

# **My Maternal DNA and Maybe I'm Dutch?**

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# Introduction

A [mitochondrial DNA](#) test traces a person's matrilineal or mother-line ancestry using the DNA in his or her mitochondria. mtDNA is passed down by the mother unchanged, to all her children, both male and female. A mitochondrial DNA test, can therefore be taken by both men and women.<sup>1</sup>

This approach for studying our female ancestors is well and good, however, recent studies have shown that *sometimes* fathers can pass along mtDNA.<sup>2</sup> Swell.

All the same, here is my maternal line for which I have documentation, starting with my grandmother:

Eliza Coquigne → Emmanet Brown → Sarah Jane Hildreth →  
Sarah Crane → Catherine (Caty) Williams

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1 "[Mitochondrial DNA Tests](#)", International Society of Genetic Genealogy Wiki, accessed 8 Oct 2020.

2 "[Mitochondrial DNA can be inherited from fathers, not just mothers](#)" by Thomas G. McWilliams and Anu Suomalainen, Nature, 14 Jan 2019.

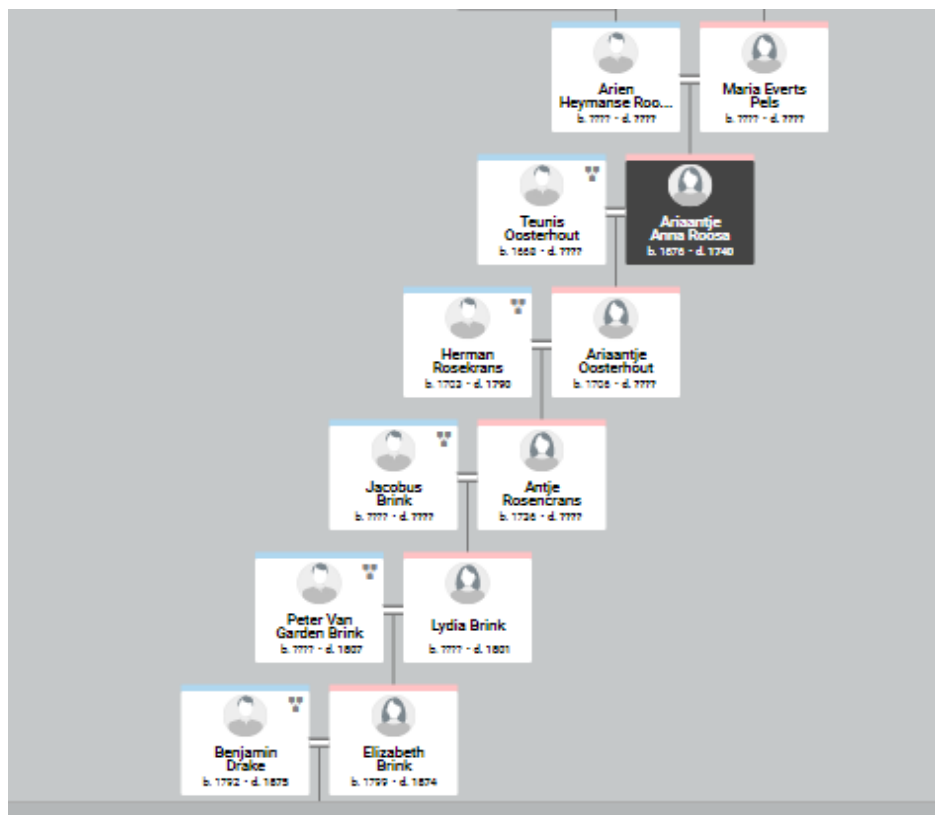
# My mtDNA Test

I took the mtDNA test through the company FTDNA late in 2018 and my results became available 19 Jan 2019. I have to say I was initially disappointed. I had 12 matches within a Genetic Distance of 2, half of which have attached a family tree to their results, and among those, nothing whatsoever looks familiar.

Since then, three more matches have appeared within a Genetic Distance (GD) of 2. To be clear, I mistakenly thought that GD meant within two generations (which seems awfully close), but it does not mean that at all, as this [excellent article](#) explains. It means there are two mutations between my mtDNA and the mtDNA of my GD-2 matches. So I'm not there yet in terms of mtDNA matches. I'm still waiting for somebody to test who matches me with a Genetic Distance of zero.

Even so, I've been poking around in the family trees of those mtDNA matches within GD-2. I became very interested in one whose origins go back to Sussex County, New Jersey around the years of the Revolution. That's when my mystery ancestors, Joseph Ors Crane and Catherine Williams, were in the neighborhood and having children.

Here is a view of the maternal line of the GD-2 match going back from Elizabeth Brink:



Thoughts:

- This is a whole lot of Dutch. Now I'm wondering if the 31% of my English ethnicity includes Netherlands. In fact, my English ethnicity is classified as "England and Northwestern Europe" and according to the map presented by ancestry, it does indeed include the Netherlands. Hmmmm.
- Caty Williams had her children baptized in the Clove Dutch Reformed Church (Wantage, Sussex, NJ). Seems like a number of churches were available for baptism in that area of New Jersey by the late 1790s. Why this one? Hmmmm. In fact, if I look again at the page in the church record for the baptism of Sarah Crane in 1793, the pages are full of Dutch names, including even the name Brink! Hmmmm.

More exploring is called for!

When looking at my mtDNA Ancestral Origins:

No Matches Found

HVR1, HVR2, AND CODING REGION MATCHES

GENETIC DISTANCE -2				
Country	Match Total	Country Total	Percentage	Comments
Germany	1	8627	< 0.1 %	
Netherlands	1	1000	0.1%	
United States	2	10992	< 0.1 %	

GENETIC DISTANCE -3				
Country	Match Total	Country Total	Percentage	Comments
Germany	2	8627	< 0.1 %	
Netherlands	1	1000	0.1%	

And now my Haplogroup Origins:

No Matches Found

HVR1, HVR2, AND CODING REGION MATCHES

GENETIC DISTANCE -2			
Haplogroup	Country	Comments	Match Total
H5b1		-	5
H5b1	Germany	-	1
H5b1	Netherlands	-	1
H5b1	United States	-	2

GENETIC DISTANCE -3			
Haplogroup	Country	Comments	Match Total
H5b1		-	1
H5b1	Germany	-	2
H5b1	Netherlands	-	1

Hmmmm, more repeat of Netherlands. Next, I checked the Matches Map for my FMS (Full Mitochondrial Sequence). There are two FMS matches, both going back to New York, one is GD-2 and the other GD-3. Preliminary research on the GD-2 match leads to the family group of Albert Heymans Roosa, and the GD-3 match places their earliest maternal ancestor in the Kingston area of Ulster County, New York where many, many Dutch families lived.

Even while I await a more exact mtDNA match to appear, I think the lesser exact matches are still pointing to the Netherlands, and it seems reasonable to think that ethnicity comes from Caty Williams, ie, Caty's mother or grandmother or previous maternal ancestor was Dutch. In fact, a search for the Dutch names of Roosa, Decker, Van Winkel, and others among my autosomal matches produced several results! There's plenty of food for thought here.

Meanwhile, it seems rather remarkable to be this far along in my genealogy journey, and just now I'm starting to consider that I might have some Dutch ancestors!