Meek/Meeks Families of Virginia

Meek Group F Introduction

The Meek/Meeks DNA Project[1] has established Y-DNA signatures[2] for a significant number of early American ancestors based on tests of living descendants. This allows for a determination of which Meek(s) ancestors were related and which ones were not related. Combined with genealogies Y-DNA shows five major groups one of which is designated as Group F and includes the ancestors Priddy Meeks, Athe Meeks, Nacy Meeks and Littleton Meeks. Y-DNA 37 STR[3] marker tests on their descendants indicate that they all shared a common Meek(s) ancestor.

In addition to this well-known American family, Group F includes two men whose families either stay in Scotland or did not migrate to America until 1835. They represent a branch or branches of the Meek family that did not migrate to America in the 1700's. This provides an important time frame from which to evaluate DNA results.

Genealogy

The Scotland subgroup F2 comprises two men with unconnected genealogies. However, their ancestors lived in Scotland long after the subgroup F1 families arrived in America. The first family is believed to have lived in Fortissat, Scotland from the 1600's. The second descends from William Meek and wife Ann (nee Corbet) who emigrated from Edinburgh to Ontario about 1835.

Historically, the American progenitor of the early American families has been recorded in genealogies as William Meeks born about 1725 (source for date unknown). His children were reportedly born in Virginia. However, this is not documented and William Meeks is first mentioned in the 1777 tax list of Surry Co., NC. He died in Greenville Co., SC in 1797. His most frequently mentioned sons are Priddy Meeks born about 1747-1751, Athe Meeks born about 1750-1756, Littleton Meeks born 8 Feb 1766 and Nacy Meeks born about 1768. Also mentioned are John, Jesse and Martin.

Various genealogies report that his father was also named William who came from England and he had a brother named John. The source for these items is Dr. Priddy Meeks, a son of Athe Meeks and grandson of William Meeks. He wrote;

> "William Meeks came from England, he had two sons, John and William. They lived in Virginia. William Meeks married and had three sons, Priddy, Athe and Jesse. His wife died; he married again and had two sons, Middleton and Nacy. They lived in Georgia. My father had two sisters that I remember, Candice Williams and Susannah Mitchum. My father, Athe Meeks married Margaret Snead and had ten children."[4]

The authenticity of the handwriting was validated by Dalton Meeks who wrote;

> "This is from a loose sheet that appears to be cut from a book similar to his journal. It is in Priddy's own handwriting. A photocopy was obtained by Athe Meeks (b.1911) from a descendant of Priddy's oldest daughter Elizabeth Dalton."

[1] http://meekdna.com
[2] 37 or more Y-DNA STR marker results. AKA DNA haplotype, DNA signature or DNA profile
[3] STR=short tandem repeat
[4] Unpublished pages from the Journal of Dr. Priddy Meeks, 1879

Unfortunately, there is little documentation to support Dr. Priddy Meeks' statement. These pages of the journal were written 11 Oct 1879 from memory at age 85. He had Littleton's name wrong and as will be seen later there is some question as to whether William was the father of Nacy and Littleton. The reader must decide how much weight to give Dr. Meeks statement in view of the other evidence available. Other evidence includes lack of research and documentation, age, proximity to events and facts derived from Y-DNA testing. It is acknowledged some portions of the unpublished pages do provide genealogical support for his immediate family and some aspects of the history of his father.

One of Dr. Priddy Meek's wives, Sarah Mahurin, is reported to have been a granddaughter of Priddy Meeks. They may well have had a collective knowledge of Priddy's status within the family that they may not have had about the other named uncles.

One of the few proven facts from genealogy concerning relationships is that on 7 Jan 1797 William Meeks transferred his property to "Athe Meeks my son" in Greenville Co., SC court records. Therefore it is accepted that Athe Meeks was a son of William Meeks.

The genealogical efforts on the American Meeks family have been helped by some unique given names. Priddy, Athe, Littleton and Nacy (Ignatius) are very rare names for any Meek or Meeks families during the latter half of the 1700's. So rare that one can follow the very common name William Meeks by following his son Athe from Surry Co., NC to Greenville Co., SC[5]. Unfortunately, Athe is the only son of William Meeks that can be proven genealogically. This is significant because there is some genealogical information that suggests that Littleton Meeks may have been related to John Meeks of Hanover Co., VA[6]. Hanover Co., VA deed records dated 2 October 1788 show that Littleton inherited land from John Meek of Hanover Co., VA. Unfortunately, no will has ever been found. Deed records also show one Martin Meeks inherited land from John Meeks. There are no known records that place William in Virginia but Athe and Priddy do appear in a couple of records in the 1770's. Generally, there is little documentation for Athe, Priddy, Littleton and Nacy until after their respective marriages.

Interpretation of Y-DNA

Three members of Meek Project Group F have completed advanced SNP testing called the Big Y-700 test at FTDNA. two member is in subgroup F1b and one in F2. The results indicate the haplogroup[7] of Group F men is defined by the SNP[8] marker FT80274[9]. The path is R-P310> L151>P312>R-L21>**L513**>S5668>A7>S5979>**S5982(L193)**>ZS4581>Z17817>BY615>FGC36506>FT80274
L151 and his descendant P312 are predominantly found in Western Europe. L21 is one of the larger groups in P312 and L513 is a major branch of L21. Men in the S5982(L193) subclade will have a similar Y-DNA STR signature but includes dozens of families with different surnames which may have lived in Scotland prior to the use of surnames. All men named Meek in Group F will likely be positive for R-FT80274.

[5] Deed Book D p. 294, Greenville Co., SC
[6] Hanover County, Virginia Deeds, 1783-1792, Abstracted and compiled by Rosalie Edith Davis
[7] Haplogroup=large population of men defined by a single SNP marker
[8] SNP=single nucleotide polymorphism
[9] Big Y tests at FTDNA on kit #159822, #212486 & #56015

The Meek haplogroup, FT80274, descends from FGC36506. The later has only six known Big Y testers and now constitutes a small niche in the much larger S5982(L193) portion of the "R" Haplotree. However, there is considerable room for expansion. FGC36506 has twenty equivalents most of which will eventually become separate branches. FT80274 has only one equivalent but already has 1 branch, BY195516, based on private variants of two testers. Private variants are SNPs unique to the individual tester. If two men have the same private variant, then a new branch will be added to the Haplotree. The two testers in the American branch each have two matching private variants which will become a new named branch under FT80274 in the near future. More importantly, it will split Group F between those ancestors who immigrate in the early 1700's (subgroup F1) from those some of which immigrated later (subgroup F2). The new branch will be named either FT138775 or BY169105. The single member of subgroup F2 has six private variants, and these should become a named branch when additional men obtain the Big Y test. In the meantime, the subgroup F2 member will be in an unnamed branch of FT80274.

STR markers

STR markers will continue to be important because many members are unwilling or unable to upgrade to the Big Y test. Potential members can be identified through STR markers.

The following STR markers values are typical for men with the S5982(L193) SNP; DYS607=16, DYS406s1=11, DYS534=14, DYS617=13, and DYS640=12. Men in Group F can be distinguished from other L193 men by DYS391=10, DYS447=24, and DYS572=12.

The S5982(L193) haplotype is also consistent with a Scottish origin. Subgroup F2 can be distinguished from the U. S. branch by the markers CDY=40, 41 and DYS641=10. The U. S. branch will have CDY=38, 41 and DYS641=11.

Overall Y-DNA results for descendants of Priddy, Littleton, Nacy and Athe show that these four ancestors shared a common Meek(s) ancestor. Who that ancestor was or when he lived is not revealed by DNA alone. Because there are multiple descendants from two or more sons of three of the American ancestors one can project the ancestral signature for the group. In addition, one can see what the Y-DNA signature of Athe, Priddy, Nacy and Littleton might have been. A caveat is that with only one descendant for Priddy Meek one cannot be sure the descendant's results represents the ancestors values on the key markers, especially DYS 456. Additional descendants for testing are desirable and would increase the level of confidence for some conclusions.

A more in-depth analysis of Y-DNA STR results relies on two markers. They are DYS 576 and DYS 456. These markers mutate faster than other markers and one must carefully review all data to insure the proper conclusions.

The below chart shows the ancestral values (67 markers) for the three subgroups of Group F. Addition tests would increase the level of confidence, especially for subgroups F1b and F2.

Four descendants of Littleton through three different sons, four descendants of Nacy through two different sons as well as the two Scottish members have DYS 456=16. One descendant of Priddy

Meeks and the four descendants through two sons of Athe Meeks have DYS 456=15. Therefore the ancestral value for DYS 456 is16 and Priddy and Athe carried a mutation of DYS 456=15. This marker will, in most cases, distinguish descendants of Athe and Priddy from those of Littleton and Nacy. More importantly this mutation splits the American Group F1 family into two related branches. They are labeled here as subgroups F1a for Athe and Priddy and F1b for Littleton and Nacy.

As indicated above the relationship between William and Athe has been established genealogically. In that regard William is also part of subgroup F1a. There is little actual genealogical proof that William was the father of Priddy Meeks. The Y-DNA signature of the descendant of Priddy is consistent with those of Athe and Dr. Priddy Meeks, aided by his wife, Sarah, a granddaughter of Priddy, may have been correct in saying Priddy was his uncle and brother of Athe.

William Meeks' Y-DNA would have looked very much like Athe's Y-DNA. Mutations do occur between father and son since they have to start somewhere. If Priddy was a son of William and had DYS456=15, then William likely had DYS456=15 because he had two sons with that value.

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	DYS456	DYS607	DYS576	DYS570	CDYa	CDYb	DYS442	DYS438
R1b1 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
L193 Modal																															16						
Gp F1a-Nacy	13	24	14	10	11	14	12	12	12	13	13	29	17	9	10	11	11	24	15	19	29	15	15	17	17	11	11	19	23	16	16	19	17	38	41	12	12
Gp F1a-Littleton	13	24	14	10	11	14	12	12	12	13	13	29	17	9	10	11	11	24	15	19	29	15	15	17	17	11	11	19	23	16	16	20	17	38	41	12	12
Gp F1b-Athe & Priddy	13	24	14	10	11	14	12	12	12	13	13	29	17	9	10	11	11	24	15	19	29	15	15	17	17	11	11	19	23	15	16	19	17	38	41	12	12
Gp F2-Scotland	13	24	14	10	11	14	12	12	12	13	13	29	17	9	10	11	11	24	15	19	29	15	15	17	17	11	11	19	23	16	16	19	17	40	41	12	12

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
R1b1 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
L193 Modal									11									14						13				12		
Gp F1a-Nacy	11	9	15	16	8	10	11	8	11	10	12	23	23	16	10	12	12	14	8	12	22	20	13	13	11	13	12	12	12	12
Gp F1a-Littleton	11	9	15	16	8	10	11	8	11	10	12	23	23	16	10	12	12	14	8	12	22	20	13	13	11	13	12	12	12	12
Gp F1b-Athe & Priddy	11	9	15	16	8	10	11	8	11	10	12	23	23	16	10	12	12	14	8	12	22	20	13	13	11	13	12	12	12	12
Gp F2-Scotland	11	9	15	16	8	10	10	8	11	10	12	23	23	16	10	12	12	14	8	12	22	20	13	13	11	13	12	12	12	12

One descendant of Priddy, four descendants of Nacy through two different sons and the two Scottish members have DYS 576=19. This cuts across subgroup lines and is presumed to be the ancestral value of DYS576. The four descendants of Athe have DYS576=18, DYS576=19 and two not tested for that marker. Therefore, DYS576=18 is presumed to be a recent mutation. Athe would have had DYS576=19.

There are four Y-DNA tests for descendants of Littleton Meeks. One descends through his son William Sheridan Meeks and another descends through his son Jesse. Each has the same results of DYS 576=20. The third test from a third son, Mark, has DYS576=21. This value is not inconsistent with the other two. It may be a recent mutation from 20 to 21. Therefore it is likely that Littleton also had DYS 576=20. This marker will, in most cases, distinguish descendants of Littleton Meeks from those of Priddy Meeks, Athe Meeks and Nacy Meeks.

One deviation from the ancestral values does not set Littleton so far apart from Nacy so as to preclude any possible relationship. However, Littleton's mutation at DYS576=20 combined with

both Priddy and Athe's mutation at DYS 456=15 does limit the possible relationships between subgroup F1a and subgroup F1b.

Limitations of the Data

Past and present genealogical efforts on the American Group F family as well as interpretation of Y-DNA results has been influenced by the sketchy genealogy provided by Dr. Priddy Meeks in 1879. Based on the memory of an eighty-five year old man and his wife we were told that the great grandfather William Meeks came from England and had sons William and John. Dr. Priddy Meeks named his father Athe Meeks son of William Meeks and uncles Priddy, Middleton, Nacy and Jesse. He also listed the names of Priddy and Jesse's wives and children.

Research from official documentation reveals that Athe Meeks was in fact the son of William. Deed records tell us that Littleton inherited land from a person in Virginia named John Meeks. In addition one can see that Littleton and Nacy associated with each other and named children after one another. Athe and Priddy migrated along a northerly route while Littleton and Nacy migrated along a southerly route.

Y-DNA evidence tells that Athe, Priddy, Littleton and Nacy shared a common ancestor named Meeks. Y-DNA evidence also tells that descendants of Athe and Priddy shared a mutation DYS456=15 while the rest of Group F has DYS456=16. Finally Y-DNA evidence tells us that descendants of Littleton have a mutation DYS576=20 while all others had DYSS576=19.

There are limitations to all three areas of discussion. Dr. Priddy Meeks did not conduct genealogical research or present a proper genealogy. At an advanced age he wrote down some memories about family members some of whom he had little contact with for most of his life. This author's experience is that many family stories become corrupted in small or large ways over time. The reader must decide how much weight to give what Dr. Priddy Meeks wrote. The major point at issue is were Athe, Priddy, Littleton and Nacy brothers and sons of William Meeks. It is not necessary to accept or reject every data point in Dr. Meeks papers. Each point should be evaluated in conjunction with other evidence.

Needless to say there is precious little information in the official records concerning the early years of this family. Connecting any particular man named William Meek(s) to any given records is problematic due to a lack of identifying information. There are records of other unrelated Meek(s) families in and around Hanover Co., VA.

In one regard the members of Group F are fortunate that their Y-DNA has the mutations it has. Many groups do not have significant mutations that allow for subdividing a family into branches. However, additional tests, particularly for Priddy Meeks, would provide a higher level of confidence for some of the hypothesis. Tests on additional descendants could possibly show that Priddy had a different value. However, one should not assume anything from a lack of evidence and it would be inappropriate to assume that the single descendant of Priddy has a mutation that his cousins would not have. The evidence is strong that Athe carried DYS456=15 and it should not be surprising that someone thought to be his brother would also have that mutation. Additional tests will eventually resolve this issue.

Conclusions:

Known facts and their limitations were presented above. By combining genealogical and DNA evidence some clarity may be achieved. But with gaps in the data all of the questions cannot be answered. Now that SNP data is available it is given that the Scotland and American subgroups are related and can be identified from SNP markers as well as STR markers. The following hypothesis are based on STR markers and are not in conflict with the Big Y tests. Hypothesis 1 through 3 below have a high degree of confidence. Hypothesis #4 is hopefully non-controversial despite a less than high level of confidence regarding Priddy's ancestral values.

Hypothesis #1: Athe Meeks, Priddy Meeks, Littleton Meeks and Nacy Meeks shared a common ancestor named Meeks. Who that ancestor was or when he lived is not revealed by Y-DNA alone. This is based on seventeen 37 marker Y-DNA tests and the same surname.

Hypothesis #2: The marker DYS456 splits American Group F family into two observable genetic branches with Athe and Priddy in subgroup F1a where DYS456=15. By virtue of the genealogical connection between Athe and William Meeks, William Meeks is included in F1a. Subgroup F1b includes Littleton Meeks and Nacy Meeks where DYS456=16 and represents the value of the common ancestor of both subgroups of the American Group F family.

Hypothesis #3: The marker DYS576 splits subgroup F1a where Littleton carried DYS576=20.

Hypothesis #4: William Meeks was the father of Athe Meeks and Priddy Meeks. Athe's relationship with William has been established genealogically. Both Priddy and Athe carryed the DYS456=15 mutation. In addition Dr. Priddy, aided by his wife, seems to have known slightly more about Priddy than he did Littleton and Nacy. This hypothesis implies William also carried DYS456=15 because two possible sons had that value and one is proven to be a son.

Hypothesis #5: William Meeks was not the father of Littleton Meeks and Nacy Meeks. This is based on Hypothesis #2 and discounts what Dr. Priddy Meeks wrote about his uncles. In addition, Littleton inherited land from John Meeks of Hanover, Co., VA.

For William Meeks to have been the father of all four men he would have had two sons with mutations. If William had DYS456=15 then Nacy had a mutation at DYS456 and Littleton had 2 mutations at DYS456 and DYS576. If one discounts the single test for Priddy and suggest that Priddy and William had DYS456=16 then Athe alone had a mutation at DYS456 and Littleton had a mutation at DYS576. The first condition is less likely than the second but either condition would be unusual as a man would not normally produce different sons who had two and possibly three different mutations.

The only contradictory evidence is Dr. Priddy Meeks' journal. It is not unusual for older relatives to get details about the family confused. Dr. Priddy Meeks appears to have known less about Littleton and Nacy than he did about Priddy.

Hypothesis #6: Littleton Meeks and Nacy Meeks may or may not have been brothers.

Genealogically Nacy interacted with and migrated with Littleton. They named children after each other and did not name children after Athe or Priddy. If any of them were brothers one would suspect that Nacy and Littleton were. If that is true the mutation DYS576=20 must have first appeared when Littleton was conceived. (Mutations occur during mitosis.) There is no genealogical proof that Littleton and Nacy were brothers. Y-DNA only says they were related. The different values in DYS576 are a negative factor in the absence of other evidence. However, it does not preclude them from being brothers.

Hypothesis #7: There is insufficient evidence to determine anything about relationship between Group F ancestors and John Meeks of Hanover Co., VA.

John Meeks of Hanover Co., VA appears to have a connection to at least Littleton Meeks. Even if he was not Littleton's father he may have had a relationship with Group F ancestors. Is he the brother of William mentioned by Dr. Priddy Meeks? This author doubts that. However, there are so few records available for John Meeks that it may never be known if he was related or not.

Summary:

In researching William Meeks one is confronted with a pitifully small amount of factual data. For more than 100 years people have been forced to rely on a sketchy genealogy written from memory by an 85 year old patriarch of one branch of the family. Despite the efforts of many people only one fact has been verified, Athe Meeks was a son of William. The unpublished pages of Dr. Priddy Meek's Journal are an important genealogical document. But its value or weight must take into consideration that much of the information about William and his family cannot be verified.

Y-DNA has now brought new facts to the family historian even if those facts look different from traditional genealogical facts. Like any collection of genealogical facts some are stronger than others and some seemingly weak facts become stronger when combined with other pieces of data. Y-DNA has proven that William, Athe, Priddy, Littleton and Nacy were related and part of the same Meeks family. This was not proven before. But Y-DNA also suggests that William was not the father of Littleton and Nacy. This runs contrary to the traditional view of the family but this author is not the first person to put forth that hypothesis. There may well have been a more extensive and complex family that immigrated to the United States than originally thought.

Y-DNA mutations are infrequent events. Here we have four ancestors, long thought to be brothers, leaving descendants with three slightly different Y-DNA signatures. It is difficult to believe that these four ancestors had one father. This may create conflict with people who grew up with not just a tradition but one started by such a respected person as Dr. Priddy Meeks.

It is also acknowledged that the addition of Y-DNA evidence does not provide definitive answers to many questions. Such is the way of genealogy as well as genetic genealogy. "More research is needed" seems always to be the last sentence in every genealogy.

Disclaimer: This author is not related to this Meeks family. This author is not a geneticist, mathematician or scientist of any kind. The experience applied to this set of results is over 50 years of genealogy and 16 years working with the Meek DNA Project.

Appendix:

The 111 marker ancestral signature based on four results only and should not be considered final. The modal values for R1b and L193 are far from certain.

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	DDYS497	DYS510	DYS434	DYS461	DYS435
R1b Modal (P312)	35	15	9	16	12	26	26	19	12	11	13	12	10	9	12	12	10	11	11	30	12	13	24	13	10	10	21	15	19	13	24	17	12	15	24	12	23	18	10	14	17	9	12	11
L193 Modal													11																19		18	14		15									16			
Group F	35	15	9	16	12	26	27	19	12	11	13	12	11	9	12	12	10	11	11	30	12	13	23	13	10	10	19	15	18	14	24	15	12	15	24	12	23	18	10	14	16	9	12	11