Chapter 93

At Long Last – A DNA Match with the Allen Miller Oakley Branch of Our Family

[originally written 24 March 2023]

Introduction

I am interested in genetic genealogy – that is, using DNA matches to confirm and to extend my family tree. My cousin[1] Timothy Kane Oakley (born 1962) recently had his DNA "tested" on Ancestry.com, and I now have spent some time looking into his DNA matches.

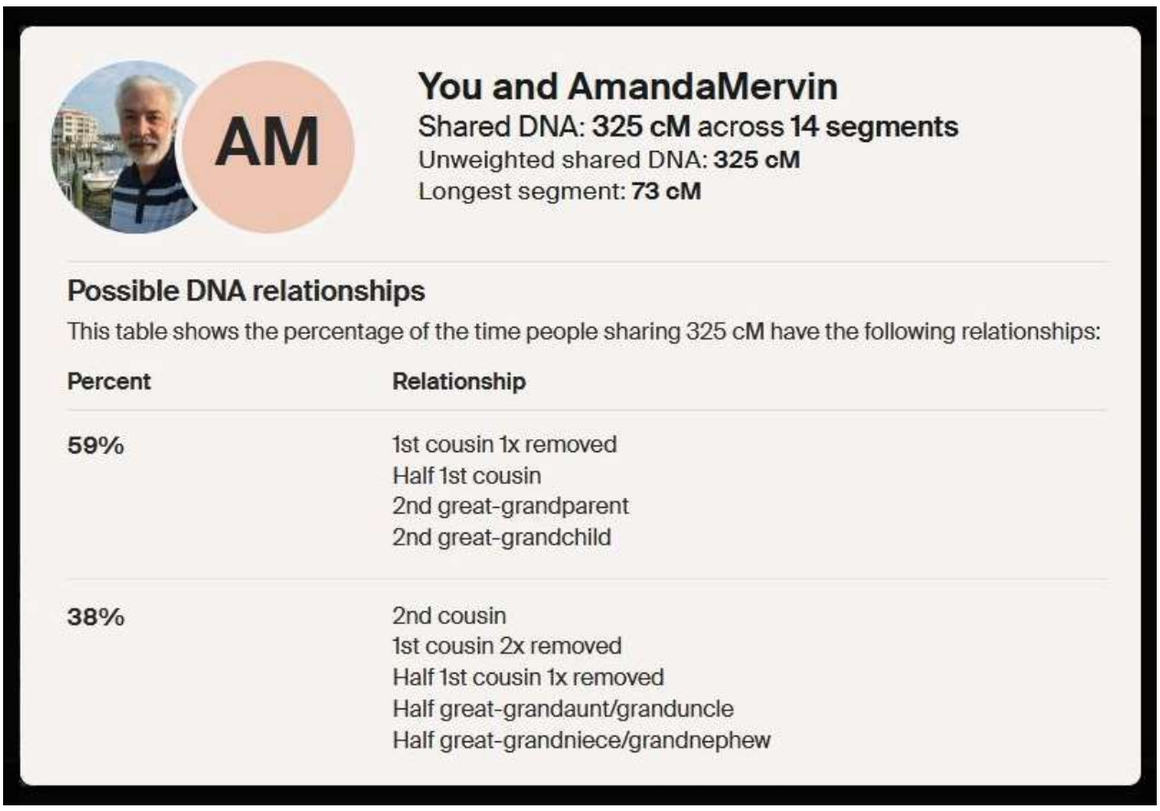
A New DNA Match with Amanda Mervin

A few days ago, I looked on Ancestry.com at the DNA matches that Tim Oakley and I have in common – our so-called "Shared DNA Matches":

[1] I was a first-cousin of Tim's father, David Ray Oakley Sr. (1940-2022), so that means that Tim and I are first-cousins once-removed.

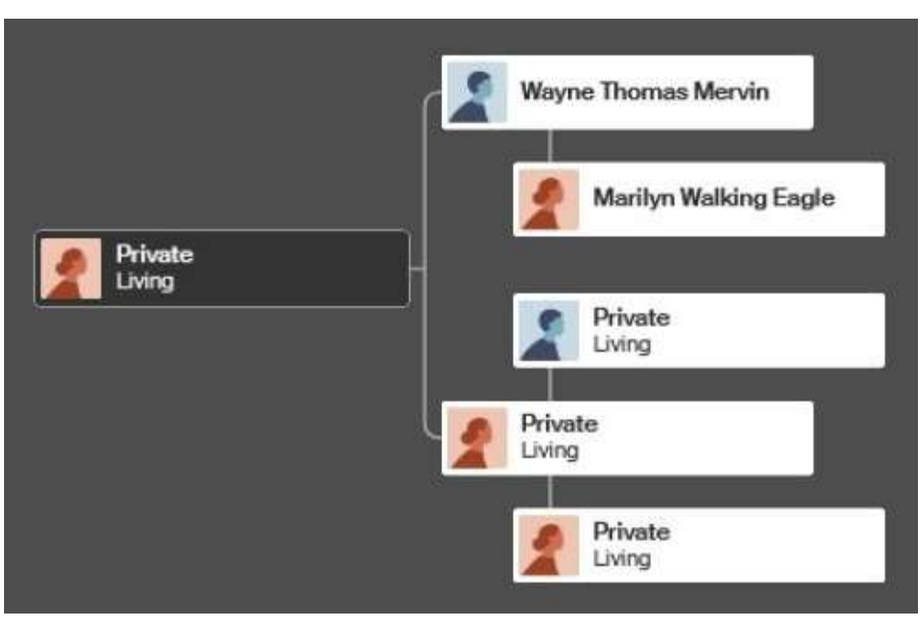
Of course, my largest DNA match on this list was with my daughter, Amy Oakley. After Amy, my next largest shared DNA matches were with Hal Oakley, Mark Eidem, and Amanda Mervin. Hal and Mark are my first-cousins once-removed on the ***Oakley*** side of my family, so I expected to see them on the list of DNA matches that I share with Tim Oakley.

But Amanda Mervin came as a real surprise to me. This is certainly the first time I saw my DNA match with her. Amanda and I share 325 cM of DNA, which suggests a rather close genealogical relationship. In fact, based solely on the size of this match, software on the Ancestry.com website calculated the probability of various relationships between Amanda and me:



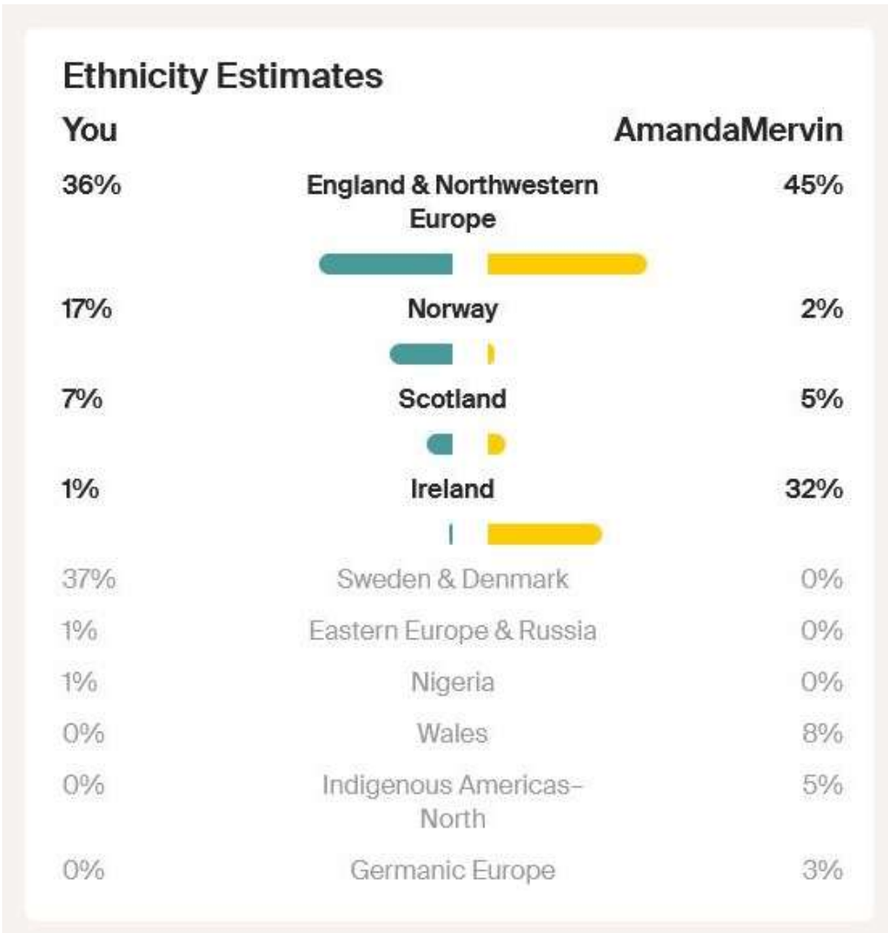
Ancestry.com predicted that we have a 59% probability of being first-cousins once-removed (or some other relationship with that degree of separation), and we have a 38% probability of being second-cousins (or some equivalent relationship, such as first-cousins twice-removed).

I next looked at Amanda's family tree on Ancestry.com:



This limited family tree wasn't any help to me in figuring out how Amanda and I are related. However, it was interesting to see that her paternal grandmother was Marilyn Walking Eagle, which certainly sounds like she would have been a Native American.

I also looked at Amanda's ethnicity estimates (not that this information would help me figure out our relationship):



Ethnicity Estimates

You		AmandaMervin
36%	England & Northwestern Europe	45%
17%	Norway	2%
7%	Scotland	5%
1%	Ireland	32%
37%	Sweden & Denmark	0%
1%	Eastern Europe & Russia	0%
1%	Nigeria	0%
0%	Wales	8%
0%	Indigenous Americas–North	5%
0%	Germanic Europe	3%

Nothing really surprising here, except that Amanda does indeed have 5% Indigenous Americas-North as part of her ethnicity. This ethnicity most likely came from her paternal grandmother, Marilyn Walking Eagle.

I then had the brilliant idea of looking at my family tree on my PC, which is maintained in a RootsMagic database. Much of the information in this database was imported from another database that Hal Oakley sent me at least fifteen years ago.

And what do you think I found in my RootsMagic database?

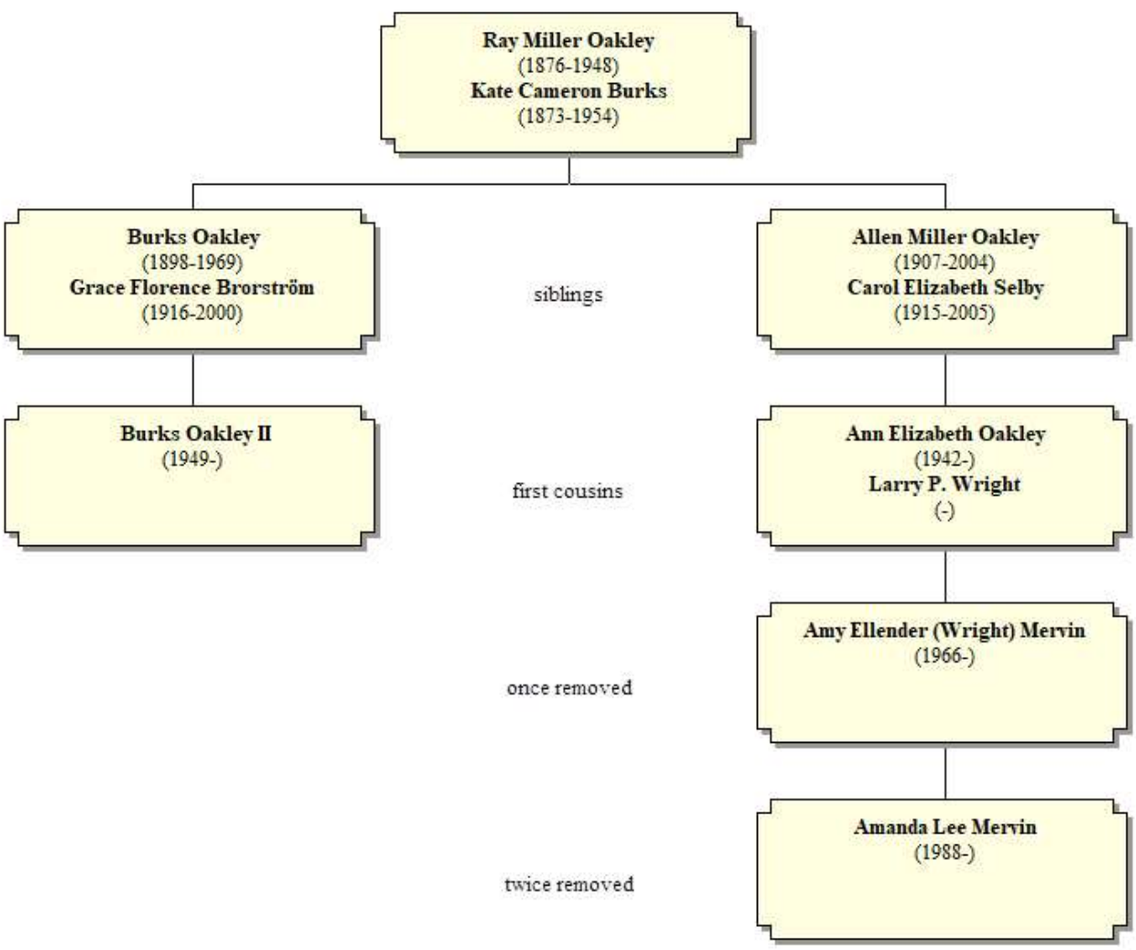
Go on to the next page!

Amanda Lee Mervin, born 9 February 1988, was in my RootsMagic database:

2 - Allen Miller Oakley	M	4 Oct 1907	Quincy, Illinois	11 Jan 2004	Quincy, Illinois
+Carol Elizabeth Selby	F	25 Dec 1915		5 Apr 2005	Quincy, Illinois
3 - Ann Elizabeth Oakley	F	13 Nov 1942	Quincy, Illinois		
+Larry P. Wright	M				
4 - Marvin Miller Wright	M	3 Mar 1964	Carbondale, Illinois		
4 - Amy Ellender (Wright) Mervin	F	10 Sep 1966	New York City, N.Y.		
5 - Holly Mervin	F	21 Jun 1985			
5 - Amanda Lee Mervin	F	9 Feb 1988			
5 - Stephanie Ann Mervin	F	21 Mar 1989			
5 - Charity Mervin	F	21 Jun 1993			
4 - Polly Ann (Wright) Mize	F	8 Mar 1970	Denver, Colorado		
+Daniel Mize	M				

Amanda is a granddaughter of my first-cousin Ann Elizabeth Oakley (born 1942), and therefore she is a great-granddaughter of my uncle Allen Miller Oakley (1907-2004) and his wife Carol Elizabeth Selby (1915-2005).

Here is a chart showing how Amanda and I are related:



Amanda is my first-cousin twice-removed (1C2R).

In 2020, the noted genetic genealogist Blaine T. Bettinger published his data showing the amount of DNA shared between people with known genealogical relationships:

The Shared cM Project – **Version 4.0** (March 2020)

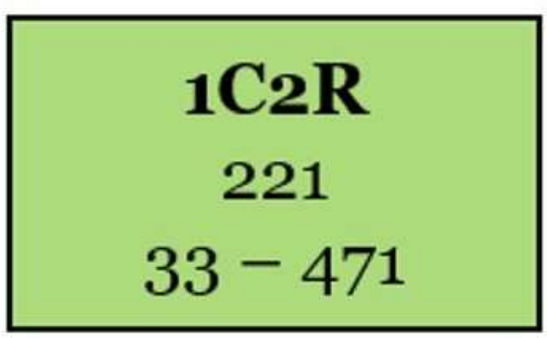
Blaine T. Bettinger
www.TheGeneticGenealogist.com
CC 4.0 Attribution License

How to read this chart:
Aunt/Uncle (Relationship)
1741 (Average)
1201 - 2282 (Range (min-max))

								Great-Great-Great-Grandparent		GGGG-Aunt/Uncle	
								Great-Great-Grandparent	GGG-Aunt/Uncle		
Half GG-Aunt/Uncle 208 103 – 284	Great-Grandparent 887 485 – 1486							Great-Great Aunt/Uncle 420 186 – 713	1C3R 117 25 – 238	2c3R 51 0 – 154	Other Relationships
Half 1C2R 125 16 – 269	Half Great-Aunt/Uncle 431 184 – 668	Grandparent 1754 984 – 2462						Great Aunt/Uncle 850 330 – 1467	1C2R 221 33 – 471	2c2R 71 0– 244	3C2R 36 0 – 166	6C 18 0 – 71
Half 2c1R 66 0 – 190	Half 1C1R 224 62 – 469	Half Aunt/Uncle 871 492 – 1315	Parent 3485 2376 - 3720			Aunt/Uncle 1741 1201 - 2282	1C1R 433 102 – 980	2c1R 122 14 – 353	3C1R 48 0 – 192	4C1R 28 0 – 126	6C1R 15 0 – 56
Half 3c 48 0 – 168	Half 2c 120 10 – 325	Half 1C 449 156 – 979	Half-Sibling 1759 1160 – 2436	Sibling 2613 1613 – 3488	SELF	1C 866 396 – 1397	2c 229 41 – 592	3c 73 0 – 234	4c 35 0 – 139	5c 25 0 – 117	6C2R 13 0 – 45
Half 3c1R 37 0 – 139	Half 2c1R 66 0 – 190	Half 1C1R 224 62 – 469	Half Niece/Nephew 871 492 – 1315	Niece/Nephew 1740 1201 - 2282	Child 3487 2376 – 3720	1C1R 433 102 – 980	2c1R 122 14 – 353	3C1R 48 0 – 192	4C1R 28 0 – 126	5C1R 21 0 – 80	7C 14 0 – 57
Half 3c2R 27 0 – 78	Half 2c2R 48 0 – 144	Half 1C2R 125 16 – 269	Half Great Niece/Nephew 431 184 – 668	Great-Niece/Nephew 850 330 – 1467	Grandchild 1754 984 – 2462	1C2R 221 33 – 471	2c2R 71 0– 244	3C2R 36 0 – 166	4C2R 22 0 – 93	5C2R 18 0 – 65	7C1R 12 0 – 50
Half 3c3R	Half 2c3R	Half 1C3R 60 0 – 120	Half GG Niece/Nephew 208 103 – 284	Great-Great-Niece/Nephew 420 186 – 713	Great-Grandchild 887 485 – 1486	1C3R 117 25 – 238	2c3R 51 0 – 154	3C3R 27 0 – 98	4C3R 19 0 – 60	5C3R 13 0 – 30	8C 11 0 – 42

Minimum was automatically set to 0 cM for relationships more distant than Half 2C, and averages were determined only for submissions in which DNA was shared

Here is the entry for 1C2R:



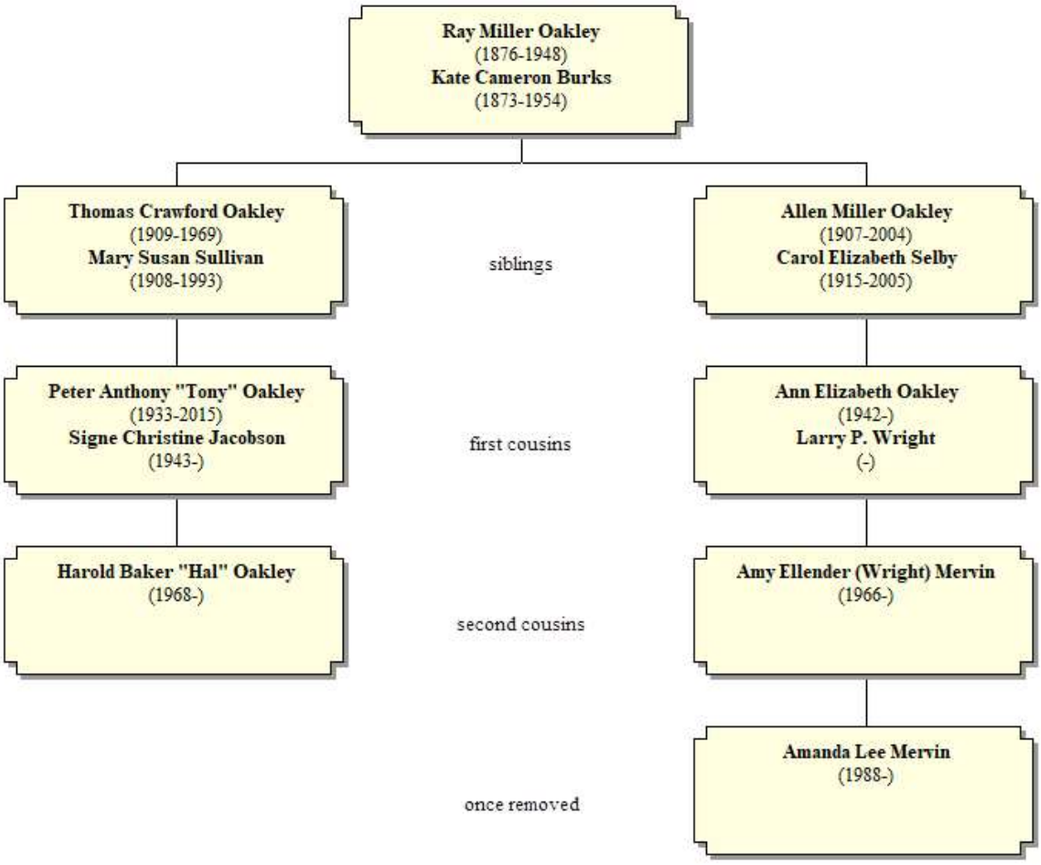
Individuals who have a 1C2R relationship average 221 cM of shared DNA, with a range of 33-471 cM. So my DNA match with Amanda (325 cM) is well above average in size, but certainly within the observed range.

This is cool! I finally have a DNA match with someone in Allen Miller Oakley's branch of our family!!

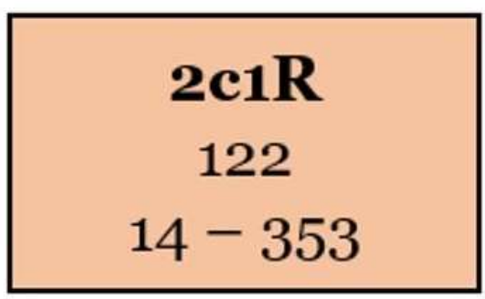
I went on to look at the DNA matches between Amanda and my other ***Oakley*** relatives who have their DNA on Ancestry.com. Here is Amanda's DNA match with Hal Oakley:

Amanda and Hal share 111 cM of DNA.

Here is a chart showing how Hal and Amanda are related:



Hal and Amanda are second-cousins once-removed (2C1R). Here is the relevant cell from the Bettinger data:

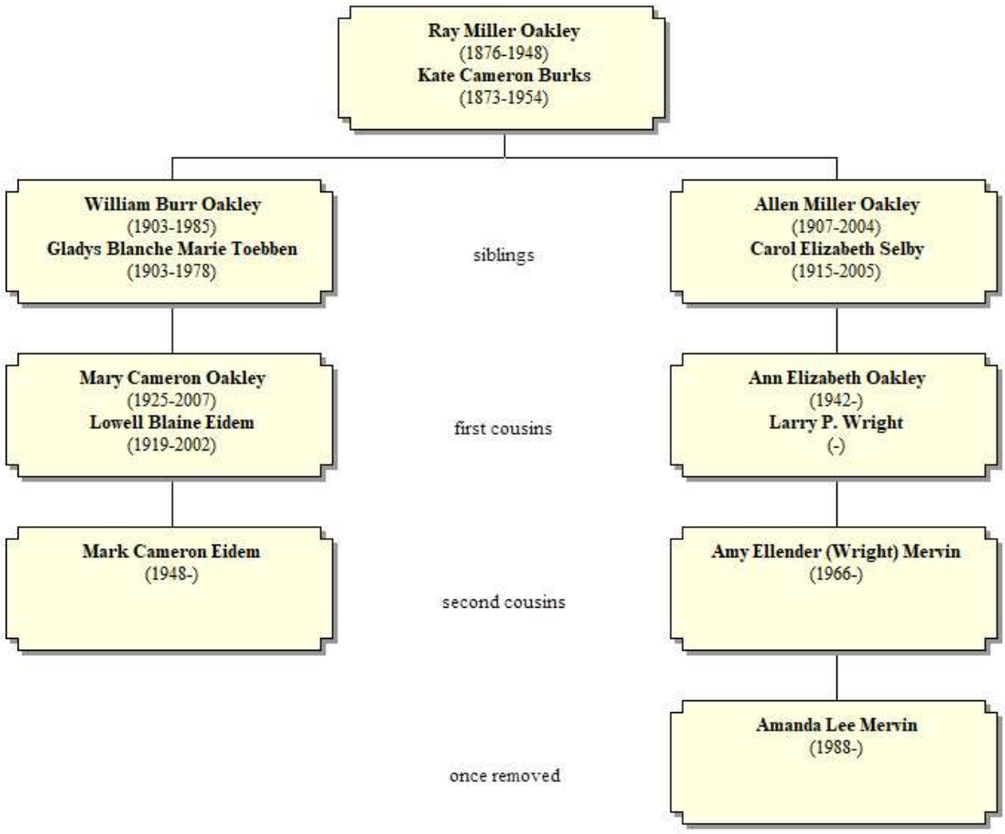


Hal's DNA match with Amanda of 111 cM is just slightly below average in size.

Moving on, I next looked at Mark Eidem's DNA match with Amanda:

Mark and Amanda share 105 cM of DNA.

Here is the chart showing how Mark and Amanda are related:

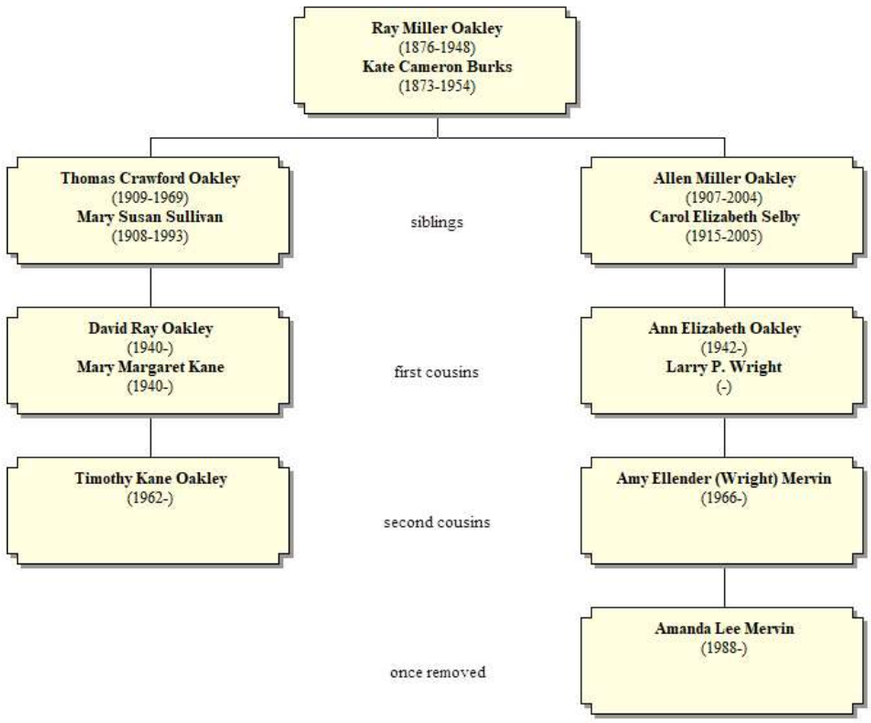


Mark and Amanda also have a 2C1R relationship, and their 105 cM DNA match is slightly below average in size.

Now on to cousin Tim Oakley, whose DNA match with Amanda started all this:

Tim and Amanda share 135 cM of DNA.

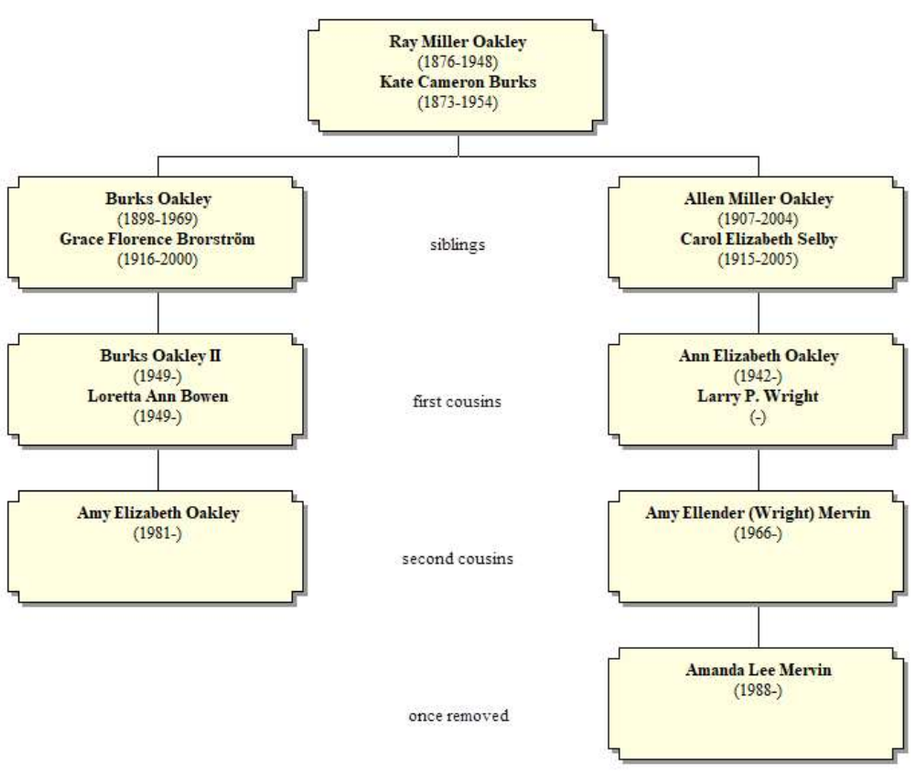
Here is the chart showing how Tim and Amanda are related (and if you are paying attention, you will already know their relationship):



That's right – they are 2C1R. And their 135 cM DNA match is slightly above the average of 122 cM for this relationship.

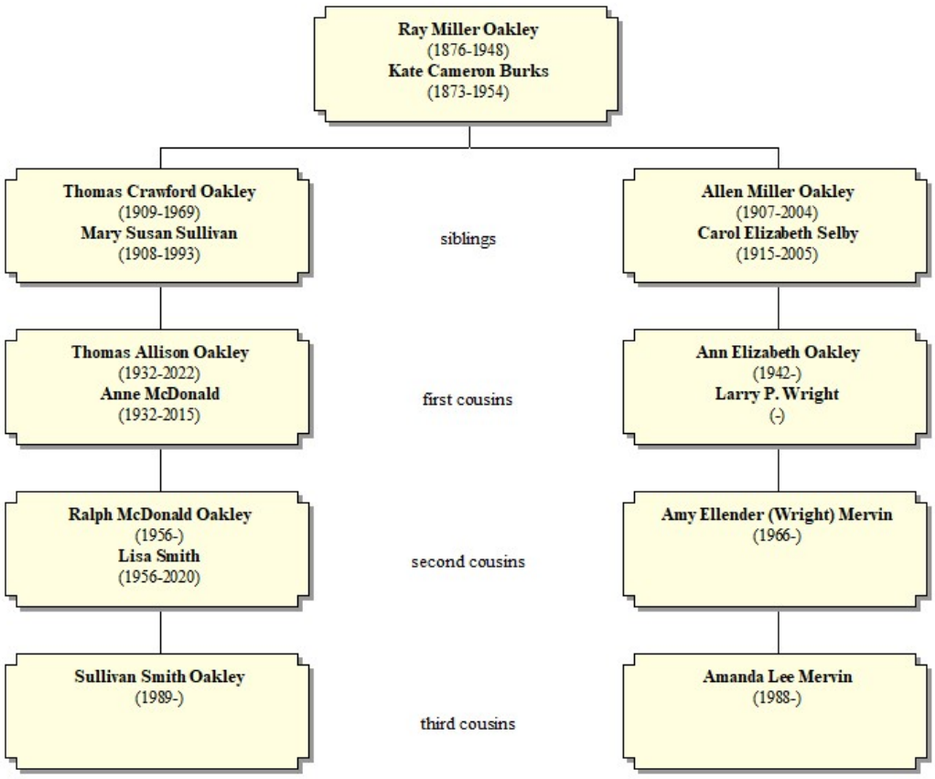
The next DNA match to consider is my daughter Amy's DNA match with Amanda:

Amy and Amanda share 163 cM of DNA, and they also are 2C1R:

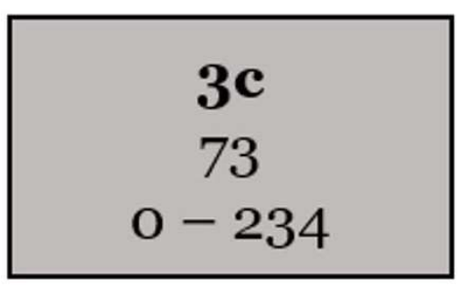


Amy's DNA match with Amanda (163 cM) is well above average in size. The range of the size of these 2C1R matches (from Mark at 105 cM to Amy at 163 cM) is a good example of the random way that autosomal DNA is inherited.

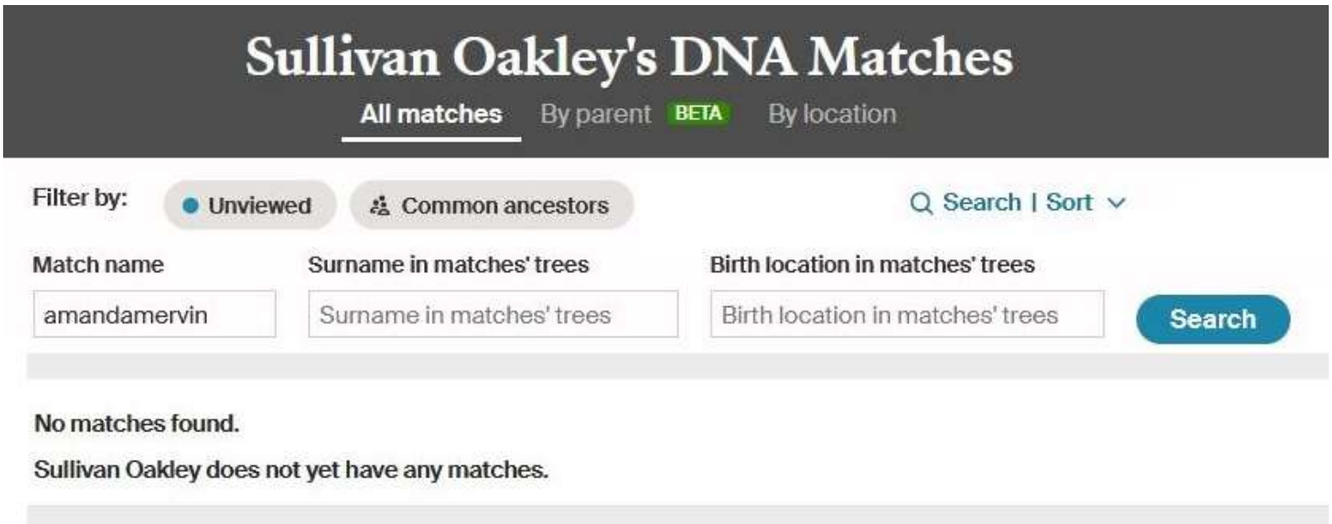
Finally, let me look at Sullivan Oakley's DNA match with Amanda. Sullivan and Amanda are third-cousins (3C), as shown in the following relationship chart:



Based on the Bettinger data from 2020, 3C average 73 cM of shared DNA, with a range of 0 to 234 cM:



Sullivan's DNA match with Amanda is shown on the next page:



Oh my! Sullivan does NOT have a DNA match with Amanda. I guess that this is a great example of the variable ways in which autosomal DNA is inherited.

Summary

In this short chapter, I began with my new DNA match with Amanda Mervin. Amanda is a great-granddaughter of my uncle Allen Miller Oakley (1907-2004) and his wife Carol Elizabeth Selby (1915-2005). Based on this relationship, Amanda and I are first-cousins twice-removed (1C2R). Amanda is the first DNA match that I have found in the Allen Miller Oakley branch of our family, and that is really nice to see.

I also looked at the DNA matches between Amanda and other ***Oakley*** family members who have their DNA on the Ancestry.com website: Hal Oakley, Mark Eidem, Tim Oakley, Amy Oakley, and Sullivan Oakley. All of these DNA matches fell within the expected range for their known genealogical relationships. The one surprise (to me) was that Sullivan Oakley does not have a DNA match with her third-cousin Amanda Mervin.