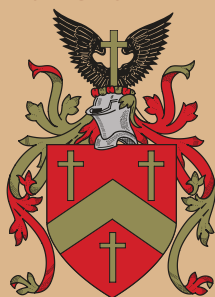


Austin Families Association of America

NEWSLETTER

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Fostering Austin Genealogy & Heritage

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Walter Aston/Austin of Virginia George Aston of Pennsylvania

• Research Continues •
By John Clinard

Walter Aston/Austin was an immigrant in 1627 aboard the ship *James*, explored uncharted land south of the Appomattox River and eventually owned several tracts of land in Charles City, VA. In our Spring Newsletter (Vol.30, No.1) Barbara Austin Giacomelli, reporting on her transcription of the Virginia Notebook of Janet Austin Curtis, raised the question "Who is this Walter?". Could we connect him to any of the Austin families in our AFAOA databases?

In the Summer Newsletter (Vo.30, No.2) this researcher expanded Walter's ancestry to the 1500s in Staffordshire, England. Walter was from a family of English nobility. The conclusion of this report was: "There are 141 men/women with the surname Aston in our AFAOA databases, many being associated with the 'George Aston of Pennsylvania' line, and quite a few 'Unplaced Southern Austins' with that name as well. Linking any of these Southern Austin/Aston men to Walter Aston is a daunting task."

We have now discovered Walter's connection to George Aston! Walter Aston, (born 1607 in Cornwall, England) was the great-granduncle of George Aston (born

1671 in Birmingham, England and a long-time resident of Downingtown, Chester Co., PA, eventually serving as a Justice of the Peace). Their common ancestor was Walter's father, also a Walter Aston, born



about 1560 in Staffordshire, England. Walter, Sr. was the great-great-grandfather of George Aston.

Another discovery was that George Aston's second son, Peter Aston (born 1718), also immigrated to America and established his family in Lancaster, PA, rather than Chester, PA where his brother, George Jr. (born 1715), settled. This researcher is presently expanding the family of Peter and will include the findings in AFAOA's "George Aston of Downingtown, Chester Co., Pennsylvania" database.

But that's not all that's going on. Because of AFAOA's Y-DNA studies, this researcher has discovered descendant men of George Aston who share the same Y-

continued on page 2

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NEW MEMBERS

And their Earliest Known Austin Ancestors

Patrick Sumner

2315 Lower Hunters Trace, Louisville, KY 40216;
kypatlou@bellsouth.net; *"Thomas Austin of New Kent Co. VA"*
b.~1600 Eng

P. Thomas Austin

13900 South Park Blvd. #11, Shaker Hts., OH 44120;
ptaustin@roadrunner.com; *"Unplaced Northern Austins"*—
Christopher b.1812 Essex Co. NY, Lambert b. 1850 MI,
Carlton b. 1875 MI

Linda Austin Perdue

2770 Woodland Rd., Thomaston, GA 30286;
linper@charter.net; *"William and Ruth of NC"* William b.1700
Ireland, Charles b.1726 Ire.; John b.1759 Ire.; William b.1800 GA

Trecia J. Oster

2232 N. Fourth St., Apt C; St. Charles. MO 63301;
treciaoster@yahoo.com; *"Andy" or "Jack" (Andrew Jackson?)*
b.~1830s; Jerome b. 1871 Henderson Co. TN

Jo Dean Walston

603 Water Oak Lane, Fleming Island, FL 32003;
jodean46@hotmail.com; DNA indicates connection to
Thomas Austin of New Kent Co., VA

James Worth Dorton

6291 Lucas Road, Flint MI 48506; notrod@gmail.com;
DNA indicates connection to *Thomas Austin of New Kent Co., VA*

James C. Carter

7223 Sunlit Trail Drive, San Antonio, TX 78244;
jcarter26@att.net;
DNA indicates connection to *George Aston of PA*

Stacy Lynn Austin Falkner

4623 Blank Rd., Sedro Woolley, WA 98284;
stacyfalkner@ymail.com; Benjamin W. b 1808 RI; Melville
(*"Melvin"*) Dayton b.1846 Herkimer, NY; William Edward
b.1870 NY

Gay Auerbach

110 El Camino Real, Berkley, CA 94705;
gayauerbach@hotmail.com; *"Unplaced Northern Austins"* -
Fredus Aldrich b. 1782 Sag Harbor, NY; James Lewis b. 1825
Sag Harbor NY; John Gawley b. 1876

Eileen J. Hoover

297 Viscaino Way, San Jose, CA 95119; eileen.hvr@gmail.com;
"Thomas Austin of New Kent Co., VA" b.~1600 Eng., Richard
b.~1624 Eng., Richard b.~1660 VA, John C. b. aft 1692, Joseph
b.1805 KY, Christopher b.1827 TN, James E. b.1856

Blix Rice

213 Beagle Run, Easley, SC 29642; ancestry@narrowhaven.com;
DNA indicates connection to *Thomas Austin of New Kent Co., VA*

John William Sumner

1245 Blueberry Trail, Decatur GA 30033;
jwsumner1@gmail.com;
DNA indicates connection to *Thomas Austin of New Kent Co., VA*

Katherine Williams

276 Cobb Road, Jackson, TN 38305; katherinewilliams@char-
ter.net; *"William and Ruth of NC"* - William b.~1700 Ireland,
John b. 1727 Ireland, Richard b. 1755 Ireland, Charles b. 1796 NC

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Walter Austin, continued from page 1

DNA signature and the Y-haplogroup G-M201. Three of these men, who have the surname of Austin, all being cousins of known relationships, have joined our Austin DNA Project. They have shown that their most-recent common ancestor was Andrew Jackson Austin, Jr., born 1847 in Botetourt County, VA. Thus, Andrew possessed the same, or very similar Y-signature. If more distant Austin cousins could be identified, then the proof of earlier Austin/Aston ancestry would be possible.

When the Y-DNA of these three Austin descendants of George Aston is compared to all men who have tested their Y-DNA with FTDNA, close matches to men with other

surnames, such as Carter and Hooker, are discovered. Often the surname differences of men with matching Y-signatures are due to non-paternal events (NPEs), also referred to as undocumented adoptions. This researcher is collaborating with several Carter and Hooker men to identify solutions of their potential NPEs. Through advanced Y-DNA and autosomal DNA methods we are making progress. Nine Carter men and women and four Hooker men have joined AFAOA's Austin DNA Project. All parties speculate that their progenitor was likely an Aston man. More work is needed to prove the possibility.

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As I wrote before, this is an unusual year for AFAOA. We officers did things that were exceptions to the AFAOA by-laws. These actions have been documented and placed in our permanent records.

As president, I proposed the actions, intended as one-time-only actions, because there was absolutely no way to follow our bylaws given circumstances surrounding the on-going pandemic. In all cases I sought the approval of our 7-person executive committee prior to moving forward, and in all cases the approval was unanimous.

These are the actions taken:

- An agreement between AFAOA and Allen County Public Library—Genealogy Center (ACPL-GC). Actions began in August 2020
- Extra spending to satisfy our agreement to send paper materials to ACPL-GC
- Cancellation of the in-person 2020 annual AFAOA conference
- Modification of our officer election procedure, allowing voting by paper and e-mail ballot
- Decision to hold the 2020 annual board and business meetings using remote audio and video.

Amendments to the AFAOA bylaws are being drafted, so that we can proceed into the future in compliance with our bylaws. The drafted amendments will be detailed in our next newsletter and presented for membership approval at next year's conference business meeting.

John Clinard
president@afaoa.org



AFAOA's First Virtual Conference

Because of the on-going pandemic we had to cancel the AFAOA Annual Conference in Williamsburg, VA for 2020. Instead we will hold a remote conference using Zoom. We hope all members will participate!

Here are a few things you should know:

1. The Conference will be at 5:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time on Friday October 30, 2020.
2. This will be our annual Business Meeting with brief comments and reports by AFAOA officers and committee chairpersons. Old and new business will be discussed. We will address your questions and comments.
3. New officers for the upcoming 2-year term will be welcomed and installed.
4. We are trying to hold the Zoom time to 2 hours, and hopefully much less.
5. All AFAOA members are invited. The first 100 logins will be accepted.
6. Please acquaint yourself with Zoom before joining the meeting.
7. Each AFAOA member will receive an e-mail containing the Zoom details (meeting ID and password, and phone-in instructions). Watch for this e-mail a few days before October 30, 2020.

Please send any questions or comments to John Clinard as soon as possible.

We hope to "see" you there!
the AFAOA Board

Election of Officers

The Nominating Committee presented a slate of officers for the two year term of 2020-2022 in the Summer Newsletter, and the vote was held by paper and e-mail ballot.

Secretary/Treasurer Paula Mackey reported that ballots were received during August 2020, and the vote was unanimous in favor of the slate of officers as presented by the Nominating Committee. The incoming officers, to be installed remotely at the annual business meeting, are:

President: John Clinard (2nd term)
Vice President: Joy Davis (2nd term).
Vice President: David Neithamer (2nd term)
Vice President: Elizabeth Neithamer
Secretary-Treasurer: Barbara Giacomelli
Genealogist: Liz Austin Carlin (no term limit)

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AFAOA's Partnership with Allen County Public Library—Genealogy Center

Allen County Public Library—Genealogy Center (ACPL-GC) in Fort Wayne, Indiana is an important center for genealogical research. They have one of the largest research collections available, incorporating records from around the world. They have a staff specializing in genealogy and always available to help.

AFAOA has formed a partnership with ACPL-GC. Curt Witcher, Genealogy Center Manager, solidified the following terms of our agreement on June 3, 2020 and appointed Aaron Smith, Genealogy Materials Manager for ACPL, as our point of contact for transactions and communication.

AFAOA's responsibilities:

1. Deliver to ACPL-GC about 30 boxes of paper documents constituting AFAOA's archival holdings, and representing both northern and southern Austin family research.
2. Deliver in digital form all documents currently included in AFAOA's website.
3. Fund all shipping and any other transmission costs.
4. Describe in our website and in our newsletters the success of interactions, initial and future, between AFAOA and ACPL-GC.
5. Grant ACPL-GC all rights to describe these interactions for any of its publications.
6. Provide a direct link from AFAOA's website to ACPL-GC's Austin Families site (see ACPL-GC's responsibilities)
7. Grant ACPL-GC a nonexclusive perpetual license for use of all materials.

ACPL-GC's responsibilities:

1. Receive and digitize paper documents to the satisfaction of ACPL-GC's specifications. Final disposition of these materials will be the Genealogy Center's choice.
2. Provide resulting digital representation of physical materials back to AFAOA.
3. Establish an Austin Families site on the Genealogy Center's website, with acknowledgement to AFAOA for providing the materials.
4. Establish a direct link from the Austin Families site to the AFAOA website.
5. Perpetually provide the Austin Families site openly to the public.

David Neithamer delivered 29 boxes of paper materials to the Genealogy Center on August 8. Implementation of the agreement is proceeding.

New AFAOA Website

We are pleased to announce and introduce our new website, using EasyNetSites (ENS), software designed specifically for genealogy groups like ours. The AFAOA Database will continue to use TNG software, just as before, but on a separate yet seamlessly connected website. Our address is still afaoo.org.

The new website will have many added features, allowing us to communicate more easily with each other. These features include:

- Renew your membership, and pay membership dues online.
- Visit a Members Only forum where you can post queries or brick wall issues, give or receive advice, and more.
- Post your entire list of surnames and have your list become Google searchable.
- Send queries to our genealogists.
- Receive our full-color quarterly newsletter, sent directly to your inbox.

While many areas will be available to the general

public, the AFAOA Database and Members Only sections will require you to login with a username and password. Due to different security protocols, each of these sections requires a separate login.

You should have received an email with your username and password for the new website. If you had previously created a user account on our TNG site, your username and password have been moved to the new site. No changes are needed for AFAOA Database access. Members may also use the same username and password for the Members Only section.

If you had not established a user account, the email contained your temporary username and password. We ask that you login within 30 days of receiving the email to change that password. (You may also change your username.) Anyone who does not login within 30 days will have access suspended and will need to contact the webmaster to have access restored. This is due to the security risk of emailed passwords.

Bookmark our website and visit it often. New features, that we hope you will find useful, will be added in the future.

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The Unfortunate Captain Austin

Now he has a home!

In the AFAOA Newsletter of August 2006, based on research by Jim Carlin, we were told about Union Captain George Austin and how "The Unfortunate Captain Austin" was involved in a national incident during the Civil War. The article concluded: "This is all we know about George Austin, and today he is in our Unplaced Austins database, until we find a home for him." Now George has a home!



George H. Austin was born about 1832 - 1834 in Clark Co., Indiana, the 5th of 6 children born to John Austin and Nancy Epler. Research on John Austin and his descendants has placed George in the family line of "Richard Austin of Charlestown, Massachusetts" (George⁷, John⁶, John⁵, William⁴, Lt. John³, Anthony², Richard¹). We are grateful to Fred Wexler for his research and contribution to this database.

George's father, John Austin, was born 2 November 1789 in Shaftsbury, Bennington, Vermont. When John was quite young his family moved to Little Falls, NY, and later to Indiana Territory, settling in Charlestown, Clark County, IN. John and Nancy were married 6 Oct 1813 in Clark County; their six children were born there. In 1839 the family moved to New Albany, IN. John was listed in the 1850 census as a miller and in the 1860 census as a merchant. He died 11 Jan 1877 in New Albany.

George Austin was well involved in the community of New Albany. An article in the New Albany Daily Ledger of 22 Feb 1861 lists names of citizens that were elected to serve in senior positions in the "City Guards," a unit of men generally used for ceremonial purposes and having some military training. George was elected by the group to be 3rd Orderly Sergeant.

The Civil War began on April 10, 1861. Colonel William E. Woodruff organized a volunteer regiment at Camp Clay, Pendleton, Ohio. Although consisting primarily of Ohio recruits, they were led by Kentucky officers. The unit was mustered into Union service 13 June 1861 as the 2nd Kentucky Volunteer Infantry. 1st Lieutenant George Austin, age 29 years, was placed in command of Company B.

On 17 July 1861, the regiment engaged Confederate forces, at which time, the regimental commander Col. Woodruff, his assistant Lt. Col. George W. Neff and the leader of Company B, the now Captain George Austin, were captured and ultimately confined as prisoners of war in the Columbia Jail, Columbia, South Carolina.

At some point, Union forces captured two Virginia Ranger officers, Captains Triplett and Spriggs. The Virginia Rangers were civilian units, loosely sponsored by the Confederate Government, whose purpose was to roam about Virginia and harass Union forces using

guerilla tactics. Some groups were very effective and some became common criminals. Therefore, Captains Triplett and Spriggs were not considered uniformed soldiers, and were tried for their crimes as civilians and not prisoners of war. They were condemned and were scheduled to be executed by hanging, prompting a tug-of-war between Confederate and Union leaders reaching up to members of the U.S. Congress, the State and War Departments in Washington and Generals George B. McClellan and Robert E. Lee.

In a 19 June 1862 letter from Gen. Robert E. Lee to Major Gen. George B. McClellan, Lee writes:

"GENERAL: I am directed by the Secretary of War to state that having been informed of the capture of Captains Spriggs and Triplett, of the Ranger Service of the State of Virginia, and of their intended execution by order of the United States Government, he has caused lots to be drawn from among US officers detained as prisoners of war for the purpose of selecting subjects for retaliation, and the that lots have fallen upon Captain George Austin and Captain Timothy O'Meara."

"It is the desire of the Confederate Government to conduct this war in conformity to the usages of Christian and civilized nations, but should he have been correctly informed and should Captains Spriggs and Triplett be executed, retaliation will be made on Captains Austin and O'Meara. This course will be demanded by due regard for the citizens of the Confederate States and will be unhesitatingly though reluctantly pursued."

In a 22 July 1862 letter written from the Columbia Jail to J. A. Cravens, Member of Congress, George writes that he had been informed that the two governments had agreed on a general exchange of prisoners. He was freed in September 1862.

Captain George Austin's military career continued after his exchange. He was wounded in action, in the arm, 31 Dec 1862 during the Battle of Stone's River, near Murfreesboro, TN.

On 19 May 1864 George Austin married Alice E. McDonald, the daughter of John S. McDonald, president of the First National Bank in New Albany. George and Alice's daughter Evelyn was born in June 1869.

George died at the young age of 38. The New Albany Daily Ledger, Feb. 4, 1871, p. 2, reported that "Mr. George H. Austin, a well known citizen of New Albany, died at his residence in this city this afternoon. Mr. A. has been slowly sinking with consumption for several months past...." He is buried in the Fairview Cemetery, New Albany, Floyd Co., IN. Pension applications were filed for George's widow Alice and his minor daughter Evelyn, based on his military service.

In 1891 Evelyn married Edward Seguin. They had two children—Austin A. Seguin (b. 1892) and Edward Wallace Seguin (b. 1897).

Now we know the rest of the story.

What Is This DNA Stuff and Why Should I Care?

Part 3: Mitochondrial DNA—Maternal Ancestry By David R. Neithamer

In Parts 1 and 2 of this series we learned about the structure of DNA and how the four major testing companies (Ancestry.com, MyHeritage, 23andMe, and FTDNA) test your DNA sample. In Parts 3-6 we will look at the different types of DNA, beginning with mitochondrial. FTDNA is the only major testing company that offers an mtDNA test.

Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) is found in the mitochondria and is the only DNA not found in the cell nucleus. Human mtDNA forms unique circular molecules, like a twisted rubber ladder with its ends connected to itself, as shown in **Figure 1**.

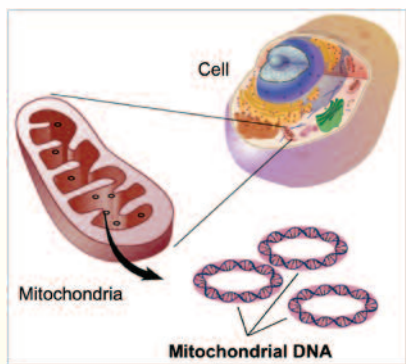


Figure 1. Mitochondrial DNA

Source: Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitochondrial_DNA

Mitochondria are the powerhouses of the cell and produce energy for the cell using oxygen and glucose. Human cells average about 100 mitochondria per cell. Each mitochondrion contains about 5 mtDNA molecules. Therefore, on average, each human cell contains about 500 mtDNA molecules.

The three genealogical regions of interest in mtDNA are the hypervariable regions (HVR1 & HVR2) and the coding region (CR). In early DNA testing, only HVR1 & HVR2, which could be used for haplogroup identification, were tested. The mtDNA shows very slow mutation rates compared to nuclear DNA, and no recombination occurs, which means that it is inherited unchanged over many generations. There is only a 50% chance of finding a most recent common ancestor (MRCA) within 5 generations (~120 years). However, the probability increases to 95% back about 22 generations (~550 years).

There is also a unique inheritance pattern - only fe-

males pass on their mtDNA to their children, but both males & females inherit their mtDNA from their mothers. Therefore, both males and females can take an mtDNA test. Why do only females pass on their mtDNA to their descendants? Because mitochondria are the powerhouses of the cell, sperm cells contain a large number of mitochondria in their tails to enable them to propel themselves toward the ovum and ultimately achieve fertilization. Most of the mitochondria is located at the base of the tail, which is lost upon penetration of the ovum membrane and fertilization of the egg.

One way to look at the inheritance pattern is shown in **Figure 2**. The matriarch in the family tree will pass on her mtDNA to all four of her children, and those first-generation descendants will all have the same mtDNA. However, in the second generation, neither of her male children will pass on her mtDNA, and only one of her daughters had children. So, only those two grandchildren, a boy and girl, will inherit their grandmother's mtDNA. In the third generation that granddaughter will pass on her grandmother's mtDNA, and all three of her children will share the same mtDNA from their great grandmother.

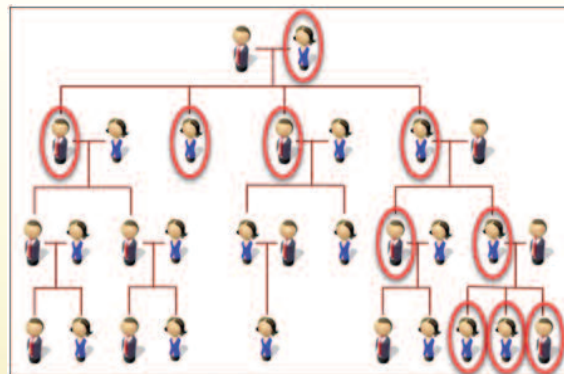


Figure 2. Who Inherits Great Grandmother's mtDNA?

Source: Generated by the author

The maternal haplogroup can be identified through this test, and reveals information about the migration of your ancient female line. My maternal haplogroup is H2a2a. The H branch of my ancient maternal line dates to about 30,000 years ago and is one of the most common lineages to migrate into Europe, accounting for about 40% of the Western European population.

My wife, on the other hand, is maternal haplogroup W6c. The origin of the W haplogroup dates to approximately 20,000 years ago, and it is mainly found distrib-

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uted in west Eurasia. It is likely that individuals bearing this lineage participated in the expansion into Europe following the Last Glacial Maximum.

Figure 3 shows the ancient maternal human haplogroup migration map for all of the branches of the maternal tree.

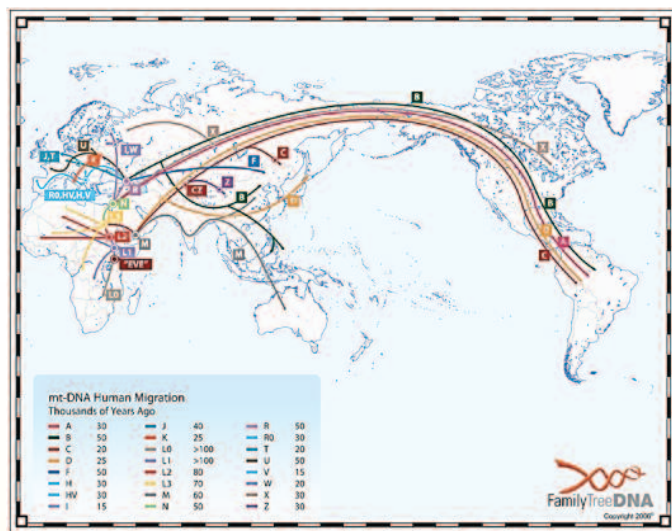


Figure 3. mtDNA Human Haplogroup Migration Map
Source: Family Tree DNA website Migration Map Copyright 2006.
https://www.familytreedna.com/pdfs/?path=%2Fpdf-docs%2Fmt_migrationmap.pdf

Because of the slow rates of mutation and the lack of recombination, mtDNA is not useful for finding living genetic cousins because an exact full sequence match may be several generations or several thousand years back. When I took my mtDNA test, 22 perfect full sequence matches were identified. Except for my mother, none of those matches were genealogically relevant - no common ancestors were found in their trees. However, mtDNA is useful in determining the maternal haplogroup and ancient origins back thousands of years and it can help identify specific individuals. Forensic laboratories occasionally use mtDNA comparison to identify human remains, and especially to identify older skeletal remains.

As an example, in 2012 researchers found a skeleton under a parking lot in Leicester, England. Based on the location, skeletal wounds and severe scoliosis present they believed these to be the remains of King Richard III of England. Richard III died in the Battle of Bosworth Field on August 22, 1485. Using full sequence mtDNA to test their hypothesis, genealogists traced the maternal descendants of his sister, Anne of York, to two living relatives,

Michael Ibsen and Wendy Duldig. Richard's mtDNA differed from both Michael and Wendy by only one mutation and they all had the same rare haplogroup, J1c2c. Based on this and other evidence they proved that these were indeed the remains of King Richard III.

Another example: in 1918 Vladimir Lenin ordered the murders of the Romanov family, who were being held in the Ural Mountains. Czar Nicholas II, his wife Czarina Alexandra, his four daughters Olga, Tatiana, Maria, and Anastasia, his son Alexei, a physician, and three female servants were all murdered, but the location of the burial site was never disclosed.

In 1922, a woman named Anna Anderson claimed to be the Czar's youngest daughter, Anastasia, but numerous critics claimed she was actually Franziska Schanzkowska, the daughter of a Polish factory worker. At the time, there was no scientific way to prove or disprove her claim. Then in 1991, a burial site was found in the Ural Mountains with nine bodies - two adult males, four adult females, and three young females. The bodies could be the Czar, Czarina, three daughters, the physician, and the three servants. If so, what happened to the fourth daughter and to the son?

A descendant was needed for DNA testing. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and husband of Queen Elizabeth II, was identified as a living descendant, through his mother, of Queen Victoria, the grandmother of Czarina Alexandra, and sharing the same mtDNA. Testing showed that Philip had two rare mutations. The mtDNA of one adult female and the three younger females matched his, including the rare mutations. The Romanov family had been found!

The absence of the fourth daughter and the son led credence to Anna Anderson's claim of being Anastasia. The solution was to test Anna Anderson's mtDNA. She had died seven years earlier, but her tissue samples had been stored in a freezer at a hospital where she was a patient. Her mtDNA conclusively showed she did **not** match the Romanov family. It did, however, match the maternal great nephew of the Polish factory worker. She was indeed Franziska Schanzkowska.

In 2007 another burial site near the first site was found of a young boy and a young girl. The mtDNA of both bodies matched the Romanov family - Anastasia and Alexei were found!

Next, we will discuss Y-DNA which follows the male or surname line.

This article, expanded to include additional scientific explanation, will be placed on the AFAOA website, in "Austin DNA Project" / "DNA Tutorials".

Austin Families Association of America

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Address Service Requested

Austin Families Association of America

Objectives

- To gather, preserve and disseminate Austin genealogies and Austin family histories.
- To establish a specialized database of Austin information that can assist genealogists and family members to learn as much as possible about their Austin heritage.
- To foster acquaintances and long-term friendships among the members of all branches of Austin families.

*Thanks to all members
for your support of the
Austin Families Association of America*

**Please notice the membership renewal date
on your address label.**

Dues are \$15 for 1 year, \$25 for 2 years

**Send to: Paula Mackey
5104 Golden Lane
Fort Worth, TX 76123**

**It is now possible to renew your membership
and pay dues on-line (but for 1 year only).
Find your membership expiration date in
your member "profile".**