

Note From the Editors:

The feature of this month's newsletter is an article written last May on DNA by one of our readers, Rodney Williams. Our Armfield DNA family site at Ancestry.com has three male members, Connie's brother James Armfield, Rodney Williams and a Mather male. Paula Hinkle and Doug Miller are administering another Armfield DNA site at Family Tree DNA. The Generations Network is the parent company of all of these sites that includes Ancestry.com, MyFamily.com, Genealogy.com, and Rootsweb.com . We would certainly like to have other Armfield males participate in our DNA studies so that the results become more meaningful for all Armfield researchers.

Joyce & Connie

yDNA

By Rodney Williams

A relatively new and somewhat misunderstood science, genetic genealogy, shows promise in the broader field of genealogy, if for no other reason than that it has the potential to pierce through the brick walls we all frequently lie in bed pondering. Paternal DNA (yDNA) testing is by far the most useful and promising (to the genealogist) of all currently available tests, so we'll focus on that test here.

A yDNA test looks at a section of the male sex chromosome (the y-chromosome), which is passed virtually unchanged from father to son. Females do not have a y-chromosome and can therefore not be yDNA tested, but the results of a known biological brother or other relative on the same paternal line can reveal the same genealogical information for a female as it can for her male relatives.

What makes the yDNA test dovetail so nicely with what any genealogist cares about?:

- The y-chromosome is passed down in exactly the same way as surnames are passed down in most western cultures (barring "non-paternal events"; we'll get to that later).
- While the y-chromosome is usually passed from father to son unchanged, every so often a 'mistake' occurs in the copying of this portion of the DNA (as happens throughout our entire genetic code). These mistakes are called mutations, and what's neat about the y-chromosome is that it mutates at a rate that makes it relevant to the genealogist: fast enough (that is, happening frequently enough over a given number of generations) to reveal whether two individuals are truly related within a time-frame that a genealogist cares about, and slow enough (that is, happening infrequently enough) to ensure that two closely related individuals will indeed have a DNA match (meaning few if any mutations have occurred).
- yDNA can tell you something that no genealogist I've ever met has been able to prove through traditional research (although most of us can speculate): if you trace your direct paternal line (father's father's father's. . .father) back to the first ancestor who

lived before widespread intercontinental travel began, but after humans had dispersed from Africa--on what continent did that ancestor live? In other words, where would he fit in with what we know today as ethnicity?

Let's look at some of the implications and uses of each of these characteristics of the y-chromosome:

Your father's name is embedded in your DNA. The fact that yDNA is passed down like surnames means not only that it is a handy genetic record of the direct paternal branch of your family tree, but also that assembling a group of strangers who might actually be distant (or not-so-distant) relatives, and then determining if and how they are related is fairly straightforward. Single-surname discussion boards and newsletters (like this one, for example) are a perfect match for yDNA testing, particularly when combined with the information we have each individually uncovered about our family trees. One example of how this works can be seen by clicking [here](#) to go to the KING FamilyTree DNA Project results page. Notice how participants are grouped, based on their DNA results, by the sharing of a common ancestor. With your DNA test results you will also receive a list of other participants with close DNA matches to yours, along with an estimate of TMRCA (Time to Most Recent Common Ancestor) between you and that participant. You can then anonymously contact those with the closest matches to you, especially those who share your surname and compare family trees to see if a link can be found within the estimated TMRCA. Regardless of which testing company you use, you can enter your results into public sites like ySearch, which allows you to click on a link for an individual in your match list and see the family tree information from the gedcom file uploaded by that individual. And then there's the case of the 'non-paternal event', any event that causes a male to not have the same surname of his biological father. This can be as simple and non-controversial as an adoption, or a man who changes his last name because he doesn't like his original one, or it can be something more scandalous and sinister (I'll leave it to your imagination to come up with some examples). While DNA results won't tell you which of these situations is the case for your ancestors, they will give you clues as to which family you biologically belong. This can be particularly useful if you know that you or your ancestor was adopted, the biological father of one of your ancestors is unknown, or you belong to an ethnic group whose historical circumstances make it hard to trace your roots through traditional means (or who have a high incidence of non-paternal events; for example, descendants of African-American slaves). Had it not been for DNA testing, I would never have had a clue that I had any connection to the ARMFIELDs, and you wouldn't be reading this now.

We are the sum of our mutations. Because we can estimate the mutation rates of the various markers (sections) on the y-chromosome, we can also estimate the TMRCA between any two individuals. Admittedly the science of doing so is in its relative infancy and continuously evolving, but as long as you keep the limitations in mind as you use this tool (as you would any historical document or passed-down family tale) you can stumble upon some intriguing clues that could lead you to the crack in that brick wall you've been staring at for years. The more markers you test, the more closely you can narrow down the TMRCA, although beyond 46 markers or so the increased accuracy diminishes to become much less valuable. I recommend testing at the highest marker level you can afford, recognizing that you may be paying for a level of accuracy that is somewhat

irrelevant, at least for the time being (that is, until DNA databases have many more participants or the science evolves to a more advanced point).

Your Father's Father's Father's Father's (repeat 25,000 times) "name" is also embedded in your DNA. While not always immediately useful in breaking down brick walls within a genealogically relevant time-frame, discovering your 'deep' ancestry (at least on your direct paternal branch) can be quite fascinating and may give you a deeper sense of your roots than is possible with traditional genealogy research. The fact that our ancestors were once a number of isolated gene pools without access to intercontinental travel (and thus to swapping DNA) means that to this day we can still be classified into roughly 20 clusters of yDNA, or Haplogroups. These haplogroups are identified with letters from A to T, and you will usually see them further divided and identified as Haplotypes (R1b, C32, etc). While technically these Haplogroups/types refer to gene pool origins (and hence, geographic origins) they also somewhat correspond, in a messy kind of way, to what we know as ethnic groups. For instance, James Armfield (Connie's brother) and I were informed that our ancient ancestry predictions are Haplotype R1b, "The Artisans", and they believe our ancestors "may have been responsible for the first cave paintings, and probably lived in present day England, France, Spain or Portugal." It is not entirely unreasonable to speculate that we may get a note in a couple of years informing us that we are now thought to be part of some other Haplogroup, which would be more easily explained by the historical record, but may not be quite as clever a story to tell at parties (although almost as clever!). Either way the plot thickens, and neither story would likely have been told without yDNA testing.

I hope this admittedly (but intentionally) non-technical introduction to yDNA has enticed you to look more into DNA testing and how it might advance your research. Remember, females can have a brother or other male relative on the same paternal line test for them. This is about as good a time as any to remind you that Connie Stenhjem at ancestry.com and Paula Hinkle at FamilyTree DNA submitted Armfield male DNA samples for their respective ARMFIELD DNA study groups.

Rodney Williams

We all would be willing to assist you in any way we could if you decide to participate. Some contacts for you are:

- Rodney Williams at innkeeper@strawberrycreekinn.com
- Doug Miller, on behalf of FTDNA, wrote that they are having a special rate for those that have tested with other companies. Check out their homepage where you can find the instructions. http://www.familytreedna.com/PDF/PROMO_GAP_0308.pdf
- Paula Hinkle at phinkel@pacbell.net
- The ySearch site is <http://www.ysearch.org>
- Connie Armfield Stenhjem at cstenhjem@comcast.net
- and for ancestry dna@ancestry.com.

There are other yDNA sites where you can manually input your results, but most of them have pretty small databases of participants. The exception is ySearch.org which Rodney referenced and is the public database linked to FamilyTree DNA. When someone tests with FTDNA they are given the option of having their results on the public site at ySearch.

Inputting results on ySearch requires some manipulation of the results to match the different lab standards, but either Rodney or Doug could assist you.

Connie and Rodney chose Ancestry because of their broad reach into the genealogy community in general. It is anticipated that they will eventually catch up with FamilyTree DNA in database size and that they could possibly integrate the DNA results into the other features on their site, e.g., you can now attach your DNA results to your tree and have it automatically attached to everyone on your direct maternal or paternal line. Paula Hinkle went with FTDNA. FamilyTree DNA has been doing DNA testing longer, claims to have the largest database of testers in the world (which, of course, increases your chances of finding close matches) and has more features in terms of analyzing results for a group of people. All three of us have now submitted our DNA results at ySearch and, as we suspected, Paula's brother, who is an Armfield, Rodney Williams and James Armfield are the closest matches.

There is an interesting article entitled [DNA Fact or Science Fiction](#) by Lauren Gamber in the December 2009 issue of Family Tree magazine. It also includes a DNA resource Directory and DNA databases.

Generous Offer

Rodney is the owner and innkeeper of The Strawberry Creek Inn in Idyllwild, California (www.strawberrycreekinn.com). As an incentive to participate in a DNA project, he has graciously offered a \$300 gift certificate good for one year from date of issue (subject to availability) to the first ten direct Armfield male descendants who test and join one of the ARMFIELD group projects by February 28, 2010. Contact Rodney once your results have been posted to either site at innkeeper@strawberrycreekinn.com

Comments & Contributions

Mark & Suzanne Troemner contributed the following information on their Armfield family line, Joab and Susannah (Murphey) Armfield and their daughter Elizabeth Jane who married William Conner Lambert in 1853 in Indiana. William was the son of William Eli Lambert and Elizabeth Conner. The Lamberts and Armfields lived in the Stockwell area of Indiana for about twenty years. Elizabeth Jane Armfield and William Conner Lambert were the grandparents of Suzanne's grandfather who was substantially raised by them in Minburn, Dallas, Iowa as his parents were separated during most of his youth.

Suzannah Murphey Armfield was buried in Stockwell. Susannah's headstone has an inscription on one side for one of her married daughters. It is currently unknown when Joab died or was buried. There was an Armfield family in Dallas County, Iowa before William Conner and Elizabeth Jane Lambert moved their family there.

Matilda and Virtuous Armfield, daughters of Joab and Susannah both married Edwards. They had emigrated together to Rush County, Indiana. There are a large number of Edwards buried in Stockwell and some of them may be descended from these two Armfield sisters. troemner@pressenter.com

Regarding the Armfield surname, attached are two links for you to explore. From NameLab at the link below; "English:probably a variant of ARNFIELD, a habitational name

from Arnfield in Cheshire, named with the Old English personal name EARNWIG + Old English feld 'open land used for pasture or cultivation'.

<http://www.familyeducation.com/home>

Another site www.surnamedb.com includes various spellings of the Armfield surname. They wrote that the surname is English and is of locational origin from a place which was probably spelled "Earm-feld" or something similar and would be one of the many "lost" medieval villages of Britain.

Karen Armfield wrote that her daughter Meghan had a really neat experience while she was finishing up her finals in order to graduate from college with a degree in History. Meghan was to write a final term paper on the black uprisings after the Civil War. She was randomly assigned the subject of the outlaw Lowrey Gang in North Carolina. During her research, she discovered that Annie Lou Armfield, daughter of Marcus Donald & Ruth Adeline Prather married William Clifton Wishart. William Clifton Wishart's father was Francis Marion Wishart who was murdered by the Lowrey Gang. As luck would have it, Karen searched Ancestry for Francis Marion and found a family tree that had just posted some newspaper clippings and a photo of Francis Marion Wishart. What a coincidence. Meghan was able to state in her paper that her family lineage had a connection, although it was very distant. It sure made the subject matter far more interesting for her to write about!

An interesting link for researchers to check out is www.genealogybank.com

They are a fee based site, but they often run introductory rates for a thirty day trial period. They have monthly and annual dues. According to their published vital statistics, their database contains more than 250,000 documents and books and more than 186 million news articles.

Queries & Family Lines

Ron & Marilyn Jennings submitted the following piece on the family of Jacob & Ann (Stephenson/Stevenson) Armfield. On page 152 of the original 1902 printing, or on page 98 of the republished manuscript, by Sallie W. Stockard, The History of Guilford County, North Carolina, it was written that the entire family of Jacob Armfield, oldest son of William, Jr., went to Indiana in 1831 ending all knowledge of his branch of the family.

This has been such a mysterious mental picture. It's as though this family including spouses, children, in-laws, friends with their wagons, possessions, and livestock went through a stage curtain which parted then closed behind them. Many questions come to mind. Did the family stream to Indiana in one long wagon train or did they go in waves, one family at a time? As they approached Indiana, there was the hurdle of the Ohio river to cross by ferry. How long did this trip take them? Although news about these people must have gone back and forth to North Carolina, the North Carolina Armfield family was the main subject of the Sallie Stockard piece. We now know the Armfield's of Indiana became a large and interesting family.

The Jennings are interested in collaborating with others working on these family lines and their research and discoveries will be published in future newsletters. You may contact them at rrmjennin@aol.com

A reminder to our readers that Manning Garrett wants to talk with any relatives of any people who were officers at any national bank in the South. Contact Manning Garrett at 864-430-4020 or e-mail at manning.garrett@gmail.com or www.eastcoastcurrency.com/

Susan Newman along with her mother Virginia Speck Marshall contributed pictures and information on their Armfield line. Hannah Rich Iddings (1811-1907) married Julian Armfield (1809-1875) on 15 Apr 1830 Bond Date, in Guilford County, NC. They left North Carolina for Indiana and spent about twenty years in Miami County, IN. Julian died in Indiana and is buried there. In the 1880 census, Hannah had left Indiana and was residing in Atchison County, Kansas with her daughter Sarah who had married Archimedes Smith Speck. Hannah died in Kansas and was buried in Round Mound Cemetery. Hannah's biography was published in the Guilford Genealogist, Spring 1982, Vol 9, No. 3. It was submitted by Virginia (Speck) Marshall. It was also published through the Iddings Association in their family history. If interested in this line, you can contact Susan at newman_susan@sbcglobal.net

Unknown Armfields

We have come across several Armfields that cannot be placed in a family line. If any of you have information or would like to do some research on these people, we would appreciate your efforts and contributions. Here are a few to start with.

In the 1850 census, Southern Division, Guilford, NC a **Mary Armfield**, age 8, born in Guilford and living with J? Elliott, age 51, and Margaret Elliott, age 52.

Guilford County Deed Book 1 by Wm. D. Bennett, p. 209, 18 Jan 1773; "Samuel Brown of Rowan to David Macy of Guilford, sixty five pounds, 240 acres, on both sides of South Buffaloe, begin at a stake on N. side of South Buffaloe, E 148 p. to a black jack, S 325 p. cross Buffaloe to a hicory, W 69 p. to a post oak, N 127 p. cross Buffaloe to 3 black jacks, W 88 p. to an ash, N 193 p. to first station, part of a tract from Granville to Brown 1759", recorded in Rowan; signed Samuel Brown; Wit: Enoch Macy, Isaac (+) Edwards, **JAMES (I) ARMFIELD**, proved feb. 1773 Term by Enoch Macy

Talbot County, MD 1733 Tax List - **PHILIP ARMFIELD**.

Walter Armfield born 14 May 1878 was s/o J.W. Council and M.V. Cocke, Watauga, NC.

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