

Abraham Shockey was the son of Valentine ... How we know

Abraham Shockey (1755-1861) was not the son of Johann Christoffel Schacke but was the eldest son of Valentine Shockey (1739-1810). And the Abraham Shockey who died from wounds obtained in the Revolutionary War was not the son of Valentine or John (the immigrant's sons) but was the son of Johann, the immigrant. The two Abraham Shockey's have been flipped around in our books and our family trees.

An early misunderstanding led many of us to mis-date Johann's will which resulted in several false assumptions about who was alive and who was already deceased at the time of the immigrant's death. Y-DNA testing has now shown that Abraham Shockey who lived from 1755 to 1861 was a son of Valentine. This coincides with autosomal DNA tests which have also demonstrated that Abraham Shockey's descendants are more closely related to Valentine's other descendants than they are to the other Shockey branches. Furthermore, this better explains the close ties between this Abraham and some of the other children of Valentine. These are the four primary lines of evidence that we will discuss below.

The wrong will of Johann Schacke

Four copies of Johann Christoffel Schacke's (AKA Christopher Shockey) will have now been found. The original was written in German and then it was translated three times into English. The fourth copy of this will was certified in 1796 soon after his second wife remarried, and his youngest son sold the 300 acres that he had inherited from his father. However, careful attention to the original German indicates that Johann had died before June 1775 and that the original probate took place that summer. Two other English translations were filed at other times between 1775 and 1796.

The 1796 probate has led many to presume a death date over twenty years after Johann actually died in 1775. Both volumes of Shockey history (the "Red Books" and the "Green Books"), for example, state that Johann died at the later incorrect date. This error has led to multiple mistakes in the Shockey tree.

If one assumes that Johann wrote his will or that it was proved in 1796, then logically one would make the further false assumption that his first nine children were still alive in 1796. Many have rejected the idea that Johann had a tenth child (i.e., Samuel Christian) because he was not mentioned in the will. Pertinent to this thesis, a 1796 will leads to the false assumption that his sons Abraham and Christopher must have both been living at that time. Therefore, it has often been presumed that Christian Shockey (1756-1829) and Abraham Shockey (1755-1861) must have been his sons. I believe that both claims are wrong and that both men were the sons of Valentine.

When Johann wrote his will in June 1773, his first nine children were living and he had remarried to Anna Maria, but Samuel Christian had not yet been born. Samuel was born in October 1774, Johann died in or before 1775, Christopher (Jr) was hung in December 1779, and Abraham was wounded in the War and died around 1782. The latter two facts would be problematic if Johann had died in 1796. Therefore, many false assumptions have been made producing a chain reaction of mistakes, including the following:

- Johann Christoffel did not die in 1796, but around 1775.
- Johann's original probate was not in 1796, but in 1775.
- Johann did not have merely nine children, but a tenth was born shortly before his death.
- Most pertinent to this paper, Abraham Shockey (1755-1861) was not Johann's son. He was the son of Valentine. Instead, it was Abraham Shockey who died from his wounds in the Revolutionary War who was the son of Johann, the immigrant.

- Christian Shockey (1756-1829) also was not Johann's son and was not the man who was tried for desertion and for counterfeiting. Christian was Valentine's son, and Christopher was the ninth child of Johann and Barbara who deserted twice and was hung for passing counterfeit money in 1779.

Unfortunately, the probate for Johann's will has been mis-dated. This mistake has snowballed into several more errors. It has produced a tree that has confused or conflated multiple individuals in the first two to three generations of Shockey's in America. Sometimes this has resulted in people making up individuals that didn't exist to find solutions for the above errors.

Strong evidence from Y-DNA testing

Genetic testing has added a powerful instrument to our toolbox that allows us to trace mutations in the Shockey tree. Not only are we able to observe the presence of DNA variations in living Shockey men, but Y-DNA testing has also enabled us to trace the presence of these same mutations in Shockey men who lived and died 250 years ago. Presently, eight Shockey men have participated in FamilyTreeDNA's Big-Y 700 test (with the eighth test presently in the lab) and the results demonstrate that Abraham Shockey (1755-1861) inherited a mutation that originally occurred in Valentine Shockey (1739-1810).

In layman's terms, Abraham Shockey (1755-1861) was the son of Valentine Shockey; and we need to switch the two Abraham's in our Shockey tree.

This study has evaluated the allele value of STR marker DYS507 in eight Y-DNA tests. The normal allele value among most men from the Q Haplogroup is 9. The allele value of the nearest branches to the Shockey clan demonstrates that this allele value of 9 has been maintained up to the modern age and is present in our distant cousins (including the Baysingers). Furthermore, an allele value of 9 has remained constant in the three tests of those who descended from John, Isaac, and Christopher Shockey. In other words, the mutation was not yet present in Johann Schacke's Y-DNA nor in the Y-DNA of those three sons. They all had an allele value of 9 on marker DYS507.

Valentine Shockey was the first man in the Shockey clan to have the presence of 10 alleles at marker DYS507. That mutation was then passed on to all of Valentine's male patrilineal descendants, and we have observed that same allele value (10) on four Y-DNA tests in the lineages of Valentine's sons: two from the lineage of Abraham, one of which is still in the lab (1755-1861), one from the lineage of Christian, Sr. (1756-1829), and one from the lineage of Joseph (1767-1861). All Shockey men on Valentine's branch will have the presence of 10 alleles unless a second mutation occurs in the same place ... a rare but potential occurrence.

The probability, though, that two brothers (i.e., Valentine and Abraham) would have been subject to the same mutation independent of receiving the variant from their father is 1 in 15,000 (by safe estimates; it could be closer to 1 in 500,000 depending on the mutation rate of DYS507 which is unknown at this time).

The probability that Abraham was Valentine's son is between 99.9934 and 99.9998%. Still, we'll refrain from calling this "proof" and just label it as "overwhelming evidence," but observe the following additional evidence that tilts the balance even more.

Extra evidence from autosomal DNA testing

This "overwhelming evidence" is corroborated by multiple DNA tests that have been taken on Ancestry.com. We have 28 volunteers, so far, participating in our ThruLines project where we compare DNA connections across all Shockey branches. The project is limited by the random nature in which DNA is passed down in autosomal chromosomes and by the diverse range of our participants (e.g., some

participants are one or two generations further removed from Johann; and some Shockey branches are smaller so have fewer connections by default).

However, despite these limitations, several patterns have started to emerge. One of these patterns is that the descendants of Valentine Shockey have a much higher rate of finding a DNA match to the descendants of Abraham Shockey (1755-1861) than to any of Valentine's siblings. The DNA overlap is of such significance that we noticed the pattern after analyzing only two or three tests. At first, I assumed that Valentine and Abraham must have been "twins" born 16 years apart, brothers that anyone would notice if they walked side by side down the street. Or, I thought, perhaps they had married sisters because the DNA connections were so lopsided.

It turns out that there is a much simpler explanation: Abraham was Valentine's son, not his brother. Thus, Abraham's descendants are my 7th cousins instead of 8th. That makes an enormous difference when 50% of each person's Shockey DNA is lost every generation. Finding DNA matches becomes more and more difficult for every generation we are removed from the common ancestor.

By itself, there are too many variables for us to build a theory around autosomal DNA alone. However, given the misunderstanding of the paper trail and the date of Johann's will, and given the overwhelming evidence obtained from Y-DNA testing, the autosomal DNA tests add another layer of evidence making the case even more air-tight.

Close familial bonds

One final piece of evidence may give us even a little more assurance. Abraham and Christian, who I am arguing were the sons of Valentine, remained close for most of their lives. I believe that these are the two individuals who moved to (West) Virginia and lived in Berkeley County near their uncle John Shockey for many years. **Note that they were not their uncle John's sons as many have presumed and as DNA evidence now proves is an incorrect theory. John likely did not have a son named Abraham or Christian, at least none that survived childhood.**

Both Abraham and Christopher appear on the Berkeley County tax records through the 1790s. At the turn of the century, they each moved closer to the Mason-Dixon line; Abraham moved to Allegany County, Maryland, and Christian moved just north of the line to Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Some of their children were neighbors almost. Abraham later signed an affidavit claiming that he was a witness to the wedding between Christian Shockey and Mary Welsh.

Obviously, the same kind of relationship could have existed between an uncle and a nephew. Combined with the other pieces of evidence, though, this just adds one more factor that indicates these two men were brothers, the sons of Valentine Shockey and the grandsons of the immigrant, Johann.

Conclusion

I believe that it is time for us to fix our family trees and put the correct Abraham and Christian Shockey in their place.

- Pvt. Christopher Shockey was born between 1751-1756. He deserted twice and was hanged to death for passing counterfeit money in 1779. **This was the son of Johann Christoffel Schacke.** He married Rosannah (King?) and had 3 children that we know of, and possibly a fourth born after his execution.
- Pvt. Abraham Shockey was born between 1751-1760. He served in the 4th Company of the 2nd Battalion of the Continental Army and was wounded in battle around June 1782 and seems to have died later that year. **This was also the son of Johann Christoffel Schacke.** He married

Elizabeth and also had 3 children that we know of, and possibly a fourth born after he died from his injuries.

- John Shockey (the son of Johann) did not have sons named Abraham or Christian as far as I have been able to find.
- Sgt. Christian Shockey was born 7 May 1756 in Manheim, York PA. He eventually served in the New Eleventh Regiment and the 3rd Regiment of Pennsylvania and served to the end of the War. **This was the son of Valentine Shockey.** He married Mary Ann Welsh with whom he had eleven children. He died 18 April 1829 in Salisbury, Somerset, PA where he is also buried.
- Pvt. Abraham Shockey was born in 1755 in Pennsylvania. He seems to have served in the Maryland 6th Regiment and soon deserted. He later served in the 2nd Company of Maryland's 3rd Regiment. **This was also the son of Valentine Shockey.** He married Margaret with whom he had twelve children. He died 20 January 1861 in Ohio.