

Genetic genealogy uncovers the paternal lineage of Peggy Jean (Winslow) (Vroman) Tritchler

by
Joseph E Tritchler Jr

Traditional genealogy relies on the accuracy of the documents in which the events of one's life are recorded. Documentary evidence indicated the parents of Peggy Jean Vroman were Lyle Raymond Vroman and Vera Mercedes Winslow but DNA testing of Peggy's son revealed a very different paternal lineage.¹

THE PAPER TRAIL

According to her birth certificate, Peggy Jean Vroman was the “legitimate” daughter of Lyle R. Vroman and Vera Mercedes Winslow, born 6 June 1933, in Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.² However, Vera didn't marry Lyle Raymond Vroman, the purported father of Peggy Jean, until 24 November 1933, suggesting Peggy Jean was born illegitimate.³ Their union lasted only a few years but resulted in the birth of two additional daughters.⁴ On 24 October 1947, George Oliver Diener became Vera's second husband and the stepfather of her three daughters.⁵ Eight years later George Diener died on 29 August 1955, leaving Vera a widow with two daughters still

© 2025 by Joseph E Tritchler Jr., the son of Peggy Jean Vroman, is a retired physician assistant and biomedical scientist with 48 years of genealogical research experience. His work in the biomedical sciences included performance and interpretation of court-ordered paternity testing. The author acknowledges that many of the lineage source citations are not original documents which may be considered a weakness of this proof argument. However, the DNA results, coupled with the use of original and derivative sources in lineage construction, provide ample evidence of the lineal validity of the cited DNA matches. All cited URLs were active as of 25 February 2025.

¹ State of Minnesota, Department of Health, Certificate of Birth, no. 41558, Peggy Jean Vroman; copy in author's records. And, the author's interview with Peggy Jean's mother, Vera Mercedes Winslow, 1977.

² Minnesota, Certificate of Birth, Peggy Jean Vroman, 1933.

³ For marriage, Iowa State Board of Health, Certificate of Marriage, Lyle Raymond Vroman and Vera Mercedes Winslow, 24 Nov 1933, Cresco, Howard County, Iowa; imaged in “Iowa, U.S., Marriage Records, 1880-1948,” *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/8823/images/41697_329258-02061); citing State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines. For birth, Minnesota, Certificate of Birth, Peggy Jean Vroman, 1933.

⁴ 1940 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, Minnesota, population schedule (pop. sch.), Minneapolis, enumeration district (E.D.) 89-410, sheet 8A, lines 18-22, household of Lyle R. and Vera Vroman; National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) microfilm publication T627, roll 1993.

⁵ “Minnesota Official Marriage System, MOMS” database, Minnesota Association of County Officers (MACO), *MOMS* (<https://moms.mn.gov/>), George Oliver Diener and Vera Mercedes Vroman, 24 October 1947; citing certificate no. 05380499, Hennepin County Vital Records, Minneapolis, Minnesota. And, 1950 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, Minnesota, pop. sch., Minneapolis, E.D. 89-882, sheet 77, dwelling (dwell.) 533, household of George O. Diener; National Archives at Washington, DC., RG 29, NAID: 43290879.

at home.⁶ Peggy Jean had married Joseph Edward Tritchler on 18 July 1952.⁷ Peggy and Joseph had two sons including Joseph E Tritchler Jr.⁸

According to Peggy's youngest sister, supported by the date of Vera's first marriage, Vera was an unwed mother at the time of Peggy's birth.⁹ With her newborn daughter, Vera returned to her childhood home to live with her widowed mother, Amanda Victoria (Nelson) Winslow, in Zumbrota, Goodhue Co., Minnesota, until she met and subsequently married Lyle Vroman.¹⁰

On July 1, 2024, the State of Minnesota began allowing access to original birth records for adoptees.¹¹ An unaltered, original birth certificate of Peggy Jean Winslow (later Vroman) was obtained and confirmed she was the illegitimate daughter of Vera Mercedes Winslow (Figure 1). No father was identified on the original birth record. No evidence of adoption by Lyle Vroman was found in the original birth record file.¹²

⁶ "Minnesota, U.S., Death Index, 1908-2017," database, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7316/records/567757>), George O Diener, 29 August 1955; citing Minnesota Department of Health, Minneapolis.

⁷ Hennepin County, Minnesota, Certificate of Marriage, no. 608-425, Joseph Edward Tritchler and Peggy Jean Vroman, 18 July 1952; copy in author's records. And, "Tritchler-Vroman Vows Exchanged," *The Minneapolis [Minnesota] Star*, 22 July 1952, p. 20, column (col.) 5.

⁸ Minnesota Department of Health, Certificate of live birth, number (no.) 50730, Joseph Edward Tritchler Jr., [DATE PRIVATE]; copy in author's records. And, Saint Felix [Catholic] Church, Wabasha, Minnesota, Certificate of Baptism, (PRIVATE) Tritchler [second son]; copy in author's records.

⁹ B. K. Boeder, (ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE), Jackson, Wyoming, to Joe Tritchler, letter, 1 October 2022; privately held by Joseph Tritchler, (ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE), Whitsett, North Carolina, 2025.

¹⁰ Boeder to Tritchler, 1 October 2022.

¹¹ Minnesota Legislature, *Access to original birth record after adoption*, Chapter 115, Article 18, Section 8, Statute 144.2252, Minnesota Statutes 2023 Supplement, effective 1 July 2024; "Minnesota Session Laws - 2024, Regular Session," *Minnesota Office of the Revisor of Statutes* (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2024/0/115/laws.18.8.0#laws.18.8.0>).

¹² Minnesota Dept of Health, (P.O. Box 64499, Saint Paul, Minnesota), to Joseph E Tritchler, correspondence, 4 February 2025; privately held by Joseph Tritchler, [ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE], Whitsett, North Carolina, 2025; referencing request no. 2025-3944942, birth record state file no. 1933-MN-016076. Search results: "Evidence of adoption not on file."

MAY NOT BE USED FOR IDENTIFICATION OR LEGAL PURPOSES

Later known as: Peggy Jean Vroman *7700 rail*
 PLACE OF BIRTH THE STATE OF MINNESOTA
 County of Ramsey *6-16-33*
 Township of _____
 or
 Village of _____
 or
 City of St. Paul Minn
 Reg. District No. _____ No. in Registration Book _____
 (Above numbers to be filled in only by local registrar or his deputy)
 (No. Salvation Army Home, St. _____ Ward) _____
 (If birth occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number)
 FULL NAME OF CHILD Peggy Jean Winslow } If child is not yet named, make supplemental report as directed.

Was 1% silver nitrate used to prevent infant blindness? Yes No
 4. Was child deformed or physically defective? Yes No
 5. Nature of defect: None
 Sex female If plural births { 7. Twin, triplet, or other _____ 9. Premature _____ 10. Legitimate? Full term mate? no
 8. Number, in order of birth _____ 11. Date of birth June 6 1933
 (Month, day, year)

FATHER
 12. Full name _____
 13. Residence (usual place of abode) (If non-resident, give place and State) _____
 14. Color or race _____
 15. Age at last birthday (Years) _____
 16. Birthplace (city or place) (State or country) _____
 17. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as farmer, bookkeeper, etc. _____
 18. Industry or business in which work was done, as factory, office, bank, etc. _____

MOTHER
 19. Full maiden name Vera Mercedes Winslow
 20. Residence (usual place of abode) (If non-resident, give place and State) 780 W. Ave. Gumbrot Minn.
 21. Color or race White 22. Age at last birthday 20 (Years)
 23. Birthplace (city or place) (State or country) Gumbrot Minn.
 24. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as housekeeper, typist, nurse, clerk, etc. Domestic
 25. Industry or business in which work was done, as own home, lawyer's office, factory, etc. Private Home

1. Number of children of this mother (At time of this birth and including this child) (a) Born alive and now living _____ (b) Born alive but now dead _____ (c) Stillborn _____
 2. If stillborn, period of gestation { months or weeks } 28. Cause of stillbirth _____ { Before labor _____ During labor _____

CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDING PHYSICIAN OR MIDWIFE*
 I hereby certify that I attended the birth of this child, who was Born alive at 9:15 P.M. on the date above stated, and that the above facts as given are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.
 (Born Alive or Born Dead)
 (Signature) [Signature]
 PHYSICIAN, MIDWIFE, PARENT OR INFORMANT
 (Cross out words which do not apply)
 Date June 14 33 Address 1477 W. Como Ave.
 (Signature) [Signature]
 Given name added from a supplemental report: _____
 Filed JUN 14 1933 19 _____ Address _____

Figure 1: Original birth certificate of Peggy Jean Winslow (later Vroman). Source: State of Minnesota, Department of Health, Record of Birth, no. 41558, Peggy Jean Winslow, 1933; copy in author's records.

DNA ETHNICITY ESTIMATE

In January 2022, Joseph E Tritchler Jr (hereafter JT) had DNA testing performed through AncestryDNA®. His ancestral regions (ethnicity estimate) report is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of AncestryDNA Ancestral Regions/Ethnicity Estimates

Ancestral Regions	Predicted Ethnicity	AncestryDNA Ethnicity Estimate	Ancestry DNA Reported Lineage
Germanic Europe	50%	39%	95% Paternal 5% Maternal
Central & Eastern Europe (Northern Greater area of Western Central Poland)	0%	23%	100% Maternal
Norway	12.5%	0%	
Sweden (Småland & Halland)	12.5%	13%	100% Maternal
United Kingdom and Western Europe	25%	25%	50% Paternal 50% Maternal

Two notable aberrations were identified within JT’s maternal heritage when the DNA results were compared to his predicted ethnic background based upon his well-sourced family tree:

- the presence of an unexpected Northern Greater West Central Poland lineage, and
- the absence of an expected Norwegian heritage.

Lyle Raymond Vroman was the son of Ray Wilson Vroman and Laura Mathilde Nora Molde.¹³ Both of Laura’s parents had 100% Norwegian ancestry.¹⁴ If Lyle Raymond Vroman were the grandfather of Joseph Edward Tritchler Jr, then Joseph should have inherited approximately 12.5% Norwegian ethnicity (Table 2).

Table 2: Norwegian Ethnicity Estimation

Purported Family Lineage	Predicted Norwegian Ethnicity
Laura Molde	100%
Lyle Raymond Vroman	50%
Peggy Jean Vroman	25%
Joseph Edward Tritchler Jr	12.5%

¹³ State of Minnesota, Division of Vital Statistics, Record of Birth, [Male] Vrohman [*sic*], 4 October 1908; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L9XF-Z568>), image group no. 004159154, image 326 of 2256. And, Hennepin County, Minnesota, Affidavit to amend birth record, no. 30039, Lyle Raymond Vroman, received 13 January 1942; image, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9XF-Z5M6>), image group no. 004159154, image 325 of 2256.

¹⁴ 1900 U.S. Census, Olmsted County, Minnesota, pop. sch., Salem, E.D. 121, sheet 3A, dwell. 38, Nora [Laura] Molde in the household of Jens and Christina Molde; NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 779. Both parents of Laura Molde were born in Norway.

Because ethnicity estimates can vary and become more specific as reference DNA databases are enlarged and updated, the AncestryDNA test results were uploaded to FamilyTreeDNA® and MyHeritage® for comparison. None of the ethnicity estimates obtained from these other DNA testing sites revealed Norwegian ancestry for JT. To confirm Lyle Vroman's Norwegian ethnicity could be detected through AncestryDNA testing, the ethnicity estimates of Lyle's great-grandson (KB), whose lineage goes through a different daughter of Lyle Vroman, revealed KB was 5% Norwegian.¹⁵ Based on his relationship with Lyle Vroman, the estimated amount of Norwegian DNA for KB would be 6.25%.

ANCESTRYDNA THRU LINES®

No DNA matches were identified by the AncestryDNA ThruLines algorithm for any of the supposed Vroman ancestors of Peggy Jean (Winslow) (Vroman) Tritchler through the 3rd great-grandparents of JT. ThruLines identified matches for all of JT's other ancestral lines.

DNA MATCHES

Using the Leeds Method, analysis of JT's matches sharing 98 to 444 cM DNA revealed four distinct clusters (Table 3).¹⁶ All matches were estimated to be 1st to 3rd cousins. Only one of the matches (#14) clustered in two of the four groups. Three of the clusters were associated with the known great-grandparents of JT:

- **Cluster 1:** 7 matches were all descendants of Franz Joseph and Mary (Muller) Tritchler, parents of JT's paternal grandfather.
- **Cluster 2:** 4 matches were all descendants of Christian and Emma (Eichenberger) Dapper, parents of JT's paternal grandmother.
- **Cluster 3:** None of the 16 matches in this cluster were found among the descendants of Ray and Laura (Molde) Vroman, the supposed parents of JT's maternal grandfather.
- **Cluster 4:** 5 matches were all descendants of Don Ray and Amanda (Nelson) Winslow, parents of JT's maternal grandmother.

Using the 16 matches belonging to the unidentified cluster (group 3), 60 additional shared matches associated with this cluster group were identified using a predicted relationship threshold to JT of 4th cousin or closer. Sourced family trees were constructed for 38 of the 76 matches, including 8 of the original 16 persons estimated to be second (2nd) or third (3rd) cousins.¹⁷ The most recent common ancestral (MRCA) couple for 34 of those 38 matches was identified as Michael and Magdalena Helen (Mazgar) Karaus. Fifteen of the 38 matches shared a second ancestral couple, Casparus "Caspar" and Marie (Pojat) Lewandowski. The Karaus and Lewandowski families were joined through the marriage of Martinus "Martin" Lewandowski, son

¹⁵ KB DNA testing performed by AncestryDNA.

¹⁶ Dana Leeds, "The Leeds Method," *Genealogy with Dana Leeds* (<https://www.danaleeds.com/the-leeds-method/>).

¹⁷ See the Genealogical Summaries section for the family trees of all 38 matches.

of Casparus and Marie (Pojat) Lewandowski, and Magdalena Karaus, daughter of Michael and Magdalena (Mazgar) Karaus.¹⁸

- 4 matches were descendants of Caspar and Marie (Pojat) Lewandowski only
- 19 matches were descendants of Michael and Magdalena Helen (Mazgar) Karaus only
- 15 matches were descendants of Martin and Magdalena (Karaus) Lewandowski

Table 3: Leeds Method Clustering

#	Match Source	Shared DNA (cM)	Segments	Longest Segment (cM)	Estimated Relationship	Confirmed Relationship	Tritchler (Cluster 1)	Dapper (Cluster 2)	Unknown (Cluster 3)	Winslow (Cluster 4)
1	GEDMatch	444	21	45	1C Group	Half 1C				
2	AncestryDNA	428	23	48	1C Group	1C1R				
3	AncestryDNA	312	18	48	2C-3C	1C1R				
4	AncestryDNA	268	11	84	2C-3C	2C				
5	AncestryDNA	253	14	33	2C-3C	Half 1C1R				
6	AncestryDNA	227	13	31	2C-3C	2C1R				
7	AncestryDNA	215	9	69	2C-3C	2C				
8	AncestryDNA	210	8	65	2C-3C	2C				
9	AncestryDNA	200	10	41	2C-3C	2C				
10	AncestryDNA	193	11	37	2C-3C	Undetermined				
11	AncestryDNA	186	17	32	2C-3C	2C				
12	AncestryDNA	185	11	35	2C-3C	2C1R				
13	AncestryDNA	180	9	39	2C-3C	2C1R				
14	AncestryDNA	159	9	60	2C-3C	1C2R				
15	AncestryDNA	156	8	42	2C-3C	3C				
16	AncestryDNA	149	6	69	2C-3C	3C				
17	AncestryDNA	148	8	38	2C-3C	3C				
18	AncestryDNA	147	9	35	2C-3C	Undetermined				
19	AncestryDNA	146	8	37	2C-3C	3C				
20	AncestryDNA	144	6	69	2C-3C	3C				
21	AncestryDNA	143	6	36	2C-3C	2C1R				
22	AncestryDNA	136	6	65	2C-3C	Undetermined				
23	AncestryDNA	135	6	56	2C-3C	2C-1R				
24	AncestryDNA	129	5	34	2C-3C	Undetermined				
25	AncestryDNA	123	8	43	2C-3C	3C				
26	AncestryDNA	120	8	33	2C-3C	2C1R				
27	AncestryDNA	108	5	45	2C-3C	Undetermined				
28	AncestryDNA	107	6	32	2C-3C	3C				
29	AncestryDNA	103	6	33	2C-3C	3C				
30	AncestryDNA	102	4	68	2C-3C	3C-1R				
31	AncestryDNA	98	6	29	2C-3C	Undetermined				
Total Matches per cluster							6 ½	3 ½	16	5

¹⁸ Steele County, Minnesota, Marriage Record, vol. D, p. 249, Martin Lewandowski and Magdaline Karaus, 23 November 1886; imaged in "Minnesota, County Marriages, 1853-1983," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-99CG-MQXM>), FSL IGN 007413030, image 1233 of 1278.

JT's closest match was found on GEDMatch (Match 1) sharing 378 cM autosomal DNA (atDNA) and 65.4 cM on chromosome-X (X-DNA) with JT. A 65.4 cM segment of shared X-DNA is approximately one-third (33.4%) of the entire X chromosome, signaling a very close biological relationship between the two individuals. Using the GEDMatch One-to-one Autosomal DNA and X-DNA Comparison tools, the shared DNA segments between JT and Match 1 were identified.

Table 4: JT-Match 1 Shared DNA

Chromosome	Amount Shared	# Shared Segments	Total length of chromosome (cMs) ¹⁹	% of total chromosome shared
1	18.5	2	281.5	6.6%
2	24	1	263.7	9.1%
3	43	1	224.2	19.2%
4	29.3	1	214.4	13.7%
7	13.8	1	187	7.4
8	71	3	169.2	42.0
9	50.8	4	167.2	30.4
10	19.1	1	174.1	11.0
11	22.1	2	161.1	13.7
13	39.6	1	131.9	30.0
17	48	2	137.3	35.0
X (23)	65.4	2	196	33.4
All DNA	444	21	~7400	6%

The estimated number of generations to the MRCA between Match 1 and JT was 2.6. A family tree was constructed for this match confirming her descent from Martin and Magdalena (Karaus) Lewandowski but the estimated 2.6 generations to MRCA suggested an even closer common ancestor was likely. Based upon 444 cM total shared DNA, several possible relationships between JT and Match 1 were identified (Table 5).

¹⁹ International Society of Genetic Genealogy [ISOGG] Wiki, "centiMorgan," ISOGG (<https://isogg.org/wiki/CentiMorgan>), citing GEDMatch chromosome length data.

Table 5: Possible Relationships between JT and Match 1

Possible Relationships	Relationship Probability
Great-Great-Aunt/Uncle, Half Great-Aunt/Uncle, Half 1 st Cousin, 1 st Cousin once removed, Half Great-Niece/Nephew, Great-Great-Niece/Nephew	84%
Half-Great-Great-Niece/Nephew, Half-Great-Great-Aunt/Uncle, 2 nd Cousin, Half 1 st Cousin once removed, 1 st Cousin twice removed	15%
Great-Aunt/Uncle, 1 st Cousin, Great-Niece/Nephew, Great-Grandparent, Half Aunt/Uncle, Half Niece/Nephew	1%
Source: Blaine T. Bettinger, "The Shared cM Project 4.0", updated March 2020; <i>DNA Painter</i> (https://dnainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4)	

Further delimitation of the relationship between JT and Match 1 suggested they were probably half-first-cousins (Half 1C) or first-cousins once removed (1C1R) based upon the following:

- JT had only one full brother and no half siblings; therefore, no nieces or nephews. (The excluded relationships are shown with a **blue X** in Figure 2)
- JT's mother, Peggy Jean (Winslow) Vroman, had no full siblings, only half-siblings. (The excluded relationships are shown with a **green X** in Figure 2)
- The ages of JT and Match 1 precluded certain matches. (The excluded relationships are shown with a **black X** in Figure 2)
- The specific probability for each of the predicted relationships, based upon the amount of shared DNA between Match 1 and JT.
- The predicted distance to MRCA (2.6).

								Great-Great-Grandparent	GGGG Aunt / Uncle		
								Great-Great-Grandparent	GGG Aunt / Uncle		
Half GG-Aunt / Uncle 208 103 – 284	Great-Grandparent 887 485 – 1486						Great-Great-Aunt / Uncle 420 186 – 713	1C3R 117 25 – 238	2C3R 51 0 – 154	Other Relationships	
Half 1C2R 125 16 – 269	Half Great-Aunt / Uncle 431 18 – 668	Grandparent 1754 984 – 2462				Great-Aunt / Uncle 850 330 – 1467	1C2R 221 33 – 471	2C2R 71 0 – 244	3C2R 36 0 – 166	6C 18 0 – 71	
Half 2C1R 66 0 – 190	Half 1C1R 224 62 – 469	Half Aunt / Uncle 871 492 – 1315	Parent 3485 2376 – 3720		Aunt / Uncle 1741 1201 – 2282	1C1R 433 102 – 980	2C1R 122 14 – 353	3C1R 48 0 – 192	4C1R 28 0 – 126	6C1R 15 0 – 56	
Half 3C 48 0 – 168	Half 2C 120 10 – 325	Half 1C 449 156 – 979	Half Sibling 1759 1160 – 2436	Sibling 2613 1613 – 3488	SELF	1C 866 396 – 1397	2C 229 41 – 592	3C 73 0 – 234	4C 35 0 – 139	5C 25 0 – 117	6C2R 13 0 – 45
Half 3C1R 37 0 – 139	Half 2C1R 66 0 – 190	Half 1C1R 224 62 – 469	Half Niece / Nephew 871 492 – 1315	Niece / Nephew 1740 1201 – 2282	Child 3487 2376 – 3720	1C1R 433 102 – 980	2C1R 122 14 – 353	3C1R 48 0 – 192	4C1R 28 0 – 126	5C1R 21 0 – 80	7C 14 0 – 57
Half 3C2R 27 0 – 78	Half 2C2R 48 0 – 144	Half 1C2R 125 16 – 269	Half Great-Niece / Nephew 431 18 – 668	Great-Niece / Nephew 850 330 – 1467	Grandchild 1754 984 – 2462	1C2R 221 33 – 471	2C2R 71 0 – 244	3C2R 36 0 – 166	4C2R 22 0 – 93	5C2R 18 0 – 65	7C1R 12 0 – 50
Half 3C3R 60 0 – 120	Half 2C3R 60 0 – 120	Half 1C3R 60 0 – 120	Half GG-Niece / Nephew 208 103 – 284	Great-Great-Niece / Nephew 420 186 – 713	Great-Grandchild 887 485 – 1486	1C3R 117 25 – 238	2C3R 51 0 – 154	3C3R 27 0 – 98	4C3R 19 0 – 60	5C3R 13 0 – 30	8C 11 0 – 42

Figure 2: Delimitation of possible relationship between JT and Match 1. Image source: Blaine Bettinger, “The Shared cM Project 4.0 tool v4,” DNA Painter (<https://dnapiainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4>), showing possible relationships with 444 cM shared DNA. Shaded boxes are relationships that are considered not possible sharing that amount of DNA. See text for explanation of the overlaid Xs.

X-DNA

The large shared fragment of X-DNA between JT and Match 1, in conjunction with the predicted distance of 2.6 generations to MRCA, suggests their common ancestor would probably be a grandparent.

Based upon the inheritance pattern of X-DNA, JT’s X-DNA had to come from his mother. A woman inherits an X chromosome from each of her parents but a man only inherits X-DNA from his mother. Since Match 1 was a woman who is unrelated to JT’s maternal grandmother based upon DNA clustering, the 65.4 cM X-DNA these individuals share must have been inherited from JT’s maternal grandfather. If JT and Match 1 share the same grandfather, their mothers would be half-sisters. Based upon that hypothetical relationship, the predicted amount of shared X-DNA between Match 1 and JT would be approximately 25%. Additionally, the predicted total amount of shared DNA for half-first cousins would be 6.25%. JT and Match 1 share one-third (33.4%) of JT’s X-DNA and 6% of their total DNA. Therefore, a half-first cousin relationship is strongly supported by the amount of shared atDNA and X-DNA. If JT and Match 1 shared a maternal great-grandparent, they would be half-second-cousins, a relationship that is not supported by the large fragment of shared X-DNA, nor the shared amount of atDNA.

Using this hypothetical relationship between Match 1 and JT (i.e. half-first cousins), relationships to the author's other 37 shared matches were hypothesized (Table 6). The amount of shared DNA with each match was compared to the predicted amounts of shared DNA (Table 7) for the hypothesized relationship. No discrepancies were noted. All of the hypothetical relationships matched the predicted amounts of shared DNA.

Table 6: Documented lineage of the mystery cluster [#3] DNA matches

MRCA	2 nd Gen	3 rd Gen	4 th Gen	5 th Gen	6 th Gen	7 th Gen	Match Shared DNA	Match Relationship to Author	
Kasper Lewandowski	Lawrence Lewandowski	Frank W	Francis	PRIVATE	Match 28		53	3C 1R	
	Michael Lewandowski	Grace	Match 29				72	2C 1R	
			Audrey Swentik	Match 30			20	3C	
		Agnes M	Match 31				57	2C 1R	
	Martin John Lewandowski and Magdalena Karaus	William Lindusky & Vera Winslow William Lindusky & Agnes Schauls Adeline Lindusky Martha Lindusky Martin Lindusky Francis Lindusky	Peggy Vroman		AUTHOR				Self
			Barbara Lindusky	Match 1				444	Half 1C
			Beverly Macklin	Match 2				268	2C
			PRIVATE	Match 3				200	2C
			Francis Riehm	Match 4				210	2C
			PRIVATE	Match 36				65	2C 1R
Elaine			PRIVATE	Match 5			185	2C 1R	
Elsie			PRIVATE	Match 6				180	2C 1R
			Donna Herbert	Match 7				120	2C 1R
						Match 8		40	2C 2R
				Match 9		46	2C 2R		
				Match 10		71	2C 1R		
Michael Karaus	Elizabeth Karaus	August Falk	Louise	Match 20			146	3C	
			Thomas Weidner	Match 21			48	3C 1R	
		Joseph	PRIVATE	Match 23			40	3C 1R	
		Eva	Janet Knopp	Match 24			43	3C 1R	
		Jane	John Blaeser	Match 22			73	3C 1R	
		Albert Gustav Falk	Mary	PRIVATE	Match 27			20	3C 1R
			Albert Thomas	Match 25				35	3C
			James	Match 26				39	3C
			Francis Henry	Match 18				86	3C
		Henry Falk	Leo	Match 17				112	3C
	Clarence		PRIVATE	Match 19			27	3C 1R	
	Marie		Match 16				123	3C	
	Adelaide Lerach		Match 15				62	3C	
	John Michael Karaus	Martin	James	Match 13				42	3C
			Eugene L	Match 14				25	3C
						Match 33		31	3C 1R
		John J	Donald Felix	Kathleen	Match 32			73	3C 1R
					Match 38			75	3C 1R
		Frank Fabian	Dorothy Marie	Match 35				107	3C
			Kathryn Lucille	Match 34				156	3C
Augusta Karaus		William Einfeldt	William Henry	Match 37				63	3C
	Leo Einfeldt	Delores	Match 11				45	3C	
	Anna Einfeldt	Benjamin Hedrick	Match 12				27	3C	

Abbreviations: MRCA = most recent common ancestor, Gen = generation, 1C = first cousin, 2C = second cousin, 3C = third cousin, 1R = once removed, 2R = twice removed. Source citations to support all lineage relationships are provided in the genealogical summaries.

Table 7: Predicted amounts of shared DNA (cM)

Relationship	Predicted Shared DNA	Average Predicted Shared DNA
Half 1C	156-979	449
2C	41-592	229
2C 1R	14-353	14-353
2C 2R	0-244	71
3C	0-234	73
3C 1R	0-192	48
3C 2R	0-166	36

Source: Blaine T. Bettinger, "The Shared cM Project 4.0", updated March 2020; *DNA Painter* (<https://dnainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4>).

OPPORTUNITY

In order for William August Lewandowski/Lindusky to father Peggy Jean (Winslow) (Vroman) Tritchler, there needed to be an opportunity. While no records have been found to prove an encounter between Peggy's mother and William August Lewandowski/Lindusky, records do confirm a temporal geographic proximity for these two individuals.

Vera Mercedes Winslow was born 24 July 1912 in Zumbrota, Goodhue County, Minnesota, the daughter of Don Ray and Amanda Victoria (Nelson) Winslow.²⁰ She was the third of six children born to the couple.²¹ Her father died on 10 September 1929 leaving his widow Amanda, only 45 years old, to care for their five children still at home, ranging in age from 12 to 19.²² Amanda had never worked outside the home and now relied on her two oldest daughters for financial assistance. Amanda owned her home but she lacked any specific workforce skills.

By 1930, Selma, the oldest daughter of Don Ray and Amanda (Nelson) Winslow, had moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota, about 64 miles from her family home in Zumbrota, to work as a case operator in a bank.²³ Amanda's second oldest child, Lavona, was living at home while working

²⁰ Minnesota Department of Health, Delayed Certificate of Birth, Vera Mercedes Winslow, 24 July 1912; citing Vera Winslow's Baptismal Record, dated 12 May 1913, Goodhue County, and the Minnesota, School Census Record, dated 15 August 1918; copy of birth certificate in author's records.

²¹ 1920 U.S. Census, Goodhue County, Minnesota, pop. sch., Zumbrota Village, ED 63, sheet 3A, dwell. 58, household of Don R. and Amanda Winslow; NARA microfilm publication T625, roll 831.

²² Minnesota Division of Vital Statistics, Certificate of Death, no. 5014, Don Ray Winslow, 10 Sep 1929; imaged in "Minnesota, Deaths, 1887-2001," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-DTG9-MVG>); citing Minnesota State Department of Health, Saint Paul.

²³ 1930 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, Minnesota, pop. sch., Minneapolis, ED 27-222, sheet 17A, line 25, Selma V Winslow; NARA microfilm publication T626, roll 1098.

as a telephone operator at the local telephone office, a career she continued until retirement.²⁴ Vera and her three younger siblings were attending school in Zumbrota.²⁵

William August Lindusky was born on 18 February 1902 in Dakota Co., Minnesota, probably in South Saint Paul, the son of Martin John and Magdalena (Karaus) Lewandowski/Lindusky.²⁶ William remained in South Saint Paul through at least 1950.²⁷ In 1930, William was 28 years old and still living in his parents' home, working as a repairman at a garage.²⁸ That same year, his older brother Martin had married and was living in Rochester, Olmsted Co., Minnesota, working as a traveling salesman.²⁹

U.S. Highway 52 (US-52), is the main thoroughfare connecting South Saint Paul and Rochester, a distance of approximately 80 miles. About midway between the two cities (though slightly closer to Rochester) is Zumbrota, located just off the highway. US-52 would have been the route used regularly by the Lindusky family, traveling back and forth to visit each other. South Saint Paul and Rochester would have been key locations for shopping and other personal services for residents of Zumbrota, a small rural community.

Like her older sister, Vera was probably anxious to get out of the home and into the world. At the age of 18, she would have graduated from high school, probably in 1931. In June 1933, at the age of 20, she gave birth to her illegitimate daughter Peggy Jean Winslow.³⁰ Peggy was born in Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota, at the Salvation Army Booth Brown House (AKA Booth Memorial Hospital), which served the surrounding community as a maternity home for unwed mothers.³¹

²⁴ 1930 U.S. Census, Goodhue County, Minnesota, pop. sch., Zumbrota, ED 25-35, sheet 9A, dwell. 202, Lavona Winslow in the household of Amanda Winslow; NARA microfilm publication T626, roll 1088.

²⁵ 1930 Census, Goodhue Co, Minn., ED 25-35, sheet 9A, dwell. 202, household of Amanda Winslow.

²⁶ For date of birth, "Minnesota, World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1940-1947," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSJB-R9RN>), William A. Lindusky, serial no. T1725; FSL IGN 103377593, image 2312 of 2750. For location, 1905 Minnesota State Census, Dakota County, E.D. 2, South Saint Paul, Wards 2 & 3, p. 61, line 662, Wm (age 3) in the household of Martin and Mrs. Lewandowski; imaged in "Minnesota, State Census, 1905," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:9Q97-YSY3-177>), FSL IGN 004520271, image 189 of 1076; citing Census Bureau, State Library and Records Service, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

²⁷ 1950 U.S. Census, Dakota County, Minnesota, pop. sch., South Saint Paul, ED 19-51, sheet 29, dwell. 406, household of Willam A Lindusky; National Archive at Washington, DC., NAID 43290879, RG 29.

²⁸ 1930 U.S. Census, Dakota County, Minnesota, pop. sch., South Saint Paul, ED 19-33, sheet 7B, line 85, William in the household of Martin Lindusky; NARA microfilm publication T626, roll 1085.

²⁹ 1930 U.S. Census, Olmsted County, Minnesota, pop. sch., Rochester, ED 55-35, sheet 5B, line 89, Martin L Linduski; NARA microfilm publication T626, roll 1110.

³⁰ State of Minnesota, Department of Health, [Original] Record of Birth, no. 41558, Peggy Jean Winslow, 1933; copy in author's records.

³¹ Minnesota, [Original] Record of Birth, Peggy Jean Winslow, 1933. And, "Booth Brown House: 100 years serving youth in St. Paul, MN," article, *The Salvation Army* (https://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usc-wm4/news/booth_brown_house_100_years_2013/).



Figure 3 Salvation Army Home. Attribution: McGhieuer, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Salvation_Army_Women%27s_Home_%26_Hospital.jpg).

When Peggy was a teenager, she discovered Lyle Vroman was not her biological father. The explanation Peggy’s mother provided to her daughter following that discovery, was that her father had died from appendicitis because his family were earnest followers of Christian Science beliefs which precluded seeking outside medical assistance.³²

On 24 May 1933, William August Lindusky’s first known child (a daughter) was born in South Saint Paul. Agnes Mary Schauls was the girl’s mother.³³ That child’s birth preceded the birth of Peggy Jean Vroman by only 10 days. A record of the marriage of William and Agnes has not been found but they appear to have remained together until William’s death on 8 November 1985, in Dakota Co., Minnesota, probably in South Saint Paul.³⁴

³² Boeder to Tritchler, 1 October 2022.

³³ “Minnesota People Records Search,” Gale Family Library, *Minnesota Historical Society* (<https://www.mnhs.org/search/people>), (PRIVATE) Lindusky, 24 May 1933, mother’s maiden name: Schauls; citing certificate no. 1933-41397, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

³⁴ For death, “Minnesota, Death Index, 1908-2002,” database, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:V4WW-4WZ>), William August Lindusky, 1985. For evidence of marriage and continued relationship between William and Agnes (Schauls) Lindusky, 1940 U.S. Census, Dakota County, Minnesota, pop. sch., E.D. 19-35, sheet 27B, dwell. 456, household of William A. and Agnes Lindusky; NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 1918, And, 1950 U.S. Census, Dakota County, Minnesota, pop. sch., South Saint Paul, E.D. 19-51, sheet 29, dwell. 406, household of William A. Lindusky; National Archives at Washington, NAID: 43290879, RG 29.

Given the temporal and geographic proximities of Vera Mercedes Winslow and William August Lewandowski/Lindusky, it appears entirely possible that their paths could cross. Unfortunately, Vera set a poor example for her siblings. Her next younger sister also conceived a child out of wedlock a few years later. Neither of these events was openly discussed within the involved families. When yet another unwed birth occurred in the next generation the incident was once again shrouded in secrecy. The family maintained these secrets until DNA testing uncovered previously unknown relationships and descendants of Don Ray and Amanda (Nelson) Winslow.

CONCLUSION

Children conceived out of wedlock were often treated as a shameful family secret, even as recently as the 20th century. Families would go to great lengths to conceal the ‘dirty little secret’ or it sometimes resulted in a ‘shot-gun’ wedding. Until recently, these cover-ups were often successful and went undetected, complicating the efforts of genealogists to create accurate genealogies and family histories. Fortunately, the 21st century genealogist has a new tool with which to uncover the truth – DNA.

Genetic genealogy has proven a remarkable resource in the construction of an accurate family lineage in this case. Unlike the historic paper records which have been the genealogist’s mainstay of information in building a family tree, DNA evidence of family relationships is far less prone to error. The family of Peggy Jean (Winslow) (Vroman) Tritchler had always believed she was the daughter of Lyle Raymond Vroman. DNA testing revealed she was not. Through meticulous analysis and correlation of shared DNA matches, the almost certain biological father of Peggy Jean (Winslow) (Vroman) Tritchler was identified as William August Lewandowski/Lindusky. However, William August had apparently fathered another daughter by a second woman at nearly the same time he fathered Peggy Jean. To his credit, he did pledge himself to one of those women, it just wasn’t Peggy Jean’s mother.

This family secret was well preserved, even taken to the grave. But the truth has finally been uncovered and the biological father of Peggy Jean (Winslow) (Vroman) Tritchler is now known, opening a new branch of her ancestral tree for future discovery.

GENEALOGICAL SUMMARIES³⁵

³⁵ The descendency genealogical summaries for Casparus and Marianna (Pojacka) Lewandowski and Michael and Magdalena (Mazgar) Karaus, detailing the sourced lineage of each of the 38 DNA matches cited in this genealogical proof argument, are being written and will be added upon completion.