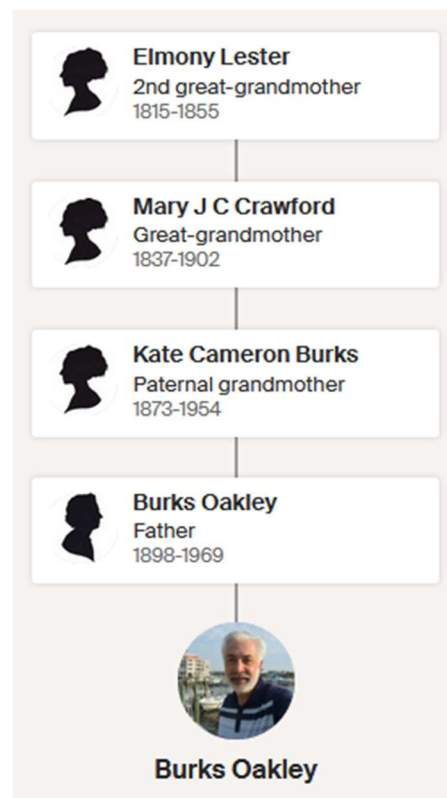


My New DNA Match with *dannysize45* (and where it took me)

By Burks Oakley II
2 September 2023

Preface

One of my second-great grandmothers was Elmony Lester (1815-1855). Here is a chart showing my line back to Elmony Lester:



When I first became interested in DNA and genealogy, Elmony Lester was a “brick wall” – that is, I didn’t know anything about her ancestors. Through DNA, guesswork, persistence, and a lot of luck, I found Elmony’s ancestors, which was a major breakthrough for me. I documented all this in the spring of 2016 in a lengthy narrative entitled “Who Were Elmony Lester’s Ancestors?” – see:

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/9A-LesterGenealogy.pdf>

I found that Elmony was a daughter of Abner Lester (1783-1871) and his wife Rachel West (1788-1860). In turn, Abner Lester was a son of John Lester (1752-1825) and his wife Catherine Plickenstalver (1759-1833).

Subsequent research has supported these findings –I believe that I have this branch of my family tree correct. See:

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/9B-ElmonyLester-revisited.pdf>

But I have to say that I still wonder if I screwed up somewhere. So any time that I find more supporting evidence, I feel good about it. And that is what this narrative is all about.

Introduction

I recently looked at my new DNA matches on the Ancestry.com website. I filtered my matches so that I only saw those matches I had not viewed previously (“unviewed”) and where software on the website was able to identify common ancestors. One of these new matches was with a man with the username *dannysize45* (yes, that really is what he goes by on Ancestry.com):

Burks Oakley's DNA Matches

All matchesBy parentBy ancestorBy location

Filter by:UnviewedCommon ancestors

Distant Family

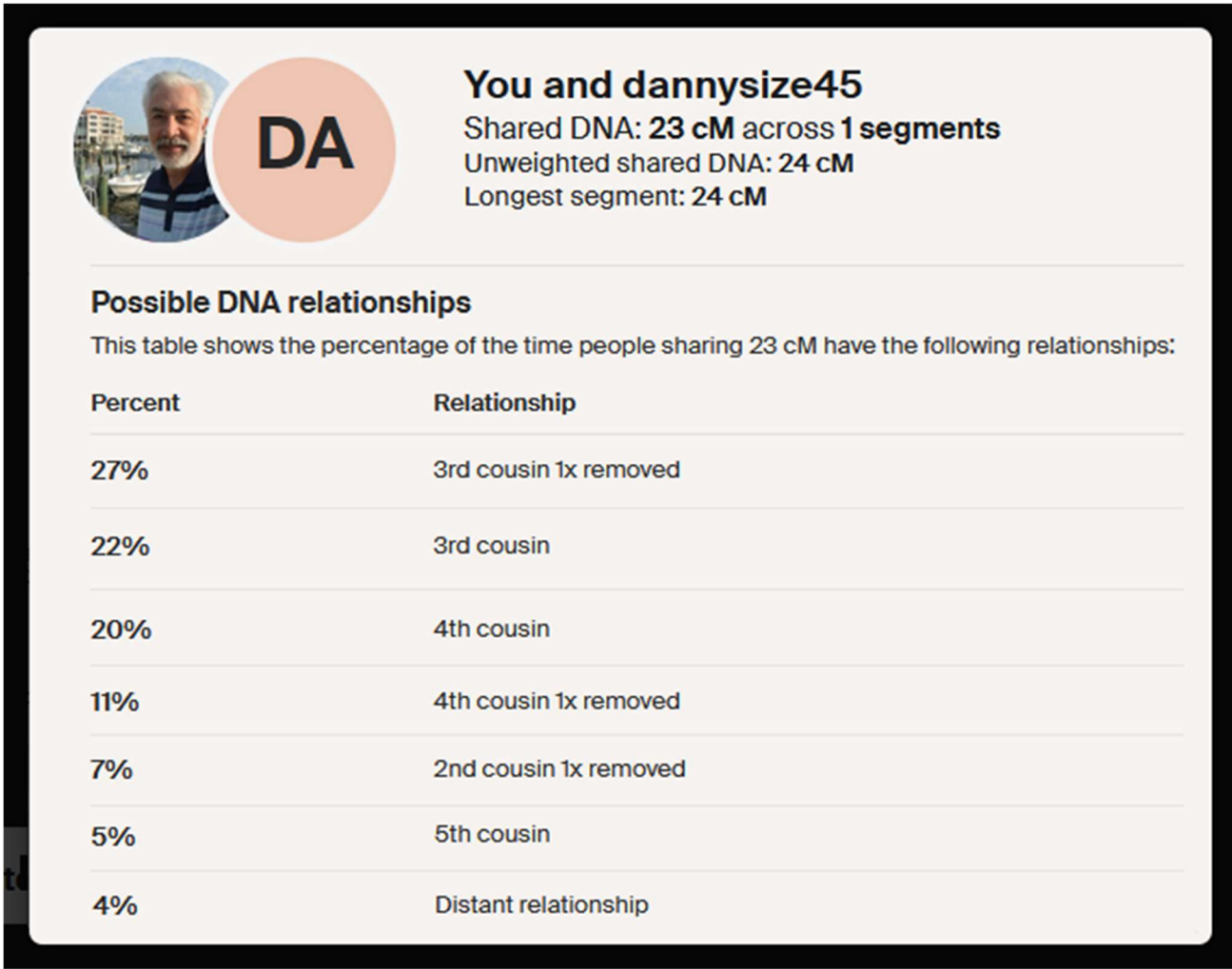


dannysize45

4th – 6th Cousin
23 cM | < 1% shared DNA
Paternal side

Private linked tree
9 People
Common ancestor

dannysize45 and I share 23 cM of DNA. Based solely on the size of this match, software on the Ancestry.com website produced a chart showing the probabilities of various relationships that I would have with *dannysize45*:



The last line in the chart shows that we have just a 4% probability of being more distant than fifth-cousins. And the larger probabilities in this chart suggest that *dannysize45* and I have a much closer relationship.

My DNA Match with dannysize45

I went on to look at the ancestors that *dannysize45* and I have in common:

How are you and dannysize45 related?

Common Ancestors

According to Ancestry member trees, these are the common ancestors that connect you and dannysize45. View a common ancestor to see the relationship path that connects you.

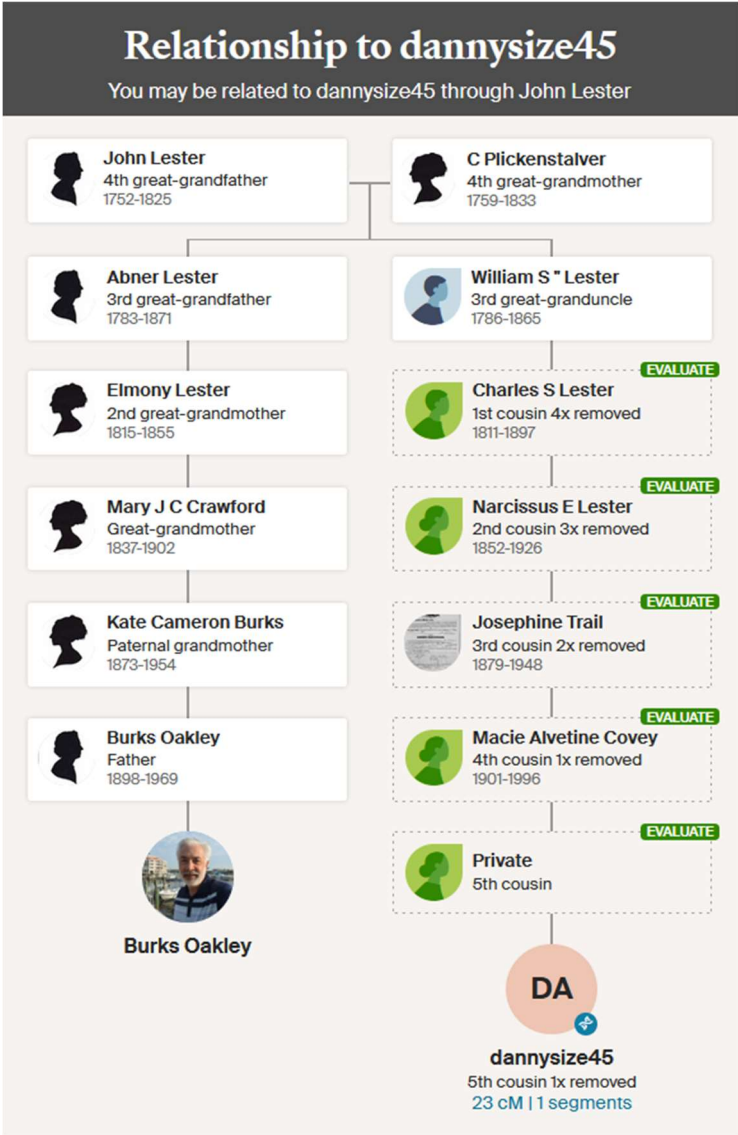
dannysize45 could be your 5th cousin 1x removed through:

John Lester
4th great-grandfather
1752-1825
[View Relationship](#)

Catherine Plickenstalver
4th great-grandmother
1759-1833
[View Relationship](#)

dannysize45 and I are both descended from John Lester (1752-1825) and his wife Catherine Plickenstalver (1759-1833). This couple were my fourth-great grandparents, and as I mentioned in the *Preface*, they were Elmony Lester’s paternal grandparents. And they were born before the American Revolution!

I then viewed the chart that Ancestry.com created, showing how *dannysize45* and I are related:



I am descended from the Lester-Plickenstalver couple through their son Abner Lester (1783-1871), while **dannysize45** is descended from this couple through their son William S. “Tug” (or Tugg) Lester (1786-1865). According to this chart, I am a fifth-cousin of **dannysize45**’s mother (marked “Private” in the chart). This means that **dannysize45** and I are fifth-cousins once-removed (5C1R).

In 2020, the noted genetic genealogist Blaine T. Bettinger published the results of his study looking at the amount of DNA shared by two people with known genealogical relationships. Here is the relevant part of his data:



He found that 5C1R on average shared 21 cM of DNA, with a range of 0 - 80 cM. So my DNA match with **dannysize45** is just slightly below average in size. It is somewhat strange that Ancestry.com gave only a 4% probability of us being farther removed than fifth-cousins.

At any rate, I went on to look at the DNA matches that **dannysize45** and I have in common. An individual needs to have DNA matches with both **dannysize45** and me that are at least 20 cM in size in order to be on the “Shared Matches” list. This requirement limits the number of people on the list.

Here is a subset of our Shared Matches list, where Ancestry.com had identified a common ancestor:



DA

You and dannysize45

4th – 6th Cousin | Paternal side

< 1% shared DNA: 23 cM across 1 segments

Trees Ethnicity Shared Matches

Filter by:

Unviewed

Common ancestors

Search | Sort

Extended Family



mikecascone@gmail.com

2nd – 3rd Cousin

106 cM | 2% shared DNA

Paternal side

Public linked tree

11 People

Common ancestor

Distant Family



David Farley

4th – 6th Cousin

42 cM | < 1% shared DNA

Paternal side

Public linked tree

27 People

Common ancestor



Julian Trail

4th – 6th Cousin

27 cM | < 1% shared DNA

Unassigned

Public linked tree

145 People

Common ancestor



Jefferson Casto

4th – 6th Cousin

22 cM | < 1% shared DNA

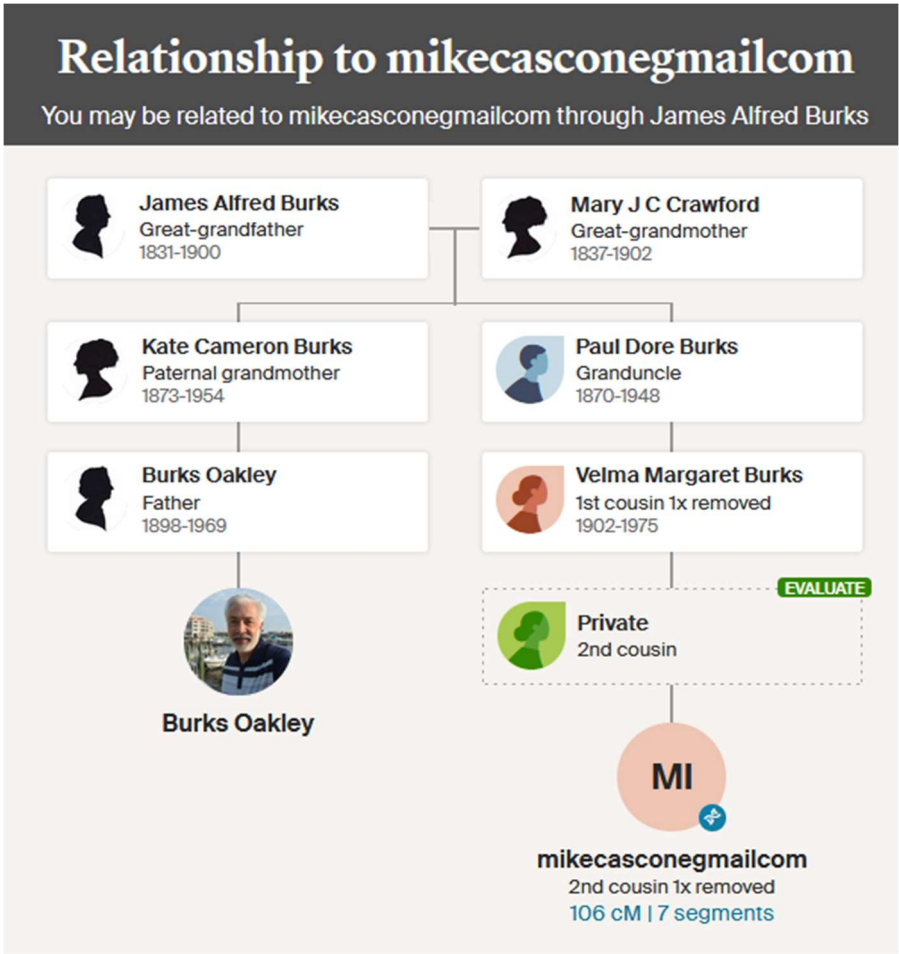
Paternal side

Public linked tree

8 People

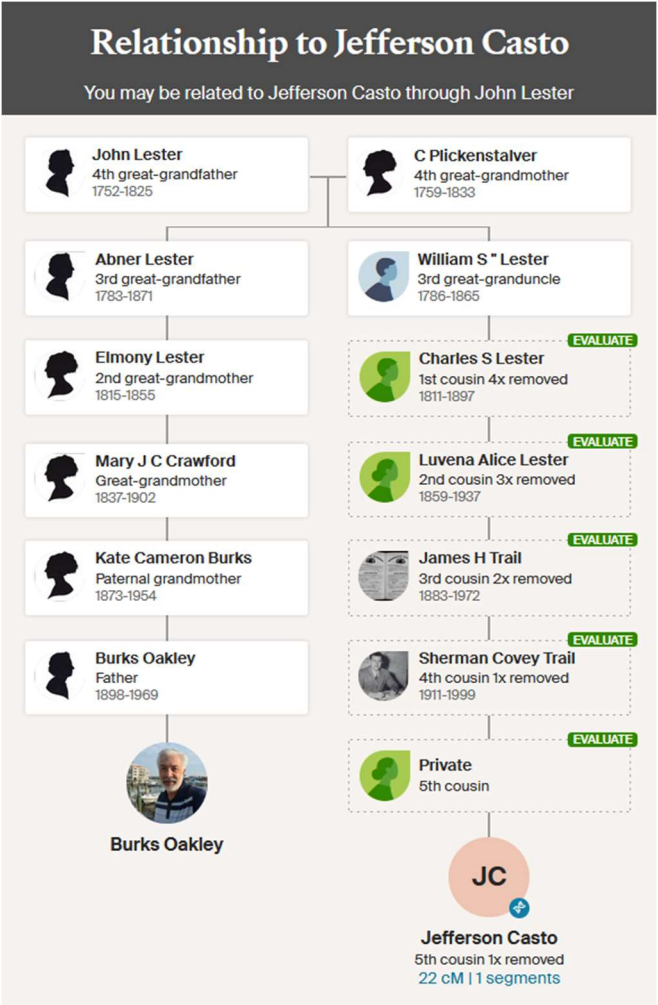
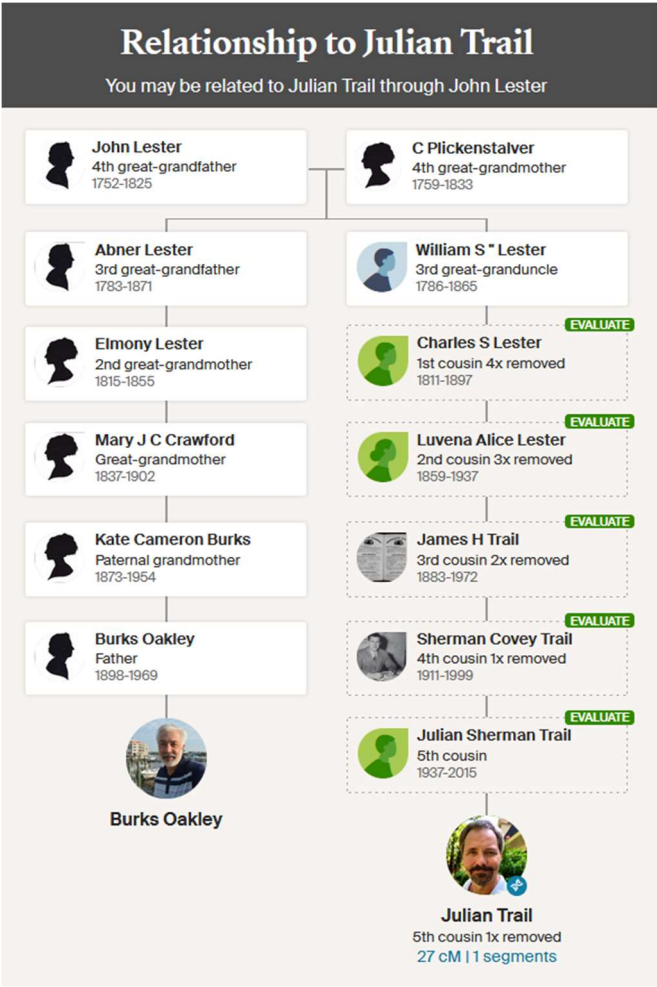
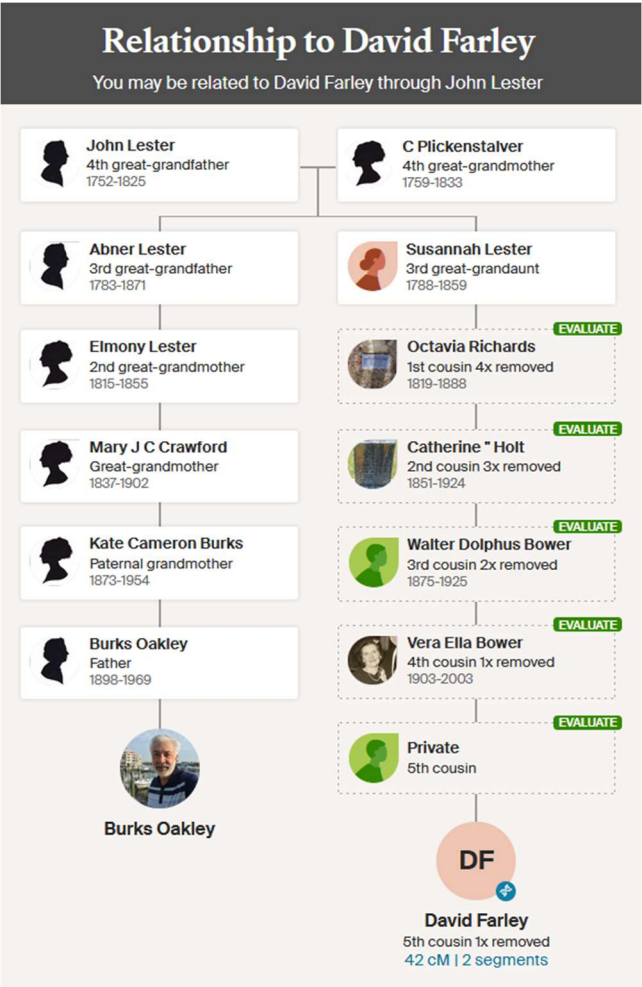
Common ancestor

The first individual on this list is Mike Cascone. Mike is a great-grandson of Paul Dore Burks (1870-1948), and Paul was a brother of my paternal grandmother, Kate Cameron Burks (1873-1954), as shown in the following relationship chart:



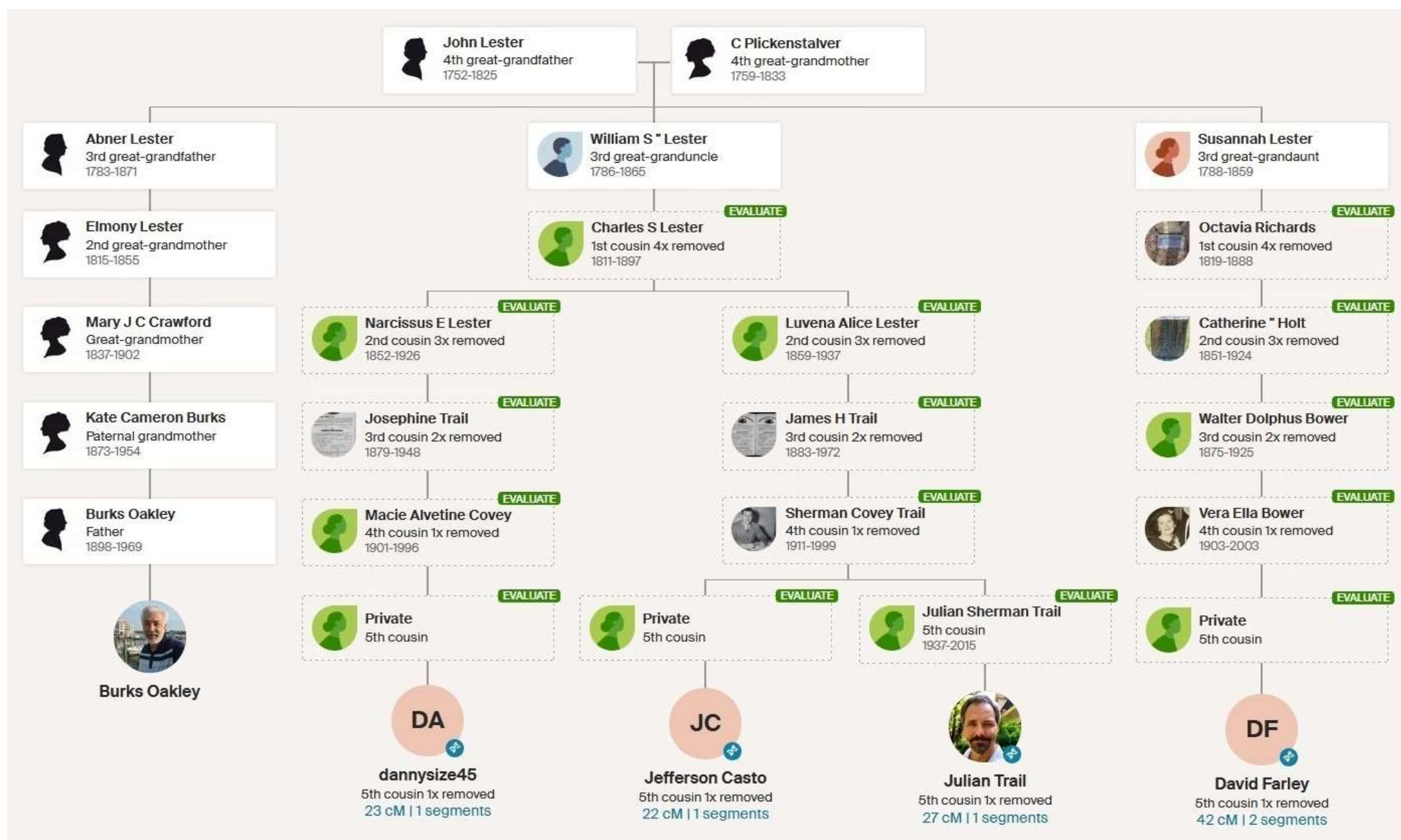
Note that my ancestral line to the Lester-Plickenstalver couple goes back through Mary Jane Cameron Crawford, so this would explain why *dannysize45* has a DNA match with Mike Cascone – *dannysize45* and Mike both are descended from the Lester-Plickenstalver couple.

The other three people on my list of Shared Matches with *dannysize45* were David Farley, Julian Trail, and Jefferson Casto. I was amazed to see that all three of these people are descended from the Lester-Plickenstalver couple, as shown in the following three charts:



Interestingly, all three of these individuals are my fifth-cousins once-removed – just like *dannysize45*.

I combined these three charts (plus my chart for *dannysize45*) into a single chart, which is shown in landscape mode on the next page:



This combined relationship chart shows the three new individuals – Jefferson Casto, Julian Trail, and David Farley – who all are descended from the Lester-Plickenstalver couple and have DNA matches with both **dannysize45** and me that are at least 20 cM in size. I find this to be pretty remarkable, since all three of these individuals (four if you include **dannysize45**) are fifth-great grandchildren of the Lester-Plickenstalver couple.

Several things are worth pointing out in this chart. First, Jefferson Casto and Julian Trail are first-cousins. They both are grandsons of Sherman Covey Trail (1911-1999). Second, Narcissus Ellen Lester (1852-1926) and her sister Luvena Alice Lester (1859-1937) married two brothers having the surname of **Trail** (the husbands are not shown in this chart).¹ Their children were Josephine Trail and James H. Trail, respectively (more about James H. Trail below).

I also looked at some of the details for my new DNA matches in this chart. Jefferson Casto and I have shared DNA matches with Julian Trail and **dannysize45**. Julian Trail and I have shared DNA matches with Jefferson Casto and **dannysize45**. So all of this is consistent.

When I looked at my Shared Matches with David Farley, I found a new person:



DF

You and David Farley

4th – 6th Cousin | Paternal side

< 1% shared DNA: 42 cM across 2 segments

Trees Ethnicity Shared Matches

Filter by:

Unviewed

Common ancestors

Search | Sort

Distant Family



dannysize45

4th – 6th Cousin

23 cM | < 1% shared DNA

Paternal side

Private linked tree

9 People

Common ancestor



Amy Kyle

4th – 6th Cousin

21 cM | < 1% shared DNA

Paternal side

Public linked tree

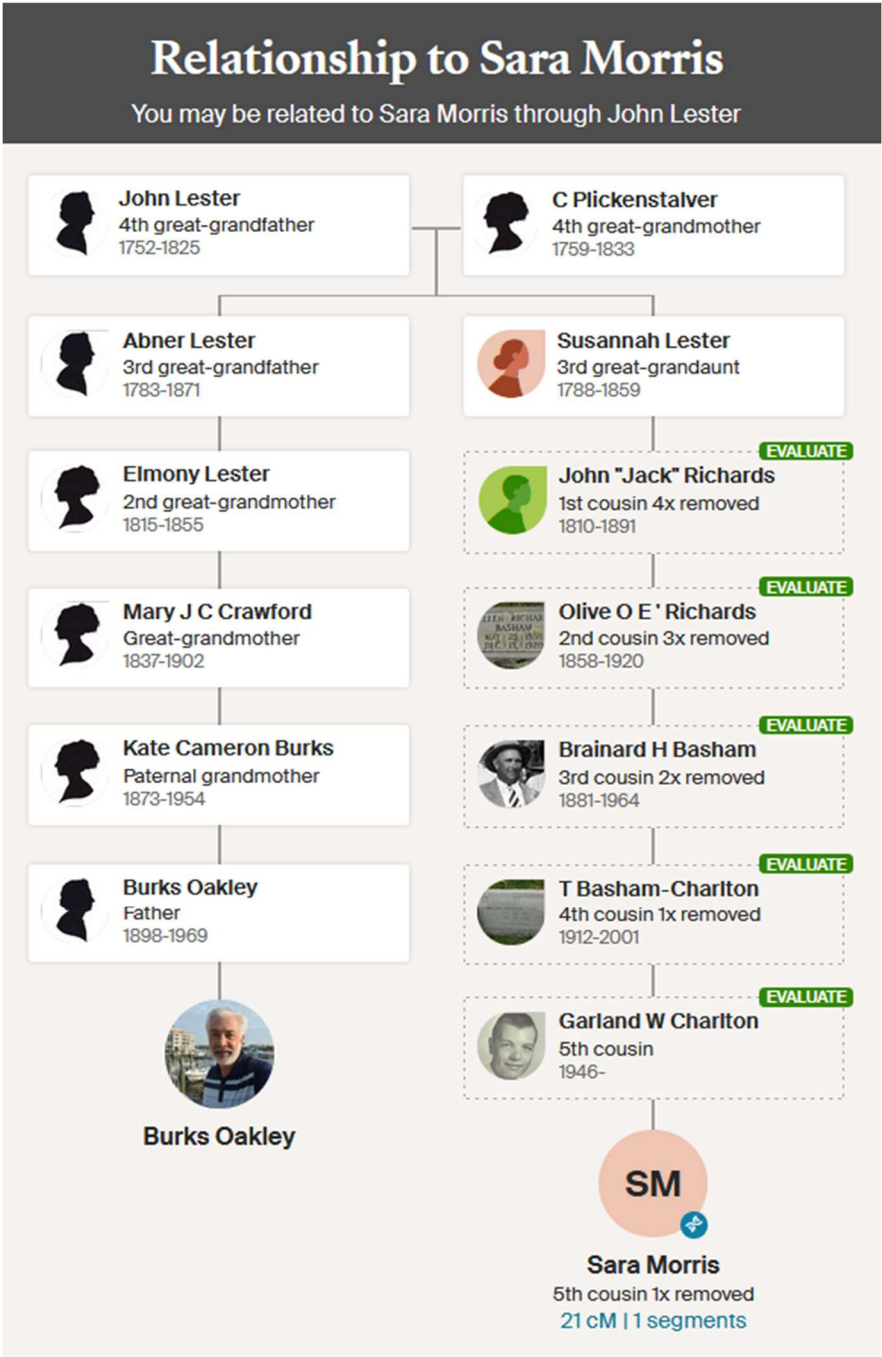
34 People

Common ancestor

David Farley and I both have DNA matches (that are 20 cM or larger) with **dannysize45**, and we also have DNA matches with a woman named Amy Kyle. Here is a chart showing how Amy and I are related:

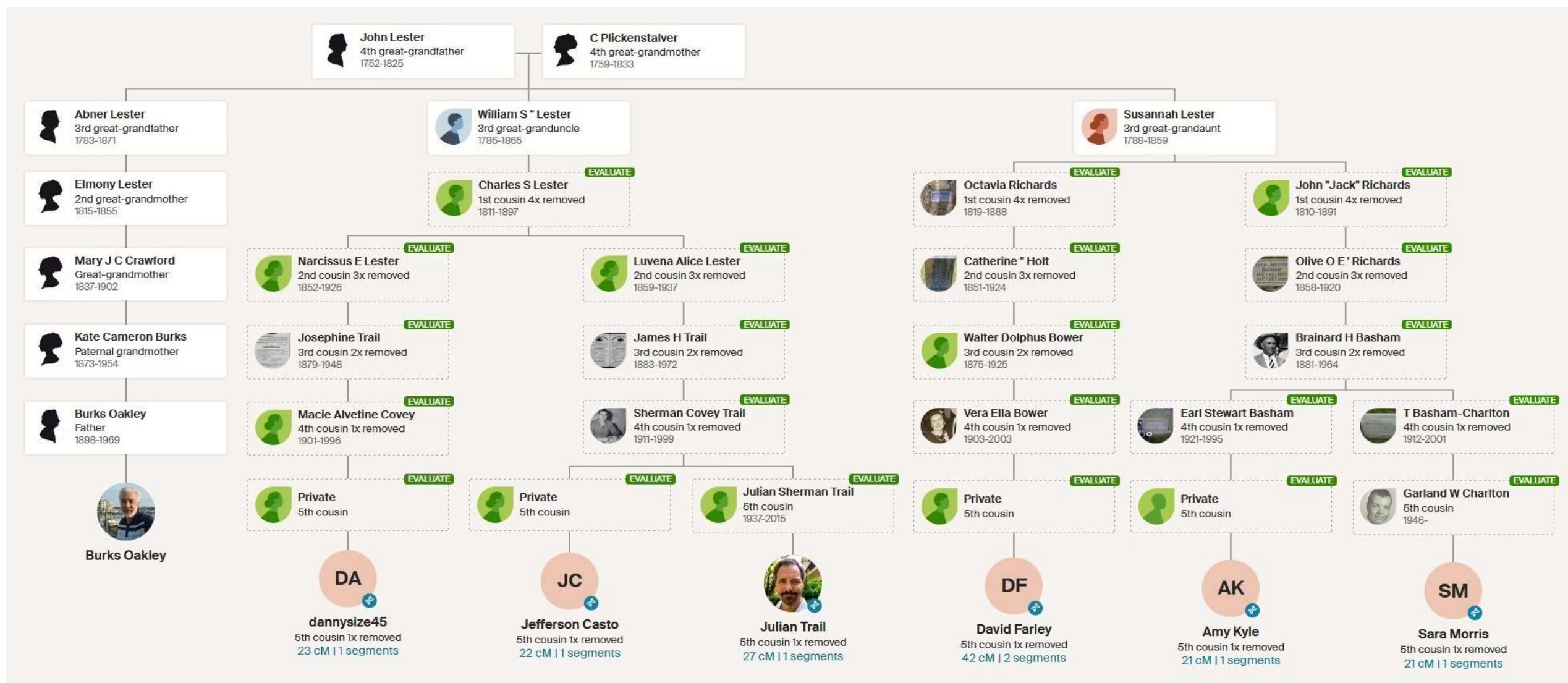
¹ Narcissus married Harvey Washington Trail and Luvena married Thomas Columbus Trail.

This list of Shared Matches adds a woman named Sara Morris. And, of course, Sara Morris is a Lester-Plickenstalver descendant:



I find it amazing that I have so many DNA matches that are 20 cM or larger going back to my fourth-great grandparents!

At this point, I decided to add Amy Kyle and Sara Morris to the overall relationship chart. The revised chart is shown in landscape mode on the next page:



This chart shows that I have DNA matches with six descendants of the Lester-Plickenstalver couple that are 20 cM or larger. Really quite amazing!

My Oakley Cousins

I looked at my *Oakley* cousins' DNA matches on Ancestry.com – Mark Eidem, Hal Oakley, Tim Oakley, and Sullivan Oakley. Out of this group, only Hal has a DNA match with *dannysize45*:

Hal Oakley's DNA Matches

All matchesBy parentBy ancestorBy location

Filter by:UnviewedCommon ancestorsSearch | Sort

Match nameSurname in matches' treesBirth location in matches' trees

dannysize45SearchCancel

Distant Family



dannysize45

5th – 8th Cousin
8 cM | < 1% shared DNA
Unassigned

Private linked tree
9 People
Common ancestor

Way to go, Hal!

How Does jrholman59 Fit In?

In looking at all the shared DNA matches, I learned that a man having the username of *jrholman59* is on my list of Shared Matches with David Farley:



DF

You and David Farley

4th – 6th Cousin | Paternal side
< 1% shared DNA: 42 cM across 2 segments

TreesEthnicityShared Matches

Filter by:UnviewedCommon ancestorsSearch | Sort

Distant Family



jrholman59

4th – 6th Cousin
39 cM | < 1% shared DNA
Paternal side

Public linked tree
57 People
Common ancestor



dannysize45

4th – 6th Cousin
23 cM | < 1% shared DNA
Paternal side

Private linked tree
9 People
Common ancestor

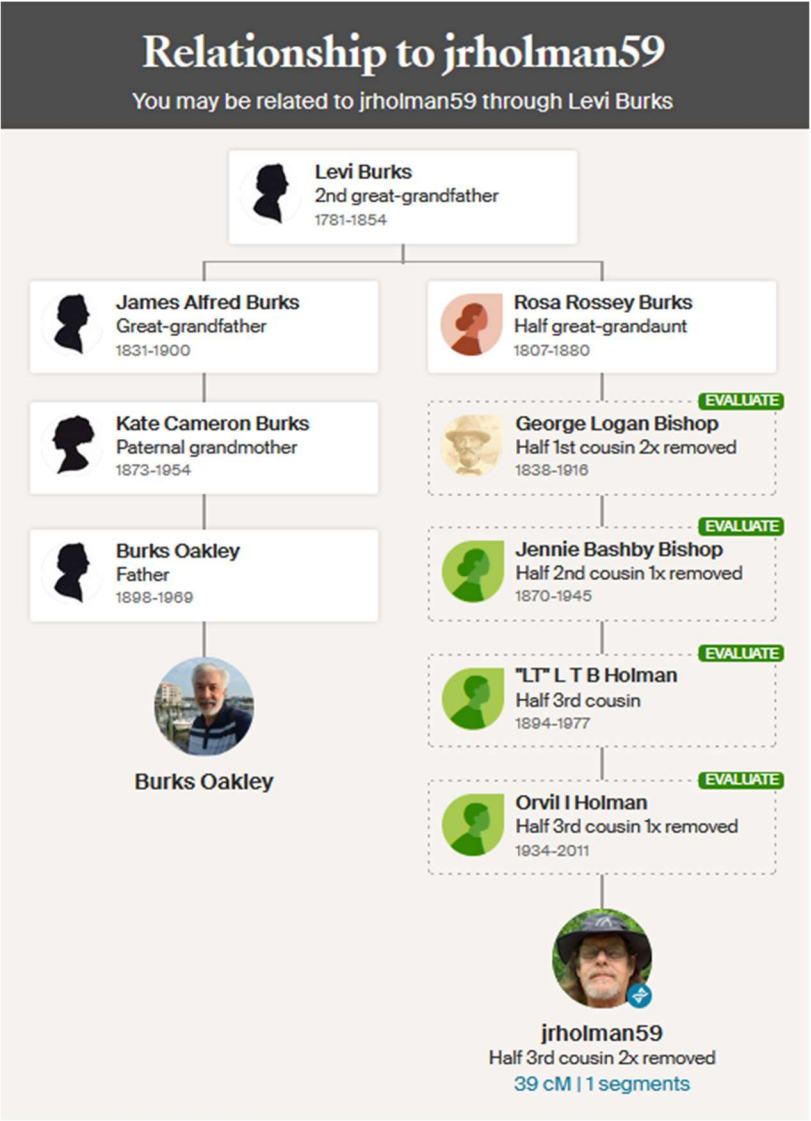


Amy Kyle

4th – 6th Cousin
21 cM | < 1% shared DNA
Paternal side

Public linked tree
34 People
Common ancestor

Here is a chart showing how *jrholman59* and I are related:



We both are descended from Levi Burks. My line goes back to Levi Burks through his son from his second marriage, James Alfred Burks, while *jrholman59*'s line goes back to Levi Burks through his daughter from his first marriage, Rosa Rossey Burks. Based on this chart, *jrholman59* and I are "half" third-cousins twice-removed (Isn't that a mouthful!).

The relationship chart shown above cannot account for the DNA matches that David Farley has with *jrholman59* and me. There has to be another way that I am related to David Farley. And unfortunately, Ancestry.com no longer shows multiple sets of common ancestors. I'll try to contact both of them and see if they can tell me how they are related to each other.

Lester, West Virginia

OK, now I'm down to the minutia that I found in researching this narrative. In verifying the ancestral lines shown in this narrative, I learned that two **Lester** sisters (Narcissus Ellen Lester and Luvena Alice Lester) married two **Trail** brothers (Harvey Washington Trail and Thomas Columbus Trail, respectively). Luvena and her husband Thomas had a son James Henry Trail, who appears in the overall relationship charts as the great-grandfather of Jefferson Casto and Julian Trail.

Here is a profile for James Henry Trail from the Hunt Family Tree on Ancestry.com:

 Hunt Family Tree ▾

 Tree search

 KH Kim Hunt



James Henry Trail

BIRTH 26 SEP 1883 • Lester, Raleigh County, West Virginia, United States of America
DEATH 22 JANUARY 1972 • Lester, Raleigh, West Virginia, USA

I noticed that James Henry Trail was born in Lester, West Virginia. I wondered where the town got its name. Could it be named after one of my ***Lester*** ancestors? What do you think?

A quick look at Wikipedia gave me the following:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lester,_West_Virginia

Lester is a town in Raleigh County, West Virginia, United States. The population was 337 at the 2020 census. The community was named after Champ Lester, a local pioneer.

OK, so who is Champ Lester? I found lots of profiles for him on Ancestry.com. Here is one of them:

 Simmons/Hall/Van Lear/... ▾

 Tree search

 lynwus



Chandler Camden 'Champ' Lester

BIRTH 3 NOV 1809 • Montgomery County, Virginia, USA
DEATH 1 SEP 1888 • Raleigh County, West Virginia

Hmm.... He was born in Montgomery County, Virginia, which is where our ***Lester*** family came from.

I looked at his father in the family tree shown above:

Simmons/Hall/Van Lear/... ▾

Tree search

lynwus

William S Tugg Lester DNA

BIRTH 7 OCT 1785 • Montgomery Co, Virginia
DEATH 1865 • Alum Ridge, Floyd, Virginia, United States

Family

Parents

Capt. John Lester DNA
1752-1825

Catherine Plickenstalver DNA
1759-1833

Spouse and children

REBECCA SIMMONS
1790-1861

Chandler Camden 'Champ' Lester
1809-1888

Charles S LESTER DNA
1811-1897

Nancy Byer LESTER
1813-1879

Susanna Jane Lester
1814-1888

John Simmons Lester
1816-1882

James Patterson 'Preston' Lester
1818-1903

Delilah Lester
1820-1888

Boston Lester
1822-1900

Gordon C. Lester
1825-1853

Ballard Lester
1827-1830

Rebecca Lester
1829-

William S. Lester Jr.
1832-1916

Oh my! Champ Lester was the son of William S. “Tugg” Lester, and a grandson of the Lester-Plickenstalver couple. And Champ was the older brother of Charles S. Lester, who appears in the overall relationship charts as my first-cousin four-times-removed.

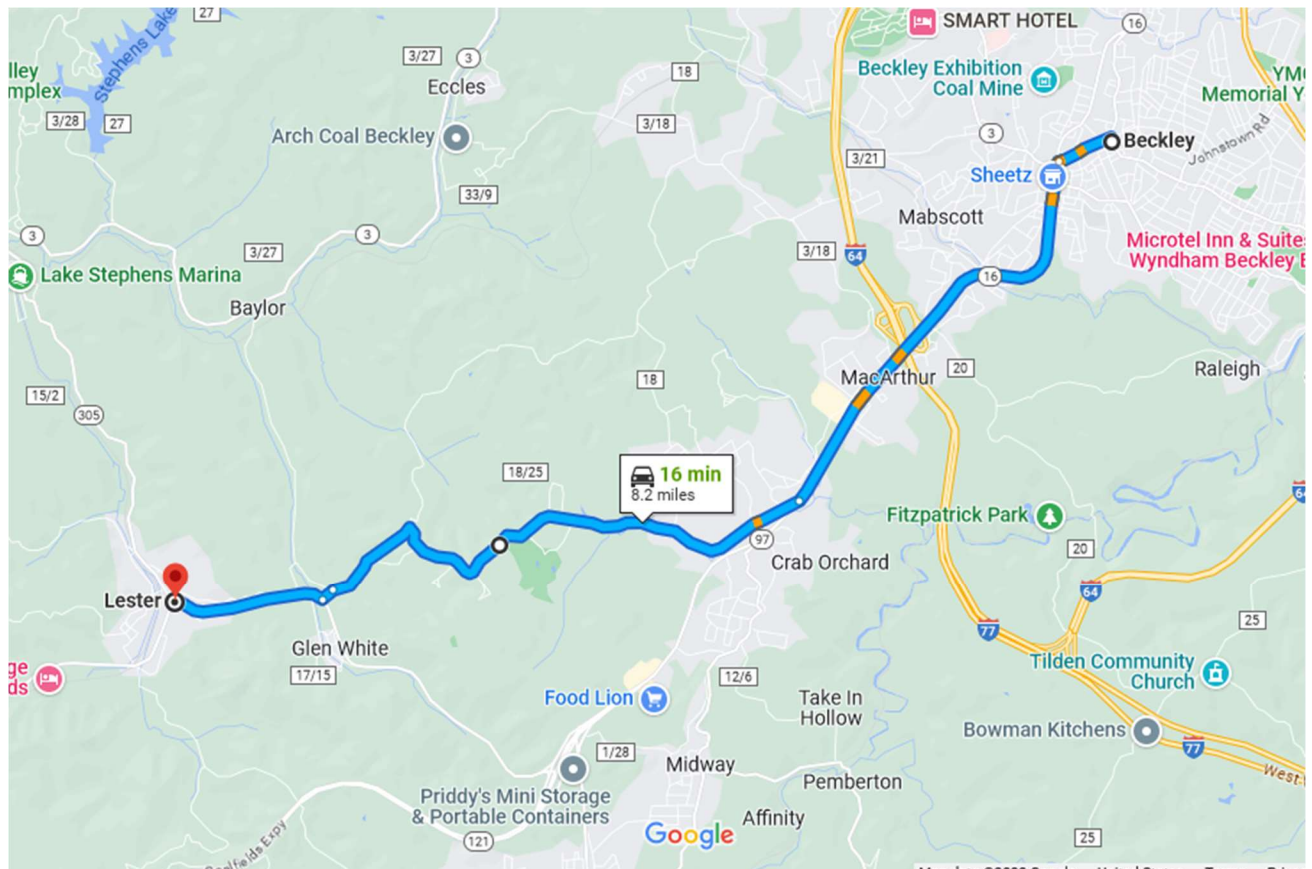
So indeed Lester, West Virginia, was named after one of our **Lester** ancestors!!

And....

Drumroll, please....

Scroll to the next page.....

Lester is just 8 miles from Beckley, West Virginia:



And some members of the Quincy **Oakley** family at one time had an ownership interest in WVVA-TV, which serves the Bluefield-Beckley-Oak Hill television market:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WVVA>

WVVA (channel 6) is a television station licensed to Bluefield, West Virginia, United States, serving the Bluefield-Beckley-Oak Hill market as an affiliate of NBC and The CW Plus. Owned by Gray Television, the station maintains studios on U.S. Route 460 in Bluefield, West Virginia, and its transmitter is located atop East River Mountain, near the West Virginia-Virginia border.



Nice to see these two connections – Lester, West Virginia, named for one of our Lester ancestors, and Lester, West Virginia, served by WVVA-TV.

An entire branch of the extended **Lester** family must have settled in the Lester, WV, area. From the relationship charts shown in this narrative, **dannysize45's** maternal grandmother was Macie (or Macy) Alvetine Covey (1901-1996), and she was born in Lester, West Virginia:



According to the FindAGrave.com website, Macy (Macie) is buried in Sunset Memorial Park in Beckley, West Virginia.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/20974578/macie-a.-brooks>

Quite interesting to see the connection to our **Lester** ancestors!

Summary

In this lengthy narrative, I began with my new DNA match on Ancestry.com with **dannysize45**. He and I are both descended from John Lester (1752-1825) and his wife Catherine Plickenstalver (1759-1833). This couple were my fourth-great grandparents, and they were Elmony Lester's paternal grandparents.

I found that **dannysize45** and I have "Shared Matches" with three individuals, and in turn, those individuals led me to "Shared Matches" with another two individuals. I find it amazing to have DNA matches that are 20 cM or larger with six individuals (**dannysize45** and the other five) who are fifth-great grandchildren of the Lester-Plickenstalver couple.

The DNA matches that I described in this narrative provide additional support for Elmony Lester's ancestral lines that I found through my earlier research, which is always nice to see!

Finally, I learned that Lester, West Virginia, is named after one of our **Lester** relatives, Champ Lester – and Lester, West Virginia, is located close to Beckley, West Virginia, which is served by WVVA-TV – a station in which members of my Quincy **Oakley** family had an ownership interest at one time.