The English Ancestry Committee
of
THE WILLIAM STROTHER SOCIETY, INC.

REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

July 27, 2006

Attachment to the Report:

- Committee Treasurer's Report

THE ENGLISH ANCESTRY COMMITTEE
The William Strother Society, Inc.

REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS – JULY 27, 2006

This is the fourth report to the Board of Directors by the English Ancestry Committee which was formed in 1999 to make an organized, sustained search for the ancestry of William Strother, the immigrant to Virginia in the mid-1600's.

Since our last report, there has been a major set-back in our search for the ancestry of William Strother. We have been advised by geneticists that there is very little chance that Ian Strother and our William Strother have a common ancestor within the past 600 years.

As was set out in our prior reports, when Vanderbilt University tested the Y-chromosomes of Ian Strother, William's descendants and others, Vanderbilt tested only 8 markers of the Y-chromosome. This was the standard at the time. This was in the very early days of genetic testing for genealogical purposes. Ian matched the male descendants of William Strother on seven of the eight markers tested. That is, he differed on only one of the eight markers. We were advised at the time that this difference could possibly mean that Ian and William were of different lineages. But as Ian was the closest match we had from the eighteen Strother men tested and there was a possibility Ian and William were of the same lineage, we pursued Ian's ancestry as the best lead we had.

Several years later we established a relationship with Family Tree DNA, a commercial testing laboratory for genetic genealogy that is the most prominent in this country. It was not in business when we started with Vanderbilt University. We found there had been many advances in the science of genetic genealogical testing since we began with Vanderbilt. So to see if we could learn more about Ian, we had Ian retested by Family Tree DNA on 25 markers of the Y-chromosome instead of just the eight tested by Vanderbilt University. We also had one of William's descendants retested so we could compare. The result was that Ian differed from the descendant of William on seven of the 25 markers tested.

We have explored the meaning of these results at length with geneticists with Family Tree DNA. As we have explained in prior reports, the interpretation of the results of such testing is based on statistical probability of the rate of mutation of

certain markers on the Y-chromosome. Therefore, the results do not predict with absolute certainty as mutations can occur between the latest generations as well as between father and son 50 generations ago. However, we are advised that the probabilities of Ian and our William having a common ancestor are as indicated on the following table:

100 years	200 years	300 years	400 years	500 years	600 years
0.00%	0.02%	0.19%	0.97%	3.03%	6.96%

From this, it is apparent that the statistical probability of our finding our William's ancestry by pursuing the ancestry of Ian Strother is very, very low. Therefore, we have ceased that line of inquiry.

A group of Strothers in the group not related to us has, for twenty or more years, been collecting references to Strothers in all the records in England they could find. They put these references into family trees and spreadsheets. They made these available to us. We have examined these and looked at each William referenced. We have not found a William that could be our William.

Therefore, we still need to locate a Strother male whose Y-chromosome matches that of the descendants of William Strother so we will have a lead as to where to search for William's ancestry.

Before discussing what we do next, we want to mention some interesting findings from the studies of the Y-chromosomes. In the Strother literature, there is speculation that the Strothers are of Viking or Scandinavian origin. The results of our DNA study suggest that this is true as to one branch of the Strothers.

The 2002 report to us from Vanderbilt University on the results of the DNA analysis of 22 male line Strothers advised us there were two different groups of Strothers in England who were unrelated in a genealogic time frame. Vanderbilt labeled them Group 1, which included Ian Strother and the descendants of our William Strother and Group 2, which included Strothers in the UK with whom the Society has corresponded over the years and who, before these DNA studies, we thought were our cousins.

The results of our DNA studies suggest that the Strothers in Group 2 were from a lineage common within Viking populations. As to Group 1, our group, the studies suggest our lineage came from the most common population group in Europe, one that re-colonized Europe after the last Ice Age, 10,000 years ago.

So what do we do now in our search for William's ancestry? We have already done three things for the future.

We set up with Family Tree DNA what is called a "Surname Project". Under this arrangement, a Strother Surname Project has been added to the list of surname projects run by Family Tree DNA. Then someone browsing the Family Tree DNA Web site may notice there is a surname project of his surname. He can join the project and be tested at a reduced testing fee which he will pay. To join the project and get the reduced testing fee, he must agree to make his test results available to us. We can then compare them to those of our William to see if we have a match. If we do, we will have found a relative of William.

By advertising in genealogical magazines in, say, the Northumberland area, we can try to recruit Strother men to join the project. The advantage of the surname project approach is that it will cost us very little. The disadvantage is that it may take a long time for us to get a match this way. But Family Tree DNA will keep our Y-chromosome records for 25 years. We have already set up the Strother Surname Project and have set up a Web page for it. The Web page can be accessed from the Strother Society Web site (wmstrother.org) or directly with this URL: http://www.familytreedna.com/(qkfj4h55j2ejs4m4etjcudfe)/public/strotherdnaproject/index.aspx

Another thing we have done is to list the Y-chromosome test results of the Strothers tested by Family Tree DNA on a searchable database available to the public to add their test results and to search the database. The search feature allows you to search based on Y-chromosome values irrespective of surnames. This is a large database and is growing. As it is not surname or country limited, it may have real potential for us. The extensive but fruitless searches for a William Strother in England have raised a question as to the Strother parentage of our William. This database, called Ysearch, may help us look into that question. The

database can be accessed through the English Ancestry Committee page of the Strother Society Web site, through Family Tree DNA (http://www.familytreedna.com/) or directly at http://www.ysearch.org/.

The third thing we have done is to revise the English Ancestry Committee page of the Society's Web site to facilitate access by the membership to information about the activities of the Committee.

Now as to what else can be done.

One thing we intend to do is to keep in touch with our friends in England who are doing Strother researcher to see if a clue to our William turns up in their research.

We also intend to post our test results on other public databases comparable to Ysearch as well as monitor these databases.

Another thing we need to do is to have Family Tree DNA test a descendant from another son of William. The testing done by Vanderbilt University six years ago of only 12 markers was pretty rough-hewn compared to today's advances in genetic genealogical testing. We found this out when we retested Ian Strother. We now have only one of William's descendants tested by Family Tree DNA. We need another son tested so we can verify that we are using the correct Y-chromosome values to compare with others. We estimate such testing would cost about $300.

We should explore the ancestry of some of the Strothers who tested as being unrelated to us but who claim a documented line back to Lancelot of Kirknewton and Elinor Conyers (of the royal line). Beginning with reporting the results of the first test in 2000, we have had to base our lack of a connection to Elinor Conyers on two things – the lack of any documented connection and the finding that we were unrelated biologically to the Strothers who claim a documented connection to Elinor Conyers. But we have just assumed their documentation is good. We have not checked it out ourselves.

The critical point is whether the unrelated Strothers are really descendants of Lancelot of Felkington whose father is purported to be William of Akeld or not. If they are, then the William that is Lancelot's brother cannot be our William and we

do not have the formerly supposed connection to Elinor Conyers. If they are not descendants, then there is still a possibility, albeit a small one, that we have a connection to Elinor Conyers even though we have not yet found one. We estimate such a project would cost about $1,500 in research fees.

The most productive thing we could do now would be to repeat our prior direct mail solicitation for DNA donors from male line Strothers in the UK and test the new donors. This might turn up a match with our William better than Ian's match. But we can not do this without substantial financial support from the members as the specimen donors will expect us to pay for the testing as we had to do before.

However, our acceptance of specimen donor volunteers can be more selective should we do this again because we have learned there are two unrelated groups of Strothers in the UK. Any volunteer whose known ancestry leads to the group we have previously identified as not related to our William can be rejected without testing. This can be of considerable help as some members of the unrelated group have done considerable work over a number of years in identifying members of this unrelated group. They have shared this data with us. Because of this, we think that an approach like we did the first time would be more cost effective if done again. But, as before, we cannot guarantee that a match would be found.

You will see from the attached Treasurer's Report that the Committee has few funds remaining. An additional solicitation of members for funds will be necessary before the Committee can proceed with any further significant research or testing.

The Committee would like to know the sense of the Board as to further action the Committee should take.

Committee Members: Nolan B. Hensarling, Chairman; Edward L. Strother, Treasurer.

Respectfully submitted,

Nolan B. Hensarling, Chairman

ATTACHMENT:
Committee Treasurer's Report

The English Ancestry Committee

The William Strother Society, Inc.

Treasurer's Report

June 1, 2004 through May 31, 2006

Cash balance at June 1, 2004	**$ 284.00**	
Receipts	1,870.00	
Total available funds	*2,154.00*	
Disbursements:		
Research	50.00	
Genetic testing	924.00	
Total disbursements		**974.00**
Cash balance at May 31, 2006		**$ 1,180.00**