

3/8/97 How did they have man's DNA?

Man, 9,000-year-old skeleton linked

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LONDON — Using DNA from a tooth, scientists have established a blood tie between a 9,000-year-old skeleton known as "Cheddar Man" and an English schoolteacher who lives just a half mile from the cave where the bones were found.

The network of underground caves at Cheddar, 130 miles west of London, is believed to have been home to a community of Stone Age people. Many artifacts have been found there.

Oxford University scientists announced yesterday that Adrian Targett, 42, a history teacher in the town of Cheddar, shares a common ancestor with Cheddar Man.

It is the longest human lineage ever traced, said the team of scientists from the

university's Institute of Molecular Medicine.

"They would have shared a common ancestor about 10,000 years ago so they are related — just not very closely," said Bryan Sykes, leader of the research team.

"I am overwhelmed, a bit surprised," Targett said. He suggested that if more people were tested, researchers would find other relatives of Cheddar Man.

Larry Barham, a Texas-born archaeologist at Bristol University, said the finding "adds to the evidence that Britons came from a race of hunter-gatherers who later turned to farming because they found it was to their advantage." Archaeologists believe Cheddar Man, who lived during the Stone Age, was a hunter-gatherer.