



©2011 The Phillips DNA Project

Phillips DNA News

www.phillipsdnaproject.com

October 2012

Volume 4 Issue 10

Editor: [Nancy Kiser](#)

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

Project News

This is an update of a report we published in the newsletter over one year ago about the status of British participants in our Phillips DNA Project. Thus far, we have tested 48 British men surnamed Phillips or some variation of the surname Phillips and two more tests are currently in progress. Most of these men received free DNA tests courtesy of our Phillips DNA Project and its generous benefactors. It is difficult to get British men to take DNA tests, even when the tests are offered for free.

Of the 48 British men surnamed Phillips who have been tested, 26 of them do not match any other men named Phillips in our database. This is slightly less than a 50% match rate, which is a bit disappointing. American men surnamed Phillips have a 70% chance of matching another man with the surname Phillips. However, more than 500 American men named Phillips have gotten their Y-DNA tested and I believe the match rate is mostly a result of the number of Phillips men tested in each country.

Here is a list of the Phillips Family DNA Groups that have received matches with British men: Group 1, Group 2, Group 4, Group 8, Group 16, Group 21, Group 37, Group 41, Group 45, Group 52, Group 61, Group 66, Group 69, Group 73 and Group 79. Some of these groups have more than one British match.

Group 1 has the largest number of British members, because a Canadian member of Group 1 actively tracked down British men whom he thought might belong to his Phillips family and paid for all of their DNA tests. Roger discovered one line of his Phillips family had moved to India and he also found a potential New Zealand member of his group and paid for his DNA test, which turned out to be a match.

Group 2, our largest Phillips family group with over 40 members, has two British matches. One of these matches traces his Phillips roots back to Somerset and the other to London. The Somerset match is particularly interesting, because an American member of Group 2 has traced his Phillips line on paper back to Cornwall in the 1500s. Cornwall is located one county away from Somerset in southwestern England.

Group 4 recently received a British match with a Phillips man who traces his Phillips family back to County Down in Ireland. Several American members of Group 4 have also been able to trace their Phillips family to Northern Ireland. A Canadian member of Group 4 has traced his

Phillips family back to Scotland. This is not contradictory because Northern Ireland has received considerable immigration from Scotland.

Group 8 has matches with two British men who have deep roots in the Midlands of England. The Y-DNA of Group 8 looks extremely Anglo-Saxon. In support of this, the Y-DNA of Group 8 also matches the Y-DNA found in some 3,000 year-old skeletons discovered in a cave in Saxony, Germany.

Group 16 has a match with a British man who traces his Phillips roots back to Ireland and another British man who traces his Phillips family back to Staffordshire, England. Group 16 belongs to a Y-DNA signature called the NW Irish Modal Haplotype. It is hypothesized that men who belong to this Y-DNA signature descend from a prolific 5th century Irish war lord called Niall of the Nine Hostages. The Staffordshire branch of Group 16 likely moved to England from Ireland at some point after the death of Niall.

Group 21 is made up of three men who trace their Phillips lines back to Pembrokeshire, Wales, and one who traces his Phillips line back to County Mayo, Ireland. Their Y-DNA belongs to the Western Atlantic Modal Haplotype (WAMH), which means we don't have a clue where they may have originated based on their Y-DNA alone. The WAMH is equally commonly found in Ireland, Wales, England, Scotland and western continental Europe.

Group 37 is comprised of only two members. One of them is a British man who traces his Phillips line back to Sussex, England, and the other is an American who traces his Phillips line back to Pennsylvania. The Y-DNA of this group looks a bit Anglo-Saxon, which makes sense if this Phillips family originated in Sussex. The name Sussex is thought to be derived from the Old English words for "South Saxons".

Group 41 consists of two British men, one of whom traces his Phillips line back to Surrey and the other to Suffolk. Surrey and Suffolk are both located in the southeastern part of England. This group has Slavic-looking Y-DNA (Haplogroup R1a) which is uncommonly found both in the British Isles and in our Phillips DNA Project.

Group 45 is composed of two men, one Briton and one American. The American has not supplied a Phillips pedigree, but the British member traces his Phillips line back to Hampshire, England. This group also has Y-DNA that is not commonly found in the British Isles. They belong to Haplogroup E1b1b1, which is considered to be Mediterranean in origin.

Group 52 is also made up of only two men and both of them are British. One of them has not supplied a pedigree, but the other one traces his Phillips roots back to Loughor, Swansea, Wales. Once again, the Y-DNA of this group matches that of the commonly found Western Atlantic Modal Haplotype (WAMH), so it is impossible to say much about it based on Y-DNA alone.

Group 61 consists of two British men, both of whom trace their Phillips families back to Aberdeenshire, Scotland. The Y-DNA of this group also matches the Western Atlantic Modal

Haplotype (WAMH). As mentioned before, the WAMH is commonly found everywhere in the British Isles and Western Europe.

Group 66 is comprised of an American and a British man. Interestingly, the surname of the American is Phelps, not Phillips. We have very few men named Phillips whose Y-DNA match men named Phelps, but this is one example. The British man traces his Phillips line to Lincolnshire.

Group 69 is composed of two British men. One of them traces his Phillips line back to London and the other to Angus, Scotland. The Y-DNA of this group (Haplogroup I2b1) appears to be Scandinavian or Anglo-Saxon. Haplogroup I2b1 has a peak population in Germany and another peak in eastern Sweden.

Group 73 is another group made up of just two men, one a Scot and the other an American. The American traces his Phillips line back to Canada and the Phillips line of the Scottish man is found entirely in Scotland. The Y-DNA of this group looks rather Anglo-Saxon.

Group 79 is our most recent group. It is comprised of an American and a Brit. The American has not supplied a pedigree but the British man traces his Phillips line back to Aberdeenshire, Scotland.

[Book Reviews](#)

Where a Man Can Go: Major General William Phillips, British Royal Artillery, 1731-1781

Written by Robert P. Davis

Reviewed by Google Books

This is the first published account of the life of Major General William Phillips, a British officer whose achievements during the American Revolution place him in the ranks of Britain's most successful generals such as Charles Cornwallis. Although he was a commoner, Phillips rose from the rank of cadet in the Royal Artillery Academy, distinguished himself through remarkable achievements in Europe's Seven Years War, and went on to command a field army in America. This story chronicles his extraordinary abilities, leadership, and innovative style that left a lasting mark on British artillery tactics and military leadership. It provides new insights into the captivity of Burgoyne's army, British operations in Virginia in 1781, and the first detailed account of the Battle of Petersburg, Virginia.

Featured Phillips Family Story

MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM PHILLIPS

British Royal Artillery (1731-1781)

The following article was written by Robert P. Davis for the Petersburg, Virginia, website and is reprinted with permission from the Petersburg, Virginia, website.

See <http://www.petersburg-va.org/revwar/phillips.asp>



Somewhere in the outer northeast angle of old Blandford Church, in Petersburg, Virginia, lays the hidden body of Major General William Phillips, a British officer who died in this town on 13 May 1781, far away from his English homeland. Since his death of a contagious fever over two hundred years ago, this extraordinary officer has remained in almost total obscurity.

It was not until 1914 that a particular recognition was finally give to Phillips' burial site either by the British or Americans. In that year, the Francis Bland Randolph Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution erected a memorial outside the south wall of the Blandford Church, which simply states:

*SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
MAJ. GEN. WILLIAM PHILLIPS
OF THE BRITISH ARMY WHO DIED AT
"BOLLINGBROOK"
MAY 13, 1781
AND WHOSE REMAINS LIE BURIED IN THIS
CHURCH YARD
ERECTED BY THE FRANCES BLAND RANDOLPH
CHAPTER D.A.R. 1914."*

William Phillips was a brilliant soldier, artillerist, and leader, and Thomas Jefferson described him as "the proudest man of the proudest nation on earth." By whatever description, Phillips' final claim to fame was to have conducted one of the British army's most successful campaigns in the American Revolution. Moreover, to the welfare of Petersburg and Chesterfield County, one of Phillips' standing orders to his army was that the "private property and the persons of

individuals not taken in arms, are to be under the protection of the troops." Therein, by his own view against wanton destruction, Phillips saved Petersburg from war's common devastation following the great battle fought there on 25 April 1781.

Born in 1731, Phillips was descended from an ancient line of Welsh warriors dating back to the period of the Roman conquests of England and Wales. Though his ancestors included several knights and barons who loyally served the throne of England over many centuries, William Phillips was not born into any titled nobility. He was the child and grandchild of English career soldiers. At the age of sixteen he was enrolled into the Royal Artillery Academy at Woolwich, England as a Gentleman Cadet. There the young Phillips excelled in every facet of gunnery and artillery warfare, and gained early recognition by his superiors.

When England allied with Germany against the Austrians and French in the Seven Years War, Captain Phillips was given command of a brigade of artillery and deployed to Germany with the British Expeditionary Force. In that war, he was credited with great gallantry and ingenuity for his artillery expertise and awarded for his heroism. During the Battle of Warburg, Phillips executed a completely unprecedented maneuver with his artillery brigade by galloping his heavy guns over five miles into battle and unleashing a ferocious bombardment that cutoff the entrapped French army. By the end of the war, Phillips had gained great acclaim for himself, was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, and had established a brigade musical organization which became today's Royal Artillery Band.

Following the Seven Years War, Phillips became Inspector General of the Artillery serving in the Mediterranean and then Commander of Artillery at the artillery school at Woolwich, England. In 1772, he was promoted to Colonel and further appointed as Lieutenant Governor of Windsor Castle. Following his promotion to Brigadier General in 1774, he was elected as a Member of Parliament for Boroughbridge in Yorkshire.

With the outbreak of hostilities between the American Colonies and England, Phillips was promoted to Major General of Artillery and he was transferred to North America to command all artillery in the Provinces of Canada. Phillips was assigned as deputy and wing commander to Lieutenant General John Burgoyne's campaign from Montreal, which culminated in disaster near Saratoga, New York. Throughout that campaign and in the heat of the heaviest combat, Phillips displayed the greatest heroism and leadership with total disregard for his personal safety.

On 17 October 1777, Burgoyne surrendered and his entire army, then known as the troops of the Convention, was marched to Boston to be held until they could be exchanged. Phillips became commander of the Convention Troops with Burgoyne's return to England and shortly thereafter the "prisoners" of the Convention were moved to Albemarle Barracks near Charlottesville, Virginia. The circumstances for the British prisoners were terrible at best and Phillips was constantly engaged in attempts to clothe, feed, and house his troops.



Surrender of General Burgoyne
(Major General William Phillips stands just behind Burgoyne, left of center)

Two important occurrences came about during Phillips' captivity in Virginia. One was the very civil treatment of the British soldiers by their American captives, an act which Phillips would not later forget. The other was the personal hospitality afforded to Phillips and his staff by Thomas Jefferson who frequently entertained the British senior officers at Monticello. By late 1779, Phillips, along with his staff, was finally moved to New York and exchanged back into British hands.

On the first of January, 1781, the British sent an expedition into the Chesapeake Bay of Virginia, under the command of their new Brigadier General Benedict Arnold. Arnold conducted a lightning raid up the James River to Richmond, severely damaging and destroying American logistics lines and industrial support to the war. He then returned to the Chesapeake, fortifying his army at Portsmouth. Knowing this force was too small to conduct any further operations in Virginia, Sir Henry Clinton, the British Commander in Chief in New York, sent Phillips with a large reinforcement to Portsmouth. Phillips was to continue operations in the state, to further interrupt American logistics lines between the northern and southern states.

Phillips arrived in March 1781 and on 18 April began a major campaign up the James River, striking at Yorktown, Williamsburg, the Virginia State Naval docks on the Chickahominy River, and subsequently landed at Westover Plantation. After a brief rest for his troops, Phillips then moved his fleet and army to City Point, landing on the 24th. The morning of the 25th he marched his army overland towards his primary target - Petersburg. Under Major General von Steuben, there was only a small army of slightly more than one thousand militia, to confront Phillips' two thousand five hundred veteran troops. Notwithstanding the overwhelming odds, the determination and discipline of the Virginia militia withstood Phillips' attack on Petersburg, holding the invading British at bay for upwards of three hours before yielding the town.

Two days following the battle, Phillips marched his army north on the final leg of his campaign, burning the log military training barracks at Chesterfield Court House, destroying several war and cargo ships at Osborne's Landing, and burning the foundry and numerous warehouses at Westham. In the meantime, the American regulars of Major General Lafayette's army arrived

at Richmond in time to prevent Phillips from taking the Capitol City. It was then that Phillips decided that his expedition had been completely successful and ordered his army back down the James River to Portsmouth.

During the movement down river, Phillips fell violently ill with a fever, which is believed to have been either malaria or typhus. A few days later, orders arrived from Lieutenant General Cornwallis in North Carolina, directing Phillips to meet him in Petersburg. Phillips' army arrived in Petersburg on 9 May; however the General was so ill that General Arnold had to assume command of the army. On the 10th, Lafayette's army arrived on the heights north of Petersburg (now Colonial Heights) and briefly bombarded the British army in the town, including Bollingbrook, the home in which Phillips lay dying. On the morning of the 13th, Major General William Phillips died. Late that same evening, his body was taken to Blandford Church Cemetery and buried in a secret location.

Numerous epitaphs were written to honor this great British general; however, Captain Johann Ewald of the German Jagers perhaps wrote the most encompassing description of Phillips. "One saw in him and his precautions that he was worthy of commanding men, and one recognized in him the skillful and industrious officer. The general drove everyone zealously to his duty. But he was the most pleasant, unselfish, and courteous man in the world."