

My Kirk Family

DNA evidence has been extremely useful in confirming my Kirk family as well as moving the family back several generations.

Lucinda Kirk

Lucinda Kirk was the wife of Henry Ridenour of Mercer Co. Missouri per my Aunt Blanche and mother of Thomas Riley Ridenour, my great grandfather. The only census record for Lucinda and Henry can be found in the 1850 Mercer Co. Missouri census where they are listed with a daughter, Hester, age 2 indicating that they married about 1847. In the 1860 census, Lucinda is missing but a 4 month old daughter, M.M. is enumerated indicating that she likely died in child birth in February of that year. This is the only paper trail that I have found on Lucinda.

Because Lucinda named her son Thomas Riley, we suspected that Lucinda was a daughter to Thomas Riley Kirk. In the 1840 Anderson Co. TN census, there were 2 females age 5 to 9 listed. In 1850, there is only Nancy, age 15 and that would be consistent with Lucinda being the second daughter, married and living with Henry Ridenour in 1850. This was confirmed by a strong DNA match with Wiley Clark Kirk's grandson who is listed in Thomas Riley Kirk's 1860 census as Clark, age 20.

Thomas Riley Kirk

Thomas was born 1790 in Virginia per most census records and his children's birthplaces are listed as Tennessee. There are two Kirk families in Tennessee, both with similar names. In 1850, his wife is listed as Patsy and Martha in 1860. Carrie Kirk lists her name as Martha Gwinn and their marriage as September 15, 1825 in Anderson Co. Tennessee.

In 1998, Margaret Summitt sent me a transcript of the Kirk family history by Effie Lenore Kirk written about 1950 and based on bible records and family interviews. In this, Thomas, John and Elijah are named as sons of John Kirk and that seems to be confirmed by census and land transactions in Anderson Co. Tennessee. Effie was a descendant of John Kirk Jr. who married Eva Nausler while we descend through his brother, Thomas.

John Kirk

John purchased land in Anderson Co. Tennessee in 1807, witnessed by Elijah and sold land to John Kirk Jr. the same year. In 1808, there is a Giles Co. Virginia land transaction from John Kirk of Anderson Co. Tennessee to an Isaiah Givens establishing that John's family was in Giles Co. Virginia before coming to Tennessee.

Per "Kirk Families of Early Fauquier and Giles Counties" by Edgar C. Smith, there were two different Kirk families with similar names living in Giles Co. Virginia. He references them as the Green Valley Kirks and the Stinking Creek Kirks. Our Kirk line came from the latter as it was noted in the assessor's records that John Kirk had moved to Anderson Co. Tennessee in 1807/08.

In 1801, Thomas Kirk of Montgomery Co. Virginia died naming as heirs 6 sons, 2 daughters and his wife Margot and a land grant to the same named heirs of Thomas Kirk, placed the acreage on Stinking Creek thus establishing Thomas and Margot Kirk as John's parents. Marriage records for these same children can be found in Montgomery Co. Virginia.

Thomas Kirk d. 1801

Thomas' wife, Margot is named by others as the daughter of William Duncan and Ruth Rawley. And while I have yet to search for the paper trail to confirm, I suspect that this is the source for the name Riley being passed down through the generations of our family even to one of my uncles.

Thomas is where my Kirk paper trail ends and the DNA investigation continues.

John Kirk d. 1730 Stafford Co. Virginia

John Kirk of Stafford Co. Virginia who married Francis Mason is thought to be the father of Thomas. His wife who remarried William Clift and Joseph Kirk "eldest son" of Orange Co. North Carolina are named in land transactions. From Max Kirk on Gedforum:

1757 June 15. Frances Clift of Culpeper County, widow, to George Roberts of same, planter. For L100 current money. 400 acres which was granted to Joseph Cooper by patent 24 June 1726 and by deeds of lease and release 2-3 Oct. 1727 recorded in the County Court of Spottsylvania was conveyed by Joseph Cooper to John Kirk of Overwharton Parish, Stafford County, who was then husband of said Frances Clift, and 11 Feb. 1728/29 John Kirk did make his last will and testament whereby he among other things bequeathed to his wife Frances all his lands, and his will was recorded in the County Court of Stafford 8 July 1730. Frances after the death of her husband intermarried with William Clift who is since dead... Witnesses: Wm. Green, Thos. Slaughter, John Field.

1757 Apr 22. Bond of Joseph Kirk of Orange Co. N.C., to George Roberts of Culpeper County. George Roberts hath agreed to purchase of Mrs. Frances Clift 400 acres whereon Frances Clift now liveth which was bequeathed to Frances Clift by John Kirk her former husband... Joseph Kirk being eldest son and heir at law as well of John Kirk, deceased, as of Frances Clift, and being satisfied that it was the design of his deceased father that his mother should enjoy the 400 acres forever... Joseph Kirk nor his heirs shall not demand the 400 acres. Witnesses: Adam Menzies, James Slaughter, William Kirtley.

1768 Sept 5/6. George Roberts and Elizabeth his wife of Culpeper County to Joseph Burt of Cumberland County, Pa., and William Green of Culpeper County... 184 acres in St. Mark's Parish... on the bank of Mountain Run by the mouth of a gully... in an island of Thorney Branch standing among rocks... part of a tract containing 400 acres which was granted by patent to Thomas Cooper 24 June 1726 and by Cooper sold to John Kirk who died thereof seized and by his last will and testament bequeathed the same to Francis his wife... Witnesses: Benja. Roberts, Wm. Delany, Joseph Roberts.

I have several maternal DNA matches with descendants of the Mason family of Stafford Co. Virginia but yet to find any evidence confirming this relationship. However, I do have two separate DNA triangulations indicating that our family is descended from John's parents, Christopher Kirk and Ann Wright.

Christopher Kirk d. 1721

There are two separate DNA triangulations to indicate that Christopher Kirk and Ann Wright were the grandparents of Thomas Kirk d. 1801 Montgomery Co. Virginia.

Kirk MRCA

Lucinda Kirk
d.1850 Mercer MO

Thomas Riley Kirk
d.1882 Mercer MO

John Kirk
d.1850 Anderson TN

Thomas Kirk
d.1801 Montgomery VA

Christopher Kirk
d.1821 Lancaster VA

Christopher Kirk
d.1705 Northampton VA

Chromosome 5

Carrie Nelson's
grandchildren

Clark Kirk's
grandson

C. Jones

Chromosome 19

Uncle Ray

W.H.Mitchell &
D. Akins

M. Abrams

Summary

DNA testing has not only confirmed family testimony about the Kirk line but has aided in moving the ancestral line back to the immigrant, Christopher. We are also fortunate in being able to identify the Kirk haplogroup as R-P312 from one of his direct ancestors.