

My DNA Match with Shannon Lopez (née Ely) – Another Relative on the *Miller* Branch of my Family Tree

By Burks Oakley II
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A few days ago, I looked at my DNA matches on the Ancestry.com website.¹ I filtered these matches so that I only viewed those that I had not seen previously (“Unviewed”) and where software on the site was able to identify our common ancestors. This filtering process turned up a new DNA match with Shannon Lopez:

Unviewed X

Common ancestor X

Distant Family



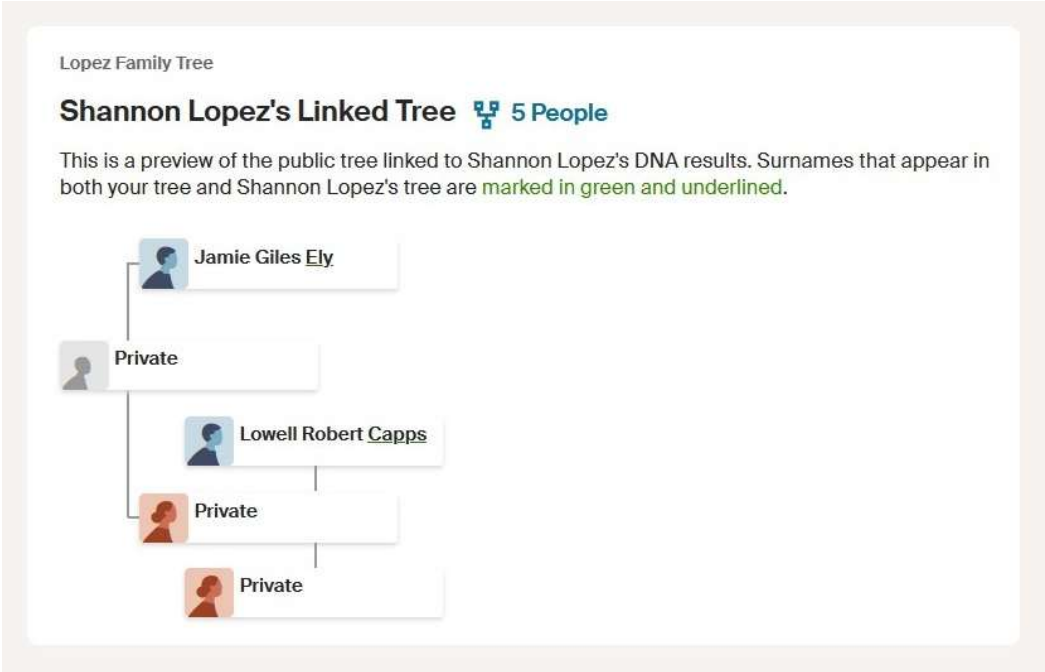
Shannon Lopez

[Half 3rd cousin 1x removed or 3rd cousin 2x removed](#)
Paternal side
13 cM | < 1% shared DNA

 Public linked tree
5 people

 Common ancestor

Shannon and I share 13 cM of DNA, and we are related on the paternal side of my family tree. I then viewed Shannon’s pedigree chart:



I went on to view our common ancestors. Sure enough, Shannon and I are both descended from Ezra Marvin Miller (1812-1874) and his wife Jane Kershaw Wells (1812-1882). This couple were my second-great grandparents.

How are you and Shannon Lopez related?

Common Ancestors

According to family trees on Ancestry, you and Shannon Lopez are connected through these common ancestors.

Shannon Lopez could be your 3rd cousin 2x removed through:



Ezra Marvin Miller

2nd great-grandfather

1812-1874

[View Relationship](#)



Jane Kershaw Wells

2nd great-grandmother

1812-1882

[View Relationship](#)

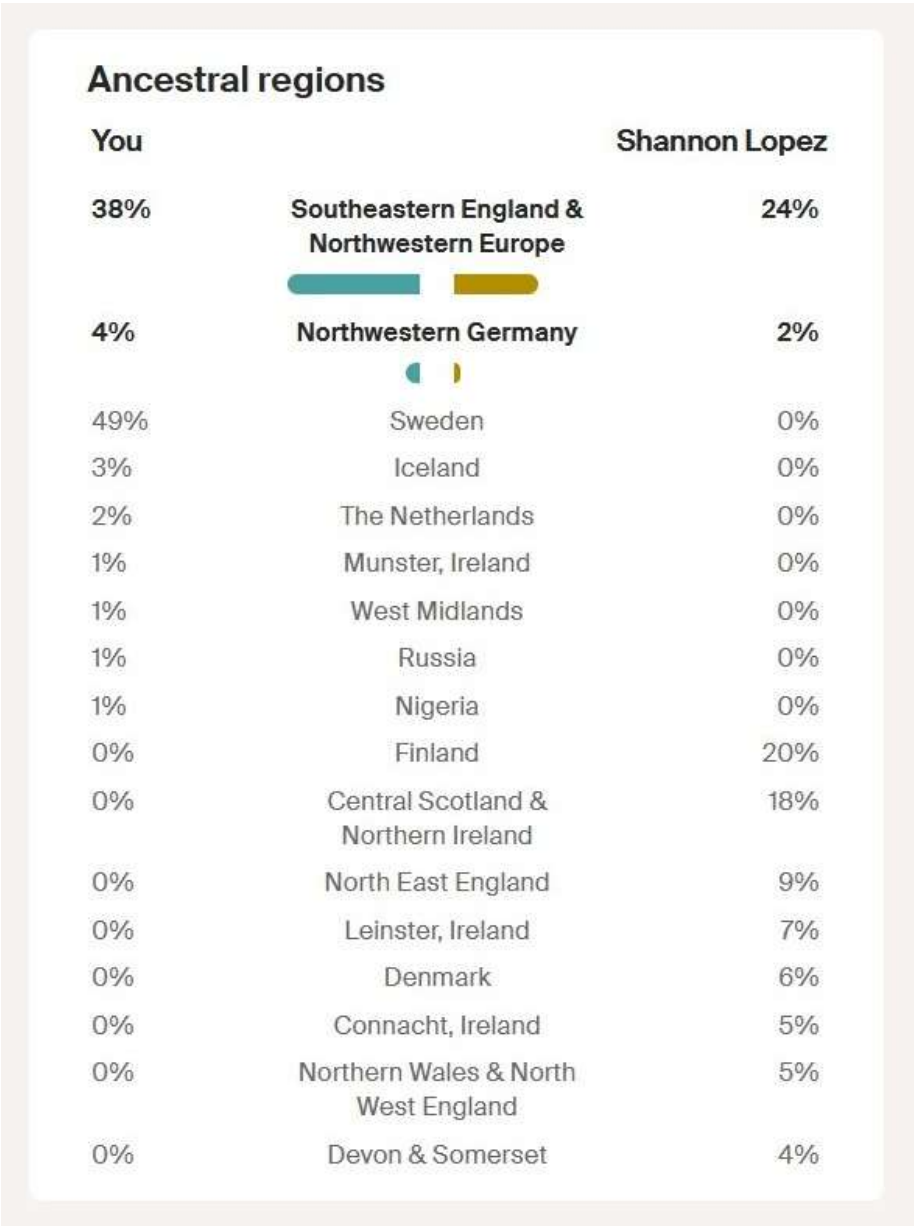
Here is a chart that software on Ancestry.com automatically created, showing how Shannon and I are most likely related:



I am descended from the **Miller-Wells** couple through their daughter Hannah Mariah Miller (1838-1926), while Shannon is descended from this couple through their son Ezra Allen Miller (1836-1917). Based on this chart, I was a

third-cousin of Shannon’s maternal grandfather, Lowell Robert Capps (1924-2002), which means that she and I are third-cousins twice-removed.

I also looked at Shannon’s ethnicity estimates (what Ancestry.com is now calling “Ancestral regions”):



Shannon’s ethnicity is dominated by Southeastern England & Northwestern Europe (24%), Finland (20%), and Central Scotland & Northern Ireland (18%).

I note that Shannon doesn’t have any Hispanic or Latino ethnicities, consistent with **Lopez** being her married name.

At this point, I knew that I had a new DNA match with Shannon Lopez (née Ely), and software on Ancestry.com was able to construct a chart showing how we most likely are related. This really isn’t solid proof of our genealogical connection.

To find more proof of our relationship, I next looked at those individuals that have DNA matches with both Shannon and me – our so-called “Shared DNA Matches”. There are a total of 25 people on this list, and software on Ancestry.com was able to identify seven of them where our common ancestors are known:

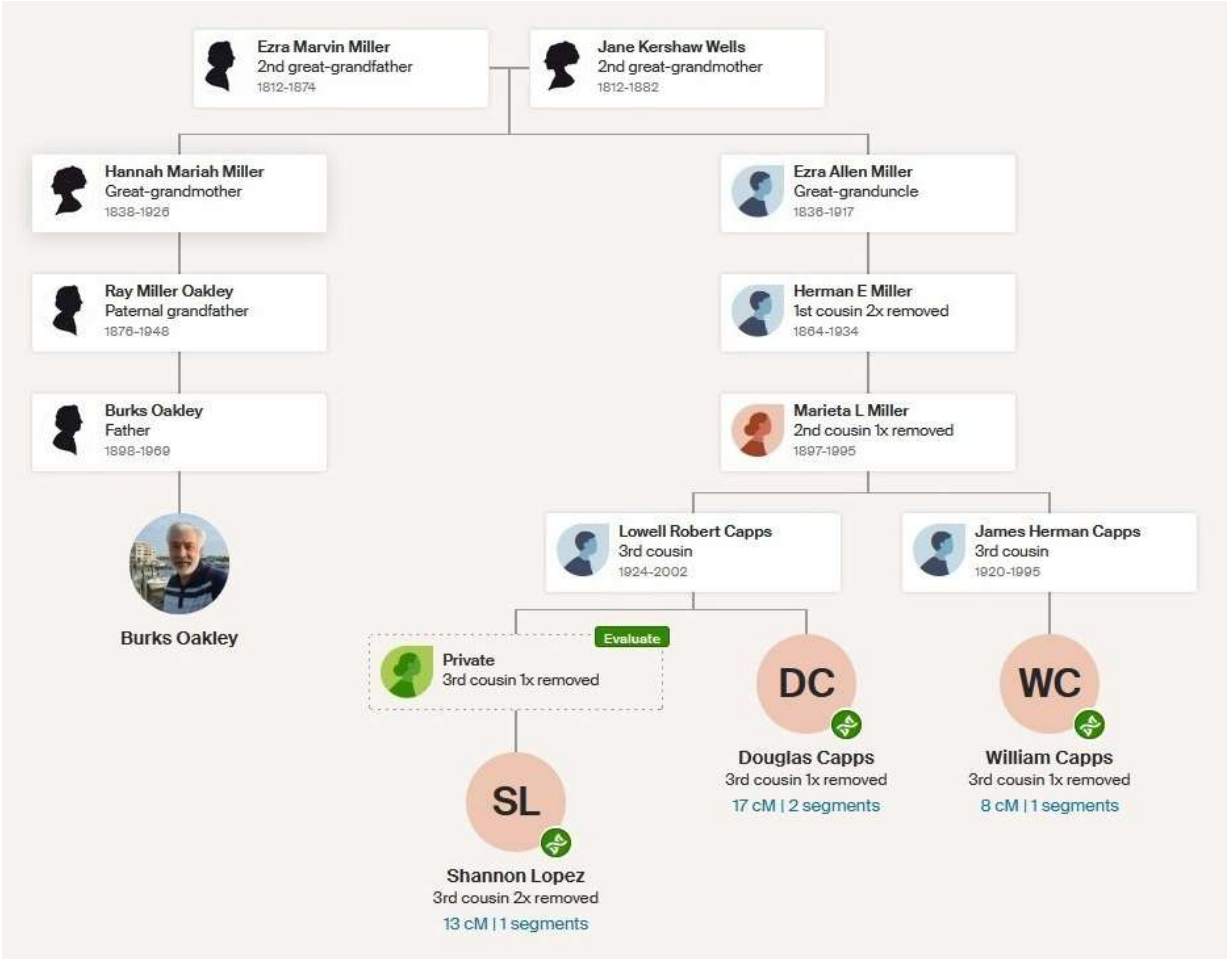
Common ancestor

Clear all

Shared match:	Your:	Shannon Lopez's:
 Mary Helen Choate Managed by Julia Martinroe  	Your: Half 2nd cousin 1x removed or 3rd cousin 61 cM Unassigned	Shannon's: 3rd cousin 2x removed or half 2nd cousin 3x removed 21 cM
 Karin Brouillette  	Your: 3rd cousin 1x removed 45 cM Paternal side	Shannon's: Half 2nd cousin 1x removed or 3rd cousin 60 cM
 kcdelivers  	Your: 3rd cousin 1x removed 36 cM Paternal side	Shannon's: Half 1st cousin 1x removed 281 cM
 Douglas Capps  	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 17 cM Paternal side	Shannon's: Uncle 1,538 cM
 JASON KELLY  	Your: Half 3rd cousin 1x removed or 4th cousin 10 cM Paternal side	Shannon's: 2nd cousin or half 1st cousin 1x removed 304 cM
 gay nichols  	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 9 cM Paternal side	Shannon's: 3rd cousin 1x removed or half 2nd cousin 2x removed 49 cM
 William Capps Managed by especiallykids  	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 8 cM Paternal side	Shannon's: 1st cousin 1x removed or half granduncle 489 cM

The people on this list include Mary Helen Choate, Karin Brouillette, *kcdelivers*, Douglas Capps, Jason Kelly, Gay Nichols, and William Capps.

I'll next present several charts showing how Shannon and I are related to these people. I'll begin with Douglas Capps and William Capps:



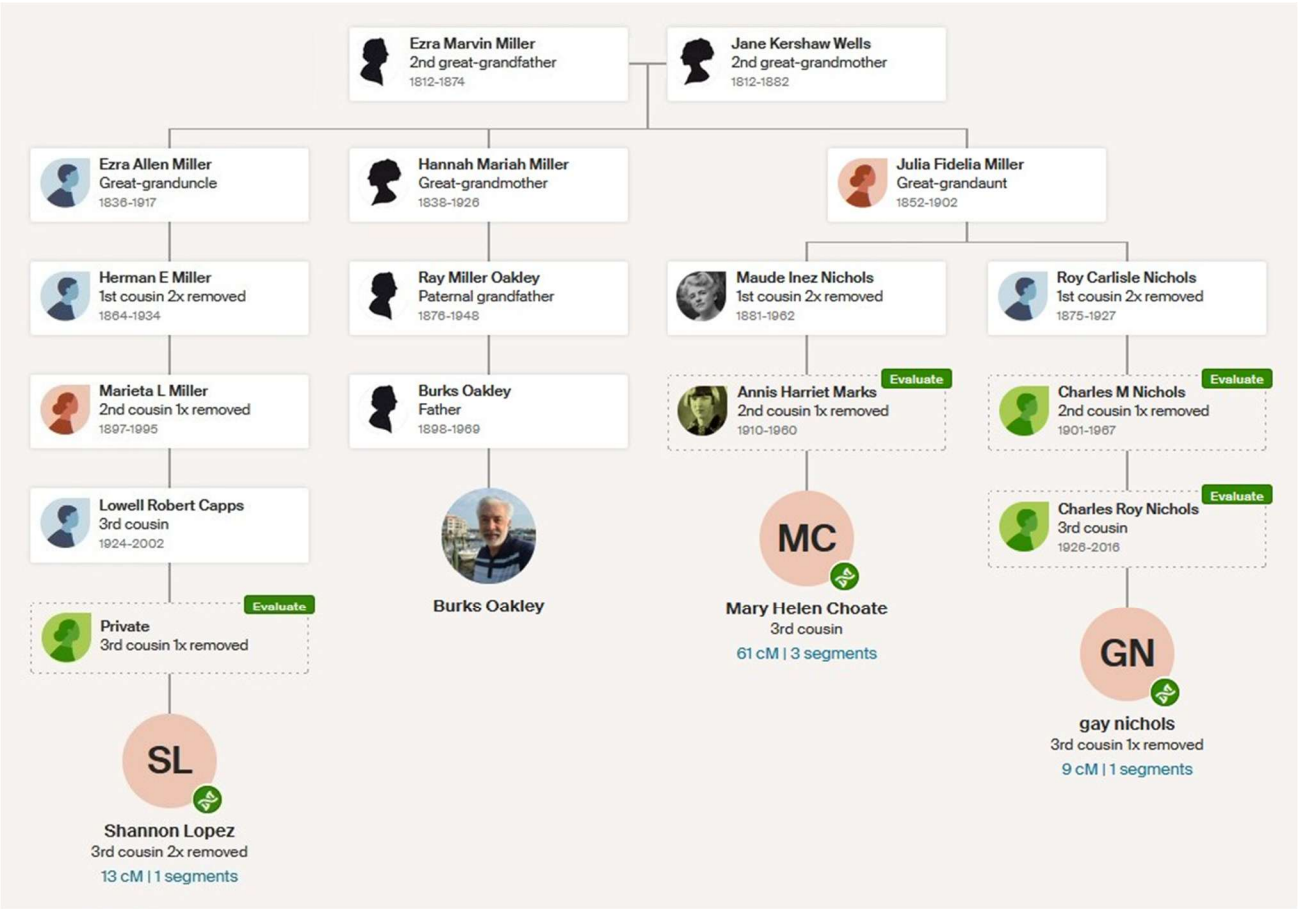
Based on this chart, Douglas Capps is Shannon’s uncle and William Capps is a first-cousin of Shannon’s mother (meaning that Shannon and William are first-cousins once-removed). These are the exact relationships predicted in the list of Shared DNA Matches on the previous page.

Moving on, here is a chart showing how Shannon and I are related to Karin Brouillette:

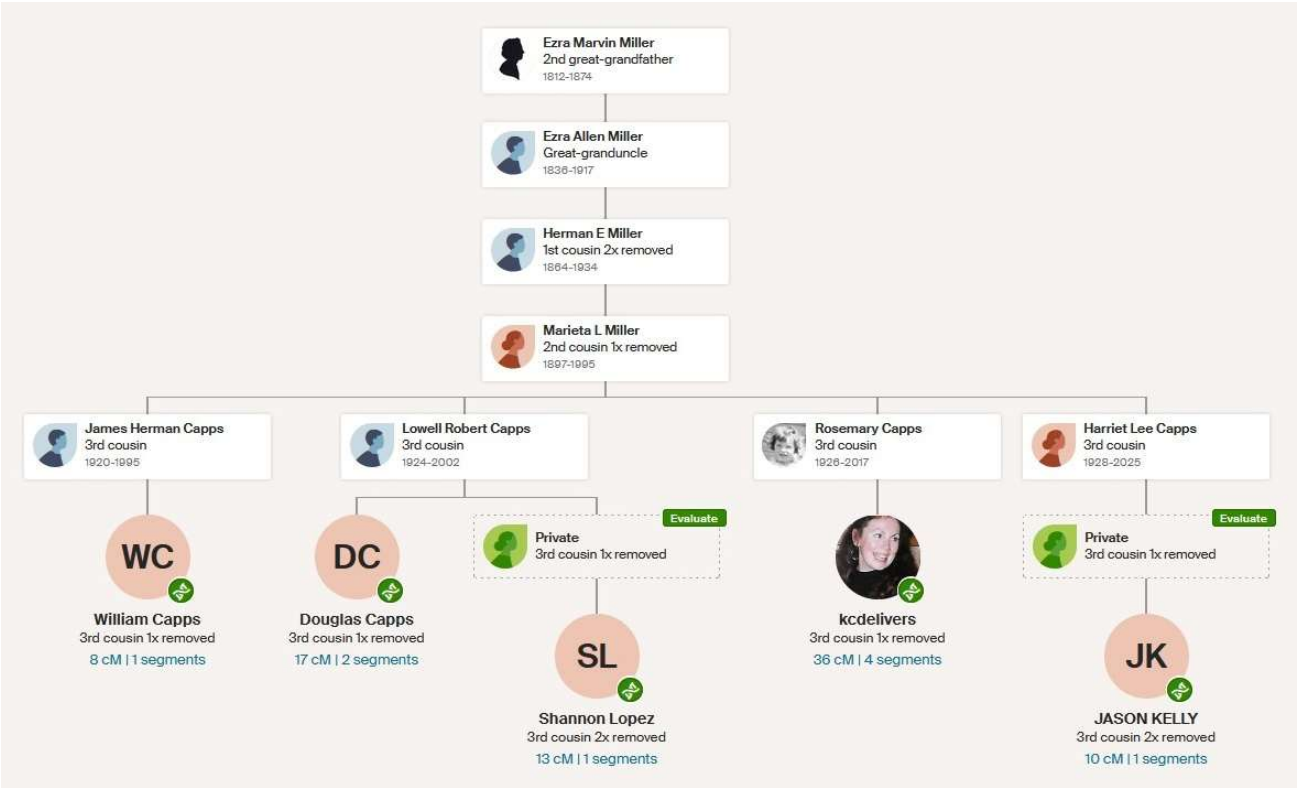


Note that Karin’s father is Ronald H. Miller, so her maiden name was most likely **Miller**.

Continuing on, here is a chart showing how Shannon and I are related to Mary Helen Choate and Gay Nichols:



That takes care of five of the seven “Shared DNA Matches” where our common ancestors are known. I still need to show Jason Kelly and *kcdelivers*, and they both appear in the branch of the ThruLines® chart for Ezra Marvin Miller that goes through his great-granddaughter Marieta I. Miller (1897-1995):



kcdelivers’ mother was Rosemary Capps and Jason Kelly’s maternal grandmother was Harriet Lee Capps (1928-2025).

At this point, all of these “Shared DNA Matches”, combined with the genealogical connections, provide really strong support for the chart showing how I am related to Shannon Lopez.

Now let me address a few loose ends.

Recall that earlier I showed the five largest “Shared DNA Matches” that I have with Shannon from her perspective – here is that table:

Shared match:	Your:	Shannon Lopez's:
 David Capps 	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 40 cM Paternal side	Shannon's: Uncle 1,733 cM
 Donovan Day 	Your: 3rd cousin 2x removed or half 2nd cousin 3x removed 18 cM Paternal side	Shannon's: Nephew 1,599 cM
 Douglas Capps 	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 17 cM Paternal side	Shannon's: Uncle 1,538 cM
 William Capps Managed by especiallykids 	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 8 cM Paternal side	Shannon's: 1st cousin 1x removed or half granduncle 489 cM
 JASON KELLY 	Your: Half 3rd cousin 1x removed or 4th cousin 10 cM Paternal side	Shannon's: 2nd cousin or half 1st cousin 1x removed 304 cM

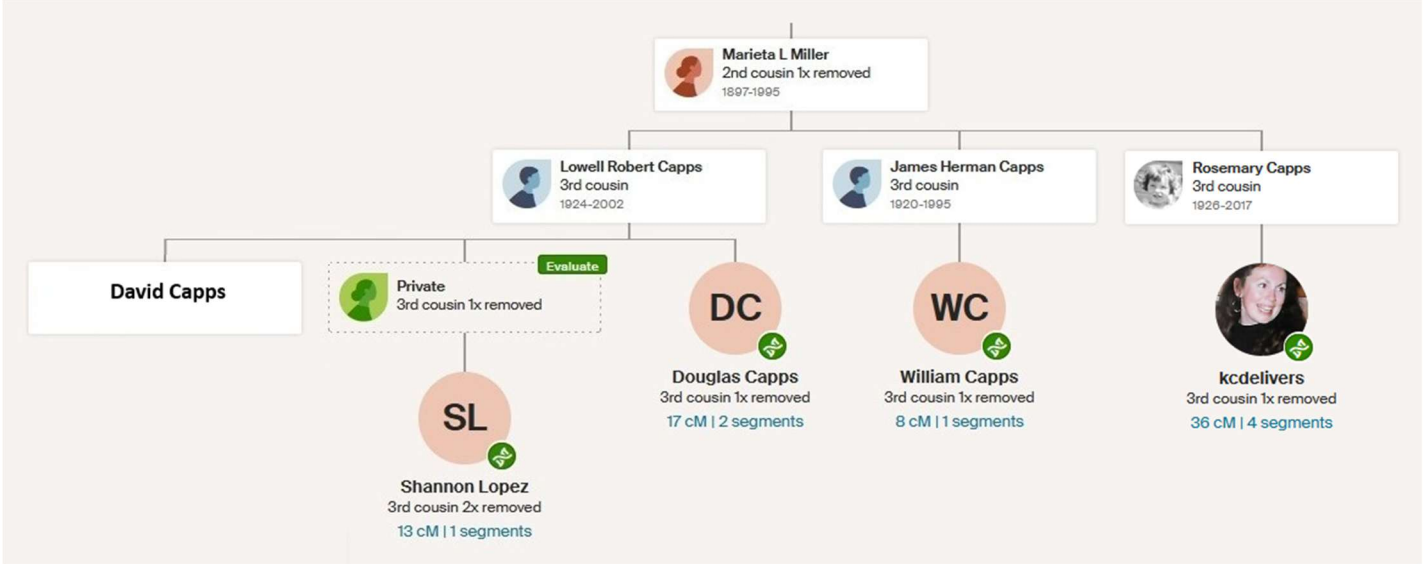
Note that the two largest DNA matches (from Shannon’s perspective) are David Capps and Donovan Day – but software on Ancestry.com was unable to identify our common ancestors. So who is David Capps? Who is Donovan Day?

Based on the size of their DNA matches shown in the table above (as well as other factors, such as their ages), David Capps is Shannon’s uncle and Donovan Day is Shannon’s nephew.

Let me deal with each of these relationships in turn. If David Capps is Shannon’s uncle, then he, Douglas Capps, and Shannon’s mother all would be siblings. This means that David Capps would be a brother of Douglas Capps. And sure enough, based on the size of their DNA match, that is how they are related:

Shared match:	Your:	David Capps's:
 Douglas Capps 	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 17 cM Paternal side	David's: Brother 2,696 cM

Here is a hypothetical relationship chart, showing how David fits into the family:



Note that I have added *kcdelivers* to this chart. In this chart, David Capps is shown as a brother of Douglas Capps and an uncle of Shannon Lopez.

Based on this chart, *kcdelivers* is a first-cousin of William Capps, Douglas Capps, and David Capps. And based on the size of their DNA matches, that is exactly what they are:

Shared match:	Your:	kcdelivers's:
David Capps	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 40 cM Paternal side	kcdelivers's: 1st cousin 938 cM
William Capps Managed by especiallykids	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 8 cM Paternal side	kcdelivers's: 1st cousin 885 cM
Douglas Capps	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 17 cM Paternal side	kcdelivers's: 1st cousin 775 cM

OK, that takes care of David Capps – but what about Donovan Day? Based on the size of Shannon’s DNA match with Donovan (as well as other factors), software on Ancestry.com predicts that she is his aunt. And if Shannon is Donovan Day’s aunt, then how is Donovan related to Douglas Capps?

Donovan Day	Your: 3rd cousin 2x removed or half 2nd cousin 3x removed 18 cM Paternal side	Douglas's: Grandnephew or half nephew 742 cM
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According to Ancestry.com, Donovan is Douglas’ grandnephew. And what, pray tell, is a grandnephew? Well, here is what Google says:

AI Overview

grand nephew

A grandnephew is the grandson of your brother or sister, or the son of your own niece or nephew. He is two generations down from you in your family tree. Merriam-Webster +1

OK – A grandnephew is the grandson of your brother or sister. Using this information, I constructed another hypothetical chart, including both David Capps and Donovan Day:



Note that Douglas Capps is a brother of Donovan’s grandmother, so this means that Donovan is indeed Douglas’ grandnephew.

Of course, this also means that Donovan should be a grandnephew of David Capps:

	Donovan Day			Your: 3rd cousin 2x removed or half 2nd cousin 3x removed 18 cM Paternal side	David's: Grandnephew 835 cM
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And he is!!

OK – enough of this. It is nice that I have the extended features in the Pro subscription to Ancestry.com, so that I can see how various DNA matches are related to each other.

Overall, my DNA match with Shannon Lopez really solidified the **Capps** branch of the **Miller** family.

As I always say, the DNA doesn’t lie.

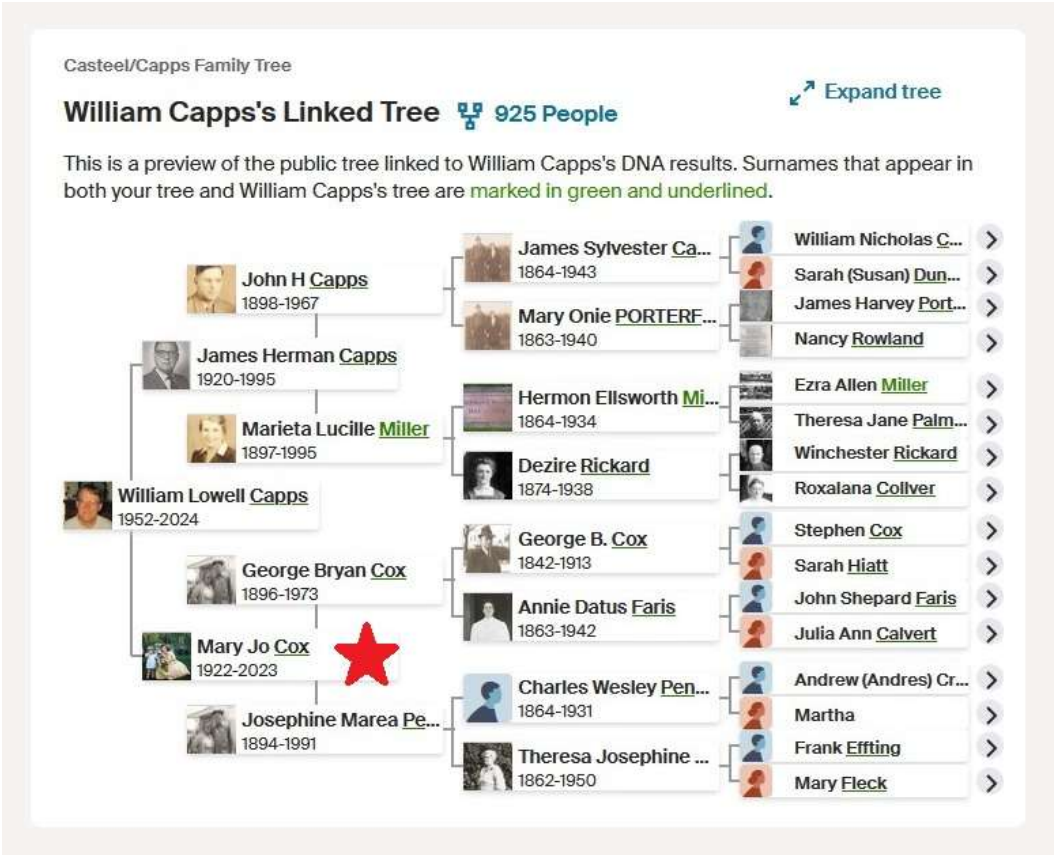
Appendix A: Mary Jo Capps (née Cox)

In the main narrative, I included a discussion of various aspects of my DNA match with William Lowell Capps (1952-2024).² William’s father was my third-cousin, James Herman Capps (1920-1995). And William’s mother was Mary Jo Cox (1923-2023).

When I was a child living with my parents in Euclid, Ohio (a suburb of Cleveland), James and Mary Jo lived in Brecksville, Ohio (another Cleveland suburb). Sometime around 1960, James and Mary Jo visited us to discuss *Miller* family genealogy – although that was a very long time ago and I certainly can’t remember any details.

My father was a second-cousin of Marieta Lucille Miller (1897-1995), who was Mary Jo’s mother-in-law.

Here is the pedigree chart for William Lowell Capps, with Mary Jo Cox highlighted with a red star:



Now let me digress...

My third-great grandfather was Allen Miller:



² William Lowell Capps died at the age of 71 in 2024. His obituary is online at:

<https://www.haugerzeigler.com/obituary/William-Capps>

Allen Miller was born in 1788 in Hartland, Connecticut, and he died in 1868 in New Milford, Illinois (near Rockford). He lived a good part of his adult life in Cayuga County, New York (in upstate New York, just southwest of Syracuse).

Allen Miller’s son, Ezra Marvin Miller, was born in 1812 when the family was in Scipio, Cayuga County, New York.

A photograph of a rectangular gravestone for Ezra Marvin Miller. The stone is light-colored with dark lettering. It reads "E. M. MILLER" at the top, "DIED" on the left, and "1874" on the right. There is a small cross symbol between "DIED" and "1874".

Ezra Marvin Miller

BIRTH 12 APRIL 1812 • Scipio, Cayuga County, New York, USA
DEATH 6 MAY 1874 • Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana, USA

Around 1840, the entire Allen Miller family (adult children, spouses, grandchildren) moved west from upstate New York to Winnebago County, Illinois.

Ezra Marvin Miller’s son, Ezra Allen Miller, was born in Portage, New York.

A photograph of a shield-shaped gravestone for Ezra Allen Miller. The stone is dark and weathered. It reads "E. A. MILLER" at the top, "BORN" in the middle, and "1836" at the bottom. There is a small cross symbol between "BORN" and "1836".

Ezra Allen Miller

BIRTH 1 AUG 1836 • Portage, Livingston, NY
DEATH 09 MAR 1917 • Portland, OR (Multnomah Co.)

Ezra Allen would have moved with the family to Winnebago County, Illinois, around 1840, when he was a young child.

Ezra Allen is listed in the 1880 US Census as living in Orange, Clinton County, Iowa. His occupation was listed as a carpenter.

But by the time of the 1910 US Census, Ezra Allen Miller was living in Portland, Oregon! And once again, he and a group of his descendants all made the move to Portland together.

Ezra Allen Miller’s son Frank Henry Miller was born in 1859 when the family was in Winnebago County, Illinois:

A stylized blue silhouette of a man's head and shoulders, facing right. The man has short hair and is wearing a dark shirt.

Frank Henry Miller

BIRTH 25 AUG 1859 • Cherry Valley, Winnebago, IL
DEATH 18 APR 1932 • Portland, Multnomah, OR

Frank was part of the group that moved to Portland, and he died there in 1932. I was told by several of my **Miller** cousins who live(d) in Portland that a number of the **Miller** men were carpenters who built a large number of houses in Portland.

Frank Henry Miller's son was Jerome Everett Miller Sr. Jerome was born in 1900 when the family was in Cedar County, Iowa:



And Jerome Sr. died in Portland, Oregon, in 1954. In the 1940 US Census, he was living in Dilley, Oregon, and his occupation was listed as carpenter.

At any rate, in the spring of 2005, the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) held its annual meeting in Portland, Oregon:

<https://www.asee.org/events/Conferences-and-Meetings/Past-Annual-Conference-Locations>

I was active in the ASEE at that time, and I attended that annual meeting.

Somehow (and I have no idea at all about this), I connected with Anthony "Tony" Miller and Jerome Everitt Miller, Jr., who were distant **Miller** cousins living in Portland. They contacted Mary Jo Capps (née Cox), who lived in McMinnville, Oregon, at the time, and informed her about my upcoming visit.

At any rate, while in Portland, I spent some time visiting Tony, Jerry, and Mary Jo.

After that visit, I wrote an email to Hal Oakley that included:

Jerome has copies of all of Ezra Marvin Miller's Civil War records. Enlistment paper, muster out paper, pay records. Recall that Ezra Marvin was a veterinary surgeon. He also has Ezra's handgun from the Civil War.

He also has Ezra Allen Miller's Civil War records and handgun. And his widow's pension document from 1916.

Incredible to be able to meet them so soon after corresponding with Tony Miller.

Here is an excerpt from an email that Mary Jo sent to me on 22 July 2016:

Dear Burks and family:

I am really losing it -- I have no memory of answering your email about 23andMe in 2014 but came across it tonight. Did I ever give you Steve's email? He and I (and now Bill and Carol - son/middle child) more and more are getting involved in the family tree. I have lots of new "cousins" but nowhere so far (I think) have Jerry and Tony Miller been mentioned. It was so great to see you in Portland that time -- Jerry and I mention it frequently. Anyhow, hope you will let me know if I ever answered and how you all are these days. At 93, I guess I am beginning to lose it although Steve says it IS NOT in a bad way, just normal.

I love your photography -- fabulous and beautiful, especially the birds (to an old bird-watcher like me). I never equaled your Mom, though, except that I did do all 7 continents and the penguins were the best. I am in a retirement home (not a happy camper), my house sold the first day and I feel rushed into too much. Seem to do not much but sleep daytimes and stew at night (it is 1:45 a.m. right now.)

Hope I will hear from you. My phone is 503-xxx-xxxx if calling is any easier. I am out of this apt. as much as possible, though, so leave a message.

Cousin Mary Jo

Here is a screenshot of Mary Jo's obituary from the NewsRegister.com website (from Yamhill County, Oregon – the county seat is McMinnville). She was quite an interesting woman!!

Mary Jo Capps 1923 - 2023

Mary Josephine (Mary Jo) Capps passed away April 14, 2023, in San Carlos, California. She was 100 years old. Born January 25, 1923, in Madison, Wisconsin, she was the daughter of George B. and Josephine Cox. She moved with her family in 1927 to Corvallis, Oregon, when her father took a manual arts teaching position at Oregon State Agricultural College. She graduated from Corvallis High School in 1940. She attended Oregon State College, majoring in Home Economics, graduating in 1946.

She was married to James H. Capps on June 6, 1944, D-Day, in a beautiful wedding planned in 48 hours with 150 guests when Jim suddenly came home on leave. They had been married for 50 years when he died on May 24, 1995.

She and Jim moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana, after he graduated from Oregon State College in 1947. While he worked for General Electric, the family lived in Fort Wayne, followed by Brecksville, Ohio, Niskayuna, New York, and Wilton, Connecticut. When Jim left GE to take a job at the U.S. Department of Energy, he and Mary Jo moved to Morgantown, West Virginia. In 1987, he retired and they moved "home" to Oregon, choosing to live in McMinnville.



Mary Jo was an awesome wife and mother who had many talents and hobbies and who was active in many organizations throughout her life. Once their children had all left home, she began working as a "Kelly Girl" in Connecticut. She was much in demand but loved being a "temp" since it afforded her the opportunity to take time off to travel with Jim for his work and pleasure. In Morgantown, she became an early user of computers, first a Radio Shack TRS-80 and then a Macintosh. She created a word processing business called "A Way With Words."

The organizations in which she was active included Alpha Xi Delta Sorority, P.E.O. and DAR. She served as Girl Scout leader for daughter Barbara's troop for years. She was a very active volunteer at the Schenectady New York Museum, including managing the gift shop for three years. She was active in a Newcomers Club in Morgantown and imported the idea to McMinnville, where she was instrumental in starting a club there. In McMinnville, she was also active in the Garden Club and at the Yamhill County Museum. She continued to hone her word processing skills to produce the membership/yearbooks for several organizations.

Throughout her life, Mary Jo was an avid woodworker. She often took community woodworking classes at the local high school so she would have access to tools she and Jim didn't have at home. Over the years, she made a few pieces of furniture, refinished and re-caned antique dining chairs, created clocks from fruit tree burls and made whatnot shelves to display items she picked up as she traveled the world.

Mary Jo loved to travel. She and Jim traveled to Europe and Alaska before he passed away. She then continued to travel on tours and was able to travel to every continent. She was especially enamored with Antarctica and the penguins.

Survivors include two sons, William Capps (Carol) of Irwin, Pennsylvania, and Stephen Capps (Marie D'Amico) of San Carlos, California; a daughter, Barbara Cormack of Beaverton, Oregon; five grandchildren, Jennifer Clarke (Art) of San Francisco, Christopher Cormack (Olga Senashova) of Portland, Oregon, Ashley Capps of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Jim Capps of Pittsburgh, and Emma Capps of San Carlos; as well as two great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, James Capps; and her brother, George Cox, Jr.

A casual and joyous Celebration of Life will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, July 8, on the grounds of the Newell Pioneer Village on Champoeg Road near St. Paul, Oregon. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be sent to the OSSDAR Newell Pioneer Village at 8089 Champoeg Rd. N.E., St. Paul, Oregon 97137. It is also possible to securely donate online using Paypal or a credit card at <https://newellpioneervillage.com>. The donate button is at the bottom of the home page. Either way, please add a message indicating that the donation is in honor of Mary Jo Capps for the upkeep of the Newell Pioneer Village.