

The Case for Catharine Culp

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The Problem (Introduction)

In the middle of the 19th century, much of Marion Co., OH, was being and had recently been populated by a significant number of people from Pennsylvania as well as from what is now western Germany.ⁱ This research note is about an effort to trace the ancestors of an example germanic family that appears in the 1850 Federal census in Waldo Township in Marion Co. The research is an example of how the combination of DNA analysis and an oblique approach to conventional records can yield useful information, in this case the identity of the mother in this family.

The family in question is headed by John and Catharine Snyder. An image of the entry in the 1850 census follows.ⁱⁱ Because of the poor image quality, transcriptions of names are shown as well.



Household	Sex	Age	Birthplace
John Snyder	M	46	Pennsylvania
Catharine Snyder	F	55	Pennsylvania
Susanna Snyder	F	18	Pennsylvania
Elizabeth Snyder	F	16	Ohio
George Snyder	M	15	Ohio
Martha Snyder	F	9	Ohio

Figure 1: 1850 Federal Census for Marion Co., OH

The heads of this family are my maternal third great-grandparents by way of their daughter Susanna. In spite of few definitive conventional records, I believe that there is enough evidence to suggest that Catherine was born Catherine Culp.

Seeking a Solution

In order to find out more about this family, I used a combination of conventional research as well as DNA matching techniques. Conventional records about the family have been sparse and hard to find. Consequently conventional research relied heavily on analysis of information about their neighbors in 1850. Augmenting this with DNA analysis it became possible to identify Catharine more fully with reasonable certainty.

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Conventional Research

Direct Approach

An attempt was made to follow the family forward and backward in time in OH. Because of the birth years of the children, records in OH were searched from 1830 – 1870. The following sources were explored. Note that sources in Marion and Delaware Counties were employed. This is because governance responsibility for the (Waldo Twp) area in question changed from Delaware Co. to Marion Co. in 1848.ⁱⁱⁱ

- Marion County Genealogical Society; Delaware Historical Society
- Marion Library
- Newspaper articles
- Graves – online, genealogical society information, phone; Twp trustees
- Church records – phone
- Wills/Court records
- Property transactions (U.S. Military District); online & OGS.org

The results of this work were as follows.

- Nothing was found regarding the family in OH prior to 1850. There were a few possibilities in the census enumerations, but nothing that clearly matched.
- There were no birth records for the children born in OH.
- There were no land transaction records for the couple.
- There were no death/burial records for either parent (John or Catharine).
- The marriage record of daughter Elizabeth to Jacob Boyer in 1859 was found, but no one other than the groom was mentioned.^{iv} She and her family were followed forward in time with nothing to hint at the identity of her parents.
- It is likely that son George joined the Union Army and died in the war. He was not found in records after the war, but likely records of his enlistment and death were found. No hints about parents.^v
- Daughter Martha does not clearly appear in any records after the 1850 census.
- Daughter Susanna married John Loy (a.k.a. Johann Georg Lay) in 1857, has two children, and disappears from the records after the 1860 census. Her husband remarries in 1863. (His 4th - 5th marriage!)^{vi}

So, the direct approach yielded nothing useful about Catharine (and John) Snyder.

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Indirect Approach

Having failed at the direct approach, another approach based on finding interesting families in the 1850 census for Waldo Twp was tried. “Interesting” means families with similar characteristics to those of the family of John and Catharine Snyder. Specifically . . .

- Parents born in PA prior to about 1810.
- First children born in PA.
- Subsequent children born in OH.
- Implied migration to OH in 1832-1834.
- Preference for Germanic names.
- Proximity to the Snyder family in Waldo Twp, Marion County, OH, in 1850.

Two families immediately suggested themselves from the same page on the 1850 census that showed the Snyder family.^{vii} The surnames for these families were Selanders and Culp as shown below.

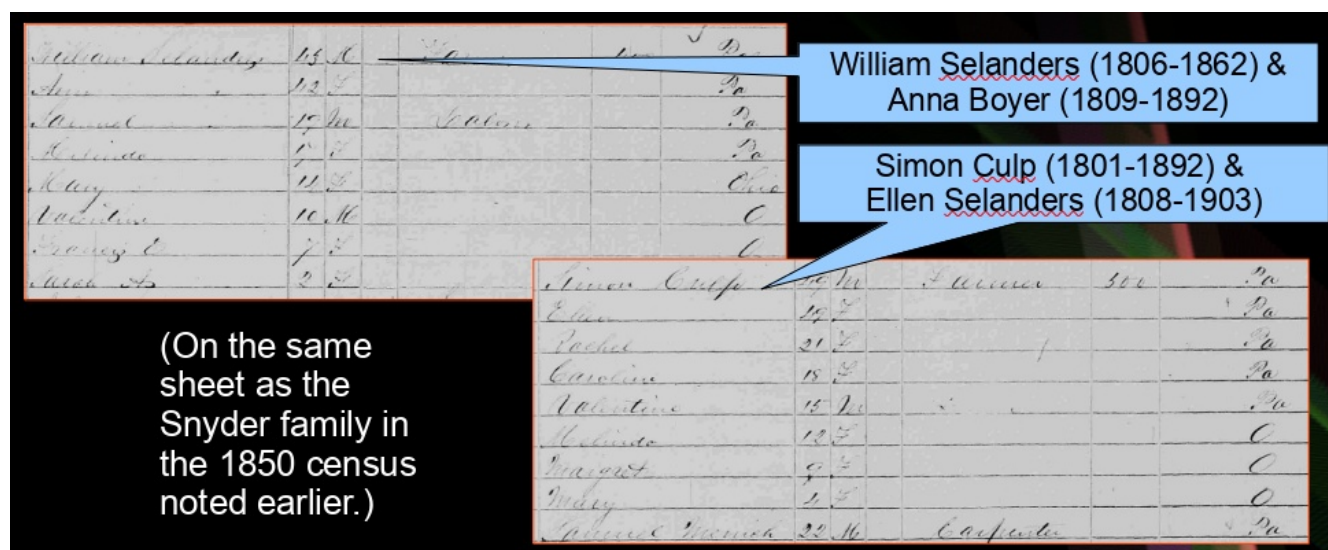


Figure 2: 1850 Federal Census for Marion Co., OH

A little research revealed that the wife of Simon Culp was a sister of William Selanders as well as the fact that both Simon and William had lived close to each other in Cumberland Co., PA. So, research was focused on Selanders and Culp people in Cumberland County, PA. Two research reports resulted from the subsequent work.^{viii} Some select details from these reports follow.

Here are some examples of what was found regarding Selanders people. - Members of the family of William Selanders b. about 1806-1809 (PA) and Anna Boyer b.1809 (Cumberland Co., PA) follow. The

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history of each child was followed for hints about the origins of the parents. No new information was found.

- Alvina b.1829 in PA
- Samuel b.1831 in PA
- Malinda b. 1833 in PA
- Mary b. 1836 in OH
- Valentine b. 1840 in OH
- Frances b. 1843 in OH
- Sarah b. 1848 in OH

William migrated with parents (Valentine & mother Rachel Bruce) & siblings (Samuel, Ellen, and Malinda) to OH in about 1833-1834.^{ix}

Here are some examples of what was found regarding Culp people. - The members of the family of Simon Culp b.1801 (PA) and Ellen Selanders b.1806 (PA) follow. The history of each child was followed for hints about the origins of the parents. No new information was found.

- A record shows that Simon & Ellen were married in 1828 in Silver Spring Twp, Cumberland Co., PA. Their children were . . .
 - Rachel b.1829 in PA
 - Caroline b.1831 in PA
 - John Valentine b. 1835 in PA
 - Malinda b.1838 in OH
 - Margaret b.1839 in OH
 - Mary Jane b.1844 OH

Simon had two brothers – Andrew and Samuel, who also passed through OH on their way to other places farther west.

The 1830 census puts both Valentine Selanders & Simon Culp in Silver Spring Twp in Cumberland Co., PA.^x

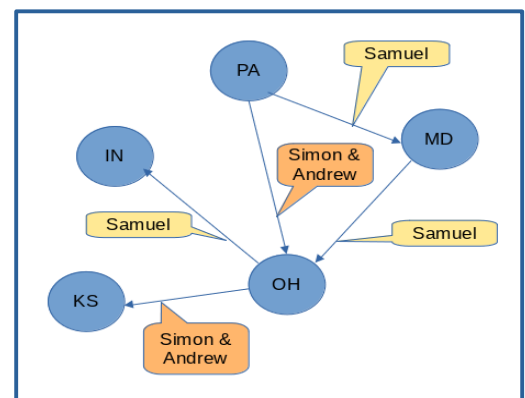


Figure 3: Culp Brothers

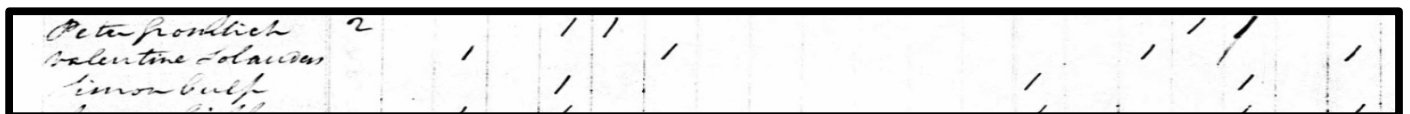


Figure 4: 1830 Federal Census for Cumberland Co., PA

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A summary of results of the indirect research includes the following.

- The ancestors in PA of the Snyder family are still undefined. There were many possibilities based on the Snyder surname and no way to choose the right one(s).
- Culp – hints of Anabaptist religion; only obvious tie is between Culp & Selanders families
- Selanders – interesting family, Evangelisch
- In both cases, however, I now had lots of information about brothers, sisters, descendants in Culp and Selanders families.
- Many bits of information point to Cumberland County, PA.

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DNA Matching (autosomal)

Having made little progress using conventional records, DNA matching was next employed. I chose to use my mother's DNA since this problem only involved my maternal line. My mother's DNA had been submitted to these companies.

- 23andme - There were about $61 \times 25 = 1525$ matches at 23andme.
- FTDNA – There were 5113 matches at FTDNA.
- Ancestry.com – There were hundreds of matches with trees at ancestry.com

In order to make this a tractable problem, a way needed to be chosen to focus and find the hidden gems. I employed a method somewhat similar to that used in the Leeds method.^{xi} (i.e., limit the range of matches considered to focus on more distant matches) This meant looking at some relatively weak signals. The shared cM Project Tool provided guidance in this regard, and I chose to look at matches in which the amount of shared DNA was approximately 25-30 cM. Here is a picture of the tool with an entered value of 25 cM and names filled in for my mother's ancestors.^{xii}

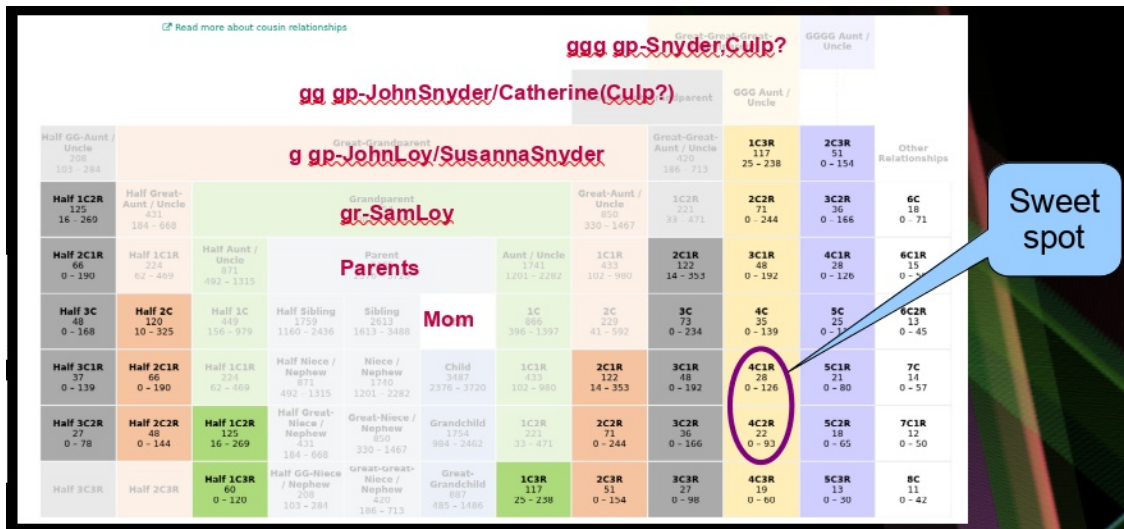


Figure 5: Example Output of Shared cM Tool

The “sweet spot” identifies the range where I hoped to find matches with people of my generation who are descended from my mother's 3rd great grandparents.

At ancestry.com I looked for people with a DNA match in the right range and who mentioned Selanders in their trees. Then the same process was used to look for matches that mentioned the name Culp. This revealed three candidates with ties to Culp family members – namely the three brothers mentioned above (Simon, Andrew, and Samuel). Each match traced to a different Culp brother. These matches were in the range of 22-34 cM!

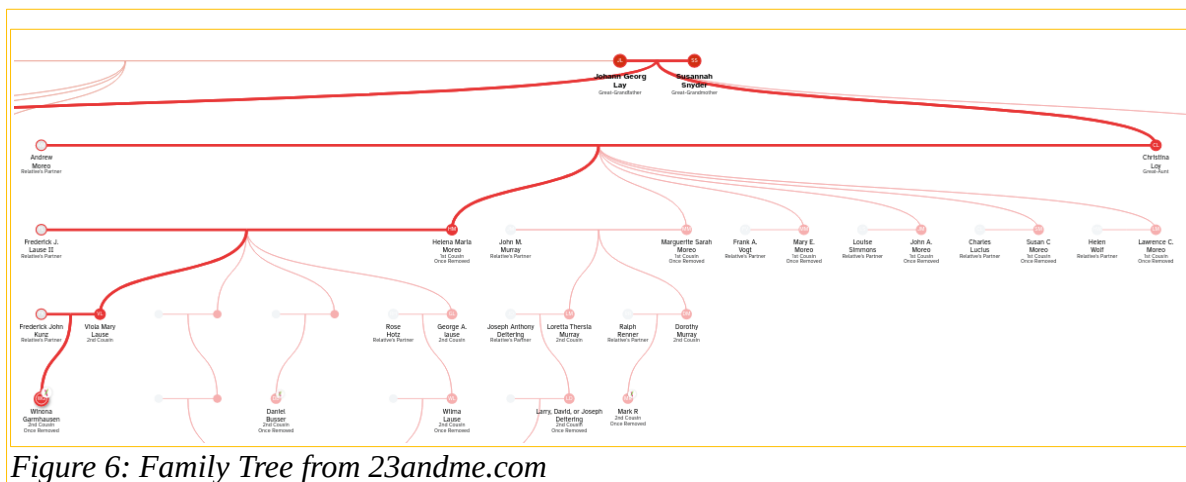
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At 23andme.com, the same process yielded three matches again when the Culp surname was used. Communication with these three individuals has been tried without success so no detailed ancestor matching information is available.

At familytreedna.com the process yielded just one match, and it turned out to be a duplicate of one of those identified at ancestry.com.

When the Snyder surname was used at ancestry.com, one match of interest appeared, but it is not relevant to the search for Catharine since common ancestors could not be identified. Interestingly, the match does point to a Sarah Snyder of Cumberland Co., who was born there in 1797 and died there in 1863. It would have certainly been nice if this match had led to John Snyder in Cumberland Co. More work on this needs to be done.

In a separate effort, using the tree creation tools at 23andme, a tree was constructed for my mother's matches. Carefully following the maternal line of descendants from Susanna Snyder to daughter Christina to Helen Moreo to Viola Lause to Winona Garmhausen, it appears that Susanna's mtDNA haplogroup is T2F1. This must be the haplogroup for Catharine as well, and this information may be useful at some point.



The conclusions that were drawn from the DNA matching work are the following.

- No matches related solely to the Selanders name were found.
- Mom appears to be related to each Culp brother.
- Catharine Snyder may very well have been born Catharine Culp.
- Indirection pushed the research forward!

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Final Proposed Solution

My proposal based on all information above is that the woman in the 1850 census enumeration and identified as Catharine was born Catharine Culp, the sister to Simon, Samuel, and Andrew Culp. She was born in PA in the early 1790s, possibly in Cumberland Co., PA. Furthermore, her mtDNA haplogroup is T2F1.

Future Work

It is necessary to keep on working to prove/disprove the proposal. For example, the Historical Society of Cumberland Co. PA may have more information. (Request has already been sent.) Maybe a marriage record for John and Catharine can be found in Cumberland Co. - or even a birth record for Susanna. The former might also lead to information about John's ancestors.

It is possible that Catharine's birth family is shown in the 1800 and 1810 Federal Census as follows. This is based on a hint from another researcher that the father of brother's Simon, Andrew, and Samuel Culp was also named Simon. Perhaps this can be proven/dis-proven based on land, tax, or church records.

1800:^{xiii}



Mr. Harvey	"	2	"	"	1	1	"	"	"	"	"	"
Simon Culp	2	"	"	1	"	1	"	"	"	1	"	"
Saml. Bear	1	"	"	1	"	1	"	"	"	1	"	"

1810:^{xiv}



Simon Culp	4	2	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
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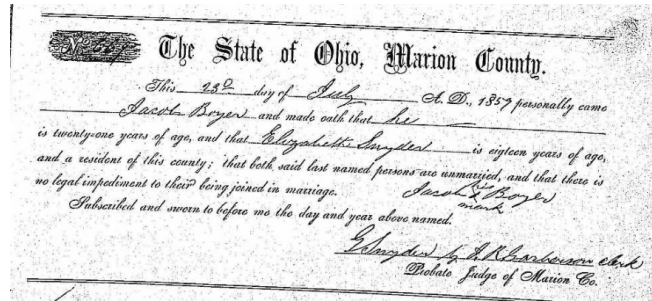
Mennonite records may be useful in the event that Catharine's family was associated with this group.

Continue exploring in Marion and Delaware Counties (OH) for more information.

Keep investigating DNA matches for clues.

End Notes

- i See for example *The Settlement of the Old Northwest: Ethnic Pluralism in a Featureless Plain*; Author(s): Robert P. Swierenga; Source: *Journal of the Early Republic* , Spring, 1989, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring, 1989), pp. 73-105; Published by: University of Pennsylvania Press on behalf of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic; Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3123525> . Figure 2 is a good summary.
- ii 1850 Federal Census: The image for Waldo Twp in Marion Co., OH, can be found at familysearch.org using this link. - <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MXQL-MV2>
- iii See for example *The History of Marion County, OH*, published in 1883 by Leggett, Conaway & Co. of Chicago, p. 296.
- iv An image of the marriage record for Elizabeth can be found at <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XZDK-L2G> .

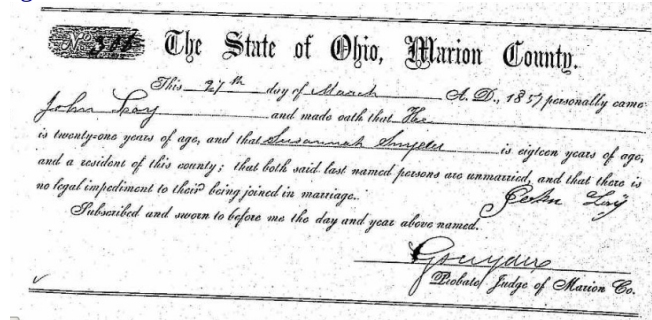


- v The following is a likely secondary record of George's involvement in the Civil War. See page 126 of the *Atlas of Marion County Ohio*, published in 1878 by Harrison, Sutton, and Hare in Philadelphia. Available from the Ohio Genealogical Society using this url. -

https://www.ogs.org/wp-content/uploads/resources/Active_1_of_4/mss00048f00034_oh_marion_civilwar_hardesty.pdf

Schnider, John G. . .	"	D	"	"	"	"	Captured, Gettysburg.
Snyder, George. . . .	"	H	4th	"	"	April, '61	Sept. 25, '62.
	"			"	"	Sept. 1861	June 1865.

- vi For full information about the family of John Loy and Susanna Snyder as well as John's other families, see the following unpublished report - https://281connections.us/281connections_Wiki/South_Dakota_Families/Loy-Allen/LifeAndTimesOfJohannLay.pdf . An image of Susanna's marriage record can be found at <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XZDK-FFR> .



- vii Refer to note ii above.
- viii Unpublished reports with source citations: The research report related to Culp ancestors can be found at https://281connections.us/281connections_Wiki/South_Dakota_Families/Loy-Allen/Snyder_Family_Research/SimonCulp-EllenSelenders.pdf . The report on Selanders ancestors can be found at https://281connections.us/281connections_Wiki/South_Dakota_Families/Loy-Allen/Snyder_Family_Research/ChristianSelanderSr-children.pdf . A similar report on Snyder family research can be found at https://281connections.us/281connections_Wiki/South_Dakota_Families/Loy-Allen/Snyder_Family_Research/JohnSnyder-Clues.pdf .
- ix See the Selanders research report in note viii above.
- x See the Culp research report in note viii above.
- xi Leeds method: <https://www.danaleeds.com/the-leeds-method/>
- xii The Shared cM Project Tool can be found at <https://dnainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4> .
- xiii 1800 Federal Census for Cumberland Co., PA, showing Simon Culp: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XHRD-GRT>
- xiv 1810 Federal Census for Cumberland Co., PA, showing Simon Culp: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XH2K-TWV>