

Geneticist solves airport baby riddle

April 15 2011

A University of Edinburgh researcher has helped a man abandoned at birth in Gatwick airport to trace his genetic roots.

Dr. Jim Wilson, of the Centre for Population Health Sciences, analysed the man's DNA to identify where his parents may have come from.

Steve Hydes, now 25, was found as a ten day old baby on the floor of a ladies toilet in Gatwick airport.

His parents had wrapped him in a blanket and he was well fed and cared-for, but they left no identification or indication of where he might have come from.

Having been adopted and raised in England, Steve is now a father himself and after many years of wondering about his ancestry, he decided to try and trace more details of his background.

His story is told in the documentary, *Gatwick Baby: "Abandoned at Birth,"* which aired on Wednesday 13 April on BBC 3.

Dr. Jim Wilson, a population geneticist, features in the programme as he provided the DNA analysis that helped Steve to identify where his [family](#) originated.

The tests showed that Steve shares big blocks of DNA with people whose four grandparents came from England and also one from Ireland, meaning they are his distant cousins.

Dr. Wilson also analysed Steve's Y-chromosome to track the male bloodline and the results show that his father's family was more likely to come from the east of Britain than the west.

"Our research showed that his family were likely to be English with some Irish ancestry, as is common around London. As more and more people take genetic ancestry tests I am certain that we will eventually find a closer cousin of Steven's which might one day lead him to his father and mother," said Dr. Jim Wilson of Royal Society University Research Fellow.

Finally, Dr. Wilson fed Steve's DNA into a global databank containing the genetic profiles of millions of individuals.

These were people hoping to find family matches for either genealogical or medical reasons.

From this, he identified a number of individuals who are Steve's seventh or sixth or even, in one case, fifth cousin.

Provided by University of Edinburgh

Citation: Geneticist solves airport baby riddle (2011, April 15) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-04-geneticist-airport-baby-riddle.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.