Who Was the Father of Alvin Franklin Ward?

by
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To: The children of Alvin Franklin Ward

Background Summary:

Alvin Franklin Ward was born 5 December 1932 in Jennings, Pawnee County, Oklahoma. He died 8 April 2018 in Riverton, Wyoming.[1] His mother was Nora Mae Storm. His father was supposedly Nora's first husband, Harry Jack Ward. But is this true? According to family, Nora married a circus performer named “Jack” or “Harry Jack” Ward around 1922 at the age of 15.[2] No record of this marriage or any record for Mr. Ward has yet been found. The 1930 census, conducted 14 April 1930, lists Nora Ward (with “Ward” crossed out), age 23, living with her parents John and Marinda Storms in McElroy township, Pawnee, Oklahoma. Listed below is her son, Herbert, age 6, and daughter Norma, age ½. Their father's birthplace is listed as Wyoming.[3] Where is Jack and why is “Ward” crossed out? Two and a half years later, Nora gave birth to Alvin Franklin Ward in Jennings. Nora married a second time in 1935 to Harry J. Frost.[4] She was then a resident of Jennings.[5] In 1940, Harry Frost and his wife, Nora, were living near Pampa in Gray County, Texas. Eugene, Norma and Alvin were still using the Ward name. Her inferred residence for 1935 was rural Pawnee County, Oklahoma.[6] Apparently Alvin didn't look much like his older brother and sister, Herbert Eugene and Norma Jean Ward.[7] This and the absence of any “Harry Ward” or “Jack Ward” at the time of Alvin's birth, or even two years earlier, make the family suspect that Alvin's father might have been someone other than Harry Jack Ward.

Objective:

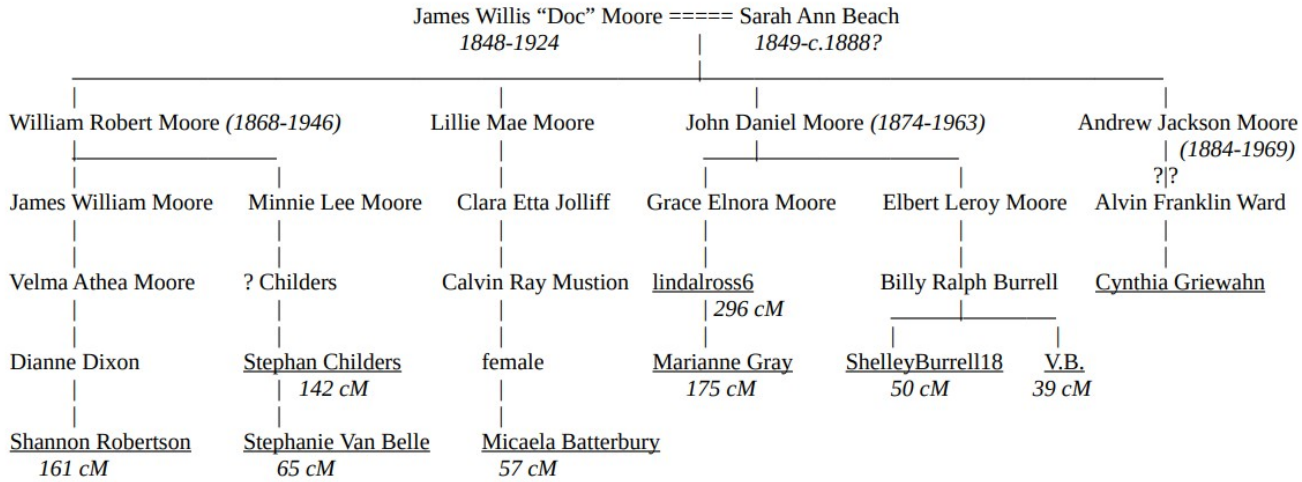
Although a thorough search for all possible documentation for the birth of Alvin Franklin Ward and the marriage of Nora Mae Storm and Harry Jack Ward has not been done, such is not necessary in this case. The purpose of this research is to use DNA to determine the identity of the biological father of Alvin Franklin Ward. Alvin's daughter, Cynthia Griewahn, submitted her DNA to the AncestryDNA database and received thousands of matches. An answer to the research objective can hopefully be gleaned from an analysis of these matches.

1. “Alvin 'Al' Ward,” obituary, *Davis Funeral Home, Inc.* (https://www.thedavisfuneralhome.com/home/obit/2699 : accessed 30 March 2023).
2. This information was found on numerous online trees and in several conversations with Zelma Skinner in August 2022.
3. 1930 U.S. Census, Pawnee County, Oklahoma, population schedule, McElroy Township, enumeration district 0019, page 5A-5B, dwelling 97, family 97, household of John H. Storms; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 23 March 2023); citing NARA microfilm publication T626.
4. “Oklahoma, U.S., Marriage Records, 1890-1995,” database with images, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 30 March 2023), marriage of Harry Frost and Nora Ward, 1 January 1935.
5. “U.S., Newspapers.com Marriage Index, 1800s-current,” *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 30 March 2023), marriage announcement for Mrs. Nora Ward.
6. 1940 U.S. Census, Gray County, Texas, pop. sch., (“Talley Addition of”) Pampa, e.d. 90-11A, p. 10B, dwell. 188, household of Harry J. Frost; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 30 March 2023); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 4042.
7. This information came from conversations with Zelma Skinner in August 2022.

Research Findings:

Our genetic code is composed of 23 pairs of chromosomes. One of each pair comes from the father and one from the mother. Because of this, *AncestryDNA* is able to separate our genetic matches according to parent. All the researcher has to do is to identify which parent (parent 1 or parent 2) is the paternal and which is the maternal. In most cases, including Cynthia's, it was easy to do this. Her paternal matches are, of course, related through her father Alvin Ward. By looking at a few of the family trees attached to those paternal matches, and then using the “shared matches” feature, it quickly becomes obvious which matches are related through Alvin's father and which are related through Alvin's mother, Nora Mae Storm. These related matches are referred to as “shared match” clusters. By looking at the cluster representing Alvin's father, we can then identify further, smaller clusters. One is composed of matches related through Alvin's paternal grandfather and the other of matches connected to Alvin's paternal grandmother.

There are far more matches related through Alvin's mother than through his father. This could mean that people on Nora's side had more children, or had more descendants interested in taking DNA tests, or even that Cynthia simply inherited less DNA from her paternal grandfather than her paternal grandmother. Of the cluster that does represent Alvin's father, all of them were either descendants of James Willis “Doc” Moore (1848-1924) and his wife Sarah Ann Beach (1849-c.1888?), or related to one or other of them. This proves conclusively (assuming no incest) that Alvin's father was one of the sons of this couple. This couple had six, or possibly seven, children before either Sarah died or was divorced. Of these, only three sons reached adulthood. These were **William Robert Moore** (1868-1946), **John Daniel Moore** (1874-1963), and **Andrew Jackson Moore** (1884-1969). One of these must be Alvin's father, despite the great age difference between any of them and Alvin's mother Nora (she was born in 1907). The task then is to analyze the amounts of shared DNA among all of the relevant matches which have been identified. The chart below depicts the relationship between these matches and the amount of DNA in centiMorgans (cM) shared with Cynthia Griewahn.



As we have seen, in 1932, Alvin's mother, Nora Mae Storm (a.ka. Mrs. Nora Ward), lived in the area of Jennings, Pawnee, Oklahoma. While taking into consideration the genetic data on the chart, we must also consider who had the most opportunity to enter into a relationship with Nora. That is, who lived nearby?

William Robert Moore (1868-1946)

In 1930, William Robert Moore lived in Lagoon township, Pawnee County, Oklahoma with his wife Sena H., their two youngest children and two grandchildren. He worked as a farmer.[8] This was about six miles east of where the Storm family lived, including Alvin's mother Nora Ward. According to the 1940 census, William Robert Moore, age 71, his wife, Sena H., and a couple of their children were still living in Lagoon township. He had no occupation and is son, James W. Moore, was running the farm. Their inferred residence in 1935 was Jennings, but in actuality it was probably Lagoon township.[9] We see that William lived only six miles from Nora at the time of Alvin's conception. He almost certainly knew her family. William was the oldest of the three Moore brothers. He was 63 and Nora was just under 25. The 38 year age gap is unusual and tends to argue against him being the father.

What does the DNA evidence show? As the chart shows, three of William's descendants are found among Cynthia's matches. Only two are relevant here because the third is a daughter of one of the others. One, Stephan Childers, shares 142 cM (centiMorgans) and the other, Shannon Robertson, shares 161 cM (centiMorgans). The former is a great-grandchild of William. The latter is a great-great-grandchild. If Alvin is William's son, then Cynthia would be a half first cousin, twice removed (H1C2R) of Shannon and a half first cousin, once removed of Stephan. If Alvin is the son of one of William's brothers, Cynthia would be a second cousin, twice removed (2C1R) of Shannon and a second cousin, once removed (2C1R) of Stephan. Does the amount of shared DNA favor one brother over the other? According to AncestryDNA, a match sharing 161 cM has a 5% chance of being at the genetic distance of 2C2R and a 35% chance of being at a genetic distance of H1C2R. According to Blaine Bettinger's chart, the predicted cM for a 2C2R is 71 with a range of 0-244. For an H1C2R, it is 125 with a range of 16-269. Thus, looking exclusively at the DNA of Shannon Robertson, it seems more likely that William was Alvin's father, although it is still very possible that one of his brothers was. For Stephan Childers, who is a generation closer to William, 142 cM means a 47% chance of being removed at the level of a 2C1R and a 41% chance of being at the level of an H1C1R. Looking at Stephan Childers, for a 2C1R, Blaine Bettinger predicts 122 cM with a range of 14-353. And for an H1C1R, it predicts 224 cM with a range of 62-469. So in the case of Stephan Childers, 142 is very close to average for a 2C1R.[10] This one could go either way.

John Daniel Moore (1874-1963)

John Daniel Moore is the least likely candidate for being the father of Alvin Ward. In 1930, he lived with his wife, Sarah, and their children in Mesa, Arizona.[11] In 1940, the census lists him as widowed and living by himself in Phoenix. It states that he was also living in Phoenix in 1935.[12] Perhaps he was divorced in the early 1930's because by 1940, his ex-wife, Sarah A. Guy, lived in Mesa with her new

8. 1930 U.S. Census, Pawnee County, Oklahoma, pop. sch., Lagoon township, e.d. 17, p. 6B, dwell. 129, fam. 127, household of William R. Moore; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 30 March 2023); citing NARA microfilm publication T626.
9. 1940 U.S. Census, Pawnee County, Oklahoma, pop. sch., Lagoon township, e.d. 59-15 p. 1B, dwell. 14,household of W. R. Moore; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 30 March 2023); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 3322. The census taker was required to record the nearest town with over 2500 people.
10. Blaine Bettinger, *The Shared centiMorgan Project–Version 4.0* (March 2020), (www.TheGeneticGenealogist.com).
11. 1930 U.S. Census, Maricopa County, Arizona, pop. sch., Mesa, e.d. 104, p. 10B, dwell. 199, fam. 209, household of John B. Moore; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 30 March 2023); citing NARA microfilm publication T626.
12. 1940 U.S. Census, Maricopa County, Arizona, pop. sch., Phoenix, e.d. 7-1, p. 7A, dwell. 167, household of John D. Moore; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 30 March 2023); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 104.

husband, James D. Guy, and her daughter Reba Moore.[13] Could the divorce, which took place in the early 1930s, have been connected to a relationship John had with Nora? Arizona is a long ways from Oklahoma. However, that does not mean that he couldn't have met Nora while spending time at his brother's place. The age gap is still quite large though. John was 57 and Nora just under 25.

What does the DNA show? Four matches descend from John Daniel Moore. One is probably the daughter of the other so we need not consider it. As can be seen on the chart, one of John's granddaughters, lindalross6, shares 296 cM with Cynthia. She is the closest match from Alvin's paternal match cluster. If Alvin were John's son, Cynthia would be a half first cousin (H1C) to this match. What is the predicted relationship for 296 cM? According to AncestryDNA, a match sharing 296 cM has a 41% chance of being at the genetic distance of an H1C. And there is a 51% chance that the match is at the genetic distance of a second cousin. According to Blaine Bettinger's chart, the predicted cM for a H1C is 449 with a range of 156 to 979. For a 2C it is 229 with a range of 41 to 592. So this makes it seem possible that John *is* Alvin's father. The other two matches are siblings (V.B. and ShelleyBurrell18) who match at 39 and 50 cM, respectively. If Alvin is John's son, these matches would be half first cousins, once removed (H1C1R). According to Ancestry DNA, there is only a 1% chance that someone is at the level of an H1C1R. For 50 cM, it is 3%. However, for 2C1R (the situation if one of John's brothers were the father), the likelihoods are 13% for 39 cM and 27 cM for 50 cM. On Blaine Bettinger's chart, the predicted cM for a 2C1R is 122 with a range of 14 to 353 and for an H1C1R, it is 224 with a range of 62 to 469.[14] So we can see that these last two matches are in the range for being 2C1R, but not H1C1R. These last two matches make it extremely unlikely that John was Alvin's father. The cM numbers are just way to low and are far more consistent with one of John's brothers being the father.

Andrew Jackson Moore (1884-1969)

What about Andrew Jackson Moore? In 1930, he lived by himself in Eagle township in Payne County, Oklahoma. He is listed as a “salesman” at a filling station.[15] This was about ten miles southwest of where Nora Ward lived. In 1940, Andrew, age 54, still lived in Eagle, this time with his wife, Tressie May, age 34. He is listed as a “merchant” in a filling station. He and Tressie's inferred residence for 1 April 1935 was also Eagle township.[16] Thus, from at least 1930 to 1940, which encompasses the time of Alvin's birth, Andrew lived about ten miles from the Storm family and eight miles straight south of his brother William Robert Moore.

What about the DNA? Unfortunately, no record of any other children of Andrew has ever been found. He was unmarried until he married Tressie May Burgess, a divorced woman 20 years younger, sometime between 1930 and 1935.[17] The two of them had no children. So it seems unlikely that

13. 1940 U.S. Census, Maricopa County, Arizona, pop. sch., Mesa, e.d. 767, p. 10B, dwell. 213, household of James D. Guy; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com : accessed 30 March 2023); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 106.
14. Blaine Bettinger, *The Shared centiMorgan Project–Version 4.0* (March 2020), (www.TheGeneticGenealogist.com).
15. 1930 U.S. Census, Payne County, Oklahoma, pop. sch., Eagle township, e.d. 12, p. 6A, dwell. 138, fam. 142, household of Andrew J. Moore; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 1 April 2023); citing NARA microfilm publication T626.
16. 1940 U.S. Census, Payne County, Oklahoma, pop. sch., Eagle township, e.d. 60-12, p. 4A, dwell. 64, household of Andrew Jackson Moore; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 1 April 2023); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 3323.
17. This can deduced by comparing the above mentioned 1940 Census with: 1930 U.S. Census, Creek County, Oklahoma, pop. sch., Mannford, e.d. 26, p. 8B, dwell. 156, fam. 159, household of James O. Burgess; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed 1 April 2023); citing NARA microfilm publication T626.

descendants of Andrew will ever show up in the AncestryDNA database. All we can go by is the DNA data supplied by his siblings' descendants. We concluded that John Daniel was almost certainly not Alvin's father, that William Robert seems most likely (if you're only looking at the DNA of their descendants), but that Andrew Jackson Moore is still very possible, and even probable. Although both brothers lived in the right area, Andrew was sixteen years younger than William. At 47 and unmarried, rather than 63 and married with ten children, it is more likely that he would have been able to become involved in a relationship with Mrs. Ward, a divorced woman only 22 years younger (rather than 38).

Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Research

The current DNA data cannot answer the research question with certainty. The father of Alvin Franklin Ward was almost certainly either William Robert Moore (1868-1946) or his far younger brother, Andrew Jackson Moore (1884-1969). Both lived in the area. Despite the DNA evidence from one particular match weighing in favor of the former, the latter is still very possible and, in the opinion of the researcher, more likely in terms of age and opportunity. Is there any way of determining the answer with certainty? Not likely, unless some unknown documentary evidence pops up. More DNA matches could indeed tip the argument in favor of one or the other. These can be attained if some of Cynthia's closer, but unidentified matches respond to the inquiries sent out by the researcher, or if Cynthia submitted her DNA to one of the other databases. Also, since siblings only share about half their DNA, testing Cynthia's siblings should also give us a few more matches. If more of William's descendants appear in the database with lower shared centiMorgan numbers that would bolster the argument *for* Andrew and *against* William.