

How are we (they) related?

By Joseph Jackson, 5/26/2023

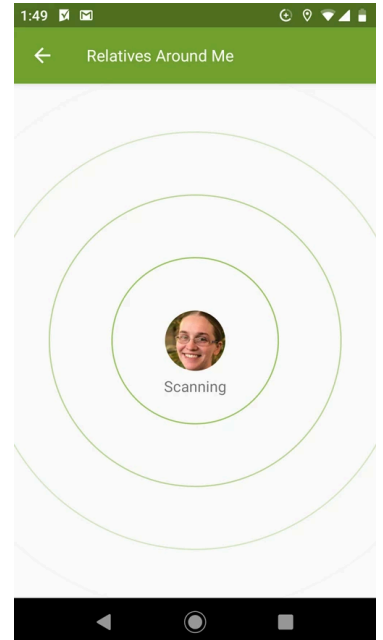
If you want to figure out how someone fits in a family tree, there are three ways to discover the relationship using tools in FamilySearch.org – depending on the status of the person.

1. Me (alive) related to a friend (alive)

You and each of your friends are almost certainly related, but the biological relationship is probably quite complex since you have common ancestors at various generations.

Consider a “small world” example: You have 4 grandparents, 8 great-grandparents, and 16 great-great grandparents. You could plausibly be 1st cousins on one side of the family (share 2 of 4 grandparents because each of your fathers are brothers). At the same time, your mothers might be 2nd cousins (sharing 2 of 8 of their great-grandparents). These two relationships account for 6 of 8 great-grandparents. The remaining 25% of your pedigree might be some combination of 10th cousins, 12th cousins, and other difficult to trace relationships.

If you use “[Relatives Around Me](#)” from the tools menu on the FamilySearch App, the results will show the nearest generation between you and your friend, thus simplifying the complicated description of how you are connected to the one person.

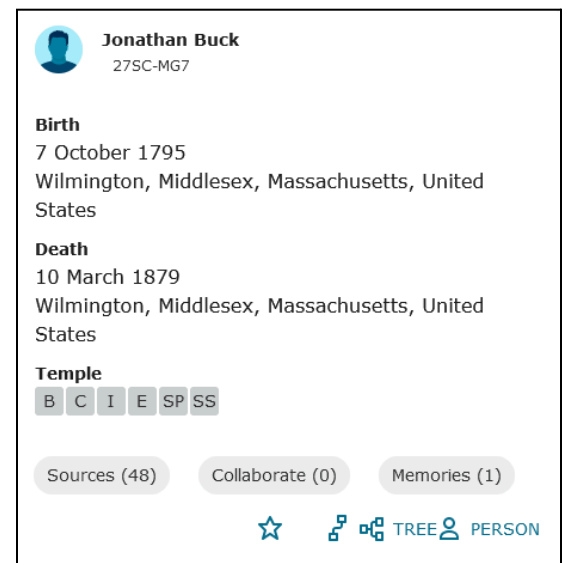


2. Me (alive) related to someone in a cemetery (deceased).

Perhaps you are walking through a town cemetery, and you recognize a name and wonder how you are related to that person. This feature is also enabled through the FamilySearch website using the “[View Relationship](#)” tool (the squiggle icon to the right of the star), but it requires just a little bit more research.

The first task is to find the deceased person in the FamilySearch Family Tree with their unique FamilySearch ID. This can be found one of two ways:

1. Using “Family Tree” > “Find”, if you have a name, birth or death date, and a place.

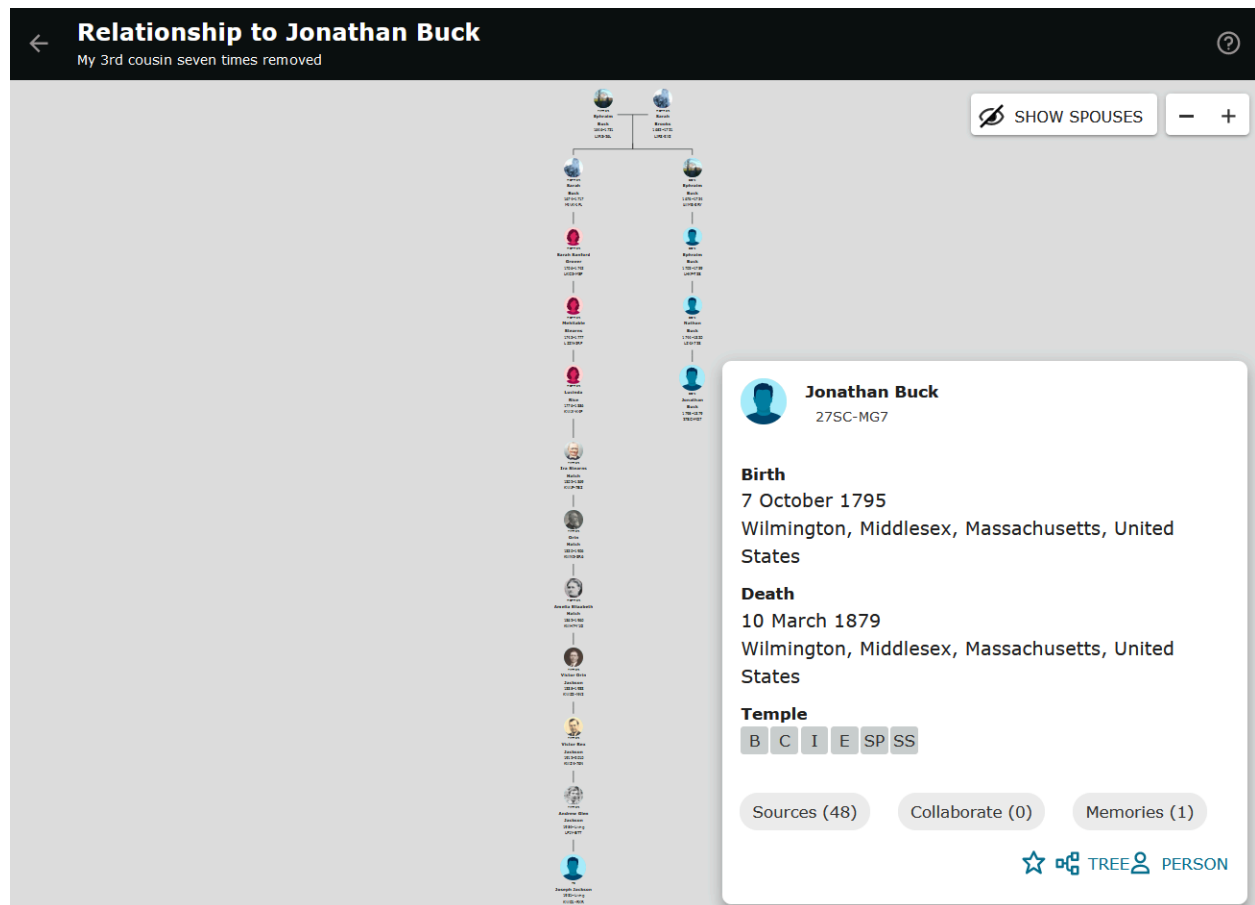


2. If you have other auxiliary information and want to use “Search” > ”Records”, you might find specific records that identify the person you are looking for, and if that record is already linked to the person’s profile (indicated by the “pedigree” icon, illustrated above to the right of the “View Relationship” squiggle), you can navigate to the profile rather easily.

Whether finding them directly in the tree via “Find” or looking through recognizable records and finding which ones are attached to the tree, the answer is to click on the squiggle icon between the star and the tree icon.



For me, I recognized the name “Buck” as a family name, and wanted to see if I was related to one of my town forefathers. I clicked on the “View Relationship” button for Jonathan Buck, and found that I was 3rd Cousin, 7 times removed! It put up a chart of our relationship:



As it turns out, the house his great-great-grandfather Ephriam Buck (my 9th Great Grandfather) built around 1670 still stands here in town, and is thought to be the oldest house in Wilmington. By using this tool, I found that along this one pedigree line, I am a townie!

3. Someone (deceased) and someone else (deceased)

Sometimes your curiosity gets the better of you, and you want to find out how two deceased people are related to each other. This uses the same FamilySearch algorithms in the background, but is not published to the web interface or the app. Instead, collect the two FamilySearch IDs for the people involved, and enter them at **Relative Finder**:

<https://relativefinder.org/#/two-deceased>. This makes it so you don't need to be closely related to either person to determine their relationship.

The screenshot shows the 'Relative Finder' web interface. The header is dark teal with the 'Relative Finder' logo in white. Below the header is a navigation bar with the text 'Connect Two Deceased' and four dropdown menus: 'Relatives', 'Groups', 'Connect', and 'More'. The main content area is light gray and contains the following elements:

- A heading: 'View the relationship between two deceased people by entering their FamilySearch.org PIDs below.'
- Two input fields for PIDs, each with a placeholder 'XXXX-XXX'.
- A blue 'Submit Query' button.
- A link 'Don't know what PID means? In FamilySearch it looks like this' with an arrow pointing to a sample profile.
- A sample profile for 'Alta Wintch' (1915-1985) with a red box highlighting the PID 'KWCW-3SH' and a link 'View My Relationship'.
- A link 'What is a PID?' with a text box explaining that it is a unique identifier assigned to every person in FamilySearch.

The results are illustrated and described similarly to those shown under section 2, but the relationship does not describe your own relationship as the researcher.