

# THE BLAIR DNA PROJECT

## When Conventional Research Dead-Ends

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The 1820 Census lists 11 Blair households in Vermont. Three of those households were part of my extended Blair family tree. These families were Robert Blair and Margaret McLuckie and 2 of their sons, John and Andrew. So I was very interested in the following query submitted by William Blair Philbrick:

"I'm trying to trace my g-g-grandfather's family history. His name was Alexander Blair. He was born in Vermont in 1823. He married Sarah Smalley in Brandon, Vermont about 1845. Before moving to LaCrosse, Wisconsin (about 1860), they had five children born in Brandon (Frank, Ella, Roland, Charles and Sarah). Any assistance in helping trace Alexander's ancestors will be greatly appreciated."

Besides the obvious reference to Blair born in Vermont there were two points that caught my attention. The first was the name Alexander. This name is common in this branch of my Blairs (it's actually common in most branches of Blairs). What really got my interest was the fact that Alexander died in Wisconsin.

Robert Blair and Margaret McLuckie settled in Barnet VT in 1784. Robert, born July 1754 in Bucklyvie (Kippen), Stirlingshire, Scotland, was the son of John Blair and Margaret McLuckie. Robert had six brothers and a sister. His youngest brother Peter was my gr-gr-grandfather. Peter's youngest son Peter, born Apr 27, 1806, settled in Vermont in the 1830s. See "Descendants of John Blair and Margaret McLuckie"

The first thing I did was check the known sons and grandsons of Robert Blair and Margaret McLuckie. They had a son Alexander, but he was born March 30, 1792. Alexander had a son named Alexander, born January 01, 1826, but he married Harriet Stoddard and died in Barnet VT, April 19, 1912. There is no indication that this Alexander ever left Vermont. There were no other documented sons or grandsons of Robert named Alexander.

Two of Robert's sons lines were quite well documented. Alexander's line was explored through the early 1900's. Joseph's line was also documented into the early 1900's. A third son, Robert, died at the age of 16. There is very little information about Robert's first two sons, John and Andrew.

According to the William Philbrick's query, Alexander was born in 1823. This would make him between 5 and 9 years old in the 1830 census and between 15 and 19 years old in the 1840 census. Since neither of these censuses provide any names, other than the head of household, this was all I had to go on. In the 1830 census for Vermont there were six households with male children between 5 and 9 years old. In the 1840 census for Vermont there were only three households with male children between 15 and 19 years old. Robert's son Andrew was the only head of household listed in both the 1830 and 1840 census. These same censuses indicate that Andrew had five sons and three daughters, born between 1804 and 1825.

Although little is known of Andrew Blair's family we do know he was one of the earliest settlers of Goshen Gore Vermont. Goshen Gore was later renamed Stannard in 1867. Most of the records of Stannard (Goshen Gore) were destroyed by a fire in 1960. According to an article on Goshen Gore from the Vermont Historical Magazine, written by Joseph Clark, "Mr. Blair was one of the pioneer settlers. Andrew M. Blair, Esq., son of Andrew Blair, was late a member of the Wisconsin state senate." The official State of Wisconsin website confirms that Andrew M. Blair was a democratic Senator from Fond du Lac from 1853 to 1854. The 1870 Census for Wisconsin indicates that Andrew M. Blair was born in VT, as was his father and mother.

The fact that Alexander and Andrew both ended up in Wisconsin may be a coincidence, but I suspected they were brothers. There are also indications, though no hard evidence, that other of Andrew's sons may have also gone to Wisconsin.

There is considerable circumstantial evidence that Alexander was the son of Andrew: 1) according to census data Andrew Blair could have been Alexander's father, 2) both Alexander and Andrew's son, Andrew both went to Wisconsin, 3) the fact that most of records for Stannard were destroyed by fire could explain why we couldn't find any information on Alexander. But the evidence is only circumstantial and didn't prove a connection. Still, I believed that Alexander was the son of Andrew, grandson of Robert, and a distant cousin of mine.

In June of 2002, I started the Blair DNA project. A complete explanation of this project was published in the Summer 2003 issue of the BFM and is available on my website <http://blairgenealogy.com/dna/>. Briefly the project tests the Y-chromosome found only males. The Y-chromosome is passed down from father to son, generation after generation virtually unchanged. The test determines the length of various segments of the DNA, known as markers. By comparing your test results with others, you can estimate how closely you may be related. This is expressed as probability that two people share a common ancestor within a certain number of generations. For example if two people with the same surname (or bloodline) test 25 markers and match on all 25 markers then there is a 50% probability that they share a common ancestor within 7 generations and a 90% probability they share a common ancestor within 23 generations. If you match on less than all 25 markers then the estimated number of generations to your common ancestor increases.

William Philbrick and I both took the 25 marker test and matched on all 25 markers, indicating a 50% probability we share a common within 7 generations. It was also both interesting and I believe significant, that two of the markers we matched on had extremely uncommon values. The value on one of the markers occurs only 9% of the time while the value on the second marker occurs only 1% of the time. This would further strengthen the probability we share a common ancestor.

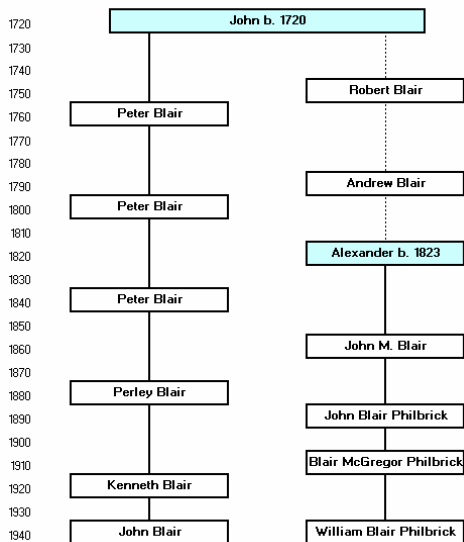
If we assume that Alexander's father is Andrew Blair, then William Blair Philbrick is seven generations removed from John Blair, Alexander's gr-grandfather and I am six generations removed.

The DNA test results in themselves do not **prove** that William and I share a common ancestor. But they do indicate a strong probability that we do. The convention research does not **prove** that Alexander Blair was the son of Andrew Blair. But it does provide strong circumstantial evidence to that effect. When you combine the conventional research with the DNA test results there is overwhelming evidence to support the assumption that Alexander is the son of Andrew. Without source documents, such as a birth certificate, death certificate, etc. we can never say with 100% certainty this is the case, but until such documents are found and disprove this theory, there is no doubt in my mind that Alexander is the son of Andrew, or at the very least the grandson of Robert Blair.

The Blair DNA project is an independent project that I'm running through my own website. It is endorsed and supported by both the BSGR and the Clan Blair Society. The Blair DNA Project now has 74 participants signed up, 68 who have had their samples tested and the results returned. Family Tree DNA, who I use for our DNA testing, now has over 900 Surname Projects underway. The Blair DNA project is one of the largest.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Blair DNA Project or participating in the project can do so by visiting <http://blairgenealogy.com/dna/> or emailing me at [dna@blairgenealogy.com](mailto:dna@blairgenealogy.com). You can also contact me by convention mail at:

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# Descendants of John Blair and Margaret McLuckie

by John A. Blair, Mem. #0873

## Generation No. 1

1. **JOHN<sup>1</sup> BLAIR** was born March 27, 1720 in Kippen, Stirlingshire, Scotland, and died December 1799 in Bucklyvie (Kippen), Stirlingshire, Scotland. He married **MARGARET MCLUCKIE** April 17, 1749 in Kippen, Stirling, Scotland. She was born Abt. 1720, and died December 1798. Robert Blair and Margaret McLuckie settled in Barnet VT in 1784. Robert's brother Peter was my gr-gr-gr-grandfather. Children of **JOHN BLAIR** and **MARGARET MCLUCKIE** are:

- i. **JOHN BLAIR**, b. February 11, 1750, Kippen, Stirlingshire, Scotland.
2. ii. **ROBERT BLAIR**, b. July 1754, Bucklyvie (Kippen), Stirlingshire, Scotland; d. January 21, 1821, Barnet, VT.
- iii. **JAMES BLAIR**, b. June 01, 1759, Kippen, Stirlingshire, Scotland.
- iv. **JOSEPH BLAIR**, b. May 21, 1761, Kippen, Stirlingshire, Scotland; d. Unknown.
3. v. **PETER BLAIR**, b. April 02, 1763, Kippen, Stirlingshire, Scotland.
- vi. **JANET BLAIR**, b. November 11, 1764, Kippen, Stirlingshire, Scotland; d. Unknown.
- vii. **DUNCAN BLAIR**, b. August 18, 1751.
- viii. **ALEXANDER BLAIR**.

## Generation No. 2

2. **ROBERT<sup>2</sup> BLAIR** (**JOHN<sup>1</sup>**) was born July 1754 in Bucklyvie (Kippen), Stirlingshire, Scotland, and died January 21, 1821 in Barnet, VT. He married **MARGARET MCLUCKIE** April 17, 1784 in Middle or New Parish, Greenock, Renfrew, Scotland. She was born 1753 in Scotland, and died December 13, 1833 in Barnet, VT. Children of **ROBERT BLAIR** and **MARGARET MCLUCKIE** are:

4. i. **JOHN BLAIR**, b. May 28, 1785, Barnet, VT; d. January 25, 1873.
5. ii. **ANDREW BLAIR**, b. November 27, 1786, Barnet, VT; d. December 09, 1865, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT.
- iii. **CHRISTIAN BLAIR**, b. August 28, 1788, Barnet, VT; d. June 10, 1876; m. **WILLIAM GIBSON**, December 20, 1812; b. Ryegate, VT.
- iv. **ROBERT BLAIR**, b. September 10, 1790, Barnet, VT; d. 1806.
6. v. **ALEXANDER BLAIR**, b. March 30, 1792, Barnet, VT; d. April 14, 1883, Barnet, VT.
- vi. **MARGARET BLAIR**, b. August 03, 1794, Barnet, VT; d. January 06, 1877; m. **DAVID GIBSON**, April 20, 1820; b. Unknown; d. Unknown.
7. vii. **JOSEPH BLAIR**, b. August 10, 1796, Barnet, VT; d. September 28, 1878, Barnet, VT.
- viii. **JANET BLAIR**, b. 1797, Barnet VT; d. 1807, Barnet VT.

3. **PETER<sup>2</sup> BLAIR** (**JOHN<sup>1</sup>**) was born April 02, 1763 in Kippen, Stirlingshire, Scotland. He married **ELIZABETH BELL** June 01, 1788 in Kippen, Stirlingshire, Scotland. She was born 1763 in Scotland. Children of **PETER BLAIR** and **ELIZABETH BELL** are:

- i. **MARGARET BLAIR**, b. Sep. 27, 1789, Glasgow, Lanark, Scotland; d. December 22, 1857.
- ii. **JOHN BLAIR**, b. May 15, 1791, Scotland; d. 1812.
- iii. **ELIZABETH BLAIR**, b. September 12, 1793, Saint Ninians, Stirlingshire, Scotland; d. July 12, 1859.
- iv. **ROBERT BLAIR**, b. June 11, 1796, Saint Ninians, Stirlingshire, Scotland; d. April 20, 1858.
- v. **ALEXANDER BLAIR**, b. January 07, 1797, Stirling, Stirlingshire, Scotland; d. March 17, 1857.
- vi. **MARY BLAIR**, b. May 27, 1800, Stirling, Stirlingshire, Scotland; d. 1870.
- vii. **SUSANNA BLAIR**, b. July 22, 1802, Stirling, Stirlingshire, Scotland; d. 1870.
- . viii. **JANET CAMERON BLAIR**, b. June 04, 1804, Stirling, Stirlingshire, Scotland; d. August 05, 1855.
8. ix. **PETER BLAIR**, b. April 27, 1806, Stirling, Stirlingshire, Scotland; d. March 19, 1888, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT.
- x. **AMELIA ETTEAN BLAIR**, b. September 01, 1808, Stirling, Stirlingshire, Scotland; d. August 06, 1889.

### Generation No. 3

**4. JOHN<sup>3</sup> BLAIR** (ROBERT<sup>2</sup>, JOHN<sup>1</sup>) was born May 28, 1785 in Barnet, VT, and died January 25, 1873. He married (1) NANCY KELLY, daughter of JN KELLY. He married (2) AGNES KELLY May 03, 1810. She was born 1787, and died November 16, 1855. Children of JOHN BLAIR and AGNES KELLY are:

- i. JOHN BLAIR, b. April 07, 1811; d. September 14, 1838.
- ii. MARY BLAIR, b. 1813; d. April 15, 1859.
- iii. JANNETTE BLAIR, b. 1821

**5. ANDREW<sup>3</sup> BLAIR** (ROBERT<sup>2</sup>, JOHN<sup>1</sup>) was born November 29, 1786 in Barnet, VT, and died December 06, 1865 in Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT. He married ELIZABETH RONNALDS, October 31, 1809 in Barnet, VT. She was born 1786, and died January 14, 1866. Children of ANDREW BLAIR and ELIZABETH RONNALDS are:

- i. Unknown Son, b. 1804 - 1809
- ii. Unknown Son, b. 1811 - 1815
- iii. Unknown Daughter, b. 1811 - 1815
- iv. ANDREW BLAIR. b. abt 1816  
Note: According to an article, GOSHEN GORE from the Vermont Historical Magazine, written by Joseph Clark, Andrew Blair was late a member of the Wisconsin state senate.
- v. Unknown Daughter, b. 1816 - 1820
- vi. MARGARET BLAIR, b. 1820; d. December 17, 1838.
- vii. Unknown Son , b. 1821 – 1825 (Possibly ALEXANDER b. 1823)
- viii. Unknown Daughter , b. 1821 – 1825

**6. ALEXANDER<sup>3</sup> BLAIR** (ROBERT<sup>2</sup>, JOHN<sup>1</sup>) was born March 30, 1792 in Barnet, VT, and died April 14, 1883 in Barnet, VT. He married JEAN GILFILLAN, March 26, 1823 in Barnet, VT, daughter of ROBERT GILFILLAN and JEAN MCINDOE. She was born June 07, 1798 in Barnet, VT, and died September 04, 1887 in Barnet, VT. Children of ALEXANDER BLAIR and JEAN GILFILLAN are:

- i. ROBERT BLAIR, b. April 20, 1824, Barnet VT; d. August 05, 1896, Barnet VT; m. MARTHA MARTIN; b. Great Falls NH.
- ii. ALEXANDER BLAIR, b. January 01, 1826, Barnet VT; d. April 19, 1912, Barnet VT; m. HARRIET STODDARD, 1862; b. Waterford, VT.
- iii. JANE BLAIR, b. April 30, 1828; d. 1906.
- iv. JOHN BLAIR, b. August 15, 1830, Barnet VT; d. New York NY.
- v. WILLIAM BLAIR, b. September 04, 1832, Barnet VT; d. September 01, 1864, Barnet VT.
- vi. MARGARET G. BLAIR, b. October 01, 1834, Barnet VT.
9. vii. **JAMES GILFILLAN BLAIR**, b. March 10, 1837, Barnet VT; d. July 16, 1918, Barnet VT.
- viii. HELEN J. BLAIR, b. July 01, 1839, Barnet VT; d. July 20, 1916, Lawrence, MA.

**7. JOSEPH<sup>3</sup> BLAIR** (ROBERT<sup>2</sup>, JOHN<sup>1</sup>) was born August 10, 1796 in Barnet, VT, and died September 28, 1878 in Barnet, VT. He married MARION GILFILLAN December 09, 1824 in Barnet, VT, daughter of ROBERT GILFILLAN and JEAN MCINDOE. She was born 1802 in Barnet, VT, and died November 30, 1861 in Barnet, VT. Children of JOSEPH BLAIR and MARION GILFILLAN are:

- i. JANE BLAIR, b. September 02, 1825; d. May 12, 1911.
- ii. INFANT BLAIR, b. June 18, 1827; d. July 15, 1827 Barnet VT.
- iii. ROBERT BLAIR, b. June 28, 1828; d. January 05, 1900.
- iv. PETER BLAIR, b. 1832; d. May 21, 1842, Barnet VT .
- v. MARGARET JANET BLAIR, b. 1835; d. May 19, 1842, Barnet VT.
10. vi. **GILBERT BLAIR**, b. January 26, 1838; d. March 07, 1915.
- vii. PHOBE BLAIR, b. 1840; d. May 15, 1842.
- viii. PHOBE AMELIA BLAIR, b. 1844; d. 1846.

**8. PETER<sup>3</sup> BLAIR** (PETER<sup>2</sup>, JOHN<sup>1</sup>) was born April 27, 1806 in Stirling, Stirlingshire, Scotland, and died March 19, 1888 in Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT. He married ELIZABETH RODGER May 29, 1835 in Lowell Middlesex MA, daughter of WILLIAM RODGER and AGNES ADAMS. She was born December 29, 1801 in Neilston, Stirlingshire, Scotland, and died December 31, 1891 in Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT. Children of PETER BLAIR and ELIZABETH RODGER are:

- i. ELIZABETH BLAIR, b. April 21, 1836, Lowell, MA; d. November 09, 1910, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT.
11. ii. **WILLIAM BLAIR**, b. September 22, 1837, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT; d. March 25, 1927, North Waden, VT.
- iii. AGNES BLAIR, b. October 12, 1840, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT; d. abt 1924
12. iv. **PETER BLAIR**, b. November 09, 1842, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT; d. June 04, 1930.

#### Generation No. 4

**9. JAMES GILFILLAN<sup>4</sup> BLAIR** (ALEXANDER<sup>3</sup>, ROBERT<sup>2</sup>, JOHN<sup>1</sup>) was born March 10, 1837 in Barnet VT, and died July 16, 1918 in Barnet VT. He married AMELIA CHASTINA DICKINSON November 09, 1861, daughter of HARRY DICKINSON and PRISCILLA WEBSTER. She was born October 1844 in Littleton NH, and died March 02, 1914 in Barnet VT. Children of JAMES BLAIR and AMELIA DICKINSON are:

- i. GEORGE WILBERT BLAIR, b. December 03, 1862, Barnet VT.
- ii. LENA JEAN BLAIR, b. November 19, 1868, Barnet VT; d. March 04, 1920, Newport VT.
- iii. WINIFRED MAUDE BLAIR, b. January 28, 1879.

**10. GILBERT<sup>4</sup> BLAIR** (JOSEPH<sup>3</sup>, ROBERT<sup>2</sup>, JOHN<sup>1</sup>) was born January 26, 1838, and died March 07, 1915. He married MARY ELIZABETH BATCHELDER June 04, 1877, daughter of NATHANIEL BATCHELDER and JEAN NELSON. She was born August 22, 1850 in Ryegate VT, and died 1940. Children of GILBERT BLAIR and MARY BATCHELDER are:

- i. NELLIE MARION BLAIR, b. April 23, 1880; m. FRANK SHAW, August 23, 1905.
- ii. JOSEPH NATHANIEL BLAIR, b. February 02, 1882; d. 1949.
- iii. JOHN BATCHELDER BLAIR, b. April 18, 1883; m. RHETTA YOUNG, March 21, 1914.
- iv. MARGARET JANE BLAIR, b. March 31, 1884.
- v. MABEL AGNES BLAIR, b. July 24, 1887; d. 1937.
- vi. BERTHA ELIZABETH BLAIR, b. May 10, 1890.

**11. WILLIAM<sup>4</sup> BLAIR** (PETER<sup>3</sup>, PETER<sup>2</sup>, JOHN<sup>1</sup>) was born September 22, 1837 in Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT, and died March 25, 1927 in North Waden, VT. He married EMELINE SMITH October 08, 1862. She was born July 13, 1844, and died August 07, 1894 in Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT. Children of WILLIAM BLAIR and EMELINE SMITH are:

- i. MABEL AGNES BLAIR
- ii. GILBERT BLAIR
- iii. SOPHIA BLAIR, b. January 07, 1869, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT; d. June 14, 1953, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT.
- iv. FLORA BLAIR

**12. PETER<sup>4</sup> BLAIR** (PETER<sup>3</sup>, PETER<sup>2</sup>, JOHN<sup>1</sup>) was born November 09, 1842 in Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT, and died June 04, 1930. He married ETTA MARY PRATT January 01, 1880 in Sheffield VT, daughter of THOMAS PRATT and SARAH O'HARA. She was born March 12, 1858 in Orange, VT, and died November 18, 1937 in Manchester, NH. Children of PETER BLAIR and ETTA PRATT are:

- i. FAYETTE C. BLAIR, b. August 06, 1880, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT; d. 1981.
- ii. WINNIE BLAIR, b. August 07, 1883, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT; d. Abt. 1960.
- iii. PERLEY BLAIR, b. February 27, 1885, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT; d. February 18, 1974, Manchester, NH.
- iv. WALTER A. BLAIR, b. August 28, 1886, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT; d. October 29, 1951.
- v. HAROLD L. BLAIR, b. February 22, 1892, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT; d. 1956.
- vi. RUTH A. BLAIR, b. June 04, 1893, Goshen Gore (Stannard), VT; d. June 10, 1893.