

TRACING THEIR FOOTSTEPS

MANY THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HELP

I would like to say thank you to all the people who helped me over the past months with my research. I have met so many new cousins this year. Many people reached out to me once they heard about my project and provided me with a lot of information. A special thanks to Loretta Gray from Wichita Falls, Sarah Castle from New Mexico, and Marvin Spencer from Springfield, MA. Each of them provided me with valuable information. Marvin Spencer pulled out all the stops and filled in with pictures and names of the entire branch of family in Springfield, MA. Thanks again to everyone for helping. Go to the tree on ancestry.com and check it out. You will see some new faces.

SUMMARY OF FAMILY TREE	
PEOPLE:	1047
STORIES:	17
COMMENTS:	22
PHOTOS:	252
RECORDS:	864

I have many more people to contact so if you haven't heard from me yet, you will be hearing from me soon.

ALBERTA, ALVERTA, ALVERDA

Over the years the spelling of many family names changed with the generations. Runnells became Reynolds, Strahan became Strayhand and Alverda can be seen as Alverta and Alberta. Because of illiteracy immediately after emancipation, official papers were most times signed with an X and the details were filled out by whites who in many cases were barely literate themselves. Many times the names were written as they sounded. As blacks became educated they corrected the spelling of their names. In some cases one branch of a family may have adopted the new

spelling while another did not. Even today you might find a branch of your family who continues to spell their surname the way it was spelled those many years ago.

We can use Alverda Jackson Reynolds as a prime example. On each official document we find her name spelled different. Now we need to determine what was her real name. Her marriage license has her name as Alverda, the census has her name as Alverta and her death record has her name as Alberta. Does anyone have proof of the correct name and spelling?

UNDERSTANDING DNA AND GENEALOGY PROJECTS

While DNA can't provide you with your entire family tree or tell you who your ancestors are, DNA testing can:

- Determine if two people are related
- Determine if two people descend from the same ancestor
- Find out if you are related to others with the same surname
- Prove or disprove your family tree research
- Provide clues about your ethnic origin

DNA tests have been around for many years, but it is only recently that the cost of genetic testing has finally come down into the realm of possibility for the average individual interested in tracing their roots. Home DNA test kits can be ordered through the mail or over the Internet at a cost averaging \$100-\$400 per test. They usually consist of a cheek swab or mouthwash to easily collect a sample of cells from the inside of your mouth. You send back the sample through the mail and within a month or two you receive the results - a series of numbers that represent key chemical "markers" within your DNA. These numbers can then be compared to results from other individuals to help you determine your ancestry. Confused with all the talk of markers, mutations and haplotypes? See [Genetic Basics: Understanding the Clues Found in Our DNA](#)

There are two basic types of DNA tests available for genealogical testing:

mtDNA Tests - Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) is contained in the cytoplasm of the cell, rather than the nucleus. This type of DNA is passed by a mother to both male and female

offspring without any mixing, so your mtDNA is the same as your mother's mtDNA, which is the same as her mother's mtDNA. mtDNA changes very slowly so it cannot determine close relationships as well as it can determine general relatedness. If two people have an exact match in their mtDNA, then there is a very good chance they share a common maternal ancestor, but it is hard to determine if this is a recent ancestor or one who lived hundreds of years ago. It is important to keep in mind with this test that a male's mtDNA comes only from his mother and is not passed on to his offspring.

Example: The DNA tests that identified the bodies of the Romanovs, the Russian imperial family, utilized mtDNA from a sample provided by Prince Philip, who shares the same maternal line from Queen Victoria.

Y Line Tests - More recently, the Y chromosome in the nuclear DNA is being used to establish family ties. The Y chromosomal DNA test (usually referred to as Y DNA or Y-Line DNA) is only available for males, since the Y chromosome is only passed down the male line from father to son. Tiny chemical markers on the Y chromosome create a distinctive pattern, known as a haplotype, that distinguishes one male lineage from another. Shared markers can indicate relatedness between two men, though not the exact degree of the relationship. Y chromosome testing is most often used by individuals with the same last name to learn if they share a common ancestor.

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Example: The DNA tests supporting the probability that Thomas Jefferson fathered the last child of Sally Hemmings were based on Y-chromosome DNA samples from male descendants of Thomas Jefferson's paternal uncle, since there were no surviving male descendants from Jefferson's marriage.

Markers on both mtDNA and Y chromosome tests can also be used to determine an individual's haplogroup, a grouping of individuals with the same genetic characteristics. This test may provide you with interesting information about the deep ancestral lineage of your paternal and/or maternal lines.

FAMILY SPOTLIGHT Marvin Carl Spencer



Born: July 28, 1948,
Bonham, Fannin, Texas
Carl lives in Springfield, MA with his wife Joyce and children Jennifer and Terrance. He is the son of Mildred Harvey and Marvin Spencer. Carl also has a family tree on ancestry.com.

Heritage Photos, Bible Pages and More



Bessie Creighton
Of Denison, Texas
Shared by Jean Jackson of
Blue Springs, Missouri

I am still looking for heritage photos, family bible pages and family stories to share in our family history album. I am willing to pay for professional duplication of the photographs. You can take your photographs to a photographer in your area and have them scanned. You do not have to leave your photo. If you have photo's that you would like to share, please contact me for arrangements. I can help you find someone in your area and arrange for payment.

Contact Debra Favors at 206-329-2548
Or favorsdd@msn.com



This is an example of photo that was on "tin type" that was successfully scanned.