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19th century family saga re-told by DNA recovered from postcard stamps

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Old postcards with stamps might help unravelling historical family stories and relationships. By employing ancient DNA recovered from world war I postage stamps, we disprove a family saga of an illegitimate child born in 1887. We developed a protocol to collect DNA from saliva, trapped and protected on the backside of postage stamps glued on postcards. With replicate STR analyses we were able to assemble almost full autosomal and Y-STR profiles of three male, deceased family members. The illegitimate child turned out to be a legitimate child of a later married couple.

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