

## Joseph Driggs is Not Josias Drake, Jr.

Joseph Driggs of East Haddam, Connecticut died between 31 October 1748 and 15 November 1748 (dates of his will and probate). He was buried in the Congregational Church Cemetery in Millington, Connecticut. His first appearance in any confirmed record is in 1709 when he is listed in a Company of Connecticut Troops returning from Woods Hole, near Lake George, New York, after an expedition against Canada (then French). He married Elizabeth Martin, a widow of Joseph Bourn, on 13 September 1716 in Middletown, Connecticut. They had five children between 1716 and 1724. Joseph later married Martha Holland. Joseph Driggs left many descendants; many of them are recorded in two volumes. The first, *Driggs Family History*, by Howard R. Driggs, was published in 1959. The second, *Driggs Family History Volume 2*, followed in 1971 and was authored by L. Lynne Driggs, Harry Stoddard Driggs, with Howard R. Driggs given a posthumous acknowledgement (he had died in 1963). Both volumes claim that Joseph Driggs was born Josias Drake, Jr., the son of Josias Janszen Drats and Aeltje Brouwer who lived at Gowanus, Long Island, and apparently later at Newtown. Although I will not go into it now, it should be noted that both volumes also have incorrectly left the impression with some readers that Josias Janszen Drats, was a member of the De Raet family. This claim is unsubstantiated and completely incorrect. As it turns out, the claim that Joseph Driggs was born Josias Drake, Jr. can now be confirmed as completely incorrect.

The tale, as told in the Driggs Family History volumes and since repeated by some others, is that in about 1703, a young man washed ashore on a sand bar at Saybrook, Connecticut. The ship he was on had been wrecked and Joseph was found “lashed to a mast.” It is said that he spoke a foreign language and when he uttered his name it was interpreted by the English speaking locals as “Joseph Driggs.” He was thus given that name. In an attempt to search for his origins, some early, turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Driggs researchers somehow came to the conclusion that Joseph Driggs was Josias Drake, Jr. Historical events of late 17<sup>th</sup> century New York were then contorted and misinterpreted to concoct a story of Josias Drake’s impressment into the British Navy thus giving him reason to be aboard a ship that was wrecked in the Long Island Sound (the ship is never named). None of the story is supported by, nor can be supported by, any documentary evidence from the period in which these events supposedly took place. For many decades most interested Driggs descendants have accepted these claims without question. Others, however, have questioned them. Now, thanks to the recent advancements in human DNA research and technology, we can compare the Y-DNA profiles of male descendants of both Joseph Driggs and Josias Janszen Drats to see just how closely the two are related and if the possibility exists that Joseph Driggs could be Josias Janszen Drats’ son.

The tests were conducted through Family Tree DNA, [www.familytreedna.com](http://www.familytreedna.com). Results of a Y-DNA test for a direct male descendant of Joseph Driggs were completed in December 2008. The results were compared to Y-DNA test results previously obtained from known descendants of Josias Janszen Drats. In comparing the two, only one conclusion can be reached: *Joseph Driggs cannot be a son of Josias Janszen Drats. Joseph Driggs cannot be Josias Drake, Jr.* The results for the Josias Janszen Drats descendants have been previously posted to the Drake Surname Project Website,

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~drakerobinson/DNAPages/DrakeDNA.htm> (scroll down to "Dutch Drakes R1b1). In short, the tested descendants, two of whom have confirmed lines of ancestry back to Josias Janszen Drats, have allele values on the first twelve markers of 13-24-15-11-11-14-12-12-12-13-13-29. This places Josias Janszen Drats, *and his descendants* in the haplogroup R1b1 (please see the references listed below for background information regarding Y-DNA analysis and definitions of some terms used here). The Joseph Driggs descendant who was tested first had his lineage confirmed. He certainly is a direct descendant of Joseph Driggs, and his grandfather, Don Carlos Driggs was a brother of Howard R. Driggs, the author of the first *Driggs Family History*. The first twelve marker allele values for the Joseph Driggs descendant were: 13-23-15-10-14-17-11-13-11-13-14-31. *This matches the Josias Janszen Drats descendants on ONLY three of twelve markers*. This sequence, when compared to others in the larger database at Family Tree DNA, shows an exact match to those belonging to haplogroup T (formerly known as K2). Both the T haplogroup and R1b1 haplogroup have their common ancestor in the K haplogroup. Haplogroup T has its origins dated as approximately 30,000 years ago (in short, a mutation took place in a K haplogroup male that defined a new haplogroup called T). Haplogroup R1b1 is descended from haplogroup P, who's split from haplogroup K occurred approximately 34,000 years ago.

Therefore, any common ancestor for the descendants of Joseph Driggs and those of Josias Janszen Drats could only have lived *more than 34,000 years ago*. It is impossible for Joseph Driggs and Josias Drake, Jr. to have been one and the same person. For those seeking to discover the origins of Joseph Driggs, these results now release you from the overhanging assumption that he was Josias Drake, Jr. He was not. Joseph Driggs' parents and ancestry are still to be discovered. For those interested in Josias Drake, Jr., it can no longer be assumed that he was Joseph Driggs. Perhaps Josias lived a full life of his own, and perhaps he left descendants yet to be discovered. Good luck in your searches.

Chris Chester  
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[http://web.me.com/blacknorthfarm/Brouwer\\_Genealogy/Welcome.html](http://web.me.com/blacknorthfarm/Brouwer_Genealogy/Welcome.html)

*Update, April 7, 2009: Advanced SNP testing of the Driggs descendant's DNA sample by Family Tree DNA has confirmed the descendant's haplogroup affiliation as Haplogroup T.*

#### *References:*

- Driggs, Howard R., *Driggs Family History*. Salt Lake City: Publisher's Press, 1959.
- Driggs, L. Lynne and Harry Stoddard Driggs, *Driggs Family History Vol. 2*. Salt Lake City: Driggs Family Association, 1971.
- Howard R. Driggs Memorial Foundation website.  
<http://driggsfoundation.org/biography.htm>.
- Wells, Spencer, *Deep Ancestry, Inside the Genographic Project*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2007.

Wikipedia. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page). Look up articles on the various haplogroups mentioned, T, R1b, K, P. Each will provide you with a concise explanation of the various groups and their origins along with links and references to more specific and in depth literature in the field.

Family Tree DNA website. [www.familytreedna.com](http://www.familytreedna.com). Use their search to find the Drake DNA Surname Project.

The Brouwer Genealogy Database.

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~brouwergenealogydata/>. I have posted genealogical research on Joseph Driggs, Josias Janszen Drats, and Josias Drake, Jr. In January 2009, I will update with the line of Joseph Driggs descendants linking the participant, to his grandfather.