

Chapter 46

A DNA Match with Debra Coleman on My West-Lewis Line

[Updated 2 July 2020]

Introduction

I am using DNA on the Ancestry.com website to confirm and to extend my family tree. Several times each week, I look to see if I have any new DNA matches on this site; however, I'm really only interested in those matches where the software on the website is able to identify an ancestor (or ancestors) that a DNA match and I have in common. I typically get more than one hundred new DNA matches each week, but only once every few weeks do I get one showing a common ancestor. This is due to the fact that many of my DNA matches don't have family trees or their trees are not linked to their DNA profiles. So many people use the Ancestry.com website to learn about their "ethnicity" and are not at all interested in building a family tree or contacting their DNA matches. Frustrating!

New DNA Match with Debra Coleman Lilly

In May 2020, I filtered my DNA matches on Ancestry.com to show only those matches with a common ancestor, and then sorted those results by date. In looking at this list, I found that I had a new DNA match with a woman named Debra Coleman Lilly (the little blue dot indicates that I had not previously viewed this match):



The screenshot shows the 'Burks Oakley's DNA Matches' interface. At the top, there are options for 'List' (selected) and 'Map'. Below this, there are filter buttons for 'Unviewed' (selected) and 'Common ancestors'. A search and sort dropdown is also visible. The main content area is titled 'Last 7 days' and displays a match for 'Debra Coleman Lilly'. The match is identified as a '5th-8th Cousin' with 'Shared DNA: 9 cM across 1 segments'. To the right, it indicates '6,510 People' and 'Common ancestor'.

Debra and I share 9 cM of DNA on a single segment, and we could be as close as fifth-cousins. I always like these smaller DNA matches, since they come from common ancestors who are farther back in the family tree. For example, 5th-cousins have fourth-great grandparents in common.

I next went on to see how Debra and I might be related.

How are you and Debra Coleman Lilly related?

Common Ancestors 🌿

According to Ancestry member trees, these are the common ancestors that connect you and Debra Coleman Lilly. View a common ancestor to see the relationship path that connects you.

Debra Coleman Lilly could be your 5th cousin 1x removed through:



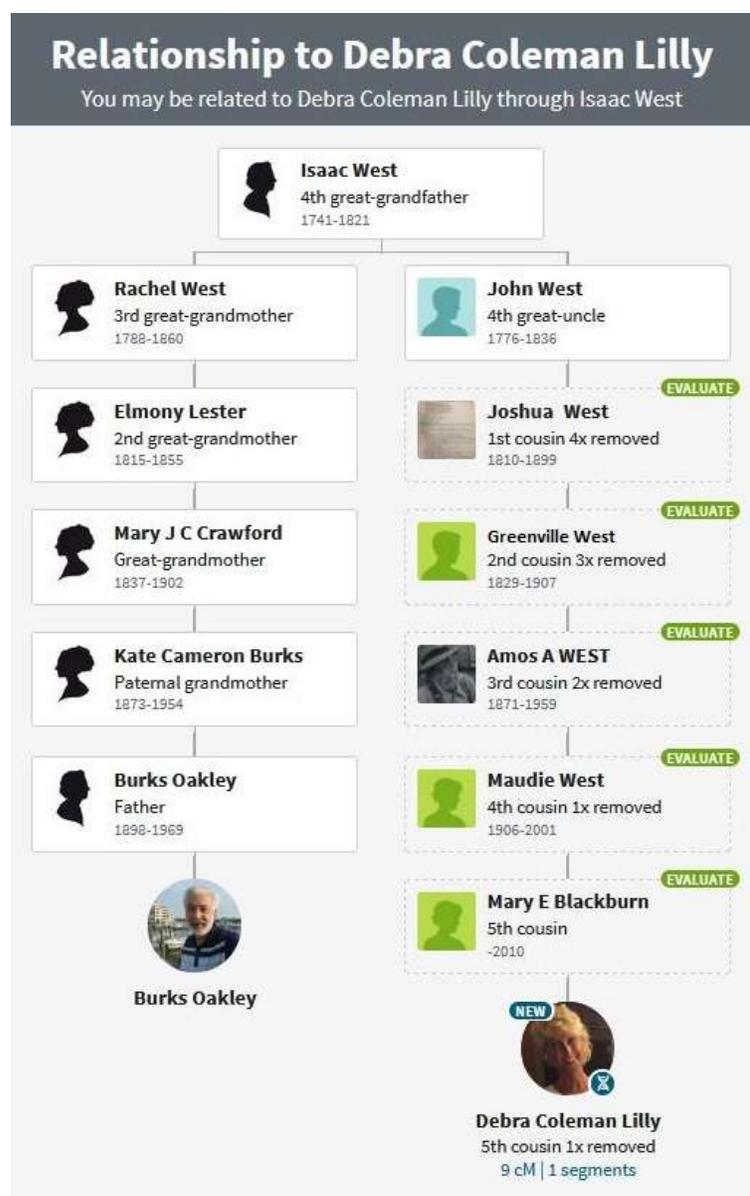
Isaac West
4th great-grandfather
1741-1821
[View Relationship](#)



Rosanna Lewis
4th great-grandmother
1752-1818
[View Relationship](#)

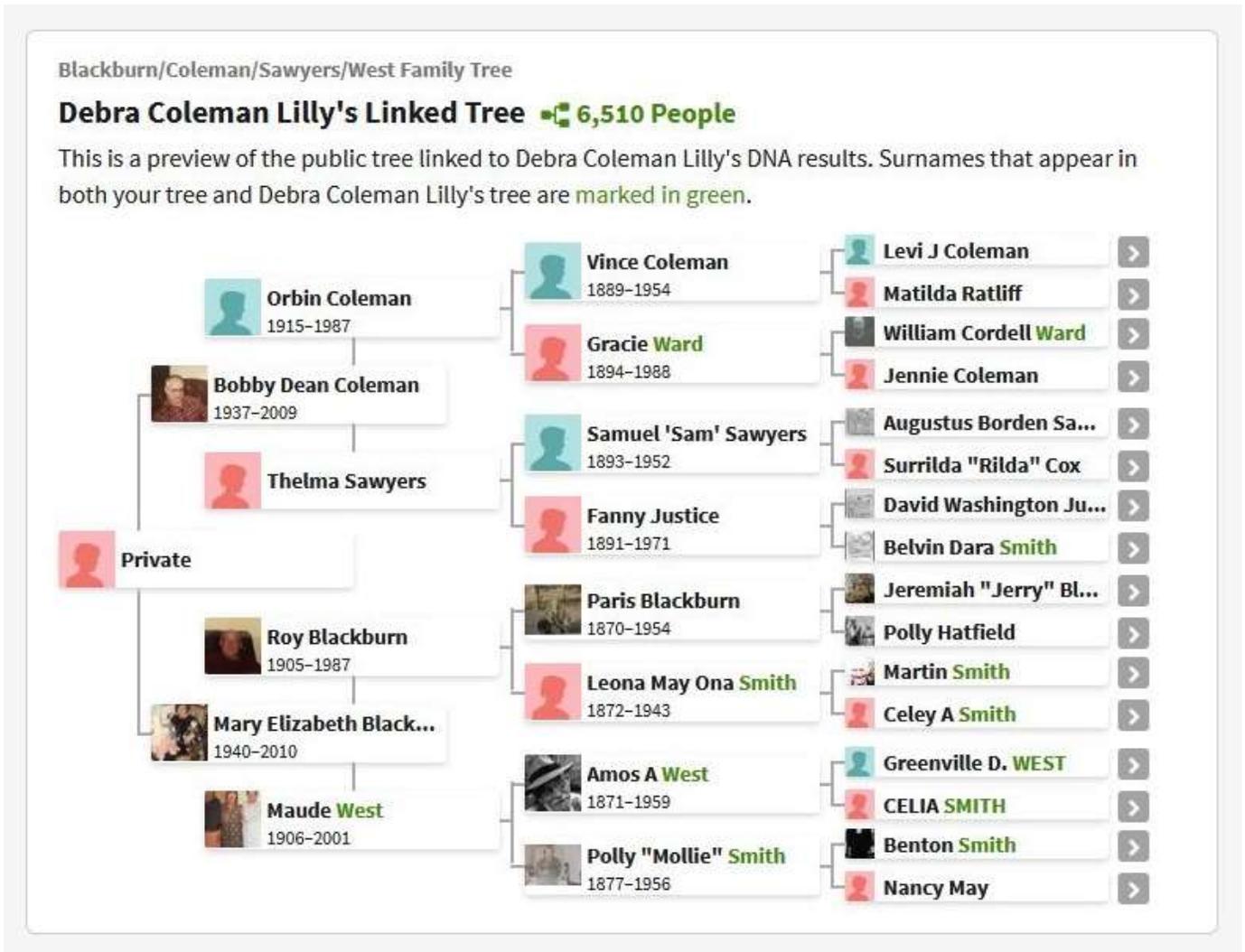
The software on Ancestry.com suggests that the DNA match that I have with Debra may be due to the fact that we both are descended from Isaac West (1741-1821) and his wife Rosanna Lewis (1752-1818).

The software automatically created this relationship chart:



This chart shows that I am descended from Isaac West through his daughter Rachel West (1788-1860), while Debra is descended from Isaac West through his son John West (1776-1836). I should add that the relationship chart for Isaac West's wife Rosanna Lewis looks identical to this one.

I next looked at Debra's family tree:



Based on this family tree, it is clear that Debra's maiden name is Coleman, and that Lilly must be her married name.

Debra's maternal grandmother was Maude West (1906-2001), and it is clear that Maude came from a long line of West males:

- Amos West (1871-1959)
- Greenville D. West (1829-1907)
- Joshua John West (1810-1899)
- John Thomas West (1776-1836)
- Isaac West (1741-1821) – my fourth-great grandfather; our common ancestor

For each of my DNA matches, Ancestry.com shows the surnames that we have in common in our family trees. For Debra, this list (obviously) includes West. Clicking on a name brings up a list of the people in each tree what that surname. Here are the West surname matches:

Direct ancestors with the surname West

From Debra Coleman Lilly's tree: Blackburn/Coleman /Sawyers/West Family Tree (5)	From Your tree: Burks Oakley II (5)
 Greenville D. WEST 1829-1907	 Isaac West 1741-1821 
 ISAAC WEST 1742-1821 	 John West 1690-1776
 Amos A West 1871-1959	 Joseph West 1718-1802
 John Thomas West 1766-1816	 Rachel West 1788-1860
 Maude West 1906-2001	 Thomas West 1659-1730

Note that we both have Isaac West in our trees. Here are our Lewis surname matches:

Direct ancestors with the surname Lewis

From Debra Coleman Lilly's tree: Blackburn/Coleman /Sawyers/West Family Tree (4)	From Your tree: Burks Oakley II (5)
 David Lewis 1694-1773	 John Lewis 1669-1725
 John J Lewis 1720-1802	 John Lewis 1719-1802
 Mary Lewis 1690-1773	 Major John Lewis 1635-1689
 Rosannah Lewis 1752-1818 	 Rosanna Lewis 1752-1818 
	 Susanna Lewis 1692-1768

And how nice – we both have Rosanna Lewis in our family trees, although she has the name spelled Rosannah.

ThruLines™ for the West-Lewis Couple

In February 2019, Ancestry.com released a new feature called ThruLines™. The ThruLines™ software creates a chart for each one of a person's direct ancestors, going back as far as their 128 fifth-great grandparents. Each chart shows all of an individual's DNA matches that go back to that common ancestor.

Since the ThruLines™ are based on family trees on the Ancestry.com website, (1) they change whenever other users change their family trees, (2) they change whenever new DNA tests are added, and (3) they are prone to errors, since they are based solely on family trees on the Ancestry.com website.

Having said that, the ThruLines™ can be very useful to get an idea about an individual's family tree, and they certainly are a good starting point for additional research.

In this section, I'll show my ThruLines™ charts for Isaac West and his wife Rosanna Lewis, as well as for their parents. These charts can be difficult to display, since they often are quite wide. So it is necessary to view sections of the charts in landscape view.

Here is my ThruLines™ for Isaac West:

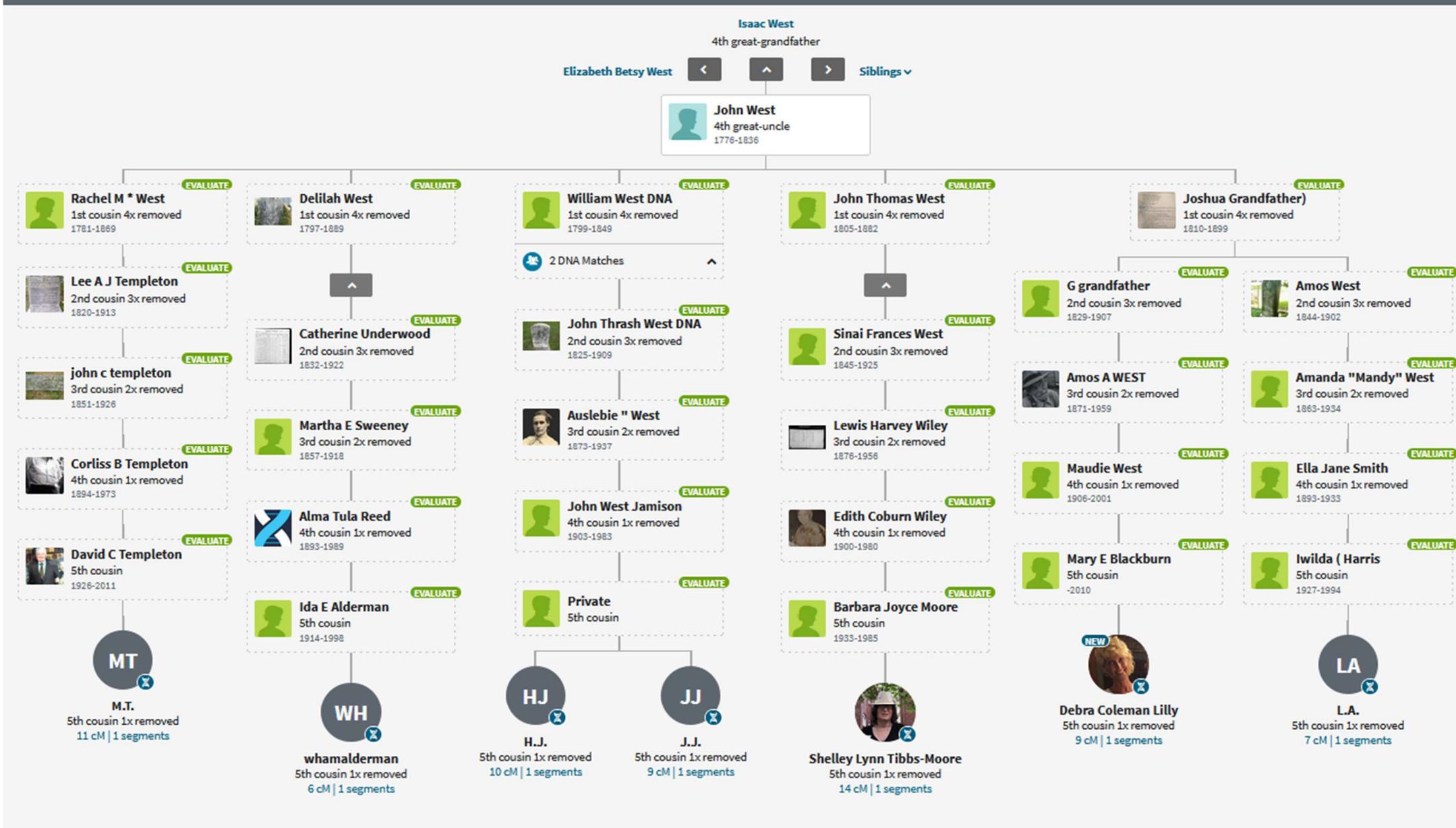


This chart shows that I have DNA matches with sixteen descendants of Isaac West. These lines connect back through his children Elizabeth Betsy West, John West (who is listed twice – one must be in error), Jane West, Jacob West, and Rachel West. Two of these lines (John West and Jane West) are not opened in the overall view of the ThruLines™ to conserve space. Note that the line for the second John West lists him as a “half 4th great-uncle”, since this John West apparently didn’t have Rosanna Lewis as his mother. Something is wrong here. This line doesn’t appear in the ThruLines™ for Rosanna Lewis (obviously) – otherwise the ThruLines™ for Rosanna Lewis is identical.

Moving on, I opened the line connecting back through John West, which accounts for seven more DNA matches:

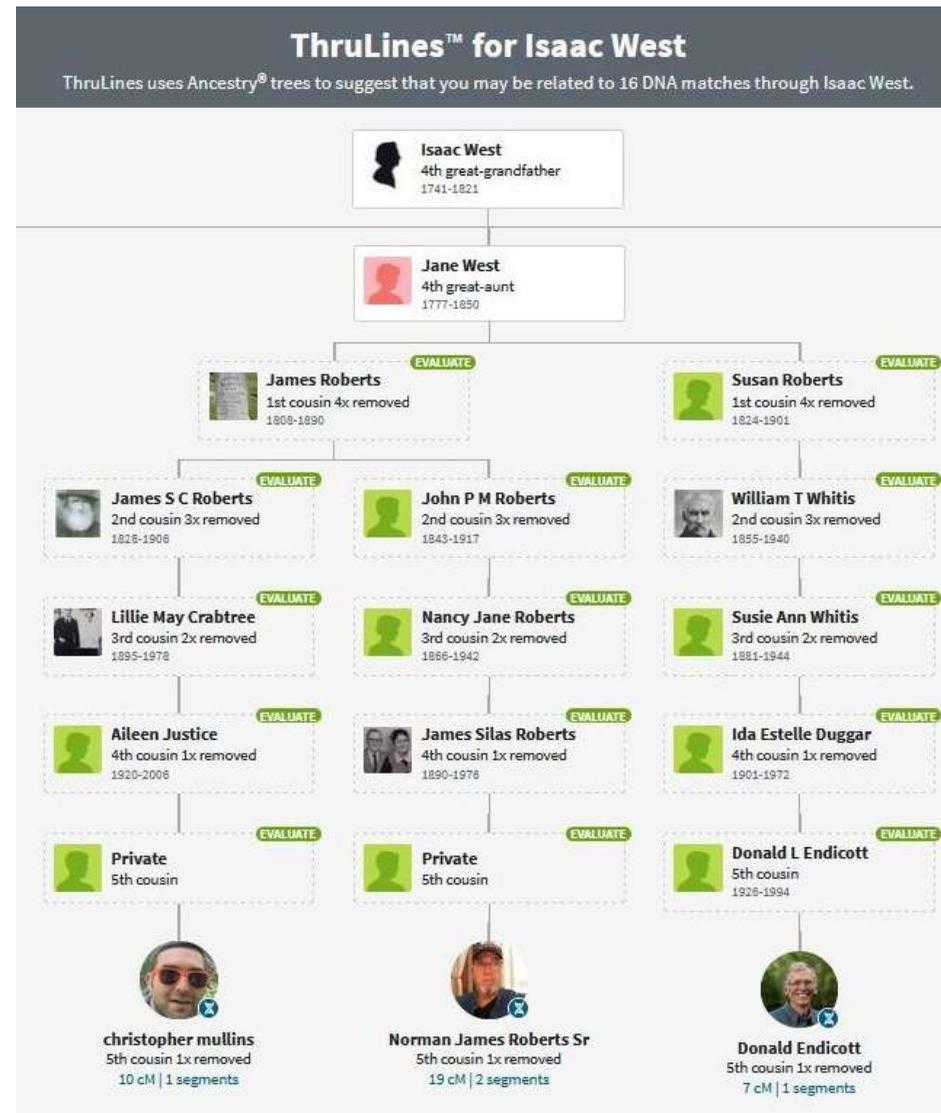
ThruLines™ for Isaac West

ThruLines uses Ancestry® trees to suggest that you may be related to 16 DNA matches through Isaac West.

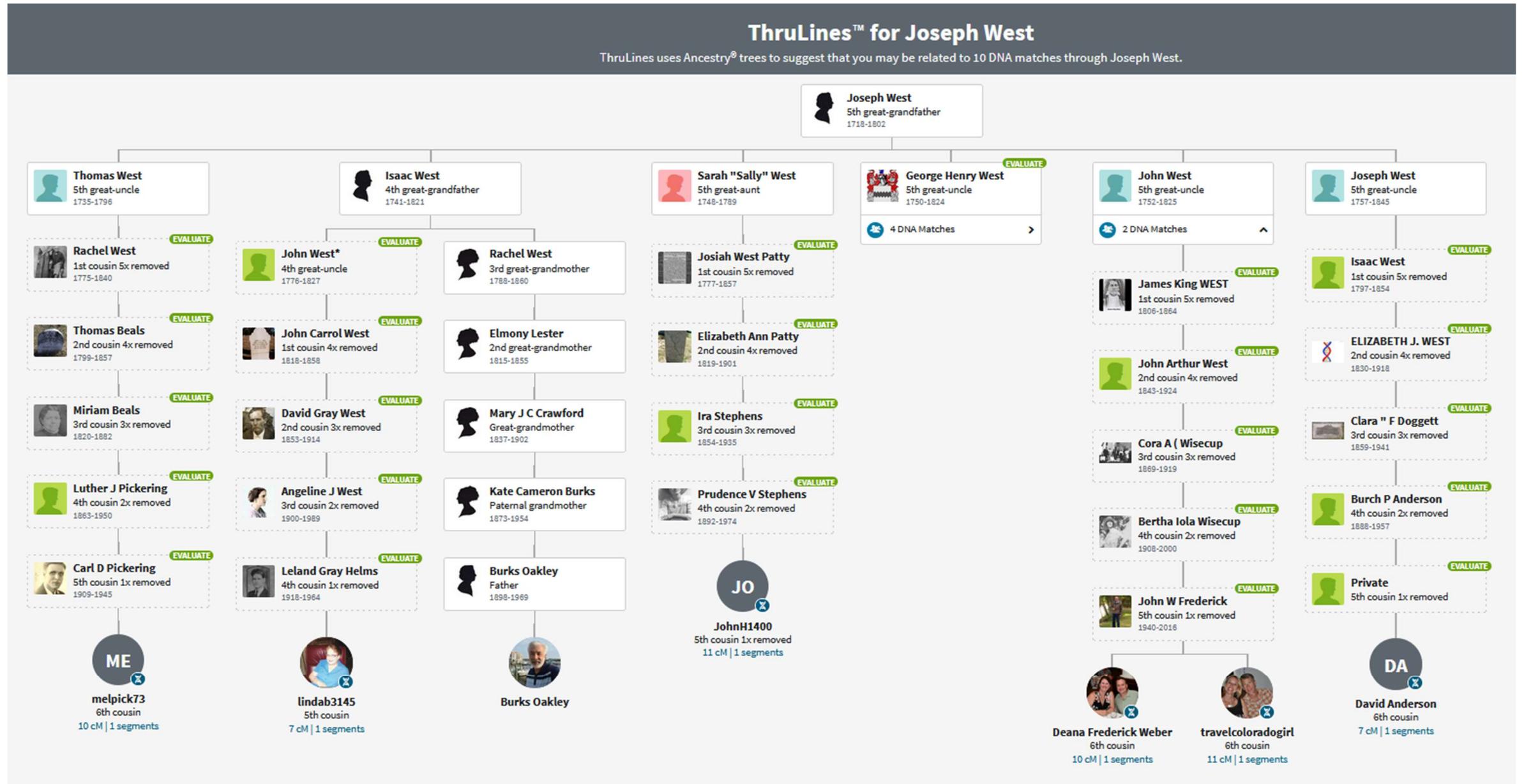


Note that Debra Coleman's line is part of this branch of the ThruLines™.

Finally, here is the last part of the ThruLines™, which accounts for three more of my DNA matches:



Let me now go back one more generation. Isaac West's father was Joseph West (1718-1802), and here is my ThruLines™ for Joseph West:



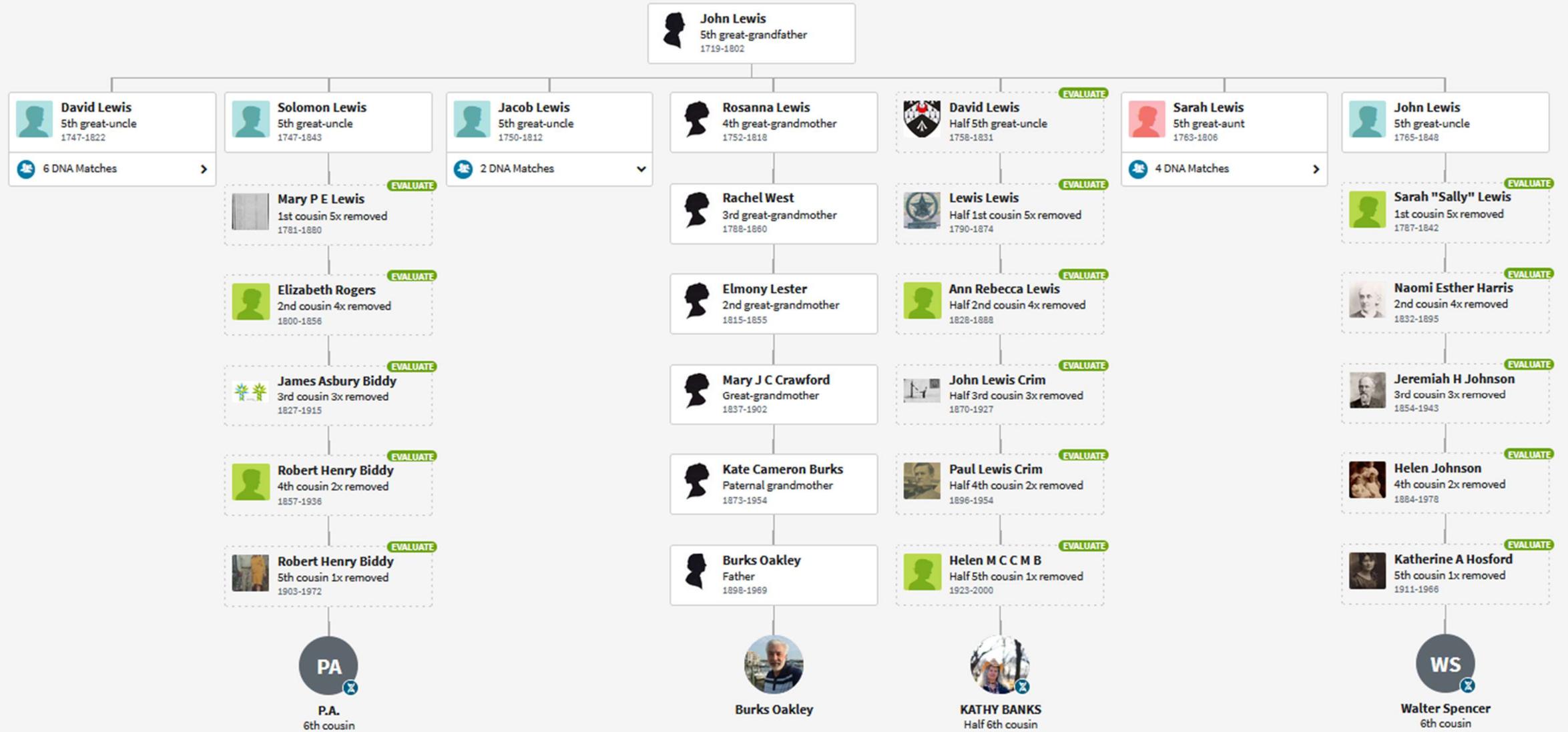
This chart shows that I have DNA matches with ten descendants of Joseph West. One thing worth noting is that most all of my DNA matches connecting back through Isaac West (my ancestor) have gone away. This is because ThruLines™ only go as far as to show people at the level of a sixth cousin. Most of my DNA matches in my ThruLines™ for Isaac West were at the level of fifth-cousins once-removed. Going back one more generation, they are too distant to appear on a ThruLines™ chart.

I note that the ThruLines™ for Joseph West's wife, Jane Owen, looks identical to this one.

Rosanna Lewis' parents were John Lewis (1719-1802) and Priscilla Brooks (1725-1797). Here is my ThruLines™ for John Lewis:

ThruLines™ for John Lewis

ThruLines uses Ancestry® trees to suggest that you may be related to 15 DNA matches through John Lewis.



This chart shows that I have 15 matches with descendants of John Lewis. Once again, the DNA matches that connect through Rosanna Lewis have dropped off the chart, because they are more distant than sixth-cousins.

The ThruLines™ chart for Priscilla Brooks is basically the same, except that it adds a line connecting through another daughter that I think is incorrect; and this daughter's father was not John Lewis, so the line shows up only in the ThruLines™ for Priscilla Brooks. I think it is in error.

The numerous DNA matches that I have with descendants of

Overall, the observation that I have DNA matches with 16 descendants of Isaac West is strong support for the genealogy. And remember that my line goes back to Elmony Lester, and this line was inferred from DNA matches, since very little was known about Elmony Lester. See:

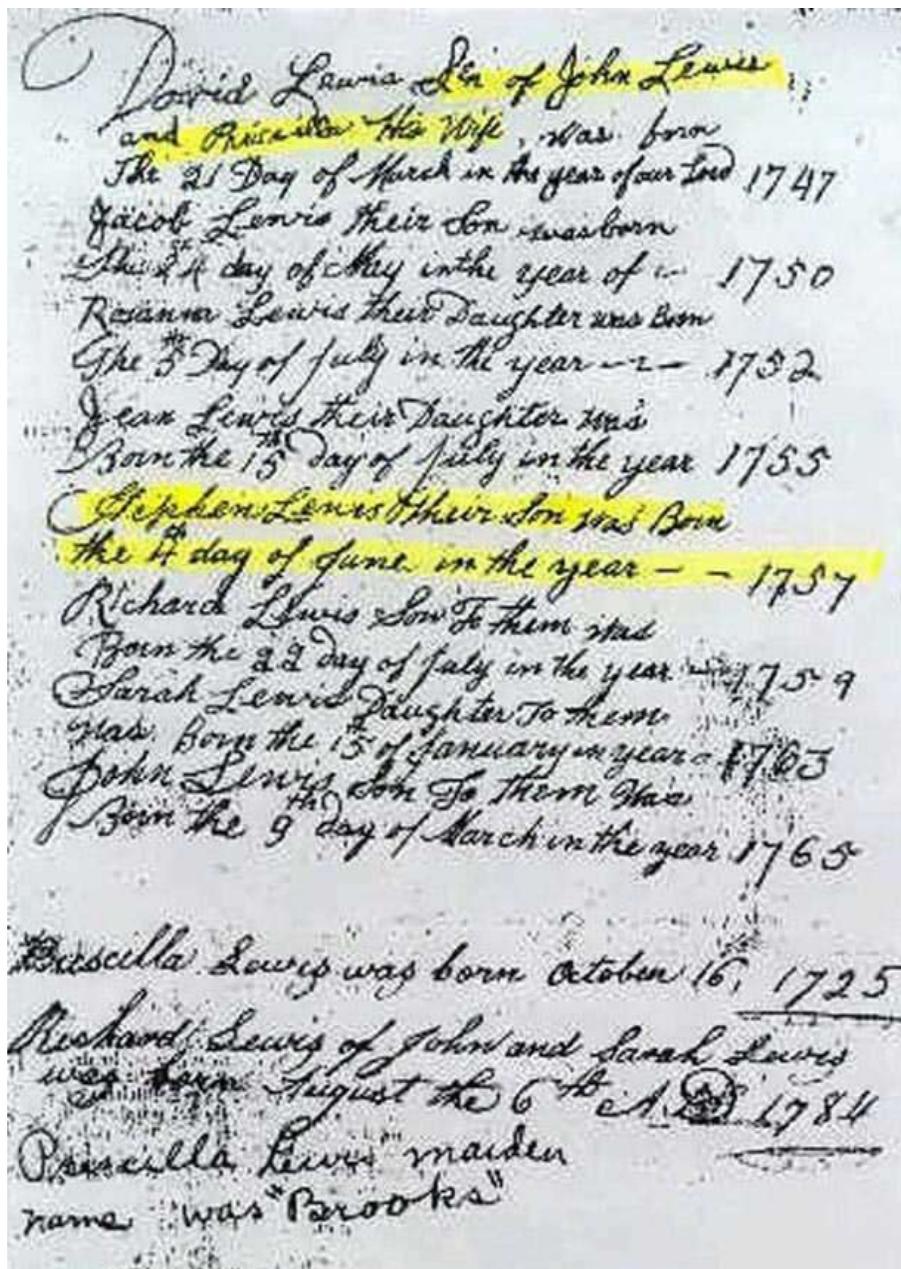
<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/9A-LesterGenealogy.pdf>

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/9B-ElmonyLester-revisited.pdf>

Miscellaneous

Family Bible

Debra Coleman has several interesting photos attached to her family tree. By far, the most important photo for me is of a page in the family bible owned by John Lewis and Priscilla Brooks (the parents of Rosanna Lewis):



It reads:

David Lewis, son of John Lewis
And Priscilla his wife was born
the 21 Day of March in the year of our Lord 1747.
Jacob Lewis their son was born
the 24 day of May in the year of 1750
Rosanna Lewis their Daughter was born
the 5 Day of July in the year 1752
Jean Lewis their Daughter was
Born the 15 Day of July in the year 1755
Stephen Lewis their Son was Born
the 4th day of June in the year 1757

Richard Lewis Son to them was
Born the 22 Day of July in the year 1759
Sarah Lewis Daughter to them
was Born the 15th day of January in the year 1763
John Lewis Son to them was
Born the 9th day of March in the year 1765

Priscilla Lewis was born October 16 1725
Richard Lewis of John and Sarah Lewis
was born August the 6th 1784

Priscilla Lewis maiden
name was "Brooks"

How great to see this!!! Especially since it goes all the way back to 1747.

Isaac West

In looking for information on Ancestry.com about this branch of my family tree, I was absolutely amazed to see that Isaac West appears in 3595 family trees:

All Family Trees results for Isaac West

Results 1-20 of 807,552

* Isaac West found in **3595 trees** [View all](#)

* Isaac West from tree Rowe/East/Hillard/Payton Family Tree

Birth	7 Nov 1742 Chester, Pennsylvania, USA	Father	* Joseph Pearson West Sr. dv+5 (1719-1802)
Residence	1812 Tyrrell, North Carolina, USA	Mother	* Jane Owen(West) dv+5 (1720-1791)
Marriage	1819 South Carolina, USA	Spouse	* Rosanna Lewis(West) (1752-1818)
Death	Nov 1821 Montgomery, Virginia, USA		

8797 People 8 Records 49 Sources

Why would so many people have an interest in this man? [I'll leave this question unanswered for now.....]

Amy also has a DNA match with Debra

My daughter Amy also has a DNA match with Debra:

Amy Oakley's DNA Matches

[List](#) [Map](#)

Filter by: [Unviewed](#) [Common ancestors](#) [Search](#) | [Sort](#) ▾

Last 7 days

	Debra Coleman Lilly	5th-8th Cousin Shared DNA: 9 cM across 1 segments	6,510 People Common ancestor
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Summary

In this narrative, I have described my DNA match with Debra Coleman (married name Lilly). Debra and I are both descended from Isaac West (1741-1821) and his wife Rosanna Lewis (1752-1818). This couple were my fourth-great grandparents.

I also presented the ThruLines™ charts for Isaac West and Rosanna Lewis. I have sixteen DNA matches with descendants of this couple.

I also went back one more generation. Isaac West's father was Joseph West (1718-1802), and my ThruLines™ for Joseph West show another ten DNA matches. Rosanna Lewis' father was John Lewis (1719-1802), and my ThruLines™ for John Lewis show another fifteen DNA matches.

Overall, the DNA matches shown in this narrative provide strong support for the genealogical record, going back on these lines to my fifth-great grandparents.