

Are the **Quincy Oakleys** Related to J.N. “Ding” Darling?

By Burks Oakley II
18 March 26

On 16 March 2026, I sent my **Oakley** cousins a narrative about my **Darling** line, going back to my third-great grandfather, Samuel Darling (1754-1807)– with an appendix about his father, Jabez Darling (1728-1778):

http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/FelicityLynn_16Mar26.pdf

My first-cousin once-removed, Hal Oakley, responded in an email, where he wrote “Any connection between our Darlings and Ding Darling?”

So who the heck is Ding Darling? According to Wikipedia:

Jay Norwood Darling (October 21, 1876 – February 12, 1962), better known as Ding Darling, was an American cartoonist who won two Pulitzer Prizes. He was an important figure in the 20th century conservation movement and founded the National Wildlife Federation.

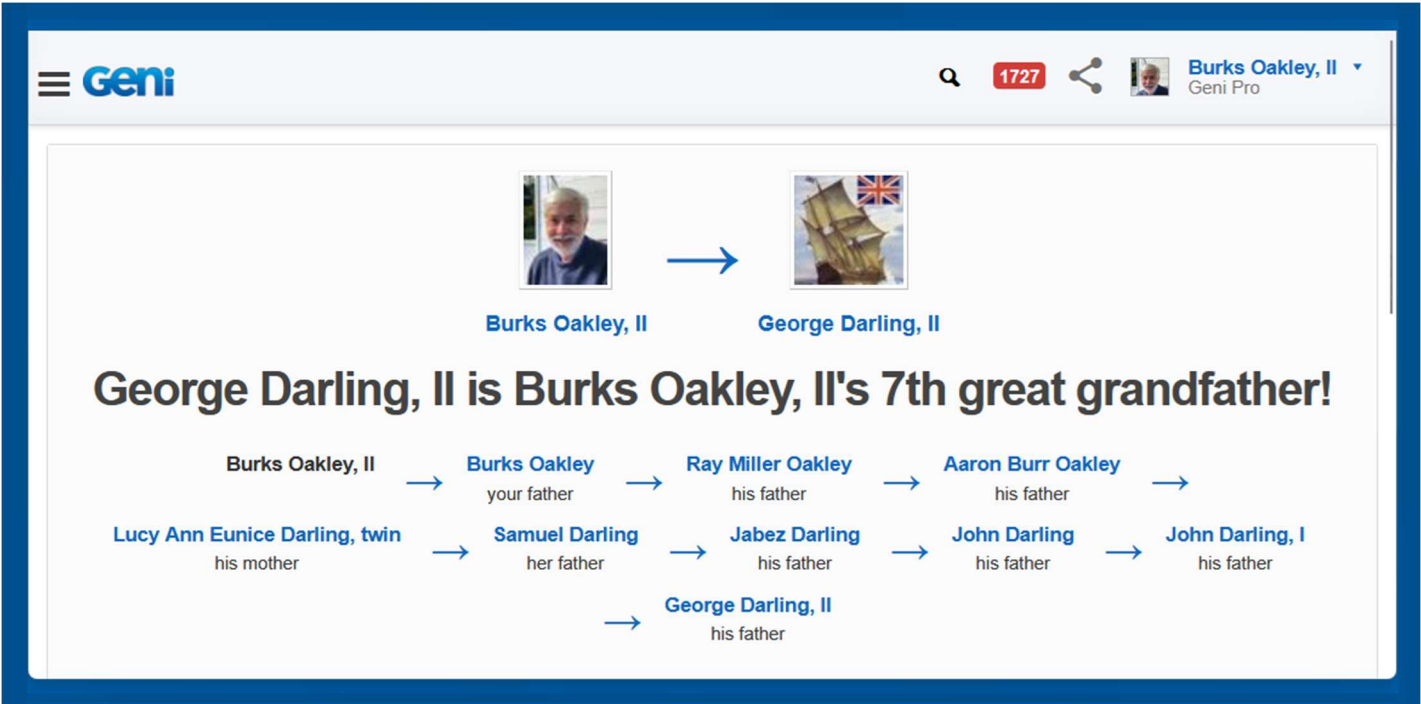
The J. N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island in southwest Florida is named after him, as is the Lake Darling State Park in Iowa that was dedicated on September 17, 1950. Lake Darling, a 9,600-acre lake at the Upper Souris National Wildlife Refuge in North Dakota, is also named in his honor.

Jay Norwood “Ding” Darling received his famous nickname as a shortened contraction of his last name. While attending Beloit College in Wisconsin, Jay was responsible for editing the school yearbook. To make it more engaging, he added humorous sketches and, to keep his identity secret, he signed his work “D’ing,” a contraction of “Darling”, which eventually became just “Ding” and stuck.

He began using “Ding” professionally when signing his cartoons for the *Sioux City Journal* in 1900 and later for the *Des Moines Register* in 1906.

Now, back to Hal’s question – Are the Quincy **Oakleys** related to Ding Darling?

My **Darling** line going back to George Darling II (1614-1693) appears on the Geni.com website:



George Darling II was my seventh-great grandfather. He had an incredibly interesting life (although I’m sure that at times it was incredibly difficult). I wrote about George Darling II when I first became interested in genetic genealogy:

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/4A-DarlingGenealogy.pdf>

George’s life was discussed at the very end of that document.

Briefly, George was Scottish, and he was captured by the English in the Battle of Dunbar in 1650. Thousands of Scots who had been captured by the English were force marched to London, and by some chance, George was among the 150 men who were sent to Massachusetts as indentured servants.

George Darling worked in the Saugus Iron Works. After his seven years as an indentured servant, George married and subsequently had twelve children (listed on the next page). The first was John Darling I (my ancestor), who was born in 1657.

My guess is that George had a family in Scotland before he was captured at the Battle of Dunbar, and it is likely they never heard from him again after he was captured and sent to America.

Here is the entry for George Darling II on the Geni.com website:



George Darling, II

Gender: Male

Birth: July 16, 1614
Lasswade, Midlothian, Scotland (United Kingdom)

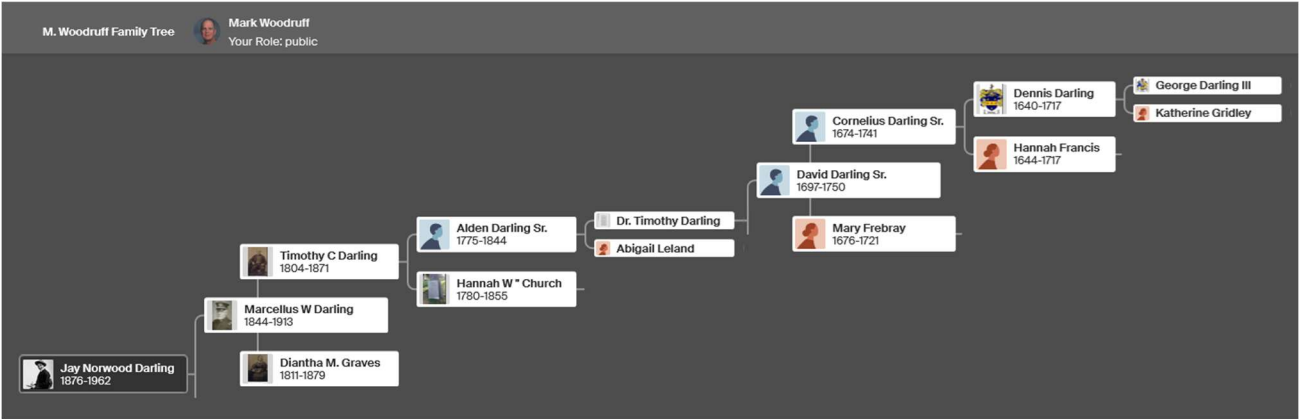
Death: October 09, 1693 (79)
Salem, Essex County, Province of Massachusetts, British Colonial America

Place of Burial: Salem, Essex County, MA, United States

Immediate Family: Son of [George Henry Darling, I](#) and [Lady Isabel Elizabeth Muckle](#)
Husband of [Katherine unknown](#)
Father of [John Darling, I](#); [James Darling](#); [Thomas Darling, I](#); [Daniel Darling, I](#); [Sarah Elizabeth Darling](#); [Joseph Darling](#); [Margaret Darling](#); [Hannah Darling](#); [Benjamin Darling](#); [Henry Darling](#); [Joanna Darling](#) and [Rebecca Darling](#)« less
Brother of [Charles Darling](#); [Agnes Darling](#); [Charlotte Darling](#) and [Beatrice Darling](#)
Half brother of [Richard Darling](#)

The reason that I presented all of these details about George Darling II is that a number of family trees on Ancestry.com show an ancestral line from Ding Darling back to George Darling II (or III, depending on whose tree you are viewing).

Here is one such ancestral line (from the M. Woodruff Family Tree), which goes from Jay Norwood “Ding” Darling back to George Darling:



In fact, hundreds and hundreds of family trees on Ancestry.com have a line from Ding Darling back to George Darling II. But they all have the same problem. They all have George’s son being Dennis Darling (1640-1717). And many of these trees have Dennis being born in America. But we know that George II didn’t come to Massachusetts until 1650 and didn’t have children in the new world until 1657.

So my guess is that all of these trees have the same error.

Here is a listing that shows that Dennis Darling (1640-1718) appears in 9,615 trees on the Ancestry.com website:

Dennis Darling found in 9615 trees

View all

Dennis Darling from tree

Foster

Birth	1640 Braintree, Norfolk, Massachusetts, USA	Father	George Darling 9GGF (1614-1693)
		Mother	Katherine Gridley 9GGM (1628-1693)
Marriage	1662 Braintree, Essex, England	Spouse	Hannah Francis Deacon (1650-1700)
Residence	1850 Worcester, Worcester, Massachusetts, USA		
Death	25 Jan 1718 Mendon, Worcester, Massachusetts, USA		

18549 People

12 Records

31 Sources

And a number of these trees not only have Dennis Darling’s father as George Darling (1614-1693) – but they include “Battle of Dunbar prisoner” as part of George’s name:

Dennis 'Denice' Darling from tree

Wojeck Walsh Family Tree

Birth	1640 Braintree, Norfolk, Massachusetts, USA	Father	George B Darling* -Battle of Dunbar prisoner* (1614-1693)
Marriage	1662 Braintree, Essex, England	Mother	Katherine Gridley (1628-1693)
Death	25 Jan 1717 Mendon, Worcester, Massachusetts, USA	Spouse	Hannah Francis Deacon (1650-1700)

15921 People

4 Records

18 Sources

Note that in this last entry, Dennis was born in 1640 to Katherine Gridley, who herself was born in 1628. All the more reason not to believe the connection between George Darling II and Dennis Darling.

Geni.com has a very pointed statement:

Overview

Media (8)

Timeline

Discussions (2)

Sources (11)

Revisions

About

edit | history

Dennis Darling (1640-1715) and his brother John arrive in Massachusetts Bay Colony and settle on a farm in Braintree, south of Boston. Not known to be sons of [George Darling, II](#).

<https://gw.geneanet.org/tdowling?lang=en&pz=timothy+michael&nz=dowl...>

M Denice Darling

Born about 1640 - Yorkshire, England

Deceased January 25, 1718 - Mendon, Worcester Co., MA, aged about 78 years old

Referring to Dennis Darling (1640-1715) and his brother John – “Not known to be sons of George Darling II.” Clearly, many people have family trees in which Dennis Darling is the son of George Darling II. But the good folks at Geni.com say that this connection is not valid.

So while it would be nice to say that we are related to Ding Darling, I think that the chances of this are very low.

Photos of Ding Darling can be found in the Appendix, starting on the next page.

Appendix: Photos of Ding Darling & A Few of His Editorial Cartoons



Ding Darling while working at the *Sioux City Journal* in 1904.

From: <https://inksnow.blogspot.com/2012/10/ding-darling.html>

Ding was awarded two Pulitzer Prizes for his editorial cartoons, and President Roosevelt appointed him to what would ultimately become the US Fish & Wildlife Service, which today continues to sport the original National Wildlife Refuge “blue goose” logo designed by him. Aside from many conservation efforts enacted within the governmental system as a politician, another result of his leadership and vision was the creation of the Federal Duck Stamp program, which he also drew the first design for.



An interesting note is what he chose as the flagship species of duck to be featured: the common Mallard. Despite its ubiquitous presence across America today, it had, astonishingly enough, been almost hunted to extinction in the 1920's. And these sorts of battles never end, as recent legislation proved once again the power of lobbyists, as usual spearheaded from the likes of the NRA, to influence and corrupt current policy, in this case the usage of toxic lead in ammunition.





All dressed up and no place to go

One of Ding’s iconic cartoons, courtesy of the Ding Darling Wildlife Society.