

## THE FATHER OF JOHN OSBORN ROBERTS?

The following excerpts from a letter by David Travillion Bunton of Russellville, AR, ([travillion@hotmail.com](mailto:travillion@hotmail.com)) presents a case for George Bates being the father of John Osborn Roberts. The letter is given here with his permission.

*Hello cousins*

*[Two male descendants of John Osborn Roberts, one each from sons John Addison Roberts and Andrew Jackson Roberts, both took Y-DNA tests which matched]. This gives us a proven DNA number now for John Osborn Roberts. I knew that we needed John O's DNA number verified and then when I saw the other non-Roberts surname matches, I knew that something had been verified at long last---by this I mean the father of John Osborn Roberts.*

*About 20 years ago my mother and I drove to California and met with the family of Ivan Roberts. We met his widow Mary and his sister Cecil. Ivan Roberts father was Andrew J Roberts (the nephew of my Andrew) and the nephew Andrew had written the write up which I believe all of you have about the family coming into Tennessee very early, living in a tent while wild animals growled and howled outside, had their family and then about the uncle Haggard who chased my ancestor Union Capt. Andrew Roberts around the country trying to capture him. Etc, etc. The writer was the grandson of John Osborn Roberts and he stated that his grandfather had changed his name, adding the name John. I have proven that to my satisfaction years ago by finding Dickson Co, TN court records naming Osborn Roberts. This was his true name at birth, he added John later. Anyway, back on the gist of what I want to say. When we visited Mary and Cecil they were very elderly...if I remember correctly Mary was at least 95 or so and Cecil a few years younger. I started talking to Cecil getting info from what her father had told her and while I was doing that Mary was talking to my mother. The bottom line is that the two old ladies were both talking and Mary wanted by attention---my mother kept saying I need to listen to her but Cecil was in the middle of some really neat stories as told by her father Andrew J Roberts and about the Gallegly family and etc. So, to make a long story short Mary had stated that she had the clue about the Robert's ancestry and John O Roberts father. However, by the time that Cecil had finished her story, Mary took a sack brimming with papers left by Andrew and Ivan and had her daughter take them away. When I said I was interested in seeing them, she told me that they probably wouldn't interest me. More conversation but the thing which stuck out to me was a comment "my father in law told about George Bates I guess you haven't found that out..." and "George Bates is the name you need to look for" (or comments very similar). I wrote a note to myself to try to figure out who George Bates was - to the Roberts family---I had no clue as to which generation. Since Mary seemed somewhat miffed because I had paid so much attention to Cecil I didn't get very far. That stuck in my mind, and when I talked to my mother later about it we mulled it all over and my mother said that Mary had something important to tell me about the father of John O Roberts and had*

*talked to her and when my mother told me some of the things later in the car I said, well I didn't hear that, etc. So, I got some of the comments second hand just after the conversation.*

*... the DNA tests ... [indicated] ... there were two matches for men of the BATES surname. In other words, John O Roberts DNA numbers matches this BATES family. All this came flooding back to me almost 20 years later. I went back to look at any Bates in Rutherford County, NC and found a very few scattered references. However, I found two Bates men, John Bates and George Bates. G E O R G E B A T E S. He lived as a neighbor to Rachel Moore in the 1790 Rutherford Co, NC census.*

*I believe based on all this, that Andrew J Roberts told his son Ivan and his wife Mary that the surname was really Bates and that he had discovered that George Bates was his great grandfather. Since George Bates lived two or three households away from Rachel Moore (who is Mary Moore's mother) in 1790 and since the DNA matches the Bates DNA, I believe I can say with certainty that George Bates is the father of John Osborn Roberts. I have now wondered if George H M Walker was also fathered by George Bates. A DNA test of a George Walker descendant would be very insightful. Could GEORGE Walker have really been named after George Bates? When Mary Moore married William Battles she married under her maiden name. Sue Ann Hayley got confirmation years ago (like in the late 60s or early 70s) that George HM Walker, John O Roberts, and William Battles were all three half-brothers. That is well documented.*

*Best wishes,*

*David*

The DNA test results referred to by David are presented in the table (modified from FamilyTree DNA), on the following page. The table compares the two tests for known male descendants of John Osborn Roberts with those for various male descendants of ancestral Bates surnames. It should be noted that the two tests do not match any of the hundreds of Roberts tests on the FTDNA website.

DNA matches are clearly shown for four Bates tests, suggesting that they may represent common Bates ancestors, perhaps, as David says, with George Bates (or one of his sons) being the father of John Osborn Roberts. Shown also are four non-matching results for Bates said to have been living in Rutherford Co., NC, around the time of John Osborn Roberts' birth (1791). These tests indicate that if George Bates (or one of his sons) were the father of John Osborn Roberts, he was not from any of these four Bates families.

Finally, to address David's thoughts from above (*I have now wondered if George H M Walker was also fathered by George Bates. A DNA test of a George Walker descendant would be very insightful.*), I have obtained the consent of a male Walker descendant (my cousin) to do Y-DNA testing to determine if our 3rdGGF George H. M. Walker (b. 1793), was fathered by a Bates or by one of the many Walkers living in the Rutherford County area at the time.

Data taken from Roberts & Bates Surname DNA Projects - Y-DNA Classic Chart (FamilyTreeDNA.com; Sep 19, 2019)

Kit Number	Paternal Ancestor Name	Country	Haplogroup	DYS393	DYS390	DYS19	DYS391	DYS385	DYS426	DYS388	DYS439	DYS389i	DYS392	DYS389ii	DYS458	DYS459	DYS455	DYS454	DYS447	DYS437	DYS448	DYS449	DYS464	DYS460	Y-GATA-H4	YCAII	DYS456	DYS607	DYS576	DYS570	CDY	DYS442	DYS438
<b>Roberts surname tests managed by David Bunton</b>														12----->									25----->										37----->
130794	John Osborn Roberts b. 1791 Rutherford Co, NC (testee is a descendant of Andrew Jackson Roberts)	Unknown Origin	R-M269	13	23	14	11	11/14	12	12	12	14	14	30	17	10/10	11	11	25	15	19	29	15-15-17-18	11	11	19-23	15	15	16	17	40-40	12	12
35563	(testee is a descendant of John Addison Roberts)	Ireland	R-P25	13	23	14	11	11/14	12	12	12	14	14	30	17	10/10	11	11	25	15	19	29	15-15-17-18	11	11	19-23	15	15	16	17	40-40	12	12
<b>Bates surname tests with close matches to Roberts</b>																																	
7837		Unknown Origin	R-M269	13	23	14	11	11/14	12	12	12	14	14	30																			
17328		England	R-M269	13	23	14	11	11/14	12	12	12	14	14	30																			
13711		Unknown Origin	R-M269	13	23	14	11	11/14	12	12	12	14	14	30																			
342214	Henry Bates b. abt 1670 and d. 1770	England	R-M269	13	23	14	11	11/14	12	12	12	14	14	30	17	10/10	11	11	25	15	19	29	15-15-17-17	11	11	19-23	17	15	16	17	40-40	12	12
2345	Henry Bates c. 1685 - c. 1770	England	R-Z9	13	23	14	11	11/14	12	12	12	14	14	30	17	10/10	11	11	25	15	19	29	15-15-17-17	11	11	19-23	17	15	16	18	40-40	12	12
<b>Bates surname tests without close matches to Roberts</b>																																	
29600	Martin Bates, born 1810, NC; died 1900, TN	Unknown Origin	R-M269	13	24	14	11	12/14	12	12	11	13	13	29																			
85734	Martin Bates, b.c. 1810, Rutherford Co., NC	Unknown Origin	R-M269	13	24	14	11	12/14	12	12	11	13	13	29	17	9/10	11	11	25	15	19	29	15-16-16-17	11	11	19-23	16	15	16	17	36-38	14	12
N106540	Martin Bates, b 1810, Rutherford, NC d 1900	Unknown Origin	R-M269	13	24	14	11	12/14	12	12	11	13	13	29	17	9/10	11	11	25	15	19	29	15-16-16-17	11	11	19-23	16	15	16	17	36-38	14	12
2059	James Bates, b.c.1760, Rutherford Co. N.C.	England	R-M269	13	24	15	11	12/14	12	12	12	13	13	29	17	9/10	11	12	25	15	19	28	15-17-17-17	11	12	19-23	16	15	17	17	36-39	12	12