

*Genealogy and Genetics:
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Thomas Carter
of Lancaster County, Virginia;
John Carter
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and Thomas Carter
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By

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***Genealogy and Genetics:
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By Robert Mike Terry and Robert D. Lumsden¹

The presidency of James Earl “Jimmy” Carter, Jr., spurred interest among historians and genealogists in the relationship and ancestry of colonial Virginia Carters. With the encouragement of Francis L. Berkeley, Jr. of the University of Virginia, a Robert “King” Carter historian, Noel Curren-Briggs, a noted English genealogist, published a major work in 1979, “The Carters of Virginia, Their English Ancestry.”² This scholarly work revealed considerable information about the early Carter immigrants to Virginia and is a valuable compilation of what was known about these early Virginians. He also attempted to discover who their families were in England, and how they might have been related to each other. Unfortunately, Curren-Briggs was prevented from making definitive conclusions as to how the Carters were related and especially who their families were in Great Britain. This was because no proven evidence had been uncovered that these early Virginia Carters were related to each other nor did they leave any definitive proof of their English origins. The mid-seventeenth century was a perilous time, and they may not have wanted it known how they were connected to England. It is clear, however, that in spite of the many Thomas Carters,³ Williams and Johns, some of them likely knew each other, worked with each other as landowners and merchants and even socialized with each other. The John/Robert Carter and the Thomas Carter families of Lancaster County were socially close and had many connections in the merchant and tobacco businesses.

¹ The senior author is one of the administrators of the FamilyTreeDNA.com Carter Surname Project. The second author is a volunteer at Mary Ball Washington Museum & Library, and a descendant of Thomas Carter of Lancaster County. The authors wish to acknowledge the editorial comments and suggestions of Douglas J. Carter, Dayton, Ohio, a descendant of Thomas Carter Isle of Wight.

² Curren-Briggs, Noel. 1979. *The Carter's of Virginia, Their English Ancestry*. Phillimore & Co. Ltd., Sussex, England.

³ Jones, Christine Adams. 1982. *The Early Thomas Carters of Lancaster County, Virginia*. Mary Ball Washington Museum & Library, Lancaster, Virginia.

For example, John Carter, Jr. served as a godfather to Thomas and Katharine Carter's second son, John, plus Robert and Judith Carter served as godparents to Joseph Carter the youngest son of Thomas Carter of Lancaster.⁴ Also, their second son, Capt. Thomas Carter, Jr. was a close business associate of Robert "King" Carter as revealed in Robert Carter's will and other documentation.⁵

Some researchers claim a relationship between the Lancaster Carters and Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight and identify him as a Thomas Carter who was in Lancaster County only briefly between 1663 and 1665. However, Christine Jones⁶ in her analysis of the Thomas Carters of Lancaster suggests that this Carter is a distinctively different individual from the other Carters. She suggested that Capt. Thomas Carter in Lancaster County at this time was a distinctly different person from an earlier Thomas Carter who died in 1658/9 and from Mr. Thomas Carter "of Barford" who appeared in the public record about 1670. It has been suggested but not proven that he was Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight, so because of the possible association with Lancaster County, descendants of this Thomas Carter are included in this analysis.

Many individuals have made conclusions based on unproven evidence about the interrelationships of these Carters. Mostly these claims are unpublished or simply undocumented claims on the Internet. There are only two suggestions for a familial relationship between the two Lancaster families. First is the reference in Robert Carter's will that Capt. Thomas Carter, Jr. was among his "friends and relations" which has erroneously been interpreted by some that he was related by kinship. Second, John Carter, a descendant of Thomas Carter of Lancaster, in an 1858 family history wrote, "And I have heard said we are kin to old Robert Carter who is burried (sic) at old Christ Church in this County but have never found out how."⁷ However, as stated before, there is no proof of a relationship between these families. There are some published works for the three Carter families. These provide proven and unproven ties to Lancaster County but generally accurate history and genealogy and are:

⁴ Lumsden, R.D. 2018. *Known by the Company They Keep, An Analysis of the Thomas Carter Prayer Book Entries*. 2nd Edition. Historic Christ Church, Irvington, VA., pp. 63-67.

⁵ Lumsden, *Ibid.*, pp. 27-30.

⁶ Jones, *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁷ Lumsden, R.D. 2013. *Aunt Fannie, John Carter of the Nest and the Carter Family Pedigree*. *Echoes of Yesteryear*, Vol. 2, p. 24. Mary Ball Washington Museum & Library, Lancaster, VA.

- (1) **Thomas Carter of Lancaster County:** “The Descendants of Capt. Thomas Carter of “Barford,” Lancaster County, Virginia, 1652-1912,”⁸ by Dr. Joseph Lyon Miller, 1912; published by Dr. Miller and which has been reprinted by Rare Book Reprints, 1998.
- (2) **John Carter and his son Robert Carter of Corotoman in Lancaster County:** “A Goodly Heritage, History of the Carter Family in Virginia” by Dr. Nolan B. Carter, 2003, Richmond, Virginia, Virginia Genealogical Society. This is a well-researched publication.
- (3) **Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight:** “Ancestors of Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter,”⁹ by Jeff Carter (President Carter’s son), 2014, McFarland Publishing Co. This is unproven by public records for connections and relationships.

So far, no direct evidence has emerged in the public record or otherwise of familial relationships between these families and certainly no documented evidence of who their families were in England. Only yet to be discovered seventeenth or eighteenth century documentation would establish these connections. However, there are new ways to prove or disprove familial relationships.

In the 1990s, genetic genealogy was in the news due to several high-profile DNA cases. One of the most famous was the family of Thomas Jefferson and his slave Sally Hemmings where DNA analysis proved that Hemmings’ descendants were fathered by a male in the Jefferson line. Although it did not prove a connection to Thomas Jefferson himself, it certainly has proven a connection to Jefferson’s descendants. This was just one event that spurred the development of DNA testing and analysis to help validate family genealogies. For a history of genetic genealogy see the publication by Megan Smolenyak,¹⁰ or a more recent publication by Blaine Bettinger.¹¹

⁸ Dr. Miller in his monumental genealogy of the Thomas Carter family, which was published in 1912, had limited resources, but he published an excellent compilation for this family. Unfortunately, probably because of the many Thomas Carters living in the 17th century [see Christine Jones], he was not able to distinguish between them and may have come to some erroneous conclusions. Additionally, he identified Thomas Carter as “of Barford”. He was referring to “of Barford” being written in Thomas’ Book of Common Prayer. This is the only recorded time when the name “Barford” was used in reference to Thomas Carter. Instead of referring to his plantation in Lancaster County, it could refer to his unproven place of origin in England.

⁹ This publication claims a familial relationship between the Thomas and John Carter families of Lancaster and Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight without providing conclusive proof. This work is largely based on the unpublished manuscript by Bascom “Barry” Hayes, “The Descendants of John Carter, Vintner of London.”

¹⁰ Smolenyak, Megan and Ann Turner. 2004. Trace your roots with DNA: using genetic tests to explore your family tree. 272pp. Holtzbrinck Publishers.

¹¹ Bettinger, Blaine T. and Debbie Parker Wayne. 2016. *Genetic Genealogy in Practice*. 230 pp. Arlington, Va.: National Genealogical Society.

The genetic testing company FamilyTreeDNA has established a Carter DNA Project with over 600 members of men with the Carter surname. In 2011, the senior author of this paper became one of the administrators for the Carter project. In September 2014, he gave a presentation to The Carter Society of Virginia at their annual meeting in Lancaster County, Virginia, on how genetic Y-DNA testing could help validate or invalidate traditional genealogy research. The focus of this talk was whether the early Lancaster County Carter families were related by DNA, and if so, how close was the relationship. To his credit, Charles R. Carter of The Carter Society early on promoted Y-DNA testing to help validate Carter family lineages.

Many past genealogical researchers have tried to prove through circumstantial evidence that Thomas Carter and John Carter of Lancaster County and Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight County were related. This paper's purpose is threefold: 1) to explain Y-DNA testing basics, 2) to show that the three above men were not related within a genealogical or historical time frame,¹² and 3) to show the value of genetic genealogy as a supplement to traditional genealogical pursuits.

DNA is a component of all living things and three forms of it can be an aid to traditional genealogy as follows:

Mitochondrial DNA is passed from mothers to all of her children but is only passed on to future generations by females. It functions in cellular metabolism and is not found in the chromosomes. It has limited genealogical usefulness because it remains largely unchanged for thousands of years, and because it is passed along female lines, it is also difficult to trace because of surname changes each generation.

Autosomal DNA is located in each cell in our bodies and programs all cell functions. We obtain half from our fathers and half from our mothers. When analyzed, it can be useful for discovering matches with close relatives and even distant cousins for genealogical purposes.

Y-DNA determines the male sex and is located only in the Y chromosome that is passed from fathers to sons and is the subject of this paper. While small mutations (that is, small changes) do occur, there are very few changes in Y-DNA over the generations.

¹² The time frames since records have been kept and since surnames such as the occupational surname Carter has been use. The surname was likely derived as a way to identify an individual who operated a cart. Since every village likely had its carter, many families would have used the surname Carter.

Therefore, Y-DNA testing serves as a reliable indication that two males may share a common forefather by comparing the Y-DNA number sequences. The more numbers that match between individuals, the closer they are genetically related. By analyzing these numbers, the probability can be determined that two male individuals share a common forefather within a genealogical time frame (i.e., since historical records have been kept and surnames have been used). Currently, testing is available on 12, 25, 37, 67, and 111 Y-DNA markers. When males match on at least 25 markers, they are placed in lineage groups. The top-level group is called the haplogroup. Men in the same haplogroup will have ancestors who migrated in pre-recorded history from the same areas into Europe or other regions.

Men within the Carter DNA project fall into seven different haplogroups, the majority being designated R1b. The three Carter family groups being discussed all fall into the R1b haplogroup. That is, they **are** related to each other but only in the very distant past within a migratory group that moved into Southern Europe and the British Isles. The Carter DNA project haplogroups are separated into subgroups by numbers. For example, the haplogroup subgroup for Thomas Carter of Lancaster is designated as Group R1b – 02, the subgroup for Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight as Group R1b – 04, and for John Carter of Lancaster as Group R1b – 32. Y-DNA results for the Carter DNA project are online publicly but do not name the participant.¹³ The three colonial Carter descendants' Y-DNA haplogroup subgroups are compared below and the pedigrees are presented with permission of the participants.

Thomas Carter of Lancaster County

Table 1 shows selected members who descend from different sons of Thomas Carter of Lancaster. Notice that Kit 259858, a Bennett surname male, matches this Carter haplogroup. The Bennett family believes Travis Bennett was actually a Carter son who was orphaned and took the name of his adopted Bennett family. The Bennett test is included to illustrate what Y-DNA testing can discover.

¹³ Members of the Carter DNA project, if they desire, may submit a pedigree and an e-mail contact. This facilitates communication between Carter family researchers. The results of Carter Y-DNA testing may be viewed at: <https://www.familytreedna.com/public/carter?iframe=yresults> The pedigrees for project members are documented by each member using public record information and submitted to FamilyTreeDNA.

Table 1. Pedigrees of five descendants of Thomas Carter of Lancaster County, Group R1b – 02, that are identified by their kit numbers and the level of testing

Carter Lineage Group R1b - 02				
<p>162741 (Y-DNA67) Thomas Carter 1630 - 1700 Capt Thomas Carter 1672 - 1833 Charles Carter 1713 - 1766 Charles Carter 1760 - 1830 Stanton Carter 1781 - 1875 Francis Carter 1826 - 1867 Tyra Carter c1855 - c1938</p>	<p>76388 (Y-DNA67) Thomas Carter 1630 - 1700 Capt Thomas Carter 1672 - 1833 Peter Carter 1706 - 1789 Solomon Carter 1739 - 1786 William M. Carter 1760 - 1842 John Carter 1787 - 1819 Alfred T. Carter 1813 - 1843 James A. Carter 1844 - 1915 Ivan M. Carter 1879 - 1955</p>	<p>348762 (Y-DNA67) Thomas Carter 1630 - 1700 Edward Carter 1671 - 1743 Thomas Carter 1700 - 1776 John Carter c1724 - 1782 Thomas P. Carter c1752 - 1813 Landon Carter c1786 - aft 1843 George W. Carter 1816 - 1884 Salem G. Carter 1849 - 1928 Eustace Carter 1877 - 1957 Elmer N. Carter 1911 - 1944 Tom E. Carter 1937 - 1972</p>	<p>259858 (Y-DNA37) also 273632 Y-DNA 37 Richard Carter Travis Bennett 1778 - ??* Hazel G. Bennett 1806 - bef 1860 Thomas T. Bennett 1845 - 1931 Charlie Bennett 1866 - 1915</p>	<p>211452 (Y-DNA67) Thomas Carter 1630 - 1700 Henry S. Carter 1676 - 1743 Robert Carter b c 1725 Frederick Carter c1767 d aft 1850 Marshall Carter c1816 - aft 1870 William B. Carter 1848 - 1899 Charles Carter 1882 - 1970</p>

* Travis Bennett was adopted by a family named Bennett.

For absolute verification of a common ancestor within a subgroup, there must be at least three different kits that trace back to that male ancestor from sons **proven** by traditional genealogical research, that is, not by circumstantial evidence. This is called positive triangulation. This has been accomplished for Thomas Carter of Lancaster by four project members above in Table 1.

John Carter of Lancaster County

Table 2 shows three Carter men with traditional genealogical research documentation back to Robert “King” Carter, son of John Carter of Lancaster County, from different proven sons of “King Carter”. This group also has positive triangulation. Note that Kit number 6947 has a proven genealogical record to William H. Rose who was born in 1814 and died in 1884. Because this Rose surnamed individual matches the John Carter descendants very closely, it has been postulated that Margaret Rose and an unknown Carter male continued this Carter Y-DNA line but retained the Rose maternal surname. This shows the value of Y-DNA analysis in proving or disproving a family line. Explaining the situation regarding this Kit 6947 was approved by the project member.

Table 2. Pedigrees of four descendants of John Carter of Lancaster County, Group R1b – 32, that are identified by their kit numbers and the level of testing

Carter Lineage Group R1b - 32			
218088 (Y-DNA37) John Carter 1613 - 1669 Robert "King" Carter 1663 - 1732 John Carter c1689 - 1742 Charles Carter 1732 - 1806 Williams Carter 1782 - 1864 Charles Carter 1818 - 1888 James N. Carter 1864 - 1924 James N. Carter 1895 - 1946	223271 (Y-DNA37) John Carter 1613 - 1669 Robert "King" Carter 1663 - 1732 Landon Carter 1709 - 1778 John F. Carter 1739 - 1789 John Carter c1766 - 1838 Thomas T. 1818 - 1901 Cassus C. Carter 1861 - aft 1920 Fauntleroy L. Carter 1883 - 1962 George F. Carter - deceased	39137 (Y-DNA67) John Carter 1613 - 1669 Robert "King" Carter 1663 - 1732 John Carter c1689 - 1742 Edward H. Carter 1733 - 1792 Hill Carter 1781 - 1830 George N. Carter 1822 - 1889 George H. Carter 1855 - 1926 Randolph J. Carter 1901 - 1961 George H. Carter 1921 - 2006	6947 (Y-DNA111) John Carter 1613 - 1669 Robert "King" Carter 1663 - 1732 *** *** Unknown Carter* William H. Rose 1814 - 1884 William S. Rose 1852 - 1938 William A. Rose 1877 - 1938 William S. Rose 1922 - 2004

* The children of Margaret Rose and an unknown Carter male retained the mothers' maiden name of Rose.

Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight County

Table 3 shows five selected families who claim descent from Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight County. Only Kit number 529028 has documentation back to a proven son of Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight, who was Alexander. However, this Kit along with the preponderance of the evidence for the remaining three kits provides positive triangulation that Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight is in fact the patriarch of this Carter family.

Table 3. Pedigrees of five descendants of Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight County, Group R1b – 04 that are identified by their kit numbers and the level of testing

Carter Lineage Group R1b - 04				
134472 (Y-DNA67) Thomas Carter 1650 - 1710 Edward Carter 1673 - 1730 John Carter 1700 - 1740 Solomon Carter 1725 - 1809 David Carter 1761 - 1840 John T. Carter 1800 - 1880 Solomon Carter 1822 - 1895 David E. Carter 1853 - 1941 Raymond Carter 1885 - 1965	189663 (Y-DNA37) Thomas Carter 1648/1650 - 1710 Joseph Carter ?? - c1730 Matthew Carter 1720s - c1780s Isaac Carter 1756 - 1840 William Carter 1783 - 1859 William Carter 1819 - 1882 Abner U. Carter 1846 - 1919 Daniel W. Carter 1872 - 1923 Eugene M. 1891 - 1976 Hugh Carter 1902 - 1983	270973 (Y-DNA111) Thomas Carter 1648/1650 - 1710 Joseph Carter b aft 1673 Matthew Carter abt 1725 - Isaac D. Carter 1756 - 1840 William Carter 1783 - 1859 Isaac E. Carter 1815 - 1875 Levi D. Carter 1857 - 1929 Loamie Carter 1887 - 1974 Leo Carter 1917 - 1991	172256 (Y-DNA 37) Thomas Carter 1648/1650 - 1710 Moore Carter 1690 - 1740 Isaac Carter 1715 - 1792 Kindred Carter 1750 - 1801 James Carter 1773 - 1858 Wiley Carter 1798 - 1864 Littleberry W. Carter 1829 - 1873 William A. Carter 1858 - 1903	529028 (Y-DNA37) Thomas Carter 1650 - 1710 Alexander Carter c1690 - 1769 John Carter 1725 - 1795 James Carter 1764 - 1808 James Carter 1797 - 1883 Alexander P. Carter 1837 - 1906 James N. Carter 1860 - 1948 Ernest R. Carter 1894 - 1981 Frederick T. Carter 1924 - 2000

We now compare these three Carter family groups in Table 4 which shows the most common Y-DNA marker values for each of the three family groups. The consecutive numbers across the top of Table 4 represent the different markers on the Y-DNA chromosome. The values to the right of R1b – 02, R1b – 04, and R1b – 32 are the most common (or modal) values for the Y-

DNA markers.¹⁴ The individual marker values mutate or change over a long period of time. The changes in these values are somewhat like a genealogical clock because each change represents a point in time when the genes slightly changed (i.e., mutated) between one generation and the next. Yet these changes occur so infrequently that they can be used to estimate how many generations back a common forefather might have lived. This information is the core of the Y-DNA analyses. By comparing the values in each of the Table 4 numbered columns, differences between the families are calculated. For example, in column 1 all three values [13] are the same, thus no differences (i.e. mutations) have occurred at this point on the chromosome. In column 2, the value 23 is the same between R1b – 02 (Thomas of Lancaster family group) and R1b – 32 (John of Lancaster family group), but a mutation occurred at some point in time for R1b – 04 (Thomas of Isle of Wight family group). In column 6, differences have occurred between each of the family groups. The more differences there are between family groups then the further back in time the family groups shared a common forefather.

Table 4. Comparative results of the most frequent DYS values for 37 Y-DNA markers for Thomas Carter of Lancaster [R1b – 02], Thomas Carter Isle of Wight [R1b – 04], and John Carter of Lancaster [R1b – 32]

DYS values for 37 markers on the Y-DNA Chromosome	
	01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37
R1b-02	13 23 14 11 11 15 12 12 12 13 14 29 18 9 10 11 11 25 14 18 30 15 15 16 18 11 10 19 23 16 15 17 17 35 37 13 12
R1b-04	13 24 14 10 11 14 12 12 10 13 13 29 17 9 10 11 11 25 15 20 28 15 15 17 18 11 11 19 22 15 15 19 17 37 38 11 12
R1b-32	13 23 14 11 11 12 12 12 12 13 13 29 17 9 10 11 11 23 15 19 30 15 16 17 17 11 10 19 23 17 14 18 17 37 38 13 12

So, by comparing the DYS values between these three family groups in Table 4, we can determine how closely they are related. The total number of DYS value differences (called the genetic distance) between the groups can estimate how likely they share a common forefather.

¹⁴ A more detailed explanation and discussion on STRs can be viewed on the Internet at: <https://isogg.org/wiki/Y-STR>

Also, these differences can estimate the approximate number of generations back to the common forefather between two families. If two families differ in the DYS marker values on one marker, the genetic distance is 1. If they differ on two markers, the genetic distance is 2, and so on. When comparing families, if they have few DYS marker differences (i.e., a small genetic distance) then a common forefather can be confirmed as having lived in a genealogical or recent time frame. However, with the three Carter ancestors in this study, the number of differences between them is so great that it discounts a genetic relationship in recent or a genealogical time frame. Table 5 illustrates this.

FamilyTreeDNA, the largest genealogical genetic Y-DNA testing company, has statistically determined the genetic distance¹⁵ guidelines for the likelihood that two testers share a common forefather within a genealogical time frame. Table 5 shows that a genetic distance of 0 to 4 indicates a common forefather lived recently or perhaps as long ago as 570 years, but within a genealogically relevant time frame. Five mutational differences between individuals indicate a possible relationship within a genealogical time frame. Six or more differences would place a common forefather before most genealogical documentation would be available. In the case of these three Carter families, a common forefather would have lived before recorded history and perhaps as far back as migratory times from Central and Southern Europe into the British Isles. That the descendants of these three Carter men have the R1b haplogroup in common shows that they and their descendants had a common forefather, however that common forefather lived two thousand or more years ago and certainly before recorded history.

Table 5. Genetic distances¹⁶ or number of mutational changes at 37 Y-DNA markers and the relationships among descendants of John and Thomas Carter of Lancaster County and Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight County (I.O.W.)

¹⁵ A more detailed explanation of the various ways to calculate genetic distance can be found at: <http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~gkbopp/genealogy/DNA/FTDNA%20Genetic%20Distance.htm>

¹⁶ Genetic Distance and generations to Most Distant Common Ancestor (MRCA) for this article were determined by using the Dean McGee Y-Utility: Y-DNA Comparison Utility, FTDNA 111 <http://www.mymcgee.com/tools/yutility111.html> accessed 30 Aug 2016.

<u>Genetic Distance</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Carter Ancestor Comparisons</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Generations</u>
0	Very tightly related		0-270	0-9
1	Tightly related		0-270	0-9
2	Related		0-270	0-9
3	Related		0-270	0-9
4	Probably related		300-570	10-19
5	Possibly related		600-870	20-29
6 or more	Not related in recent time		900-1170	30-39
13	R1b Haplogroup	Thomas Lancaster/John Lancaster	1,920	64
17	R1b Haplogroup	Thomas Lancaster/Thomas I.O.W.	2,580	86
15	R1b Haplogroup	John Lancaster/Thomas I.O.W.	2,250	75

The genetic distance between the Thomas of Lancaster descendants to the John of Lancaster descendants is 13; for Thomas of Lancaster to Thomas of Isle of Wight [I.O.W.] is 17; and for John of Lancaster to Thomas of Isle of Wight is 15. This is significantly beyond the value of 6 that is considered **not related** in a genealogical time frame. The estimated years back to a common forefather is 1,920 to 2,580 years back in time. This represents a range of 64 to 86 generations, well beyond recorded history for the Carter families. Therefore, while the Thomas Carter of Lancaster, the John Carter of Lancaster and the Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight family groups all share a common haplogroup of R1b, the conclusion is that they are very distantly related but not within a genealogical time frame.

Over the years, a number of researchers and historians have speculated, based on the then best available information, that the families of Thomas Carter of Lancaster County, John Carter of Lancaster County, and Thomas Carter of Isle of Wight County were in some way related. Often it was asserted that they might be probably brothers, uncles, fathers, or cousins. We must now disregard these assertions in light of the genetic genealogy tools that earlier researchers did not have. Y-DNA test analyses are unbiased and therefore do not take into consideration any preconceived notions about family trees. However, Y-DNA testing **does not** eliminate the requirement to have properly sourced family histories with documentation of births, deaths, marriages, and court records. Clearly, genetics cannot develop family histories. Only traditional genealogical research can document a family history, and it will always be the key and essential part of genealogical discoveries. However, Y-DNA testing can validate the stated pedigrees. It can also, as shown earlier with the Bennett and Rose families, reveal anomalies that might not otherwise have come to light.

Genetic genealogy is a useful tool in validating or invalidating family histories. In this study, we have **invalidated** the past assumption that the Thomas Carter family of Lancaster County, the John Carter family of Lancaster County, and the Thomas Carter family of Isle of Wight County were closely related. They were **not** related within a genealogical time frame, which means any ancestral relationship between these three Carter families occurred before the advent of surnames and reliable records. Today, Y-DNA testing and analysis should certainly be used as another tool to validate family histories.

Since we currently have no solid documentation relating these three Virginia Carter families to Carter families in England, perhaps our best approach is to begin efforts to locate Carter men in England who will join the Carter Y-DNA project by contributing Y-DNA. If analysis of that Y-DNA shows a genetic distance within a genealogical time frame to one of the Virginia Carter families, then traditional genealogical research and analysis will be required to establish a specific common English forefather for the related family.

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INTERNET LINKS

Definitions: Family Tree DNA Glossary <https://learn.familytreedna.com/glossary/>

Helpful Websites about DNA:

Charles F. Kerchner, Jr. report on genealogy and genetics:

<http://www.kerchner.com/books/introg&g.htm>

Kelly Wheaton's series of lessons on Genetic Genealogy (highly recommended for learning more about DNA testing):

<https://sites.google.com/site/wheatonsurname/beginners-guide-to-genetic-genealogy>

Richard Hill's Top Ten Reasons to Choose FTDNA as your testing company:

<https://www.dna-testing-adviser.com/FamilyTreeDNA.html>

The Carter Society: <http://cartersociety.org/>

International Society of Genetic Genealogists: <https://isogg.org/>

