

My New DNA Match with Bill Earls (and where it took me)

By Burks Oakley II
22 July 2024

A few days ago, I was looking for new DNA matches on the Ancestry.com website. I typically filter my DNA matches so that I only see a match when (1) I have not viewed it previously and (2) software on the website is able to find that the match and I share common ancestors. Many days, no individuals appear on this list. But this particular time, I saw that I had a new DNA match with a man named Bill Earls:

Burks Oakley's DNA Matches

All matchesBy parentBy ancestorBy location

Filter by:UnviewedCommon ancestorsSearch | Sort

Distant Family



Bill Earls

5th – 8th Cousin
19 cM | < 1% shared DNA
Paternal side

Public linked tree
5,864 People
Common ancestor

Bill and I share 19 cM of DNA, and we are related on the paternal side of my family tree. I next looked at his bio on Ancestry.com:



WILLING TO HELP

Bill Earls

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
Age: 60+

born and raised in Nashville, Davidson, Tennessee, USA I Used to visit every two or three years, My Parents was William Earls Sr and Gertrude Nave My Email address is ozziebill@optusnet.com.au

Joined
28 Aug 2004

Last active
Today

Family History Experience

Intermediate
Researches almost every day

Wow! Bill lives in Sydney, Australia – but he was born in Nashville, Tennessee. And his mother was Gertrude Nave. Wow again! I have **Oakley** relatives from Tennessee whose mother’s maiden name was **Nave**. They have to be related! Of course, I next looked at our common ancestors:

How are you and Bill Earls related?

Common Ancestors

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

Bill Earls could be your half 6th cousin through:



Miles Oakley
5th great-grandfather
1696–1763
[View Relationship](#)

Bill and I apparently go all the way back to my fifth-great grandfather, Miles Oakley (1696-1763). So Bill is indeed an ***Oakley*** descendant! But when I looked at this more closely, I wondered why Ancestry.com only listed Miles Oakley as our common ancestor. What about Miles Oakley’s wife, Sarah Tippetts (1700-1800) – wouldn’t she also be a common ancestor?

I next looked at the profile I have for Miles Oakley in my family tree on Ancestry.com:



Miles Oakley III

BIRTH 1696 • Bronx, Westchester, New York
DEATH 1763 • Westchester, New York

Burks Oakley II

Find in tree

Family

Parents



Miles Oakley
1671–1743



Mercy Gardner
1673–1723

Spouse and children



Sarah Tippetts
1700–1800



Miles Oakley
1716–



Caleb Oakley
1716–1783



Jane Oakley
1716–



Martha Patty Oakley
1718–



Isaac Oakley
1720–1784



David William Oakley
1720–1796



Joseph Oakley
1725–1797



Jeremiah Oakley
1730–1820



William Oakley
1730–1809



Gilbert Oakley
1732–

Miles and his wife Sarah had ten children. The “Quincy Oakleys” are descended from their eighth child, Jeremiah Oakley (1730-1820). I have never seen anything on Ancestry.com to suggest that Miles had children with another wife. And Sarah outlived Miles by decades, so it wasn’t like Miles would have remarried. [Note that Sarah had ten children and lived to be 100 years old!!]

When I was viewing my profile for Miles Oakley III, I noticed a hint about “Possible marriage records”:

1716

20

Birth of daughter [Jane Oakley](#) (1716–)

1716

Possible marriage records

[Hints](#) ×

1718

22

Birth of daughter [Martha Patty Oakley](#) (1718–)

1718

And here is that hint:



Miles Oakley in the

Geneanet

Community Trees

Index

⋮

Name	Miles Oakley
Gender	M (Male)
Birth Date	1696
Birth Place	Westchester, Westchester County (Westchester), New York, USA
Marriage Date	1715
Marriage Place	New York (New York City), New York, USA
Death Date	1763
Death Place	Westchester, New York, USA
Father	Miles Oakley
Mother	Mercy Gardner
Spouse	Sarah Tippitts
Child	Caleb Oakley
	David Oakley
	Gilbert Oakley
	Isaac Oakley
	Jane Oakley
	Jeremiah Oakley
	Joseph Oakley
	Martha (Patty) Oakley
	Miles Oakley
	William Oakley

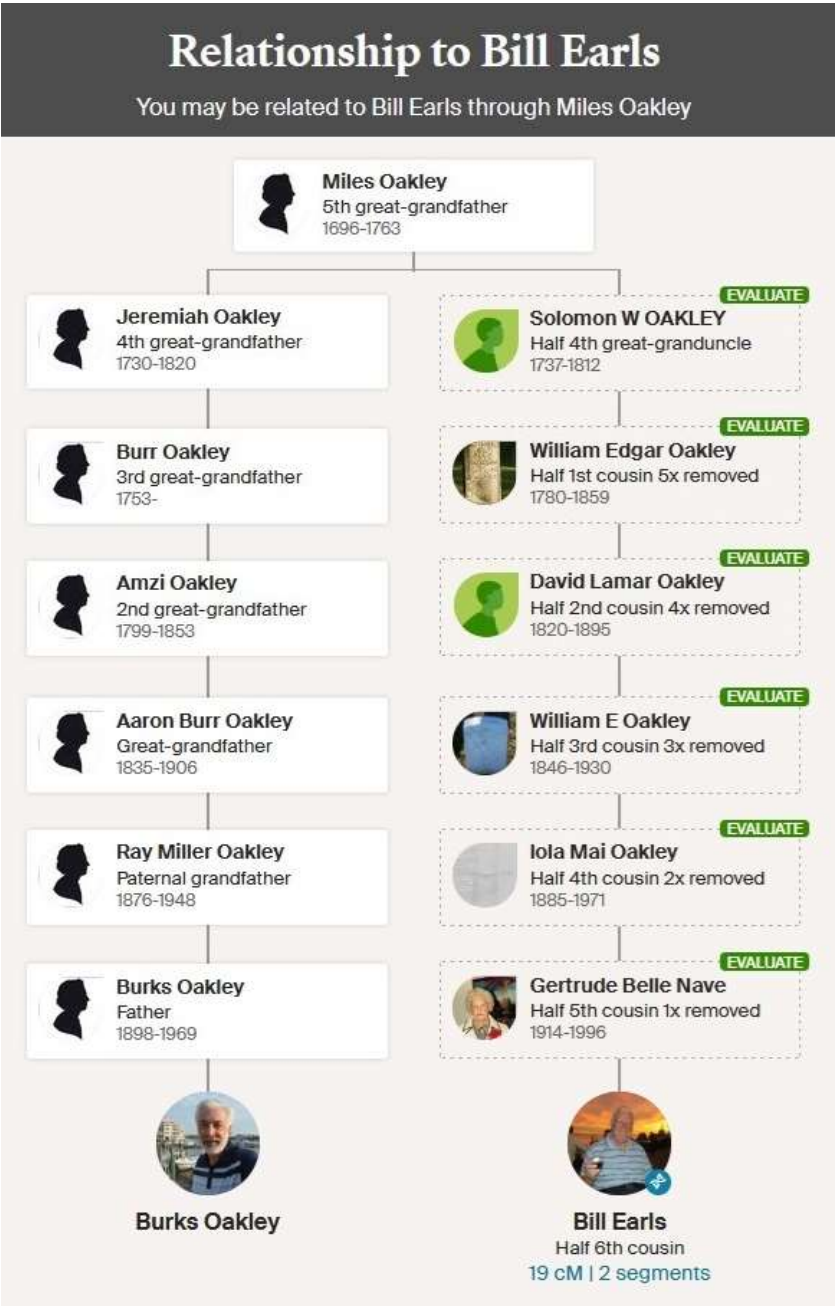
Ancestry.com. Geneanet Community Trees Index

[database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com

Operations, Inc., 2022.

This “marriage record” certainly agrees with my profile of Miles Oakley III – same parents, same wife, and same children.

I went on to look at the chart showing how software on Ancestry.com found that Bill Earls and I are both descended from Miles Oakley:



The software found that we “may” be related through Miles Oakley. According to this chart, Bill is descended from Miles’ son Solomon W. Oakley (1737-1812).

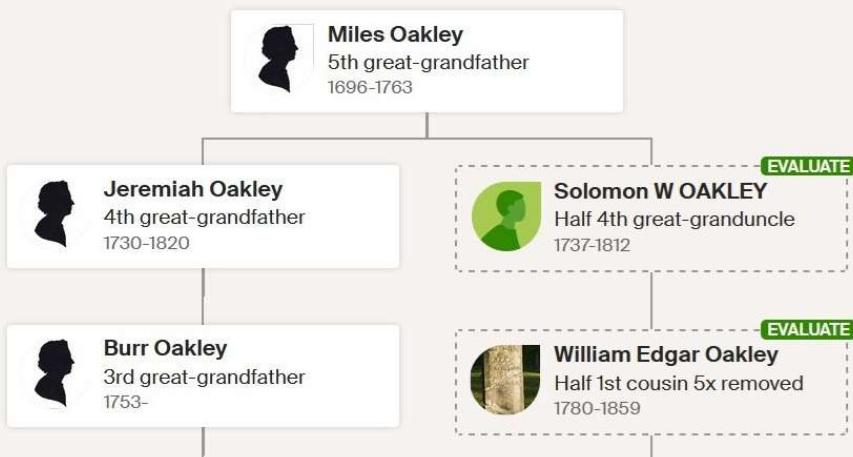
But at least according to my knowledge of Miles Oakley, he did NOT have a son named Solomon W. Oakley in 1737.

Note that in the chart above, Solomon W. Oakley appears inside a dotted box that is marked with a green “EVALUATE” button. This means that Solomon is NOT in my family tree (unlike my ancestors in the left-hand column in this chart, who appear inside solid white boxes, since they already are in my family tree on Ancestry.com).

When I clicked on the “EVALUATE” button for Solomon W. Oakley, I saw a pop-up window at the right-side of the screen:

Relationship to Bill Earls

You may be related to Bill Earls through Miles Oakley



Solomon Wilmoth OAKLEY

Solomon Wilmoth OAKLEY may be the son of Miles Oakley. Below is some of the information used to suggest this relationship:

Trees Linked to DNA Matches **0**

Ancestry Member Trees **1**

Oakley by Kirk Oakley
2 Records

ThruLines suggestions come from Ancestry trees and when members make changes to their trees, ThruLines may also change.

Ahah! Solomon Wilmoth Oakley (1737-1812) only appears in the “Oakley” family tree that is owned by Kirk Oakley. Just this one single tree, out of all the family trees on the Ancestry.com website. In other words, Solomon is not shown as a son of Miles Oakley in any other tree on the Ancestry.com website.

Note that the wording in the box at the right includes “may be the son” and “some of the information used to suggest this relationship”. It also has “when members make changes to their trees, ThruLines may also change.”

It would appear that the “suggestion” that Bill Earls and I are both descended from Miles Oakley is based solely on this one family tree on Ancestry.com. And as I have written many times before, family trees on this website are notorious for having many, many errors.

It would appear that Bill Earls has had his DNA profile on Ancestry.com for some time, since he joined Ancestry.com in 2004. And I just now found out about him. My guess (and this is just a guess) is this is because Kirk Oakley just edited his tree so that it now shows an incorrect “father-son” relationship between Miles Oakley and Solomon W. Oakley.

But if Bill and I are not both descended from Miles Oakley (1696-1763), then is it possible that he still is related to me on the ***Oakley*** side of my family?

I went on to look at the DNA matches that Bill Earls and I have in common – our so-called Shared DNA Matches. I was surprised to see that there were 38 individuals on this list. I recognized a number of these people as being ***Oakley*** descendants:

- John Bever
- Timothy Bever – his paternal grandmother was Gladys Harriet Oakley
- Howard Bever – his mother was Gladys Harriet Oakley
- Donald Baird
- Mark Workman – descended from Miles Oakley and Sarah Tippetts
- Betty Jackson – her maternal grandmother was Iola May Oakley
- Ann Winningham – Betty’s sister
- Kathy Orr – Betty’s sister

I wrote about my DNA matches with several of these people earlier – we all share a common segment of DNA on Chromosome 15, and we all are descended from Miles Oakley Jr. (1671-1743) and his wife Mercy Gardner (1673-1723):

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/14A-DeepTriangulationConfirmsOurOakleyLineage.pdf>

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/14B-Triangulation-Chr.15.pdf>

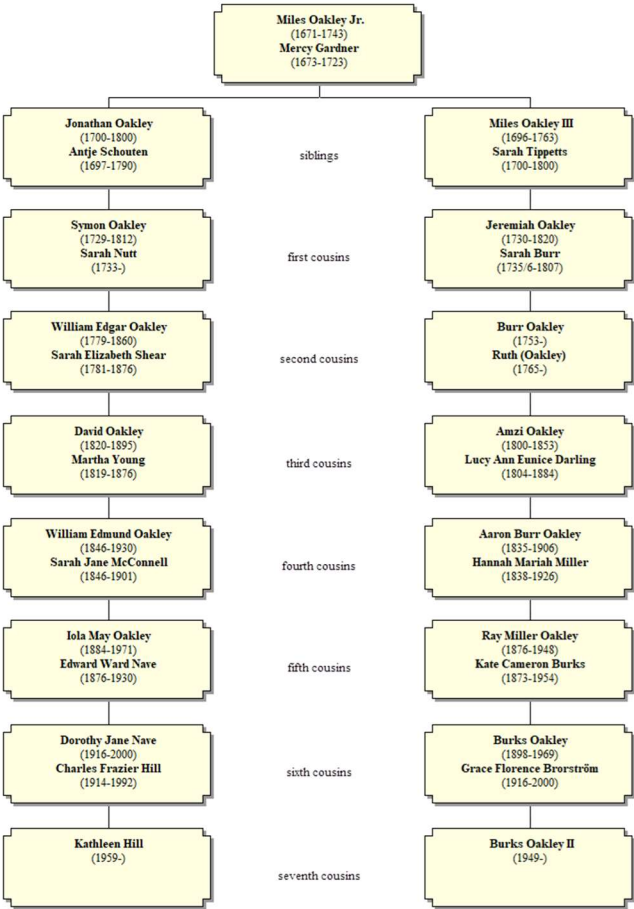
Three of the people on the list of Shared DNA Matches are sisters – Betty Jackson, Ann Winningham, and Kathy Orr. All three of them had the maiden name **Hill**, and their mother was Dorothy Jane Nave (1916-2000). And Dorothy’s mother was Iola May Oakley (1885-1971). I can trace their **Oakley** line from Iola May Oakley back to the Oakley-Gardner couple mentioned above.

Well, according to Bill Earls’ family tree, his mother was Gertrude Belle Nave (1914-1996), and her mother was Iola May Oakley (1885-1971). So this means that Gertrude and Dorothy were sisters, and Dorothy’s three daughters are first-cousins of Bill Earls. When I discovered this relationship, I sent an email to Kathy Orr (née Hill). She wrote back right away:

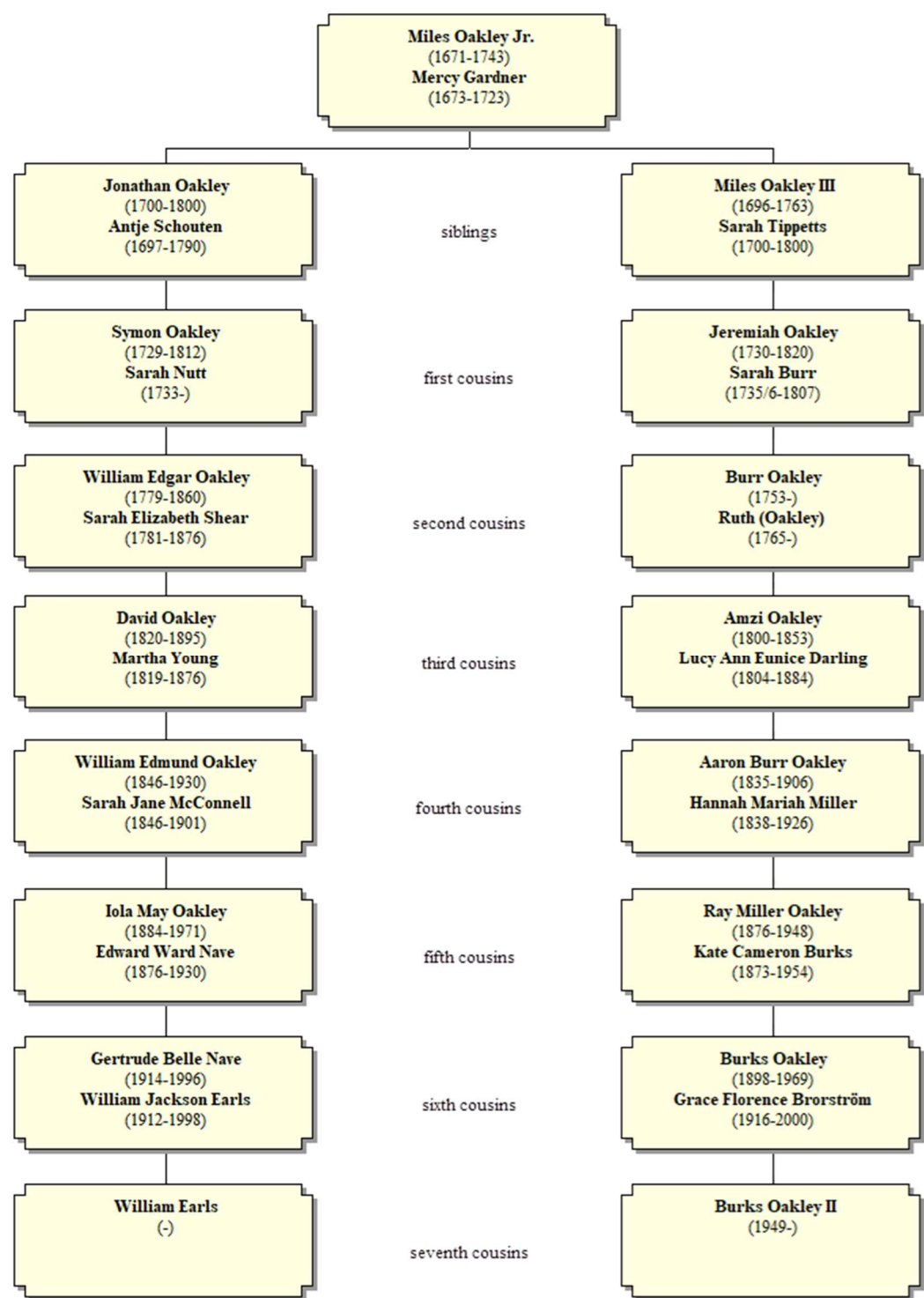
Yes, Bill Earls (better known as Ozzie Bill) is my cousin. Bill grew up in Nashville with a sister and brother. He enlisted in the Army during the Vietnam war, and it was my understanding he met his wife from Australia during the war. He has spent a tremendous amount of time doing research on the Nave and Oakley families.

Of course, this means that I now can trace Bill Earls’ **Oakley** line back to the same Oakley-Gardner couple that are Kathy’s ancestors.

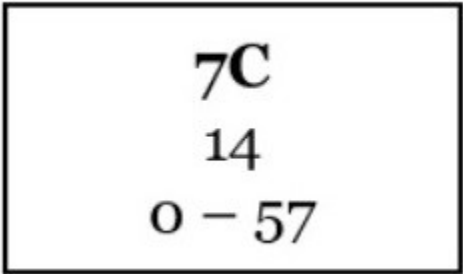
Here is a chart that I already had on my computer, showing how Kathy Orr (née Hill) and I are related:



I added Bill Earls and his parents to my RootsMagic database, and then generated a similar relationship chart:

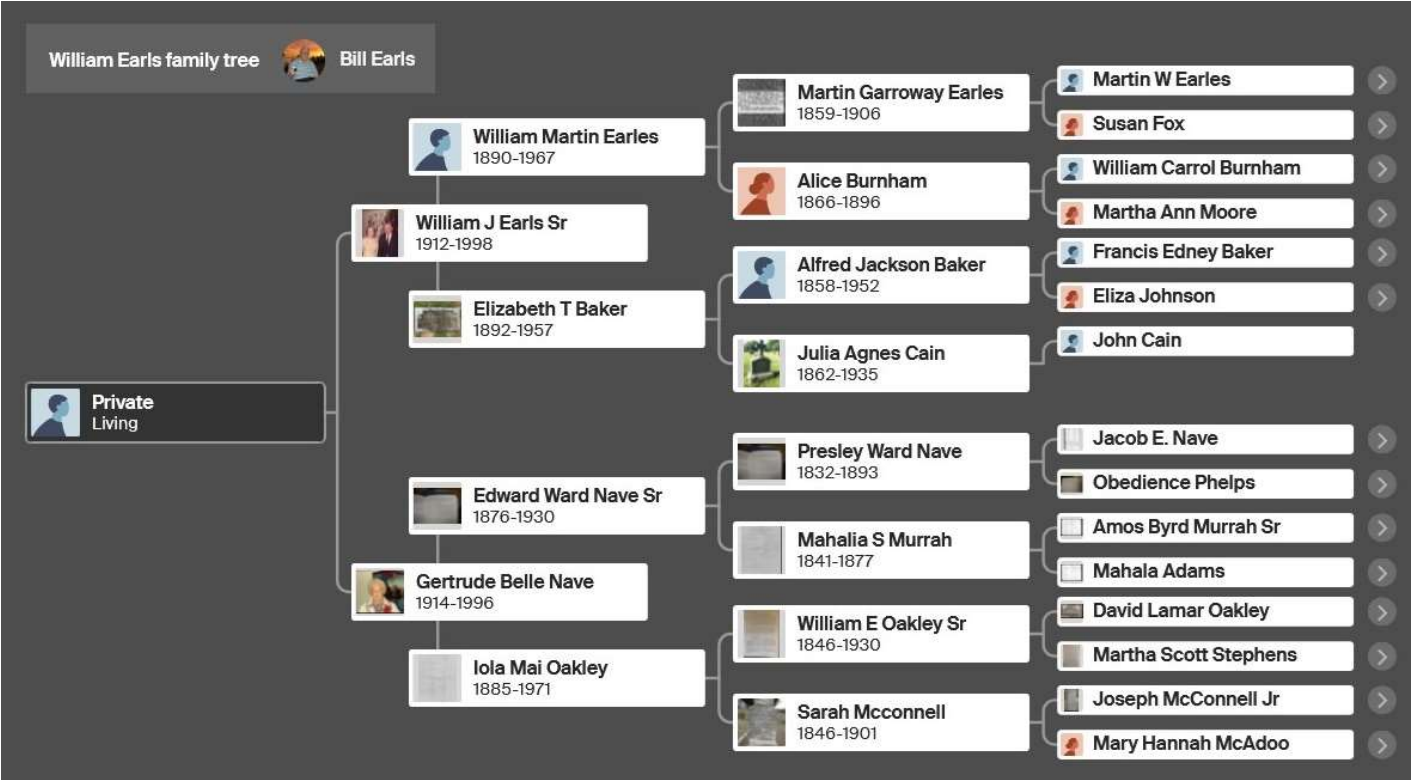


According to this chart, Bill and I are seventh-cousins (7C). And we shared 19 cM of DNA. According to the Bettinger data, 7C on average share 14 cM of DNA, with a range of 0-57 cM:



So my DNA match with Bill is not that much larger than average.

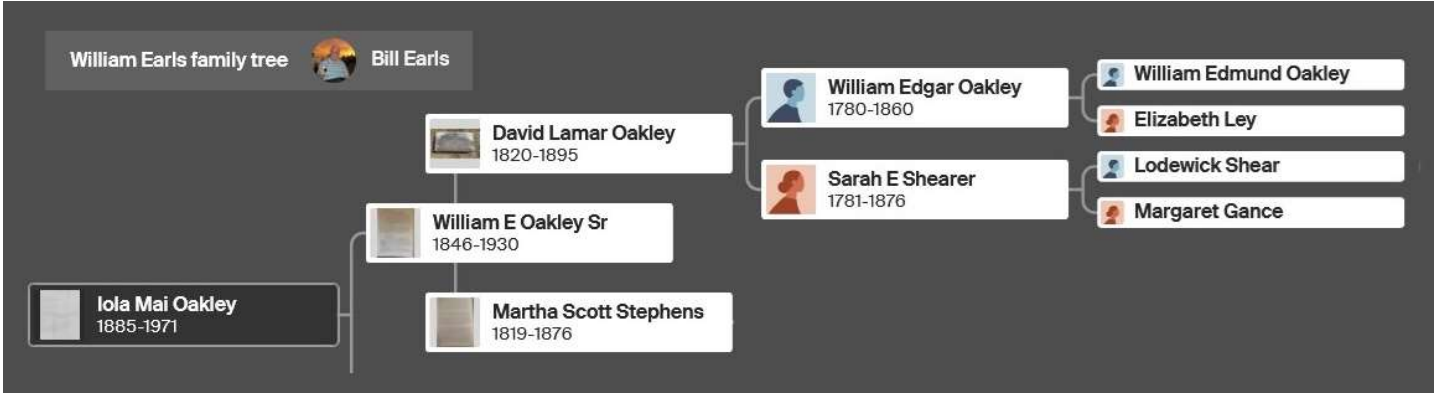
I also looked at Bill Earls’ family tree on Ancestry.com – well, really Bill’s pedigree chart. Here is the initial portion:



I note that his maternal grandmother was Iola Mai Oakley, but I believe that the correct spelling was “May” (not Mai). At least, her gravestone has “May”:



The relevant portion of Bill’s pedigree for Iola May Oakley is:



I actually don't think that this is correct. I agree that Iola's father was William Edmund Oakley (1846-1930). And that William Edmund Oakley's father was David Lamar Oakley (1820-1895). And that David Lamar Oakley's father was William Edgar Oakley (1779/80-1860).

But my version of Bill's Oakley line has Symon Oakley (1729-1812) as the father of William Edgar Oakley.

Here is a profile for William Edgar Oakley – this one is from the “Angela Ashley Family Tree”:

Angela Ashley Family TreeFind in treeAngela Monroe



William Edgar Oakley

BIRTH AUG 15 1780 • Connecticut, USA

DEATH 17 FEBRUARY 1860 • Ohio, United States of America

Family

Parents

Simon Oakley
1729-1812

Sarah Nutt
1733-

Spouse and children

Sarah Elizabeth (Betsy) Shear
1781-1876

Margaret Oakley
1801-1886

Abraham Oakley
1802-1886

Phoebe Ann Oakley Armstead
1804-1875

Elizabeth Oakley Taylor
1807-1875

Ann Mariah Oakley
1808-1828

William R Oakley
1811-1862

John B. Oakley
1813-1813

Sarah Caroline Oakley Lott
1814-1880

George William Oakley
1818-1864

David Oakley
1820-1895

Claricia Oakley
1824-1915

Amasa Wilder Oakley
1826-1895

This profile has William Edgar Oakley's father as Simon Oakley.

Note that I have used the spelling “Symon” in my family tree. This is because Symon's mother was Antje Schouten (1697-1790), and her father was Symon Schouten (1655-1730). I assume that she named her son after her father:



Symon Schouten was born in the Netherlands and immigrated to America, which would explain the spelling “Symon”:



But I digress...

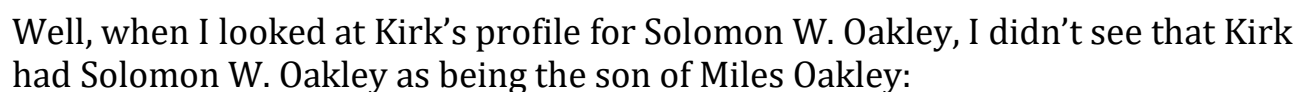
Let me now go back to Bill Earls’ family tree, which shows William Edmund Oakley as the father of William Edgar Oakley. When I looked at Bill’s profile for William Edgar Oakley on the Ancestry.com website, I saw that it had to be in error:



This profile shows William Edgar Oakley being born in 1780 to William Edmund Oakley, who died in 1759. Of course, this would be impossible.

Bill’s family tree does not have the parents of William Edmund Oakley. Perhaps the wrong father for William Edgar Oakley in Bill’s family tree kept the software on Ancestry.com from showing how Bill and I are related.

I now want to go back to Kirk Oakley, whose family tree appears to be responsible for me finding Bill Earls in the first place. Recall that Ancestry.com used Kirk’s family tree to suggest that Solomon W. Oakley was the son of Miles Oakley:



Kirk has Solomon as the son of Jonathan Oakley and Antjen Schouten. I certainly haven't seen any family trees that have Solomon as a son of that couple.

In addition, Kirk's tree has Solomon and his wife Rachel having children from 1758 through 1805, a span of 47 years. And their last child, Tobias G. Oakley, was born in 1805, when Rachel would have been 67 years old. So I don't have much confidence in Kirk's information about Solomon W. Oakley.

At this point, I'm completely flummoxed. And befuddled. It really is difficult to sort through all of the errors in family trees on the Ancestry.com website. Sigh!

As an aside, here is a short bio for Kirk Oakley:



WILLING TO HELP

Kirk Oakley
The Entrance, New South Wales, Australia
Age: 40-49

Message

...

Family History Experience
Intermediate
Since 2001

Research Interests
Oakley
New York
1600 - 2012

Like Bill Earls, Kirk lives in New South Wales, Australia. Maybe the two of them can figure all this out over a Great Northern Super Crisp Lager or two:



What Do I Know For Sure?

Bill Earls is a first-cousin of Kathy Orr (née Hill). Kathy and Bill have the same maternal grandmother, Iola May Oakley. In the past, I was able to trace Iola May Oakley’s ancestry back to Miles Oakley (1671-1743) and his wife Mercy Gardner (1673-1773).

A number of people, including Kathy and me, have a common segment of DNA on Chromosome 15. This group is called a triangulation group, since we all share a common segment of DNA and we all are descended from Miles Oakley and his wife Mercy Gardner. I detailed all of this in two earlier narratives:

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/14A-DeepTriangulationConfirmsOurOakleyLineage.pdf>

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/14B-Triangulation-Chr.15.pdf>

Importantly, Bill has DNA matches with three of the people in this triangulation group who have their DNA profiles on Ancestry.com, namely Kathy Orr (née Hill), Tim Bever, and Mark Workman. Bill also has DNA matches with Kathy's sisters, Betty Jackson and Ann Winningham.

At this point, I have every reason to believe that Bill Earls also has the same matching segment of DNA on Chromosome 15. It would be most helpful if he could download his DNA profile from Ancestry.com and then upload it to the free GEDmatch.com website.

Bill? Are you listening? <smile>

Appendix A: John Bowen Oakley Sr.

My wife’s paternal grandfather was John Bowen (1888-1959), who was born in Wales. He immigrated to America in 1907. My brother-in-law was named John Bowen, in honor of his paternal grandfather.

When I was looking at all the family trees involving Bill Earls’ branch of the *Oakley* family, I was quite surprised to find a John Bowen Oakley Sr.:

Roots, Branches, Twigs a...Find in treeRichard Hunsaker

John Bowen Oakley

BIRTH 18 SEP 1875 • Coshocton, Coshocton, Ohio, USA

DEATH 8 SEPTEMBER 1947 • Highland, Oakland, Michigan, USA

Family

Spouse and children

Parents

William Edmund Oakley Sr

1846–1930

Sarah Jane McConnell

1846–1901

Louise Lydia Thiel

1875–1956

John Bowen Oakley

1907–1979

Lewellyn McConnell Oakley

1908–1987

Thiel Oakley

1911–

I note that since this man had a son who was also named John Bowen Oakley (1907-1979), he is referred to as John Bowen Oakley Sr. in many trees on the Ancestry.com website (including Bill Earls’ family tree).

I was quite surprised to see that John Bowen Oakley Sr.’s father was William Edmund Oakley Sr. (1846-1930), and of course, William was Bill Earls’ great-grandfather.

Roots, Branches, Twigs a...Find in treeRichard Hunsaker

William Edmund Oakley Sr

BIRTH 02 JAN 1846 • Truro, Franklin County, Ohio, United States of America

DEATH 15 DEC 1930 • Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, United States of America

Family

Spouse and children

Parents

David Lamar Oakley

1820–1895

Martha Scott Young

1819–1876

Sarah Jane McConnell

1846–1901

David McConnell Oakley

1868–1890

Jennie Shaylor Oakley

1878–1965

William Edmund Oakley

1870–1932

Joseph Tennyson Oakley

1880–1962

Fredrick Almond Oakley

1872–1872

James Garfield Oakley

1883–1954

Llewellyn Cardiff Oakley

1874–1961

Iola May Oakley

1884–1971

John Bowen Oakley

1875–1947

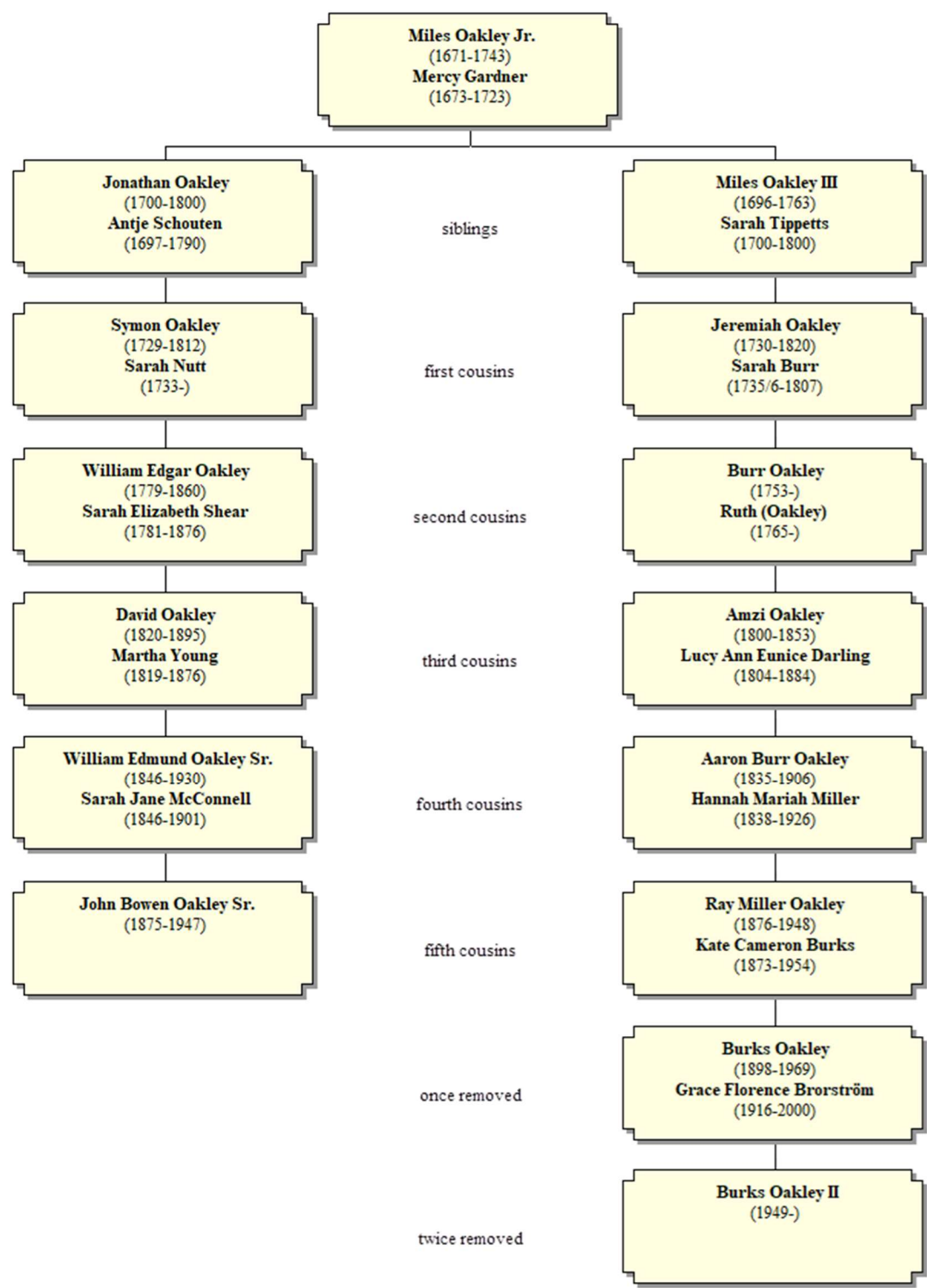
Quintus Lamar Oakley

1887–1960

And John Bowen Oakley Sr. had a sister named Iola May Oakley (1884-1971), who was Bill Earls’ maternal grandmother. Of course, Iola May Oakley was also the grandmother of Kathy Orr (née Hill) and her sisters Betty and Ann.

I guess that means that John Bowen Oakley Sr. was Bill Earls’ great-uncle. Small world!

Here is a chart showing how John Bowen Oakley Sr. and I are related:



John Bowen Oakley Sr. was my paternal grandfather’s fifth-cousin. That makes him my fifth-cousin twice-removed.

Here is the entry for John Bowen Oakley Sr. on the FindAGrave.com website:



MEMORIALSCEMETERIESFAMOUSCONTRIBUTE



Photo added by [K. Doran](#)

John Bowen Oakley Sr.

BIRTH	18 Sep 1875 Coshocton, Coshocton County, Ohio, USA
DEATH	8 Sep 1947 (aged 71) Highland, Oakland County, Michigan, USA
BURIAL	Highland Cemetery Highland, Oakland County, Michigan, USA
PLOT	Lot 201, Grave 5
MEMORIAL ID	115370919 · View Source

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/115370919/john_bowen_oakley

And here is the entry for Iola May Oakley Nave from FindAGrave.com:



MEMORIALSCEMETERIESFAMOUS

Iola Mai *Oakley* Nave

BIRTH	4 Aug 1884 Dodge City, Ford County, Kansas, USA
DEATH	14 Jul 1971 (aged 86) Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, USA
BURIAL	Woodlawn Memorial Park and Mausoleum Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, USA  Add to Map
PLOT	Grace9lands, Lot 38-2
MEMORIAL ID	151647868 · View Source

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/151647868/iola-mai-nave>

The entry for Iola May Oakley Nave on the FindAGrave.com website also lists her children:

Children:

Sarah Elizabeth "Nannie" Nave (1906-2004), Memorial # 21864345

Ed Ward Nave Jr (1907-2001), Memorial # 154630078

William Presley Nave Sr(1909-1971), Memorial # 145272564

Andrew Nelson Nave (1913-1994), Memorial # 178829937

Gertrude Belle Nave (1914-1996), Memorial # 130170669

Dorothy Jane Nave (1916-2000), Memorial # 88778592

Martha Louise Nave (1921-2014), Memorial # 127834693

Joseph Lamar Nave Sr (1923-2008), Memorial # 170844694

Iola M Nave/Smith (1925-2015), Memorial # 170843710

Fredrick Lloyd "Fred" Nave (1927-1928), Memorial # 147546773

(daughter) Nave (ca 1928-)

Appendix B: Bill Earls' Parents

Kathy Orr (née Hill) sent me a photo of Bill Earls' parents:



Gertrude Belle Nave Earls and William Jackson Earls

Gertrude was a sixth-cousin of my father, Burks Oakley (1898-1969).

Appendix C: The Wachlin Branch of the Oakley Family Tree

When I was trying to sort out what caused Ancestry.com to have the incorrect (I think) common ancestors for Bill Earls and me, I revisited my DNA match with Kathy Orr (née Hill). I looked at our Shared DNA Matches, and one of them was a man having the username of *goinbroke2*:



You and KathyOrr60

4th – 6th Cousin | Paternal side

< 1% shared DNA: 27 cM across 1 segments

Trees

Ethnicity

Shared Matches

Filter by:

Unviewed

Common ancestors

Search | Sort

Distant Family



goinbroke2

4th – 6th Cousin

26 cM | < 1% shared DNA

Paternal side

Public linked tree

3 People

Common ancestor

I thought that this was an “interesting” username, so I decided to look at our DNA match. We share 26 cM, and even though he only has three people in his family tree, that was enough for software on the site to determine our common ancestors. Since Kathy and I both have DNA matches with him, I figured that he simply had to be an *Oakley* descendant.

I next looked at our common ancestors:

How are you and goinbroke2 related?

Common Ancestors

According to Ancestry member trees, these are the common ancestors that connect you and goinbroke2. View a common ancestor to see the relationship path that connects you.

goinbroke2 could be your 6th cousin through:



Miles Oakley

5th great-grandfather

1696–1763

View Relationship



Sarah Tippetts

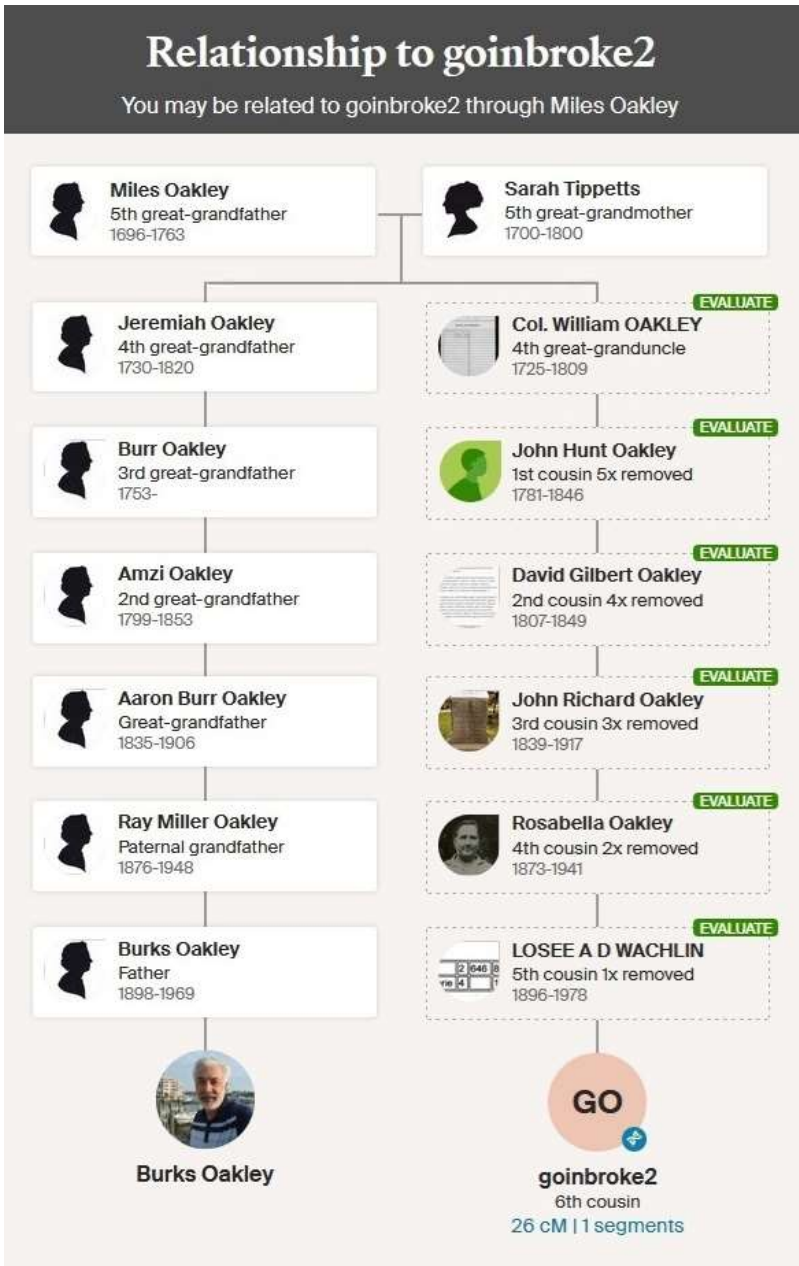
5th great-grandmother

1700–1800

View Relationship

Oh my! It appeared that our common ancestors were Miles Oakley (1696-1763) and his wife Sarah Tippetts (1700-1800). I wondered if this was “real” or due to errors in one or more family trees on the Ancestry.com website. Since it included both Miles Oakley AND his wife Sarah Tippetts, I thought that it most likely was real.

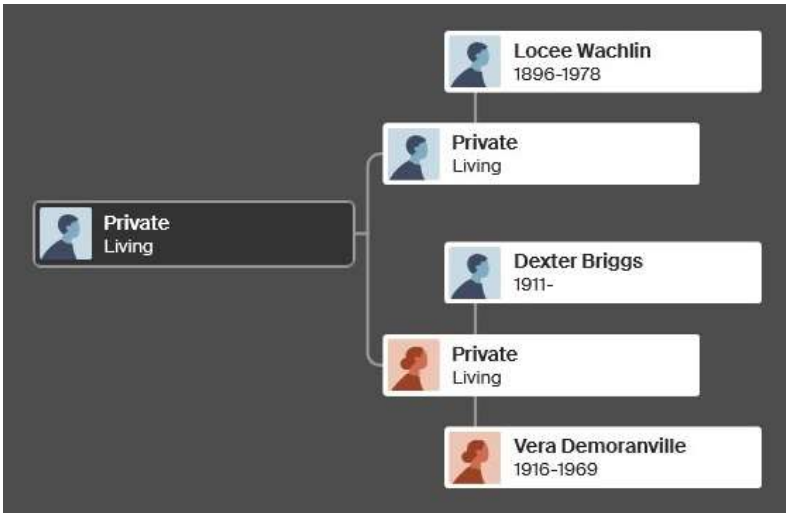
I next looked at our relationship chart:



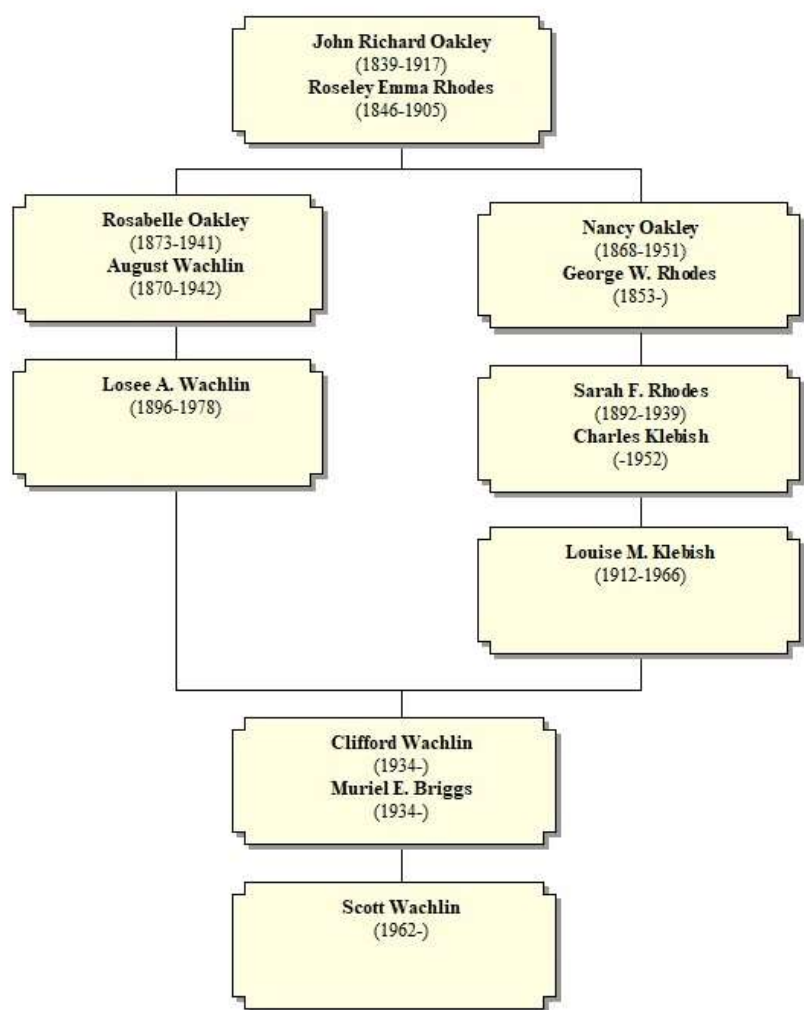
Oh my! This man (***goinbroke2***) is the son of Losee Wachlin (1896-1978), and I have had dealings in the past with Scott Wachlin, who is a grandson of Losee Wachlin. In fact, Scott has the ***Oakley-Gardner*** DNA segment on Chromosome 15:

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/14A-DeepTriangulationConfirmsOurOakleyLineage.pdf>

Scott’s tree on Ancestry.com shows that indeed he is the grandson of Losee Wachlin (the spelling on his WW II draft card is “Losee”):



When I interacted with Scott in 2017, I learned that he has two ***Oakley*** ancestral lines:



In this chart, John Richard Oakley’s grandson (Losee A. Wachlin) married his great-granddaughter (Louise M. Klebish). I wonder which path was responsible for our DNA match...

Since ***goinbroke2*** is a son of Losee Wachlin, maybe he is Clifford Wachlin.

At any rate, ***goinbroke2*** and I have shared DNA matches with:

- John Bever
- Timothy Bever
- Howard Bever
- Donald Baird
- Mark Workman
- Andrew Baird
- Elizabeth Workman
- Jeannie Trana
- Betty Jackson
- Ann Winningham
- Kathy Orr
- Brenda Coleman
- Scott Wachlin

All of these people are known ***Oakley*** descendants with the ***Oakley-Gardner*** segment on Chromosome 15. One big happy family!

And, of course, the amazing thing is that this segment of DNA on Chromosome 15 has persisted for so many generations. We all share a common segment of autosomal DNA that goes back to Miles Oakley (1671-1743) and his wife Mercy Gardner (1673-1773). This is quite remarkable and makes all of my work with genetic genealogy worthwhile!!