

The *Sypher* Branch of the *Oakley* Family Tree

By Burks Oakley II
17 May 2025

I have been spending a lot of time recently finding my DNA matches with descendants of Miles Oakley III (1612-1672) and his wife Mary Browne (1607-1682). This couple were my 8th-great grandparents. I have a segment of DNA on Chromosome 15 that appears to have come from this couple, and I share this ***Oakley-Browne*** segment with a large number of other people who are descended from this couple.

Here is a webpage with links to a number of narratives I have written recently on this topic:

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/Oakley-Chr-15.html>

One of the key people in my recent “research” is Rev. Timothy W. Bever, who is known to have the ***Oakley-Browne*** DNA segment on Chromosome 15. As I have done in a number of narratives, I started with my DNA match with Tim on the Ancestry.com website. I then looked at our “Shared DNA Matches”. One of my “Shared DNA Matches” with Tim is Eileen Earley Catalli:

 Eileen Earley Catalli	👤 +	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 20 cM Paternal side	Timothy Bever's: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 23 cM
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Eileen and I share 20 cM of DNA, while Eileen and Tim share 23 cM.

To see if Eileen has the ***Oakley-Browne*** DNA segment, I next looked at our “Shared DNA Matches”. Here are the top three:

 Timothy Bever Managed by Marva Gervais	👤 +	Your: 3rd cousin 1x removed or half 3rd cousin 43 cM Paternal side	Eileen Earley Catalli's: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 23 cM
 Cassidy Prentiss	👤 +	Your: Half 3rd cousin 1x removed or 3rd cousin 2x removed 39 cM Paternal side	Eileen Earley Catalli's: Half 3rd cousin 1x removed or 3rd cousin 2x removed 23 cM
 sheila porter	👤 +	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 27 cM Paternal side	Eileen Earley Catalli's: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 30 cM

Here are the next three:

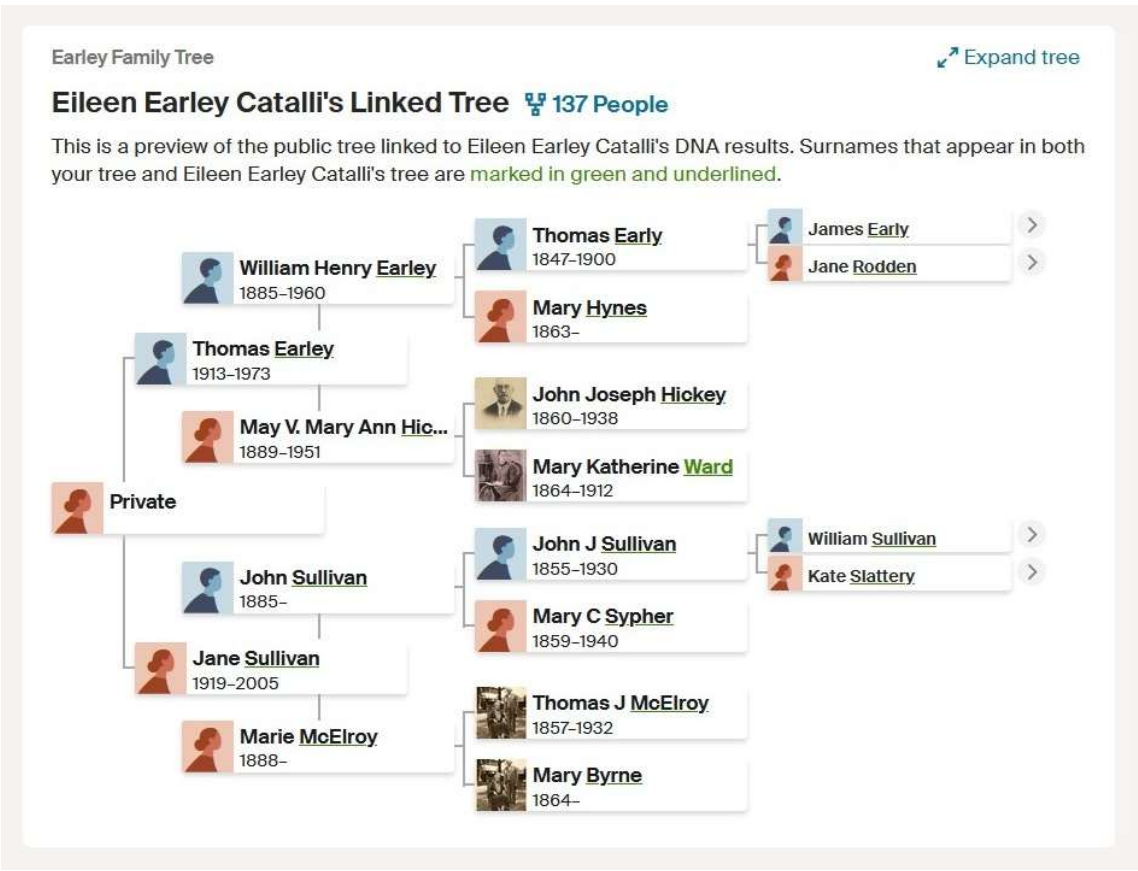
 Betty Jackson	 	Your: Half 3rd cousin 1x removed or 4th cousin 27 cM Paternal side	Eileen Earley Catalli's: Half 3rd cousin 1x removed or 4th cousin 30 cM
 Ann Winningham	 	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 27 cM Paternal side	Eileen Earley Catalli's: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 23 cM
 KathyOrr60	 	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 27 cM Paternal side	Eileen Earley Catalli's: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 23 cM

And here are another three:

 Victoria Vought	 	Your: 3rd cousin 2x removed or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 21 cM Paternal side	Eileen Earley Catalli's: 3rd cousin 2x removed or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 31 cM
 J.V. Managed by dmholck	 	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 21 cM Paternal side	Eileen Earley Catalli's: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 27 cM
 Roberta vorobel	 	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 21 cM Paternal side	Eileen Earley Catalli's: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 22 cM

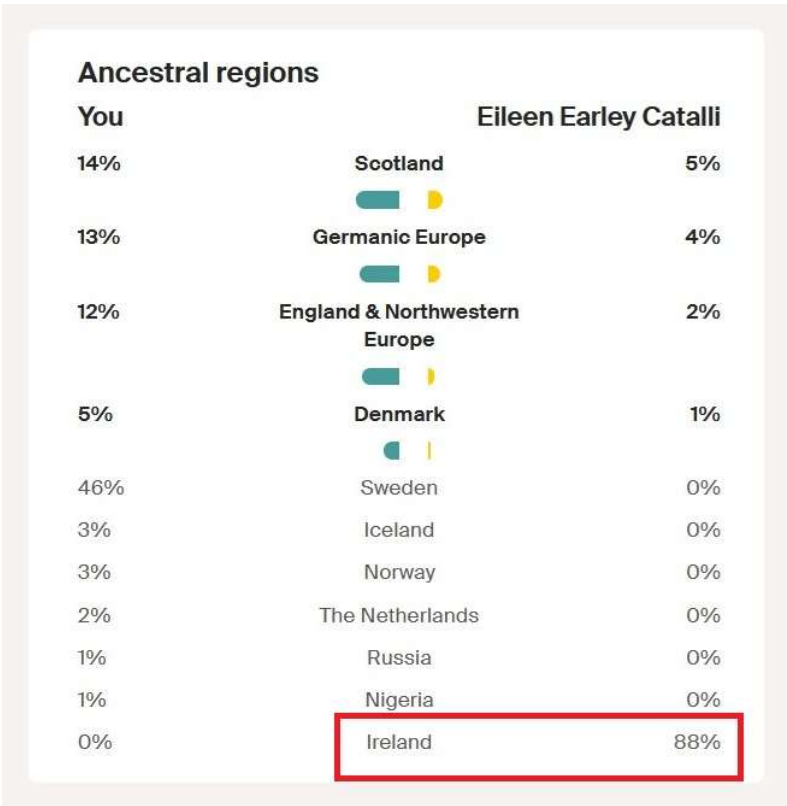
All of these matches are descendants of the ***Oakley-Browne*** couple who have the ***Oakley-Browne*** DNA segment on Chromosome 15. So at this point, I was 99.9% sure that Eileen was a member of this group.

I went on to look at Eileen’s family tree, hoping that her connection to the Westchester branch of the ***Oakley*** family would be obvious. Here is Eileen’s pedigree chart:



I looked at a number of her ancestors, and I was surprised to see so many Irish immigrants – but no obvious *Oakley* connection.

I looked at her ethnicity estimates:



Wow! Eileen’s ethnicity estimate is 88% Ireland. That sure is consistent with her pedigree chart.

Going back to Eileen’s pedigree, I did see that one of her great-grandfathers was John Joseph Hickey:

Earley Family Tree

Find in tree

EC Eileen Earley Catalli



John Joseph Hickey

BIRTH 6 AUG 1860 • St Olaves, Surrey, England

DEATH 4 MAR 1938 • Manhattan, New York, USA

John J. Hickey was born in England. For a moment, I thought to myself that it would be really cool if this man was descended from our *Oakley* ancestors in England. Wouldn’t that be something! But then I saw that his parents were both born in Ireland. Darn!

I wasn’t ready to give up on finding Eileen’s *Oakley* connection. I next looked at my DNA match with her, and then at our “Shared DNA Matches”. I sorted them from her perspective, from largest to smallest. Her largest shared match is a woman having the username of *gladysshamrock*:



gladysshamrock

+

Your:

4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed

22 cM

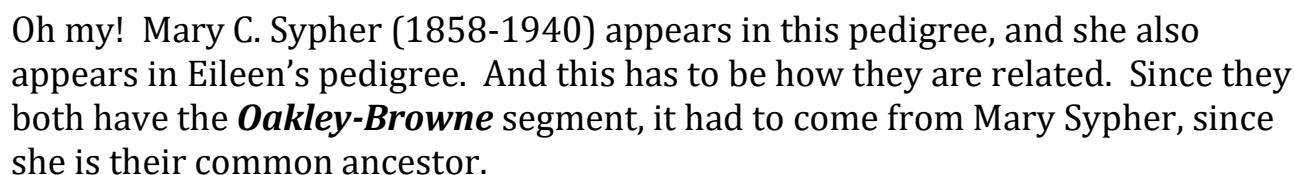
Paternal side

Eileen Earley Catalli's:

2nd cousin 1x removed or half 2nd cousin

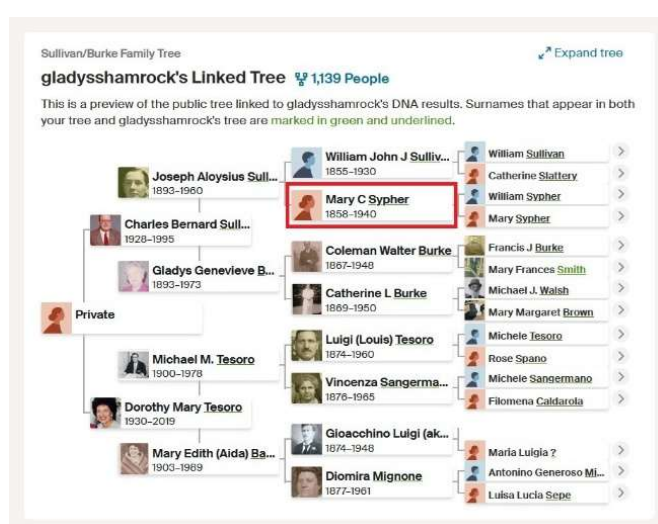
162 cM

I next looked at Gladys Sullivan's pedigree in detail:



Not so fast, Burks. What about Mary's husband, William John J. Sullivan (1855-1930)? He also was a common ancestor to Eileen and Gladys. I looked at his profile on Ancestry.com and learned that he was born in Ireland and immigrated to America, so I'm going to rule him out as being the ***Oakley-Browne*** descendant.

Here are the two pedigree charts with a red box around Mary Sypher:



I was 99.9% sure that Gladys has to be an **Oakley-Browne** descendant, but I checked our “Shared DNA Matches” just to be certain. I won’t bother showing them all, but suffice it to say that Gladys has DNA matches with a large number of people I know to be **Oakley-Browne** descendants.

And now I was stuck. Eileen’s family tree doesn’t have either of Mary C. Sypher’s parents, and Gladys’ family just has their names – William Sypher and Mary Sypher (undoubtedly not her maiden name). And I couldn’t find any trees on the Ancestry.com website that had anything more than this.

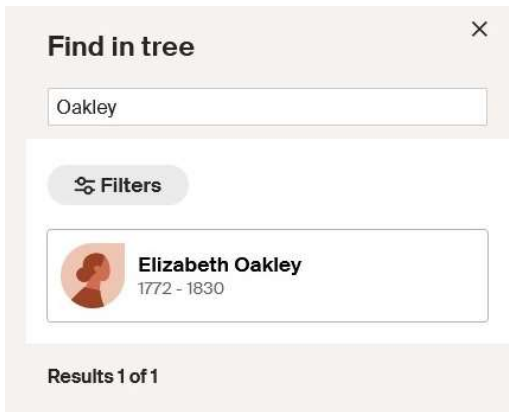
I made a wild-a\$\$ed-guess about Mary’s connection to the **Oakley** family. Mary was born in New York in 1858 – so maybe William Sypher (her father) was born around 1835. And maybe William’s father was born around 1810. And to connect with the **Oakley** family, William’s father would have been born in New York.

Going on this hunch, I searched on Ancestry.com for a **Sypher** male born in New York state around 1810 (±5 years). This search turned up John Wildey Sypher (1814-1846). Here is his entry in the “Paula Stefanski Rabetsky Family Tree”:



I then searched this tree for an **Oakley** – hoping that there would be a connection between the two families.

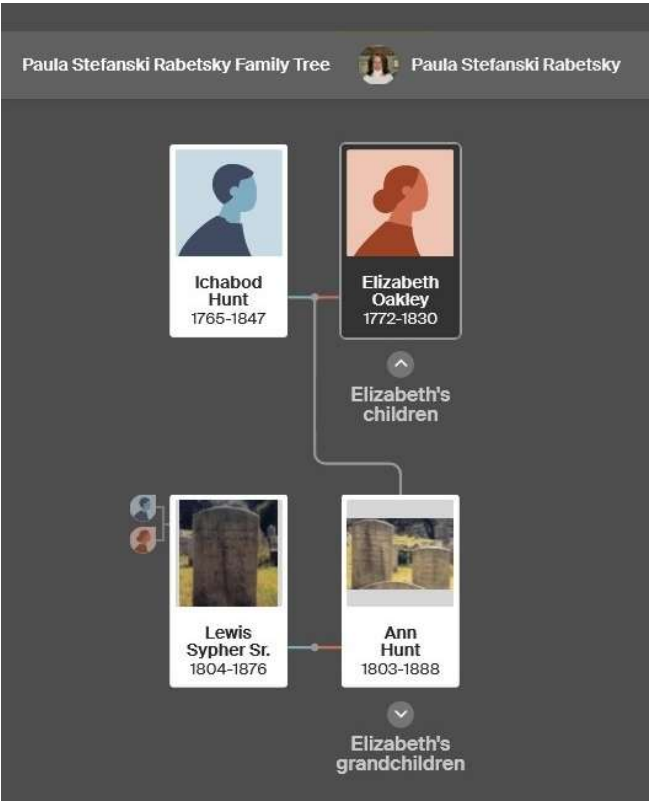
Here is what I found:



Elizabeth Oakley (1772-1830) is in Paula’s family tree. Along with someone from the **Sypher** family. I then viewed Elizabeth Oakley in Paula’s tree. And guess what I found?

Scroll down...

Go on to the next page:



OMG – Elizabeth’s daughter Ann Hunt (1803-1888) married Lewis Sypher Sr. (1804-1876). This has to be how the ***Oakley-Browne*** DNA got into the ***Sypher*** line.

I’m getting ahead of myself here, since this assumes that Elizabeth Oakley was descended from the ***Oakley-Browne*** couple. But she had to be, right? Or else I wouldn’t be writing all this.

Here is a profile for Elizabeth Oakley from the “Thompson Family Tree”:

Thompson Family Tree Find in tree Queenshannon1

Elizabeth Oakley
BIRTH 22 JUL 1772 • Ossining, Westchester, New York, USA
DEATH 27 JUN 1830 • Mount Pleasant, Westchester, New York, USA

Family

Parents

- John Oakley 1748-1816
- Margaret Devoe 1767-1815

Spouse and children

- Ichabod Hunt 1765-1847
- Oakley Hunt 1792-1823
- Isaac Hunt 1805-1882
- Levi Hunt 1794-1822
- William P Hunt 1808-1893
- Margaret Hunt 1796-~
- Andrew Graham Hunt 1810-1861
- Phebe Hunt 1798-1875
- John Purdy Hunt Sr. Sr 1812-1893
- Lewis Hunt 1801-1876
- Edward Hunt 1816-1884
- Anna Hunt 1802-1888

This profile has “Anna” Hunt, not “Ann” Hunt. And it has her birth year as 1802, not 1803. After looking at other trees on Ancestry.com, I’m convinced that it is the same person.

Note that Elizabeth Oakley’s eldest son was Oakley Hunt (1792-1823).

Elizabeth’s father was John Oakley (1748-1816), and here is his profile from the “Garry Frank Nixon Tree”:

Garry Frank Nixon Tree

Find in tree

Garry Nixon

DIRECT ANCESTOR

John Oakley

BIRTH 1748 • White Plains, Westchester, New York, USA

DEATH 30 DEC 1816 • Ossining, Westchester, New York, USA

Family

Spouse and children

Parents

Isaac Oakley

1720–1789

Miriam Hunt

1725–1759

Margaret Devouw

1755–1815

Elizabeth Oakley

1772–1830

Anna Oakley

1775–1840

John I Oakley

1777–1785

Sarah Oakley

1780–1864

Mary Oakley

1782–1837

Issac Oakley

1789–1841

Abraham Oakley

1792–

I have also seen John’s wife as Margaret Devoe.

John Oakley’s father was Isaac Oakley (1722-1784 or 1720-1789):

Catlin-Whitehouse Famil...

Find in tree

Lauren Whitehouse

Isaac Oakley

BIRTH 1722 • Throggs Neck, Westchester, New York, USA

DEATH 1784 • White Plains, Westchester, New York, USA

Family

Spouse and children

Parents

Miles Oakley III

1696–1763

Sarah Tippetts

1696–1783

Miriam Hunt

1718–

John (Lt) Oakley

1736–

Isaac Oakley Jr

1738–

Miles Woodworth Oakley

1740–1789

Phebe Oakley

1740–1825

Ann Oakley

1775–1840

And Isaac Oakley was a son of Miles Oakley and Sarah Tippetts – and this couple were my 5th great-grandparents. And this Miles Oakley was a great-grandson of the **Oakley-Browne** couple.

As a check, Isaac Oakley appears in my RootsMagic database as a son of the **Oakley-Tippetts** couple. Most of the information in this database came from my father’s genealogical research, supplemented by my cousin Hal Oakley’s research.

OK. At this point, I can connect a child of Lewis Sypher Sr. back to the **Oakley-Browne** couple. I can connect Eileen and Gladys back to Mary C. Sypher. Now I just have to connect Mary C. Sypher to Lewis Sypher Sr.

Mary’s father was William Sypher (no dates). Did Lewis Sypher Sr. have a son named William?

Here is Lewis Sypher Sr.'s profile from Paula's tree:

Paula Stefanski Rabetsk...

Find in tree

Paula Stefanski Rabetsky



Lewis Sypher Sr.

BIRTH

MARCH 22, 1804 • Manhattan, New York, USA

DEATH

JANUARY 23, 1876 • Manhattan, New York, USA

Family

Parents

William Edward Syffer/
Sypher
1770-1833

Mary Lewis
1774-1814

Spouse and children

Ann Hunt
1803-1888

Elizabeth Sypher
1826-1827

Sarah Ann Sypher
1827-1913

William Henry Sypher
1829-1853

Charles Lewis Sypher
1829-1895

Stephen Augustus Sypher
1831-1833

Theodore Sypher
1835-1868

Phebe Eliza Sypher
1838-1858

George Harrison Sypher
1840-1843

Emeline T. Sypher
1843-1923

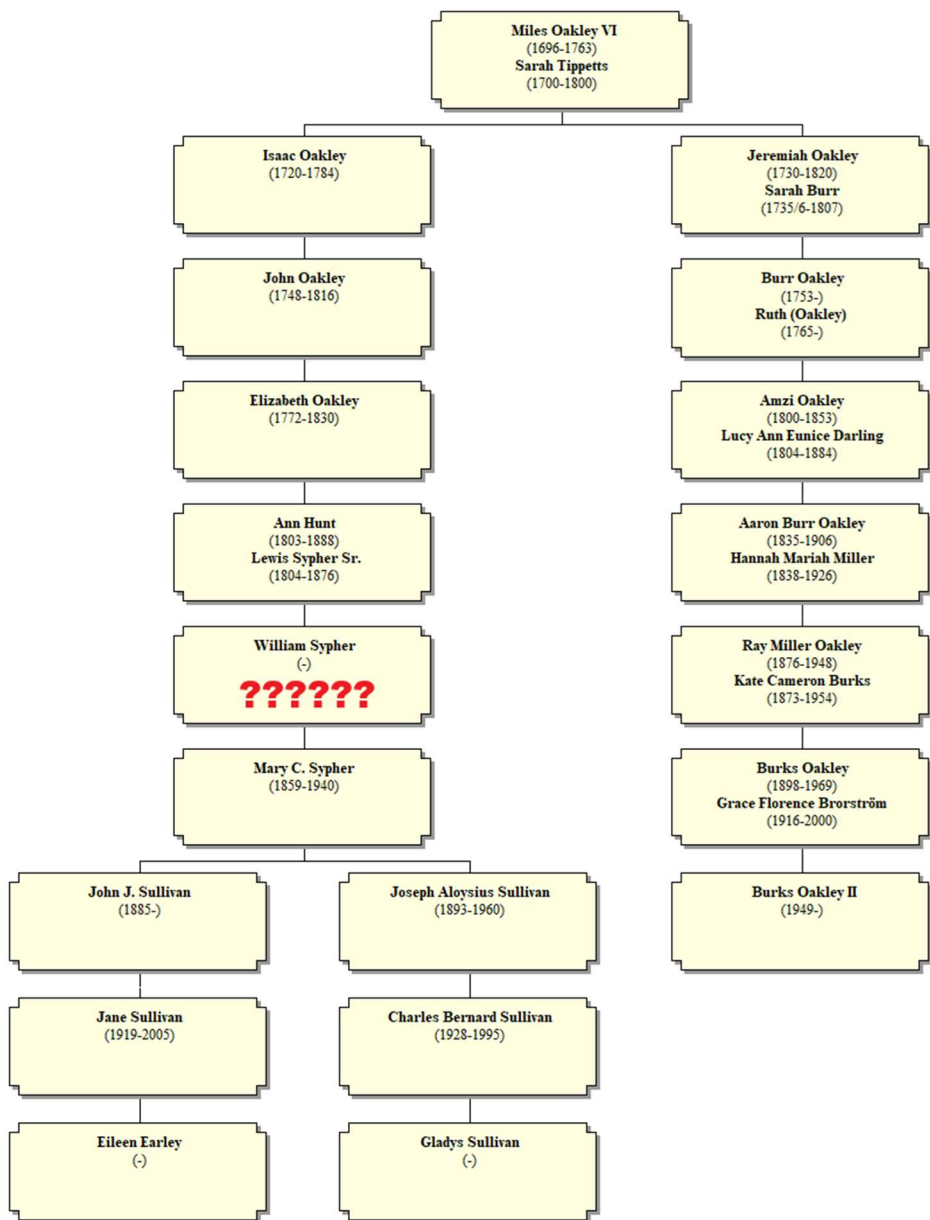
Vetterrean Sypher
1845-1877

Victorine Sypher
1846-1877

Alonzo Irwin Sypher
1848-1866

Yes, he did! Do the dates work? Lewis Sypher Sr. was born in 1804. His son William Henry Sypher was born in 1829 – BUT WILLIAM HENRY SYPHER DIED IN 1853!!!! And Mary C. Sypher wasn't born until 1858. So this doesn't work. Bummer! And I really can't find anything more on Ancestry.com about a man named William Sypher.

I'm going to assume that one of Ann Hunt's sons was the father of Mary C. Sypher. That would be consistent with the DNA evidence. And the most probable way to get the *Oakley-Browne* DNA segment into the *Sypher* line. This assumption let me construct the following relationship chart:



Does their DNA match support this relationship?

Recall that Gladys was Eileen’s top shared match with me:

 gladysshamrock	Your: 4th cousin or half 3rd cousin 1x removed 22 cM Paternal side	Eileen Earley Catali's: 2nd cousin 1x removed or half 2nd cousin 162 cM
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Gladys and Eileen share 162 cM, and based on the size of this match, software on Ancestry.com suggests that they are second-cousins once-removed. But based on the relationship chart shown above, they are second-cousins. And going back to each of their pedigree charts shown earlier, Mary C. Sypher is a great-grandmother of both Eileen and Gladys, meaning that Eileen and Gladys are second-cousins.

I went to the Shared cM Project’s website¹ and looked at the probabilities of various relationships for people sharing 162 cM of DNA. Here is the resulting table:

¹ <https://dnainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4>

53%	<i>Half 2C 2C1R Half 1C2R 1C3R</i>
29%	<i>Half GG-Aunt / Uncle 2C Half 1C1R 1C2R Half GG-Niece / Nephew</i>
14%	<i>Half 1C3R † 3C Half 2C1R 2C2R</i>
4%	<i>2C3R † Half 2C2R † Half 3C 3C1R</i>

While a second-cousin once-removed (2C1R) relationship has the highest probability at 53%, a second-cousin (2C) relationship still has a probability of 29%. So I conclude that the DNA match between Eileen and Gladys does support their 2C relationship.

Summary: The genealogy gods must have been smiling down on me when I found the **Sypher-Oakley** connection. Or maybe I was just lucky. At any rate, it always is fun to make these types of genealogical connections, which in turn are supported by the DNA. But I have to admit that it is frustrating not to know the exact connection between Ann Hunt and her granddaughter Mary C. Sypher (if this indeed was the connection from Mary back to the **Oakley-Browne** couple).