestry users who responded to my email messages and helped clarify our family connections.

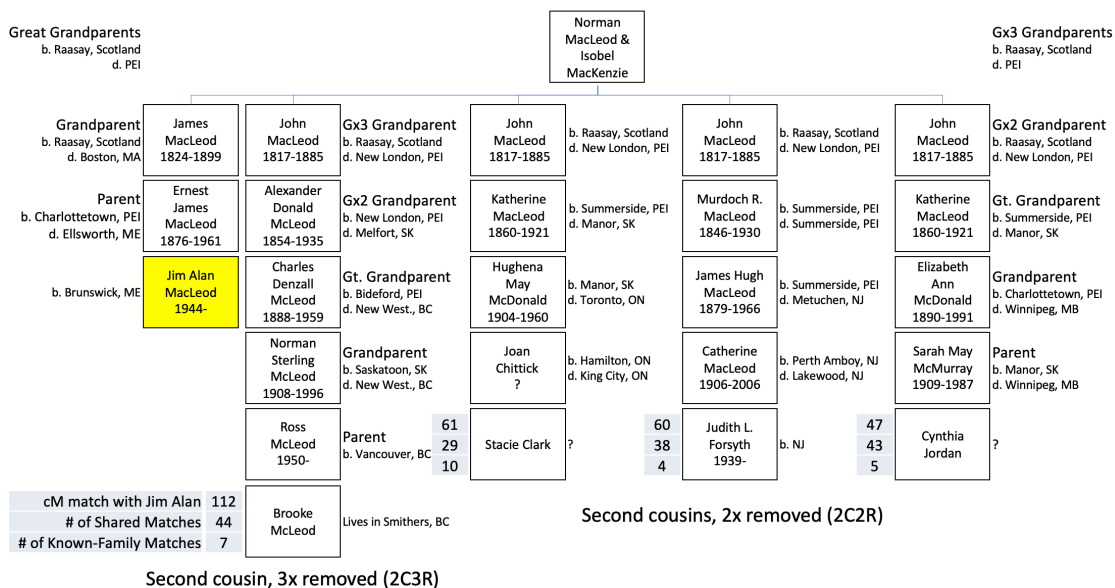
Appendix



Partial family trees of DNA matches to Jim Alan MacLeod leading to **Alexander MacLeod**. Only the MacLeod bloodline is shown. All trees and DNA match statistics point to our common ancestors being the parents of James and Alexander MacLeod, namely Norman MacLeod and Isobel MacKenzie.

DNA match/Ancestry Username	Jim Alan MacLeod	Edward MacLeod	Mary Bonczek	Paul MacLeod	Scott GK MacLeod	Mark MacLeod	Jen Murray	Jen MacLeod	Mark Shoemaker	Susannah Shoemaker	Other family ties
Ronald Steven Perry	182	43	107	21	24	35	*	19	25	42	EM
Neil Charles McLeod	175	173	93	33	70	13	*	26	*	*	EM, MT, ML, TL
Diana Haaranen	150	214	110	124	113	12	*	11	8	*	EM, ML, TL
Derek Cook	131	52	37	29	46	9	*	24	*	*	EM, MT
Twootter	105	58	21	23	14	*	8	9	*	*	EM

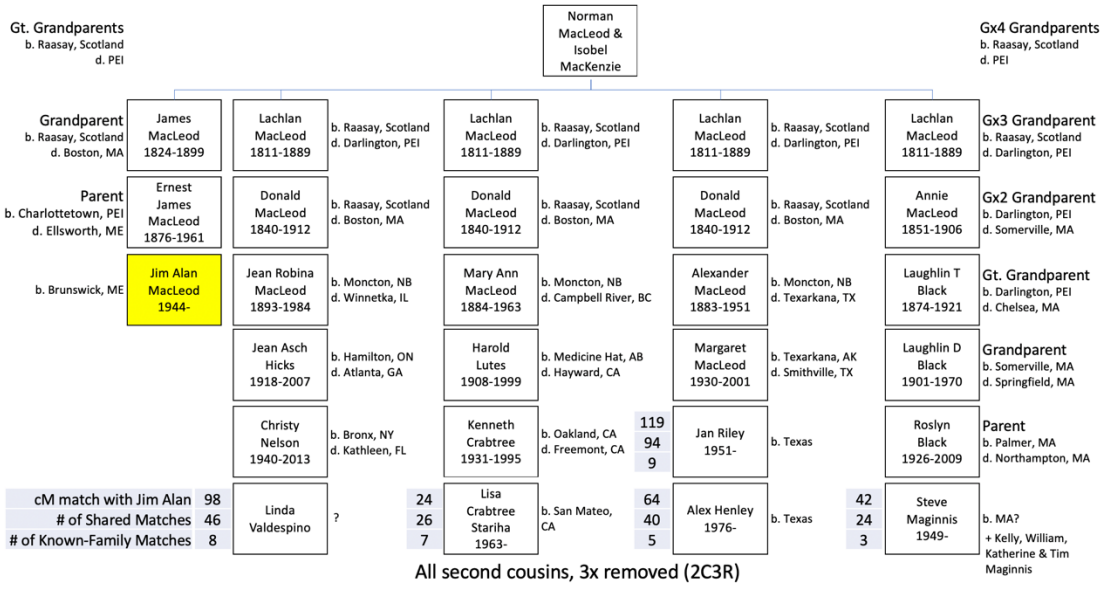
Five strongest DNA matches in Ancestry who lead to **Alexander MacLeod**, born 1822 on the **Isle of Raasay**. * = not a match. Other family ties: EM = Eric MacLeod, MT = Melissa Troisi, ML = Mary Lindmark, TL = Trevor Lindmark.



Partial family trees of DNA matches to Jim Alan MacLeod leading to **John MacLeod**. Only the MacLeod bloodline is shown. All trees and DNA match statistics point to our common ancestors being the parents of James and John MacLeod, namely Norman MacLeod and Isobel MacKenzie.

DNA match/Ancestry Username	Jim Alan MacLeod	Edward MacLeod	Mary Bonczek	Paul MacLeod	Scott GK MacLeod	Mark MacLeod	Jen Murray	Jen MacLeod	Mark Shoemaker	Susannah Shoemaker	Other family ties
Brooke McLeod	112	52	*	26	22	*	*	27	*	*	BM, KD
OurRootsToHistory	97	27	52	41	39	25	*	18	25	25	ML, TL
Stacie Clark	61	44	40	34	39	15	*	8	8	16	ML, TL
Judith L. Forsyth	60	95	21	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	EM
Cynthia Jordan	47	56	27	20	26	*	*	*	*	*	none

Five strongest DNA matches in Ancestry who lead to **John MacLeod**, born 1817 on the **Isle of Raasay**.
 * = not a match. Other family ties: BM = Brett MacLeod, KD = Kaitlyn DiBuono, ML = Mary Lindmark, TL = Trevor Lindmark, EM = Eric MacLeod.



Partial family trees of DNA matches to Jim Alan MacLeod leading to **Lachlan MacLeod**. Only the MacLeod bloodline is shown. All trees and DNA match statistics point to our common ancestors being the parents of James and John MacLeod, namely Norman MacLeod and Isobel MacKenzie.

DNA match/Ancestry Username	Jim Alan MacLeod	Edward MacLeod	Mary Bonczek	Paul MacLeod	Scott GK MacLeod	Mark MacLeod	Jen Murray	Jen MacLeod	Mark Shoemaker	Susannah Shoemaker	Other family ties
Linda Valdespino	98	22	21	44	38	*	9	20	*	*	BM
Lisa Crabtree Stariha	24	45	35	*	*	7	7	*	*	*	EM, MT
Jan Riley	119	125	51	*	24	34	33	*	28	11	EM, JK
Alex Henley	64	65	16	*	16	30	*	*	*	*	JK
Steve Maginnis	42	10	31	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	none

Selected DNA matches in Ancestry who lead to **Lachlan MacLeod**, born about 1811 on the **Isle of Raasay**.
 * = not a match. Other family ties: BM = Brett MacLeod, EM = Eric MacLeod, MT = Melissa Troisi, JK = Joseph Kennedy.



Partial family trees of selected DNA matches to Mark MacLeod leading to **Glynn family** ancestors. Only the Glynn-related bloodline is shown. Our common ancestors likely date back to the mid 1700s from Ireland. (Robert Glynn Jr. is a family friend from St. John's.)

DNA match/Ancestry Username	Mary Bonczek	Paul MacLeod	Scott GK MacLeod	Mark MacLeod	Jen Murray	Jen MacLeod	Mark Shoemaker	Susannah Shoemaker	Other family ties
Alfred Glynn	*	17	20	16	16	9	*	*	none
Maria Ann Snow-Michel	113	11	19	51	58	*	*	14	MT, KD
Robert Glynn Jr.	35	*	23	11	11	*	11	*	JK, MT, ML
Catherine Monahan	73	*	48	35	35	*	*	*	JK, ML, MT, KD
Lisa Pierce	23	*	*	32	32	*	*	*	MT
Pamela Bogdan Massa	42	*	23	50	36	*	14	18	MT, ML
Margaret June Carberry	50	*	25	11	*	*	11	*	MT

7 of 30 DNA matches between MacLeod family members and Glynn family descendants. *=not a match. Other family ties: MT = Melissa Troisi, KD = Kaitlyn DiBuono, JK = Joseph Kennedy, ML = Mary Lindmark.

The Isle of Raasay and the MacLeods

The island of Raasay is one of a group of islands that lie east of the Isle of Skye in Scotland. The island is about 13 miles long and no more than 3 miles wide. Today, Raasay can be reached by a 25-minute ride on a car ferry from Sconser, Skye.

From the early 1500s Raasay has been overseen by MacLeod chiefs, according to some writers, after Malcolm MacLeod IX of Lewis gave his second son Malcolm Garbh MacLeod (aka Mac GilleChaluim) the islands of Raasay and Rona, and other lands. Until around 1670, the main seat of the MacLeods of Raasay was probably Brochel Castle which is now in ruins on the east coast. The secondary home was Raasay House, currently a 4-star hotel near the ferry landing from Skye.

The main historical event on Raasay happened in 1746. During the Jacobite Uprising, the MacLeods of Raasay made a poor choice and supported Bonnie Prince Charlie, unlike their kinsman at Dunvegan. After his defeat at Culloden in 1746, Prince Charles went into hiding, including two days on Raasay. In retribution for supporting the prince, the government redcoats ransacked the island, killed or confiscated the livestock and burned all the houses, including Raasay House. Soon after, John MacLeod, the 11th chief of Raasay (1714-1786), inherited the title of chief from his father Malcolm and he set out to rebuild the island and Raasay House. John took on a lot of debt in the process.

When John MacLeod died in 1786, his son James became the 12th chief and he further extended Raasay House, adding to the family's debt. James died in 1824, around the time our ancestor James MacLeod was born. Was our ancestor James named after the recently deceased clan chief?

John MacLeod, James the 12th's eldest son, became the 13th clan chief. He was the last chief with true oversight of Raasay, as he grew deeper in debt after spending too much money gambling and restoring Raasay House. He didn't even live on Raasay. Also, because of years of poor harvests, rents normally paid to him by his tenants were in arrears. John began clearing some tenants from their lands - likely including our ancestors - to enable sheep grazing but this didn't improve his financial situation. Therefore, in 1843 John MacLeod emigrated to Australia, and in 1846 the entire island including Raasay House was sold by creditors to a former slave trader named George Rainy for £27,660 (~\$US 4.2 million today). Since then, the island has traded hands many times. Raasay House is now owned by Raasay House Community Company, a small outfit based in Inverness. Since we descend from the MacLeods of Raasay, we can't lay claim to Dunvegan Castle or, as it turns out, anything on Raasay!

The population of Raasay in the early 1800s was around 700 people. Today it is less than 200. The main occupations were farming, raising cattle, and fishing. It's likely our ancestors were tenants or crofters, in arrears on rent payments, living on lands controlled by the laird of the day. We don't know yet where our ancestors lived but James' brother Lachlan MacLeod and his family were living in Manish in 1841.

Emigration from Raasay started in the late 1700s/early 1800s because of poor harvests, extreme poverty, and the decline of prices for wool and cattle. The potato blight and the Scottish Clearances accelerated emigration, directed by George Rainy, beginning in the 1850s. Our ancestors likely left Raasay in 1839 for the same reason other migrants move on – the chance for a better life. It seems they found it on Prince Edward Island!



Arnish, 1885. James' brother Lachlan MacLeod lived nearby in Manish in 1841. Courtesy of Raasay Heritage Trust.



Raasay House



Successive MacLeod clan chiefs spent lots of money rebuilding, expanding, and upgrading Raasay House which contributed to poverty, the sale of the island and widespread emigration from Raasay in the 1800s.

Skeletons, interesting connections, and far-flung relatives found in DNA matches

Lauree Gott from Maine:

Lauree is a strong DNA match to members of our family, particularly Jim Alan and Edward MacLeod, with match levels above 100 cMs. Lauree also matches 10 other family members. We also found seven other Gott family members who are DNA matches to our family. The Gott family tree leads to Bessie MacLeod who was born in 1860 in PEI and died in 1928 in Maine. DNA and other evidence points to our James MacLeod as Bessie's father. Bessie was born when James was married to his first wife Ann Bulger.

Brad White from Nova Scotia:

Brad is a strong DNA match to 8 family members. Brad sent an email asking for any insight as to why we might be related. Brad didn't know his biological father. After lots of digging and many emails, we determined that Brad descends from Frederick S. MacLeod (1875-1946). Fred was a brother of our ancestor Ernest James MacLeod. He married Maggie McDonald, from Nova Scotia, in Boston in 1905. It looks like they immediately moved to Nova Scotia, and they had a daughter named Gertrude in 1906. Fred's death record indicates he suffered from chronic psychosis.

Brad is the only known DNA match who descends from James MacLeod's many other 'declared' children besides Ernest. He eventually found the name of his biological father – Doug Chisholm - and they've met. Doug remembers spending time with his great grandmother Maggie and that her husband Fred 'had issues'.

Diana Haaranen from the UK:

Diana is the 3rd strongest DNA match to Jim Alan MacLeod of those who descend from Alexander MacLeod. Diana also matches 10 other family members.

Diana's public bio posted on Ancestry says:

I was born July 17, 1945 to Mary Elizabeth Kate Neale in Cheltenham England. She lived in Cirencester near the air base in Swindon. That is where she met my father, Alexander McLeod who was part of the Canadian forces. I believe he was a high school English teacher. He knew of my existence but told her she would be better staying with her family in Cirencester.

After exchanging emails with Diana, we determined that her biological father was Alexander Donald MacLeod (1922-2014) whose great grandfather was Alexander MacLeod, brother of our James. Alexander Donald MacLeod was in the Royal Canadian Air Force in WWII.

Gary Earl Johnson, and two others.

Gary is a match to Jim Alan MacLeod and 7 other family members.

Gary Earl Johnson was governor of New Mexico (1995-2003) and a two-time US presidential candidate (2012, 2016). Gary's father – Earl Johnson – was adopted and Earl didn't know his biological father. Earl Johnson's mother was Marion Moe of Norwegian descent. Using DNA connections to another Ancestry user named Judy MacLeod, we determined that Earl Johnson's biological father was Peter MacLeod,

born in PEI in 1875. Peter's mother, Mary MacLeod, was born on Raasay and must be somehow connected to our family (ongoing research!). The 'two others' noted above were raised by different fathers but have recently traced their paternity to Earl Johnson using DNA.

8 Ancestry users including tommymcloud, Debra Ryans & Angela Barlag: DNA match to Jim Alan and Edward MacLeod. Shared matches include many Ancestry users with Raasay ancestry.

These 8 Ancestry users hail from the southern part of the US and lead back to Norman Calhoun McLeod (1771-1845), reportedly from Kintail, Scotland near Skye and Raasay. Norman emigrated from Scotland to North Carolina in the late 1700s and he was a very successful farmer with large holdings. Sadly, according to his will, he was also a slave holder.

Over 60 DNA matches living in Australia:

These matches to many of our family members lead to a few common ancestors, all from the Isle of Raasay. Common ancestor surnames are MacLeod, Gillies, McSwain, MacLean and MacKenzie. There are so many matches that Ancestry's ethnicity maps for Jim Alan and Edward MacLeod and Mary Bonczek all show a link to descendants of these settlers in southern Australia.

Hundreds of Raasay people emigrated to southern Australia in 1852 and 1854 during the height of the clearances and several communities in Raasay were emptied. These ancestors are generally well-documented, starting with the 1841 and 1851 Scotland census records and ship manifests. It may be that we can find our common ancestors given this amount of documentation.

DNA matches Audrey Paterson, Cathie Speece, Liz Kordula and Norm Calder:

Audrey, Cathie and Liz, who are 1st cousins, and Norm each match several family members, and each has at least one parent from Raasay. Audrey, Cathie and Liz's fathers were MacLeod brothers, and Norm's mother was a MacLeod – and their ancestors were all from Raasay. Audrey, Liz and Norm live in Scotland. These 4 matches alone provide very strong support for our link to Raasay.

For many of these matches, the remaining challenge is to figure out how they tie into our tree!