

Jackson Brigade DNA Project's Report

By Dr. Daniel C. Hyde

July 25, 2014

For several years, individuals have contacted Jackson Brigade Board members and asked if any Jackson Brigade members had their DNA tested. In April 2011, we were approached by a Family Tree DNA's Jackson Surname Group Administrator: "If two distantly related descendants of John Jackson and Elizabeth Cummins would test, it would be a great help to those Jacksons still looking to find their connections." The Board members decided that Dan Hyde would investigate what needed to be done, the cost, the issues, and the benefits to the organization.

In October 2011, the Board approved the Jackson Brigade DNA Project with the following goals:

1. To establish a base of DNA knowledge for others to compare to.
2. To find cousins to whom we could reach out and invite to become members of Jackson Brigade.
3. To gather DNA evidence to aid in proving family connections of interest to the Jackson Brigade.

Activities: After the project's approval, Board members identified two males with Jackson surnames who we were confident (by research and written documents) are descendants of John Jackson and Elizabeth Cummins. In November 2011, the two (Board members John M. Jackson and Robert Lee Jackson) took Y-DNA67 tests through the Family Tree DNA company.

In July 2012, Dan Hyde created the Jackson Brigade DNA Project web pages and announced the DNA Project to the world. See the web pages at the following: <http://www.jacksonbrigade.com/dna-project/>

One objective is to use DNA testing to aid in identifying the ancestors of John Jackson. One promising lead is to have Steven Jackson, author of *The Irish Ancestry of Stonewall Jackson*, Just Done Productions, 2008, take a Y-DNA test. Steven claims in his book that John Jackson's father was Thomas Jackson of Ballynarry Birches of Tartaragham Parish, County Armagh, Ireland. Jane Hilder contacted Steven and he was very interested in taking the DNA test. Unfortunately, he passed away suddenly in May 2012. Jane has been in contact with Steven's wife Leonora who relayed that Steven's brother Clive or Clive's son Adam may be willing to take the DNA test. We are currently pursuing this lead.

Results: John and Lee's Y-DNA matched 66 markers out of the 67. This gives a 95% probability of a common ancestor in the last 8 generations. Since John descends from John and Elizabeth Jackson's son Henry and is 8 generations away; and Lee descends from John and Elizabeth Jackson's son John Jr. and is 6 generations away, this confirms both John and Lee's paper trails that they are descendants of John Jackson. More importantly it establishes the Y-DNA for John Jackson and all his direct male descendants including Thomas Jonathan "Stonewall" Jackson. Now males can test their Y-DNA to see if they are of this Jackson line and related to Stonewall.

From the tests, the Y-DNA haplogroup (ancient ancestry) for the John Jackson/Elizabeth Cummins line is a *very* common one (R1b1a2 or in the new designation, R-M269). A large percentage of Western Europe is in this haplogroup! Because it a very common haplogroup, any prospective individual will need to test at least 67 markers.

In the last two years, we have had a dozen or so DNA-related inquires where several resulted in minor successes and at least two new Jackson Brigade members.

Future: The effort and money that went toward establishing our DNA baseline should continue to aid in proving family connections. We know a lot of folks want to believe they are related to Stonewall Jackson! Now they have a way to verify that!

We are hopeful that we will be able to use DNA testing to break through the "Stonewall" of identifying John Jackson's parents and where he lived in England.