

## Anna Land's Father

Researchers into the Land Family, who descend from Abraham Land (b: 1781, d: 1844), who married Sarah Wofford and Sarah Edwards, will quickly realize that there is no documentation of who his father was. He was born to Anna Land (b: 1765, d: 1787), who married Jonathan Reeves (1762-1837). However, that marriage occurred soon after Abraham's birth. Also, Abraham kept the Land surname, which was passed down to all of Abraham's descendants. The mystery has been who Abraham's father was. Was Abraham fathered by Jonathan Reeves prior to his marriage to Anna? Was Abraham fathered by an undocumented man?

Genetic genealogy has solved that mystery.

I, Robert McElroy Land, 4<sup>th</sup> great grandson of Anna Land, had my yDNA sequenced. This yDNA is shared by all my male ancestors for as far back as my genetic material goes. This yDNA line is shared with the mystery father of Abraham. The results yielded two possible fathers, one of whom seems the most likely candidate.

Genetic testing revealed two new surnames to the mystery, Cloud and Nixon. Through genetic testing, through FamilyTreeDNA.com (kit: B732864), I found my haplogroup to be **R-BY177482**. As of this writing, this is a rare haplogroup shared by only two people in their genetic database. The two men, Thomas James Cloud and Michael David Nixon. I am genetically related to both men through my yDNA (which is shared by all of my male ancestors).

1. Thomas James Cloud is a close genetic relative with only 3 genetic differences at 111 genetic markers. Each genetic difference probably happens every 80 years on average. Therefore, our DNA is identical when you go back about 240 years (80X3). Abraham was born 240 years ago in 1781. That means that the man who fathered Abraham shares my yDNA.

After researching Thomas's family, I discovered that he is descended from a man named Isaac Cloud, Sr., who was born in Chester, Pennsylvania, British America in 1752. Abraham was born 580 miles away in 1781 in Chester South Carolina, British America (when Isaac would have been 29 years old). However, records reveal that Isaac was living in Spartanburg, South Carolina in 1790, which is 50 miles from Chester, Pennsylvania.

The context of this relationship is important for the story. This all occurred during the Revolutionary War. Abraham was likely conceived in April 1780. At that time, the continental army was struggling in the South. In April 1780, the British took over and occupied Charleston, South Carolina, on the shore, which likely led to chaos in the area. We don't know if Isaac or Anna were British sympathizers, and their union was unwanted. We don't know if there was a social connection between Anna and Isaac. Anna's father, Joseph Alexander Land was known as Colonel and is assumed to have been in the military. Anna's subsequent husband, Jonathan Reeves was in the military as well. Did Colonel Land ask a favor of his friend to marry his daughter who was pregnant out of wedlock? Whatever happened, it happened at a time of upheaval in the area, so I am sure many unexpected pairings occurred.

Research questions to answer: Was Isaac Sr. in the military? If so, that might add some insight into how he and Anna might be connected. Were Isaac or Anna British sympathizers? This would contribute to understanding their mindset. Did the Cloud's, Land's and Reeves know each

other or associate together in some way?

There is no doubt that I share yDNA with Isaac Sr. and his descendants. These genetic matches are strong and do not lie.

2. Michael David Nixon is a more distant relative. He and I have 4 genetic differences at 111 markers, which means that our common ancestor is around 320 years ago. That is further back than around the time when Abraham was born.

Michael's ancestor that lived in that area at the time and who could have been at the right age to conceive Abraham was John Bentley Nixon (b: 1730 d: 1797). This man was a documented member of the military. In 1780 he was in the military, at 50 years old, as a "scaleman in the Commissary of Issues Department" near Camden County, South Carolina, which is 50 miles from where Abraham was born. Again, the chaos and upheaval in the area probably led to a lot of movement and activity in the area. Were Anna and John brought together through their connection to the military?

My genetic connection to John Bentley Nixon is not as strong, so the likelihood of his fathering Abraham is lower, but there are some intriguing clues that might have brought he and Anna together.

Research Questions to answer: Were there children of John that might have been of age to conceive Abraham? As of the writing I am not sure of children that might fit those criteria.

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