

DNA Committee Statement and Policies

The Towne Family Association DNA committee was formed in 2007 to undertake a DNA testing project for the benefit of the organization as a whole and to aid its individual members in furthering their own genealogical research.

After an extensive search the committee selected the testing company FamilyTreeDNA to host our project, which focuses on Y-DNA testing to confirm or refute participants' descendency from William Towne, and to learn as much as we can about William's ancestry. The results of those tests are made available on a companion website, worldfamilies.net, in the form of a spreadsheet and textual analysis. Only kit numbers and participant codes are used in order to protect the privacy of the participants. Pedigree charts are also available showing the lines tested, but codes are used instead of names wherever a test participant appears in a tree.

There is no business relationship between the Towne Family Association and FTDNA, worldfamilies, or any other testing companies. Test participants have their own accounts at FTDNA and are responsible for maintaining their own contact information. TFA DNA committee members serve as volunteer project administrators on the FTDNA site, in order to facilitate test result analysis that depends on comparing results across multiple individuals who may be related. TFA provides the committee with a limited budget each year to help subsidize testing costs where a TFA member has limited resources and where their test results are of particular interest to the group as a whole.

The DNA committee's roles and responsibilities include advising and facilitating TFA members in obtaining DNA tests, and endeavoring to aid in the analysis of those test results. We report annually to the membership as a whole about what we have learned, and give an accounting of monies spent. The committee, being unpaid volunteers, cannot guarantee what if any assistance they will provide in the analysis, nor can we guarantee the accuracy of any conclusions we draw. This is an emerging field. We are learning as we go, and our efforts are impacted by our available time and limitations in our expertise.

The committee endeavors to protect the privacy and anonymity of all participants, regardless of the outcome of their test results, though we cannot guarantee those protections. If the tester signs a consent form with FTDNA, his/her name and email will be disclosed by FTDNA to his/her genetic matches, and only to those matches. We as a committee do our best to redact names in any reports we produce, and access to the administrator page on the FTDNA site is limited to the committee members (and for continuity purposes, the president of TFA). In the course of selecting a testing company we considered their policies with respect to privacy protection, and we do our best to follow the guidelines they set. In addition, we try to the extent we can to follow the standards and best practices outlined in the "Genetic Genealogy Standards" document (Jan 2015) found at <http://www.geneticgenealogystandards.com>.

Just as with traditional genealogy research, unexpected results can sometimes arise from DNA tests regarding misattributed parentage or other errors or omissions. We advise anyone who is considering DNA testing to be aware of these possible outcomes. TFA is issuing a separate cautionary statement to this effect. If a member chooses to proceed with testing, they should be reassured that regardless of the results or outcome their inclusion in the Towne Family Association will not be impacted in any way.

PASSED 9/15/2016