

## **“A DREAM COME TRUE”<sup>1</sup>**

Joan Elaine Medlicott of Medicine Hat and her Relationship to Lady Diana Spencer, The Princess of Wales

**By William J Anhorn K.C. ICD.D**

*William J. Anhorn was born and raised in Medicine Hat, Alberta and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree (Political Science) from the University of Calgary and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Alberta. He returned to his hometown of Medicine Hat in 1976 and practiced law for over 35 years as a senior partner with the Law firm of Pritchard and Company. He retired in 2012 and he and his wife Joan Elaine Anhorn (Medlicott), a retired teacher, continue to reside there.*



*Always having had a keen interest in history and more recently genealogy, he has researched and written a series of articles on his own family and his extended family (Medlicott/Mclvor) and their history. He has also written numerous articles on other topics of interest.*

*His passion for history (including the history of Medicine Hat) has resulted in several articles in relation to local history. He currently is a member of the Medicine Hat Genealogical Society and the Medicine Hat and District Historical Society. He is former Chairman of the Historical and Heritage Resource Management Committee of the Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede Company.*

*He is a frequent contributor to the Alberta Genealogical Society newsletter 'Relatively Speaking'.*

*Most of his articles and stories can be found on his blog at <http://wjanhorn.ca>*

---

<sup>1</sup> This is a 2023 revised and updated version of an earlier article posted to my site in 2017.

## **The Princess of Wales and the Spencer Family**

Lady Diana is the daughter of John Spencer, 8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Spencer and Frances Ruth Roche and the mother of Prince William, Duke of Cambridge and Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex. She was born July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1961 in Park House Sandringham, Norfolk, England, United Kingdom. She was and continues to be one of the most distinguished and revered members of the British Royal Family.

Often referred to as “Lady Di”, “Princess Di” or simply “Diana”, her popularity has given rise to intense scrutiny of her life and her ancestry has become subject matter of close examination by genealogists around the world. The Internet has numerous sites endeavoring to document her royal heritage and great effort has been made in documenting her distant relationship with famous people.

She became immensely popular as a result of her “story-book” marriage to Charles, the Prince of Wales and has been the subject of tremendous enquiry following her divorce and her subsequent tragic death, all of which has been well documented.

Those members of English royalty related to her include:- King Edward I, (20<sup>th</sup> great-grandfather), William the Conqueror, (24<sup>th</sup> great grandfather), King Henry VIII, (13<sup>th</sup> great-granduncle via Henry VII).

Some other famous notable relatives include- Sir Winston Churchill (4<sup>th</sup> cousin 4 times removed), Oliver Wendall Holmes Sr. (3<sup>rd</sup> cousin 6 times removed) Thomas Jefferson, 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. President (4<sup>th</sup> cousin 7 times removed).

The Spencer family is one of the distinguished aristocratic families in England with many of the family members being Knights, Baronets and Lords. The hereditary titles include the Duke of Marlborough, the Earl of Sunderland and Spencer, and the Viscount of Weymouth. The most prominent member of the Spencer family by far is Sir Winston Churchill.

Imagine, if somehow, one of your relatives could be identified as a relative of Princess Diana. It would make for a great talking point!

## The Genealogical Research

My genealogical research has discovered that my wife Joan Elaine Medicott of Medicine Hat Alberta, Canada, a retired schoolteacher, is RELATED to Diana Spencer, the Princess of Wales.

In a previous article entitled, [\*"The Medicott Family History- A Family of Knights, Lords and Ladies"\*](#), I traced my wife's family pedigree(Medicott) as far back as 985 to Roger de Montgomery, "Roger the Great" of Normandy. He was a cousin to William the Conqueror, who led the Norman invasion and through his battlefield success at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 became William I, King of England. Intrigued by this close connection to royalty, I have examined more closely the "royal" connection and began documenting in greater detail this side of the Medicott family tree.

Let's start at the beginning.

### De Botevyle, De Boutville, de Botevile, de Botevile Family History

Roger de Montgomery (985-1040) and his son Roger Montgomery II (1022-1040) like their cousin, William the Conqueror were from the nobility of France and through marriage became related to what became a well recognized family of British aristocracy-De Botevyle/Thynne.

As I have noted in my earlier article, much like the Medicott surname, this family name had many alliterations, which was quite common at the time, but the family history despite its many variations has been well documented.<sup>2</sup>

Around 1400, the Boteville surname was interchanged with the name "de La Inn" apparently referencing a name or a place, where one of

---

<sup>2</sup> See Stemmata Botevilliana: Memorials of de Boteville, Volume I (1858) by Beriah Botfield ]

the descendants resided. Gradually over the next few generations the “de Botevyle” name was converted into the surname **THYNNE**. The Thynne family became one of the pre-eminent names in British aristocracy and its connection to the Spencer family heritage is well established.

This is where the connection to royalty begins.

### **The Thynne Family and the Medlicotts- A Connection to Royalty**

Sir John Thynne (1449-1479) married Lady Joan Bowdler and they had two sons-

- **Ralph Thynne (1465-1515)**
- **Roger Thynne (1484- ).**

It is here that the Medlicotts establish a family connection to the Thynne family and to royalty.

Roger Thynne (1484- ) had a son named William and a daughter named Margaret.

William married Margaret Skerry and they had 3 children: Thomas, Joan and **Eleanor**.

Eleanor Thynne married **John Medlicott**, who became a wealthy landowner and this familial connection is one from whom Joan Elaine Medlicott can directly trace her ancestry.

There is also evidence that the daughter Margaret Thynne, daughter of Roger married a “Medlicott”, a male person identified in early archival records as “A. Modlicott”. Again, this form of alliteration of the last name was quite common. But this ancestral connection remains unsubstantiated<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup> see, Henry Edmundstone Medlicott, at [www.fam.medlicott.uk.co](http://www.fam.medlicott.uk.co)

Ralph and his branch of the Thynne family, not to be out done by his brother Roger, went on to fame and fortune and a life within the aristocracy of Britain, with many of his descendants having a direct and strong connection to the Royal family.

Let me quickly summarize the connection.

Ralph Thynne [Botevile] (1464-1515) has been identified in many reliable sources as being the 14<sup>th</sup> Great grandfather of Lady Diana, Princess of Wales.

In quick summary, Eleanor Medicott (Thynne) was the granddaughter of Roger Thynne and her descendants can be clearly traced directly by blood to Joan Elaine Medicott. Roger Thynne would be Joan Elaine Medicott's 14th great grandfather. Roger Thynne and Ralph Thynne were brothers. As noted, Uncle Ralph Thynne, brother of Roger is the great grandfather of Lady Diana Spencer, Princess of Wales.

Therefore, the Medicott family and in particular, Joan Elaine Medicott and her siblings have an established connection to royalty-to Lady Diana Spencer, Princess of Wales. Furthermore, by a natural, logical genealogical extension, she would be related to Prince Harry and the current heir to the British throne, Diana's son, Prince William.



## The Full Genealogical Story

For those who are more keenly interested in the full genealogical analysis and history, I offer the following treatise.

Both Ralph and Roger Thynne can trace their ancestry back through the Botevyle family to Roger, the Great (Roger de Montgomery) of France, who was a first cousin to William the Conqueror, who became William I, the King of England.

Reliable sources have identified him as the 24<sup>th</sup> great grandfather of Lady Diana Spencer, and Edward I as the 20<sup>th</sup> great grandfather of Lady Di, thereby establishing the Medlicott family as having an ancestral connection to at least two Kings of England.

To the amateur genealogist, tracing a famous family pedigree and their various branches and finding a particular connection to your own family tree is quite fascinating.

Let's examine the Spencer lineage more closely and identify with greater precision the Medlicott family pedigree and some famous ancestors.

To establish the connection to British aristocracy and the royal family (Lady Diana Spencer), it is necessary to follow the Thynne family tree or pedigree, which has been well documented by others and identify some famous or other notable relatives. <sup>4</sup>

**Ralph Thynne** (1480-1515) married Lady Anne Higgons and they had 3 children: Thomas\* (1502-1546), William, Richard, and Agnes.

**Thomas Thynne** (1502-1546) married Margaret Heynes and they had a child named John Thynne\*.

**Sir John Thynne** (1513-1580) was the steward to Edward Seymour, 1st Duke of Somerset (1506-1552) and a member of the British

---

<sup>4</sup> \* denotes a direct descendant for our purposes

parliament. He was the builder of the Longleat House and his descendants became the Marquesses of Bath.

He is the first descendant to be distinguished with a knighthood and a brief historical vignette is warranted.

His uncle William Thynne introduced him to the Court of Henry VIII and being an ingenious man and traveler was taken into the household of Edward Seymour, earl of Hereford and afterwards Duke of Somerset and subsequently became his steward. He accompanied Hertford's Scottish expedition in 1544. Three years later he served in Somerset's army of invasion, and was knighted after the battle of Pinkie Cleugh (10 Sept. 1547) where he was wounded. In recognition of his services in North Britain, he was allowed to use on his arms -the Scots lion. He married twice during his life and had several children from both his spouses.

He first married Christian Gresham, who was the daughter of Sir Richard Gresham and they had 10 children: Anne, Dorothy, Francis, John\*, Thomas, Catherine, Frances, Elizabeth, Christiana and Maria. His father-in-law, Sir Richard Gresham (1485-1549) was a member of the British Parliament (1539 & 1545) and Lord Mayor of London. He also married Dorothy Wroughton (1548-1635) and had 6 children from this relationship: Egremont, Henry, Charles, Catherine, Edward and William.

Let's continue on my genealogical field trip.

**John Thynne** (1555-1604) married Joan Hayward and they had a child named John, who also knighted and became Sir John Thynne\* (1578-1639). Joan Hayward was daughter of Sir Rowland Hayward, who was twice Lord Mayor of London.

**Sir John Thynne** married twice in his lifetime. His first marriage to Mary (or Maria) Touchet gained historical notoriety. It is reported that they married both at the age of 16, after having just met. They kept their marriage secret for some time because their fathers were bitter rivals. Once discovered, Thynne's father tried

unsuccessfully to have the marriage annulled. Together they had 3 sons, before she died in childbirth: Sir James Thynne, John Thynne (-1670) and Sir Thomas Thynne (1610-1669). This love story is said to have been the inspiration for Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. His second marriage was to Catherine Lyle-Howard and from this union there was a child named Henry, who became known as Sir Henry Frederick Thynne (1615-1680)\*.

**Sir Henry Frederick Thynne** married Hon Mary Coventry and they had two children: Lady Katherine Thynne and Thomas Thynne \*(1640-1714). In 1682, Henry's son Thomas Thynne became the 2<sup>nd</sup> baronet and the first Viscount of Weymouth.

In 1789, Thomas Thynne (1734-1796) the 3<sup>rd</sup> Viscount of Weymouth became the 1<sup>st</sup> Marquesses of Bath, a line and title, which continues today with Alexander Thynne, 7<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Bath (1932-).

**Thomas Thynne** married Lady Francis Finch (1650-1712) and they had 3 children: Frances\* Thynne (1671-1750), Henry Thynne (1674-1708) and James Thynne (1680-1709).

**Frances Thynne** married Robert Worsley (1669-1747) and they had a female child: Frances Worsley\*. (1693-1743).

**Frances Worsley** married John Carteret (1690-1793) and they had 4 children: Grace, Louisa, Georgina Carteret (1715-1780)\*, George and Frances. John Carteret, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Grandville or Lord Carteret was a British statesman and member of the House of Lord (May 25, 1711) who worked closely with the Prime Minister, Spencer Compton, Earl of Wilmington. The family was originally from the Channel Islands and are of Norman descent

**Georgiana Carteret** married John Spencer (1708-1746). Born the Honorable John Spencer, he was the youngest son of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Sunderland and his wife Lady Anne Churchill. He was a British nobleman and a member of the British Parliament. He became the 1st Earl of Spencer. This family connection establishes Sir Winston Churchill as a relative of Lady Diana.

John and Georgiana had 5 children:



- John Spencer \*(1734-1783),
- Margaret G Spencer (1734-1783),
- Lady Diana Spencer (1735-1843),
- Elizabeth Spencer (1736-1831)
- George Spencer (1738-1817).

It is here that the Thynne family becomes linked to the Spencer lineage and establishes an ancestral connection to the Princess of Wales.

**John Spencer** married Margaretha G Pyntz (1737-1814) and they had a child named George John Spencer\*(1758-1834)

**George John Spencer** married Lavinia Bingham, (1762-1831) daughter of Charles Bingham, first Earl of Lucan and they had nine children including a child named Frederick Spencer\* (1798-1857) George John Spencer was a British politician and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Spencer and Viscount of Althorp.

**Frederick Spencer** married Adelaide H E Seymour (1815-1877) and they had a child named Charles R Spencer\* (1857-1923). Frederick Spencer was a British naval commander who served in the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic wars and the Greek war of Independence, who rose to the rank of Vice-Admiral. He became a Knight of the Garter in 1849

**Charles R Spencer** married Margareth Baring (1868-1906) and they had 6 children including a child named Albert E J Spencer\* (1892-1975). She was the daughter of 1<sup>st</sup> Baron of Revelstoke and married Charles Robert Spencer, 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Spencer on July 23 1887.

**Albert E J Spencer** married Cynthia E B Hamilton (1837-1972) and they had a child named Edward J Spencer (1924-1992). Albert is the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Spencer and grandfather of Lady Diana, Princess of Wales. Cynthia E B Hamilton was the second daughter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Abercorn, James Albert Edward Hamilton (1869-1950) who became the first Governor of Northern Ireland (1922-1945)



**Albert E J Spencer**

**Edward J Spencer** (1924-1992) married Frances Ruth Roche (1936-2004) and they had 5 children.

They were married on June 1<sup>st</sup> 1954 in Westminster Abbey and Queen Elizabeth II and other members of the Royal family attended.



**Edward J Spencer**

Edward J Spencer and Frances Roche had a child-Diana Frances Spencer (July 1<sup>st</sup> 1961-August 31<sup>st</sup> 1991), who married Charles Phillip Arthur George Windsor (1948- ) and who became Lady Diana

Spencer, the Princess of Wales. Charles Phillip Arthur George Windsor is the first Child of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip and the current King of England having become heir to the British throne following the death of Queen Elizabeth II.



**Lady Diana Spencer, Princess of Wales**

## “A Dream Come True”

My genealogical research into the Spencer family tree and the Medicott family tree has established a clear and unmistakable connection between these two families and in the case of the Medicott family a clear link to royalty, including none other than... Lady Diana, Princess of Wales and by logical extension- Prince William and Prince Harry.

This kind of discovery from the standpoint of the amateur genealogist, much like Diana's romance and marriage to the Prince of Wales is like “*a dream come true*”.



**Joan Elaine Medicott<sup>5</sup>**

## First Cousin, Once Removed?

Part of the fascination with genealogy and creating a family tree is discovering various family relationships, which you didn't know you had. Even more fascinating is discovering a distant relationship with a famous person or perhaps, if you are lucky, even royalty as I have demonstrated!

Establishing and identifying the exact nature of these relationships can be confusing, especially when it comes to cousins and more distant relations. People typically have confused ideas about what constitutes a second or third cousin, and when somebody throws in the phrase, "times removed," the task becomes even more overwhelming, leading to much frustration.

This is where family relationship charts or kinship charts come in handy. Family relationship charts cross-reference relationships stemming from a common ancestor. Thus, one can move horizontally across the chart to find their own relationship (or another person's) to

---

<sup>5</sup> A striking similarity

a common ancestor and then move vertically down the chart to find the other person's relationship to the same common ancestor; where the two columns come together the relationship is identified.

In a family chart, the phrase "times removed," is often used. This very simply indicates the number of times (**or number of generations**) one is removed from the direct cousin relationship. For example, the child of your first cousin is your first cousin once removed.

The child of your first cousin, once removed is your first cousin, twice removed, and so on. They are all your first cousins, just separated by a certain number of generations.

So what then is a second cousin? The children of cousins are second cousins to each other, and the children of second cousins are third cousins to each other, and so on. In other words, you have a different relationship ("times removed") to your cousin's children than do your children (2nd, 3rd, etc.). Relative to the common ancestor, these children . . . and you, are grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and 2nd great-grandchildren, respectively, as is indicated on the kinship chart.

Because of all this complexity, we tend to think of any cousin relationships beyond second cousins simply as "distant cousins." Distant cousins are important in genealogy because different parts of the family may have different pieces to the puzzles; coming together, they can fit the pieces together into a complete picture. But when you want to try to pin down your relationship exactly, the Family Relationship Chart is a useful tool.

For a useful interactive family relationship chart go to:

<http://www.searchforancestors.com/utility/cousincalculator.html>

## Using A Family Relationship Chart- A Case Example

If there are two family members (A + B) in a family tree, you may wish to determine their relationship. This is done by using a Standard Family Relationship Chart and by taking the following steps:

- 1) Choose an ancestor that the two family members or individuals have in common.

- 2) Determine the simple relationship between the ancestor and the first family member in question. ie grandchild, grandfather, great grandfather etc.
- 3) Determine the relationship between the common ancestor and the second family member in question as in Step 2.
- 4) Cross reference by using the standard family relationship chart as outlined Appendix I below or the interactive chart referenced above.

Here is a case in point.

In this article, I hypothesized based on my genealogical research that there was a close family connection between my wife, Joan Elaine Medlicott and Lady Diana Frances Spencer, Princess of Wales.

How close is this relationship?

Let's use the steps as outlined above to try to determine the exact relationship.

**Family member A:** Diana Frances Spencer, Princess of Wales

**Family member B:** Joan Elaine Medlicott

**Common ancestor: John Thynne.**

He was the father of Ralph and Roger Thynne. Ralph is the 14<sup>th</sup> great grandfather of Lady Diana, Princess of Wales and Roger is a Great Uncle. John Thynne is the 14<sup>th</sup> great grandfather of Joan Elaine Medlicott via Roger Thynne and Ralph is a Great Uncle.

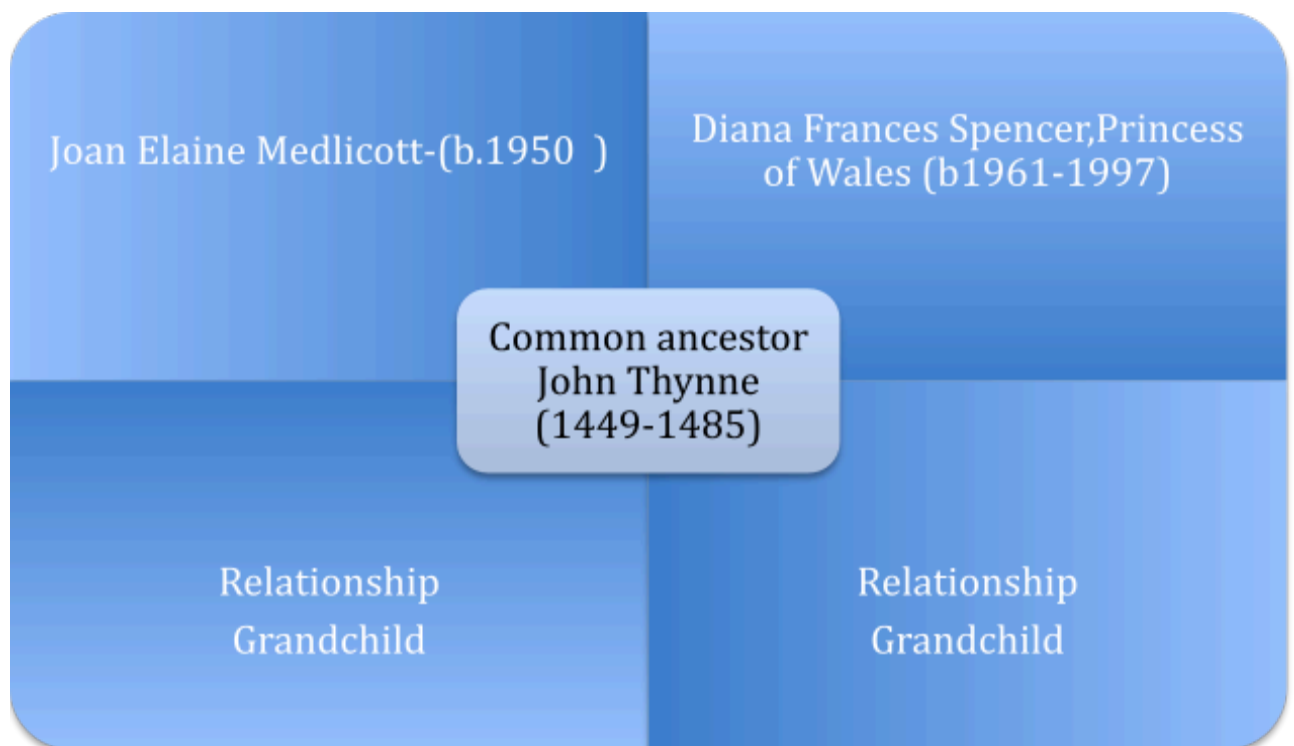
**Step 1:** The ancestor that both A and B have in common is “**John Thynne**”. As noted, Ralph Thynne has been identified in several reliable sources as the 14<sup>th</sup> great grandfather of Lady Diana, Princess of Wales, which would make John Thynne her 15<sup>th</sup> great grandfather.

**Step 2:** Therefore, the “**relationship**” for Family member A to the common ancestor is ***grandchild***.

**Step 3:** John Thynne, father of Ralph Thynne and Roger Thynne is the Grandfather of Eleanor Medicott, (via Roger). Ralph Thynne would therefore be a Great Uncle of Joan Elaine Medicott. Therefore the **“relationship”** for Family member “B” to the common ancestor is also grandchild.

The cross reference would suggest (unless proven otherwise) that the relationship between Family member A and Family member B is “cousin”. Taking into account the generational difference, Joan Elaine Medicott would be a 14<sup>th</sup> cousin once removed to Lady Diana, Princess of Wales. Not surprisingly, she is naturally, by extension, the 15<sup>th</sup> cousin once removed from Prince William, Duke of Cambridge and the heir to the British Throne.

Putting it another more simplistic way, she would be the first cousin of Lady Diana 14 generations removed. This is by reason of the fact that each of their respective 14<sup>th</sup> great grandfathers were brothers and their natural offspring would be first cousins.



## **“There is A Perfect Ending”**

Genealogy derives its name from the Greek words “generation” and “knowledge” and is the study of families and the tracing of their lineages and history. The results are often displayed in charts or in written narratives. The difficulty for the amateur genealogist is not where to start but where to end as there is seldom a perfect ending.

The pursuit of family history and origins tends to be shaped by several motives, including the desire to carve out a place in one’s family in the larger historical picture and a sense of responsibility to preserve the past for future generations. Others simply enjoy researching with the hope of discovering some famous distant relative.

Here, finding that a close family member is related to the Royal Family even remotely is ...**a perfect ending.**

**William J Anhorn K.C. ICD.D**

## **Epilog**

If you could see you’re ancestors standing in a row,



Would you be proud of them, or don't you really know?  
Some strange discoveries are made in climbing the family tree;  
And some of them, you well know,  
Do not particularly please.  
If you could see you're ancestors standing in a row,  
There might be some that you wouldn't care to know.  
But there is another question, which may require a different view,  
If you could meet your ancestors,  
Would they be proud of you?



A horizontal bar with a vertical line segment in the center.