D-OGS Newsletter – October 2022

News & Articles of Interest to Durham-Orange genealogists

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2022 dues – $20

President – David McCorkle

OUR OCTOBER 5 MEETING WILL BE IN PERSON AND ONLINE VIA ZOOM ***

We typically think of the State Archives in terms of paper, but they also have an extensive collection of audiovisual materials available to researchers. Please join us on Wednesday, **October 5** at **7:00 PM** at the **OWASA Community Center**, 400 Jones Ferry Rd, Carrboro, OR **ONLINE via Zoom,** to hear ***Vann Evans*** present **"*Audiovisual Materials at the State Archives of North Carolina*".** His presentation will focus on the development of the Archives' audiovisual collections, share some examples of materials and how they may be of interest to researchers or genealogists, and answer any questions researchers may have.

Speaker Biography

Vann Evans is the Audiovisual Materials archivist in the Special Collections Section at the State Archives of North Carolina, Office of Archives and History, N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. He oversees the development and acquisition of photographs, film, video, and audio recordings, their description, and accessibility to researchers. He began his career at the State Archives in 2007 and previously served as a supervisor in the Public Services Unit of the State Archives where he advised and assisted researchers.

Directions:

The OWASA Community Center is on the right side of Jones Ferry Road heading west out of town. Park in the lower lot on the west side of the facility - the center is the door closest to the street on the lower level.

Recording

This lecture will be recorded and made available on the member-only section of the D-OGS website.

Online Access

We will be using the popular Zoom software which runs on PCs and Macs, as well as mobile devices like phones and tablets. It will be free for you to use. You do not need a microphone or video camera - just speakers and a screen, but it will be easier to ask questions if you have a microphone. There is an option to call in via telephone but note in most cases the presentation assumes you can see the slides or demo.

MONTHLY BACKUP REMINDER

It is the first of a new month. Don't forget to back up your data files.

Remember, some disasters are avoidable, but you never know when a hardware problem will strike and knock out your PC.

ANCESTRY.COM'S CARD CATALOG: CUTTING THROUGH THE NOISE

Ancestry.com has a reported 30 billion records in its database, which is great news for genealogists. The not-so-great news: All those records make it seemingly impossible to find the one you're looking for. A sitewide search for my ancestor Henry Witte using his birth year and exact surname, for example, turns up a whopping 22,000 results.

Fortunately, Ancestry.com has a tool that helps you cut through all that noise. Like the namesake paper-and-drawer system used by libraries of yore, Ancestry.com's Card Catalog sorts its collections into more-manageable categories, acting as a guide to only the collections you need.

From the Card Catalog, you can see a full listing of Ancestry.com's 33,000 collections and drill down to the specific collections useful to your research. Filter by record type, location or time period, or search using keywords.

Click a collection title to visit its information page. From there, you can:

- Search within that specific collection, making it easier to find records
- Browse the collection's records by place, time, surname, volume, etc.
- Learn more about the collection: where it came from, what jurisdictions it includes, and more.

You do not need to subscribe to Ancestry.com to view the catalog. That means it has another useful application: helping you decide whether an Ancestry.com subscription is worth your money. Fellow subscription site MyHeritage has its own Collection Catalog, and Findmypast has a similar record set list. (So does FamilySearch, though that site is totally free to use.)

You'll still need to do a bit of digging to find your ancestors. But the Card Catalog can take those 22,000 record hits to "just" a few thousand or hundred. (No one ever said genealogy would be easy!)

PUT TAPE OVER YOUR WEBCAM!

Here's my hint of the day (or week or month or whatever... there's really no timeframe for this): Put tape or something else over the webcam on your computer. Or Amazon Show. Or any other device capable of sending video.

It doesn't really have to be tape. It could be a sticky note, or a business card, a sticker of some sort, or a dab of peanut butter. Your choice.

If you have children or grandchildren in your house frequently, this article is doubly important to you. The methodology may vary but the underlying principle remains the same: stop your webcam from being on all the time (or ever).

Hackers, government agents, and teenagers can, and do, use easily accessible tools and phishing techniques to hijack webcams of unsuspecting people, often who they know, and watch them through their camera. They can store images and videos of people in compromising situations in their bedrooms, and many of these images and videos are uploaded to shady websites. A slew of news stories in the past few years have revealed that what was once considered paranoia is now an uncomfortable frequent reality.

If you really want to get fancy, you can purchase the CloudValley Webcam Cover Slide.

It is designed primarily for laptops but, with a bit of imagination, I suspect it can be applied to other computers. (A bit of tape should do it.) These cost $6.99 for package of 2 on Amazon (go to Amazon and search for "CloudValley Webcam Cover Slide.") You can then block or unblock your webcam within a second or two by simply sliding it with your finger.

If you don't have a laptop, you can choose from dozens of other webcam blockers both on Amazon and probably any other computer retailer.

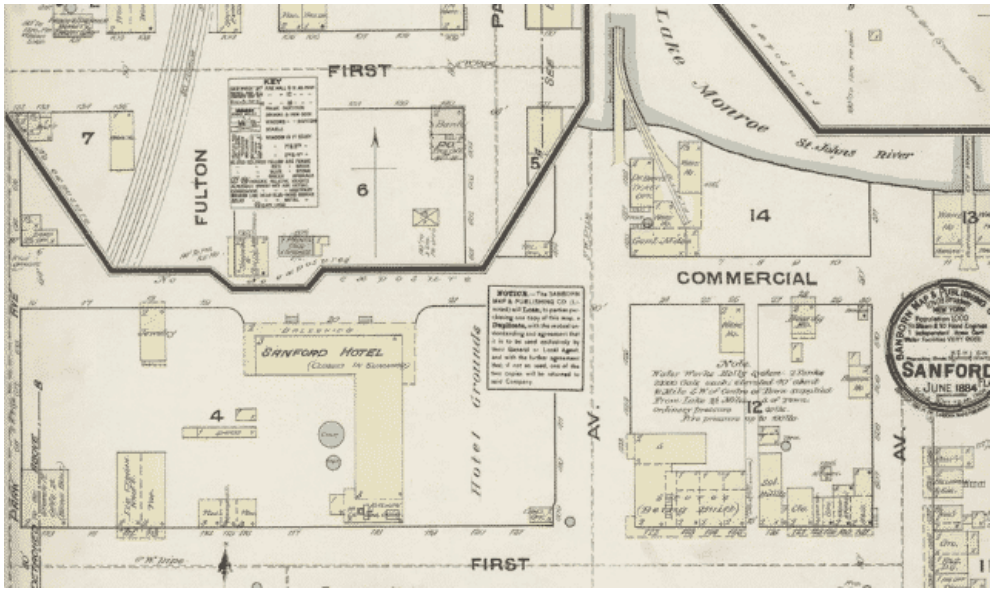
I was especially pleased to notice that most all Amazon Show devices ("Hey! Alexa") have built-in covers that slide over the webcam in a second or two. I have one of these in every room of my house (OK, so I admit I am a nerd) and the Amazon Show devices in my bathrooms and bedrooms all have the cover in place all the time. If I am chatting with someone and want to enable video, it only takes a second or so to slide the cover off. I use this to talk with my grandchildren who live about 1,000 miles from me.

This prevents me from displaying "more of me than I really wanted to show."

Regardless of which devices you have in your home, your rule of thumb should be "If it is capable of sending video, that video should also be blocked when not being used."

HOW TO USE ONLINE SANBORN MAPS FOR GENEALOGY

By Diane Haddad



(1884) Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Sanford, Seminole County, Florida. Sanborn Map Company, Jun. [Map] Retrieved from the Library of Congress.

Have you heard about the Library of Congress' digital Sanborn maps? Nearly 25,000 maps are online, with more to be added over the next three years, for a total of 500,000.

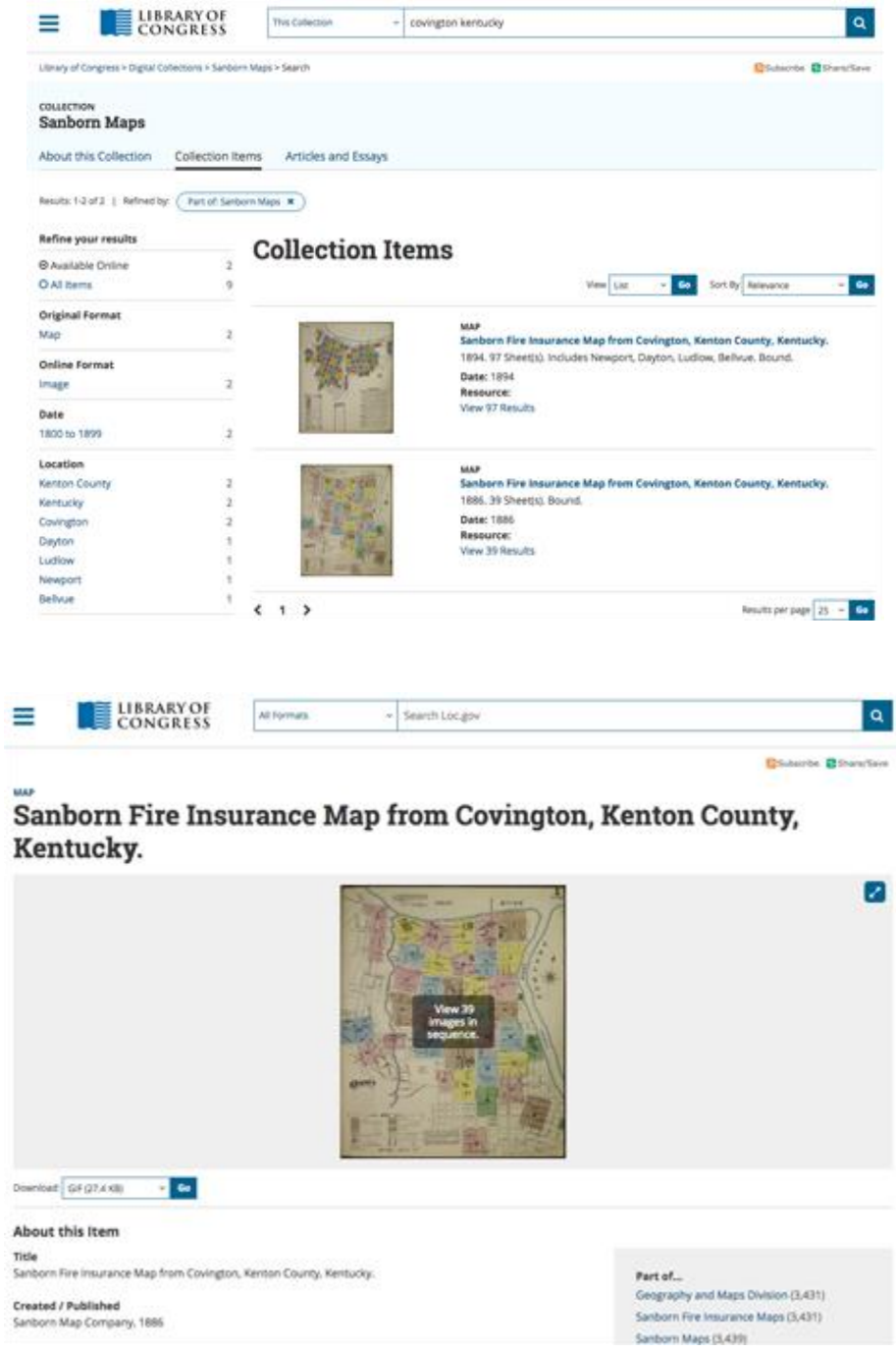
Sanborn fire insurance maps were published for insurance companies to assess a structure's risk of catching fire. They were published in different years for different places, and usually after 1920, a set of maps for a particular town might be updated by pasting over a new building.

The maps show subdivision names, streets, buildings, and building details such as address, purpose, composition, windows and doors. You can locate your ancestor's address before renumbering and renaming that might've happened, and you get a good look at your ancestor's neighborhood at the time.

Here's an example of how I used the collection to see where my ancestors lived:

1. Search for city maps

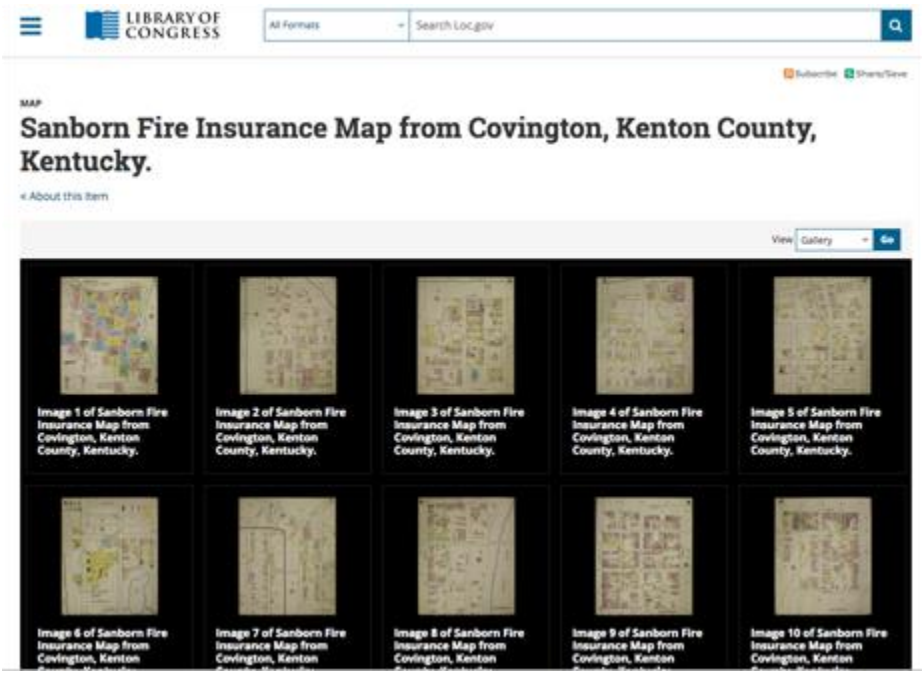
Much of my mom's family lived in Covington, Ky., so that's what I searched for (typing the full state name) in the Search box at the top of the page. Maps were published in 1886 and 1894 (I chose 1886).



2. Use city directories to find specific addresses

Next, I looked up a few ancestors' addresses in city directories. In 1886, Louis Thoss lived and worked at a hardware business at 73 E. 12th st. His mother, Elizabeth, was a widow at the southeast corner ("sec") of 13th and Garrard. His deceased brother's widow, Jennie, lived at 165 E. 13th.

3. Explore indexes



Zoom in on the index map and drag it around to get a better look at street names.

For larger cities, check the last page in the series for a street index that lists which range of house numbers and the map page they're located on. It also lists "specials," or major buildings.

The corner of East 13th and Garrard is on Map 30. Jennie's address on East 13th could be on map 29 or 30.

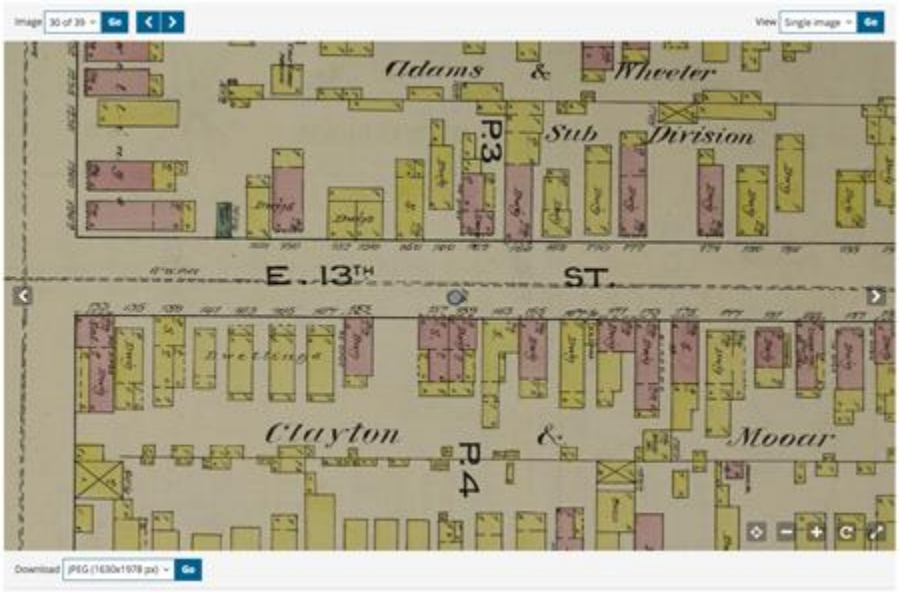
I Googled Louis' address to get a better idea of its location today. It's probably on Map 20, but might be on a different map if houses have been renumbered since Louis' day.

4. View single images or galleries

At the top right of the web page, switching from single image to gallery view and clicking Go gets me to the view of all map pages in this set, so I can find and click image 30.

Here's where it helps to check a Google map if you don't know the area. Thirteenth street was shown running north/south, because it was probably positioned horizontally on the page. But in real life, it runs east/west. If I didn't know that, I'd pick the wrong corner of 13th and Garrard. You can rotate the map using controls in the lower right corner.

Elizabeth Thoss lived at No. 133. No. 165 is 11 doors to the east.



5. Learn from colors and symbols

Elizabeth's home is mostly pink and some yellow, with numbers and Xs, and the notation "no opgs" on the side. You'll find a key on the index map page and more information about the colors and symbols here, along with notes such as the area's population and size of the fire department.

Colors indicate construction materials. Green indicated a high-risk building. The numbers tell how many stories. An X marks a door, and Xes on walls mark windows, with dots for windows on second or higher stories. An O is an iron chimney. Elizabeth's building was mostly brick (pink) and 2-½ stories, with a 2-story wood (yellow) addition. The front section held a saloon ("sal"), with a dwelling ("Dwg") in the rear.

6. Download maps for future research

You can download this map in several formats, all the way up to a TIF, using the Download menu at the lower left.

If you're looking in New York City, you can use the New York Public Library's Map Warper to view Sanborn and other old maps layered over modern maps. If not, you can upload your map to Google Earth and do an overlay there.

(Reprinted from Dick Eastman's Online Genealogical Newsletter)

MARYLAND QUIETLY SHELVES PARTS OF GENEALOGY PRIVACY LAW

From an article by Patrick Terpstra and published in the wmar2news.com web site:

A WMAR-2 News investigation has learned the Maryland Department of Health quietly stopped implementing key parts of a landmark privacy law meant to protect ancestry data online.

The law, enacted last year, was seen as a model for other states looking to set standards for when law enforcement can tap into DNA uploaded by Americans researching their heritage.

"States that don't have a law like ours, it's kind of the wild west," said Natalie Ram, law professor at the University of Maryland.

The state's law set some of the first limits in the nation on forensic genetic genealogy, a technique used occasionally to help crack the toughest murder and rape cases.

Authorities take DNA from a crime scene, and if they can't find a match to known offenders in law enforcement databases, they compare the sample to profiles for millions of Americans whose DNA is online from ancestry research.

You can read more at: https://bit.ly/3SgJom0.

5 MILLION PHOTOS OF GRAVES NOW AVAILABLE AT GENEANET

Geneanet (based in France) has reached a major milestone: 5 million photos of graves are now online. Many of these photos are taken in Europe although a few might be from North America.

The Geneanet approach is comparable to, but different from Find-a-Grave and others. At Geneanet, there is always at least one actual photo of a grave or monument in the database, so no copied lists, funeral home announcement scrapings, or blank entries. No one "owns" a grave record at Geneanet; gravestones are available for indexing by everyone, not just the photographer (although as a photographer, you can index your own photos of course). The company discourages the photography of recent graves, out of respect for the deceased.

Here is the announcement from Geneanet:

Geneanet has rich collections of genealogical data in France and Europe. We are excited to share that our "Save Our Graves" project has topped 5 million graves!

These photos are **freely accessible,** as is all data shared by Geneanet members. Our "Save Our Graves" project **simplifies** the uploading and indexing of gravesite photos, through a smartphone/tablet app (iOS and Android) and an online indexing tool. **The goal is simple: preserve the memory of the departed by indexing their names with gravesite photos.**

In many European countries, churchyard space is **limited** (many churches are hundreds of years old) and large cemeteries are not commonplace. **Perpetual care** plots are the exception; most plots are **leased.** It is often the case that plots considered abandoned are **dug up** and made available for the **recently deceased.** Any remains found are buried in an ossuary or potter's field, a **common grave.** So what is an abandoned plot? In France for example, town halls manage the contact list for cemetery plots. When a lease expires on a grave more than 30 years old, a public notice is shown at the cemetery gate, a letter is sent to the lessor of record, and the grave is marked with a "Lease expired, please contact town hall" notice. With no response **within 1 year** (this just changed; it was previously 3 years), the plot is emptied for someone else. **"Save Our Graves"** is an effort to document gravesites which could disappear, if surviving family members have moved and not visited the cemetery for some time. Of course, it is **useful** to document all graves and monuments: finding the burial place of an ancestor opens **new avenues of research,** and gravestones often provide **vital clues** with dates and other family members!

Access the photo collection through the "Search" menu, "Cemeteries and Memorials":

A lot more information, including step-by-step instructions on searching the database, may be found at: https://bit.ly/3xe1ywW.

SHARED DNA: HOW MUCH DNA DO YOU SHARE WITH YOUR RELATIVES?

Many DNA tests, like the MyHeritage DNA test, provide a list of DNA matches as part of your results. DNA matching essentially identifies segments of shared DNA between you and other people, and then provides a list of people whose DNA matches yours.

But what exactly does it mean to have shared DNA? Does sharing DNA necessarily mean you are related? Here's what you need to know about shared DNA.

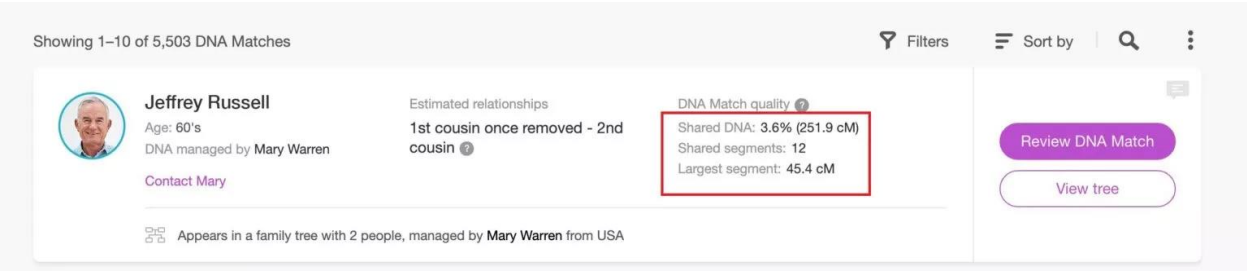
What is shared DNA?

The concept of "shared DNA" is actually a bit misleading. All humans share DNA, not only with each other, but with every living creature on earth! About 99.9% of human DNA is identical from one person to the next.

But when we speak about shared DNA in the context of genetic genealogy, we are referring to the small percent of DNA that accounts for all variation between humans. DNA matching works by examining that portion of DNA and identifying SNPs (single nucleotide polymorphisms): variations in base pairs of DNA that help distinguish your DNA from that of most other people. You can read more about how DNA matching works in this article: How Does DNA Matching Work?

So if you share 50% of your DNA with a parent or child, for example, this doesn't mean that you share 50% of your entire genetic code. Just like with other humans, your DNA is around 99.9% identical. Sharing 50% of your DNA with someone means that you share 50% of the relatively small portion of DNA that varies between human beings.

When you review a DNA match on MyHeritage, the amount of shared DNA will be indicated on the match card and in the Review Match page:



The shared DNA section of a DNA Match on MyHeritage

The amount of shared DNA is measured in percentages or in centimorgans (cMs), a unit for measuring the length of DNA segments.

How much DNA do you share with your parents?

You inherit around 50% of your DNA from each parent, or around 3700 cM. Note that the percentage won't be exactly 50%, because there are certain parts of your DNA you only inherit from your mother (such as mitochondrial DNA) or your father (such as the Y chromosome).

How much DNA do siblings share?

Full siblings generally share anywhere between around 2200 cM to around 3400 cM of DNA, or around 37.5–61%. The reason the answer varies from sibling pair to sibling pair is recombination: while both of them received 50% of their DNA from the same two people, the exact 50% they inherited is random.

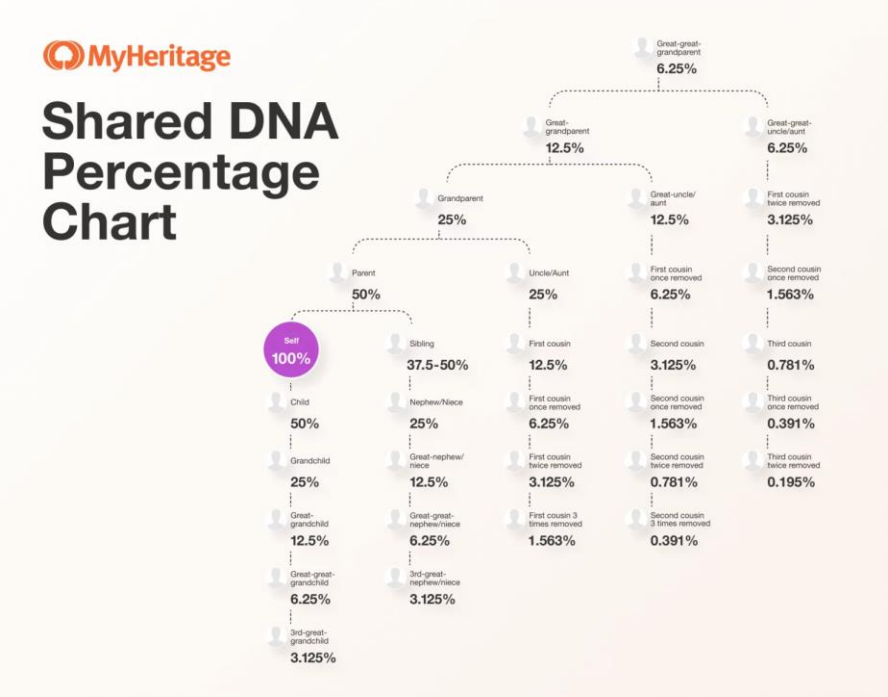
This means that any given SNP from one of the parents might be inherited by both siblings, by neither of them, or by only one of them. You can read more about the variations in sibling DNA here: Can Siblings Have Different Ethnicity Estimates? or here: Why Do I Have A DNA Match Who Doesn't Match My Sibling?

The exception to this rule is identical twins: identical twins developed from a fertilized egg that splits in two, which means that they both have the same combination of DNA, and their DNA is 100% identical.

Half-siblings will share about half as much DNA as full siblings, but again, this is an average and the percentage can vary due to recombination.

Shared DNA percentage chart

You can consult the shared DNA chart below to see how much DNA you share with different relatives:



Can you share DNA and not be related?

Yes… or no, depending on how you define "related." As outlined above, we share DNA with all humans and all living creatures. We all have common ancestors, it's just a question of how many millions of years you go back!

But what about the SNPs that MyHeritage looks at to determine DNA matches? Is it possible to share segments of DNA with an individual, and for that person to turn up in your DNA matches, even though you don't have any common ancestors from the relatively recent past?

The answer is yes. It is possible to share DNA — that is, to have identical SNPs — with an individual who doesn't share a common ancestor with you from the recent past. This situation is known as "identity by state" (IBS): the similarity in your SNPs is either an independent, random occurrence, or was inherited from a much more distant ancestor. "Identity by descent" (IDB) is when your shared SNPs were inherited from a more recent ancestor.

The more distant the DNA match and the less DNA you share, the less likely it is that you have a recent common ancestor with that match. This is particularly true among endogamous populations, that is, populations whose members married within the community for generations — such as Ashkenazi Jews. Members of these populations may share significant amounts of DNA without having a recent common ancestor.

One important way to tell if a DNA match is really related to you is to take a look not only at the overall amount of shared DNA, but at the length of the DNA segments you share. A longer shared segment indicates a greater likelihood that you are related. The length of the longest shared DNA segment will appear on the DNA match card and on the Review DNA Match page, and you can also view all your shared segments on the Chromosome Browser. You can learn more here: What Is A Good DNA Match From A Research Perspective?

(Reprinted from MyHeritage web article)

NEW NORTH CAROLINA OFFICE OF STATE ARCHAEOLOGY WEBSITE

Have any questions about cemeteries in North Carolina? Check out our new Cemetery Program page! You'll find answers to frequently asked questions, recorded webinars and workshops, resources for finding and recording cemeteries, and more!

The NC Office of State Archaeology's Historic Cemetery Program has two objectives:

Research: Identify, inventory, map, describe, and permanently record existing cemeteries in North Carolina that meet the federal definition of "historic" (meaning they are at least 50 years old) (36 CFR §60.4)) regardless of size, type, physical characteristics, or location. This is done to permanently preserve historical, genealogical, sociological, demographic, and cultural data for descendants, researchers, and interested North Carolinians.

Assistance: Help descendants, researchers, and interested North Carolinians with their cemetery questions. This might include sharing cemetery care best practices, connecting with professional researchers, restoration specialists, and archaeologists, identifying relevant NC General Statutes, sharing cemetery cultural and material characteristics, devising action, management, and outreach strategies, and more.

https://archaeology.ncdcr.gov/programs/cemeteries

HOW TO USE THE NEW SANBORN MAP TOOL FROM THE LOC

The Sanborn Map Company created Sanborn maps to assess the risk of a structure catching fire. The maps were published in different years depending on the city, but usually after 1920. Sanborn maps include an incredible amount of information including building materials, addresses, subdivision names, and streets.

Not only are Sanborn maps fun and fascinating to look at, they are also useful for genealogy research. You can use them to find your ancestors' addresses and get a glimpse into what their neighborhood was like.

The Library of Congress has a huge online collection of Sanborn Maps, and they recently released a new tool to help genealogists pinpoint addresses in larger cities.

It's called the Sanborn Atlas Volume Finder. For larger cities whose maps were published in more than one volume, this tool can help you instantly find which volume contains the address you're looking for. Here's how to use it:

- Hover over the city that you're researching (Cities with finished Volume Finders are indicated with a bright pink pin, while cities in progress are indicated by light pink.)
- A small dialog box will pop up with a link to the Volume Finder for that city. Click the link, and a new page will open with more information and instructions for how to use the Volume Finder.
- From there, simply navigate to the area of the city you're researching or search a specific address using the search bar in the upper right-hand corner. The map also lets you choose which time periods to display using a color-coded legend in the bottom left-hand corner.
- Click the area you're interested in and a new pop-up window will appear with all the available volumes for that specific place.

If you've never found your city-dwelling ancestor's address, this tool may be worth a try!

WEBSITES OF POSSIBLE INTEREST

WorldCat.org and Genealogy: A Powerful Combination

Have you used WorldCat to research your family tree? If not, you are missing one of the best online web sites for use in genealogy.

Quoting from https://www.worldcat.org/topics/genealogy:

WorldCat.org connects genealogical researchers to millions of pieces of unique content not found elsewhere.

Newspapers, family Bibles, cemetery and burial archives, microfilm, and digitized local records—it's a treasure trove of family history waiting to be uncovered. Learn how to make the most of this powerful, global resource.

Connecting you to an incredible range of resources

Genealogists love libraries and archives because they are often the only source for unique, local information about births, deaths, marriages, businesses, and other family histories. WorldCat.org can connect you to a huge variety of sources of information in this topic area including:

- Cemetery and burial records
- United States Civil War and other military records
- Family Bibles, church histories, and records
- General genealogical resources, such as directories, handbooks, and magazines
- Indexes of births, marriages, deaths, wills, and obituaries
- Microfilmed genealogy and local history collections
- Newspapers from many countries
- Photographs
- Slavery and antislavery materials, including slave records
- Town histories and probate records

In addition to library resources, WorldCat.org also connects you to millions of records from FamilySearch, a nonprofit family history organization with the largest collection of genealogical and historic records in the world.

You can start at: https://www.worldcat.org/topics/genealogy.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

IRONCLAD SATURDAY - Sat, Oct 8, 2022, 10:00am-4:00pm - CSS Neuse II Replica, 118 N Heritage St., Kinston, NC 28501

In cooperation with the CSS Neuse II and the CSS Neuse Foundation, the CSS Neuse Civil War Interpretive Center and the CSS Neuse Gunboat Association are going to host "Ironclad Saturday", a living history event on board the replica ironclad, CSS Neuse II.

Living Historians will spend the weekend on the CSS Neuse II, and it will be open on Saturday between 10am and 4pm. During the day, the "crew" will be conducting all different types of events such as musket drill, cannon drill, cutlass drill, pay call, navigation demonstrations, sailor sewing, and sailor games/pastimes.

There will be NO CHARGE to the public for this event.

If you have questions, please contact Matt at 252-526-9600, ext. 232, or at matthew.young@ncdcr.gov.

AUTUMN'S IN THE AIR COMMUNITY FALL FESTIVAL - Sat, Oct 15, 2022, 10:00am-4:00pm – FREE - Governor Richard Caswell Memorial, 2612 West Vernon Avenue, Kinston, NC 28504

Join the CSS Neuse Gunboat Association in celebrating their first annual community fall festival at the Governor Richard Caswell Memorial in Kinston!!

*Chris Raines with C&C Music will be our DJ for the day!

We will have food, ice cream, and a festive backdrop for family photos. We are currently working with additional food and alcohol vendors and will post once they are confirmed.

HOMEFRONT 1942 AND FORT FISHER: LIVING HISTORY PROGRAM - Sat, Oct 15, 2022, 10:00am-4:00pm - Fort Fisher State Historic Site, 1610 Fort Fisher Blvd. South, Kure Beach, NC 28449

Join us for 'Homefront 1942 and Fort Fisher,' a living history program highlighting Fort Fisher's lesser-known history as a WWII anti-aircraft artillery training base and the women who served in a supporting role. The family-friendly program will feature civilian and military re-enactors, educational displays, weapons demonstrations and WWII vehicle rides. The young at heart can take target practice on the site's popular anti-aircraft artillery Nerf gun and participate in the 'Paint the Toy Soldier' workshop (participants are encouraged to take their artwork home). Author, historian and retired Navy Captain Wilbur Jones will make a pair of special appearances to discuss Wilmington and the home front during WW II. The program and lecture are free and open to the public, although a small donation may be requested for some activities. All Fort Fisher programming is made possible by the Friends of Fort Fisher, a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing this national treasure. All program components are subject to change.

HUMOR

On the way back from a Cub Scout meeting, my grandson innocently said to my son, “Dad, I know babies come from mommies' tummies, but how do they get there in the first place?”

After my son hemmed and hawed awhile, my grandson finally spoke up in disgust, “You don't have to make up something, Dad. It's okay if you don't know the answer.”

PARTING THOUGHT

If you don’t fail now and again, it’s a sign that you may be playing it too safe.

(Chinese fortune cookie)

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit for future publication, please contact Richard Ellington at mailto:richard_ellington@unc.edu or 919.932.0516 (voice/text)