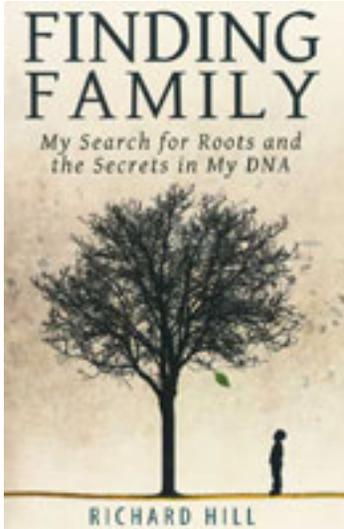


Family Chronicle Magazine Reviews *Finding Family*



A Review of Richard Hill's book, *Finding Family*, for Family Chronicle Magazine

Finding Family: My Search for Roots and the Secrets in My DNA is a new book by author and genetic genealogist Richard Hill. It chronicles his entire search experience — from the accidental discovery of his adoption through the aftermath of his successful DNA testing.

I know Richard best through his website, DNA Testing Adviser — the Independent Guide to DNA Testing, www.dna-testing-adviser.com. If I have a question about DNA testing or need to direct someone to resources about using DNA testing for genealogy and family history research, this is frequently where I, or others, end up. Besides the many pages of resources and articles available, there is also this FREE DNA Testing Guide “How to Identify Ancestors and Confirm Relationships through DNA Testing”, www.dna-testing-adviser.com/DNA-Testing-Guide.html.

With that familiarity, I was very curious to read his book about his personal journey into DNA testing.

Let me start by saying that I am not a biography reader. When not reading/using family history research books, I say, give me a mystery book, something with historical fiction, and maybe a dash of romance thrown in. Those are what I am most likely to read to relax. So, though I am constantly researching families, after hours, I rarely “read” about them!

I decided to take a chance and expand my pleasure reading to include this book. It is an easy-to-read and fast-paced book which made it fun to read. Though, there is one caveat — don’t make the mistake I did and read it right before going to bed! If you do, like me, you might find that your brain gets caught up in trying to “solve” the problems of his birth parents and prevents you from getting a good night sleep. I made sure after that to only read it in the middle of the day.

Besides being easy-to-read, it doesn’t assume that you are a genealogist or have done any family history research. And, if you have done some genealogy research, the few sentences it takes to give you context about the tenet and resources for such research do not take away from the flow of Mr. Hill’s story. You will also find that there is a fairly large cast of characters mentioned. Fortunately, Mr. Hill has written the book in such a manner that you don’t need to worry about remembering everyone mentioned, or their relationship to others. I read the book in three sittings, separated by a week each time and it was easy to resume where I left off and not feel lost. Recognize that Mr. Hill himself is adopted and the book is about his journey to identify his birth parents. He concludes the book by stating ...

I want to inspire adoptees and others of unknown or uncertain parentage to try DNA testing ...

This book has much broader appeal than helping adoptees (and others) determine their birth parents through the use of DNA testing. After all, DNA testing is just one tool at our disposal. Though Mr. Hill’s pioneering use of DNA testing clearly, and convincingly, connected Mr. Hill with his birth family, we probably all know someone whose DNA testing has seemingly disconnected them from their family and “connected” them with

another family with a completely different surname.

Do recognize that before the availability of DNA testing, Mr. Hill did a lot of the same research that we genealogists and family historians have done historically and continue to do. Creating a paper trail and learning all he could about his parents was critical; just as we do the same when researching our ancestors.

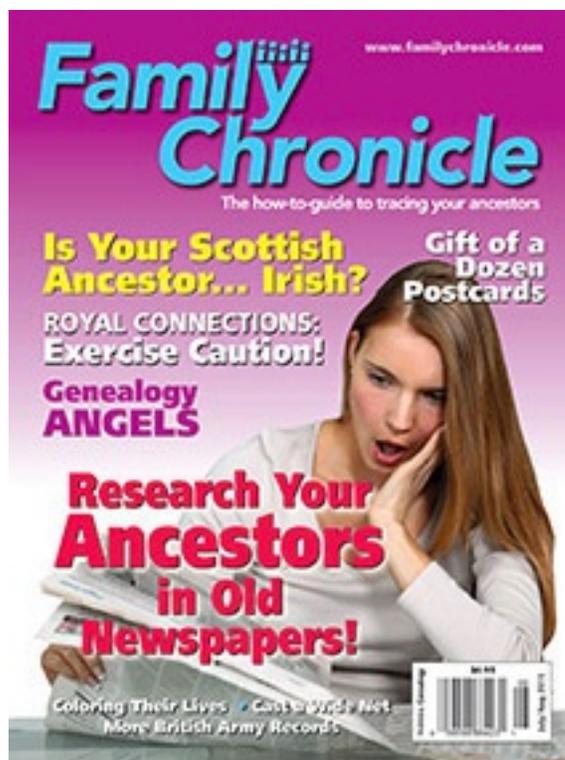
Additionally, he shows and reinforces for us that one often has to be meticulous and persistent to exhaustively prove (or disprove) theories about who is related to whom. And, as Mr. Hill shares, don't believe every- thing you are told or that is "documented".

In his case, his mother put a name on his birth certificate which was NOT that of his eventually-identified father! Just because a document is considered "primary", does not necessarily mean that it's accurate.

Regardless of whether you are adopted or not, this is a very personal journey of one man's discovery of his biological roots which has a happy ending! It was a long journey, over several decades, and yet Mr. Hill doesn't weigh the story down with too much nitty-gritty. There is just enough detail about his research methodology that it both inspires and informs us.

And, though the book (and Mr. Hill's personal story) shows what a great tool genetic genealogy can be, it also reinforces that DNA is just one tool in the genealogical research arsenal. Alone, it cannot answer any questions, though, when combined with traditional research and a well-documented paper trail, it can prove invaluable. And, it has a special place when an adoption is involved.

**Family Chronicle Magazine
July/August 2013**



DIANE L. RICHARD has been doing genealogy research for over 25 years. Besides reviewing this book for Family Chronicle Magazine, she is currently editor of Upfront with NGS and a professional genealogy and family historian researcher, speaker and writer. She can be found online at www.mosaicrpm.com.

NOTE: Diane L. Richard reviewed Finding Family in the July/August 2013 issue of Family Chronicle Magazine.