

Origines Phantasticus: The Norman Y-Haplotype, R-FGC5494 ... FT265133 Editorial

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Some fantastic stories swirl around the sphere of genealogical and Y-DNA research. And it makes sense that among the best are those that relate to the Irish, who, by self-admission, are never short of a good yarn. Yet, we Irish know not to be too cynical of the fantastic, from words attributed to the Hibernophile Lord Byron, in Don Juan:

“’Tis strange – but true; for truth is always strange;
Stranger than fiction; if it could be told,
How much would novels gain by the exchange!”

Fitzpatricks have recently learnt a thing or two about fiction, since our broad surname narrative has been exposed via Y-DNA as a gross invention, which gained momentum after our many-clan stories were lost during the turmoil of seventeenth-century Ireland. But thanks to Y-DNA, it's partly possible to reconstruct Fitzpatrick narratives. Inspired by genetic clues, and fragments of records, such as fiants and patents, lease records, and depositions, now widely accessible, which have afforded the piecing together of our clan puzzles. Yet, such research necessarily involves elements of the imagination, since we sometimes need to imagine to guess where to search for truth.

Therefore, a little Fitzpatrick fiction is affordable now and then, and an end-of-year editorial is an appropriate platform – aimed at humouring as well as informing, and providing subject matter for some end-of-year debate, all in fantastic fashion. And the narrative surrounding the origins of R-FGC5494 ... A1488 Fitzpatricks is fantastic regardless of what version you subscribe to. Yet, a fundamental truth is that, when using Y-DNA, such origins can be understood only by accounting for common ancestral connections under R-FGC5494 ... FT265133, a haplogroup a little upstream of R-A1488.

There is a theory that goes around by word of mouth known as the *Cerball Nexus*¹, which posits the common connection (hence, the Latin, *nexus*, meaning connection) is Cearbhall, King of Ossory (843-888), since three connected surnames under R-FT265133, Fitzpatrick, Costigan, and Branán, are said to be Cearbhall's descendants. But a more considered opinion would likely result in a re-branding of the theory to the *Nexus Ridiculus*, of obvious meaning, since there is no attempt by *Nexus* adherents, the *Nexians*, to connect all

¹ Unpublished, unfortunately, but AI was typically good value when asked, on 2 December 2025, “What is the Cerball Nexus”, responding:

The *Cerball Nexus* appears to be the name of a specific musical track or video rather than a widely known general concept or place. Search results suggest:

- It is the title of a video or music track with a duration of just over an hour.
- It may be associated with the musician Brian Kellock.
- It does not appear to be a common or established term in history, geography, or mainstream culture.

The name likely refers to a fictional or artistic creation, possibly related to the Irish king Cearball of Osraige.

prominent surnames under R-FT265133, only those three surnames that suit their purposes; hence, conspicuous by their absence from the *Cerball Nexus* are the surnames Dalton and Cody.

Good-natured ridicule is warranted since *Nexians* draw their Fitzpatrick-Costigan-Branan genealogy from former policeman, teacher, and part-time historian John O'Hart², while ignoring by far the most important Irish genealogies recorded ever, *The Great Book of Irish Genealogies* (GBIG), written by Ireland's last, and greatest, hereditary *sennachie*³, Dubhaltach Óg Mac Fhirbisigh (Duald Mac Firbis, 1585-1670)⁴. While citizen scientists may consider simple genealogies, such as O'Hart's, sufficiently reliable to support the Y-DNA analysis of the Irish, solving complex Irish lineage mysteries in scholarly fashion demands a much greater degree of genealogical rigor⁵.

Therefore, presented here is a scholarly alternative to the *Nexian* origins story of FGC5494 ... R-A1488 Fitzpatricks of Ossory, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, yet endeavoring to connect all the modern-day R-FT265133 surname groups, i.e., Fitzpatrick and Costigan (under R-A1488), 'Dalton' (under R-FT12974), 'Branan' (under R-BY140757), and 'Cody' (under R-FTF46424), and drawing on the great Mac Fhirbisigh. The new theory is christened *Origines Phantasticus*, i.e., Fantastic Origins.

It is essential to understand that there is no surname-specific Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP) for R-A1488 Fitzpatricks. Instead, there is an association of various surnames under the haplogroup. And it easy to understand why some with R-A1488 paternity may have taken Mac Giolla Phádraig as a surname in Upper Ossory, since it was a territory dominated by a clan of that name, particularly in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, much in the same way West Ulster clans with links to the Uí Néill, or West Breifne clans with links to the Uí Ruairc took the Ó Néill or Ó Ruairc surnames, respectively, without being of patrilineal descent from the eponymous ancestors – in such fashion were dynastic influences expressed⁶.

And there is evidence, discussed later, that Mac Giolla Phádraig of Upper Ossory may have stemmed from a Costigan line, since the former was a higher-ranking surname. But *Origines Phantasticus* does not attempt to unravel the complexity of R-A1488; rather, the focus is on earlier surname connections. It is sufficient to note that there are currently seven named descendant lineages under R-A1488, of which only two provide evidence of singular surname use: (1) R-A18403 is a line that shows, based on FTDNA's dating scheme, that the surname Mac Giolla Phádraig came into use among R-A1488 ca. 1450, and surely not before 1200⁷, while (2) R-BY116564 is a solely FitzGerald line, with that surname being adopted by

² O'Hart, J (1892). *Irish Pedigrees*. Dublin, James Duffy and Co. Ltd.

³ That is, historian and genealogist.

⁴ Ó Muraíle, N (2004). *The Great Book of Irish Genealogies*. Dublin: de Búrca.

⁵ Fitzpatrick M, and Fitzpatrick E (2025). Fitzpatrick Gene-Ealogy and the case for working the hyphen. *Journal of the Genealogical Society of Ireland* 26: 121-127.

⁶ DePew K, Gleeson M, and Jaski B (2023). Tracing the sons of Brión: The R1b-A259 Y-DNA subclade and the Uí Briúin dynasty of Connacht. *Peritia* 34: 9-45.

⁷ Family Tree DNA Haplogroup Story: R-A18403, <https://discover.familytreedna.com/y-dna/R-A18403/story>, accessed 3 December 2025.

1650⁸. Of the remaining five named descendant mixed-surname lines, the evidence is that Mac Giolla Phádraig and R-A1488-associated surnames, such as Costigan, were probably in wide use among R-A1488 descendants not long after ca. 1450⁹.

Understanding R-A1488's origins requires similar dating analysis of surnames in nearby haplotree branches, where it is immediately noticeable that there is a high degree of surname specificity compared with the surname soup under R-A1488. Hence, it is much easier to define when the surnames of the cousins of R-A1488, the County Kilkenny 'Branans', 'Daltons', and 'Codys' were adopted. R-BY140757 demonstrates a remarkably high degree of association with Branans-like surnames, and Y-DNA analysis of descendant branches indicates the earliest adoption of the surname occurred ca. 1100-1250¹⁰. Similarly, Y-DNA suggests the patriarch the Daltons, in whom R-FT12974 originated, lived ca. 1200-1350¹¹, while the common antecedent of those haplotype R-FTF46424, who came to have Cody-like surnames, flourished after ca. 750¹², and probably at the fringe of when surname use arose in Ireland or England.

At this juncture, it 'is also important to lock in correct surname origins. On the authority of William Carrigan, the County Kilkenny Codys once bore the surname 'Archdekin', from a Norman family called L'Ercecekin (i.e., The Archdeacon), but during the fifteenth century, they "adopted an Irish patronymic and called themselves Mac Ódo or Mac Óda, from one of their ancestors", Odo L'Ercecekin. Mac Óda later became "anglicised Cody and under this form of the name, all the members of the family became known. Similarly, of the Daltons of Kilkenny, Carrigan noted their name was "written incorrectly" and was really a version of Daton or D'Autun¹³. The forbear of the County Kilkenny Daltons was probably Richard de Anton, who was Sheriff of Waterford between 1291 and 1293¹⁴.

Understanding the L'Ercecekin-de Anton connection comes with the knowledge of their common pre-Irish conquest origins— the Parish of Antony in Cornwall where the L'Ercecekin held lands and a manor house; prominent members of the L'Ercecekin family used the toponym de Antone¹⁴. With such a clear Norman *nexus*, it is little wonder *Nexians* avoid Cody-Dalton conversations. Yet, the death-knell of the *Cerball Nexus* comes with learning there is no connection between Mac Giolla Phádraig of Ossory and O'Braonáin of Idough, as proposed by O'Hart, since the authority of Mac Fhirbisigh positions the two clans far apart in his genealogical schema; the latter were not among the Osraige, but of the Uí Failghi¹⁵.

⁸ Family Tree DNA Haplogroup Story: R-BY116564, <https://discover.familytreedna.com/y-dna/R-BY116564/story>, accessed 3 December 2025.

⁹ Refer to the R-A1488 descendant lineages: Family Tree DNA Haplogroup Story: R-A1488, <https://discover.familytreedna.com/y-dna/R-A1488/story>, accessed 3 December 2025.

¹⁰ Refer to the R-BY140757 descendant lineages: Family Tree DNA Haplogroup Story: R-BY140757, <https://discover.familytreedna.com/y-dna/R-BY140757/story>, accessed 3 December 2025.

¹¹ Refer to the R-FT12974 descendant lineages: Family Tree DNA Haplogroup Story: R-FT12974, <https://discover.familytreedna.com/y-dna/R-FT12974/story>, accessed 3 December 2025.

¹² Family Tree DNA Haplogroup Story: R-FTF46424, <https://discover.familytreedna.com/y-dna/R-FTF46424/story>, accessed 3 December 2025.

¹³ Carrigan W. (1905). *The History and Antiquities of the Diocese of Ossory*. Dublin, Sealy, Bryers and Walker.

¹⁴ Fitzpatrick, M. (2024). The Daltons of Kildalton: A Norman-Irish gentry family, Part I. *The Journal of the Fitzpatrick Clan Society* 5, 1-10. doi:10.48151/fitzpatrickclansociety01624.

¹⁵ *GBIG*, Volume II, 478.7

The Branans of County Kilkenny are a completely different family to the O’Braonáin of Idough, having their origins in another Norman family, the de Braham of Suffolk, whose Irish branch probably began with Robert de Braham, Sheriff of Kilkenny ca. 1250¹⁶. The de Braham family came to hold lands in the Parish of Tullaroan, and the surname last occurs in Kilkenny with John Braham of Brahamescourt, Seneschal of Kilkenny, in an Irish exchequer memoranda roll ca. 1414¹⁷.

While this is all too much for *Nexians*, the leading Branan scholar, Thomas Brennan, recognised something odd among the thirteenth and fourteenth century Kilkenny records – there were men with ‘Branan’ surnames of high-ranking positions who possessed “Norman Christian names ... not yet generally in use among the Irish”¹⁸. *Nexians*, therefore, are confronted with a Norman trifecta, but how could the Cornish families of L’Ercevedekin (*quo* Cody) and de Anton be paternally connected with de Braham of Suffolk in the pre-Irish conquest era, as indicated by Y-DNA?

Underpinning *Origines Phantasticus* is the Latin-derived term *lignage*, which the Norman nobility used to describe ancestry, descent, or blood relations. And, unsurprisingly, when the Normans embarked on their conquest of England, they ‘kept things in the family’ to maintain an hereditary ruling class, as both nobility and gentry¹⁹. Hence, when English lands were being dished out after 1066, William I the Conqueror gave himself the largest portion by far, approximately 20%, while the combined Norman nobility gained 50%. For the remainder, the Church retained, mostly unchanged, approximately 25%, replacing English with Norman appointees when the time came, and the English nobility held approximately 5%¹⁹. And there is no better person to start an *Origines Phantasticus lignage* discussion than with William the Conqueror and his kin.

After William I, the next largest estates in England granted to individuals were to his maternal half-brothers, Count Robert of Mortain and Bishop Odo of Bayeux. The Count gained lands mostly in Cornwall, and he became Earl of Cornwall. By 1272, those possessions had come to Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, who later gifted the L’Ercevedekin their best-known house, the Manor of Veryan²⁰, to which the imposing Castle of Ruan Laninhorne was attached²¹, which leads to the need for an in-depth interrogation of the L’Ercevedekin surname and particularly how it came to Ireland from Cornwall.

The L’Ercevedekin are recorded as definitively coming to hold Ruan Laninhorne, then in the parish of Varyan, by 1303²¹, but their presence in Cornwall more than one hundred years

¹⁶ Fitzpatrick M and Fitzpatrick I (2021). The Similar-Sounding Surnames of Haplogroup R-BY140757. The Journal of the Fitzpatrick Clan Society 2, 1-41. doi:10.48151/fitzpatrickclansociety00421

¹⁷ Virtual Record Treasury of Ireland. William Lynch's repertory of Irish exchequer memoranda rolls held in the Chief Remembrancer's Office, <https://virtualtreasury.ie/item/COA-Lynch-5>, accessed 12 September 2025.

¹⁸ Brennan, TA (1979). A history of the Brennans of Idough, County Kilkenny. Lebanon, New Hampshire, Whitman Press Inc.

¹⁹ Hudson, J (2012). The Oxford History of the Laws of England, 871-1216. Oxford: Oxford Academic. Noble, from the Latin *nobilis*, which came to mean of high-birth, aristocratic, etc. Gentry: from the old French *gentil*, meaning high-born, which stemmed from the Latin, *gentis*, meaning clan, extended family, etc.

²⁰ Maxwell Lyte, H (1916). Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous (Chancery) Preseved in the Public Records Office. London: His Majesty's Stationary Office.

²¹ Whitley, M (1889). Lanyhorn Castle and its Lords. Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall, 9, 425-448.

prior is well documented by the Cornish historian, Sir John MacLean²². MacLean's narrative of the L'Ercedekin was thorough at the time of publication and is summarised here, with the addition of several previously unrecognised key records between 1222 and the era of the well-known Sir Thomas L'Ercedekin, from ca. 1271.

MacLean posited that 'Ralph Lercedekne', recorded in a charter²³ of 1230, was one of the earliest of that surname in Cornwall, being the same person as 'Ralph, son of Ralph Archid'' of 'Hymene', who is found in Pipe Roll records of Richard I, dated 1189-1190 – Hymene being a variant of Varyan²⁴. It has been suggested by Elliott-Binns that Ralph senior may have been Ralph Luce²⁵, a mid to late twelfth-century Archdeacon of Cornwall²⁶. MacLean's consideration that Ralph Lercedekne was the son of Ralph Archid', is not implausible, but by 1230, he would have been advanced in years. Notably, MacLean did not uncover that, in 1233, there was a 'Radulfo le Arcediacne' who was Sheriff of Cornwall²⁷, and the Sheriff's position was generally not for an older man.

It is not possible to establish the correctness of Elliott-Binns' theory, but, presumably, there was once an Archdeacon of somewhere near Cornwall, from whom the surname L'Ercedekin came, and another early post-conquest candidate who stands out is the first recorded Archdeacon of Exeter, that town once being the seat for both Cornwall and Devon. He is recorded simply by the name of Odo, and he died in 1083²⁸.

MacLean also noted that 'Odo Le Archedekne' appeared as an assizes' justice at Launceston in 1235, but there are earlier records of him. 'Odo Archidiaconus' is recorded in a patent of 1229, as a justiciar and witness at an assize in Bodmin concerning a claim that Robert FitzWalter successfully brought against Henry de Bodrugan, regarding the tenement of Treworrick²⁹. Earlier still, in 1222, 'Odo le Archidiakne' and others were sent to the Bishop of Exeter to have him revoke the sentence passed by him 'against the King's sheriffs and bailiffs of Cornwall'³⁰.

The Cornwall Feet of Fines³¹ make several mentions of L'Ercedekens, which provide important insights into where they held land. A Fine of 1244 records that 'Odo le Ercedekne'

²² MacLean, J (1879). *Parochial and Family History of the Deanery of Trigg Minor in the County of Cornwall*, Volume III, pp. 253-260.

²³ Thompson, J and Story-Maskelyne, A (1902). *A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds Volume IV*. London: Mackie and Co. Ltd.

²⁴ MacLean's citation, Rotulus Pipae 6 Richard II, is clearly incorrect. The correct citation is Rotulus Pipae 1 Richard I, see Hunter, J (1844), *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the First Year of the Reign of King Richard the First, AD 1189-1190*, London: Eyre and Spottiswood, p. 112, 116.

²⁵ Elliott-Binns, L (1955). *Medieval Cornwall*. London: Methuen

²⁶ Ralph Luce held the office between 1161 and 1184 (Hardy, T, 1854. *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, Oxford: University Press).

²⁷ Maxwell Lyte, H (1905). *Calendar of the Close Rolls of Henry III, AD 1231-1234*. London: Mackie and Co. Ltd.

²⁸ Hardy, T (1854).

²⁹ Maxwell Lyte, H (1903). *Calendar of the Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III, AD 1225-1232*. London: Mackie and Co. Ltd.

³⁰ Maxwell Lyte, H (1901). *Calendar of the Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III, AD 1216-1225*. London: Mackie and Co. Ltd.

³¹ The Fines being a record of lawsuits, which were more friendly agreements of land transference than serious litigations, that were "begun merely in order that the pretended compromise might be made" (Rowe, J, 1914.

was granted lands in Rinsey in Breage parish, for £24³², and a Fine of 1249 records the agreement between ‘Odo Le Archedeken’ and ‘Thomas Le Archedeken’ concerning disparate lands they held in Bodwen in Helland parish, Kestle and Landrine in Ladock parish, and Killigorrick in Duloe parish³³. **Figure 1** shows the said locations, along with others mentioned in Cornwall in thirteenth-century records of L’Ercedekens.

Outside of Cornwall, Pole considered Shobrooke, Devon, was the inheritance of Michael le Ercedecne ca. 1242³⁴, i.e., in the same era as Thomas and Odo, and that is passed to Sir Thomas. While Pole’s assertion cannot be verified via primary sources, it is generally plausible since a deed records that Michael Archdeacon gained “possession of Shobrooke manor and the advowson of Shobrooke church” in 1276, and that the manor had passed to Sir Thomas Archdeacon by 1327³⁵.

In addition, Sir Michael, ‘having the name le Arcediacne’ succeeded Robert de la More as sub-deacon of Glasney Collegiate Church, at Penryn, Cornwall, in 1276, and was previously Rector of Offwell, in east Devon³⁶, which is approximately fifteen miles east of Shobrooke. A Thomas Le Ercedecne is recorded as a ‘knight, of Shogbroke’ ca. 1264, which strengthens the Devon connection and probably indicates there were multiple family members of the given names Michael and Thomas across at least two generations³⁷.

There are many records of Sir Thomas L’Ercedekin during the latter years of Henry III and the reign of Edward I, following his rise to prominence, and it is clear he had affairs in Cornwall. He participated in ‘Lord Edward’s Crusade’³⁸, being recorded in 1271 as a crusader who received a grant to appoint Ralph de Arundel as his attorney³⁹. By 1275, he had ‘lands and chattels’ in Cornwall and in 1276 Edward I ordered that the Sheriff of Cornwall pay him “£20 for his expenses about the expedition of certain of the King’s affairs on those parts”⁴⁰.

Sir Thomas L’Ercedekin is recorded as Sheriff of Cornwall between January 1279 and November 1280⁴¹, which evidences *lignage* among the L’Ercedekens, from ‘Radulfo le Arcediacne’, in 1233²⁹, to Sir ‘Warren Ercedekne’ in 1382⁴², since the position was occupied quasi-generationally, and probably in direct hereditary fashion.

Cornwall Feet of Fines Volume I: Richard I to Edward III, 1195-1377. Exeter: The Devon and Cornwall Record Association).

³² Rowe J (1914), pp. 47-48.

³³ *Ibid*, pp. 57-58.

³⁴ Pole, J (1791). Collections Towards a Description of the County of Devon. London: J. Nichols.

³⁵ National Archives: Copy of deeds relating to the manor and advowson of Shobrooke, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/a1756560-4b01-4fb4-91dc-82b96d253e91>, accessed 1 December 2025.

³⁶ Thurston, P (1903). The History of Glasney Collegiate Church, Cornwall. Camborne: Camborne Printing and Stationary Co. Ltd., p.111.

³⁷ Dallas J and Potter H (1897), The Notebook of Tristram Risdon, Elliot Stock, London.

³⁸ That is the crusade of Edmund, Earl of Cornwall.

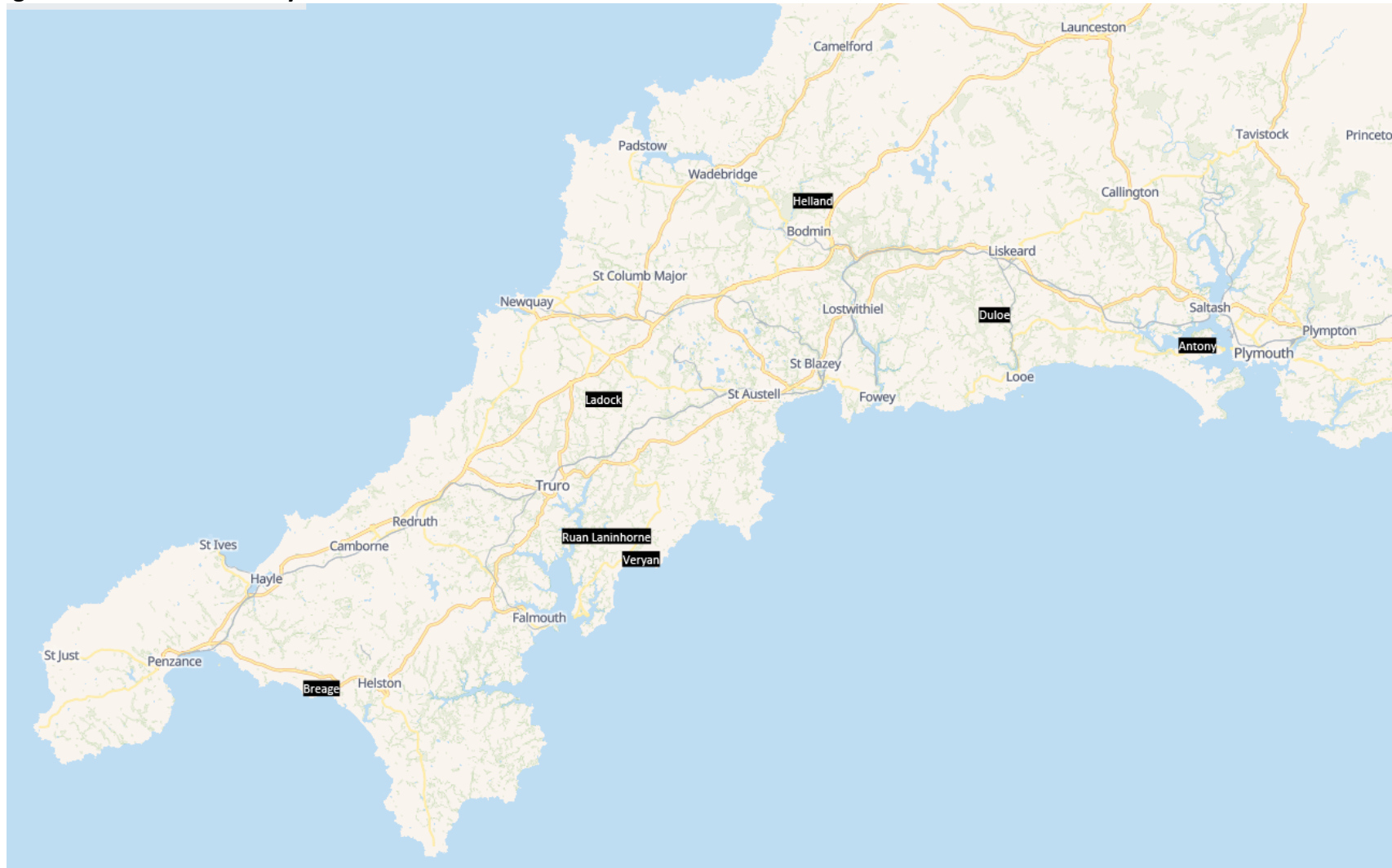
³⁹ Maxwell Lyte, H (1913). Calendar of the Patent Rolls of Henry III, AD 1266-1272. London: Mackie and Co. Ltd.

⁴⁰ Maxwell Lyte, H (1900). Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Edward I, AD 1272-1279. London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office.

⁴¹ Maxwell Lyte, H (1898). List of Sheriffs of England and Wales. London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office.

⁴² *Ibid*.

Figure 1: Thirteenth century L'Ercedekin locations in Cornwall



Reference: [OpenStreetMap](#)

MacLean also gave a summary of the branch of the L'Ercecekin in Ireland, starting with Stephen de Archedekne, who had married Desiderata Fitz Thomas, a daughter of the early administrator Thomas Fitz Anthony. Fitz Anthony, who, in 1215, held hereditary titles to the Crown lands in Waterford and Desmond, died ca. 1227, and his inheritance was split between his five daughters⁴³.

Stephen and Desiderata are recorded in the Sheriff of Waterford's account for 1231-1232 – 'Stephen Ercecekin and his wife Desiderata shall pay an account of 20s for their relief which falls to them from the aforesaid inheritance, and they are freed in the treasury for two tallies and are quit'⁴⁴. Stephen is recorded as enfeoffed in Ireland by 1228, probably shortly after the death of Fitz Anthony, since between then and 1218 he granted the Church of St Mary and St Columba and the Augustinian Priory of Inistioge, County Laois, and the Church of Kilcormac, County Offaly, 'in pure alms'⁴⁵.

St John Brooks considered that Stephen L'Ercecekin descended from 'Odo Archidiacono' and was probably his son⁴⁶. More certain is that 'Odo Archidiacono' is the first of his surname to occur in a record relating to Ireland, being a deed of Hugh [de Rous]⁴⁷, 'minister of the Church of Ossory', that he witnessed in 1203, the translation of which, from Latin, reads:

'Know for certain that I was present when William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, granted and confirmed to the Church of St Mary of Kells in Ossory in pure and perpetual charity two carucates of land in Ardaloo [Ard Lú], and one carucate of land with appurtenances which is between the land of Andrew L'Archier and Kilkenny'⁴⁸.

The grant and confirmation were made at Hamstead, England, in 1203, and it is likely that Odo came to Ireland with Bishop Hugh de Rous in the Spring of 1204⁴⁹ since the quit claim by Geoffrey Fitz Robert⁵⁰ in respect of the lands of Duiske, for the founding of Duiske (or Graiguenamanagh) Abbey, to William Marshal, was witnessed by him, the bishop, and others that year⁵¹. Regardless of when Odo L'Ercecekin was first in Ireland, there is, aside from his name, circumstantial evidence he was from Cornwall, since Geoffrey Fitz Robert gave explicit instructions that the Priors of Kells should be 'chosen from the same house [i.e., Kells] or from Bodmin'; indeed, Hugh de Rous was one of four Augustinian canons of Bodmin handpicked by Fitz Robert for Kells Priory⁵¹.

⁴³ Dictionary of Irish Biography: Thomas Fitz Anthony, <https://www.dib.ie/biography/fitz-anthony-thomas-a3128>, accessed 30 November 2025.

⁴⁴ Parker C (1992). *The politics and society of County Waterford in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries* [thesis], Trinity College (Dublin, Ireland). Department of History, pp. 512, p.462.

⁴⁵ Curtis, E (1932). *Calendar of Ormond Deeds 1172-1350 AD*. Dublin: The Stationary Office.

⁴⁶ St. John Brooks, E (1950). *Knights' fees in Counties Wexford, Carlow and Kilkenny*. Dublin: The Stationary Office.

⁴⁷ An Augustinian canon who became Bishop of Ossory in 1202 (Leslie, J, 1933. *Ossory Clergy and Parishes*. Enniskillen: RH Ritchie.

⁴⁸ White, N (1936). *Irish Monastic and Episcopal Deeds*. Dublin: The Stationary Office.

⁴⁹ Crouch, D (2015). *William Marshal the Elder, Earl of Pembroke*. Royal Historical Society Camden Fifth Series, 47, 63-183.

⁵⁰ Fitz Robert was a knight of William Marshall and Seneschal of Leinster (Butler, C and Bernard, J, 1918. *The Charters of the Abbey of Duiske*. Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co. Ltd).

⁵¹ Butler, C and Bernard, J (1918).

Returning to England, it is likely that the family L'Ercevedekin of Cornwall and Ireland descend from an eleventh-century cleric of Exeter⁵². The later abodes of the L'Ercevedekin are inextricably linked with lands held, immediately after 1066, by Count Robert of Mortain or the Church, which was under the direct authority of William I, although the practical reality is that Odo of Bayeux exercised day-to-day control.

The emergence of the eponymous L'Ercevedekin in a region under Odo of Bayeux's governance, and the intergenerational recurrence of persons named Odo L'Ercevedekin, to the extent 'Odo' was immortalised in Ireland in the surname Cody, leads to a fantastic question that is central to the title of this editorial. Was the patriarch of the L'Ercevedekin family in Cornwall, Devon, and Ireland, Bishop Odo of Bayeux?

While such a question will likely never be definitively answered, there are key factors to consider that make Odo of Bayeux a plausible candidate as the common ancestor of R-FT265133. There is no question that Odo was a man of great power, influence, wealth, and unbridled ambition. Between 1066 and 1082, Odo was the second most powerful person in England, to whom the king entrusted the government of his realm as his vice-regent⁵³. Odo gained swathes of land in twenty-two counties, mainly in the southeast of England, and he earned the title Earl of Kent. Odo's lands drew in £3000 per annum, and he travelled widely throughout England, attesting many charters and quelling revolts⁵⁴, oppressing the populace and destroying monasteries⁵³.

Odo's fall from grace was spectacular; he was imprisoned by William I in 1082 for raising an army illegally, but released in 1087, shortly before the king died, the dying monarch reputedly saying, 'my brother Odo is a man not to be trusted ... ambitious, attached to fleshly pleasures and immense cruelties'. After his loss of status as the 'number two' in England, Odo sought after the ultimate job, the Papacy, but failed. Odo's character is summarised this way: 'He ruled laudably, however, the flesh miserably ruled the spirit. Driven by worldly desire, he fathered a son named John, whom we now see at the court of King Henry, eloquent and distinguished in probity'⁵³.

Odo's opportunities to pursue his carnal desires, perhaps fathering other children, could readily have presented themselves in Devon and Cornwall. While it has been demonstrated Robert Count of Mortain held large estates in those counties, the Count was "essentially an absentee landlord ... [who] did not have the inclination, or perhaps the aptitude, to engage in post-Conquest English politics ... his loyalties were to Normandy and the Norman duke"⁵⁵. Although the Count was materially obliged to remain in England to complete the conquest from a military standpoint, ca. 1070, Odo maintained the administration of his brother's territories⁵⁶.

⁵² The See of Cornwall was united with Devon, i.e., Exeter Cathedral, ca. 1040 (Hardy, 1854).

⁵³ Congregation of St. Maur (1759). *Gallia Christiana*, in *Provincias Ecclesiasticas Distribute*. Paris: Coignard.

⁵⁴ Hollister, C (1977). *Magnates and Curiales in Early Norman England*. *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 8, 63-81.

⁵⁵ Golding, B (1991). Robert of Mortain. *Anglo-Norman Studies XIII; Proceedings of the Battle Conference 1990*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, p. 144.

⁵⁶ Du Lattay, G (1939). *Robert, Comte de Mortain et ses Successeurs 1048-1792*. Rocher: La Collégiale de Mortain.

Hence, the Fantastic Origin of the L'Ercekin of Devon, Cornwall, and Ireland, later named 'Cody', and their cousins under R-FGC5494 ... FT265133, the de Anton, later Daltons, of Counties Waterford and Kilkenny¹⁴, is not implausibly Bishop Odo of Bayeux (**Figure 2**).

But what of the de Braham, later Branan, of the same broad haplotype? It is considered that the de Braham had their seat at Braham Hall, in the Parish of Brantham, Suffolk, in the early thirteenth century¹⁶. The Domesday Survey records that Brantham was held by several Tenants-in-Chief, including Bishop Odo of Bayeux⁵⁷, and while this does prove the *Origines Phantasticus* are with Odo, the theory would have been weakened had the bishop not held Brantham.

Figure 2: Perhaps an early R-FT265133 family portrait, with Bishop Odo waxing eloquent



Reference: from the Bayeux Museum, <https://www.bayeuxmuseum.com/en/the-bayeux-tapestry/discover-the-bayeux-tapestry/the-characters>

While not critical to the *Origines Phantasticus*, the occurrence of the surname Costigan, alongside Fitzpatrick under R-A1488, considered vital to *Nexians*, warrants comment. It is a case of not mattering so much who the originator of R-A1488 was, since the haplotype is not surname-specific, and there is ample evidence that the Mac Giolla Phádraig of Ossory clerical lineage, which was probably the line that led to the first baron of Upper Ossory, may have stemmed from the cleric John Mac Costigan⁵⁸. Concerning the Mac Costigans (Mac Oisticín), it is important to reflect on their assumed genealogy, which fails to recognise that

⁵⁷ Open Domesday: The Domesday Book Mapped, <https://opendomesday.org/name/bishop-odo-of-bayeux>, accessed 1 December 2025.

⁵⁸ Fitzpatrick, M. (2020a) Mac Giolla Phádraig Osraí 1384-1534 AD Part II. The Journal of the Fitzpatrick Clan Society 1, 40-71. doi:10.48151/fitzpatrickclansociety00320.

the clan was based around Ballyhasty⁵⁹ ca. 1400, well before the surname is first recorded in Upper Ossory, in 1481⁶⁰. The tenuous Costigan origins, popularised by John O'Hart², can be compared with the only authoritative clan Costigan genealogy and narratives recorded by Mac Fhirbisigh in his section on Norman-Irish genealogies, as follows:

'Another tract here from the books of Clann Fhir Bhisigh ... Hoisteagh s. Meimhbhreac from whom are Clann Hoisteigh (Hosty)'⁶¹. Another tract calls Uilliam ... by whom Cusack was slain, 'Uilliam Breathnach', and when Caisléan na Circe was built by this Uilliam Mór (Breathnach) of An Mhaighean, he divided the country between his own immediate brethren. First he gave Gleann Oisteigh to Oisteagh s. Meireac (or Meimhbhreac)'⁶².

Hence, while only a mere comment on Costigans, not an entire thesis, it is noteworthy that the only clan with an authoritative version of the surname is from a Norman lord who gained Glenhest, in the Barony of Tirawley, County Mayo (Gleann Hoiste, Tír Amhlaidh, Maigh Eo), being among the Norman-Irish force that invaded Connacht ca. 1235⁶³. Hosty is a not uncommon surname still found in Connacht, wherefore Y-DNA could provide insights of their associated surname and deeper origins, though not as many insights that could be gained from the ancient Y-DNA of Bishop Odo of Bayeux or Count Robert of Mortain.

Another worthy genealogical pursuit would be the symbols of Odo of Bayeux, since Count Robert of Mortain used a slain dragon symbol well-known among Fitzpatricks of Upper Ossory (**Figure 3**).

Figure 3: A depiction of the Count of Mortain's banner at the Battle of Hastings



From Dumain, L (1883). *Tinchebray et sa région au Bocage Normand*. Paris: H. Champion.

⁵⁹ Baile Hoiste, i.e., Hosty's town, Hoiste being a diminutive of Oisticín – Woulfe stating that the surnames related to Costigan are Mac Costy, etc. (Woulfe, P (1923). *Irish Names and Surnames*. Dublin: MH Gill & Son.

⁶⁰ Costigan, C., Fitzpatrick, I., Fitzpatrick, M. (2022). The Mac Costigan of Ossory: dismantling an assumed genealogy. *The Journal of the Fitzpatrick Clan Society* 3, 78-100. doi:10.48151/fitzpatrickclansociety01122.

⁶¹ *GBIG*, Volume III, 841.1, entitled 'The Welshmen in Uí Amhalghaidh meic Fiachrach'.

⁶² *GBIG*, Volume II, 841.4.

⁶³ Freeman, A (1941). *The Annals of Connacht, 1224-1544*. Dublin: The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.