

DNA Discoveries

By **Susan C. Meates**

In part 2 of this article series, more Guild members share their results from their DNA Project, and illustrate how DNA is an important component of their one-name study.

Adding DNA testing to your one-name study is an opportunity to make interesting discoveries and discover information not available in the paper records.

You will have success with your DNA Project, regardless of your country of residence. Just as a one-name study is a global endeavor, a DNA Project is also global. The global nature of a DNA Project enables you, if you so choose, to raise funds in migration destination countries, to fund testing in the ancestral country, to help participants find a match. Often a documented link to the ancestral country can't be found for early migrations, and DNA testing will help these persons discover more information about their distant ancestors and a DNA match might provide a location for further research. In addition, regardless of the country, often multiple members of a family tree will contribute to fund testing for their tree. Raising donations is optional, though it is worth considering, since it will make it easier to recruit participants when you can provide a paid test or partially sponsored test kit.

With this Journal issue, another project, the Phillips DNA Project, has passed the 500 member mark, and joins the Wells DNA Project as the only two Guild member projects to reach this point.

Many Guild projects have now passed 100 participants, and more are closing in on 100. The number of participants depends on the frequency of the surname, the time the project has been in existence, and the time devoted to recruiting. In addition, using sales and marketing techniques and material can increase recruiting effectiveness.

Phillips DNA Project and One-Name Study

Family Tree DNA, Ancestry.com, DNA Heritage, and others. Established 2004. Participants, 523 at Family Tree DNA.

Nancy Kiser, administrator; Tom Hutchison, co-administrator; Virginia Phillips-Smith, co-administrator.

Websites: <http://www.phillipsdna-project.com/> and <http://one-name-study.phillipsdna-project.com/>

The Phillips One-Name Study commenced officially in 2009 when the Phillips surname was registered with the Guild of One-Name Studies, but the roots of the study go back to 2004 when a Phillips DNA project was organized in the United States. Here are the goals of the project, then and now:

1. Help researchers from common or related branches of Phillips families work together to find their shared heritage.

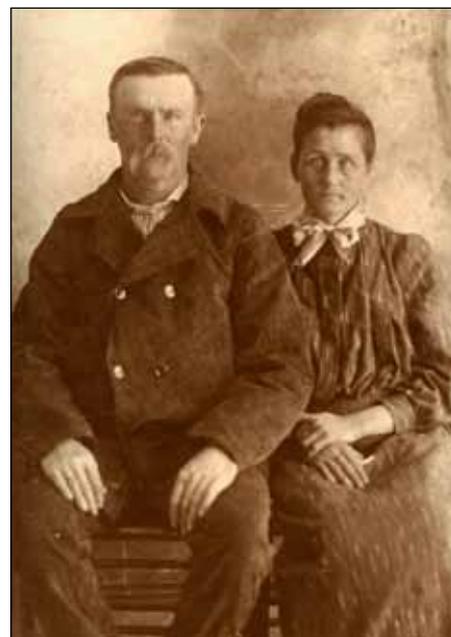


Fig 2. Charles W. Phillips (b. 1860 Tennessee) and 2nd wife Effie Byrd

2. Identify how the participants' families are connected, both genetically and through paper trails.

3. Identify and confirm genetic lineages of ancestral families and find our ancestral roots in Europe, or wherever they may be.

4. Ultimately catalog pedigrees and genetic connections of all known Phillips trees.

We believe it would be impractical to do a one-name study of such a common surname as Phillips without the help of DNA analysis, because it would be impossible to sort out and



Fig 1. Engraving of Picton Castle, Pembrokeshire, Wales, ancestral home of the Philipps family.

differentiate between all the diverse, unrelated Phillips families worldwide. Thus far, through DNA analysis, we have identified more than 60 distinct, unrelated Phillips families in the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, United States, Canada and other countries around the world.

There are over 350 different Phillips pedigrees in our database. We maintain a large database of information on Phillips families worldwide and try to help our participants as much as we can with their individual research, but we function mainly as the coordinator of a large networked group of researchers. Every month, one or more of these researchers discovers a Phillips relative or branch that they never before knew existed. Some of the DNA matches have been between Phillips men who live in different countries. This is the reason and rationale for our existence.

Ulph DNA Project

Colin Ulph. Family Tree DNA Established 2008. 65 Participants.

The project, which embraces the surnames ULPH, AULPH, HULF, ALP, ALPE and ALPS, began in July 2008, when our one-name study was already 30 years old. All six names exist in living families around the world but are quite rare, the current total number of male name-holders worldwide being just over 350. Documented ancestry indicates that ULPH, ALP and ALPE all originated in Norfolk pre-fourteenth century and probably emanated from the parish of Burnham Ulph, now part of Burnham Market. AULPH, ALPS and HULF are of more recent origin, possibly variants. One of the project's objectives has been to discover whether all six names might be traceable to a common male ancestor who lived since surnames came into use. So far at least three men with each name have been tested - more where a single name, like ULPH, has several lines known to be distinct over the past 300 years.

Although it's early days in our project, one exciting discovery early on was that all three HULFs tested have identical DNA with some of the ULPHs, proving that they do have a common ancestor who is yet to be found. It seems also that the families of ALP and ALPE will have a common ancestor, too. Early DNA results show, however, that there is no genetic link between the AULPH and ULPH



Fig 3. 107 Ulphs and descendants pack into the village hall at Burnham, Ulph for the first clan gathering in 1987. Photo taken by Colin Ulph.

men so far tested, nor between ULPH and the ALP and ALPE families. One of the ALPS lines was already known to have derived from an ALPE but, as he was illegitimate, no common ancestry was expected beyond the eighteenth century and DNA has confirmed this. Other important discoveries so far have been common DNA between men from separate ULPH lines, which gives hope that further research might reveal a common ancestor at some future time.

As the project continues, considerable effort is going into identifying and locating useful 'targets' for testing in the future. We keep up the interest by informing all past volunteers of the latest developments by means of a twice-yearly progress report, and a summary aimed at the whole clan is included in our periodic newsletter, ULPH Family News.

Parrott DNA project

Wayne Parrott. Family Tree DNA. 53 participants.

Parrotts began to appear in Maryland and Virginia beginning in the 1600s, and the spelling Parrott soon became standard. Given that their descendants frequently crossed paths as they settled throughout the southeastern United States, the assumption was that they were all one family. This assumption became official 'fact' with the publication of the book, *Links that Bind* in 1967. Subsequent research efforts have tried repeatedly to find the missing links that connected the

various Parrott families, but have come up empty.

Now, DNA testing has revealed that there were multiple Parrott families who settled in the American Colonies. It turns out the Parrott settlers in 1600's Virginia represent two completely unrelated families. A third Parrott family from Virginia was founded by a Swiss immigrant in the 1730s. Furthermore, the Virginia Parrotts turn out not to be related to the 1600's Maryland Parrott family, and it is now evident that at least one additional Parrott family settled in Maryland in the 1750's.

In the 1700 and 1800's, Parrott families began appearing throughout the southeastern part of the country, as the original settlements expanded westward. Most of these have incomplete paper trails, and thus could not be traced with any certainty to one of the original Parrott families. Finally, DNA made it possible to assign these branches to the correct original families, and in some cases, to the correct parents.

From a research point of view, it is no longer necessary to spend time and effort to find the missing links that were supposed to connect the various family branches together—the families are not related, so there were never any missing links to begin with. Now, the surviving paper record makes sense, as it no longer has to fit the preconceived notions. Without such constraints, it has been possible to trace one of the three 1600's families back to its origins



Fig 4. The signatures and seals of Richard Perrot and his son, Richard Jr., dated 2 April 1683. The Elder Richard founded one of the Parrott Families in Virginia in the mid 1600's. It is now known he was born on 10 Feb 1621/22 in Potton, Bedfordshire, England. A large proportion of the Parrotts in the USA today descend from Richard. Despite numerous reports to the contrary, these Perrots did not use the 3-pear design on their seal. This photo was taken in 2007 by Joseph Parrott. This and similar documents are part of the Churchill Family Papers, MSS 1197, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library.

in England. The search continues for the origins of the others. Thus far, there have been no transatlantic DNA matches, but DNA participation on the English side remains low.

There is one question in particular which lingers on. There is one Perrot family that became prominent in Wales and England, and which is easily recognizable because their armorial bearings used a seal with 3 pears in it. There have been many attempts to link the American Parrotts to this family, though none have held up under scrutiny. Some of these Perrots did make it to the new world, as a tombstone in Barbados bears the family seal; there is no evidence any made it to the colonies that would become the US. Seals have been found for two of the original 1600's Parrott families, and they are not that of the Welsh/English family. Unfortunately, there are no known living male descendants from the Welsh/English family. Someday, perhaps DNA analysis from one of their remains may reveal if the family is still alive in the USA, or if the family really died out.

For a more in-depth report, see these articles:

Reksten, Harald and Wayne Parrott. 2009. A re-examination of the relationships among the Parrott families of the American Colonies in the 17th century. *Magazine of Virginia Genealogy* Feb 47(1):21-43 & May 47(2):129-147

Reksten, Harald and Wayne Parrott. 2010. Early P-rr-tt families of North America: Myth & Fact on the Internet. The P-rr-tt Society Family Notes. March 26:8-12

Useful links:

- The P-rr-tt Society- has a vast data base of P-rr-tts in Britain, Australia and New Zealand <http://www.p-rr-tt.org.uk/>
- Early Parrott Lineages of North America <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~parrott/parrotlines.shtml>
- DNA Project: <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~parrott/>
- The Perrot family of Wales and England: <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~parrott/pembrokeshire.shtml>

Blencowe DNA Project

Jack Blencowe. Ancestry, 22 participants.

The Blencowe Families' Association does not have a formal DNA Project, though we have used DNA testing. The name, in all its various spellings derives from the village of Blencow near Penrith; the earliest ancestor of whom much is known is 14thC Adam de Blencow. The line descending directly from Adam died out in 1927 but one of his sons (or more likely grandson) moved south to Marston St Lawrence

near Banbury and descendants of that line flourish in Britain and elsewhere around the world.

Most of the family groups stem from a dozen locations, most of them within walking distance or horseback ride from Marston St Lawrence. A couple of the groups can be traced back to Adam on paper, most can only be traced back to the 17th or 18th centuries; DNA analysis has enabled us to link the various groups. A Blencowe descendant of a 19thC emigrant to Virginia from Towcester is one of the known descendants of Adam and his DNA is our "type specimen" and these family groups have an exact match with him:

- Blincos of USA (descended from a 17thC immigrant)
- Blencowes of Bicester, Kings Sutton, Sussex and Essex
- Blincos of Slough/Windsor

Quite different are the Blincows of Whilton/Long Buckby. Different again are the Blencoes of Wisconsin who derive from emigrants from Gawcott near Buckingham, but they proved to be identical with the Blencos of Bethnal Green.

It was not necessary to test two groups: in one the male line was broken by an 18thC adoption another by a birth out of wedlock in the early 19thC.

Members of one or two minor groups have failed to trace male descendants.

Fig 5. The portrait of Anthony Blencowe in the chapel of Oriol College, Oxford is based on the contemporary portrait in The Provost's dining room. Anthony was Provost 1574 - 1618; his nephew Sir Henry built the present-day Blencowe Hall.



Sisson DNA Project

Carol Sisson Regehr. Family Tree DNA
Established 2002. 97 participants.

I am one of the co-administrators of the Sisson/Sissons DNA project.

In December 2008 we published an article reporting the first findings of our project, in the journal "New England Ancestors" published by the New England Historic Genealogical Society. In the last year, the journal was renamed "American Ancestors".

We have found that there are at least 3 different unrelated lineages named Sisson or Sissons. We designate them the Richard, Robert, and Thomas lineages after three 17th century immigrants to North America. We have a possible 4th lineage discovered after this article was published. We have found that for the spelling "Sissons", some are related to the Robert lineage and some to the Richard lineage of the spelling "Sisson".

We are very enthused about what the DNA study has done for our one-name study. We believe that some of this information could *not* have been ferreted out with only conventional paper research.

Our long-term goals are to determine the DNA results of Richard, Robert, and Thomas themselves, to



Fig 6. Barnabas Sisson was born 9 May 1772 in Portsmouth, Newport Co., Rhode Island, USA. He died 19 Aug 1809 in Sakonnet River and was buried in Union Cemetery, Po16, Portsmouth, Rhode Island.



Fig 7. Perry Sisson who died in Andersonville prison during the USA Civil War

test more participants in England to try to find the birthplaces of Richard, Robert, and Thomas; and to find the DNA result of the pre-Richard, pre-Robert, and pre-Thomas ancestors. After the article was published we did get a new participant from Australia, so we have added one more country to our list. We have participants from the U.S., Canada, England, Ireland, France, New Zealand, and Australia.

Our results are a stellar illustration of what DNA is ideally suited for in one-name studies. For a more in-depth report, see this article: Carol Sisson Regehr, "Results of a Y-Chromosome DNA Study on Surnames Sisson and Sissons," *New England Ancestors*, Vol. 9, nos. 5-6 (Holiday 2008), pp. 53-55.

Vick DNA Project

Larry Vick. Family Tree DNA. Established 2006. 65 Participants. 23 and Me for Autosomal testing.

The Vick Y-DNA Surname Project is limited to male members since only men have a Y chromosome and thus Y-DNA. The project has members from nine major clans. Two of the clans are English. One can be traced to Gloucestershire and the other to Sussex. Additionally, there are members who trace their ancestry to German, Danish, and Norwegian clans. Most project members are Americans and are descendants of Joseph Vick of Lower Parish, Isle of Wight County, Virginia (who first appears in the Virginia records in 1675). While it is highly likely Joseph was English, no records have been found that prove he was born in

England. Men with similar Y-DNA to that of the descendants of Joseph Vick live in Orkney and Shetland. Finally, there is an African-American clan that descends from slaves.

A second project, The Vick and Allied Families DNA project, has both male and female members and uses autosomal DNA as well as DNA from the X chromosome to augment the efforts of the Vick Y-DNA project. Autosomal DNA has been useful in examining family traditions. For example, one family claimed land in the U.S. in 1902 based upon Choctaw ancestry. The family's claim was denied due to lack of documentary evidence of Choctaw ancestry. Autosomal DNA testing of project members who are descendants of this family showed it was highly unlikely the family's claim was true.

For Further Information:

If you are interested in adding a DNA Project to your one-name study, simply contact me Susan Meates at DNA@one-name.org. I can provide references to various charts and articles on vendor selection, set up your project with proven marketing material, provide sample emails/letters for recruiting, and answer any question you may have. If someone else has already set up a project for your registered surname, there may still be possible solutions.

For help, questions and to get started: DNA@one-name.org.

It is recommended that you write before taking action, since help includes setting up your DNA Project with proven marketing material.

Vendors:

FamilyTreeDNA.com
Ancestry.com
DNAHeritage.com

Vendor neutral comparison charts by ISOGG (International Society of Genetic Genealogists).

Vendor Comparison from a Project Administrator's perception:

<http://www.isogg.org/features.htm>

Vendor comparison for Y-DNA tests
<http://www.isogg.org/ydnachart.htm>

Vendor comparison for mtDNA tests
<http://www.isogg.org/mtdnachart.htm>