

The Stone Pillar



A Newsletter for the Sewell / Sowell / Sewall / Seawell Surnames

www.stonepillar.org

Edited by [M. L. Sewell](#)

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NEWS

The surname project now has 9 members' DNA data on record.

Membership

Our problem has been and remains finding appropriately surnamed candidates and getting them to participate so we can increase our

genetic database. Methodology is still being 'reviewed'. If anyone has any suggestions, *please* come forward.

Genographic Projects

A project spanning five continents is aiming to map the history of human migration via DNA.

The Genographic Project will collect DNA samples from over 100,000 people worldwide to help piece together a picture of how the Earth was colonized.

Samples gathered from indigenous people and the general public will be subjected to lab and computer analysis to extract the valuable genetic data.

Team leader Dr Spencer Wells calls the plan "the Moon shot of anthropology".

The \$40m (£21m) privately funded initiative is a collaboration between

National Geographic, IBM and the Waitt Family Foundation charity.

Participating in the five-year study are some of the world's top population geneticists, as well as leading experts in the fields of ancient DNA, linguistics and archaeology.

Future resource

"We see this as a resource for humanity going into the future. It could potentially become the largest genetic database ever created," Dr Wells told the BBC News website.

Members of the public will be able to buy a kit that contains all the material needed to add their genetic information to the database.

Already, evidence from genetics and archaeology places the origin of modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) in Africa roughly 200,000 years ago.

It is thought, the first moderns to leave the continent set off around 60,000 years ago.

By studying the Y (or male) chromosome and mitochondrial DNA (which is passed down exclusively on the maternal line), scientists have pieced together a broad-brush picture of which populations moved where in the world - and when.

What is lacking, says Wells, is the fine detail, which could be filled in by this large-scale project.

"We know which markers on the Y chromosome to focus on; we know our way around the mitochondrial genome fairly well. We just haven't had the large sample sizes to apply these technologies properly," Dr Wells explained.

"There are still many questions we haven't answered. Was there any interbreeding with Neanderthals as modern humans moved into Europe? Did any of the migrations to the Americas come across the Pacific - or even the Atlantic?"

These and other unanswered questions form the research goals of the project. They include:

- Who are the oldest populations in Africa - and therefore the world?
- Did Alexander the Great's armies leave a genetic trail?
- Who were the first people to colonize India?
- Is it possible to obtain intact DNA from the remains of

Homo erectus and other extinct hominids?

- How has colonialism affected genetic patterns in Africa?
- Was there any admixture with *Homo erectus* as modern humans spread throughout South-East Asia?
- Is there any relationship between Australian Aboriginal genetic patterns and their oral histories?
- What are the origins of differences between human groups?

A total of 10 DNA collection centers located around the world will focus on obtaining samples from indigenous peoples. The genetic markers in the blood of these groups have remained relatively unchanged for generations.

"Sub-Saharan Africa harbors the spectrum of variation that will allow us to trace the very origin of our species as well as more recent incursions," said Himla Soodyall, principal project investigator for that region.

Collection challenge

But some researchers said experience on other projects suggested this one could run into trouble with indigenous groups - particularly those, such as Native Americans and Aboriginal Australians, with a history of exploitation.

"I don't know how they'll deal with getting samples from more sensitive places," commented François Balloux, a population geneticist at the University of Cambridge, UK.

"Amongst Australian Aborigines and Native Americans, the cultural resistance to co-operating with scientists is very strong.

"For example, many Native American communities are strongly advised by their elders not to give samples."

Ajay Royyuru, IBM's lead scientist on the Genographic Project was optimistic on the issue.

"We want to attract their participation by being extremely clear about what we do and do not do. For example, we are very clear about not trying to exploit their genetic diversity for medical uses," he told the BBC News website.

Project directors said they had already sought advice from indigenous leaders about their participation.

IBM says it will use sophisticated analytical techniques to interpret the information in the biobank and find patterns in the genetic data. The IT giant will also provide the

computing infrastructure for the project.

Kits sold to the public contain cheek swabs used to scrape the inside of the mouth for a DNA sample. The swabs can then be mailed to a central laboratory for analysis.

After four to six weeks, the results of the analysis will appear on the website behind an anonymous password contained in the kit.

The exact budget available for the study will depend on how many test kits are sold to the public. The net proceeds will go back into the research and into a "legacy project" to support indigenous peoples.

The Genographic Project's directors emphasize that the information in the database will be made accessible to scientists studying human migrations.

"We see this as part of the commons of our species. We're not going to be patenting anything - the information will all be in the public domain," said Dr Wells.

For more details, visit [Genographic Project](#)

Note: You can transfer your Family Tree Y-DNA results to the project and participate for a reduced fee. You also can have testing done by the Genographic Project (GP) for about the same price as you pay at FTDNA; however, the access you have through the GP to the resultant data base is very limited. The best deals appear to be with institutions such as Family Tree DNA (FTDNA). -- Editor

DNA FINDINGS TO DATE

Member	Y-DNA Haplogroup	mtDNA Haplogroup
Kenneth Lee Sewell	I	--
Don Sewell	I	--
Martin Lafayette Sewell	I1c	U5a1
David Robert Sewell	I	--
Ralph Richard Sewell	I	
Lawrence Albert Sowell	R1b1	--
Robert Wayne Sewell	R1b1	--
Darrell Percy Sewell	R1b	--
David Thoreau Sewall	Unconfirmed	--

New Test Offered by FTDNA

FTDNA (Family Tree DNA) currently offers 5 Y chromosome tests: the 12-Marker, the 37-Marker, the 67-Marker, Backbone Haplogroup, and the Deep-SNP Test. The newest offering in this group is the **67-Marker test** which is detailed below (excerpt from the FTDNA [website](#)).

First 12 Markers (Basic)		Additional 25 (13 to 37 markers)		Additional 30** (38 to 67 markers)	
Locus	DYS#	Locus	DYS#	Locus	DYS#
1	393	13	458	38	531
2	390	14	459a	39	578
3	19*	15	459b	40	395S1a
4	391	16	455	41	395S1b
5	385a	17	454	42	590
6	385b	18	447	43	537
7	426	19	437	44	641
8	388	20	448	45	472
9	439	21	449	46	406S1
10	389-1	22	464a	47	511
11	392	23	464b	48	425
12	389-2	24	464c	49	413a
		25	464d	50	413b
		26	460	51	557
		27	GATA H4	52	594
		28	YCA II a	53	436
		29	YCA II b	54	490
		30	456	55	534
				56	450
				57	444
				58	481

31	607	59	520
32	576	60	446
33	570	61	617
34	CDY a	62	568
35	CDY b	63	487
36	442	64	572
37	438	65	640
		66	492
		67	565

*Also known as DYS 394

** The 29 markers on this third panel have mutation rates that have yet to be determined.

The markers in **red** have been observed to have a faster-than-average mutation rate, and therefore these markers are very helpful at splitting lineages into subsets or branches within your family tree.

Y-DNA Haplogroups

Using the results of a Y-DNA marker test, Family Tree DNA estimates the tester's haplogroup. The haplogroup identifies the person's major population group and provides information about the ancient origin of the male line. Family Tree DNA also offers a haplogroup test which participants can use to confirm their haplogroup assignment. The "Backbone" haplogroup test confirms the base haplogroup assignment, and the "Deep Clade" haplogroup test identifies the branch of the haplogroup the person belongs to.

HISTORY

A Sewell Family of Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, Georgia, Arkansas, Texas and Beyond

A search for the gravesite of **Joshua Sewell** (b. 1755, d. between 1834 and 1837), Revolutionary War veteran, resulted in the discovery of the cemetery containing the graves of Joshua, and his wife, Jennie White, in Franklin County, Georgia. The photo was taken by Fred Hayes York, a Sewell descendant.



Franklin and Campbell Counties are rich in my Sewell line's history. The Franklin County Historical Society¹ in Carnesville publishes a book entitled "*History of Franklin County, Georgia*" which contains much on the families of that region.

Joshua's father, **Samuel Sewell, Sr.**, is believed to be buried in or near old Enochville, North Carolina. However, a gravesite has yet to be found.

Joshua's son, **Asa Sewell** (b. ca. 1802, d. 27 June 1862) migrated to LaGrange Township, Lafayette County, Arkansas from Campbell County (formed in 1832, annulled and apportioned to other adjacent counties in 1932), Georgia around 1854. The land he purchased is still in the family but his gravesite has never been found. Ironically, he (Asa) donated the land on which the Sewell Cemetery sets (County Road 42 about ½ mile west of Highway 29). In the photo above, the figure in the first row, far right is thought to be **Asa Sewell**; the figure in the front row (seated), far left is one of his sons, **Mason Perry Sewell**.



Mason Perry, remained in LaGrange Township until his death in 1906. He and his wife, **Nancy Maria Mitchell**, had six sons. They are shown below in a photo thought to have been taken around 1915. Interestingly, none of Mason and Maria's sons were given a middle name.

¹ Franklin County Historical Society, P. O. Box 541, Carnesville, Georgia 30521



(l. to r.) **Henry, William, Asa, John, Robert, and Perry Sewell** ca. 1915, LaGrange Township, Lafayette County, Arkansas (approx. 4½ miles north of Lewisville). These six are the sons of **Mason Perry Sewell** (b. 1841) and grandsons of **Asa Sewell** (b. 1802).

M. L. Sewell

Family Confusions

My Sewell line's fondness for certain given names can be more than a little frustrating. For years there has been a confusion involving a particular given name, Asa. Pronunciation is one particular problem. To date in parts of the Southeast U. S., Asa is pronounced as one would pronounce the combined letters A and C, or 'Acey'. This causes confusion to modern genealogists as it did to census takers in the mid-nineteenth century. Thus, one great uncle, **William Asa Sewell**, was consistently listed (incorrectly) as William A. C. Sewell. Through researches of family Bible records and one priceless old photo found at the bottom of a trunk with a brief write-up printed in pencil on the back confirmed this.

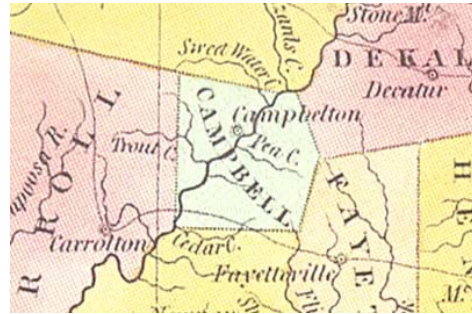
Solving that mystery was small relative to another persistent problem, again involving the given name Asa.

For years confusion existed concerning **Asa Sewell** (b. 1802, Franklin County, Georgia). He was variously listed as having been born in 1801, 1802, and between 1812-1815 as well as being married to both **Nancy Mitchell** and **Nancy Roby**.

As it turns out, there were two. Both Asa's were born in Franklin County, Georgia. **Asa Sewell** (b. 1802) was the son of **Joshua Sewell** (b. 1755) and married **Nancy Maria Mitchell** on 08 October 1829 in Franklin County. **Asa Sewell** (b. between 1812-1815), son of **William Sewell**, a younger brother of

Joshua Sewell and uncle of **Asa Sewell** (b. 1802) married **Nancy Ann Roby** on 30 January 1838 in Campbell County, Georgia.

By the 1840 census, **Asa Sewell** (b. bet. 1812-1815) moved about 100 miles to the southwest to a relatively new county, Campbell, along with **James Sewell**, **James H. Sewell**, and **William B. Sewell**. By the 1850 census, **Asa Sewell** (b. 1802) had moved with his family to Campbell County also. So, in 1850, we have two **Asa Sewell's**, each



married to women with the same given name, Nancy. The elder of these two men moved to Arkansas around 1852 but the younger remained in Campbell County until his death in June 1879. Then, the latter's wife, **Nancy Ann (Roby) Sewell** moved to a county adjacent (Columbia) to that of the elder Asa's residence (Lafayette) in Arkansas in the late 1870's taking her three young sons with her. Confusion is understandable.

The problems that remain are monumental and made so in no small way by the repetitious use of given names such as Mary, Elizabeth, Sarah, Henry, Thomas, James, John, William, Robert, etc.

Another fascinating aspect of my family's history has always been the reasons why they moved when and where they did. I am currently researching the opening of various lands for settlement, military land grants, cessation of Indian lands, and the creation of wagon roads (many of which formed the foundation for our interstate highways systems of today) between their areas of settlement. But, that's fodder for another article.

M. L. Sewell

TECHNICAL

Sykes and Oppenheimer's Forthcoming Books

- ***The Origins of the British: A Genetic Detective Story*** by Stephen Oppenheimer
- ***Saxons, Vikings, and Celts: The Genetic Roots of Britain and Ireland*** by Bryan C. Sykes

Both of the books listed above deal with genetic matters of great interest to us in this surname project. The release dates will probably be sometime in November. Both books may be pre-ordered at Amazon.com. Should anyone wish to purchase one or both of these, please use our Amazon.com link found on our website www.stonepillar.org. This will generate funds that will be applied to our General Fund (see General Fund Status section below).

Through a member of the I1c Yahoo discussion group, Ian Carswell, I was able to obtain and tabulate survey data relative to the I1c Haplogroup from Bryan Sykes (B. C. Sykes, 2006, ***Blood of the Isles***, Bantam Press, London) in Excel spreadsheet format. I do not yet have any data related to R1b Haplogroups but, hopefully, this will be available by the next newsletter. I did a quick survey looking for findings that were no more than a genetic distance of 3 from those haplogroup data bundles we currently have. My findings are:

Haplo-group	Individual	Region	No.
I	555484	Central England	9
I	555484	East Anglia	7
I	555484	Grampian	1
I	555484	Hebrides	1
I	555484	London ²	1
I	555484	North England	5
I	555484	South England	2
I	555484	Southwest England	2
I	555484	Strathclyde ³	2
I	555484	Wales	3
I1c	Group A ⁴	Borders	1
I1c	Group A	Central England	6
I1c	Group A	East Anglia	10
I1c	Group A	Grampian	2
I1c	Group A	Hebrides	1
I1c	Group A	Highland	3
I1c	Group A	Ireland	1

² One match was exact.

³ One match was exact.

⁴ Includes: 24631, 22066, 63412, and 72612.

I1c	Group A	Isle of Man	1
I1c	Group A	London	3
I1c	Group A	North England	6
I1c	Group A	Northern Isles ⁵	6
I1c	Group A	South England	3
I1c	Group A	Southwest England	1
I1c	Group A	Strathclyde	1
I1c	Group A	Wales	2

Please note that this was not an exhaustive 'search' and that Sykes only uses 7 markers in this survey (19, 390, 391, 392, 393, 389i, and 389ii-i). A conversion was made for 389i and 389ii-i since Sykes uses the Oxford Ancestor values which are different from those of Family Tree. Furthermore, Sykes provides ID numbers for each of these values but these are Oxford Ancestor ID's. Thus, much work needs to be done in chasing these up.

M. L. Sewell

General Fund Status

Contributions may be made to the fund at any time by both members and non-members. These funds are collected and administered by Family Tree DNA and then apportioned by the Site Administrator. Where you may, as a donor, have a particular goal of 'signing up' a specific individual via this method, please let me the Site Administrator know in advance of the contribution.

Currently, no funds are available.

⁵ One was an exact match.

FAMILY DISCUSSIONS

From **Darrell Sewell** –

Seeking information on **Dominicus Sewell** (b. 1735 in Gloucester, Essex County, Massachusetts). He married **Sarah Thorndyke** in Beverly, Massachusetts on 28 February 1758.

In the 1760's Dominicus moved his family to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. Around 1766, they moved to Maugerville, which is located on the

Saint John River just below Fredericton, New Brunswick. Maugerville was settled by people from Essex County and this is probably what attracted him to this area. He obtained land and farmed there until his death on 03 January 1822. He is believed to be buried somewhere on the farm but no record of it has been found.

Any descendants of **Dominicus Sewell** are invited to contact me via the editor. My research stops with Dominicus, so if there is any information available on any of his ancestors I would be interested in it as well.

From **Martin Sewell** –

Seeking information on **Asa Sewell** (b. ca. 1802, Franklin County, Georgia). Asa moved to Campbell County, Georgia between 1840 and 1850. Prior to 1860, Asa, wife **Nancy Maria (Mitchell) Sewell** and family moved to LaGrange Township, Lafayette County, Arkansas. Asa is believed to be buried on his old farm site, but no information has been found to confirm this. One picture exists that may contain an image of Asa (see p. 6).

Links of Interest

The Sewell Surname Website <http://www.stonepillar.org/>

The Sewell Surname DNA Website (at Family Tree DNA)
[http://www.familytreedna.com/\(yhsyb245vctpvyabmstqn145\)/public/sewellsurnameproject/index.aspx](http://www.familytreedna.com/(yhsyb245vctpvyabmstqn145)/public/sewellsurnameproject/index.aspx)

The Sole Society (UK) <http://www.sole.org.uk/>

Family Tree DNA (USA) <http://www.familytreedna.com/>

Oxford Ancestors (UK) <http://www.oxfordancestors.com/>

I1c Clan Study
[http://www.familytreedna.com/\(ihcsnb554hlgey55pg50ivyn\)/public/I1c-Y-Clan/index.aspx](http://www.familytreedna.com/(ihcsnb554hlgey55pg50ivyn)/public/I1c-Y-Clan/index.aspx)

If any member or non-member has an article or discussion item you would like published, the requirements are: articles should not to exceed 1,000 words, discussions should not exceed 500 words; all submittals must be electronic with all photos in *.jpg format and all text in *.rtf (rich text format). Do not send copyrighted material that you do not wish edited. No advertising is permitted and no hyperlinks are to be embedded. Rules of engagement are standard and prohibit any abusive or profane language and the content must be applicable to a surname DNA effort. The editor shall be the judge of and have the final word in this matter.

Parties who are not members of this surname project but who would like to contact the members may contact the editor by email to set up that contact.