



July 15 2021

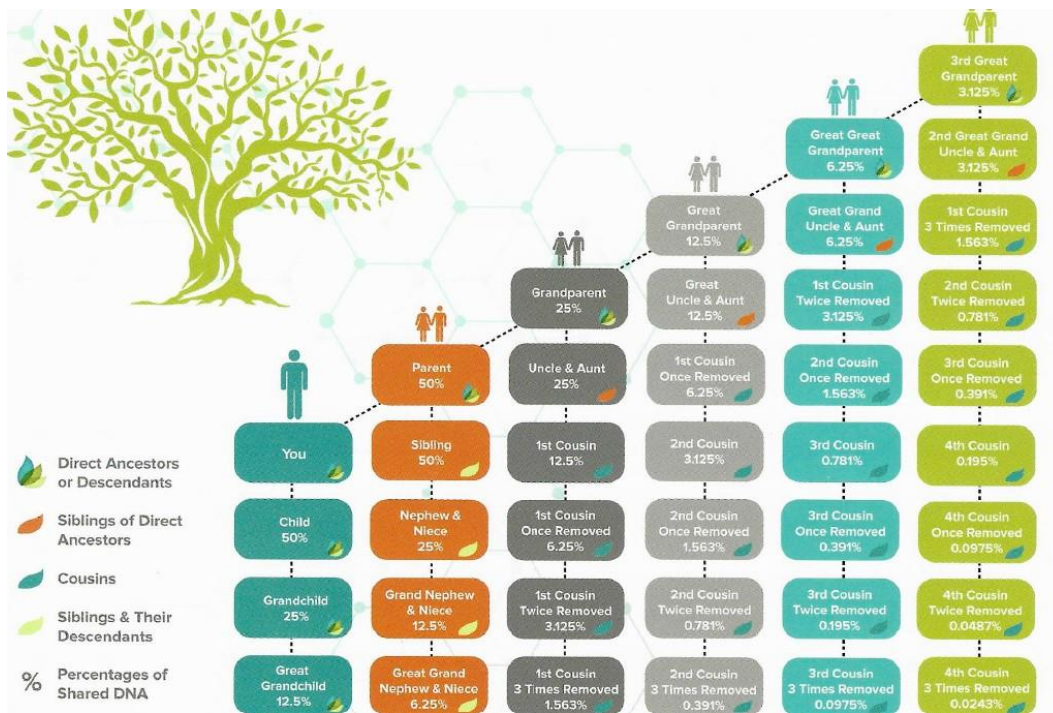
Retson Genealogy Newsletter

This newsletter may interest in the genealogy and in particular those related to persons related directly or indirectly to Grace and Clifford Retson.

My genealogy website is located at <http://www.retson.ca/retsongeneology.html>
On the left side you will see a list of Family Roots.

Cousins, and Cousins and Cousins

As you continue your genealogical research you discover more and more cousins. The nomenclature of cousins can get quite confusing for the uninitiated. Some are close and some – not so close. 1st Cousins are the children of your uncles and aunts or grandchildren of your grandparents. 2nd cousins are the children of your great uncles or Aunts or the grandchildren of your great grandparents. The Children of your 1st Cousin is not your 2nd cousin but rather your 1st cousin a generation removed. The grandchildren if your first cousin are not 3rd Cousins but rather your 1st cousin 2 generations removed. If only one of the relevant parents was involved then we add half For example half 1st cousin. This is shown in the following chart.



One of the useful offshoots of wikitree (www.wikitree.com) is the relationship finder which is generated for each person as you log in and enter your various ancestors.. My relationship finder is located at <https://www.wikitree.com/treewidget/Retson-7/102> The relationship finder will show you your relationship with others who have been profiled on wikitree. The first page shows various famous people. For example by clicking on George Bush number 40 on this page, I find I am ninth cousins with good old George .(We are both descendants of John Hoar)
https://www.wikitree.com/index.php?title=Special:Relationship&action=calculate&person1_name=Bush-7&person2_name=Retson-7).

1. George is the son of Prescott Sheldon Bush (1895-1972) [confident]
 2. Prescott is the son of Samuel Prescott Bush (1863-1948) [confident]
 3. Samuel is the son of Harriet Eleanor (Fay) Bush (1829-1924) [confident]
 4. Harriet is the daughter of Samuel Howard Fay (1804-1847) [confident]
 5. Samuel is the son of Samuel Prescott Phillips Fay Esq. (1778-1856) [confident]
 6. Samuel is the son of Lucy (Prescott) Fay (1757-1792) [confident]
 7. Lucy is the daughter of Abel Prescott (1718-1805) [unknown confidence]
 8. Abel is the son of Jonathan Prescott Jr (1677-1729) [unknown confidence]
 9. Jonathan is the son of Elizabeth (Hoar) Prescott (1646-1687) [unknown confidence]
 10. Elizabeth is the daughter of John Hoar (abt.1622-1704) [unknown confidence]
- This makes John the eighth great grandfather of George.

1. James is the son of Cliff Retson [unknown confidence]
 2. Cliff is the son of Beatrice Mary (Clifford) Retson (1887-1958) [confident]
 3. Beatrice is the daughter of Rebecca (Nelson) Clifford (1841-1924) [unknown confidence]
 4. Rebecca is the daughter of Agnes (Hoar) Nelson (1812-1896) [unknown confidence]
 5. Agnes is the daughter of David Gould Hoar (1783-1861) [unknown confidence]
 6. David is the son of Solomon Hoar (1748-1828) [unknown confidence]
 7. Solomon is the son of David Hoar Sr. (1713-1760) [unknown confidence]
 8. David is the son of Leonard Hoar (abt.1684-1771) [unknown confidence]
 9. Leonard is the son of Daniel Hoar (abt.1650-1742) [unknown confidence]
 10. Daniel is the son of John Hoar (abt.1622-1704) [confident]
- This makes John the eighth great grandfather of James.

You can have all sorts of fun with relationship finder. I am 8th cousins three times removed with Charles Tupper

https://www.wikitree.com/index.php?title=Special:Relationship&action=calculate&person1_name=Tupper-249&person2_name=Retson-7

7th cousins four times removed with Robert Bordon:

https://www.wikitree.com/index.php?title=Special:Relationship&action=calculate&person1_name=Borden-377&person2_name=Retson-7

R. B. and James are fourth cousins twice removed with R.B. Bennet:

https://www.wikitree.com/index.php?title=Special:Relationship&action=calculate&person1_name=Bennett-5964&person2_name=Retson-7

R. B. Bennett and James Retson are both descendants of David Hoar Sr.

1. R. B. is the son of Henrietta (Stiles) Bennett (1844-abt.1914) [unknown confidence]
 2. Henrietta is the daughter of David Stiles (1812-1886) [unknown confidence]
 3. David is the son of Mary G (Hoar) Stiles (1782-1866) [unknown confidence]
 4. Mary is the daughter of David Hoar Jr. (abt.1743-1848) [unknown confidence]
 5. David is the son of David Hoar Sr. (1713-1760) [unknown confidence]
- This makes David the third great grandfather of R. B..

1. James is the son of Cliff Retson [unknown confidence]
2. Cliff is the son of Beatrice Mary (Clifford) Retson (1887-1958) [confident]
3. Beatrice is the daughter of Rebecca (Nelson) Clifford (1841-1924) [unknown confidence]
4. Rebecca is the daughter of Agnes (Hoar) Nelson (1812-1896) [unknown confidence]
5. Agnes is the daughter of David Gould Hoar (1783-1861) [unknown confidence]

6. David is the son of Solomon Hoar (1748-1828) [unknown confidence]
 7. Solomon is the son of David Hoar Sr. (1713-1760) [unknown confidence]
- This makes David the fifth great grandfather of James.

Next month I will cover how you can find your relationship to a specific person entered in the tree if any exists.

“Unknown confidence”, the DNA Club and Genetic Cousins

The relationship confidence in www.wikitree.com depends on the relationship status of each link in the chain of both relationship trails. If any one of one or more parent-child relationships in the trail have an unmarked or non-biological status, then you get an “unknown confidence”. The further back you go the more uncertain a parent child relationship becomes. But in reading the latest copy of American Ancestors, the New England Historic Genealogy Society magazine, I became aware of another reason for possible uncertainty. In a 2019 Pew Research survey indicated that 25 million Americans who took a DNA test learned about a close relative who was previously unknown to them. Bill Griffeth, Author of *The Stranger in My Genes: A Memoir* reflects on how a DNA test upended his world and changed his own sense of identity. He shares the stories of other people who discovered that their dads were not biological fathers – a group he affectionately terms his “DNA Club”. I had used the term to refer to a number of “cousins” I have learned about by determining how various shared DNA matches are related to me. Since Bill’s book I have started to refer to my newly discovered DNA matches as “genetic cousins”. I have established many happy connections, some of which I have been unable to establish the exact connection. To one and all of my genetic cousins. Welcome to the family.

Where did I come from? A burning question for some

When I was approximately 12 years old I jumped on my bike and sometime later arrived at my Great Uncle John’s farm about 3 or 4 miles from home. He recognized me immediately and ask what I was doing at his farm. I indicated I just wanted to say hello. For the next hours or two while his wife brought out cookies and milk he entertained me with stories of his youth and where we had come from. At this stage of my life all I can remember was his stories about our English background. While we considered ourselves Scotch, our ancestors had originally come from England. The male immigrant was a gardener and his wife to be a “a noble woman”. I now realize that her surname was “Noble” but at the time I assumed that he meant that she was a member of aristocracy. The view was strengthened by the continuation of the story that the gardener could not write and when he crossed over the border to Scotland she had to write his name and in doing so failed to dot the i in Ritson and thereafter our names became Retson.

This story for most of my young life was my answer to the burning question “Where did I come from? By the time I left the Province of Nova Scotia to attend a University in British Columbia, I had realized that the answer was a bit more complicated. There was a biographical and biological component. And there was a thing called identity which one discovered or created. The “I” that left Nova Scotia in 1968 for British Columbia, for Quebec in 1970 and Toronto in 1971 and then returned to Nova Scotia in 1974 was not the same “I”. That “I” has continued to grow and modify. And one of the factors that has influenced that development is my genealogical research.

While the cultural influences and genetical contributions of my ancestors and my lived experience all influenced and contributed to the makeup of the “I”. they do not determine it. In that sense I am not responsible for the actions of my ancestors nor can I claim credit for them. I am free to change and hopefully for the better.

During your journey to find your roots you may learn that some of your ancestors were poor and some were rich. Findings may suggest that some of your family history was heroic or inspirational and some was not. Some of your ancestors may have owned slaves. Some of your ancestors may have persecuted witches and some of your ancestors may have been charged as practicing witchcraft. Some of your ancestors may have suffered from patterns of alcoholism, abuse or other misbehavior. It may disappoint you but it can also motivate you to go further in life than those who disappointed you in the past, thus stopping unhealthy patterns to establish a sense of redemption for a not so great lineage. Upon reflection of some of your discoveries you may find that “It’s really depressing” and “I feel a sense of shame.” The more you know about where you came from, the better you can understand and appreciate how far your family has come. Once you realize that “You are not who you think you are,” you can change where you are going. The quote “Know from whence you came. If you know whence you came, there are absolutely no limitations to where you can go.” has been attributed to James Baldwin an African-American novelist, essayist, playwright, poet, and social critic. Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's ignorance.” The truth is we are largely ignorant. What anyone knows is often only habit and instinct -just physical and emotional reaction to the environment. We are scared of what we do not know to the extent that we cling very tightly to what little we do know in case someone else should try to take it or it should become lost and make us even more vulnerable. Our large ignorance makes us averse to change. Once you reduce your ignorance you become less vulnerable and more willing to change. The willingness to change – not knowing where from whence you came is what reduces the limitations to where you can go.

In his preface to his book “A Goodly Heritage” Clifford F. Archibald indicates that he gave the book its title,

“For those whose lives we attempted to look into certainly did their best to leave us just that- a goodly heritage. And as we look now at ourselves, we ask the question, “Have we built on and improved it, or have we drifted and lost the best of it.? “

I hope that I may assist in this regards by dispelling some of the ignorance we may have concerning from whence we came.

Current News

News continues to arrive of the ever increasing number of relatives who have received thier second dose of Covid 19 vaccine and while at least 3 have caught the virus all have recovered.

During the past month I have received news of the passing of Dale W. Retson of Ashburnham April 29, 2021 in his home after an illness. Dale was born June 1, 1949 In Moncton N.B. Canada son of William Retson and Aldora (Poirier) Melanson. After graduating from Oakmont Regional High School in 1967 he enlisted in the Army. Sergeant Dale Retson served two tours of duty in Vietnam as a tank commander. He is the recipient of The Purple Heart, as well as a Silver Star. Dale leaves 1 son, Chad Retson of Westminster, 4 sisters; Vickie Gangloff of Upland CA, Janice Stiles of Templeton, Shanda Cormier of NB Canada and Amber Holloran of NB Canada, 2 brothers; John and Devon Retson Of NB Canada.

Additions to <http://www.retson.ca/retsongeneology.html> since February 1, 2020

Retson Genealogy Newsletter Jun 2021 <https://www.retson.ca/retsongenealogynewsletterjun2021.pdf>

Retson Genealogy Newsletter July 2021 <https://www.retson.ca/retsongenealogynewsletterjuly2021.pdf>

This newsletter was sent to individuals who have expressed an interest in this genealogy at some time. If you do not wish to receive future updates, please email me at jretson@shaw.ca and indicate so.