

Applying the New Cluster Tool on Ancestry.com To My Cousin Mark Eidem’s DNA Matches

By Burks Oakley II
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Within the past month, Ancestry.com released a new software tool called “Matches by Cluster”. This tool automates the “Leeds Method” that is commonly used by genetic genealogists. I recently wrote a narrative about using the Cluster Tool to examine my DNA clusters. See:

http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/ClusterTool_10Jul25.pdf

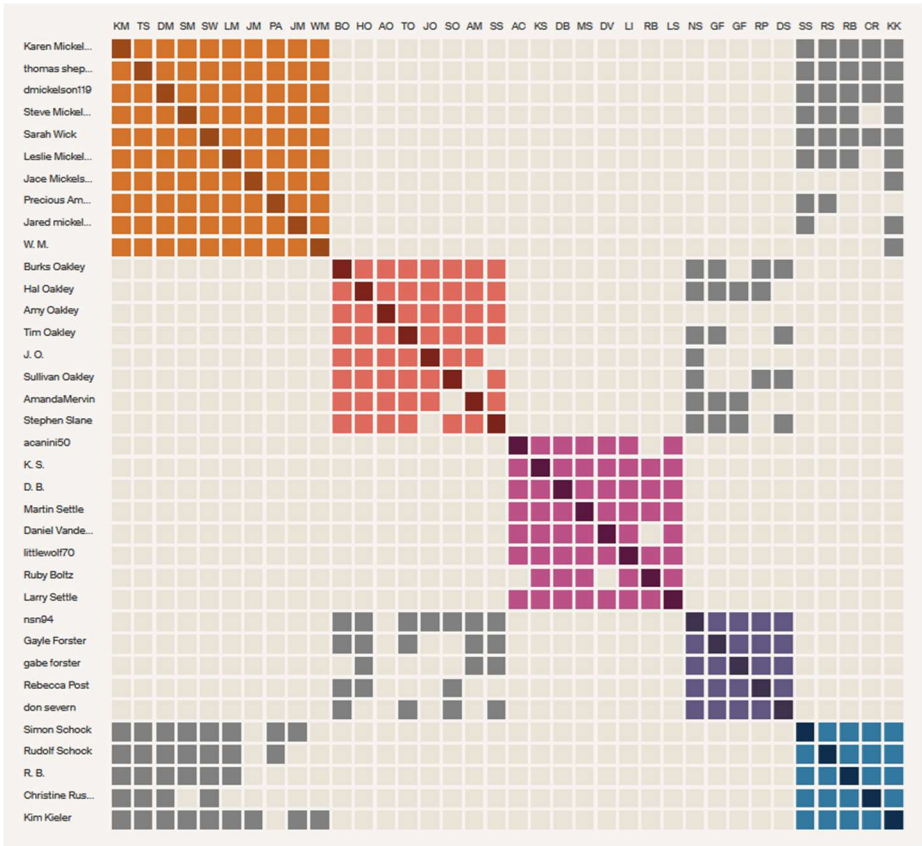
I then wrote a second narrative about using the Cluster Tool with my cousin Hal Oakley’s DNA matches – see:

http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/ClusterTool-HalOakley_12Jul25.pdf

In the present narrative, I’ll describe how I used the Cluster Tool with my cousin Mark Eidem’s DNA matches. Mark’s mother, Mary Cameron Oakley (1925-2007), was my first-cousin. The three of us are all descended from Ray Miller Oakley (1876-1948) and his wife Kate Cameron Burks (1873-1954). Unfortunately, I never met Mary Cameron. She was the oldest grandchild of Ray and Kate, and I was the youngest – we were born twenty-four years apart.

I’ll jump right in to an analysis of Mark’s clusters. If you haven’t already read the narrative about my DNA clusters, this might be a little difficult to understand. So I strongly suggest that you read that document before reading this one.

Here is Mark’s overall cluster map:



Mark has five clusters, and each of them is coded with a different color¹:

- Burnt-orange – 10 matches
- Coral – 8 matches
- Maroon – 8 matches
- Deep-purple – 5 matches
- Blue – 5 matches

This makes a total of 36 matches in the overall cluster map.²

Mark has three clusters on the maternal size of his family tree:



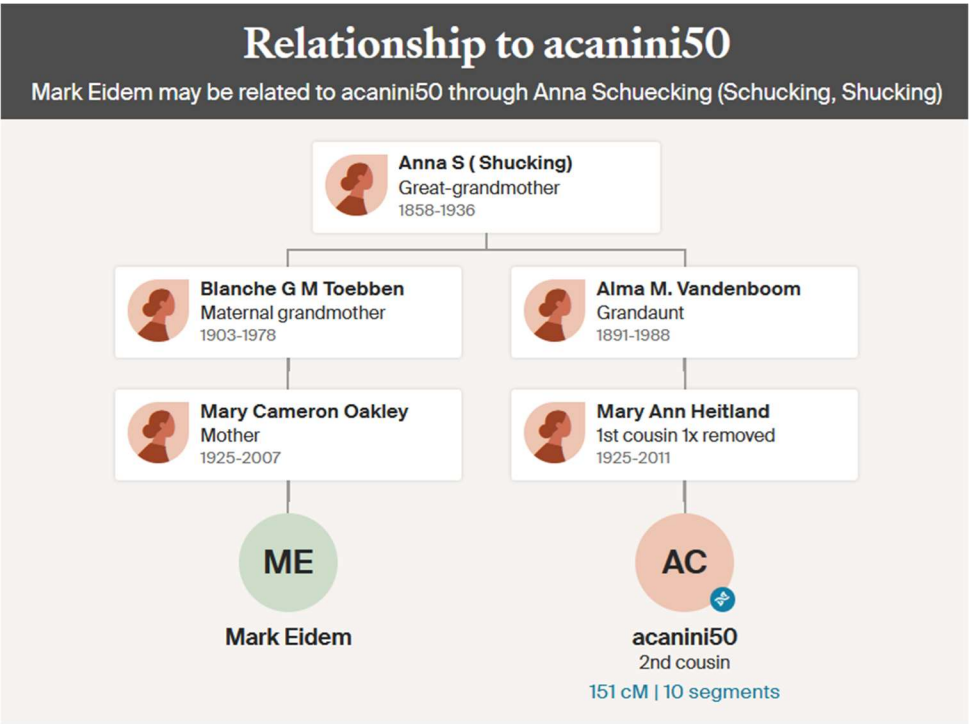
These three clusters are colored coral, magenta, and deep-violet.

The coral cluster is comprised of descendants of Ray Miller Oakley and his wife Kate Cameron Burks – except for Stephen Slane, who is a **Burks** family descendant. Stephen doesn’t have a family tree on the Ancestry.com website, so maybe the size of his DNA matches with the folks in the coral cluster determined this placement. But he really should be in the cluster with **Burks** (not **Oakley**) descendants.

The deep-violet cluster, of course, is comprised of the descendants of James Alfred Burks and his wife Mary Jane Cameron Crawford – this cluster includes **nsn94** (his last name is Severn, and he is the grandson of Lola Lisle Burks), Gayle Forster, Gabe Forster, Rebecca Post, and Don Severn. All of them are known to me to be **Burks-Crawford** descendants. I think that Stephen Slane really belongs in this cluster.

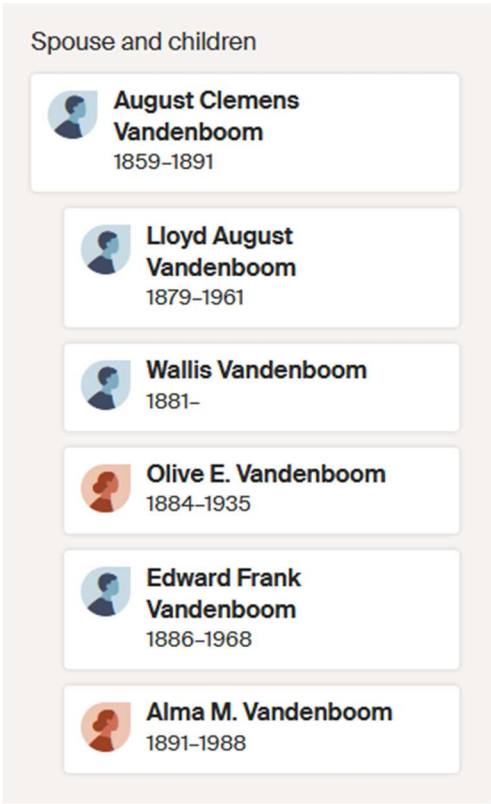
¹ I should add that these are the names of the colors that I am using; others use various other names for these colors.
² Since I wrote the first draft of this narrative, one more person (Lori Wordell) has been added to the blue cluster.

The magenta cluster is interesting, in that most of the people in the cluster do NOT have family trees, making it difficult to determine the Most Recent Common Ancestor (MRCA) for the cluster – the “Cluster MRCA”, so to speak. The one person in this cluster with a tree is *acanini50*. Here is a chart showing how Mark and *acanini50* are related:

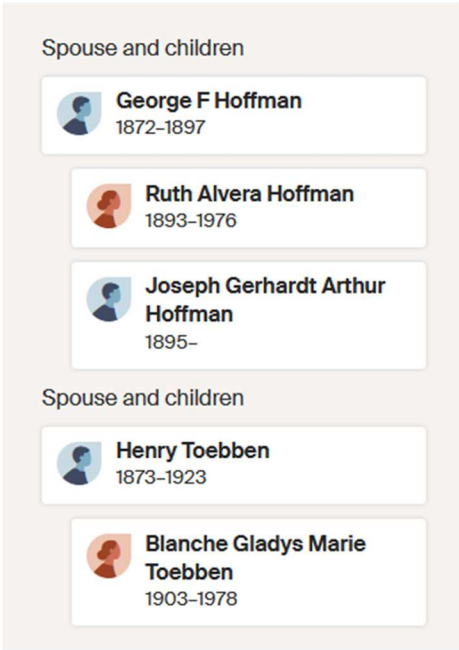


According to this chart, *acanini50* and Mark are both descended from Anna Schuecking. Note that in this chart, Anna has two daughters – Blanche Toebben and Alma Vandenboom – but these two daughters have different last names because they had different fathers. So this chart has an error, since Blanche and Alma were not full sisters, but half-sisters. That means that the three people in *acanini50*’s line should have a “half” relationship.

Here are some additional details. Anna’ first husband was August Clemens Vandenboom (1859-1891):



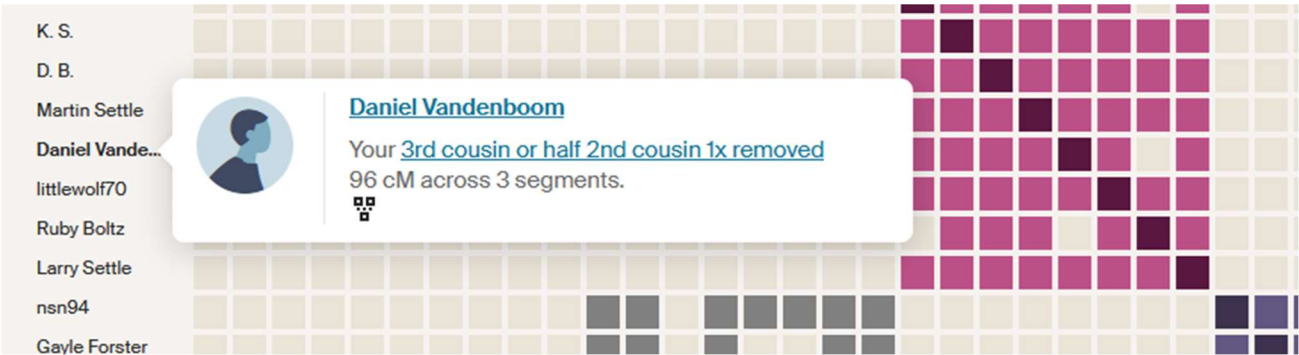
Anna’s second husband was George Hoffman (1892-1897), and her third husband was Henry Toeppen (1873-1923):



Anna Schuecking’s daughter, Blanche Toeppen, was Mark’s grandmother.

None of the other seven people in the maroon cluster have a linked family tree (linked to their DNA profiles, that is).

The only helpful hint here is that one of the people in this cluster is Daniel Vandenboom, and recall that Anna's first husband was a **Vandenboom**.



So I tentatively conclude that the “Cluster MRCA” for the maroon cluster is Anna Schuecking.

Here is the entry for Anna Schuecking in Mark’s family tree on Ancestry.com:



Anna lived her entire life in Quincy, Illinois. She is buried in Calvary Cemetery in Quincy. Here is her entry on the FindAGrave.com website:

Annie C. *Schucking* Toebe



Photo added by R&C

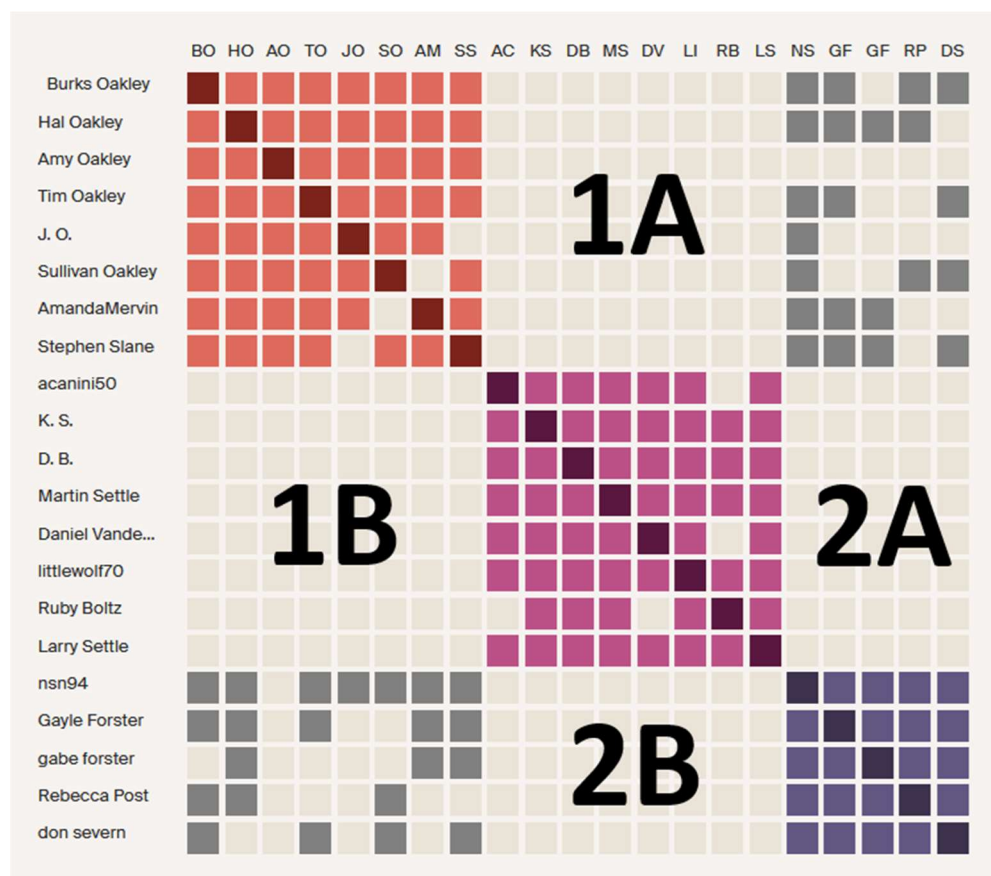
BIRTH	29 Aug 1858 Quincy, Adams County, Illinois, USA
DEATH	22 Mar 1935 (aged 76) Quincy, Adams County, Illinois, USA
BURIAL	<u>Calvary Cemetery</u> Quincy, Adams County, Illinois, USA  <u>Show Map</u>
PLOT	St Luke, Lot 239.
MEMORIAL ID	46241206 · <u>View Source</u>

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/46241206/annie-c.-toeben>

To sum up, for Mark's maternal clusters, the "Cluster MRCA's" are:

- Coral cluster – Ray Miller Oakley and his wife Kate Cameron Burks
- Maroon cluster – Anna Schuecking
- Deep-violet cluster - James Alfred Burks and his wife Mary Jane Cameron Crawford

Here again are Mark's three maternal clusters:



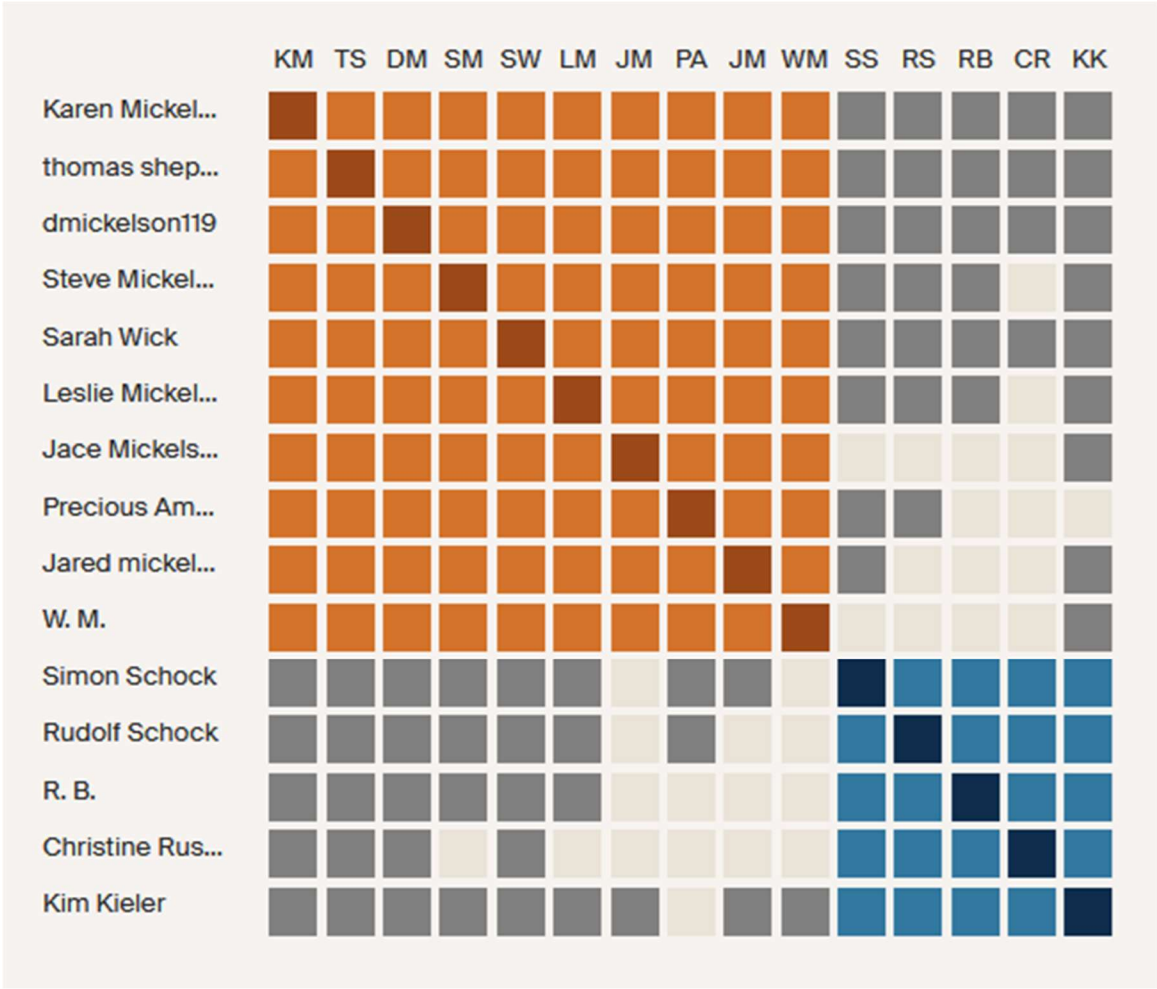
Note that the Cluster MRCA of the maroon cluster (Anna Schuecking) was on Mary Cameron Oakley's mother's side of the family, while the Cluster MRCA's of the coral and deep-violet clusters (***Oakley-Burks*** and ***Burks-Crawford***) were on Mary Cameron Oakley's father's side of the family.

Because these two sides of the family were not related to each other, there are no grey-colored boxes in the regions marked 1A and 2A (and their mirror-image regions 1B and 2B).

Speaking of gray boxes....

Note that all of the gray boxes in the cluster map shown above are where people in the coral cluster intersect with people in the deep-violet cluster. People in the coral cluster are descended from Ray Miller Oakley and his wife Kate Cameron Burks, while people in the deep-violet cluster are descended from James A. Burks and his wife Mary Jane Cameron Crawford. Since the **Burks-Crawford** couple were the parents of Kate Cameron Burks, all of the people in the coral and deep-violet boxes are related to each other. And the cells that are colored gray indicate that the two people who intersect on that cell have a DNA match that is at least 20 cM in size.

Let me now move on to examine Mark’s paternal clusters. He has two paternal clusters, and they are colored burnt-orange and blue:



When I first viewed these two clusters, my initial reaction was that there were so many gray-colored cells, so I knew that the people in each of these clusters had to be related to each other.

I’ll first look at the burnt-orange cluster. This cluster includes Karen Mickelson, **dmickelson119**, Steve Michelson, Leslie Michelson, Jace Mickelson, and Jared Michelson. I was hopeful that one or more of these **Mickelson** descendants would have a family tree showing a common ancestor with Mark. But none of them did! However, Thomas Shepard, Sarah Wick, and Precious Amerie all had trees with common ancestors. Here is a screenshot showing the common ancestors for Mark and Thomas Shepard:

How are Mark Eidem and thomas shepherd related?

Common Ancestors

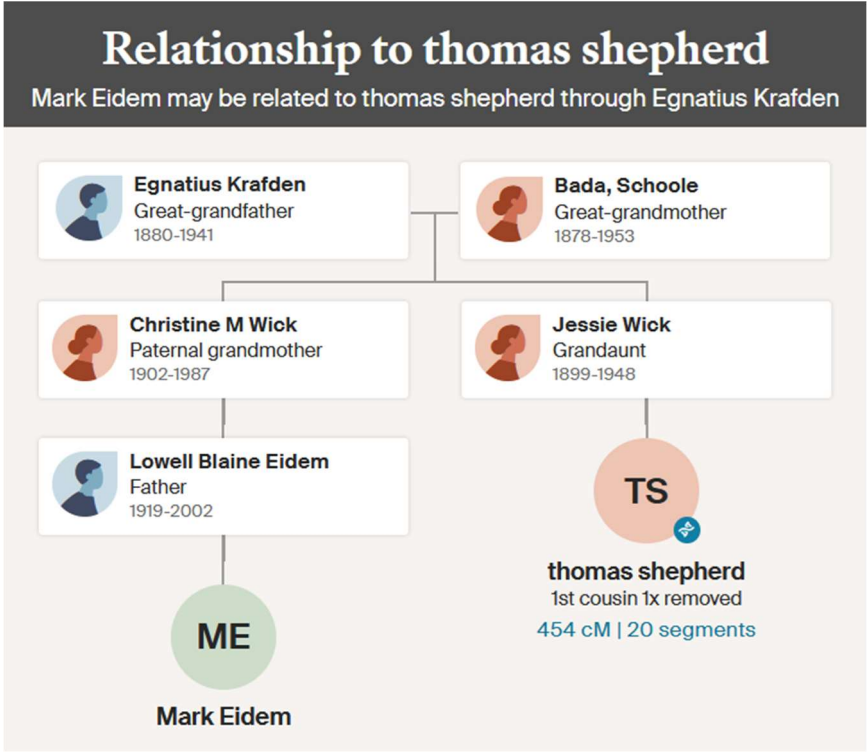
According to Ancestry member trees, these are the common ancestors that connect Mark Eidem and thomas shepherd. View a common ancestor to see the relationship path that connects them.

Mark Eidem and thomas shepherd could be 1st cousin 1x removed through:

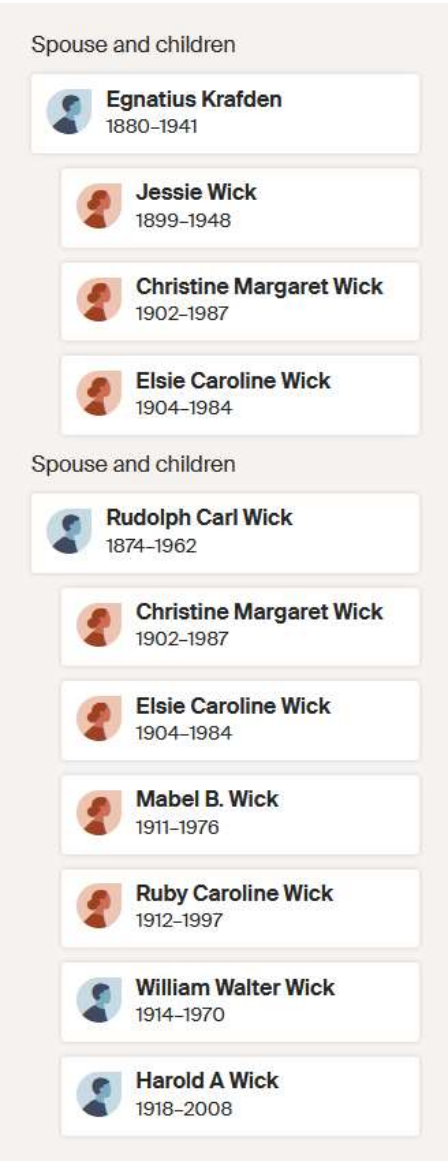
**Egnatius Krafden**
Great-grandfather
1880-1941
[View Relationship](#)

**Bada, Beatros, or Beatrice Shook or Schock or Schoole**
Great-grandmother
1878-1953
[View Relationship](#)

And here is a chart showing how Mark and Thomas Shepard are related:



Note that the daughters of the **Krafden-Schook** couple both had the surname of **Wick**. That is because Bada Schook’s second husband was Rudolph Carl Wick, and her three daughters from her first marriage took on the surname **Wick**:



Another person in the burnt-orange cluster is Sarah Wick, and here is a chart showing how Mark and Sarah are related:



Sarah Wick is also descended from Bada Schook (or Schoole), but her paternal grandfather really was Rudolf Carl Wick. So this this, the “half” relationship is correct.

The last person in this cluster with a family tree is Precious Amerie. Here is a chart showing how Mark and Precious are related:



Like Mark, Precious is descended from Christine Wick. Recall that Christine’s mother was Bada Schook.

I conclude that the “Cluster MRCA” for the burnt-orange cluster was Bada Schook.

What about the blue cluster? The five members of this cluster are:

5 matches Paternal				
	Simon Schock	2nd cousin 1x removed or half 2nd cousin Paternal side 158 cM 2% shared DNA	Public linked tree 11 people	View
	Rudolf Schock	2nd cousin 1x removed or half 2nd cousin Paternal side 115 cM 2% shared DNA	Public linked tree 10 people	View
	R. B. Managed by Herwork	3rd cousin Paternal side 91 cM 1% shared DNA	Public linked tree 27,027 people	View
	Christine Russell	3rd cousin or half 2nd cousin 1x removed Paternal side 71 cM 1% shared DNA	Unlinked tree	View
	Kim Kieler	3rd cousin or half 2nd cousin 1x removed Paternal side 67 cM < 1% shared DNA	Unlinked tree	View

None of them have a family tree that shows a common ancestor with Mark.

Simon Schock is descended from another Simon Schock, who was from Ukraine:

leaver Family Tree

Find in tree

BL brielle leaver



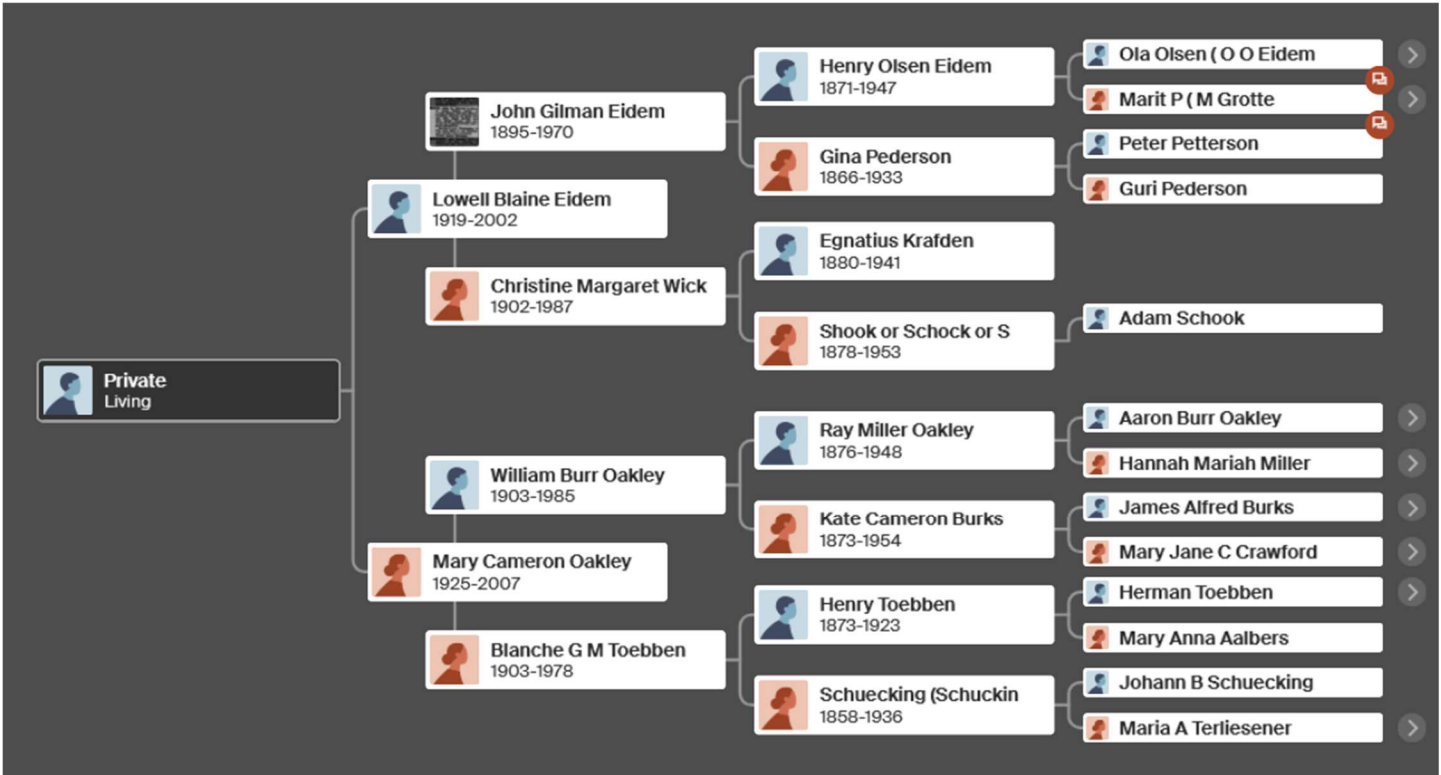
Simon A Schock

BIRTH 22 AUG 1876 • Johannesstall, Ukraine

DEATH 13 JUL 1963 • Wilmington, New Castle, Delaware, USA

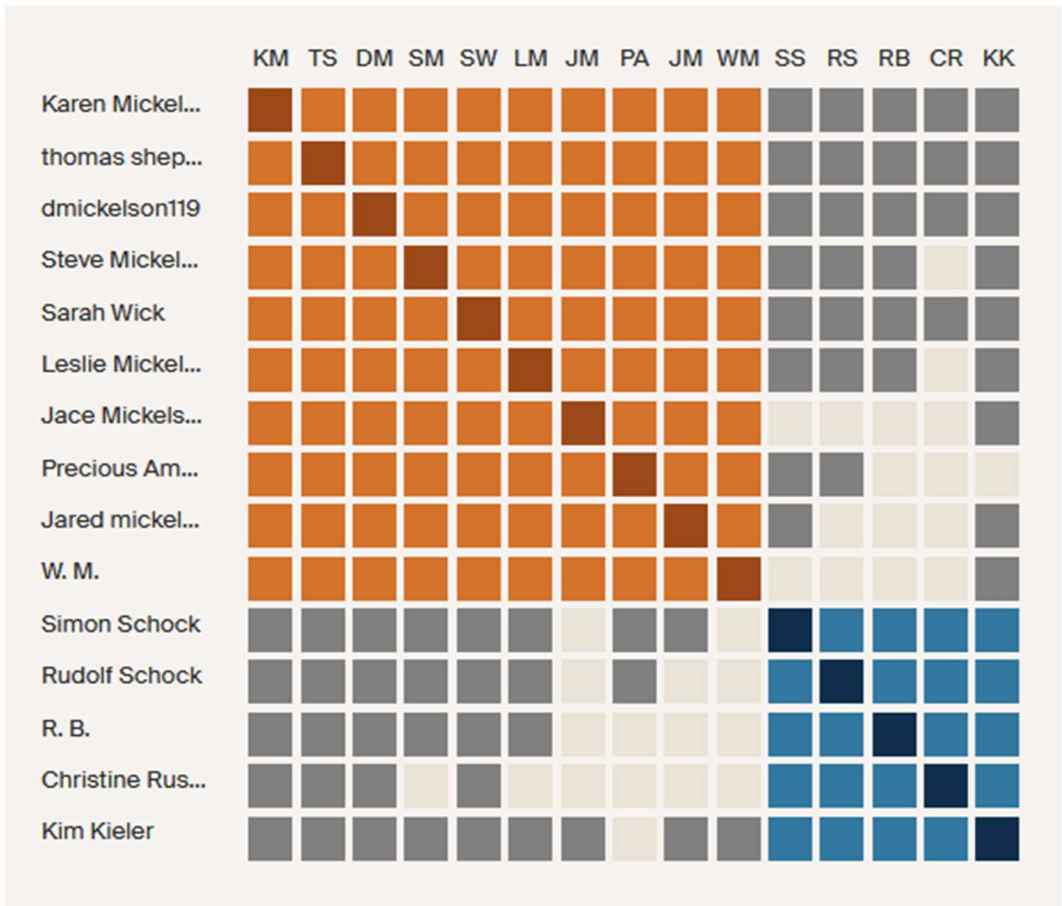
And Mark’s Adam Schook was from Russia. Adam was the father of Bada Shook.

Here is Mark’s pedigree:



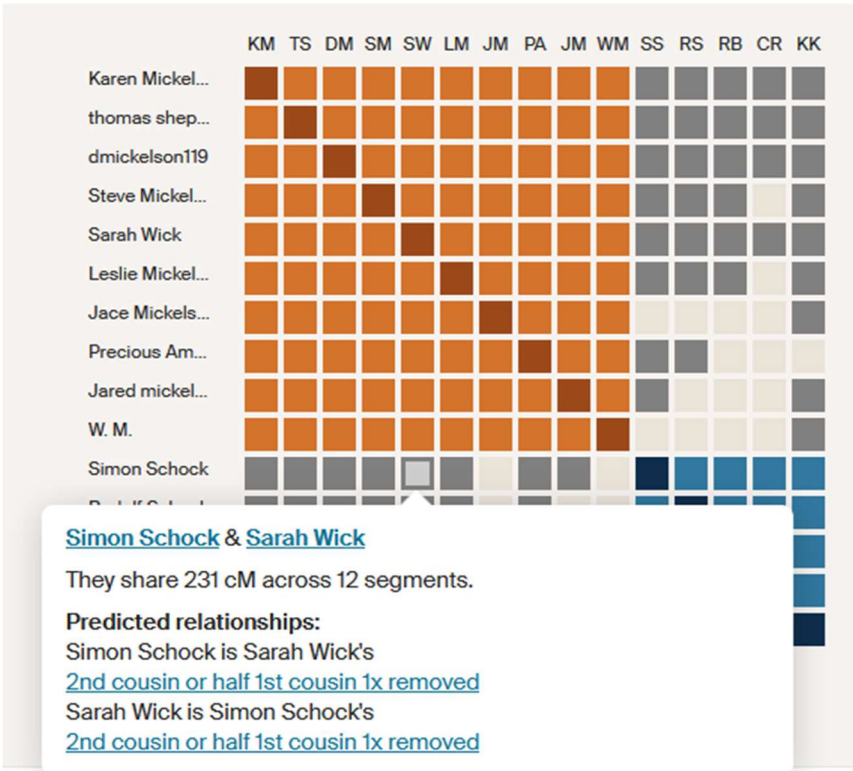
Note that in this pedigree chart, Adam Schook was the father of Bada Schock. So this looks like it might be the connection between all of the members of the blue cluster.

Going back to the two paternal clusters:



Just look at all the gray cells! Recall that if two people from different clusters share 20 cM or more of DNA, the cell where they intersect will be colored gray.

Here is one such cell – where Simon Schock (from the blue cluster) intersects Sarah Wick (from the burnt-orange cluster):



Simon and Sarah share 231 cM of DNA and could be as close as second-cousins.

Not having any additional information about the five people in Mark’s blue cluster, I’ll tentatively say that the “Cluster MRCA” for the blue cluster is Adam Schock, who was the father of Bada Schock. I apologize if I am misspelling these names...

At this point, I have to say that I am really surprised that Mark doesn't have a paternal cluster involving his Norwegian ancestors. I spent a lot of time over the years looking at Mark's lines that go back to Selbu, Norway.

I just filtered Mark's DNA matches so that I only viewed those matches that were in the 65 cM to 1300 cM size range. I saw that Mark has a 93 cM match with Ruth Stefonowicz, who most certainly is one of Mark's Norwegian-American relatives. But perhaps there aren't any others to warrant a separate cluster.

So for Mark's paternal clusters, the "Cluster MRCA" for the burnt-orange cluster is Bada Schock, while the Cluster MRCA for the blue cluster is Bada's father, Adam Schock (and possibly Adam's unknown wife, if he only had children with one wife). This close connection between these two clusters would explain why there are so many gray-colored cells in the cluster map showing just Mark's two paternal clusters.

Summary:

In this narrative, I described how I used the new "Cluster Tool" on Ancestry.com to examine Mark's DNA clusters. Mark has five clusters that collectively have a total of 36 of his DNA matches. The people in the overall cluster map have DNA matches with Mark that are between 65 cM and 1300 cM in size.

For Mark's maternal clusters, the "Cluster MRCA's" are:

- Coral cluster – Ray Miller Oakley and his wife Kate Cameron Burks
- Maroon cluster – Anna Schuecking
- Deep-violet cluster - James Alfred Burks and his wife Mary Jane Cameron Crawford

Since Kate was a daughter of the ***Burks-Crawford*** couple, many of the people in the coral and deep-violet clusters have DNA matches with each other.

For Mark's paternal clusters, the "Cluster MRCA's" are:

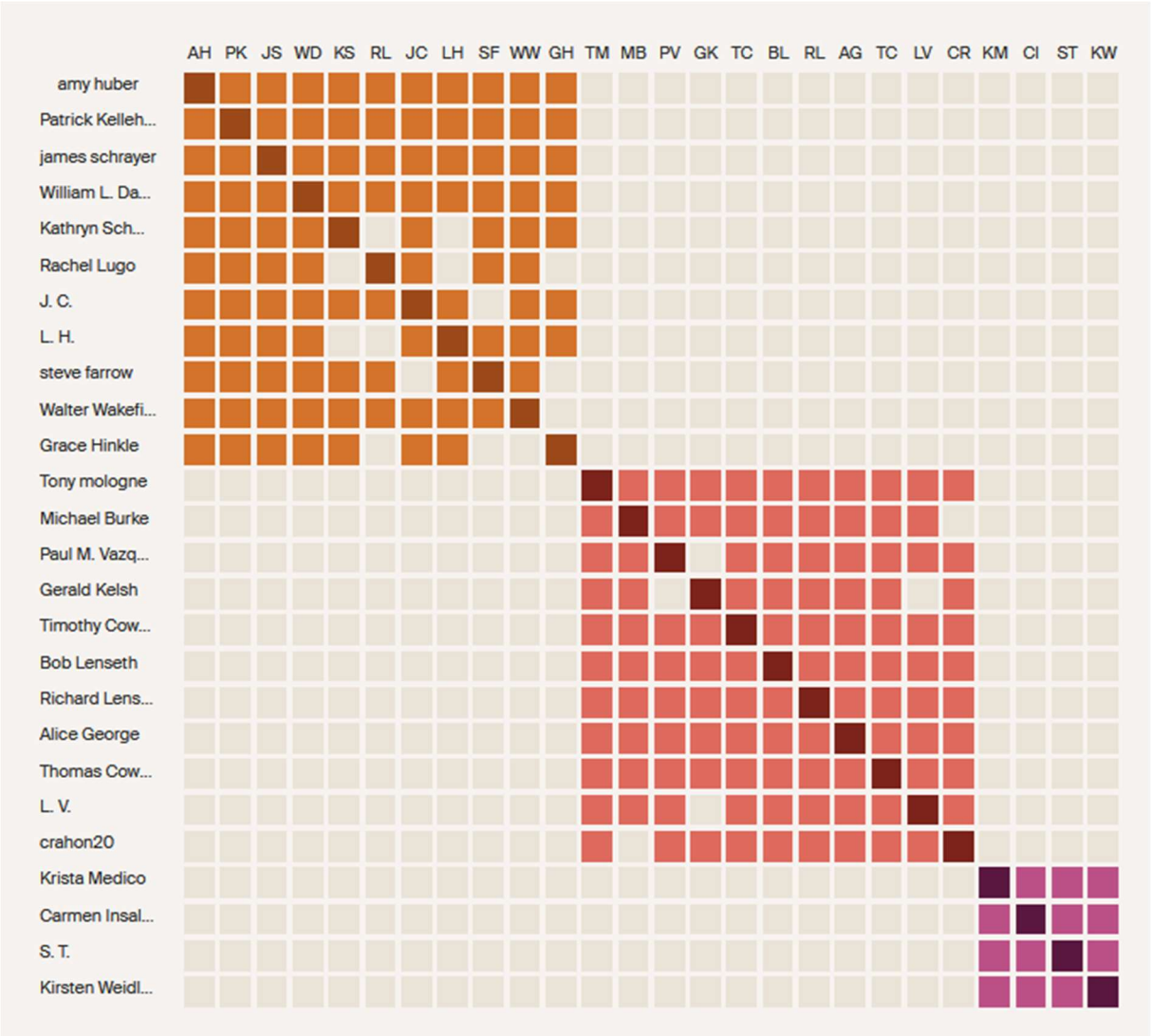
- Burnt-orange cluster – Bada Schock
- Blue cluster – Adam Schock (and his unknown wife)

Since Bada was the daughter of Adam Schock, many of the people in the burnt-orange cluster and blue cluster have DNA matches with each other that are 20 cM or larger.

While all of this is nice, I really haven't gained any useful genealogical information by using the new Cluster Tool. I haven't made a breakthrough to figure out how Mark is related to the DNA matches in his blue cluster. While this tool certainly lets the user determine the branch of the family tree where someone belongs, it doesn't do anything more than that – at least so far in my limited experience.

Appendix:

Mark’s wife, JoAnn, has a much simpler cluster map than Mark does:



The two large clusters (burnt-orange, coral) are paternal, while the small cluster (maroon) is maternal.

It is interesting that there are no gray-colored cells associated with her two paternal clusters. That is because the burnt-orange cluster comes from JoAnn’s father’s mother’s side, while the coral cluster comes from JoAnn’s father’s father’s side.

Certainly a very straightforward cluster map!