

Cartledge Connection

Recent DNA analysis offers an intriguing match between descendants of Samuel [166] Stidham and another colonial-era family of English ancestry.

By Richard L. Stedham

The Stidham* Family DNA Study has revealed some surprising, and for many, painful discoveries over the past decade. The biggest came at the very beginning, back in 2000, when it was determined that descendants of Samuel [166] Stidham did *not* match the genetic signature of others in the study. This finding meant that a non-paternity event had taken place somewhere in this line, either with Samuel himself or possibly his father, Adam [102] Stedham.

If the children of Samuel [166] were not genetically descended on the direct male line from Timen Stiddem, than who was their ancestry derived from? A credible answer may be found in the Cartledge family of Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

A recent 67-marker match has been made between Jason Thomas Stidham (a Samuel [166] descendant) and a man named Dennis Catlidge in the FTDNA database. A 67-marker match is significant as it means

these two individuals (and by extension, all Samuel [166] descendants) share a common male ancestor in the not-too-distant past. There are only two possible outcomes: Either Samuel [166] descends from the Cartledge family (the original spelling of the name), or Mr. Catlidge is a descendant of Samuel [166].

Time will tell after more Cartledge men participate in the recently-launched Cartledge Surname DNA Project at FTDNA. At this writing, there's only two and neither of them match each other. If it turns out that Mr. Catlidge is an outlier within this surname, he will then have been found to actually be a Stidham, descended from Samuel (or Adam).

The evidence linking these two families is intriguing, as they both lived in relatively close proximity to each other at the same times, first in Pennsylvania, then later in North Carolina. However, no extant paper trail has been found tying members of the two families together, i.e., as witnesses to a will, or participants to common land transactions, etc.

Pennsylvania

Edmund Cartledge was granted a tract of land by William Penn in 1682 in what is now Darby, Delaware County, Penn. Edmund and his wife Mary were the parents of John Cartledge (b. 1684), Mary Cartledge (b. 1685) and Edmund (Jr.) (b. 1689).

Between 1716 and 1719, Edmund Jr. had settled to the west at Conestoga, near the Susquehanna River with his brother John, where they were established as Indian traders (see map on next page).

Contemporary to this time, Christopher [33] Stedham and his family lived on the western side of the Susquehanna River in Manchester Township, York County, Penn.

North Carolina

By 1747 Adam [102] Stedham has migrated south to Anson County, North Carolina, where Samuel [166] was born.

The Susquehanna River as seen from the Lancaster County side looking north and very much as it must have when Christopher [33] Stedham was living on the west side in York County, simultaneous to the Cartledge Brothers living on east side at Conestoga. Is a family secret now coming to light with the aid of science?



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM SEINF / SHANKS MARE SUSQUEHANNA HOUSE

In 1749, Edmund Cartledge was among several men who were made Justices of the Peace of Anson County, N.C.

Coincidence? Maybe, maybe not. What does the DNA say? Some how, some way, these two families share a common male ancestor—somewhere.

Hypothesis

The Cartledge and Stedham families become friends while living near the Susquehanna River in the early 1700s. By the mid-1700s, Adam Stedham and Edmund Cartledge, Jr., have migrated south together, either as friends, or maybe even as brothers. Questions: Did Edmund, Sr., have an affair with Christopher Stedham's wife and the Stedhams raise Adam as their own son? Or, did Edmund, Jr., have an extra-marital tryst with Adam's wife down in North Carolina, and the Stedhams raise Samuel as their son?

You can reverse these situations with Stedham men having their way with Cartledge women too, should it turn out that Dennis Catledge winds up in the Stidham family after all. We like to think of our ancestors as saints bound for heaven. Unfortunately, human nature tells us otherwise, time and time again. Setting possible infidelities aside, was it simply a case of unreported adoption? Maybe time will make that clearer as well.

I've said this before, but it bears repeating: When you run the numbers, there are more Stidhams* alive today who descend from Samuel [166] Stidham, than from all the other Stidham* lines—combined! Samuel [166] was a prolific progenitor indeed. In contrast, two of Timen Stiddem's sons, Lulof [2] and Erasmus [4], had their respective lines "daughter-out" in the late 1700s. With that many members of the Stidham* family unattached to Timen Stiddem through the Y-chromosome, maybe new DNA tests will show a family link after all through one of the Stidham daughters. But how can we test for that? Well, maybe now we can—to a point.

Introducing Autosomal DNA

Family Tree DNA has just announced a new tool in the arsenal of genetic family researchers called "Family Finder," which



Map of S.E. Pennsylvania counties, N.E. Maryland, N. Delaware and W. New Jersey

analyzes autosomal DNA. That's the genetic input we receive from ALL of our ancestors, not just the males in the direct male line in the case of the Y-chromosome.

This is exciting as we may begin to see family connections—genetically—where we might never have seen them before. With autosomal testing, Stidham* females can now participate in the study using their own DNA samples. Of this new test, the FTDNA's website states:

Family Finder projects, will allow for the analysis and comparisons between you and all members of your project. Compare all at once with the Family Finder "Viewer" and other genetic analytical tools.

The new Family Finder test and project tools also integrate with your existing Family Tree DNA project to take it to the "next level".

Surname projects can use Family Finder to better define branches in a family tree. By using Family Finder testing, close Y-chromosome and mtDNA matches without traditional records may be assigned to a pedigree with greater confidence. Even more exciting, surname projects may now bring female cousins into the project as additional evidence.

Is your interest piqued? To join, go to: <http://www.familytreedna.com/group-join.aspx?Group=Stedham>

The Stidham* Family DNA Study, launched in 2000, was one of the earliest surname projects undertaken at Family Tree DNA, the world's leading genetic genealogy company (www.familytreedna.com). The first group of study participants included 11 Stidham* males representing descendants from three of Timen's five sons: Lucas, Adam and Benedictus. Over the years, several other men bearing the Stidham* surname have joined the study, adding their genetic, Y-chromosome profiles to the ongoing accumulation of data on file there. The study now goes by the name of: Stidham/Stedman Surnames Project.