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Phillips DNA News

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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 following FAQ's are found on the Family Tree DNA's website. Because so many participants have asked me these questions in the past, I felt it might be helpful to post these questions and answers here in our newsletter. These are only some of the FAQ's found on Family Tree DNA's website. Here is a link to all of them, in case you are interested:

<https://www.familytreedna.com/faq/answers.aspx?id=9#903>

My Y-chromosome DNA results are back, and I have matches. What do I do now?

Once you have Y-chromosome DNA [STR \(short tandem repeat\)](#) results, you should check the Y-DNA - Matches page. It will contain a list of any matches. These are your DNA cousins. Your matches' family histories and traditions of their origins are important clues about your own family tree. Contacting your matches and responding to their inquiries will help you discover if you have a genealogical connection.

At higher testing levels (Y-DNA37, Y-DNA67, and Y-DNA111), even when you cannot find a paper trail link to a specific named ancestor, the match offers a significant clue to where your family line originated.

The names and e-mail addresses of your matches are listed in the Y-DNA - Matches page. If you signed the release form then Family Tree DNA will notify you every time you receive a new match.

My Y-chromosome DNA results are back, but I do not have matches. Why not?

If you do not have [Y-chromosome DNA \(Y-DNA\)](#) matches, you may be the first person with your [Y-DNA signature \(haplotype\)](#) in our database. This means that no one else from your lineage has tested. As the database grows, you will continue to be compared against new results, and you will be notified by e-mail of any new matches.

My Y-chromosome DNA results are back, and I have many matches. Why do I have so many?

Having many [Y-chromosome DNA \(Y-DNA\)](#) matches means you have a more common [Y-DNA signature](#) (haplotype). This can mean that your lineage has survived and reproduced well. As a result, many people share the same signature. Testing additional markers (Y-DNA37, Y-DNA67,

or Y-DNA111) will refine your list of matches to those that are genealogically relevant, meaning those with whom you share a common ancestor in 1 to 15 generations.

I match men with the same surname as mine. What does that mean?

When you match men with the same [surname](#) as yours (or a variant) on a [Y-chromosome DNA \(Y-DNA\)](#) test, it means that you have potentially genealogically relevant matches. The best way to find out more is to contact your matches.

Why do I match men with a surname from my mother's side?

As the Y-chromosome is inherited exclusively from one's father, matching men with a [Y-chromosome DNA \(Y-DNA\)](#) test who share your mother's maiden name or another [surname](#) from her lineage may be a coincidence. However, should you continue to match these men at higher levels of testing (Y-DNA37, Y-DNA67, and Y-DNA111) then you may wish to investigate the possibility of an adoption or name change in your family.

Why do I match men with different surnames?

There are two reasons you may have a [Y-chromosome DNA \(Y-DNA\)](#) match with someone with a different [surname](#). It may be that your connection is from a time before surnames were in common use. This is especially likely for groups where surnames were often not adopted until the most recent 100 to 200 years, for example, Scandinavians and Jewish populations. Another reason for surnames not to match is that there has been a surname change in genealogical times. That could be in either your match's or your own line.

The main place that you will see matches with many different surnames is the Y-DNA12 Marker Matches section. The time to a common ancestor for these matches may extend beyond genealogical records and the adoption of surnames.

If you continue to match others outside your surname at the Y-DNA37, Y-DNA67, and Y-DNA111 marker level, then there is likely to have been a surname change within the genealogical timeframe. Common causes for this include deliberate name changes and adoptions.

For those matches at a higher number of markers (Y-DNA37, Y-DNA67, and Y-DNA111), contacting your matches is the best way to learn more.

Should I contact my Y-chromosome DNA (Y-DNA) matches?

Yes, you should contact your matches. Once you have Y-DNA test results, contacting your matches is the next step in using your DNA for genealogy. If you share a [surname](#) or match at 37 or 67 markers then your combined research efforts may lead to new genealogical discoveries

What should I do if one of my matches e-mails me?

If you are contacted by a [Y-chromosome DNA \(Y-DNA\)](#) test match then exchanging information about geographic origins and known genealogy is the next step. Because you and your matches may be brickwalled at different points in your trees, it is helpful to compare information both on your direct paternal lineage and your paternal ancestors' other descendant lines.

Even if your response is to say that there is not a possibility for the two of you to be related, as a matter of courtesy, please consider e-mailing back. Although you may not see an obvious named common ancestor, your family story is still relevant to them and theirs is relevant to you.

Featured Phillips Family Story

Proliferation and Confusion of Israel Phillippses

By Bob Phillips, U.E., BA, MDiv, Group 11

At the time of this writing, the Phillips DNA Project has 17 members in Group 11. Four trace their lineage back to Michael and Barbara Phillips, mid to late 1600's in Rhode Island. Seven who have provided the project information on their earliest known ancestor (EKA), have brick walls between 1700 and 1884; four have not provided information on their EKA; one does not have an identified Phillips ancestor, and one gives a name, without dates or place.

Of particular interest, to myself, are the two lineages traced from Richard Phillips (1677-1747), son of Michael and Barbara, and Sarah Mowry; as my own Y-DNA test appears most closely to match that of those who descend from Richard and Sarah. Since no member has traced back to a different EKA than Michael and Barbara, and there are two different lineages each tracing back to two different sons, I think that it is safe to conclude that those of us in Group 11 descend from Michael and Barbara Phillips, mid to late 1600's in Rhode Island.

My lineage has a brick wall at Jonathan Phillips, 1794-1868, "born in or near the Parish of Claverack, in the County of Albany, in the Province of New York" (per his discharge papers from the Glengary Light Infantry Fencibles 1815). My 37 marker Y-DNA test is within one marker of the two who trace their descent from Richard and Sarah. Following is an outline of descent for the generations up to the late 1800's, beginning with Michael and Barbara through Richard and Sarah.

Kit number N85733

1. Michael Phillips b 1623 Sussex England, d 1689 Newport RI, m Barbara Pierce
2. Richard Phillips b 1667 Providence RI, d 1747 Smithfield RI, m Sarah Mowry
3. William Phillips b 169? Providence RI, d 10 Sept 1727 Kingston RI
4. Israel Phillips b 1710 Providence RI, d 1795 Kingston RI, m Penelope Briggs
5. Israel Phillips b 1737 Providence RI, d 1823 Saratoga NY, m Amity Harris

6. Abraham Phillips b 16 Oct 1757 Smithfield, Providence, RI, Lucy Kelley
7. Jerome Phillips b 6 June 1792 Saratoga NY, m Anna Van Arsdall

Kit number 47247

1. Michael Phillips b 1623 Sussex England, d 1689 Newport RI, m Barbara Pierce
2. Richard Phillips b 1667 Providence RI, d 1747 Smithfield RI, Sarah Mowry
3. William Phillips b 169? Providence RI, d 10 Sept 1727 Kingston RI
4. Israel Phillips b 1710 Providence RI, d 1795 Kingston RI, m Penelope Briggs
5. Israel Phillips b 1737 Providence RI, d 1823 Saratoga NY, m Amity Harris
6. Israel B Phillips b 1765 Providence RI, dc 1851-52 Richmond NH, m Hannah Mann
7. Israel W Phillips b 1796 Smithfield RI, d 1870 Erie PA, m Polly Adelaid Briggs

Of interest here is the given name Israel, born 1737, Providence, Rhode Island; married Amity Harris, and died in Saratoga, New York, 1822/3. I have been attempting to verify and document his male descendants and have found it to be very difficult, if not to say confusing, due to the proliferation of unrelated Israel Phillipses of the same approximate generation.

Kit # 47247 has their ancestor Israel B. Phillips born 1765 in Providence, Rhode Island, died 1851/52 in Richmond, New Hampshire; married to Hannah Mann. According to this source, their son, Israel W Phillips was born 1796, in Smithfield, Rhode Island; died 1870 in Erie, Pennsylvania; married Polly Adelaid Briggs. What is the source of this information? The Lowville Cemetery, Wattsburg, Erie County, Pennsylvania, has the grave of Rev. Israel Wesley Phillips, 1796-1870. Also, buried at this location is his wife, Polly Briggs, 1802-1851. The tombstone appears to be relatively new and provides no additional information beyond the names and dates. Who provided the information for these tombstone inscriptions? What was their source?

A transcription of New Hampshire State birth records lists the children of Israel Phillips and his wife Amity, of Richmond, Cheshire, New Hampshire as: Abraham Phillips born 16 October 1757; William Phillips born 13 December 1759; Enoch Phillips born 15 October 1761; Amey Phillips born 3 November 1763; Israel Phillips born 4 April 1766; Annanias Phillips born 6 July 1768.

Strangely, these same names and birthdates appear in the records of Quaker births in Uxbridge, Worcester, Massachusetts. None of these names appear in the birth records of Rhode Island. The Quakers of Smithfield, Rhode Island, met in Uxbridge, Massachusetts; thus their births were recorded in Massachusetts and not in Rhode Island. When members transferred from one meeting to another, it appears that their birth dates were entered into the records of the new meeting.

The records of the Easton and Saratoga, New York, Quakers shows that the family of Israel Phillips, along with his wife, Amity, and children Annanias, Reuben, Amey, Amity, and Lucia were received from the Uxbridge Monthly Meeting in 1784. Also among these records is found, "William Philips married Levina Sowle dt of James & Mary (dec). S of Israel & Amirita 1784."

and Amity Phillips, wife of Israel, daughter of Richard Harris, died 1827, 10th month, 16th day.” I find no birth or marriage record for a “Lucia.”

Listed in Massachusetts marriage records I find: “Israel Phillips of Saratoga, NY, married Mary Smith of Adams, Berkshire, MA; 29 November 1791, at Adams, Berkshire, Massachusetts.”

The Will of Israel Phillips Sr. written in 1815, was proved 21 February 1823 in Saratoga, New York, naming his wife Amity, and his children Abraham, William, Enoch, Israel, Annanias, Rueben, Amy, and Amity; as well as granddaughters Savonia, Hannah, Penelope, and Phebe, the wife of grandson Israel Phillips. Other grandchildren are also listed. The mention of Abraham is confusing because Abraham, according to some sources, died in 1799. However, Abraham Phillips of Saratoga, New York, his Will was dated in 1799 and I have been unable to locate a date for his death. Also, who is the grandson Israel who left a widow named Phebe?

Meanwhile, back in Rhode Island, where Israel Phillips, 1737-1822, and his wife Amity Harris had been born, another Israel Phillips was born to Katherine Comstock 19 February 1765, fathered by an Israel Phillips. The father, Israel Phillips, died in 1800, in Uxbridge, Massachusetts, and named this child in his will. “I give and bequeath to Israel Phillips alias Comstock son of Catherine Comstock one third of my real estate at my decease...” This Israel Phillips’ wife, also named in the will, was Molly. This is clearly not the same Israel Phillips born in 1765 to Israel and Amity. That would require two different mothers by two different names, and a father who dies two deaths. Looking further, in the Rhode Island marriage registers, I find Israel Phillips married 6 October 1795 to Hannah Mann at Cumberland, Providence, Rhode Island. This would appear to most likely be Israel, son of Israel Phillips of Uxbridge and Katherine Comstock. The marriage record shows his father’s name as Israel Phillips, but does not have the mother’s name. The extended family of Israel and Amity had moved to Saratoga, New York by 1784. It is improbable that Israel Phillips of Saratoga, New York, the son of Israel and Amity, married a Mary Smith in 1791 and then Hannah Mann, in 1795, in Rhode Island.

There was another Israel Phillips 1737-1800, born in Oxford, MA and died in Auburn, MA who fought in the American Revolution. He is listed in the DAR files, Ancestor # A090497. From looking at what others have assembled and collected in Rootsweb databases, and at Ancestry databases, it appears that he is often mistaken to be the same Israel Phillips as married Amity Harris. According to the MA birth records, his father’s name was Joseph Phillips, and his mother’s name was Ruth. His wife was Huldah Towne 1737-1817. Israel and Huldah were married 18 September 1760. They are buried in the Auburn Center Burial Ground, Auburn, Worcester, MA.

An Israel Phillips, married 27 September 1794 at Gill, Franklin, Massachusetts, to a Mercy Bascom was found among the Massachusetts marriage records. Possibly, this Israel Phillips was born to Philip Phillips and his wife, Mercy, in Ashfield, Franklin, Massachusetts, 23 May 1770, as found in the Massachusetts birth records. An Israel Phillips is found in the 1850 U.S. Census, in Ashfield, Franklin, Massachusetts, age 80; along with Israel Jr., age 45; Sobrina, age 42; Emiline, age 18; John W., age 16; Windsor, age 14; Louis, age 12; Edwin, age 6; Ann E, age 5;

and Ralph, age 2. Or perhaps this is the Israel Phillips, 1770-1855, who married Mehitabel Belding, 1770-1841, who is buried at the Plain Cemetery, Ashfield, Franklin, Massachusetts.

Col. Israel Phillips (1784-1863) is buried in the Phillips Lot, at Foster, Providence, Rhode Island; wife Anna Hill Phillips, 1784-1825. They were married 10 March 1805 per Rhode Island marriage records.

An Israel Phelps is found in the 1800 and 1810 U.S. Census, at Chatham, Columbia, New York. The 1800 enumeration shows 2 males under age 10; 1 age 10-16; 2 age 26-45; 2 females age under 10; 2 age 10-16; and 1 age 26 to 45. The Phelps Burial Plot, Chatham Center, Columbia, New York has the graves of Israel Phelps, 1751-1826, and his wife, Lovisa, 1757-1839. Other Israel Philips/Phillips/Phelps are found in the 1800 and 1810 U.S. Census. Too many to summarize here.

The lineage outlined in Kit # 47247 appears to have been literally lifted from a book, "Bogue Genealogy" by Flora Bogue Deming; The Tuttle Publishing Company, Rutland, VT (1944); a work which cites no sources either primary nor secondary. The purpose of source citation is so that others who read what you have assembled, compiled, and written can revisit, examine, weigh the conclusions.

Guest Column

Book Review

Sustainable Genealogy: Separating Fact from Fiction in Family Legends.

By Randy Hite. Published by Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore. 2013. 110 pages.

The following book review was written by Bobbi King. It was published in Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter and is copyrighted 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 is the book that tells you what not to include in your genealogy.

Mr. Hite begins:

My father...and I...were attending a reunion of a prominent Hite family...accounts of this man claimed that he had held the title of "Baron" in his German homeland prior to coming to the American colonies, that he was a native of the area...of Strasbourg...and that his wife was Anna Maria Dubois of a wealthy Huguenot family....Jost Hite...was actually a native of the village of Bonfeld...born there in 1685. His father was...a butcher...and Jost himself was a weaver by trade. His wife...was not a Huguenot named Dubois...but was instead...Anna Maria Merckle...to parents no more prominent than Jost's own.

The reunion attendees were not happy to hear the revised family history. Several refused to give up their long-held traditions about the most-venerated Jost Hite and his high-born, illustrious wife.

Mr. Hite tells this story to illustrate our desires, even unwittingly, to match the facts to conform to our fondest wishes to how we want our ancestors to be: noble, strong, fervent, good. We might be fudging the evidence in order to present our ancestors in the most favorable of light, and elevating our own standing as their deserving descendants.

So it's with gratitude that we should thank Mr. Hite for reminding us that we should follow the evidence, not move it around to conform to our narrative. His chapters address the "Ethnic Origins of Family Names," "Maiden Names of Female Ancestors," "Birthplaces of Ancestors," "Military Service of Ancestors," and "How Much Misinformation can be Crammed into One Paragraph?"

Mr. Hite has written a straight-forward guide for evaluating and following up on family stories and legends with hard-nosed research and critical review.