

Forward by Brian P. Bass

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This collection of information began as a “quick look” at our family history but turned into an extensive, multi-year research project that seems to raise as many questions as it does find answers. Early on I noticed discrepancies in online genealogy for the Bass Family. For every step after that, I attempted to look at every detail with a critical eye and accept nothing at face value and constantly cross-checked wherever possible to reduce the “leaps-of-faith” that often lead to inaccurate answers. I found it important NOT to have preconceived ideas of what the research would lead to, instead just let the facts lead the way. I would not consider myself to be the “original author” of much of what is in this collection as most of the content is compiled from numerous other sources that I have attempted to organize, filter and validate. The writing of this story may never actually be complete as new evidence is found or as genetic testing advances, therefore I have date marked the top of each key section so they can be regularly updated as new information is found. If anyone who reads this has any details to add, please contact me.

The preponderance of research is focused on the “Bass” namesake line. The female lines going back prove much more difficult to trace because the women change their names with marriage as well as many early census records list only the “head-of-household” by name. Also, my Y-DNA study only tracks the father-to-son lineage. Family lines are also made difficult as families liked to use the same names over and over, even cousins living nearby might have the same name. The mortality rate in earlier times created numerous adoptions and mixing of households. There were frequent, misspellings, omissions and unintentional or deliberate inaccuracies in historic records and census data. All of these add to the complexity of putting together and accurate, historic story.

Different people can look at genealogy in different ways. Some may consider genetic accuracy as the “only truth” while others would say that an adopted child, legally raised as their “truth”. I am not arguing either, just presenting what I have found. As I attempt to move through the story, many (or most) of the established Bass lines in the United States actually do NOT genetically tie back to the previously accepted Bass ancestors. In essence, what used to be considered one line is actually several different lines.

The larger Bass family lineage suffers from an effort, and book, written by a Dr. Bell in 1961. Numerous inaccuracies, some accidental but some likely intentional to please the paying customer, having been taken as gospel for years. Internet genealogy (i.e. Ancestry.com) also enables the perpetuation of inaccurate information that needed to be sifted through. In fact, the online genealogy sites probably have as much or more inaccurate information as they do correct information. That being said, I am sure that my own research is not 100% accurate and always benefit from a critical eye and a readiness to update with new information.

DNA has made accurate genealogy possible at a level far beyond what people thought even a couple decades ago. DNA however isn't the only answer and does not magically yield answers. The proper paperwork trail needs to be crosschecked back and forth against the DNA to find actual answers. There are various forms of DNA testing. Y-DNA looks at the father-to-son transfer of DNA that remains largely unchanged over time. This is very helpful in determining the path but depends on having other descendants down varying branches to match up against and then rely on the accuracy of their own line to correctly match up. Other DNA is M-DNA which tracks down the female, mother-to-daughter line and Autosomal which can provide links to distant cousins and give an idea of background heritage percentages. These however are only as good as the population in their database and can change as new people are added in to a given database.

I have attempted to look at the maternal lines at each level going back as well. In some cases they fizzle out pretty quickly due to a lack of information. Also, in many of the various maternal lines, I lacked the DNA access to study in depth and relied other's research, then I validated to the best of my ability. Time is also a factor. At each level, the line branches in two which increases exponentially. I could easily take a lifetime to explore every branch. Some researchers look for distant cousins to find out who in the world is related to them. While I often used siblings' names as markers in research (helps delineate from one census to another etc), I did not attempt to trace down various sibling branches beyond what was necessary to establish parental lineage. The below graphic gives a good feel for how complex it can get tracing lines back. So for example, for all the effort it took to document back to Andrew Bass (~1730), he is my 6x great-grandfather which makes him one of 256 grandparents at that level.

Ancestral Mathematics

In order to be born, you needed:

- 2 parents
- 4 grandparents
- 8 great-grandparents
- 16 second great-grandparents
- 32 third great-grandparents
- 64 fourth great-grandparents
- 128 fifth great-grandparents
- 256 sixth great-grandparents
- 512 seventh great-grandparents
- 1,024 eighth great-grandparents
- 2,048 ninth great-grandparents

For you to be born today from 12 previous generations, you needed a total of 4,094 ancestors over the last 400 years.

Think for a moment – How many struggles? How many battles? How many difficulties? How much sadness? How much happiness? How many love stories? How many expressions of hope for the future? – did your ancestors have to undergo for you to exist in this present moment...

I wanted to go beyond just putting names on a tree chart. I have attempted to paint the historic picture of life surrounding these individuals to get a feel for what our journey was actually like. I hope that all family members who read this will keep an open mind and feel free to help make it more accurate. My final disclaimer is I hope to not offend anyone with my findings as I tried to be as accurate as possible. Just be warned, not everything is “good” news. There are crimes and killings along the way. The information however does paint a very interesting journey.

Finally, this text will probably be out-of-date as soon as it is printed and will never truly be final. I felt it was important to get version 1 out as soon as I could for two reasons. First, sitting on this project for years does not allow anyone to learn about the research. Second, I am hopeful that getting it out there will help get more information to add. So, if anyone has stories, information or photographs, please send them to me so I can included them in future revisions. –
Brian Patrick Bass