

Using Y-DNA Testing to Prove A Relationship

Eddie Lee Ewing (*GoodwaterGirl at aol dot com*)

With the help of David Ewing, Administrator of the Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project, I have been able to use the results of Y-DNA testing of myself and Ronald Arthur Ewing to prove that we are cousins. I am participant EL in the project, and Ronald is participant RA2.

For the past fifty years, researchers of my Ewing line have tended to focus on immigration to Charleston, South Carolina, from Ireland, with the immigrants then migrating quickly to Ohio through Kentucky. Lately, I have begun to think that perhaps the more probable migration route was through Pennsylvania and down the Ohio River.

I, and others, believe that our immigrant ancestor was Robert Ewing, who was born about 1740 in Ireland and died in Mason County, Kentucky; but documented proof of my line ends in southern Ohio and northern Kentucky around 1800. Without collaboration, reliably ferreting out the several Ewings on both sides of the Ohio River and their origins has been next to impossible.

In the course of researching my Ewing family line, I met and began an online collaboration with Karen Stopp, a possibly-related Ewing descendant. Our ancestors were living as neighbors in Ohio, Kentucky and Illinois from the 1790s until at least 1857. Both families sometimes used the spousal surnames of for the first or middle names of children. The names Milton and Armstrong occur several times in the same generations of each of these families. Ewing men and women from each family married spouses from the same neighboring families. We found one case where a woman married into my family and her son, by a previous marriage, married into the other Ewing family.

Plainly, there was a relationship between the two Ewing families, but we had not been able to establish a blood relationship. Their proximity over a few generations and their use of the same given names seemed to us more than a coincidence, and we began to wonder whether we might be related. But neither of us had been able to get past the Ohio/Kentucky brick wall.

I joined the Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project in May 2008 and found that I was in my own branch of the Ewing family. I realized that this meant that if I found another Ewing who matched my Y-DNA profile closely, this would be very strong evidence of a family connection. I asked Karen Stopp to find someone among her relatives to join the Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project, but to no avail.

In September 2008, Ronald Arthur Ewing of Riverview, Florida, joined the project. You can imagine my excitement at learning that our Y-DNA profiles matched very closely (genetic distance 2) and that Ronald was a relative of Karen's, the very person I had been working with online. Ronald and I became Ewing Group 3b, clear that we are related to one another, and confident that any future Ewing who matches our profile is very likely also to be a close relative.

Now, Ronald, Karen, and other related descendants will be working to come up with a strategy to discover our blood connection using conventional genealogy. For example, I believe a good starting point might be later in the 1840s and 1850s in Illinois where more data may be available. Interviews of other cousins have suggested the Ewings from both families, together with related families, held reunions together in Illinois well into the 1920s.

Two (or more!) heads are better than one, and now that Ronald and I have established through the Ewing Surname Y-DNA Project that we are related, we are working together to ferret out our common ancestor and perhaps discover our roots back to Ireland.

Eddie Lee Ewing, a native of California, is a full-time RVer, living and moving around the country in his motor home with his wife Toni. His travels allow him to meet cousins and visit ancestral areas along the way. He began his genealogical research in the 1970s but had to stop to raise a family. He restarted his research effort five years ago when he began his RVing lifestyle. In the past five years, he has found an uncle by a grandfather's third marriage, two aunts (his father's step-sisters), previously unknown step-brothers/sisters, a lost aunt and several first cousins, and met numerous other cousins with common links as far back as 1800. His major accomplishments include 8,000 names in his database as far back as the year 10 AD and photographs of his Ewing line back to his great-great-grandfather. His goal is to present his six children and 19 grandchildren a book of his research and to find his surname line in Ireland.

Index for this Issue

Armstrong 19
Ewing
David Neal 19
Eddie Lee ... 19, 20

Robert 19
Ronald Arthur
..... 19, 20
Toni 20

Milton 19
Stopp
Karen 19

Y-DNA Participant
EL 19
RA2 19