

The Meek Family from Antrim, Ireland

Meek Group E Introduction

The Meek/Meeks DNA Project¹ has established Y-DNA signatures² for a significant number of early American ancestors. This allows for a determination of which Meek ancestors were related and which ones were not related. Group E consists of more than 25 members representing known 1700 era American Meek ancestors³. There is little or no reliable genealogical information to tie them together. Y-DNA 37 STR⁴ marker tests on their descendants indicate that they all shared a common Meek ancestor. Most of them lived in Ontario, Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas. While there is family legend that indicates many of them were born in Ireland the only one who has a proven place of birth is Thomas whose son moved to Canada.

Table 1

Name	DOB	Residence	Spouse
Adam Meek	<1726	Cecil Co., MD	Jean Mitchell
Adam Meek	1729	Mecklenburg Co., NC	Elizabeth Miller
Robert Meek	1732	Brooks Co., VA	Elizabeth Alexander
Adam Meek	1746	Jefferson Co., TN	Martha Wallace
Joseph Meek	1744	Washington Co., VA	Lydia
Thomas Meek	1745	Antrim, Ire/Ontario	Jean Redman
John Meek	1745	Laurens Co., SC	Eleanor Mills
Moses Meek	1755	Mecklenburg Co., NC	Margaret

Dates of birth not confirmed and vary in different genealogies.

The men listed in Table 1 shared a common Meek ancestor. How they were related or when the common ancestor lived is not revealed by DNA alone. Some genealogies report that more than one of the Group E ancestors was a descendant of Matthew Meek son of Adam Meek of Lincolnshire, England. The original source⁵ for this was H. B. Meek who has been discredited concerning the early generations. There is no evidence to support this theory⁶. There is no evidence to prove which Matthew Meek the early authors referred to or who his sons were. Likewise there is no evidence to prove the existence of John Alexander Meek born 1686. Even if he was a real person there is no evidence regarding who his sons were. Caution is advised concerning undocumented genealogies that claim to know who the fathers of any of the ancestors in Table 1 were.

In addition to the ancestors in Table 1 a number of ancestors whose descendants currently or recently lived in Ireland have also completed a Y-DNA test. The ancestors in Table 2 represent as many as three different branches of the Group E family based on the Y-DNA signature as discussed later. More importantly they represent branches that did not migrate to America before modern times and therefore tend to support the hypothesis that at least some of the American branches came from County Antrim, Ireland.

Table 2

Name	DOB	Residence
William Meek	1791	Ballintoy, Antrim, Ireland
William Meek	<1820	Ballymena, Antrim, Ireland
James Meek	<1825	Broughshane, Antrim, Ireland

The DNA project also includes men in the United States whose Meek ancestors cannot be traced back to the 1700's and thus cannot be tied to the ancestors in Table 1. The ancestors in Table 3

¹ <http://meekdna.com>

² 37 Y-DNA STR marker results. AKA DNA haplotype, signature or profile

³ [The Meek/Meeks Family of the United States Prior to 1800](#), by Christopher A. Meek, Jan 13, 2012

⁴ STR=short tandem repeat

⁵ [A Meek Genealogy](#) by H. B. Meek, 1902

⁶ [The Progenitor Myth](#) by Christopher A. Meek, 30 Apr, 2010

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may or may not descend from the ancestors in Table 1. They or their parents may have emigrated directly from Ireland and belonged to different branches of the Meek family.

Table 3

Name	DOB	Residence
William Meek	1792	Marshall Co., TN
Moses Meek	1793	Giles Co., TN
Samuel Meek	1798	Wayne Co., OH
James F. Meek	1821	Marshall Co., TN
Samuel Meek	1814	Ontario, Canada
William W. Meeks	1844	Montgomery Co., AR
Rupert Meek	1871	Ontario, Canada

All of the ancestors in Tables 1 through 3 share the same surname and the same or similar Y-DNA signature. Thus, they are related and share a common Meek ancestor. Genealogical research should proceed along this line and all other Meek ancestors whose descendants have been tested and do not match⁷ should be excluded from consideration.

The basic Y-DNA signature⁸ that ties all Group E men together can vary slightly with individuals and/or different branches of the family. STR marker results can be analyzed by examining the changes in the pattern of marker values. This usually requires multiple tests from descendants of different sons of a given ancestor. For instance the project has four descendants of Joseph Meek through three different sons. It is a fairly simple process to determine what the Y-DNA ancestral signature for Joseph Meek descendants is. In other words it is what Joseph Meek's Y-DNA test might have looked like if it was possible to test him.

The following chart shows the ancestral signature, defining markers and subgroup differences. The blue fonts indicate the defining markers for Group E and the colored cells indicate defining markers for subgroups. The third panel lacks sufficient data but may contain up to four defining markers for the group markers.

DYS name -->	DYS393	DYS390	DYS19	DYS391	DYS385a	DYS385b	DYS426	DYS388	DYS439	DYS389i	DYS392	DYS389ii	DYS458	DYS459a	DYS459b	DYS455	DYS454	DYS447	DYS437	DYS448	DYS449	DYS464a	DYS464b	DYS464c	DYS464d	DYS460	Y-Gata H4	YCAIIa	YCAIIb	DYS607	DYS576	CDYb	CDYa	DYS441	DYS438								
L151 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						
Group E - R-A21073	13	24	14	11	11	14	12	12	12	13	14	29	17	9	10	11	11	25	15	19	30	15c	15c	16g	18c	11	11	19	23	16	14	17	17	37	41	12	12						
Subgroup 1	13	24	14	11	11	14	12	12	12	13	14	29	17	9	10	11	11	25	15	19	30	15c	15c	16g	18c	11	11	19	23	16	14	17	17	37	41	12	12						
Subgroup 2a	13	24	14	12	11	14	12	12	12	13	14	29	17	9	10	11	11	25	15	19	30	15c	15c	16g	18c	11	11	19	23	16	14	17	17	37	41	12	12						
Subgroup 2c	13	24	14	12	11	14	12	12	12	13	14	29	17	9	10	11	11	25	15	19	30	15c	15c	16g	18c	11	11	19	23	16	14	16	17	37	41	12	12						
Subgroup 2b	13	24	14	12	11	14	12	12	12	13	14	29	17	9	10	11	11	25	15	19	30	15c	15c	16g	18c	11	11	19	23	16	14	17	17	37	40	12	12						
DYS name -->	DYS531	DYS578	DYF395S1a	DYF395S1b	DYS590	DYS537	DYS641	DYS472	DYF406S1	DYS511	DYS425	DYS413a	DYS413b	DYS557	DYS594	DYS436	DYS490	DYS534	DYS450	DYS444	DYS481	DYS520	DYS446	DYS617	DYS568	DYS487	DYS572	DYS640	DYS492	DYS655													
L151 Modal	11	9	15	16	8	10	10	8	10	10	12	23	23	16	10	12	12	15	8	11	22	20	13	12	11	13	11	11	12	12													
Group E - R-A21073	11	9	15	16	8	10	10	8	10	9	12	23	25	16	10	12	12	15	8	11	22	20	13	12	11	13	11	11	12	12													
Subgroup 1	11	9	15	16	8	10	10	8	10	9	12	23	25	16	10	12	12	15	8	11	22	20	13	12	11	13	11	11	12	12													
Subgroup 2a	11	9	15	16	8	10	10	8	10	9	12	23	25	16	10	12	12	15	8	11	22	20	13	12	11	13	11	11	12	12													
Subgroup 2c	11	9	15	16	8	10	10	8	11	9	12	23	25	16	11	12	12	15	8	11	22	20	13	12	11	13	11	11	12	11													
Subgroup 2b	11	9	15	16	8	10	10	8	10	9	12	23	25	16	10	12	12	15	8	11	22	20	13	12	11	13	11	11	12	12													
DYS name -->	DYS710	DYS485	DYS495	DYS540	DYS714	DYS717	DYS505	DYS549	DYS589	DYS522	DYS494	DYS533	DYS686	DYS688	DYS575	DYS462	DYS462	DYS445	DYS445	Y-GATA-A10	DYS463	DYS441	Y-GGAAT-1B07	DYS525	DYS599	DYS650	DYS532	DYS715	DYS504	DYS513	DYS561	DYS562	DYS726	DYS683	DYS587	DYS643	DYS497	DYS510	DYS434	DYS461	DYS435		
L151 Modal	35	15	9	16	12	26	19	12	11	13	12	9	12	12	10	11	11	30	12	13	24	13	10	10	15	19	24	17	12	15	24	12	23	18	10	14	17	9	12	11			
Group E - R-A21073	33	17	9	16	12	27	19	12	11	14	12	10	9	12	12	10	11	30	12	13	24	13	11	10	15	18	12	26	17	12	15	24	12	25	18	10	14	17	9	12	11		
Subgroup 1																																											
Subgroup 2a																																											
Subgroup 2c																																											
Subgroup 2b																																											

⁷ A match is usually based on the pattern of marker values which sets a family apart from other families or groups.

⁸ DYS391=11, DYS392=14, DYS449=30, DYS464=15, 15, 16,18, DYS607=14, DYS576=17 and CDY=37, 41

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Group E can be divided into two sub-groups based on the two markers DYS391 and CDY. One of the dividing points comes with the men who have DYS391=11 and those who have DYS391=12. Using only one marker to define a group is a speculative proposition. However, one can start with a known fact that Joseph Meek had DYS391=11. Eleven is the common value for men in the R-P312 haplogroup. Any given modern day person today could have a recent mutation in this marker that does not reflect his earliest known ancestor's value. However, one would not expect to see this marker randomly mutate to the same value in so many tests of related men. Therefore, men who have DYS391=12 tend to stand out. The implication is that the men with DYS391=11 had a different common ancestor than the men with DYS391=12. In other words they represent different branches of the same family.

Table 4

DYS391=11	DYS391=12
Adam Meek b: <1726	Adam Meek b: 1729
Joseph Meek b: 1744	Robert Meek b: 1732
Thomas Meek b: 1745	Adam Meek b: 1746
	John Meek b: 1745
	Moses Meek b: 1755

Most of the ancestors listed in Table 4 have CDY= 37, 41. The second number (41) is the off modal value. CDY is a relatively volatile maker but CDYb=41 is relatively stable in Group E. The single descendant of John Meek born 1745 and two of three descendants of Moses Meek born 1755 have CDY=37, 40. Two members (father and son) who are descendants of Moses' son Josiah have CDY=38, 39. This appears to be a more recent mutation and points out the difficulty in using CDY for this type of analysis. However the hypothesis is that CDY=37, 40 represents a branch of subgroup 2. It is named subgroup 2b.

This hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that each of these sub-groups has a member whose family did not migrate to America (Table 2). They are shown in the bottom row of Table 5. Again the lack of multiple tests diminishes this support. However it appears that CDY= 37, 40 pre-date the mid 1700's. While any one of the listed descendants could be incorrectly classified due to recent mutations it is unlikely that all three descendants would be found to have recent mutations in this marker.

Table 5

DYS391=11	DYS391=12, CDYb=41	DYS391=12, CDYb=40
Adam Meek b: <1726	Adam Meek b: 1729	John Meek b: 1745
Joseph Meek b: 1744	Robert Meek b: 1732	Moses Meek b: 1755
Thomas Meek b: 1745	Adam Meek b: 1746	
William Meek b: <1820	James Meek b: <1825	William Meek b: 1791

Two recent subgroup 2 members whose families have been in Canada for generations have DYS576=16 as does the descendant of John Meek born about 1745. However, they also have CDY=37, 41 where the descendant of John Meek born about 1745 has CDY=37, 40. Undocumented genealogies indicate that John's brother, William, went to Canada after the Revolutionary War. In fact there was a Loyalist named William Meek appearing in Canadian records. This suggests that John Meek born 1745 belongs in a separate subgroup rather than subgroup 2b and mutation in CDY apparently is of recent origins.

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Table 6

Subgroup 1 DYS391=11, CDYb=41	Subgroup 2a DYS391=12, CDYb=41	Subgroup 2b DYS391=12, CDYb=40	Subgroup 2c DYS391=12, DYS576=16
Adam Meek b: <1726	Adam Meek b: 1729	Moses Meek b: 1755	John Meek b: 1745
Joseph Meek b: 1744	Robert Meek b: 1732		
Thomas Meek b: 1745	Adam Meek b: 1746		
William Meek b: 1792	James F. Meeks b: 1821	Moses Meek b: 1792	Samuel b: 1814
Samuel Meek b: <1798	William W. Meeks b: 1844		Rupert Meek b: 1871
William Meek b: <1820	James Meek b: <1825	William Meek b: 1791	

In summary the hypothesis is that DYS391 divides Group E. Those members with DYS391=12 are further divided by the marker CDY or DYS576. There are difficulties with the lack of genealogical data and lack multiple tests for each ancestor but based on the fact that there is a member of three subgroups whose family did not migrate to America this hypothesis is worth exploring.

Group E represents a large extended family that lived in Northern Ireland in the early 1700's. They originally may have come from England during the early Plantation period. Y-DNA indicates at least three branches that migrated to America with a member of each branch remaining in Ireland.

The earliest Group E ancestor known to have migrated to America was Adam Meek born before 1726. He resided in Cecil Co., MD as early as 1752. He had a brother named John Meek who had several sons. There was also a man named William Meek who appeared in the Cecil County tax records with Adam. According to his will he had a brother named James and sons named James and William. Some of Adam Meek's sons moved to York Co., SC.

It is likely that Adam Meek born about 1729 also lived in Cecil Co., MD before moving to Mecklenburg Co., NC. While it is now known through Y-DNA that these two men named Adam Meek were related Y-DNA suggests that they may not have been closely related. They were not father and son, brothers and may not have been first cousins.

Joseph Meek settled in Washington Co., VA as early as 1787. Very little is known about his early life or whether he came to America with his parent or on his own. A son of Thomas Meek immigrated to Ontario about 1818 and was the last of the early ancestors to come to America.

The early ancestors in the second sub-group include Adam Meek born about 1729 mentioned above and Adam Meek born 1746 who lived in Jefferson Co., TN. While they fall into the same sub-group Y-DNA does not prove they were more closely related than they were to any other member of the sub-group. Adam Meek born 1729 was in Maryland as early as 1752 and Adam Meek born 1746 immigrated to South Carolina from Ireland as a young man. They were not likely father and son as is often reported.

Also in the second sub-group was Robert Meek born about 1732 who married Elizabeth Alexander. He first appears in records of Ohio Co., VA. He is often confused with Robert Meek who lived in Cumberland Co., PA. However Y-DNA excludes the descendants from being related.

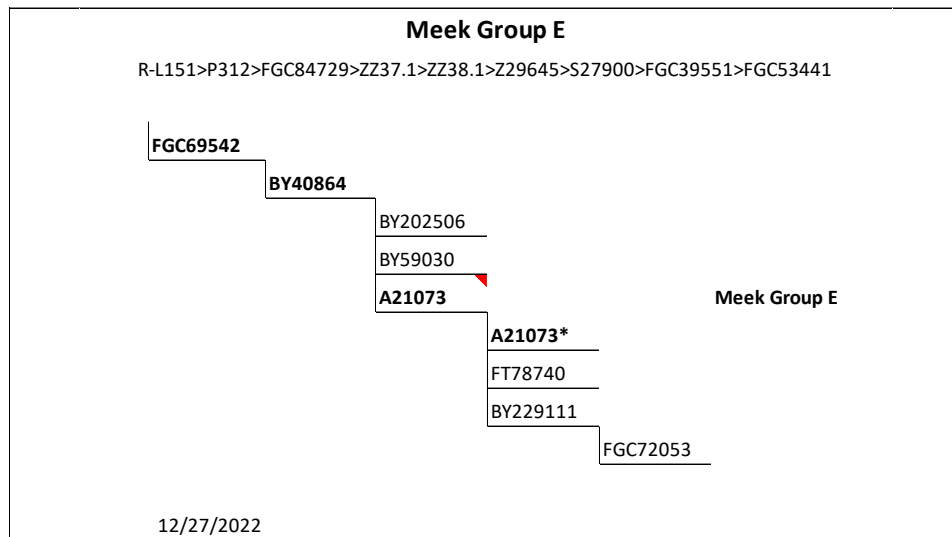
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Robert born 1732 was unique because he first appeared in the records Ohio and S. W. Pennsylvania, a considerable distance from the east coast.

The third sub-group includes Moses Meek born about 1755. He first appeared in the 1790 census of Mecklenburg Co., NC. However, there was an older man named Moses Meek living in Mecklenburg as early as 1765. In addition there was a man named James Meek in the early records of Mecklenburg. They may or may not have been related to Moses Meek.

John Meek born 1745 emigrated from Ireland and settled in Lauren Co., SC. He may or may not have been a son of a man named John Alexander Meek. This popular myth is not supported by any credible evidence. Subgroup placement is problematic. It now appears that he shares one and possibly two mutations with two unconnected Canadian members. This sits well with early genealogies that suggest John had a brother named William who went to Canada after the Revolutionary War.

The haplogroup⁹ of Group E men is defined by the SNP¹⁰ marker R-A21073. A21073 is in the FGC84729 branch of subclade of P312, one of the most common haplogroups in men of European descent. However, FGC84729 is one of the less common branches of P312. Nine members in different subgroups took an advanced SNP test (Big Y at FTDNA). All men in Group E will likely be positive for A21073. The following step chart shows that portion of the haplotree that applies to Group E.



The Big Y tests do not entirely support the subgrouping plan established by STR marker. However, SNP testing also does not disprove that plan. Three of the four men who are positive for BY229111 are also positive for the branch FGC72053. They descend from Thomas Meek born about 1745 in County Antrim. The fourth man is positive for BY229111 and purportedly descends from Adam Meek born about 1740 in Moneydolog. These four men clearly form a unique group dating to before immigration to America.

⁹ Haplogroup=large population of men defined by a single SNP marker

¹⁰ SNP=single nucleotide polymorphism

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The two men who are positive for FT8740 plus two addition members descend from James A. Meek born about 1816. There is reason to believe they descend from Adam Meek born before 1726, one of the earliest Meek ancestors. The other members who are positive for A21073 descend from more recent ancestors and cover both subgroups E1 and E2. The two genetic subgroups of A21073 thus far identified do not appear subdivide Group E. They are unique to the Meek lines mentioned above. Additional Big Y testing is desirable.

Some of the members of the early Group E families associated with each other or lived near each other including those in different sub-groups. Group E represents a complex family structure that originated in Ireland. Their descendants spread throughout the country and are well represented in the population today.

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