

This text is based on the lecture given by Jorma Piirainen at the family reunion in Kuhmo on July 7th 2013

The Piira-family DNA Research Update

The Piira Family Association has continued the genealogical research during the last two years. Both traditional methods and genetic, i.e. DNA based methods were applied.

The Y-DNA research and its analysis are now in a phase that allows us to draw some conclusions, based on these results.

(The detailed study plan is available on our Website for those who wish to learn more about it.)

We would like to sincerely thank all those individuals, who participated in this study by donating samples of their DNA.

Total of 12 individuals gave a sample specifically for this research project. Four individuals had already taken the test previously and their findings were included in this project. One person was included as he realized his findings matched with the ones in the Piira project. This brings the total of DNA samples for this study to 17.

The samples therefore cover all known Piira family lineages that were needed or we were able to collect.

The aim of the project was to perform Y-DNA mapping, by using 67 markers, in following lineages of the Piira family. This would allow us to clarify the possibility of a common ancestor from 15th century or even before that.

1. The starting point was to map DNA material from three known male members of the family for comparison with the supposed other lineages. We got Y-DNA results from eight individuals.
2. The so called Heinävesi lineage also included material from a Känninen and two Piironen/Piironen lineages.
3. From so called Polvijärvi/Liperi lineage, material from 1-2 Piironen/Piironen family members.

4. From Polvijärvi, Martonvaara, 1 to 2 samples from Piironen family. For 3. and 4. we were able to get two samples that complement each other very well.
5. From Mäntyharju, we wanted to get 1 to 2 samples from the Piira lineage. One sample was actually collected.
6. The Sastamala Piira lineage, 1 to 2 samples were sought. In spite of efforts, we were not able to collect any samples.
7. From Leppävirta Tirkkos-lineage, 1 to 2 samples were sought. We included samples from both Leppävirta and Kaavi lineages.
8. From Pudasjärvi we wanted 1 to 2 samples from the descendants of Bengt Piira. The male Piira's from this lineage died out already in the early 17th century and it was therefore not possible to collect samples.

We can conclude that we were able to complete the sampling as planned and the results form a good basis for further research on the subject.

Results from the Analysis

Table 1: Details of the samples and individuals who gave samples

Haplogroup	Subject, born in/home town now	Earliest known fore father
PreFinn		
N1c1a1a1b	Richard Hoyer, USA/USA	Johan Lovisasson, Grabbil 1870, Koskeby, Vörå, Finland
N1c1a1a1b	Ahti Känninen, Leppävirta/Leppävirta	A. Känninen, 16 th century, Leppävirta
N1c1a1a1b	Terho Piironen, Leppävirta/Vantaa*	Reijo Piironen, 16 th century, Leppävirta, Finland
N1c1a1a1b	Veli-Matti Piironen, Leppävirta/Heinävesi*	Reijo Piironen, 16 th century, Leppävirta, Finland
N1c1a1a1b	Kauko Piironen, Liperi/Karjaa*	Mickel Pijrain, 1676-1766, Liperi, Finland
N1c1a1a1b	Antero Piirainen, Kuhmo/Kuhmo*	Eskil Larss Piira 1615-1696, Kuhmo, Kiekki, Piiraala
N1c1a1a1b	Matti Piirainen, Kuhmo/Espoo*	Eskil Larss Piira 1615-1696, Kuhmo, Kiekki, Piiraala
N1c1a1a1b	Kimmo Piironen, Liperi/Joensuu*	Matti Mattss Piironen, 1837-1917, Liperi
N1c1a1a1b	Tenho Piirainen, Kuhmo/Kajaani*	Eskil Larss Piira, 1615-1696, Kuhmo
N1c1a1a1b	Jorma Piirainen, Kuhmo/Kuhmo*	Eskil Larss Piira 1615-1696, Kuhmo, Kiekki, Piiraala
N1c1a1a1b	Yrjo Piirainen, Kuhmo/Lahti, 37 markers	Eskil Larss Piira, 1615-1696, Kuhmo, Kiekki, Piiraala

N1c1a1a1b	Seppo Piirainen, Kuhmo/Turku, 37->67 markers	Eskil Larss Piira, 1615-1696, Kuhmo. Kiekki, Piiraala
N1c1a1a1b	Jukka Piironen, Kuhmo/Vaajakoski, 37 markers	Henrik Piirainen 1700-1778, Sotkamo
N1c1a1a1b	Pekka Piironen, Nurmes/Kuopio*	Eskil Larss Piira, 1615-1696, Kuhmo, Kiekki, Piiraala
Karelian (Karjalainen)		
N1c1a1a3a1a	Antero Piira, Mäntyharju/Vantaa*	Eskil Pijrain, died 1761, Jäniskylä, Mäntyharju
Savo (Savolainen)		
N1c1	Seppo Tirkkonen, Kaavi/Kaavi*	Juho Tirkkonen, 1701-59, Kaavi
N1c1	Vesa Tirkkonen, Leppävirta/Leppävirta*	Pekka Heikinpoika Tirkkonen (Piirainen), born ca 1510

*= Sample given for this research project specifically

When analyzing the results, we can conclude that the samples can be subdivided into three different branches or clusters:

- Old Karelian or Pre-Finn cluster, which is the oldest one
- Karelian cluster
- Savo cluster, which is the youngest one

The largest and the densest cluster was the Old Karelian i.e. Pre-Finn cluster into. Fourteen of the samples belonged to this cluster.

The Karelian cluster had one sample and the Savo cluster had two samples. The subjects, Tirkkonen's from Kaavi and Leppävirta, are close relatives.

The subject in Karelian cluster from Mäntyharju does not seem to be closely related to the other clusters in the study. Further research would be needed to confirm this, as we only had a single sample in this cluster.

Subjects in the Old Karelian i.e. Pre-Finn cluster have an ancestor dating around 600 years back in time. Genetically closest to this ancestor are the subjects who live in Heinävesi and Leppävirta (Piironens and Känninens).

The descendants of Eskil Piira belong to this cluster as well as Piironens and Piironens do.

We need to remember that the spelling of our name has mainly been in its original form 'Pijrain'. It was only changed to Piironen/Piironen/Piirainen in the 18th century.

According to the research conducted by professor Kalevi Wiik, the Pre-Finn cluster has most likely of western origin.

This means that it originates from Poland, Lithuania and Latvia.

Henric Piwra, who lived in 14th century in Sastamala becomes very interesting in light these findings. We can, however, only assume at this point and would need seek further confirmation before conclusions can be reached.

We can now conclude that the Piira family really exists and it is far larger than the decedents of Eskil. The Piira's who live today in Kainuu, Northern Karelia and Savo all belong to the Piira family.

The genealogical research will continue. Thanks to this research project, we have got new directions and areas of interest. As the Board of the Family Association decided in January 2012, we will continue to explore Eskil Piira's ancestors. This will certainly increase the total number of family members.

I should like to thank, besides the Board members, also Terho Piironen from Heinävesi. Terho has been an active contact person between the Piira's in Heinävesi and Leppävirta.

Thank you also to those who took part in the project and therefore contributed to the genealogical research to uncover our origins.

Thank you to Esa Kannala and Sari Heimonen, who helped with analysis of the findings. Furthermore many thanks to Professor Kalevi Wiik, who reviewed the research project plan and helped us throughout the projects, without sparing his efforts.

Translation:

Päivi Louvel, September 15th 2013, Manila

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