Ashley Zdenek – Another Distant Relative with the *Oakley-Gardner* DNA Segment on Chromosome 15

By Burks Oakley II 20 October 2024

Introduction

I am interested in genetic genealogy – that is, the use of DNA to expand and to confirm my family tree. In 2019, I began to use a website called GEDmatch.com. This site has a number of software tools that allow users to visualize which segments of their DNA are identical with another individual's DNA. Most importantly, the "chromosome browser" lets users see the exact positions of these DNA matches on any of the twenty-three autosomal chromosomes.

When I started using GEDmatch.com, I discovered a large group of individuals who have autosomal DNA matches with me on Chromosome 15. And to my surprise, I learned that all the individuals in this group who shared detailed family trees with me were descended from Miles Oakley (1671-1743) and his wife Mercy Gardner (1673-1773).

The *Oakley-Gardner* couple were my sixth-great grandparents, but for several individuals in this group, they were their eighth-great grandparents. This finding was incredibly surprising, since autosomal DNA matches typically become too small to be significant after this many generations (due to the way that autosomal DNA is inherited).

I wrote several narratives about my findings:

http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/14A-DeepTriangulationConfirmsOurOakleyLineage.pdf http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/14B-Triangulation-Chr.15.pdf

I have used the term "triangulation group" when discussing these DNA matches. The people in this triangulation group have a DNA match with me on Chromosome 15¹ and we all are descended from the *Oakley-Gardner* couple. I encourage you to read the two earlier narratives, which were written in 2019, for many additional details.

I recently renewed my paid subscription to the GEDmatch.com website, so that I could use some of the powerful software tools that are available to paying users. I had a plan to go back and see if I could find any new individuals who had a DNA match with me on Chromosome 15 and could be shown to be descended from the *Oakley-Gardner* couple.

¹ Technically, not everyone in my "triangulation group" matches everyone else – but it seems that we all started with the same matching segment of DNA. I'll discuss this later in the narrative.

Searching For Additional Oakley-Gardner Descendants

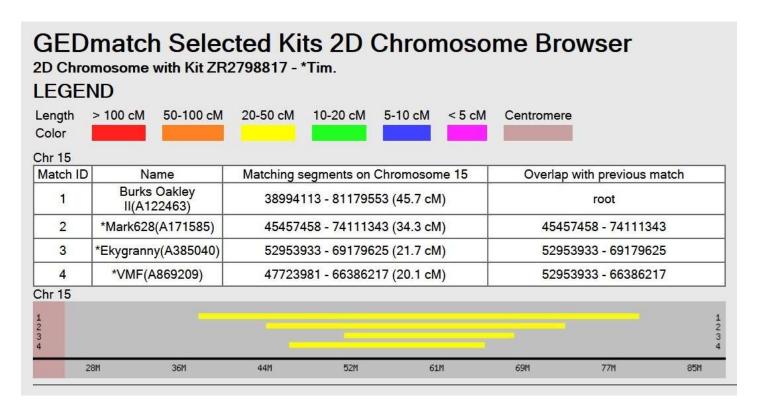
My largest DNA match with an individual in the *Oakley-Gardner* triangulation group is with Rev. Tim Bever, who is the pastor at First United Methodist Church in Pratt, Kansas. Tim's paternal grandmother was Gladys Harriet Oakley (1910-2014), and I can trace her *Oakley* line back to the *Oakley-Gardner* couple.

Tim and I have a 45.7 cM DNA match. The large size of this match again is surprising, since Tim and I are seventh-cousins. In 2020, the noted genetic genealogist, Blaine T. Bettinger, published the results of his research into the amount of DNA shared by people of known genealogical relationships. He found that seventh-cousins (7C) on average shared 14 cM of DNA, with a range of 0-57 cM:

So the DNA match that I have with Tim Bever is much larger than average, but within the range reported in the Bettinger study.

In looking at the *Oakley-Gardner* triangulation group, I have found that Tim Bever appears to have the largest segment of DNA on Chromosome 15 to which others in the group have matches. Let me illustrate this with an example.

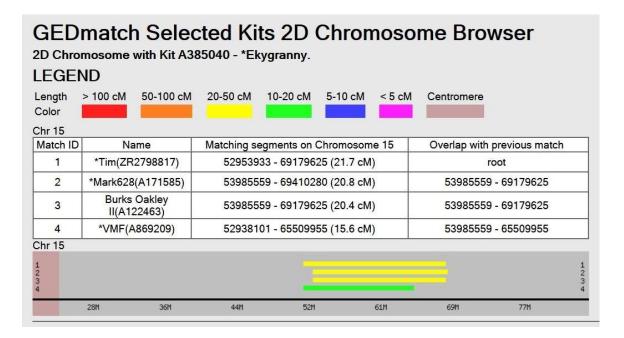
One of the software tools on GEDmatch.com is called "People who match both kits, or 1 of 2 kits". I used this tool to see how four individuals matched Tim Bever on Chromosome 15. Here is the resulting output from GEDmatch:



Note that Tim Bever himself does not appear in this chart. I am in line 1, and I match Tim from base pair 38994113 to base pair 81179553. This means that we have 42,185,440 consecutive base pairs along Chromosome 15 that are an identical match. This is very strong evidence that we are descended from a common ancestor.

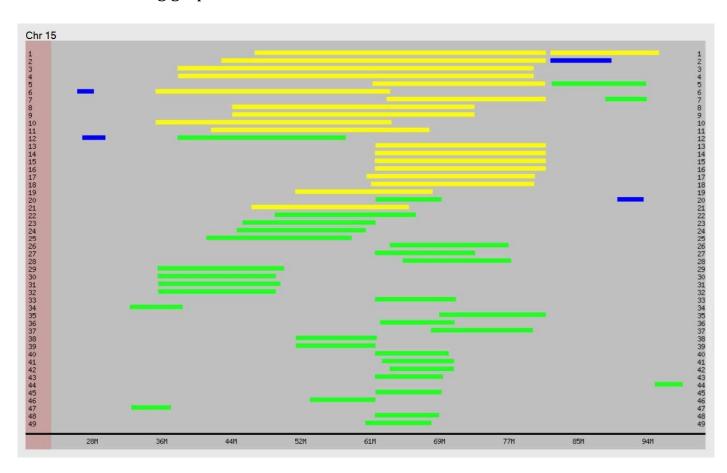
The other lines in the table (and in the graph) include Mark Workman (line 2), Elaine Stuart (*Ekygranny*, line 3), and Ginny Fossa (*VMF*, line 4). These individuals are all known to be descended from the *Oakley-Gardner* couple. We can infer that Tim's segment is at least as large as my segment in the graph on the previous page.

Note that the result would be very different if we compared how Tim, Mark, Ginny, and I compared with Elaine:



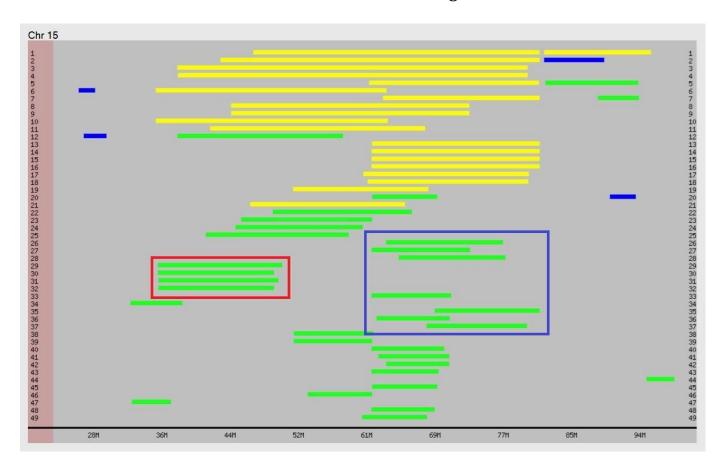
Since Elaine has a smaller segment on Chromosome 15, the longer segments (e.g., Tim and Burks) don't have anything to match. This is why I use Tim's segment as the "gold standard" – the largest segment on Chromosome 15 to which others match.

I recently used the "People who match both kits..." tool to see who in the entire GEDmatch.com database matched Tim and me. I found forty-nine individuals who have DNA matches with both of us that are at least 10 cM in size, as shown in the following graph:



Each horizontal bar in this chart represents where on Chromosome 15 an individual's DNA exactly matches Tim Bever. The longest segments are in yellow, medium-size segments are in green, and the shortest segments are in blue. Note that Tim is not shown in this chart – but we can infer that his segment extends the full range of the matching bars shown in this chart.

Although all of the people in this chart match Tim Bever and me, not all of them match each other. Here is the same chart with a slight modification:



Note that the four individuals in the red box at the left do not match the seven individuals in the blue box at the right. Yet they all match Tim and me. It appears to me that the overall large DNA segment that Tim has on Chromosome 15 split into several different segments as it was inherited over multiple generations. Various *Oakley-Gardner* descendants inherited different parts of the overall large segment. More below...

Here are the forty-nine individuals shown in the above graphs (note that I am counted as one of those people matching Tim Bever):

latch ID	Name	Matching segments on Chromosome 15	Overlap with previous match
1	Jeani Trana(A685139)	48098423 - 82573255 (40.2 cM), 83221392 - 95999729 (25.0 cM)	root
2	Tommy Lee Addington(M870246)	44198049 - 82573255 (44.2 cM), 83223425 - 90366032 (7.9 cM)	48098423 - 82573255,83223425 - 9036603
3	Burks Oakley II(A122463)	38994113 - 81179553 (45.7 cM)	44198049 - 81179553
4	*Amy.Oakley(A059368)	39046212 - 81180981 (45.6 cM)	39046212 - 81179553
5	Richard P Maxwell(SR6355427)	62093241 - 82553335 (24.9 cM), 83342772 - 94531089 (19.9 cM)	62093241 - 81180981
6	Kathy Hill Orr(A657657)	27050817 - 28962131 (7.1 cM), 36417486 - 64176308 (31.1 cM)	62093241 - 64176308
7	Patricia Dalton(GV3850802)	63786934 - 82573255 (22.8 cM), 89685568 - 94555643 (13.0 cM)	63786934 - 64176308
8	*EBW91(A127417)	45457458 - 74107677 (34.3 cM)	63786934 - 74107677
9	*Mark628(A171585)	45457458 - 74111343 (34.3 cM)	45457458 - 74107677
10	*Pops(XK6651839)	36384374 - 64282948 (31.3 cM)	45457458 - 64282948
11	Scott Wachlin(A053954)	42948674 - 68780263 (28.0 cM)	42948674 - 64282948
12	Jan Magee(ZK1667198)	27687150 - 30371774 (7.0 cM), 38994113 - 58902769 (18.4 cM)	42948674 - 58902769
13	*Grey(A122043)	62435156 - 82573255 (24.5 cM)	root
14	Jerene E Parker(A311966)	62429997 - 82573255 (24.5 cM)	62435156 - 82573255
15	Sheryl Lynn Parker(A105626)	62429997 - 82573255 (24.5 cM)	62429997 - 82573255
16	*ACFinch(GR2396243)	62429997 - 82573255 (24.5 cM)	62429997 - 82573255
17	Amy Conine(M811473)	61433376 - 81333694 (23.7 cM)	62429997 - 81333694
18	Ryan Siver(HH3486207)	61971428 - 81240669 (22.4 cM)	61971428 - 81240669
19	*Ekygranny(A385040)	52953933 - 69179625 (21.7 cM)	61971428 - 69179625
20	*BM(A300199)	62433962 - 70286917 (11.1 cM), 91128237 - 94232265 (10.0 cM)	62433962 - 69179625
21	*VMF(A869209)	47723981 - 66386217 (20.1 cM)	62433962 - 66386217
22	Cory Mckone(BC2177960)	50509591 - 67193976 (19.7 cM)	50509591 - 66386217
23	*Highflier(SX4210367)	46667965 - 62429997 (17.6 cM)	50509591 - 62429997
24	*Shelly Taylor(FN7634659)	46024351 - 61231866 (16.4 cM)	46667965 - 61231866
25	David Cornelius(T122796)	42426833 - 59607007 (15.8 cM)	46024351 - 59607007
26	Chris William Fox(PM3512395)	64167939 - 78170641 (15.4 cM)	root
27	Howard Evans(BR1674369)	62380259 - 74241506 (15.3 cM)	64167939 - 74241506
28	Tracy Evan Anderson(A507627)	65695283 - 78487583 (15.1 cM)	65695283 - 74241506
29	*Kelsey Haney(MR5569658)	36618505 - 51548782 (15.0 cM)	root
30	Rya Walters(FU5396831)	36618505 - 50566268 (14.8 cM)	36618505 - 50566268
31	Sherri Thompson(H335623)	36660548 - 51086320 (14.8 cM)	36660548 - 50566268
32	Candice Richardson- Solomon(M147907)	36659276 - 50566268 (14.7 cM)	36660548 - 50566268
33	*AEW(A348886)	62424649 - 71921839 (14.2 cM)	root
34	Joshua Shannon(A064025)	33308934 - 39529717 (14.1 cM)	root
35	Joe Kerwin(T113483)	70050625 - 82573255 (13.9 cM)	root
36	Kelly Steele(M834752)	63039118 - 71764830 (13.0 cM)	70050625 - 71764830
37	Ashley M Zdenek(TX3307904)	69037964 - 81089097 (13.0 cM)	69037964 - 71764830
38	*Glenda Jeannie(A340144)	53015703 - 62532581 (13.0 cM)	root
39	*GOSher(GS8917013)	53015492 - 62427973 (12.8 cM)	53015703 - 62427973
40	*STFinch(HS4269179)	62429997 - 71068158 (12.7 cM)	root
41	Heather McLane(DQ2285388)	63211875 - 71678798 (12.6 cM)	63211875 - 71068158
42	Heather Fox(YY8379752)	64185726 - 71678798 (11.7 cM)	64185726 - 71678798
43	Cheryl Clark(WV5906424)	62429997 - 70402309 (11.4 cM)	64185726 - 70402309
44	*KarmaStorms(UH1933712)	95578439 - 98826261 (11.3 cM)	root
45	*graylily8-2(A635736)	62433962 - 70286917 (11.1 cM)	root
46	Gary Stuck(CB9381169)	54705902 - 62429997 (11.0 cM)	root
47	Julie M. Brosnahan(A509799)	33477222 - 38139201 (10.8 cM)	root
48	*Liz(EU4865809)	62429997 - 69969105 (10.5 cM)	root
49	Cherrie Wilson	61286501 - 69020931 (10.5 cM)	62429997 - 69020931

A number of these individuals are familiar to me and were included in my two earlier narratives; these people are descended from the *Oakley-Gardner* couple. And, unfortunately, some of these people are familiar to me, since they haven't

responded to any of my previous emails about this topic. Of course, there are a number of new people on this list, and my gut-feeling (or hypothesis) is that all of them are descended from the *Oakley-Gardner* couple (since they all share part of the common DNA segment on Chromosome 15).

I started going through the list of names on this list to see if I could find any of them on Ancestry.com, where I might get lucky and find their family trees.

For some reason that I am unable to recall with any certainty, I looked at #37 on the above list, Ashley M. Zdenek:

37	Ashley M Zdenek(TX3307904)	69037964 - 81089097 (13.0 cM)	69037964 - 71764830
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Ashley and Tim have a 13.0 cM DNA match.

I searched my DNA matches on Ancestry.com – as a first stab, I guessed that her username would be "Ashley Zdenek" – and it was! Boy, was I lucky!



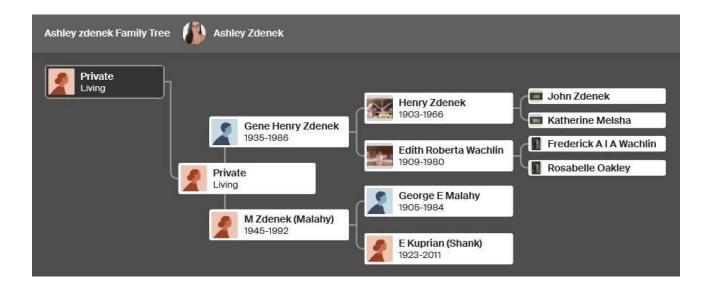
According to Ancestry.com, Ashley and I have an 11 cM DNA match.

I went on to look at Ashley's pedigree – again, hoping I could show that she was descended from the *Oakley-Gardner* couple.

What do you think I found?

Scroll down....

Go on to the next page:



Ashley's second-great grandmother was Rosabelle Oakley (1873-1941) – shown at the far right of this chart. Rosabelle's husband was Frederick Albert Isaac August Wachlin (1870-1942), and I know from earlier work that Frederick's great-grandson is Scott Wachlin, and Scott is one of the individuals in the *Oakley-Gardner* triangulation group. As an aside, in other trees, I have seen Frederick referred to as August, which was one of his middle names.

Since Rosabelle Oakley was already in my RootsMagic database, I added the ancestral line from Ashley Zdenek back to Rosabelle. Here is a chart showing how Ashley and I are related:

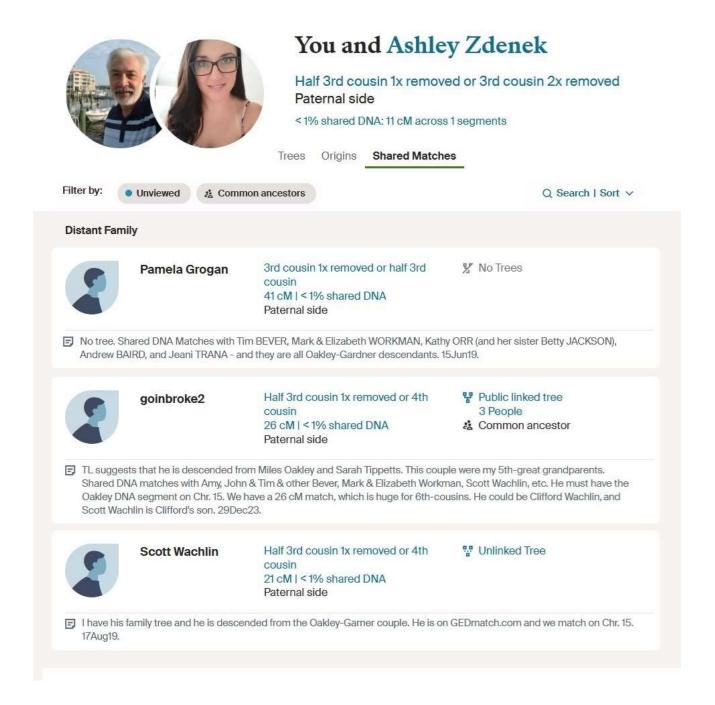


Ashley and I are both descended from Miles Oakley (1696-1763) and his wife Sarah Tippetts (1700-1800). Miles Oakley was a son of the *Oakley-Gardner* couple.

According to this chart, Ashley and I are sixth-cousins thrice-removed (I've always wanted to use the word "thrice" in a narrative). Even though we are very distant cousins, we still share (part of) the *Oakley-Gardner* DNA segment on Chromosome 15.

After I found my DNA match with Ashley on the Ancestry.com website, I looked to see if we had any "Shared DNA Matches". Recall that to be considered a shared match, an individual has to have DNA matches with both Ashley and me that are at least 20 cM in size. This size requirement limits the number of people in this group.

I found that Ashley and I have three shared matches with people I recognize:

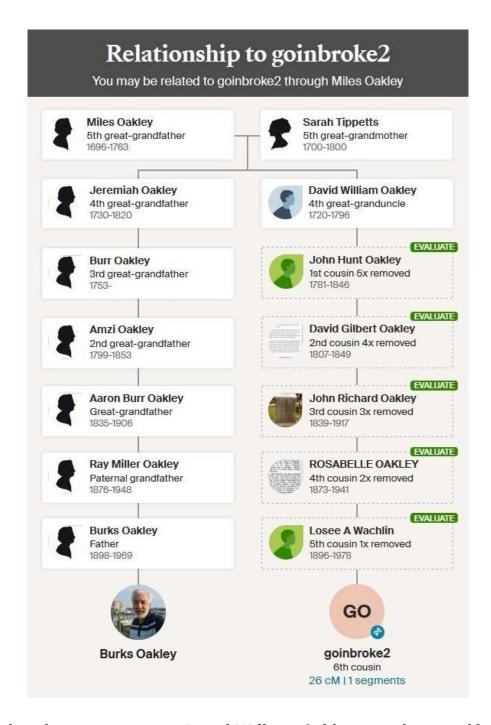


The three shared matches are with Pamela Grogan, *goinbroke2*, and Scott Wachlin.

Pamela Grogan doesn't have a family tree, but she and I have shared DNA matches with a number of people in the *Oakley-Gardner* triangulation group.

The man with the username *goinbroke2* appears to be Clifford Wachlin, who is Scott Wachlin's father. The ThruLines® software on Ancestry.com suggests that Clifford is descended from Miles Oakley and his wife Sarah Tippetts. Recall that Miles Oakley was a son of the *Oakley-Gardner* couple.

Here is a chart from Ancestry.com showing how *goinbroke2* and I might be related:

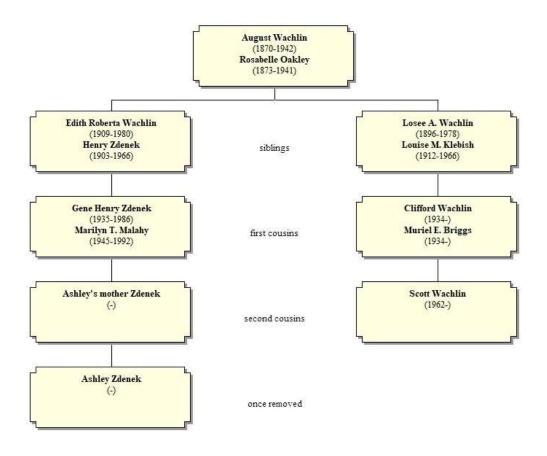


Note that this chart is incorrect. David William Oakley was the grandfather of John Hunt Oakley, not the father as shown in the upper-right. I'll discuss this in Appendix A. Remember that these charts are based on family trees on the Ancestry.com website, and these trees are notorious for having errors.

The third person on the list of shared DNA matches is Scott Wachlin. Here is a chart showing how Scott and I are related:



My reason for including Scott Wachlin and his father Clifford Wachlin in this narrative, is that both Scott and Ashley are descended from Rosabelle Oakley. Here is a chart showing how Scott and Ashley are related:



Based on this chart, Scott and Ashley are second-cousins once-removed.

I then went back to GEDmatch.com and looked at how Scott and Ashley share DNA:

Comparing Kit TX3307904 (Ashley M Zdenek) [Ancestry] and Kit A053954 (Scott Wachlin) [Migration - F2 - A]

Chr	B37 Start Pos'n	B37 End Pos'n	Centimorgans (cM)	SNPs	Segment threshold	Bunch limit	SNP Density Ratio
2	237,595,867	240,878,374	8.3	655	208	124	0.24
3	34,314,578	55,802,668	15.2	2,248	181	108	0.21
3	124,818,093	140,396,022	15.4	2,043	175	105	0.24
6	130,358,428	139,806,747	14.1	1,573	211	127	0.28
14	29,943,239	33,232,414	7.2	497	211	126	0.29
14	69,452,088	77,408,327	10.9	1,267	218	131	0.3
17	52,952,776	56,273,208	7.1	727	234	140	0.36

Largest segment = 15.4 cM

Total Half-Match segments (HIR) 78.3cM

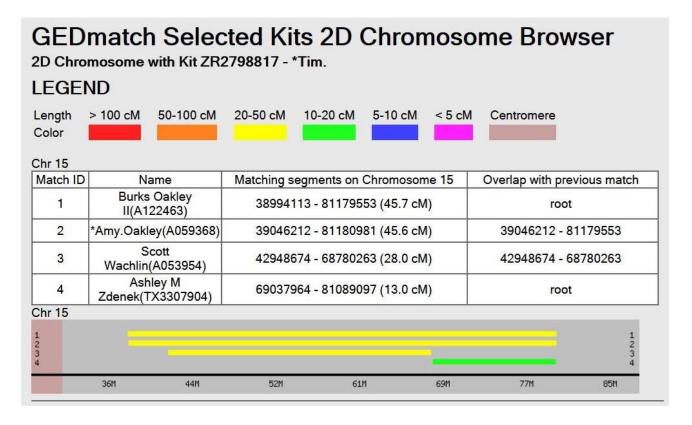
Estimated number of generations to MRCA = 3.8

Wow! The software estimated that their Most Recent Common Ancestor (MRCA) is 3.8. Based on their relationship chart, their MRCA is 3.5 – so this estimate is pretty close.²

But wait! Ashley and Scott don't have a match on Chromosome 15!!

So I looked at how both of them match Tim Bever on Chromosome 15 – and also included myself and my daughter Amy:

² Their Most Recent Common Ancestor is Rosabelle Oakley; she is 4 generations back from Ashley and 3 generations back from Scott. Averaging these two numbers gives an MRCA of 3.5.



Note that Scott's match with Tim (line 3) ends at 68780263, while Ashley's match with Tim starts at 69037964. Son of a gun! Both of them match Tim (and Amy and me). But they don't match each other on Chromosome 15. And they both are descended from the *Oakley-Gardner* couple through Rosabelle Oakley.

This finding is certainly consistent with my notion that Tim Bever has a very long *Oakley-Gardner* segment on Chromosome 15. Due to the way that autosomal DNA is inherited, various *Oakley-Gardner* descendants inherited different parts of the long segment. And this means that there will be *Oakley-Gardner* descendants (like Ashley and Scott) who have part of the *Oakley-Gardner* DNA segment on Chromosome 15, yet they don't match each other on this chromosome.

Now let me address my use of the term "triangulation group". When I asked Google "In genealogy, what is a triangulation group?", it responded with an "AI Overview":



In genealogy, a "triangulation group" refers to a cluster of individuals who all share a common DNA segment, identified through genetic testing, indicating that they are likely descended from the same ancestor, effectively forming a "triangle" of shared genetic material between multiple people which helps pinpoint a common ancestor in your family tree; this process is called "triangulation.".

We need "a cluster of individuals who all share a common DNA segment". Does this mean that Ashley and Scott can't be in the same triangulation group for the *Oakley-Gardner* segment on Chromosome 15? Or can I interpret this to mean that the common DNA segment is the "gold standard" segment that Tim Bever has on Chromosome 15? In that case, both Ashley and Scott share this segment. I guess I'll go with this broader interpretation and lump the 49 people who match both Tim and me into one large "triangulation group".

Summary

In this rambling narrative, I set out to use a specific software tool on the GEDmatch.com website to see if I could find new individuals who (1) have the *Oakley-Gardner* DNA segment on Chromosome 15 and (2) have ancestral lines going back to the *Oakley-Gardner* couple.

I found that Ashley Zdenek meets these two criteria. Ashley is descended from Rosabelle Oakley (1873-1941), and I can trace Rosabelle's ancestry back to the *Oakley-Gardner* couple.

I also looked at Scott Wachlin, who also is descended from Rosabelle Oakley. Interestingly, Scott has a totally different part of the *Oakley-Gardner* DNA segment on Chromosome 15 – and he doesn't have any overlap with Ashley on this chromosome.

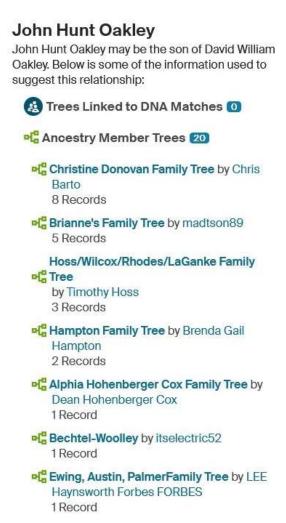
But I'm still going to include them in my *Oakley-Gardner* triangulation group!

Appendix A:

On the Ancestry.com website, the ThruLines® software suggested that Clifford Wachlin (*goinbroke2*) is descended from Miles Oakley and Sarah Tippetts, according to the ancestral line at the right in the following chart:



In Clifford's ancestral line, John Hunt Oakley (1781-1846) is shown as the son of David William Oakley (1720-1796). When I clicked on the "Evaluate" button for the entry for John Hunt Oakley, I viewed a number of family trees on the site that have this relationship (this is just a partial list):

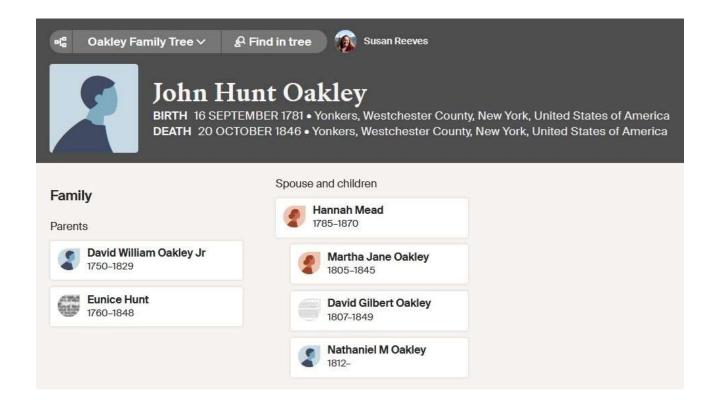


I looked at the first one – the "Christine Donovan Family Tree", and I saw the following panel:



According to this information, John Hunt Oakley's mother, Sarah Hunt, was born in 1725. John was born in 1781, when his mother was 56 years old. I don't think so. As an aside, it is amazing to see how many different family trees on Ancestry.com have this same (incorrect) information.

A little searching on the Ancestry.com website turned up a number of other profiles for John Hunt Oakley. Here is one from the "Oakley Family Tree", which is owned by Susan Reeves:



According to this profile, John Hunt Oakley was the son of David William Oakley Jr. (1750-1829). This makes a lot more sense! And this is what I had in the ancestral lines for Ashley Zdenek and Scott Wachlin earlier in this narrative.

Appendix B:

Rosabelle Oakley (1873-1941) was married to August Wachlin (1870-1942). Their daughter was Edith Roberta Wachlin (1909-1980), and she married Henry Joseph Zdenek (1903-1966). Of course, this brings together two of the important surnames in this narrative – *Wachlin* and *Zdenek*.

Edith's entry on the FindAGrave.com website is at:

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/198437039/edith_roberta_zdenek



This entry includes the following text:

Daughter of Frederick Albert Isaac August "August" Wachlin and Rosabelle Oakley, wife of Henry Zdenek and mother of Joan, Lynn, Gene, Jan, Henry, and Robert Zdenek.

Obituary - Edith R. Zdenek, 71, of Bohemia died at Southside Hospital on July 3. She had been a resident of this area all her life.

Mrs. Zdenek is survived by her children, Joan Boss, Lynn Gueci, Gene, Jan, Hanry, and Robert; her sisters, Bertha Stochl, Nancy Noonan, Evelyn Wachlin; and a brother, Robert Wachlin. She is also survived by 17 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Friends visited at the Raynor & D'Andrea Funeral Home in West Sayville last Thursday and Friday. Religious services were held at the funeral home Saturday, with the Rev. Joseph H. Bond officiating. Interment followed in Bohemia Cemetery.

(The Suffolk County news., July 10, 1980, Page 18; Edith Zdenek in the U.S. Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014; Edith Roberta Zdenek in the U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936-2007)

Presumably, this is where I learned that Frederick Albert Isaac August Wachlin went by the name "August".