



©2011 The Phillips DNA Project

# Phillips DNA News

[www.phillipsdnaproject.com](http://www.phillipsdnaproject.com)

September 2011

Volume 3 Issue 9

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

Hello, everyone! It's the magnificent month of September! Happy Labor/Labour Day to our American and Canadian participants, and Happy Bank Holiday to our British participants.

One of the members of our project asked me to prepare a report on our recruiting efforts in the British Isles, so here it is. I am always happy to oblige the requests of our participants! Thus far, we have managed to test 39 British men surnamed Phillips or some variation of the surname Phillips. Most of these men received free DNA tests, courtesy of our Phillips DNA Project and its generous benefactors. It is amazingly difficult to get British men to take DNA tests, even when the tests are offered for free.

Of the 39 British men who have gotten tested, twenty of them do not match any other men named Phillips in the database. This is slightly less than a 50% match rate. Here is a list of the lucky family groups that have received matches with British men: Group 1, Group 2, Group 8, Group 16, Group 21, Group 37, Group 41, Group 45, Group 52, Group 66, Group 69 and Group 73. Some of these groups have gotten more than one British match.

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

Group 2, our largest Phillips family group, has two British matches. One of these matches traces his Phillips roots back to Somerset and the other to London. This is 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.

Probably because I belong to this group, in my humble opinion Group 8 has the most interesting matches! We have matches with two British men who have deep roots in the Birmingham area of England. Our Y-DNA also matches the Y-DNA of some 3,000 year-old skeletons found in a cave in Saxony, Germany. In corroboration of this, the Y-DNA of Group 8 looks extremely Anglo-Saxon.

Group 16 has a match with a British man who traces his Phillips roots back to Ireland. This is encouraging, because Group 16 has Y-DNA that looks very Irish. In fact, Group 16 belongs to a DNA signature called the NW Irish Modal Haplotype. It is hypothesized that men who belong to

this DNA signature descend from a prolific 5th century Irish war lord called Niall of the Nine Hostages.

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. 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, Wales. Once again, the Y-DNA of this group matches that of the commonly found Western Atlantic Modal Haplotype, so it is impossible to say much about it based on Y-DNA.

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 matches 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 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.

## MORE ABOUT THE PHILIPPS FAMILY OF PICTON CASTLE, WALES

By Nancy Kiser, Volunteer Administrator, Phillips DNA Project

In August, I corresponded with a woman named Diane Phillips on the Phillips genforum at genealogy.com. Diane is very annoyed with the Phillips DNA Project. One of her complaints is that we are too dismissive of the idea that many or most Phillips living today descend from the aristocratic Philipps family of Picton Castle, Wales. Here are some of her comments:

*Here's the part I don't understand about the way you and others involved with the DNA project are acting - In the information on the site for the project, it admits that it only actually indicates about 600 years, not 1,000. And, secondly, where it comes to the Phillips family, your information about surnames and the use of the Phillips name in Wales is misleading at best. Why is that? The surname Phillips was used by Meredith Phillips and that was hundreds of years prior to the mentions you made. Why?*

*I've noticed a number of responses from the Phillips DNA project among the various genealogy sites since your project started, and they all seem to be the same about these things. Why is that? I don't understand. Why would you leave out the fact that a grandson of Meredith Phillips of the Wales line, served with Richard and Philip II of France on the crusades after which the crown and collar of loyalty to the British Crown was claimed on the standard of the family? That was long before the time your references make as well.*

Diane's point about the 600 years relates to her theory that the different Phillips families identified by Y-DNA might all still descend from the Philipps family of Picton Castle, Wales, even though their Y-DNA does not match. Here is her rationale:

*The other thing we found is that as the DNA project surmises, there are a lot of Phillips lines that come from a variety of places. And, although the first use of the name Phillips as a surname does indeed derive from the Wales area of Pembrokeshire and Carmarthen predating the Roman occupation of the area (which gave people in the area Roman citizenship out of negotiated deals with them), finding the lineage between the two actually exceeds the limits of the current DNA project testing methods. Which means it is possible that all of these Phillips' here, there and yonder, may have indeed some common lineage among them going back to that time.*

I explained to Diane that the individuals in any given Phillips family DNA group have Y-DNA that matches closely enough to indicate they are all related within 600 years or less, but that the Y-DNA of the different Phillips family groups is dissimilar enough to indicate that the different family groups do not share a common paternal ancestor within 1000 years. I also explained to Diane that if two family groups belong to different haplogroups, then they cannot share a common paternal ancestor within thousands of years, not just one thousand years. I am not sure she believed or accepted my explanation.

Nevertheless, I promised Diane that I would research the Philipps line of Picton Castle and especially Meredith or Maredudd Philipps (Maredudd is the Welsh equivalent of the given name Meredith) who was supposedly the first male of that line to adopt the permanent last name of Philipps and that I would publish my research in this month's newsletter. Here are the results of my research.

The following is an excerpt from "The History of Haverfordwest with that of some Pembrokeshire Parishes" originally published by John Brown in 1914 and later revised and added to by J.S. Phillips and Fred J. Warren. This book is no longer in copyright. I added the information in brackets and italics for clarity.

"No history of the town [*Haverfordwest*] would be complete without a reference to the House of Picton whose ancestral home Picton Castle is situate near the confluence of the eastern and western Cleddau. A still more ancient stronghold probably once occupied the site. In the reign of William II Rufus [c. 1056 - 1100 AD] the fortress was besieged and taken by William de Picton, a Norman knight who was a follower of Arnuiiph de Montgomery, the first Norman invader of Pembrokeshire. Wm. de Picton, having rebuilt and strengthened the place, gave to his new possessions his own name, and from that time to the present, a period of 800 years, it has never ceased to be tenanted by those who can trace their descent from its first Norman possessors. Joan, the daughter and heiress of Sir Wm. Picton, a descendant of the first Sir William, married Sir John Wogan of Wiston, knight, and brought him the Picton Castle Estate as her dowry. John Wogan, a descendant of this marriage, married Ann, daughter of James Butler Earl of Ormond, by whom he had two daughters, Katharine and Ann. Katharine married Owen Donne of Middlescumb in Carmarthenshire and had Picton Castle as her portion. Sir Henry Donne, a descendant, was killed at the battle of Banbury in 1469, leaving two daughters Jane and Jennet. Jane espoused Thomas ap Philip of Cilsant in the County of Carmarthen and brought him Picton Castle.

"This family [*the Philipps family of Picton Castle*] is of great antiquity being lineally descended from Cadifor ap Collwyn of Blaencych, Lord of Pembrokeshire, who on account of his large estate was known as Cadifor Fawr or the Great; he was of the same tribe as Vortigern, King of Britain, and paternally descended from Maximus, King of Britain and Emperor of Rome. Cadifor married Helen, daughter and sole heir to Llwh Llawen Fawr, a Lord of South Wales, who died in 1084 and was buried in the priory at Carmarthen leaving three sons among whom his lordships and possessions were divided. He [*Cadifor*] was succeeded by his eldest son Bledri surnamed Latimer and styled Lord of Kilsant which Lordship he inherited by the gift of his father together with Guidegada, Traiau, Elgood, Castle Coch in Penrhyn, Llandilo, Cantref Yw, Manner-Gayng, Coed Ralph at Saundersfoot, and Stackpoole in the county of Pembroke with divers other lands.

"He [*Bledri*] married Clydwen, daughter of Gryffydd ap Cydrych, Lord of Gwynfe, and had Rhys ap Bledri who married Ancreta, daughter of Rhys ap Gryffydd, Prince of South

Wales, styled Lord Rhys and lineally descended from Cadwallader, the last King of Britain of the British race; by her he [*Rhys*] had Sir Aaron ap Rhys who succeeded his father and, becoming a Crusader, he attended King Richard I into the Holy Land in the year 1190 where for his gallantry against the Saracens, he was rewarded with the Order of Knighthood of the Sepulchre of our Saviour and the King gave him for arms a Lion rampant, sable, in a field argent, to which Sir Aaron added a ducal coronet and chain, a beautiful symbol that he bound himself and all his posterity to be forever loyal to the Crown of England. **In the course of the family history, Philip ap Evan had Meredith who first assumed the patronymic of Philips instead of Ap-Philip. [Bolded for emphasis].** Sir Thomas Philips, knight, left Kilsant, the seat of his ancestors, and resided at Picton Castle of which he became possessed by his marriage with Jane, daughter and heiress to Henry Donne of Picton. The first baronet was Sir John Philipps who was created such in 1621. He married Anne, daughter and coheir to Sir John Perrot.

“The 2nd baronet Sir Richard garrisoned the Castle for King Charles I. The 3rd baronet was Sir Erasmus Philipps. A granddaughter of his married Sir Robert Walpole, knight of the Garter. The good qualities of the fourth baronet Sir John are set forth on a marble monument in St. Mary’s Chancel, Haverfordwest. The 7th baronet Sir Richard was in 1776 created Baron Milford of Ireland. On his death the baronetcy passed to the descendants of the youngest son of Sir John, the 1st baronet, and the peerage became extinct until in 1847 Sir Richard Philipps was created a Peer of the United Kingdom with the title of Lord Milford. He died without issue and the Castle and extensive Estates passed under the Will of the 1st Lord Milford to the second Lord’s half-brother the Rev. James Henry Alexander Gwyther, Vicar of Madeley, Salop who assumed the family name. He became as already stated Vicar of St. Mary’s. Dying in 1875, he devised the property to his elder surviving daughter Mary Philippa, the present Lady Philipps, who was married in 1868 to Sir Charles Edward Gregg Philipps Baronet, Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of the County of the Town of Haverfordwest.”

There are several interesting things to be gleaned from this history, if you can stay awake all the way through it. First, note that this line used the ancient Welsh patronymic naming system up until the birth of Meredith or Maredudd Philipps around 1380 A.D. The development of surnames in Wales reflects the history of a small country with its own social structure in which the kinship group was very important. Under the Welsh patronymic naming system, an individual was identified by his first name and then by the first name of his father. Thus Cadifor ap Collwyn meant Cadifor, son of Collwyn. Using this patronymic naming system, a family’s last name changed with every generation.

Second, note that the person who became a Crusader and attended King Richard I into the Holy Land was Sir Aaron ap Rhys, which means Aaron, son of Rhys. Sir Aaron was not the grandson of Meredith Philipps, as Diane stated in her message. Sir Aaron was the great-great-great-grandfather of Meredith Philipps, who was allegedly the first person in this line to adopt the permanent surname of Philipps. Sir Aaron is said to have been born about 1140 A.D., which seems about right, since Richard I of England lived from 1157 to 1199 A.D. Meredith or

Maredudd Philipps is said to have been born 200 years later around 1380 A.D., which was about 630 years ago.

In general, European men did not begin assuming permanent last names until around 1000 years ago, but the Welsh were a bit slower to adopt the tradition of a permanent last name. There are earlier examples of men assuming the permanent last name of Phillips (or some variation thereof) in England. Early on it appears as "Filippus" in documents relating to the Danelaw, Lincolnshire, dated 1142 A.D., and as "Philipus" in the Gilbertine Houses Charters of Lincolnshire, circa 1150 A.D. Henry Phelipe, noted in the 1273 Hundred Rolls of Norfolk, was one of the earliest recorded bearers of the surname in England with a "Ph" spelling, along with Alicia Philippes and Ellis 'fil' Philip of Huntingdonshire.

So even though the surname Phillips and all its variations are very popular in Wales today, it cannot be said that the fixed surname Phillips originated or even was first used in Wales. Also, we have now DNA-tested 19 men who claim to have roots in Wales. Most of these men have Y-DNA that is sufficiently different from each other to indicate they do not share a common paternal ancestor within 1000 years. They simply all cannot descend from the Philipps family of Picton Castle.

Moreover, we have identified 73 distinctly different Phillips families that cannot have shared a common paternal ancestor within 1000 years according to their Y-DNA. Since permanent surnames did not exist in Europe before 1000 years ago, this suggests that the founders of each of these lines were not paternally related and adopted the surname Phillips separately and independently of each other. This should not be surprising, because the surname Phillips means "son of Phillip" and there is surely no reason to believe every man with the first name Philip or Phillip was closely related to every other man with the first name Philip or Phillip back during the Middle Ages in Europe.

## Featured Family Story

### Family of Samuel Phillips<sup>i</sup> of Narragansett, Rhode Island

*By Bob Phillips, Phillips Family DNA Group 11*

Some time ago, being a member of Group 11 of the Phillips DNA Project, where a few others trace their lineage to Michael and Barbara Phillips of Smithfield and Newport, Rhode Island in the mid to late 1600's, I decided to see what I could find in the way of history and genealogical books, out of print and out of copyright, which I could download in pdf format on the internet. "Google Books" was one internet source; another was the website for Border's Books, which recently went out of business. I came across a book titled "A History of the Episcopal Church in Narragansett", by Wilkins Updike; Boston: Merrymount Press (1907). In this book, I discovered mention of Samuel Phillips of Narragansett, Rhode Island, and his family. Not



knowing exactly where Narragansett might be, or have been, I had to do a “Google” search and discovered that it is in Washington County, Rhode Island; in the southwestern part of the state.

With a little more searching, I was able to find and download “History of Washington and Kent Counties, Rhode Island”, J.R. Cole; New York: W.W. Preston & Co. (1889). It was from in this book the following account can be found on pages 382-384. The information contained in this account was not footnoted, or sourced in any form in the book. This family is particularly intriguing because it is not listed in John Osborne Austin’s “The Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island.”

“The Phillips family first settled around Wickford. Samuel Phillips, it is said, emigrated from Exeter, England, and was among the first who settled in the Narragansett country. He died in 1736, aged eighty-one years. His widow Elizabeth afterward married Colonel Thomas, and died in 1748. The children of Samuel Phillips<sup>ii</sup> were: Thomas, Charles, Samuel and Mary. Thomas, the eldest, died in 1722, in Exeter. His son Samuel died in 1748 leaving two children, Thomas and Mary. Mary married first her cousin Charles Phillips, and second Henry Wall, sheriff, ect. Among the children of Charles Phillips was Charles, who in 1749 married his cousin Mary, died in 1757, leaving: Major Samuel, Charles, William, Peter and daughters.

“Samuel, the third child of Samuel Phillips, married Abigail Brown and was the father of several children. Hon. Peter Phillips, of North Kingstown, who was a member of the convention to form the state constitution, was a son of his. He was born in 1731 and died in 1807. The daughter, Mary Phillips, married John Dickinson in 1818.

“Major Samuel, son of Charles Phillips, was born near Wickford December 20<sup>th</sup> 1749, and died August 10<sup>th</sup>, 1808. He was four times married. In early life he became an active whig in the revolutionary controversy. In August, 1776, he was commissioned by John Hancock, president of the United Colonies, as captain of the sixth company of the First regiment of the brigade raised by this state, which was taken into continental pay and constituted part of the American army. On the 22d of January, 1777, he was again commissioned by Governor Cooke (the original commissions signed by Hancock and Cooke now remain in the family) captain of a company of state infantry in Colonel Stanton’s regiment. In 1777 captain Phillips was a volunteer and commanded one of the five boats in the expedition led by Colonel Barton for the capture of General Prescott. He was captain of a company in Sullivan’s expedition in Rhode Island in 1778. The next year he entered the naval service as a lieutenant by President Adams, and entered the service. After the treaty with France he settled on his farm near Wickford, where he died August 10<sup>th</sup>, 1808.

“Peter Phillips was the son of Christopher and grandson of Samuel Phillips. He was born in North Kingstown in 1731. In the revolution he was an inflexible

whig, and rendered important service to his country during the war. He represented his native town in the general assembly, and subsequently in 1775, was promoted to the senate, and in May he was elected commissary of the Army of Observation, a body of fifteen hundred men raised by the state, of which Nathaniel Greene was elected brigadier-general. Mr. Phillips was re-elected state senator for the years 1776, 1777, 1778 and 1779. In 1780 the legislature appointed him one of the judges of the supreme court of the state, a position which he held for five consecutive years. In 1785 Mr. Phillips was elected by the people a delegate to represent Rhode Island in The Confederated Congress, but did not take his seat in that body. In 1786 he declined re-appointment on the bench of the supreme court. The legislature, desirous of retaining Mr. Phillips in the public service, elected him to the office of chief justice of the court of common pleas for his native country in the year 1795. He soon resigned all public honors and retired to private life. All the various civil and military appointments that were conferred upon him discharged with ability and fidelity.

“Mr. Phillips was a man of considerable property, owning a handsome estate in Wickford. He was a very polished gentleman, quite spare in person, wore a wig and always dressed with great neatness.”

With the above information at hand, I scrolled through the listing of Earliest Known Ancestors at our Phillips DNA Project website to see if we have any members claiming descent from this Samuel and Elizabeth Phillips of Rhode Island. I found none. So, next, I turned to Rootsweb's World Connect website, to see if any there might claim to be descended from this couple. I utilized the “Advance Search,” input “Phillips” in the surname field, “Samuel” as the “Given Name”, died in “Rhode Island,” and “Elizabeth” was input into the “Spouse” field. The resulting list gave me eleven entries of potential contacts, possible descendants of this family, along with their email addresses.

Next, I composed a short email, explaining who I was, where I found their information, and requesting if they might have more information about this couple, including documentation they might have. I also told them that I am a member of the Phillips DNA Project, and asked if they know of a living male descendant of Samuel and Elizabeth who might be willing and able to submit a painless and simple cheek swab for Y-DNA analysis.

This being my first attempt at this methodology to obtain further information, I had a lot to learn. Some of the Rootsweb World Connect entries are quite old, and the email addresses given may no longer be valid. I ended up getting a lot of bouncing emails. Unfortunately, thus far, I have not identified a living male descendant of Samuel and Elizabeth to submit a DNA test and join our Phillips DNA Project, using this approach. I used this approach, looking for alleged descendants of Michael and Barbara Phillips of Rhode Island, mid to late 1600's, as well, and was able to identify and connect with at least three new members who joined our Phillips DNA Project, and or submitted cheek swabs for testing. The data given on the websites may not be reliable and verified, but the contact information can be priceless.



More recently, my wife began to transcribe her maternal grandmother's diaries. Now, my wife is not in the least interested in genealogy. She is interested in people. She knew little to nothing about her father's side of the family, since her father had been raised by a step father. In the course of her project of diary transcription, she came across many unfamiliar names. She brought the names to me, to see if I could find something that would make sense out of the jumble. Searching the available online databases, I was able to determine the maiden name of her maternal grandmother. Turning to the Rootsweb World Connect website and applying the above search method I was able to connect to a lady whose former husband was a distant cousin of my wife. She in turn was able to connect me with another distant cousin who is into genealogy and able to fill my wife in on the family, going back several generations.

One other tactic that I have employed is posting a query at the Genforum website, "Seeking descendant of Samuel and Elizabeth Phillips of Narragansett, Rhode Island, late 1600's." So far, no responses. If and when I do get a response, I will tell them about the Phillips DNA Project and the Y-DNA test.

I use the online databases to look for clues and potential informative contacts with others researching the same line. Always, I am looking for new resources that give documentation for the data I am collecting. Until it is solved, it remains a mystery, awaiting my creative solution to the problem at hand. As I find more information about the descendants of Samuel and Elizabeth, I will be applying the above techniques, hoping to help others who are in search of their ancestors, and hopefully find a male Phillips descendant for that Y-DNA test, and a new member of our project. I encourage all of our members to do the same.

---

<sup>i</sup> "Here lieth Interred ye Body of Mr Samuel Phillips, died March ye 30th 1736. In ye 81st year of his age" "Inscriptions on the grave-stones in the old churchyard of St. Paul's Narragansett : North Kingstown, Rhode Island : with a record of the inscriptions in the graveyard of the old church at Wickford;" James N. Arnold; Boston: Priv. print. :, 1909.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.