The Meek Family of Allegheny Co., PA

Meek Group A Introduction

In the 1770's a significant number of families named Meek(s) lived in S. W. Pennsylvania and they can be identified in the records of Westmoreland, Allegheny and Washington Counties. Not all of these families were related[1]. However, five of them were related to each other and not related to other Meek families in the area. This is known because Y-DNA testing on the descendants proves that they shared a common ancestor[2]. They came from Maryland based on pension records and may have lived in Virginia before going to Pennsylvania[3].

There was a single progenitor for this group that remains unknown. While it appears that **Jeremiah Meeks** who died in 1783 was the oldest member of the group the earliest date we have is **Joshua Meek's** date of birth of 1731 which is based on the age inscribed on his tombstone. **Basil Meek** was born in 1740 Maryland based on his pension application. **John Meek** was born about 1754 and **Jacob Meek** was born in 1755 Maryland based on his pension application.

Joshua and John settled in what is now Moon TWP, Allegheny Co., PA in 1774 and 1773 respectively. Jacob Meek settled in the same immediate vicinity in 1773 but in Findley TWP. The exact relationship between Joshua and the other two is not known and DNA is not available from his descendants. However, he is presumed to be a brother.

Jeremiah Meeks died in 1783 in nearby Westmoreland Co., PA. He is thought to be the same person who sold land located immediately south of Jacob in Findley TWP in 1779. Basil Meek served in the Virginia Army between 1777 and 1779 at Ft. Pitt. He came from and returned to York Co., SC. Thus, we have all five men living in the same area in the 1770's.

John and Jacob are identified as brothers by the writings of two descendants. Basil Meeks, grandson of John Meek born in 1754, wrote a typewritten letter dated August 20, 1920 about his family. He said of his grandfather, John Meek:

> "*He had a brother Jacob Meek, who was named in the will of John Meek as executer, the will dated 1801, copy of which I have. I have often heard my father speak of this Jacob as "old uncle Jacob Meek"*."

Jeremiah L. Meek, a son of Jacob Meek born 1755 wrote in an 1837 newspaper article in the Richmond Palladium in which he describes his family's migration from Pennsylvania to Henry Co., KY.

> "*We here left the Ohio and went up the Licking River as far as Cynthiana where father had a brother-in-law residing. We spent the winter there and in the month of March 1793 he moved out to the extreme frontier where his brother, John Meek, had built a station.*"

In addition, Basil Meek can be identified as a brother of John and Jacob. The obituary of Jacob Meek born 1755 was published in the Richman, Indiana Palladium on May 23, 1840. In the last paragraph it states:

> "*DIED - In the county Henry in the State of Kentucky about six weeks since, Basil Meek, a brother of the above aged one hundred and nine years. He was also a patriot of the revolution.*"

[1] The Meek/Meeks Y-DNA Project http://meekdna.com
[2] Most recent common ancestor (MRCA): The most recent ancestor from whom a group of individuals share descent.
[3] Joshua, son of Jeremiah, is found in the records of Berkeley Co., VA and Basil born 1740 joined the army in Winchester, VA.

Y-DNA testing supports the genealogical evidence that they were brothers. The relationship of Jeremiah to the others is not known although it is believed that he was not the father as it is thought that he had sons named Joshua, John, and Jeremiah[4] who lived next to each other in Westmoreland Co., PA at the same time that Joshua and John lived in Allegheny Co., PA.

There is no proof that the men in Westmoreland County were related let alone that Jeremiah was the father. There is little question that the two men named Joshua were different men based on the documents available. One Y-DNA test for a descendant of Joshua Meeks of Westmoreland County Indicates he shared a common ancestor with the men named Meek in Allegheny County.

John and Jacob move to Henry Co., KY. John dies in 1803. Basil joins the family in Henry County about 1806. Joshua remained in Allegheny Co., PA and Jeremiah's son Joshua moved to Fairfield Co., OH.

This group of men represented at least two separate branches of the same family. One family was led by Jeremiah, and one was presumably led by the father of Basil, John and Jacob. Whether or not these two were brothers is an open question. However, it appears the common ancestor was born before 1690. There were very few American Meek ancestors born before this date who were old enough to have been the progenitor or have not been eliminated by Y-DNA testing.

	Common Ancestor	
Joshua b: 1731	Unknown Father	Jeremiah d: 1783
Joshua b: 1800	Basil b: 1740	Joshua b: <1745
Jeremiah b: 1804	John b: 1754	John
Bazel b: 1811	Jacob b: 1755	Jeremiah
	Daughter*	Ann=Ralph Cherry

*Jacob stopped in "Cynthiana" to visit his brother-in-law.

> Joshua's position relative to the others is unknown although it seems probable that he was a brother of Basil, John and Jacob. He could have been an uncle or first cousin. His father was born before 1713 and probably earlier assuming he was at least 18 when Joshua was conceived.

The Y-DNA common ancestor does not have to be the father of Jeremiah. He could have lived several generations earlier. However, this was a small compact group with little evidence that there were other relatives named Meek in America in the early 1700's. Two or more brothers (or cousins) came to Maryland and by 1773 lived in S. W. Pennsylvania. (See The Meek/Meeks Family of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Kentucky, 2nd Ed, 4 Jul 2007, by Christopher A. Meek.)

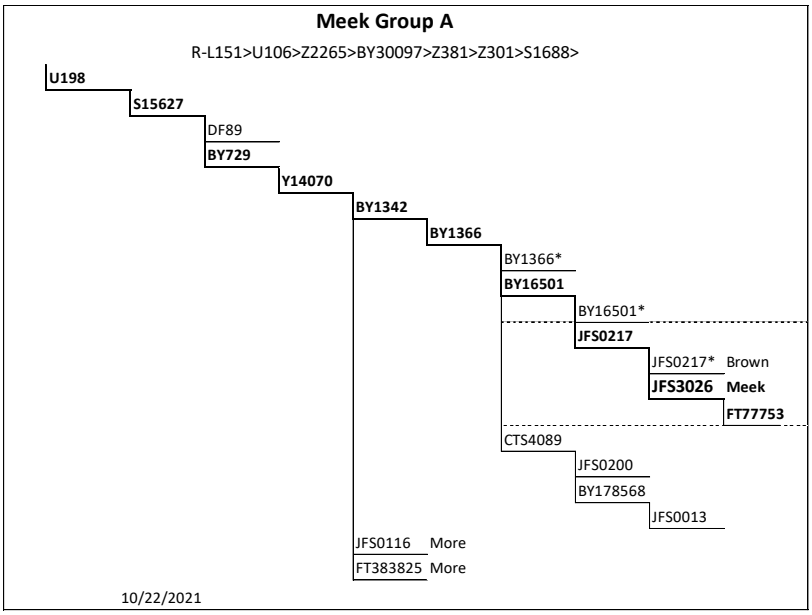
Y-DNA STR[5] marker testing has also proven that this group of men was not related to several other early Meek ancestors[6]. They were not related to the men who lived in nearby Washington Co., PA including Samuel Meek born 1732, Isaac Meek born 1746, Nathaniel Meek and Basil Meek born 1763. Also in this group were Jacob Meek who died in Henry Co., TN in 1824 and Jeremiah Meek born about 1788 and Jacob Meek born about 1765 who moved from Blount Co., TN to Carroll Co., AR. These ancestors are in DNA Group B. Group A was also not related to any other group or individual identified by the DNA project.

[4] Westmoreland Co., PA deed records
[5] STR=Short tandem repeat
[6] No two men with significantly dissimilar Y-DNA signatures can descend from the same common ancestor.

Group A Haplogroup/SNP

Four members of Group A named Meek and four members named Brown have been SNP tested with the Big Y-700 test at Family Tree DNA (FTDNA). Of the four men named Meek three of them descend from different sons of John Meek born about 1754. The results indicate a branch of the haplogroup[7] R-L151 defined by the SNP[8] marker R-JFS3026, a branch of JFS0217. This marker is part of the U198 branch of U106 which is the second largest branch of L151. No other known person named Meek(s) outside of the Meek Project Group A is classified in the U106 branch of L151.

Two of the four men named Meek descend from John Meek's son Bazil, born about 1774. One of the men descends from John Meek's son John, born about 1776. The sons of Bazil are positive for the SNP R-FT77753 a branch of R-JFS3026. The descendant of John's son John is negative for FT77753. John Meek born about 1754 was almost certainly positive for JFS3026 and negative for FT77753. A fourth man descends from Baker Meek, born about 1815. It is unlikely Baker Meek descended from John Meek born about 1754 based on genealogy. This member is positive for JFS3026 and negative for FT77753.



Note: The step chart was developed from data compiled by the U198 haplogroup project headed by John Sloan of Belfast, Ireland. In addition, information was obtained from Family Tree DNA. The step chart does not include all branches of U198.

All male descendants of John Meek born about 1754 will be positive for JFS3026 if not additional branches. All members of Group A (descendants of John Meek's extended family) are presumed to be positive for JFS3026.

It is beyond the scope of this article to explain haplogroups and SNPs in detail. SNP testing is the lesser-known part of Y-DNA testing. SNPs looks at a single point on the DNA and is more stable than STR markers. Each branch of the haplotree represent a continuous line of descent from an ancient unknown ancestor.

The above chart shows the general area of the haplotree[9] where Group A resides (begins at JFS0217). At this time Group A can be defined as descendants of the first man who carried the SNP mutation JFS0217. One of his descendants was the first man to carry the SNP mutation

[7] Haplogroup: A group of similar haplotypes that share a common ancestor with a SNP mutation. Source: ISOGG glossary
[8] SNP= Single nucleotide polymorphism
[9] Haplotree: A diagram or chart showing the different lineages within a haplogroup. Source: ISOGG glossary

JFS3026. The first man to have the Meek surname may or may not have preceded the first man to carry the JFS3026 mutation. The common ancestor of all men named Meek in Group A likely descended from a man that carried the JFS3026 mutation. However, JFS0217 had at least one other branch, negative for JFS3026. That branch is populated with descendants of a man named Brown.

The common ancestor of descendants named Brown descended from a man who was positive for JFS0217 and a yet to be identified branch of JFS0217. The Meek and Brown surname are believed to have connected within genealogical time frames based on genealogy and the complete Y-DNA data for Group A including the four Big Y-700 tests for the Brown surname. It is not known which surname came first.

Group A Ancestral Signature

The defining STR[10] markers in the Group A ancestral signature[11] are a fairly unique set of marker values. Normally one determines this by simply noting the deviations from the R1b (R-L151) modal values[12]. However, thanks to the U198 Haplogroup Project certain STR marker values in the Group A ancestral signature can be associated with certain U198 subgroups, some of which can be associated with SNP markers. SNPs and STRs work together to reveal family history but mutate independently.

R-U198 is a branch of the Western European haplogroup R-U106. U106 can be partially identified by the STR markers DYS390=23 and DYS492=13. U198 can be predicted with a high degree of confidence by the STR markers DYS390=23, YCAII=19-22, DYS607=14 and DYS492=13. This type of prediction is not possible for all haplogroups and must be confirmed by SNP testing.

S15627 is a major branch of U198. His descendants carry the STR marker value DYS464=x-x-x-18 usually 15-15-17-18. One of his descendants had the SNP mutation BY729 (Y14069). His descendants carry the STR marker values DYS393=14, DYS464=14-x-x-x (or 14-15-17-18), and DYS576=16.

BY729 (Y14069) had a descendant with the SNP mutation Y14070 (Y14201) and then BY1342 and then BY1366 (Y14201). BY1366 descendants carry the STR markers values DYS439=13 & DYS534=16. A descendant of BY1366 had the SNP mutation JFS0217. His descendants carry the STR marker values DYS458=16, DYS449=30, DYS464=x-14-x-x (or 14-14-17-18). It is not clear in which generation the each STR mutation occurred.

This process involved real men in a long line of descent. About the time the JFS0217 mutation occurred the Group A ancestral STR signature had reached its current configuration. It is not known what surname the ancestor used at that time. What is known is that the line of descent diverged and the Meek and Brown surnames each developed. The Meek line had the mutation JFS3026. The Brown line descends from JFS0217 without a branch (SNP) name yet identified. Indications are that the split may have occurred as recent as the 1500 or 1600's. The mutations at STR marker DYS442 may or may not distinguish the Brown surname from the Meek surname.

[10] Defining STR markers are those markers that make one haplotype different from another.
[11] Ancestral haplotype: The haplotype of a MRCA deduced by comparing descendants' haplotypes and eliminating mutations.
[12] A modal haplotype is the most commonly occurring haplotype (a set of STR marker values)

Thus, we have the ancestral signature for Group A with the 12 defining STR marker values of DYS393=14, DYS390=23, DYS439=13, DYS458=16, DYS449=30, DYS464=14-14-17-18, YCAII=19-22, DYS607=14, DYS576=16, DYS534=16, DYS492=13. It is not necessary for an individual to match all defining markers. Mutations can occur in any marker in any generations. What is important is when a mutation occurred. STR markers enable us to identify related individuals where the last name is Brown or Meek and the individual has not been SNP tested.

In most cases, a person with a Y-DNA test does not need to know how the ancestral signature developed over time. However, some Group A members may have numerous "matches" some of which have other surnames that may be more distantly related. Understanding this information may help explain these matches. Each mutation, whether SNPs or STRs, represents time. While member may be "related" to most of his matches the connection may date to before JFS0217 or even well before genealogically significant time frames.

There have been many attempts to devise formulae to calculate when any given SNP or STR mutation on the tree began. They are largely based on statistics for large populations such as all men who are positive for L151. However, due to the random nature of DNA mutation, various unknown factors, and smaller sample sizes these efforts to date SNPs or STR's do not always prove reliable for smaller groups such as JFS3026.

The following chart shows the ancestral signature for STR markers and how it changed from the L151 modal values over time as SNP mutations occurred. A STR mutation does not necessarily occur in the same generation as a SNP mutation. It is a continuous process as there are an unknown number of generations between each SNP marker. As can be seen there is two mutations in the second panel. While there may be some in the third panel none are identified in this report due to uncertainty about modal values in this panel.

DYS name -->	DSY393	DSY390	DSY19	DSY391	DYS385a	DYS385b	DYS426	DSY388	DYS439	DYS389I	DYS392	DYS389Ii	DYS458	DSY459a	DYS459b	DYS455	DYS454	DSY447	DSY437	DSY448	DYS449	DYS464a	DYS464b	DYS464c	DYS464d	DYS460	Y-GATA-H4	YCAIIa	YCAIIb	DYS456	DYS607	DYS576	DYS570	CDYa	CDYb	DYS442	DYS438	
R1b Modal	13	24	14	11	11	14	12	12	12	13	13	29	17	9	10	11	11	25	15	19	29	15	15	17	17	11	11	19	23	16	15	18	17	37	38	12	12	
U198		23																											22		14								
S15627																									18														
Y14069 (14-14 sub-group)	14																					14										16							
Y14201									13																														
JFS0217													16								30		14																**1-37**
Gp A - JFS3026	**14**	**23**	14	11	11	14	12	12	**13**	13	13	29	**16**	9	10	11	11	25	15	19	**30**	**14**	**14**	17	18	11	11	19	**22**	16	**14**	**16**	17	**36**	38	12	12	**Meek**
Gp A -	14	23	14	11	11	14	12	12	13	13	13	29	16	9	10	11	11	25	15	19	30	14	14	17	18	11	11	19	22	16	14	16	17	36	38	12	12	Brown

DYS name -->	DYS531	DYS578	DYS395S1a	DYS395S1b	DYS590	DYS537	DYS641	DYS472	DYS406S1	DYS511	DYS425	DYS413a	DYS413b	DYS557	DYS594	DYS436	DYS490	DYS534	DYS450	DYS444	DYS481	DYS520	DYS446	DYS617	DYS568	DYS487	DYS572	DYS640	DYS492	DYS565	
R1b Modal	11	9	15	16	8	10	10	8	10	10	12	23	23	16	10	12	12	15	8	12	22	20	13	12	11	13	11	11	12	12	38-67
U198																													13		
S15627																															
Y14069 (14-14 sub-group)																															
Y14201																		16													
JFS0217																															
Gp A - JFS3026 - Meek	11	9	15	16	8	10	10	8	10	10	12	23	23	16	10	12	12	**16**	8	12	22	20	13	12	11	13	11	11	**13**	13	**Meek**
Gp A - - Brown	11	9	15	16	8	10	10	8	10	10	12	23	23	16	10	12	12	**16**	8	12	22	20	13	12	11	13	11	11	**13**	13	Brown

	DYS name -->	DYS710	DYS485	DYS632	DYS495	DYS540	DYS714	DYS716	DYS717	DYS505	DYS556	DYS549	DYS589	DYS522	DYS494	DYS533	DYS636	DYS575	DYS638	DYS462	DYS452	DYS445	Y-GATA-A10	DYS463	DYS441	Y-GGAATA-1807	DYS525	DYS712	DYS593	DYS650	DYS532	DYS715	DYS504	DYS513	DYS561	DYS552	DYS726	DYS635	DYS587	DYS643	DDY497	DYS510	DYS434	DYS461	DYS435
	R1b-L11 Modal	35	15	9	16	12	25	26	19	12	11	13	12	10	9	12	12	10	11	11	30	12	13	24	13	10	10	20	15	18	15	23	18	12	15	24	12	23	18	10	14	17	9	12	11
JFS0217																																													
Gp A - JFS3026 -Meek		36	15	9	16	12	26	26	19	12	11	13	12	10	9	12	12	10	11	11	30	12	12	24	13	10	10	20	15	19	13	24	16	11	15	24	12	25	18	10	14	17	9	11	11
Gp A -	- Brown	?	15	9	16	12	26	26	19	12	11	13	12	10	9	12	12	10	11	11	30	12	12	24	13	10	10	20	15	19	13	24	16	11	15	24	12	25	18	10	14	17	9	11	11
		Note: R1b modal values, for this panel, are less certain and not used in this report to determine defining markers.																																											

Any direct male descendant named Meek or Brown of the ancestors named earlier will generally have the same or similar Y-DNA results. STR results for individual members may or may not have more recent mutations since the time of the common ancestor for each branch. Where a mutation exists, it represents a location on the family tree. Descendants of the person who first carried the mutation will have the same mutation. These more recent mutations will not have a bearing on earlier generations or other branches of the family tree. Whether or not a person belongs in Group A depends on him matching most of the defining marker in the STR signature or being positive for the SNP marker JFS0217.

Summary

Genetic genealogy combines traditional genealogy with genetics, in this case Y-DNA. The Group A Meek family consists of a number of early American ancestors tied together by surname, proximity or association as well as some documentation connecting some but not all of these ancestors together. Y-DNA adds the fact that all the known Meek ancestors matching the Group A ancestral signature shared a common Meek ancestor at some point in history and excludes all other Meek ancestors whose descendants have done the same test. This latter fact should increase the level of confidence for conclusions reached using traditional genealogy.

Y-DNA does not reveal who the common ancestor was or when he lived. There is some documentation indicating Basil, John and Jacob were brothers. It is a reasonable hypothesis that the genetic common ancestor was the unknown man who was in fact their father. On the other hand, there is no documentation addressing how Jeremiah Meeks was related to the others. However, Y-DNA on a single descendant of a probable son indicated that he shared a common ancestor named Meek with the other ancestors in Group A.

In the case of Joshua Meek of Allegheny Co., PA there is no documentation concerning a relationship with the others, not even Y-DNA. What documentation that does exist tells us that he lived next to and associated with John and Jacob Meek. In the absence of negative information, he is included in the group.

Y-DNA SNP and STR testing extends the paternal line back in time to the first man who was positive for the R-U198 and U106 SNPs. It identifies a unique STR marker signature for men who are positive for R-JFS0217. No other person named Meek thus far tested for Y-DNA has been found to be positive for U106 or any of its branches except the men named Meek in Meek Project Group A. The surname Brown is more likely to be found in most haplogroups.

The Brown and Meek families descend from common ancestors who were positive for the SNPs JFS0217 and JFS3026 respectively. They in turn descended from a common ancestor who was positive for JFS0217. Timing of when the Meek/Brown common ancestors was born is

problematic, but indications are it could have been a small number of generations. His surname is unknown.

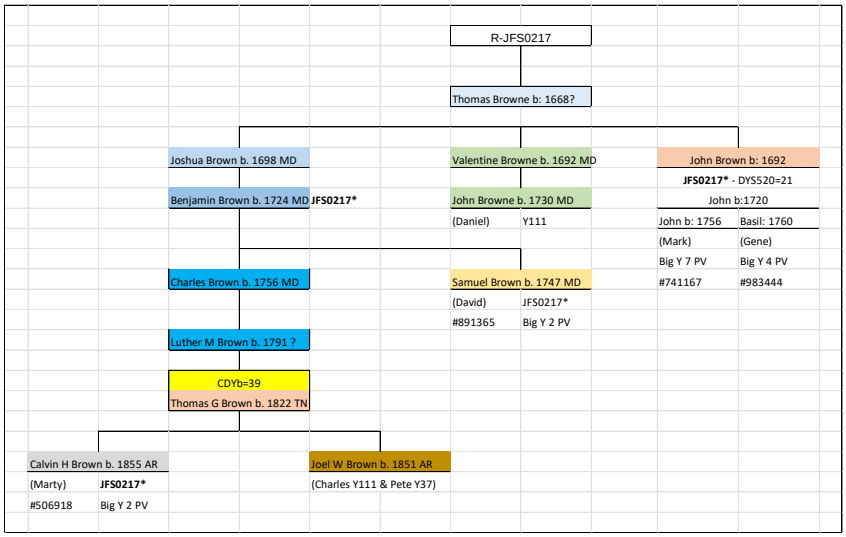
Thus, we have a small group of related early American ancestors named Meek(s), uniquely identified by Y-DNA, who came out of Maryland and settled in S. W. Pennsylvania in the 1770's. Many of their descendants are known through genealogy.

By Christopher A. Meek 24 May 2011/Rev Jan 2012/Rev Jan 2013/Rev Mar 2017/Rev Mar 2018/Rev May 2018/Rev Jun 2018/Rev Aug 2018/Rev Nov 2018/Rev Dec 2018/Rev May 2019/Rev Nov 2021/Rev Nov 2022

Addendum: The Brown Family

Seven men with the surnamed Brown have completed a Y-DNA test. The earliest known ancestor is believed to be Thomas Browne born about 1668 in Ann Arundel Co., MD. Y-DNA tests on seven descendants demonstrates there is a genetic link and supports the genealogies. This group has a very similar 111 Y-DNA marker ancestral signature to the men named Meek in Meek Project Group A. Four members in this group have completed the Big Y-700 advanced SNP test which confirms the connection to the Meek family through a common ancestor who was positive for the SNP mutation R-JFS0217.

Thomas Browne born 1668 had at least three known son whose descendants did a Y-DNA test. The Valentine Browne branch has one descendant tested to 111 markers. The John Brown branch has two member who have tested to the Big Y level. The Joshua Brown branch had four descendants tested. One man tested to 37 markers and one to 111 markers. Two members did the Big Y test.



The Joshua line also split after his grandson, Benjamin Brown. The Samuel branch had one descendant tested and the Charles branch had three descendants tested. The brown family split again with different sons of Thomas G. Brown. The way the men tested are positioned on the family tree allows for a determination of what the ancestral signature is with a high degree of confidence. Based on modal values alone it might appear that the Y-DNA STR marker signature for men named Brown may deviate on two markers from those of men named Meek. However, when genealogical information is considered, it is this author's opinion that the ancestral signature may varies on only one marker, DYS710. Unfortunately, the ancestral value for DYS710 cannot be resolved with the number of tests available. DYS710 is a fast-mutating marker, and one marker alone should not be used to determine a genetic branch.

The unique STR marker ancestral signature will be useful to identify men named Brown who might belong to this Brown family. For those men without genealogies, the lack of significant STR marker mutations to distinguish between branches or even the JFS3026 Meek families more research is indicated. Testing beyond 37 markers may not provide additional information that will determine which branch a member belongs to. The possible exception would be upgrading to the Big Y test. There is still potential with SNP testing. Both members who descend from the Joshua Brown line and completed the Big Y test have two private variants. The two members who descend

from the John Brown line and completed the Big Y test have four and seven private variants. Each private variant is potentially a new branch at some point in the line of descent.

The Brown and Meek families connect at an unknown ancestor who carried the JFS0217 mutation. The four Meek testers who did the Big Y-700 test are all positive for JFS3026 which is a subclade of JFS0217. The four Brown members are negative for JFS3026 and in a yet to be identified genetic branch. The three of the four Meek members descend from different sons of John Meek born about 1754. Therefore, the connection between the Brown and Meek families predates 1754. The four Brown testers who did the Big Y-700 test are all positive for JFS0217. The Brown members descend from different sons of Thomas Brown born about 1622. Therefore, the connection between the Brown and Meek families predates 1622.