

Carswell Connection

Origin of Carswell name.

Could our Carswell name have evolved from a very early time? Could we actually be part of the early Kerr Clan or some other roots perhaps? What do our Y-DNA markers show us that offer new possibilities in our surname identification? Here is some food for thought but not definitive in any way. Did our Carswell ancestors come through Ireland first or directly to Scotland? We do not have all the answers but here are a few things to consider.

There are many views on how names developed and the most plausible over the centuries have earned a place in various books written on name origins. Promoted, circulated and adopted as the origin, these names are seldom questioned because few people really know how to question the origin without substantial skepticism. These names become the accepted name, even for the small numbers of them that occur in limited text written in the centuries going back 800 years and more. When finds in antiquity support the name origin in common use today, it re-enforces the establishment of that name for the inexperienced researcher. However, it still does not necessarily mean it confirms the origin of the name. It just shows you that certain possibilities are the same whether they occurred 200 or 800 years ago, in places close to each other or far apart.

The name Carswell, also spelt in various other ways over the generations, is said in one book to come from the origin of a watering hole where the locals went to get water at which watercress grew. I once believed this as the only source of the origin of the Carswell name. At the same time, the Carswell name is lumped with the Cresswell name in England for the same reason....now it is plausible that Carswell origin comes from the early Britons and was extrapolated from the early Britons that came north to the area of the Borders around which our name seems to originate for the most part. However, the written record is sketchy going back beyond 1600 and even then somewhat sketchy coming forward. Besides, we are descended from people who have lived in the Borders area for something like 8,000 years or more. At the rate of a new generation being born every 25 years, that is some 320 generations of Carswell ancestors and that is only counting the family generations since the about the time of the last ice age.

That has made me think a great deal about the logical origin of our family name and another possibility that has risen. Could the Carswell name have evolved from an association with an early Kerr Clan connection? I sort of wrote that off when I found that none of the Kerr Clan has turned up with the same 12 Y-DNA markers as I have. At the same time, Carswells have turned up with my same Y-DNA markers as have a number of other names. That also got me to thinking....where is there a similarity? As a result I took a look at the various names and began to try and understand what the connection was to Kerr. I did that because it is widely accepted in Scotland that the Kerr has also included the spellings of Ker and Car in the past just as Carswell has appeared as Carswell, Caswell, Cereswell, Carsewell, Karswel and so on. Yet again, none of these have come up on my Y-DNA list of distant cousins...or have they? Here is what I have learned when I took a closer look

at the surnames sharing my Y-DNA. I want you to pay particular attention to the highlighted parts of a few of the names below.

O'Neill - *means son of Neil – common Irish name and could have originated from Scottish family members who escaped to Ireland after one of the various battle losses and chose to stay and live a quiet life with his family there. Likely a young man at the time he left.*

Schlactmeier - *this could be a name change to hide the individual's origin. Escaping to a foreign country and losing all track of their past was not an uncommon occurrence.... or perhaps this a very young adoption or very early Y-DNA subject that did not ever live in England. It is a hard one to explain without more input.*

Gentle - *This surname probably resulted from a description of the individual, as in the verb "gentle." More unlikely a possibility is that the father was a Gentleman and this Surname describes the son's connection to his father. Either way he is part of our Y-DNA family.*

Carson - *note here an actual connection to a member of the Kerr Clan....as in the son of Kerr, Ker or Car. This is as truly a demonstration of how the name Carswell could be part of the original Kerr Clan.*

McCarty - *here again, a connection to someone affectionately known as Carty (probably out of respect for his exploits as a Kerr). "Mc" means 'son of' so the father had to be a fellow known as "Carty" – found in both in County Cork in Ireland and in Scotland.*

Henderson - *simply the son of a Y-DNA family member named "Hender, derived from "Henry's son" The family at this point was established with a surname derived from the father but he was still part of our Y-DNA family.*

McMullen - *son of Mullen - like all the other Gaelic Mc's, the name is the father's first name.- This is a very early Scottish family name.*

McInerney - *son of Inerney which makes it Irish or possibly phonetically written name "Henry".*

McReynolds – *considered to be of Irish roots but in explaining it, he is the grand son of Reynold whose son became known as Reynold's (son).*

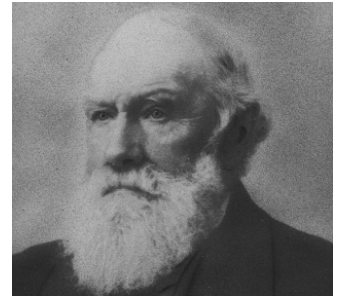
History and location have always played a part in the origin of names. The people of Scotland often ended up in Ireland and changed names hoping to save their own lives in the process. If our Carswell surname was established from a genetic line that lived near the well on property owned by a very early leader of the Kerr Clan in Scotland, say a thousand or more years ago, then perhaps that is how the name was acquired. Simply, we could have been of common folk, living under the wing of the Kerr family which, in itself brought us into the Kerr Clan because we always rode with them and fought with them over the generations. Perhaps our early ancestors lived for a long time in a home on the Kerr's property close to the well where water was drawn. I say that because as you can see from more modern 1851 census lists of the area, the Carswell name appears in large numbers therefore being quite a long and well established name in the general area of Neilston, located some 17 miles south of Glasgow.

For those of you who may think I am somewhat biased in wanting to connect our surname to one of the Clans for an identity, think again. I am already a clearly documented descendant of actual Kerrs from Lilliesleaf, in Roxboroughshire, through another ancestor. I am not trying to establish this connection with the Carswell name except to otherwise offer another possible origin of the surname all Carswells carry. I hope this gives you pause for consideration.

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James Carswell's diary, August 1847

Following is the eighth of monthly entries from the diary of James Carswell, Miller, at Dalbeattie, Kircudbrightshire.



August, 1847

- 1 Sunday. Fine morning. This is the day of our Sacrament. I was at church. Mr Burnside was officiating. There was a pretty good attendance.
- 2 Monday. Fine weather. Through grinding Indian corn.
- 3 Tuesday. Fine weather but rather dull. Corn is turning white very quick, and some small patches cut at some distance, but none here yet.
- 4 Wednesday. Fine morning but a very wet night. Thomas got himself some wet coming from Dumfries with a cart load of sugar (beets). Market still lower.
- 5 Thursday. Rather showery. There is a roub of corn at Culloch. My Father bought 3 lots of it, but far over dear Indian corn can be got at Liverpool for 30S per Quarter, and a barrel of flour 28s.
- 6 Friday. Still showery but very little water in the burn for the mill. John Hair of Waterside Farm commenced to shear today, and will have close work.
- 7 Saturday. Still showery. Thomas is very poorly today, but at evening he was a little better.
- 8 Sunday. Mild day with some showers. I was at church. Preaching about the wise and the foolish virgins.
- 9 Monday. Still showery. I have got home all my peats. I have 22 cart loads. They cost me £4/8s [for carting, for lifting 6s, and for bringing them out £5 / 6s, in all £26 / 2s_ . This is Castle Douglas lamb fair. There was but a poor trade.
- 10 Tuesday. Still soft weather. The burn rising very little.
- 11 Wednesday. Fine morning but rather soft looking. My Father was at Dumfries. Market rather falling.
- 12 Thursday. Very wet morning, water very little up. My wife gave me an addition to my family this morning – a little girl – very bad day for the commencement of the grouse shooting.
- 13 Friday. Fine dry morning and dry looking. Several people has commenced to cut their grain.
- 14 Saturday. Still dry and dry looking. I hear that grain has got a great fall again in Liverpool. Indian corn down from 24s to 20s. Barrel flour about the same, 24 s per barrel.
- 15 Sunday. Still warm and dry looking. I was at church. Mr Arthur was preaching, but thin attendance.
- 16 Monday. My Father was at Castle Douglas. Nothing new. Markets still looking down. Maxwell Fitzpatrick's potatoes is failing. They are getting black-spotted in the shaw (stem) but there is none others failing.
- 17 Tuesday. Fine weather and nearly general harvest in the neighborhood. I got my little child baby today. Margaret Grierson it is named.
- 18 Wednesday. Fine and warm. Thomas is away getting some corn at Culloch that my Father bought. Mrs Thresher died on Monday night, has been poorly 2 or 3 weeks. I expect the millwrights out tonight.
- 19 Thursday. Some slight showers. Water in burn very light. The millwrights did not come, nor did I get word of them.
- 20 Friday. Good dry day. Thomas and Hugh Milligan was away at Kirkcudbright bringing a pair of French burro(s) – and my Father went away to Liverpool to try and buy some Indian corn.
- 21 Saturday. Some slight showers in the afternoon, and a nine o'clock heavy showers and very windy. Blowing from the southwest. I got in a cast of new corn – one half from Waterside and the other from Culloch. Thomas and Hugh is away at Kirkland.
- 22 Sunday. Fine day. I was not at church. I hear and likewise see that the potatoes is failing again, apparently of last year's disease. They (the disease) won't do so much harm this year – there is not so much dependence put upon them (potatoes).
- 23 Monday. Fine harvest weather. They are getting on with harvest very rapidly. Days wages about 2S and 2S 2_ [?] and not many a wanting.

24 Tuesday. Still dry. My Father has bought 150 Quarters of Indian corn at 31 s.
25 Wednesday. Fine weather. I was at Dumfries intending to get the millwrights but they did not come. I brought out a millwright to dress the new stones for the lay down.
26 Thursday. Good harvest weather. Thomas is away cutting corn at Culloch. My Father has bought 200 Quarters Indian corn.
27 Friday. Dry day. I brought home from Culloch 45 stooks of corn, part of a lot my father bought. There is 22 stooks more. My father came home from Liverpool to day. He bought 250 Quarters Indian corn and 20 Barrels of flour at 25 s.
28 Saturday. Fine dry weather. Great deal of corn loading into the stackyard , and in good order. I whitewashed the fronts of the mills today and was grinding Indian corn. Has nearly done till more comes. Retailing Indian (corn) at 1/ 4 per stone.
29 Sunday. Fine weather. I went down to the salt water and got a fine bath. Very high tides. The "Great Britain" was got off about this time where she has lain for near twelve months in Dundrum Bay.
30 Monday. Still dry. Two millwrights came out this morning to repair our mill and lay down a pair of new French Burro (stone milling wheel). We have a sloop in with Indian corn and another with bones.
31 Tuesday. Still dry. We commenced to discharge off both the bones and corn. The corn is very excellent quality and was 153 Quarters and 30 tons bones.

Duncarnock Farm

I'm hoping to make contact with any Carswells that have a connection to the Duncarnock Farm. Robert Carswell, a farmer in 1861, who married Isabella Harvie in 1839 was my Gt Gt Grandfather (1804-1861).

Their daughter Elizabeth was my Gt. Grandmother (1852-1888) and she married a William Steven (farmer at "Mid Borland" Eaglesham in 1878).

Thank you,

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Google Books

Bob Macket has sent some links to very interesting web sites with a lot of Carswell references:

<http://books.google.com/books?id=KII5AAAAMAAJ&q=Carswell+Renfrewshire&dq=Carswell+Renfrewshire&lr=&pgis=1>

<http://books.google.com/books?id=88FnAAAAMAAJ&q=Carswell+Renfrew&dq=Carswell+Renfrew&lr=&pgis=1>

<http://books.google.com/books?id=BAdlAAAAMAAJ&q=Carswell+Renfrew&dq=Carswell+Renfrew&lr=&pgis=1>

<http://books.google.com/books?id=BvEHAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA273&dq=Carswell+Renfrew&lr>

The home page link is - <http://books.google.com>