

## Chapter 5A

### Our Wells Family History

[27 August 2015; revised 26 July 2019]

#### *Introduction*

**Wells** Family Heritage? Why on earth are you looking into the **Wells** family? What does the **Wells** family have to do with the “Quincy Oakleys”?

All excellent questions. And here are the answers.

Ray Miller Oakley (1876-1948) was my paternal grandfather. His parents (my great-grandparents) were Hannah Mariah Miller (1838-1926) and Aaron Burr Oakley (1835-1906).

In turn, Hannah’s parents (my great-great grandparents) were Jane Kershaw Wells (1812-1882) and Ezra Marvin Miller (1812-1874). Therefore, Jane Kershaw Wells was one of the eight great-great grandparents that I have on my father’s side of the family – and I am trying to build complete family trees for all eight of these people.

Jane Kershaw Wells was born in upstate New York in 1812, and moved with her family to Winnebago County, Illinois (south of Rockford) in 1839. Her father was Daniel David Wells, who was born in 1785 in Amsterdam, Montgomery County, New York – a town on the Mohawk River, about 20 miles northwest of Schenectady.

As far as I know, our knowledge of our **Wells** line stopped there. I had not been able to find anything about the ancestors of Daniel David Wells using the genealogical records on the Ancestry.com website or the FamilySearch.org website. It was what the genealogists refer to as a “brick wall.”



Every week or so, I would go back to Daniel David Wells and try yet another time to find out about his ancestors. Finally, with the help of DNA and the Ancestry.com website, I have come up with a fairly plausible genealogy for Daniel David Wells, tracing his ancestors back to England in the 1500's.

### ***Breaking through the Brick Wall***

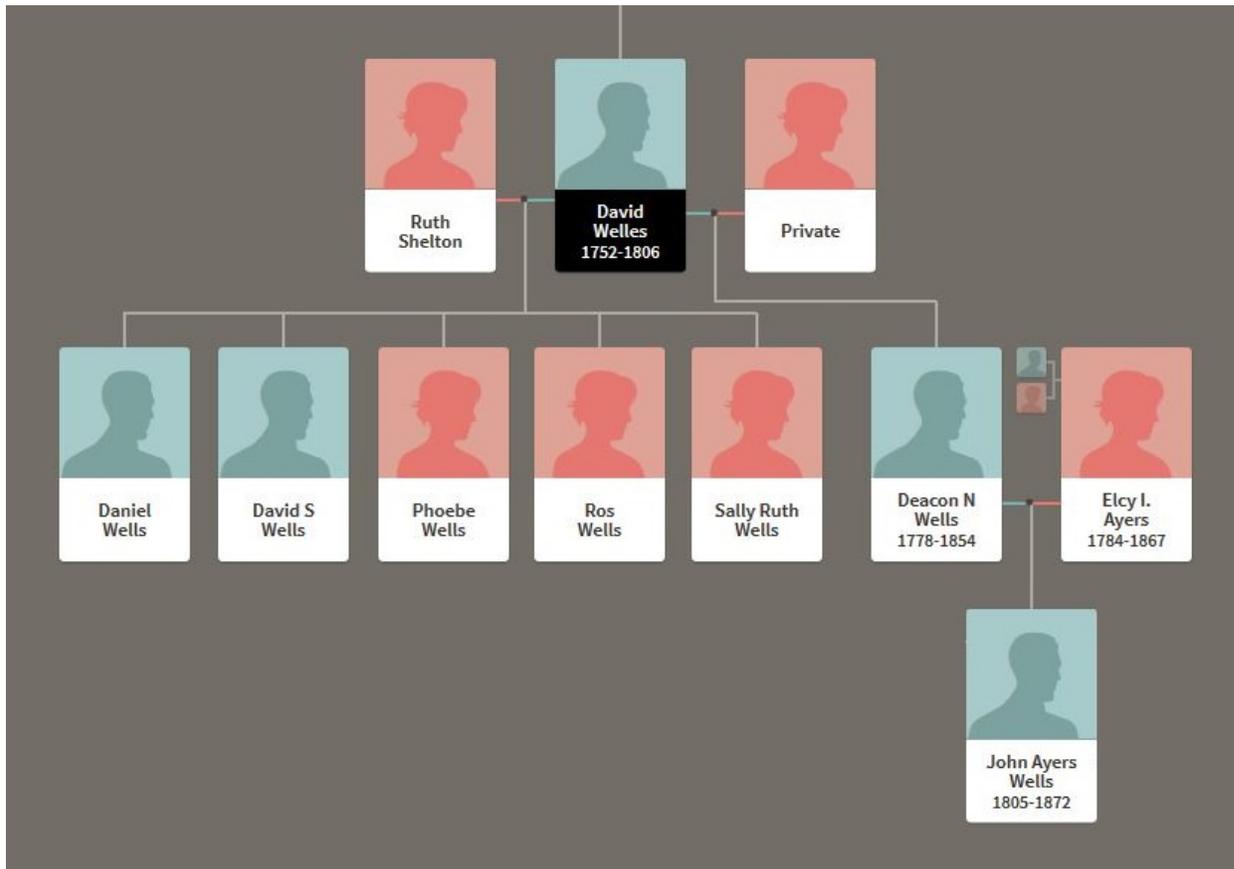
I started looking at family trees on the Ancestry.com website for people with the surname of ***Wells*** who were born in Amsterdam, Montgomery County, New York, in the late 1700's and early 1800's, hoping that I could find some siblings of Daniel David Wells, or perhaps some of his nieces and nephews. In this process, I found a John Ayers Wells in the Alm/Kristiansen/Smith family tree; John Ayers Wells was born on 21 February 1805 in Amsterdam, Montgomery County, New York.<sup>1</sup> This was the first time I had seen a ***Wells*** in Amsterdam at about the right time. This family tree showed that John's father was Deacon Nathan Wells. And oh my goodness, Deacon Nathan Wells was born in 1778 in Fairfield County, Connecticut. And anyone who has read even a fraction of my narratives about the "Quincy Oakley" family know that many branches of our family lived in Fairfield County, Connecticut: ***Darling, Oakley, Burr, Lyon, Beers***, etc. Deacon Nathan Wells died in 1854 in Amsterdam, New York.

Deacon Nathan Wells' father was David Welles (note the different spelling of the last name). David Welles was born in 1752 in Fairfield County, Connecticut, and he died in 1806 in Amsterdam, Montgomery County, New York. So it appears that David Welles moved to Amsterdam, New York, sometime during his lifetime. And since he was born in 1752, he certainly would have been the right age to be Daniel David Wells' father – remember that Daniel David Wells was born in 1785 in Amsterdam, Montgomery County, New York.

The Alm/Kristiansen/Smith family tree also showed that David Welles had five children with his second wife, and one of them was named Daniel:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://person.ancestry.com/tree/59099803/person/36042140414/facts>



Moreover, this family tree also showed that David Welles' father was named Daniel Wells (1722-1791). So it is not unreasonable to think that David Welles would have named his son Daniel David Wells, combining his and his father's first names.

As an aside, this family tree has absolutely no information about Daniel Wells – no date of birth, no place of birth – so that is why this family tree never turned up in any of my searches for Daniel David Wells.

What did I know at this point? David Welles (1752-1806) moved to Amsterdam, New York, sometime after his son Deacon Nathan Wells was born in 1778. The Deacon lived in Amsterdam, New York, for some time, since his son John Ayers Wells was born there in 1805. It appears that David Welles had five children with his second wife, and one was named Daniel. David Welles' father's name was Daniel. David Welles' children all had the surname of Wells, rather than Welles. While all this certainly tied together, it really wasn't enough to bet the farm on.

I went on to construct a tentative family tree for our ancestor Daniel David Wells, showing his father as David Welles (1752-1806). This **Welles** line goes back to Gov. Thomas Welles, who was born in 1590 in Warwickshire, England, and immigrated to Connecticut in 1639. He was the only man in Connecticut's history

to hold all four top offices: governor, deputy governor, treasurer, and secretary – starting in 1639. Gov. Thomas Welles died in 1659 in Hartford County, Connecticut.<sup>2</sup>

Wouldn't it be cool if our **Wells** family line went back to Gov. Thomas Welles? And more importantly, have I finally broken through the brick wall I had for Daniel David Wells? At least I see some light shining from the other side of the wall:



### ***Richard Phillips and DNA Match***

One of my autosomal DNA matches on the 23andme.com website is with Richard Phillips, who lives in Badsey, Evesham, England. I learned that he was an expert on **Wells/Welles** family history in England, and I thought that we might have a DNA match because of a common **Wells/Welles** ancestor. He participated in the Wells Family Special DNA Project<sup>3</sup> that was organized by the Wells Family Research Association.<sup>4</sup> I contacted him a while ago, and he wrote back: “Through yDNA testing, I know our Wells have an exact match with Governor Thomas Welles, who took his family from Warwickshire to Connecticut in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\\_Welles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Welles)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wellsfam/dnaproje/dnaproje.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.rootsweb.com/~wellsfam/wfrahome.html>

<sup>5</sup> In 2002, a DNA sample was kindly provided by James Wells, 2nd-great grandson of William Wells (and one of Richard Phillips' ancestors). They found close matches with several other families in the Wells family DNA study. Several of these were American families descended from Thomas Welles born about 1590 at Stourton, Warwickshire, England, who took his family to America and became the governor of Connecticut.

In case you are wondering, yDNA testing examines markers on the Y chromosome. Since the Y chromosome is passed down from father to son with little if any change, yDNA can be used to trace an entire branch of a family with an un-interrupted male line.

My autosomal DNA match with Richard Phillips is certainly consistent with my tentative family tree, but is well short of definitive proof (which I may never get).

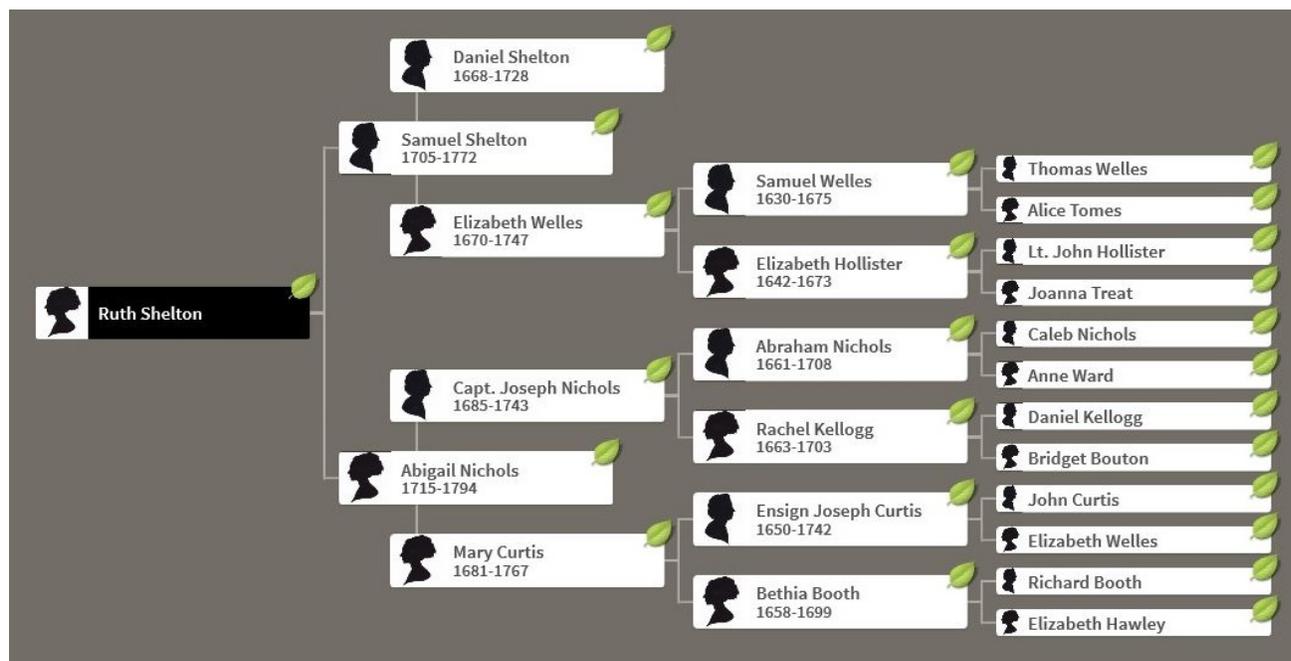
### ***DNA Matching with Descendants of our Wells Ancestors***

In one of my former lives, I was involved in scientific research. Scientists are always posing a hypothesis, and then doing experiments to test the hypothesis. I applied this approach to finding Daniel David Well's ancestors. I hypothesized that his father was David Welles (1752-1806) and that his mother was David's second wife, Ruth Shelton. And this allowed me to construct a detailed family tree for Daniel David Wells, going back for many generations on multiple lines. I based this tree solely on other family trees on the Ancestry.com website. This added a large number of new surnames to the "Quincy Oakley" family tree.

Here is what I ended up with for Daniel David Wells' paternal line, starting with his father, David Welles (1752-1806):



And here is what I ended up with for Daniel David Wells' maternal line, starting with his mother, Ruth Shelton:



In order to test this hypothesis, I postulated (I've always wanted to do that) that I should have DNA matches with living descendants of most all the family lines represented in this hypothetical family tree (keeping in mind that DNA is "diluted" with each generation, and some of the oldest ancestors might not be represented in my DNA).

What did I find?

I found that I do indeed have multiple DNA matches with descendants of David Welles and Ruth Shelton. Here are the family surnames, and the username of each of my DNA matches that goes back to a common ancestor with that surname:

### ***BOOTH/HAWLEY***

***cedwards178***  
***kgggg1***  
***MDavidMusgrove***

### ***BOURNE***

No matches, but this line goes back to Elizabeth Bourne , who was born in 1627.

## **BOUTON**

**B.H.** (administered by family9912)

**L.H.** (administered by family9912)

**family9912**

**KYAMF**

**C.O.** (administered by DanPillsbury1963)

**WAZYDJ**

**cindylingel**

**courtney allen**

**R.H.** (administered by sstatler88)

**K.B.** (administered by ckbabcock19)

## **CURTIS**

**V.C.** (administered by vhcleveland2)

**Marguerite Berger**

**gcwil57**

**libnlars**

**CarlClay08**

## **HOLLISTER**

**libnlars**

**smotycka**

## **KELLOGG**

**S\_L\_S**

**Kip Hert**

## **NICHOLS**

**V.C.** (administered by vhcleveland2)

**1\_LoneCedar**

**GinnyFossa**

**bpyle**

**Marycol1281**

**S\_L\_S**

## **SHELTON**

**1\_LoneCedar**  
**RGiles39**  
**JudyH01**

## **STILES**

**libnlars**  
**DLKinnier**  
**gangster33**

## **TOMLINSON**

**libnlars**

## **WELLES**

**V.C.** (administered by vhcleveland2)  
**gcwil57**  
**libnlars**  
**smotycka**  
**GinnyFossa**  
**24jessie**

## **WHELPLEY**

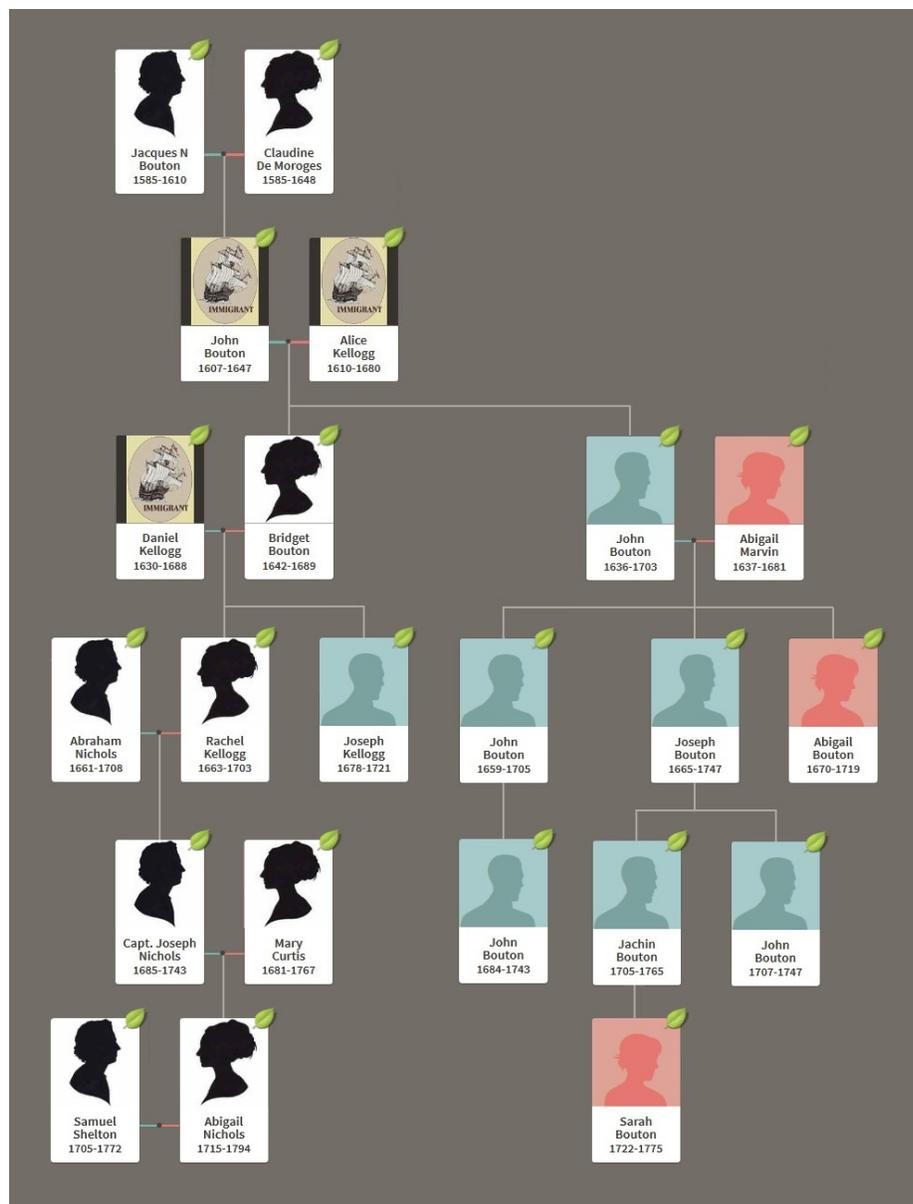
**GinnyFossa**  
**mfasman**

I have to say that this is really amazing. Consistent with my hypothesis, I actually do have DNA matches with descendants most all of the surnames represented in my hypothesized family tree for Daniel David Wells. All these DNA matches support my hypothesis that David Welles and Ruth Shelton are the parents of Daniel David Wells. Am I 100% convinced that my hypothesized family tree is correct? Not really, since most all of these families lived in Fairfield County, Connecticut, where so many other branches of our family lived – so my DNA matches could come from other lines. But finding DNA matches that are with descendants of individuals having surnames such as **Bouton, Stiles, Shelton**, etc., which don't appear in any other branches of our family tree (that I know about), certainly is encouraging.

## Pursuing the Bouton Family Connection

In looking into all of the family lines in Ruth Shelton's pedigree, I found that her 2<sup>nd</sup>-great grandmother was Bridget Bouton, and in researching Bridget's ancestors, I learned that Bridget's paternal grandfather was Jacques Nicolas Bouton (Count De Chamilly), born in 1585 in La Rochelle, Manche, Basse-Normandie, France. I believe that this was the first time I had seen an ancestor of the "Quincy Oakley" family who was from France.

Here is a **Bouton** family tree, showing my ancestors at the left side and other **Bouton** family members at the right. The other **Boutons** in this family tree are included since I have DNA matches with descendants of these people.



As mentioned above, I searched my DNA matches on the Ancestry.com website for those individuals who had ancestors with the surname of **Bouton** in their pedigrees. I had a number of these matches, and interestingly, all of them could be traced back to John Bouton (1607-1647) and his wife Alice Kellogg (1610-1680). Most all of these **Boutons** lived in Norwalk, Fairfield County, Connecticut. In fact, I got the same set of DNA matches if I just searched on the surname **Bouton** as when I narrowed the search to have **Boutons** born in Connecticut.

The first match is with three individuals - **family9912, B.H.** (administered by family9912), and **L.H.** (administered by family9912). Their **Bouton** line goes back to Sarah Bouton (1722-1775), who is shown in the lower-right of the **Bouton** family tree on the previous page.

The next DNA match is with a woman having the username of **KYAMF**. Her family tree goes back to Abigail Bouton (1670-1719). As shown in the family tree on the previous page, Abigail's father was John Bouton (1636-1703), and his parents were John Bouton and Alice Kellogg.

Next comes **C.O.** (administered by DanPillsbury1963). She has 18 **Boutons** in her family line! Her tree goes back to John Bouton, who was born in 1707 in Norwalk, Fairfield, Connecticut. The family tree shows that he was a great-grandson of John Bouton and Alice Kellogg.

Next is **WAZYDJ**. Her tree goes back to Sarah Bouton (1722-1775), and therefore is the same branch as the **family9912** line above.

Next is **cindylingel**, whose line goes back to John Bouton, who was born in 1659 in Norwalk, Fairfield, Connecticut – and John was a grandson of John Bouton and Alice Kellogg.

Another of my DNA matches, **courtney allen**, can trace her **Bouton** line to Jachin Bouton (b. 1705) - and he was another grandson of John Bouton and Alice Kellogg.

**R.H.** (administered by sstatler88) has a **Bouton** family line that goes back to John Bouton and Alice Kellogg through their son John Bouton, who married Abigail Marvin.

Finally, **K.B.** (administered by ckbabcock19) has a Bouton family line that goes back to John Bouton, who was born in 1684 in Norwalk, Fairfield, Connecticut - and he was another great-grandson of John Bouton and Alice Kellogg.

As an aside, Bridget's father was John Bouton, who immigrated to America in 1635. And as with so many of the early families who immigrated to America, an entire book was written about his family:

## BOUTON--BOUGHTON FAMILY.

DESCENDANTS OF

### JOHN BOUTON,

A NATIVE OF FRANCE,

WHO EMBARKED FROM GRAVESEND, ENG.,  
AND LANDED AT BOSTON IN DECEMBER,  
1635, AND SETTLED AT NORWALK, CT.

BY

JAMES BOUGHTON.



ALBANY, N. Y.  
JOEL MUNSELL'S SONS, PUBLISHERS,  
1890.

Here is a relevant section about our ancestor Bridget Bouton and her husband, Daniel Kellogg:

- 3 ii. BRIDGET BOUTON, b. prob. at Hartford, Ct., about 1642, m. at Norwalk, moved to Stockbridge, Mass. She m., supposed at Norwalk, 1660, Daniel Kellogg, where they lived for several years, and moved, as is supposed, to Stockbridge, Mass., where mention is made of her by the Boutons of that place.

This book is available online.<sup>6</sup> But I digress....

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<sup>6</sup> <https://archive.org/details/boutonboughtonf00bouggoog>

I don't see how I would have DNA matches with descendants of the **Bouton** family through my other ancestors. Of course, there are several other brick walls (such as Burr Oakley's wife Ruth, who also would have a Fairfield, Connecticut, connection, and in principle could come from the **Bouton** line). But it is extremely tempting to conclude that the **Bouton** link through Ruth Shelton accounts for all of my **Bouton** DNA matches.

### ***Next Steps***

My next step will be to contact all of my DNA matches – and ask them to read this narrative. I plan to ask them to upload their DNA profiles to the GEDmatch.com website, so that we can view our DNA matches at the chromosome level and triangulate on our shared common ancestors. Hopefully this triangulation through multiple lines will give me the proof I need of Daniel David Well's ancestry. But in the interim, not having *DISPROVED* my hypothesis, the rest of this narrative will be about our **Wells/Welles** family history that we would have *assuming* that my hypothesis is correct.

### ***The Welles (aka Wells) Family has its Roots in England***

The Wells Family Tree<sup>7</sup> on the Ancestry.com website goes all the way back to Lionel (Baron of Hellowe) De Welles<sup>8</sup>, who was born in 1406 in Welle, Lincolnshire, England. He died on 29 March 1461 in Towton, Yorkshire, England.

I have also seen him referred to as Sir Lionel (Leo) 6<sup>th</sup> Lord De Welles, Baron of Hellowe (1406 – 1461). If you do a Google search, you will find Lords and Knights of Welles going back to Ragemar, Lord of Welle, Claxby, Withern, etc. (1065 - 1115).<sup>9</sup>

This statue<sup>10</sup> supposedly is Sir Lionel, 6<sup>th</sup> Lord De Welles, Baron of Hellowe:

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<sup>7</sup> <http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/39720152/family>

<sup>8</sup> <http://person.ancestry.com/tree/39720152/person/20413041549/facts>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.craycroft.us/archive/getperson.php?personID=1163&tree=English\\_lineage](http://www.craycroft.us/archive/getperson.php?personID=1163&tree=English_lineage)

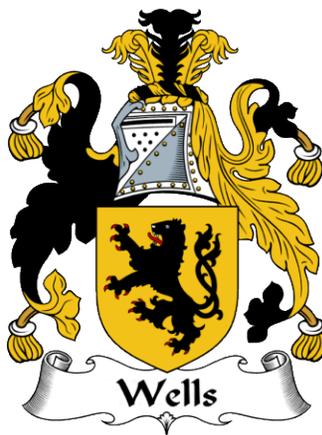
<sup>10</sup> <http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/33310522/person/19872012026/photo/aba5f037-1c96-43fa-9242-627b485af21e>



Sir Lionel, 6th Lord De Welles, Baron of Hellowe

### *The Wells Family Coat of Arms*

Here are several versions of the **Wells** Family Coat of Arms:



Note: In looking into the **Wells** family, the name originally was **Welles**, but at some point became **Wells**. There are even families where half the siblings are **Welles** and the other half are **Wells**. Go figure!

Fast forward through a number of generations after Sir Lionel 6<sup>th</sup> Lord De Welles, Baron of Hellowe, and we get to Thomas Welles (1590-1659). Thomas was born in Stourton, Whichford, Warwickshire, England. He migrated to New England

during the Puritan Great Migration (1620-1640) and eventually became the Governor of the Connecticut Colony. He died 14 January 1659 in Wethersfield, Hartford County, Connecticut.

“The first appearance of Governor Thomas Welles’s name in Hartford was on March 28, 1637, according to the Connecticut Colonial Records. Welles came to Hartford with Reverend Thomas Hooker in June 1636. Some believe a copy of a grant in which he is named confirms this statement. He was chosen a magistrate of the Colony of Connecticut in 1637, an office he held every successive year until his death in 1660, a period of twenty-two years. He was elected deputy governor in 1654, and governor of the Connecticut Colony in 1655, and in 1656 and 1657 was deputy governor to John Winthrop, Jr.; in 1658 governor, and in 1659 deputy governor, which position he held at his death on January 14, 1660.”<sup>11</sup>

Thomas Welles married Alice Tomes (1595-1640). As noted earlier, the **Welles** family line includes:

- Thomas Welles (1590-1659)
- John Welles I (1621-1659)
- Capt. John Welles I (1648-1712)
- Deacon Thomas Welles (1690-1755)
- Daniel Welles (1722-1791)
- David Welles (1752-1806)

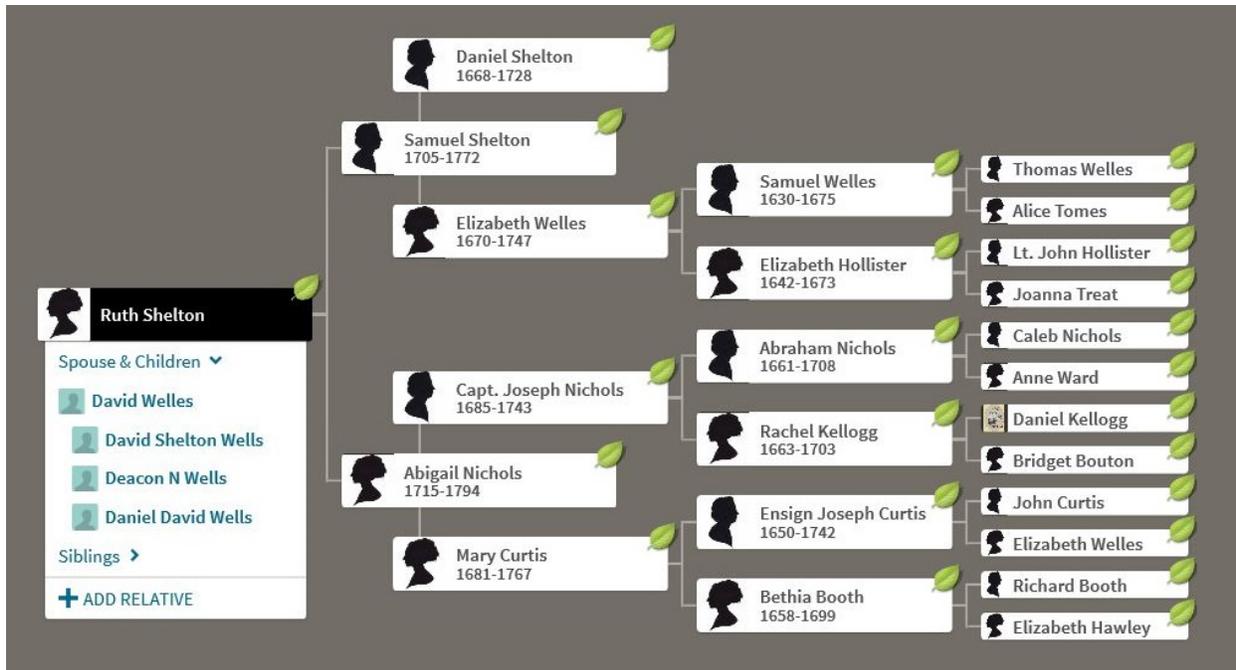


But wait – there is more to it. It turns out that Daniel David Wells’ mother, Ruth Shelton, also was descended from Gov. Thomas Welles and his wife Alice Tomes.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Welles-29>

Here is the family pedigree:

Thomas Welles (1590-1659)  
Samuel Welles (1630-1675)  
Elizabeth Welles (1670-1747)  
Samuel Shelton (1705-1772)  
Ruth Shelton (dates unknown)



So that means that Daniel David Wells and his wife, Ruth Shelton, were second-cousins, once-removed. Amazing!

This gets us to Daniel David Wells (1785-unknown). Daniel David Wells married Rosannah Clary (1791- ??) on 30 Dec 1807 in Amsterdam, Montgomery, New York. They had numerous children. One daughter was our ancestor, Jane Kershaw Wells.

Here is a summary of their family, in Daniel David Wells' own hand, listing all of their children, along with their dates of birth:

Amsterdam December 1807. Daniel D. Wells.  
The Birth of Daniel D. Wells. November 29<sup>th</sup> 1785.  
The Birth of Rosannah Wells. May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1791.  
— December the thirtieth 1807. Was Married—  
The Birth of William Clary Wells. September 27<sup>th</sup> 1808  
The Birth of Ann Elizah Wells July 4<sup>th</sup> 1807—  
The Birth of Jane R. Wells. May 30<sup>th</sup> 1812 —  
The Birth of Elizah Ann Wells April 7<sup>th</sup> 1814—  
The Birth of Sarah Ruth Wells. February 2<sup>d</sup> 1816.  
The Birth of James Wells. October 25<sup>th</sup> 1817—  
The Birth of David S. Wells. November 18<sup>th</sup> 1819.  
The Birth of Catharine Mariah Wells. November 19<sup>th</sup> 1821  
The Birth of Ellen Rosannah Wells September 4<sup>th</sup> 1823  
The Birth of Margaret Morena Wells. September 26<sup>th</sup> 1825  
The Birth of John Timothy Wells. March 10<sup>th</sup> 1827.  
The Birth of Phebe Philena Wells February 2<sup>d</sup> 1830.

Jane Kershaw Wells was born on 30 May 1812 in Montgomery County, New York. She married Ezra Marvin Miller on 29 March 1834 in Portage, New York. Ezra was born on 12 April 1812 in Scipio, Cayuga County, New York.

Jane Kershaw Wells Miller and her husband, Ezra Marvin Miller, had eight children. Their third child was Hannah Mariah Miller, who was born on 1 October 1838 in Portageville, Livingston County, New York.

Jane Kershaw Wells died on 10 January 1882 in Rockford, Illinois. She is buried in a Miller family plot in Cedar Bluff Cemetery in Rockford. Here is a photo of her gravestone:



The inscription on the stone reads:

Jane Wells Miller  
Wife of Ezra M. Miller  
May 30, 1812; January 10, 1882  
Born near Johnstown, New York

Ezra Marvin Miller left his wife, Jane Kershaw Wells Miller, sometime in the mid-1850's. I assume that they were divorced. Their 13-month old daughter Ellen Amelia died in 1855, and this could have impacted their marriage. [The gravestone shown above includes "Ellen Amelia, Dau. of Jane Wells, July 29, 1854, Aug. 30, 1855.]

Hannah Mariah Miller was the third child of Ezra Marvin Miller and Jane Kershaw Wells Miller. Hannah was born on 1 October 1838 in Portageville, New York, shortly before the family moved west to Winnebago County, Illinois. Hannah married Aaron Burr Oakley on 6 April 1858 in Beloit, Wisconsin. Aaron Burr Oakley was born on 8 August 1835 in Redding, Fairfield County, Connecticut. I wonder if their common linkage to Fairfield County, Connecticut, was what brought them together...

Aaron and Hannah had a son, Ray Miller Oakley, who was born on 2 April 1876 in Mechanicsville, Iowa.

A. B. Oakley died on 22 April 1906 in Quincy, Illinois. Hannah died on 19 July 1926 in Quincy, Illinois. A.B. Oakley and Hannah Mariah Miller Oakley are buried in the same **Miller** family plot in Cedar Bluff Cemetery in Rockford, Illinois, as Hannah's mother, Jane Kershaw Wells Miller. Their names appear in the lower-left corner of the gravestone pictured on the previous page.

Ray Miller Oakley married Kate Cameron Burks on 7 April 1897 in Quincy, Illinois. Kate was born on 23 October 1873 in Burlington, Iowa.

Ray and Kate had five children: Burks Oakley, Elisabeth "Ebbey" Oakley, William Burr "Bill" Oakley, Allen Miller Oakley, Thomas Crawford "T.C." Oakley.

Ray died on 12 May 1948 in Quincy, and Kate died on 19 January 1954 in Quincy, Illinois. They both are buried in the Oakley family plot in Woodland Cemetery in Quincy.

And that is all for this narrative tracing our **Wells** family line back to Lionel (Baron of Hellowe) De Welles , who was born in 1406 in Welle, Lincolnshire, England!