

THE KIPLING DNA PROJECT



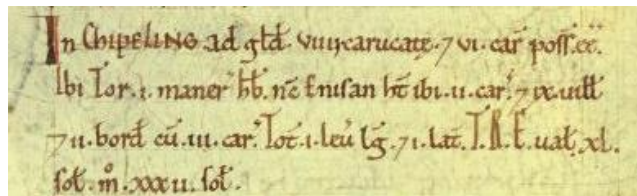
NEWSLETTER 1

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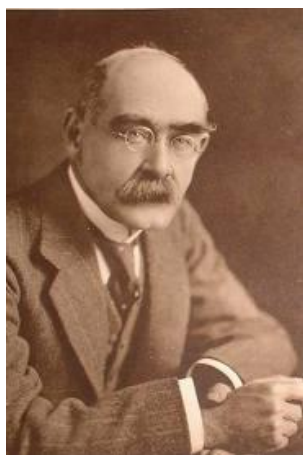
The name 'Kipling'

It is commonly thought that the name Kipling derives from the small village of Kiplin in North Yorkshire. The earliest mention of the name dates from the third year of the reign of Edward III (1329-30), being of a William de Kyplyng in the context of a dispute over property in Lartington in Romaldekirk parishⁱ, about 20 miles away on the bank of the river Tees. He would most probably have come to Lartington from Kiplin and been known as “de Kyplyng” to distinguish himself from other Williams. Surnames were becoming fixed around that timeⁱⁱ and ‘Kipling’ has retained a presence in Romaldekirk virtually ever since.

Kiplin (as “Chipeling”) is recorded in Domesday Bookⁱⁱⁱ. Today, the Jacobean Kiplin Hall^{iv} stands proud but only a few cottages remain of the village proper. It is thought that the village itself derives its name from Cypel, a pre-conquest personal name, possibly of Scandanavian origin.



Over the years, a number of people have studied the family history of people carrying the surname Kipling. Until recently, this meant long hours spent in dusty archives or pouring over poor quality microfilm images in darkened rooms. More recently, the internet has made this information much more easily accessible and searchable. The findings are that many of today’s Kiplings, wherever they are in the English-speaking world, can be traced back to forbears in Teesdale. Of course, there are exceptions, including those who have adopted the name on immigration.



Famous Kiplings include the author and poet Joseph Rudyard Kipling (1865 -1936, *left*) and Dr Thomas Kipling (1745-1822), controversial Cambridge scholar and Dean of Peterborough. Unfortunately, both the British cake brand “Mr Kipling” and the Belgian luggage brand “Kipling” are the creation of marketing departments and have no familial connection!

Today’s Kiplings making a name for themselves include folk musician Shona Kipling^v and landscape photographer Mike Kipling^{vi} (not the author of this newsletter), both still firmly rooted in North East England.

DNA and family history

Our DNA is mainly intermingled from that of both our parents. However, the Y-chromosome passes from father to son unaltered, apart from rare random mutations. By comparing the Y-chromosomes of two men it is possible to determine how likely it is that they have a common male ancestor. A similar test for a common female ancestor is also available using 'mitochondrial' DNA, but as names in our society pass down the male line, this is less useful for many family history purposes.

Specific parts of the Y-chromosome known as 'markers' are used to make such comparisons. A mutational change to a marker happens on average only once every 300 -500 generations, so there is a high chance that a father and son have the identical values for a specific marker. Conversely, though, if we compare a large number of markers, we are quite likely to find at least one difference after a relatively small number of generations.

Commercial tests are available at reasonable cost which test an adequate number of markers. The DNA is collected by rubbing a large cotton-wool bud on the inside of your cheek; no needles required! Statistically^{vii}, it can be shown that on a 46 marker test a difference at only one marker means a 50% chance of having a common ancestor within 6 generations (or, say, 150 years) and a 90% chance within 14 (350 years). Whereas a difference of 5 or more means that a recent common ancestor is unlikely.

It is also possible to use the results of the DNA tests to look much further back to the broad population groups from which people originated many thousands of year ago, and thus to get some idea when their remote ancestors first arrived in the British Isles.

DNA tests for family history purposes are not the same as those used for medical or policing purposes and the published results cannot be used to identify specific individuals nor to indicate susceptibility to most types of diseases.

The project

As part of work towards a Postgraduate Diploma in Genealogy at the University of Strathclyde, I wish to establish as far as possible the interrelationships between different Kipling families around the world. Paper and internet-based research goes a long way, but often there are gaps which until now can only be filled by speculation. In particular, the family of Rudyard Kipling cannot be traced back by traditional methods further than the middle of the 18th century.

I would therefore like to encourage as many male Kiplings as possible to take a DNA test to further this aim.

The project will be written up for University assessment purposes by July 2012 and I will make this available to all participants thereafter. The editor of the journal of the Kipling Society has also expressed interest in an article for publication towards the end of next year.

I have also established a website, www.genealogy.kipling.me.uk, through which the results of the project will be posted as they accumulate. And there will hopefully be further editions of this newsletter as the project progresses.

Early results

Already, ten male Kiplings have had their DNA analysed. The results, when coupled with recorded family history, show that there have been two genetically distinct groups of Kiplings for quite a few hundred years. One explanation would be that a number of families settled in Kiplin, having arrived there in the various waves of migration into and across England, with family members subsequently becoming known as 'de Kipling' after taking up residence elsewhere, as with William in 14th century Lartington.

Of course, it is equally possible that different DNA entered part of a single Kiplin-originated family centuries ago, through adoption, adultery or a simple name change.

One of the participants was a great-great-grandson of the Rev Joseph Kipling, Rudyard Kipling's grandfather. His test differed at only one marker from my own result and was two markers different from two other participants (known to be related to one another).

My origins can be reliably traced back to the North Yorkshire village of Barningham in the early 17th century and those of the other two close matches (both living the USA) to the nearby parish of Bowes in the early 18th century.



Grave of John & Ann Kipling, 1786, Barningham

We can thus already conclude that relatives of Rudyard Kipling populated and farmed the hills to the south of the Tees in the 17th and 18th centuries, and that it is quite possible that his particular line sprang from there also.

How you can help

If you are a male Kipling and would like to know where you fit into the global Kipling family, then the Project would very much like to hear from you. Please e-mail me at mike@kipling.me.uk or mike.kipling@strathclyde.ac.uk, phone me on 0780 168 0516 or write to me at Bay Tree House, Doomsday Garden, Horsham, West Sussex, RH16 6LB, United Kingdom.

If you would like to take a DNA test, then please have a look at the results so far at ancestry.co.uk (click on 'DNA' and then search for 'Kipling'). I will be happy to arrange a test for you at no cost to you.

Whether or not you want to take a DNA test, you almost certainly have some information about your family which will be useful to the Project and I hopefully have some about the Kiplings which will be of interest to you (have a look <http://genealogy.kipling.me.uk/> for starters)

If you are (or were) a female Kipling, your family history will be just as valuable for the project. If you can interest a male relative (named Kipling) in having his DNA tested, even better!

I look forward to hearing from you.

Mike Kipling

ⁱ Plantagenet-Harrison, G. A (1879) *The History of Yorkshire Part I*. London & Aylesbury. Hazel, Watson & Viney.

ⁱⁱ Reaney, P H & Wilson, R M (1991) *A Dictionary of English Surnames* London. Routledge

ⁱⁱⁱ Great Domesday. National Archives online. Aletco images (1985) and Aletco/Penguin translation (2002)

^{iv} www.kiplinhall.co.uk,

^v <http://www.myspace.com/shonakiplinganddamienokane>

^{vi} <http://www.mikekiplingstockphotos.co.uk/>

^{vii} Walsh, Bruce (2001) *Estimating the Time to the Most Recent Common Ancestor for the Y chromosome or Mitochondrial DNA for a pair of Individuals* *Genetics* **158**:897-912 (June 2001)