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Phillips DNA News

www.phillipsdnaproject.com

December 2010

Volume 2 Issue 12

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Please submit news articles or ideas for articles to the editor. Questions about Genetic Genealogy can always be sent to the editor.

Project News

The holiday season is upon us! Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and Joyous Kwanzaa to one and all! Peace on earth and good will to all men!

As we approach the end of 2010, it is an appropriate time to review the status of our Phillips DNA project. As of December 1st, we have 489 members who have ordered test kits from Family Tree DNA and an additional 50 members who tested at other DNA testing labs instead of FTDNA. One year ago on December 1st, we had 418 FTDNA members. That is an increase of more than 70 new members through FTDNA alone, which equals about 6 new members per month. We continue to maintain our status as the 12th largest surname project at FTDNA.

Family Tree DNA instituted a redesign of their computer system called the Group Administration Page (GAP) last month. Most of the changes only affect the administration of DNA projects, but the project web pages that are viewable by the general public were also impacted.

Although most of our members and the general public use our independent website rather than our public site at FTDNA, here is a description of the new format for those of you who still like to access our old, original website at FTDNA at this link:

<http://www.familytreedna.com/public/phillips/default.aspx>

There are now five tabs in the blue bar at the top of the home page:

About This Group
Y-DNA Results
MTDNA Results
Join Request
DNA FAQs

The first three tabs have drop-down windows. Under About This Group, you can choose Background, Goals, News and Results pages. We post our monthly newsletter on the News page and pending results on the Results page. The Goals page and Background page are self-explanatory.

Under Y-DNA Results, you can now view the results in three different formats: Classic, Colorized and Map. I recommend the Classic format as the easiest to view and understand. The Colorized format contains headings labeled MIN, MAX and MODE at the top of each group. This refers to the values of the markers contained in each group and it is a difficult concept for most average laymen to grasp. Skip it unless you really want to delve into DNA analysis.

The Map format is fairly easy to understand but it is incomplete, because only members who have filled in the geographical location by latitude and longitude of their earliest known paternal Phillips ancestors appear on the map. I would say probably less than one third of our membership have done that.

Under MTDNA Results, there is a chart and a map. I think both are fairly intuitive. The Join Request is also easy to understand. The FAQs tab is extremely informative and helpful. Here is a list of the topics:

- [General](#)
General FAQs about our company.
- [Payment](#)
Questions about payments.
- [Genographic Project](#)
Questions about the Genographic Project.
- [Order Questions](#)
Questions about ordering one of our products.
- [Privacy](#)
Questions about our privacy policy.
- [Group Projects -- Participants](#)
What do I do now that I joined a Group Project?
- [Group Administration Page \(GAP\) Reference](#)
Questions and Answers about using the classic GAP (Group Administration Page) interface. Are you thinking about starting a project? Do you wonder what that requires? Have you started one and need to know what to do next?
- [Types of Tests](#)
What type of tests does Family Tree DNA offer.
- [Test Results -- Y-DNA Short Tandem Repeat \(STR\)](#)
The answers to questions about Y-chromosome DNA (Y-DNA) test results. What do your Y-chromosome DNA (Y-DNA) results mean? What should you do next? How recently are you related to your matches? Should you upgrade?
- [Test Results -- mtDNA](#)
The answers to questions about mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) test results. What do your mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) results mean? What should you do next? How recently are you related to your matches? Should you upgrade?
- [Status Questions](#)
When should I expect my results.

- [Newsletter](#)
Questions about the Family Tree DNA newsletter
- [After I Test](#)
I just tested now what?
- [Once I Receive My Kit](#)
I just received my test kit. What now?
- [Family Finder](#)
Questions about Family Finder.
- [Jewish Ancestry](#)
Question related to Jewish ancestry, Cohanim....
- [Group Administration Page \(GAP\) Interpretation](#)
Questions and Answers about interpreting and explaining your project members' results. What do matches mean? When should someone upgrade?
- [Group Administration Page \(GAP\) How To](#)
Questions and Answers about using our Group Administration Page (GAP) interface. What tools are available? How do they work?
- [Glossary](#)
Definitions of the terms used in genetic genealogy.
- [Population Finder](#)
What is Population Finder? How does it work? What do the results mean?
- [Group Administration Page \(GAP\) Filters & FTQL](#)
This is the FAQ section for the new Filters and the FTQL query language.
- [Y-Tree](#)
Questions about the Y-Tree page. What is the YCC Tree? What is the Draft Tree? What information is included in the Draft Tree?
- [Affiliates](#)
Questions for people who wish to become a Family Tree DNA affiliate
- [Test Results -- Y-DNA Single Nucleotide Polymorphism \(SNP\)](#)
What is a Y-chromosome DNA (Y-DNA) SNP? What is Deep Ancestry? What is a phylogenetic tree? What do my results mean?

Featured Family Stories

MY CONVOLUTED PEDIGREE

By Ray Harris, Phillips Family Group 2

Sometimes, our ancestors do things that produce results that may not be too popular with their descendants. That is what happened to me. My surname should be Phillips, but that is a long and convoluted story, which is why I decided to put this on a web page rather than write it over and over.

Many years ago, I was talking to my mother about my father whom she had divorced when I was five years old. She had a few beers under her belt at the time and was obviously feeling the effects. She told me that she did not understand why I even talked to him since he was not even my real father.

GULP! Say What?

Well, at least I had the presence of mind to ask if he wasn't, then who was? She replied that my dad's best friend, Larry Priebe, was my father. Hmmmm, some friend! This was back in the days before the Internet, so my search for Larry was limited to the phone book. I found his address in my home town but I never had the courage to go knock on his door. Besides, what was I going to say? "Hi, I am your illegitimate adult son."

As it turned out, I wish I had knocked on that door. One day when I was back home, my mother handed me an obituary and told me that I should call my father and tell him his best friend, Larry, had died. She obviously had no recollection of what she had told me whilst "in her cups." Larry died when he was just over fifty years of age. I naturally thought that my life was half over since we shared the same genes. Come to find out, he died of throat cancer due to being a multi-pack per day smoker since he was about 15. I have never smoked a cigarette in my life, so I think I dodged that bullet. Anyway, not knowing that at the time, I went into a blue funk that lasted several months thinking that I would die a young man.

Enter the age of the Internet. I rediscovered my interest in tracking my roots and I started researching Lawrence (Larry)W. Priebe, Jr. I found precious little about him, but I did discover that he invented the sectional fishing rod. [See the patent.](#) I think he was probably working for Shakespeare at the time and I am sure they ended up being the benefactors of his invention.

I joined Classmates.com, knowing that they have a searchable database, and that they also include women's maiden names in that search. I found my aunt, Larry's sister, and sent her an email. I could see several hits on my profile page from her, so I knew she was doing her due diligence and was checking me out. I finally got an email from her while I was vacationing in Peru. I got on Skype and called her after several email exchanges. She gave me a lot of good information regarding my half-siblings, and I was eventually able to track a couple of them down, my half brother and his son. The son was intrigued and I think he would have been willing to welcome me into the family, but his father flatly rejected me, a decision I think he will live to regret. I don't know if he thought I was "after something" or what his reasoning was, but it is his decision. I wish it had turned out differently.

At some time during this search for my roots, I decided to get a family DNA test done to see if I could locate other Priebe's and trace my roots. I purchased the kit and sent it in and waited. When the results finally came back, I was mystified by the results. I originally had the 37 marker test done. It came back as a distance 1, 2, etc match to the Phillips surname. That means, as I understand it, that these distance 1 or 2 matches mean that the person and I share a male relative a few generations back per distance. For example, when my son got his DNA

test done, he and I came back as an EXACT match. I contacted a buddy of mine who is big into genealogy and he tried his best to explain it to me. He also suggested that I get the 67 marker test and some sort of other test that I can't remember what it was right now. Long story short, there is no doubt I am a Phillips.

I borrowed information off the family trees of my nearest matches and the lines converge. I have traced the family back to Gwinear and Penryk, Cornwall County, UK as far back as 1620. I am still trying to discover who was the Philandering Phillips who managed to talk the knickers off one of my Priebe grandmothers. At some point, with a little help from others who are a close match, I should be able to narrow down the lineage, the geographic proximity and the time to find out who did the dirty deed of bastardy that left the Priebe clan (and me) with the wrong surname.

After reading all this stuff, if you still have questions, or better yet, if you have helpful information, please email me. If you are looking for information about Robert Hicks, he is my son, proved by an exact DNA match, but he has a different surname than I, due to a bad decision after my divorce to allow him to be adopted by his new stepfather.

DNA CONFIRMS PHILLIPS FAMILY LEGEND

By Nancy Kiser, with input from Joe Payne, Phillips Family Group 17

Tobias Phillips was a second generation tobacco planter who lived in Old Rappahannock County, Virginia, now known as Richmond County, Virginia. He was the son of John and Elizabeth Phillips and his 12 January 1687 birth is recorded in the North Farnham Parish records. Tobias must have married a woman named Hannah by 1715, because the birth of their first child, Elizabeth, is recorded in the same parish records on 18 November 1715.

Margaret "Peggy" Lawrence was indicted on a felony charge of thievery on 9 July 1729 in Middlesex County, England. She was tried and convicted in the Hall of Justice of Old Bailey, London, on 25 February 1730. For her sentence, she was given "his Majesty's royal mercy on condition of transportation to some parts of America for a spare of fourteen years." Her transportation bond was issued on 9 March 1730.

That is how Margaret Lawrence, an Englishwoman, became one of 106 prisoners whom Jonathan Forward contracted to transport on the "Patapscoe Merchant" commanded by Darby Lux from the City of London's Newgate Prison to Maryland.

According to family stories, Tobias learned of the ship arriving in Baltimore, Maryland, and traveled 100 miles to meet Captain Lux and inspect the 94 prisoners who had survived the journey. Tobias purchased Margaret's bond, which entitled him to seven years of her service, and brought her back to his tobacco plantation in Old Rappahannock County, Virginia.

While living at the tobacco plantation, Margaret supposedly bore Tobias two illegitimate sons, John Lawrence born about 1731 and Thomas Lawrence born about 1733. One of the members of our Phillips DNA project, Joe Payne, has a webpage at <http://joepayne.org/aol/phillips/lawrence.htm> on which he has posted the following correspondence with a Lawrence descendant named Sandra Cole:

“The letter is not signed, and apparently was not mailed. It was found in a large collection of family correspondence of John Lawrence's family from 1840 through 1870. The letter contains some inaccuracies, for instance, Lord Trent was really Henry Trent. Other proof has been found for all the names except Baldwin; they remain elusive.

A group of Lawrence descendants pooled our money and hired an English genealogist to find out more about Margaret Lawrence, but not much was found other than a Transportation Bond dated 9 March 1730. Margaret and nine others were convicted of several thefts and larcenies and transported for fourteen years. The court documents for a short period of time surrounding March 1730 have been lost so the nature of the thefts is unknown.”

Here is a transcription of the letter:

Dear Nephew,

Your letter arrived a few days ago. The postmaster says he had been derelict of duty, I could not then attend to it. John, your request almost shames me.

Our name comes to us a little out of the order of things. My great grandmother called herself Lawrence and I have been told that she emigrated from Europe in the early part of the last century to old Virginia, and was there sold to a tobacco planter owning a plantation 8 or 10 miles from home for seven years to pay her passage. Her master settled her at that out place, she being almost his wife and remained there united. She raised two sons. John, I think was the eldest and Thomas was my grandfather. He was uneducated but was a man of good mind. He spelled his name Laurence. But I, understanding he did not know them to have been the letters used by his progenitors, altered it to Lawrence which sound is the same. Thomas sometime before the Revolution moved from Dinwiddie County to Goochland County, Virginia where they lived when Uncle John joined the army. He then moved to Wilkes County, North Carolina, where he died.

His consort's maiden name was Lucy Wammac whose mother was a Puckey, whose mother was the daughter of Lord Trent. My mother was a Cate. I am not aware how many generations there are of them in America or whether the name started here or not. Grandmother's name was Baldwin who was a crop of what used to be called Low Dutch on a Walsh Lady.

I have been told that Great Grandmother sought every opportunity to come to America and consented to be sold. No doubt severe family oppression drove her.

But it seems to me the link is either broken or becomes very slender. My recollection about Grandfather's brother is that some time after he was married and before the Revolution he being yet single went south I think to North Carolina and if they ever heard of each other afterwards I am not aware of it.

Although family legends often sound believable, they are still just family legends. Today in the 21st century, we finally have scientific means to prove whether or not they are true. Several months ago, a descendant of Thomas Lawrence, one of the sons of Peggy Lawrence, joined the Phillips DNA project and got his yDNA tested. Lo and behold, his yDNA matches the yDNA of Phillips Family Group 17! This is the family group that contains other descendants of Tobias Phillips.

Of course, the matching yDNA does not conclusively prove that Tobias was the father of Peggy's children, because one of his brothers could also have been the father. However, given the family stories and the proximity of Tobias and Peggy, it seems very likely that Tobias was the father. It is also significant to note, as pointed out by Joe Payne, that Thomas Lawrence was mentioned by Tobias in his will and the legitimate children of Tobias Phillips, especially George Phillips, appear to have accepted the Lawrence boys as half-siblings.

Guest Column

Are You Missing Most of the Available Genealogy Information?

By Richard W. Eastman

The following article is from Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter and is copyright by Richard W. Eastman. It is re-published here with the permission of the author. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com>.

This morning I received a message from a newsletter reader that disturbed me a bit. He wrote, "I have been doing genealogy research for 10-15 years but only through the Internet." He then went on to describe some of the frustrations he has encountered trying to find information.

I read the entire message, but my eyes kept jumping back to the words in his first sentence: "... but only through the Internet."

Doesn't he realize that 98% of the information of interest to genealogists is not yet available on the Internet?

To be sure, many of the biggest and most valuable resources are now available online, including national census records, the Social Security Death Index, military pension applications, draft cards, many passenger lists, land patent databases, and more.

The national databases were the "low hanging fruit" a few years ago as the providers of online information rushed to place large genealogy databases online. These huge collections benefited a lot of genealogists; these databases were the first to become indexed, digitized, and placed online. We all should be thankful that these databases are available today and are in common use.

As the national databases became available to all, the online providers moved on to digitize regional and statewide information. State censuses, birth records, marriage records, death records, naturalization records (which originally were recorded in many local and state courts), county histories, and much, much more are still being placed online.

Of course, this is great news for genealogists who cannot easily travel to the locations where the original records are kept. For many of us, this is even better than having information on microfilm. Most of us don't have microfilm readers at home, but we do have computers.

Yet, I am guessing that 98% of the information of interest to genealogists has not yet been digitized. Why would anyone want to look for genealogy information "... only through the Internet?"

State censuses, birth records, marriage records, death records, naturalization records, county histories, and more are all "work in progress" projects. That is, they are not yet complete. In fact, I doubt if all of them will be available online for at least another two decades! If you only look online, you are missing a lot.

In many cases, church parish records, local tax lists, school records, most land records (other than Federal land grants), and many more records are not yet available online and probably won't be available for years. If you are limiting yourself to "... only through the Internet," you are missing 98% of the available information.

If you have the luxury of living near the places where your ancestors lived, I'd suggest you jump in an automobile and drive to the repositories where those records are kept. There is nothing that matches the feeling of holding original records in your hands. Make photocopies or scan them or take pictures of them or do whatever is possible to collect images of the original records.

If you do not enjoy the luxury of short distances, use microfilm. Luckily, that is easy to do

although you will have to leave your home. Many (but not all) of these records have been microfilmed, and those films may be viewed at various libraries, archives, or at a local Family History Center near you. There are more than 4,000 of those local centers, so you probably can find one within a short distance of your home. The Family History Centers are free to use although you do have to pay a modest fee for postage when you rent a microfilm by mail. See http://www.familysearch.org/eng/library/FHC/frameset_fhc.asp for details.

If you do not know where to start, I would suggest reading the applicable Research Guides found at http://www.familysearch.org/eng/home/welcome/frameset_information.asp and at http://www.familysearch.org/eng/Search/RG/frameset_rg.asp

Which option would you prefer: accessing 2% of the available records or 98% of the available records or 100% of the available records?