

Kurt Cobain Irish Roots and Family Tree

In the magazine *Guitar World*, "The Lost Interview" by Jon Savage, Kurt refers to his Irish roots. This is an excerpt from an interview that took place July 23, 1993. Kurt mistakenly thought that his family came from County Cork. We now know that Kurt's family came from County Tyrone.

GW: What was it like for you growing up?

COBAIN: I was very isolated. I had a really good childhood, until the divorce. Then, all of a sudden, my whole world changed. I became antisocial. I started to understand the reality of my surroundings, which didn't have a lot to offer. Aberdeen was such a small town, and I couldn't find any friends that I was very fond of, or who were compatible with me, or liked to do the things that I liked. I liked to do artistic things and listen to music.

GW: What did you listen to then?

COBAIN: Whatever I could get a hold of. My aunts would give me Beatles records, so for the most part it was just the Beatles, and every once in a while, if I was lucky, I was able to buy a single.

GW: Did you like the Beatles?

COBAIN: Oh, yeah. My mother always tried to keep a little bit of British culture in our family. We'd drink tea all the time! I never really knew about my ancestors until this year, when I learned that the name Cobain was Irish. My parents had never bothered to find that stuff out. I found out by looking through phone books throughout America for names that were similar to mine. I couldn't find any Cobains at all, so I started calling Coburns. I found this one lady in San Francisco who had been researching our family history for years.

GW: So it was Coburn?

COBAIN: Actually it was Cobain, but the Coburns screwed it up when they came over. They came from County Cork, which is a really weird coincidence, because when we toured Ireland, we played in Cork and the entire day I walked around in a daze. I'd never felt more spiritual in my life. It was the weirdest feeling and I have a friend who was with me who could testify to this I was almost in tears the whole day. Since that tour, which was about two years ago, I've had a sense that I was from Ireland.

Kurt Cobain Family Tree

Great-Great-Great-Great-Great Grandfather

Thomas Cobane

Born: c. 1765, Possibly Skey Townland, Co. Tyrone, Ireland

Died: ?

Married: ?

Great-Great-Great-Great Grandfather

Samuel Cobane (brother William)

Born: c. 1792, Possibly Skey Townland, Co. Tyrone, Ireland

Died: 1866, Dunmisk, Co. Tyrone

Married: Ellen Lagan

Great-Great-Great-Grandfather

Samuel Cobane (brothers William, John, James, Patrick, Deane)

Born: May 23, 1823, Dunmisk, Co. Tyrone, Ireland

Died: Oct. 24, 1900, Ellensburg, Washington, USA

Married: Letitia Cobane

Great-Great-Grandfather

John James Cobain

Born: Dec. 28, 1863, Inishatieve, Co. Tyrone, Ireland

Died: Nov. 26, 1922, Portland, Oregon, USA

Married: Anna Minerva Van Alstine

Great-Grandfather

John James Arthur Cobain

Born: Dec. 28, 1863, Inishatieve, Co. Tyrone, Ireland

Died: Nov. 26, 1922, Portland, Oregon, USA

Married: Anna Minerva Van Alstine

Grandfather

Leland Elmer Cobain

Born: Oct. 24, 1923 Kittitas County, Washington, USA

Married: Iris Maxine LaBrot

Father

Donald Leland Cobain

Born: Washington, about 1945

Married: Wendy Fradenburg

Kurt Donald Cobain

Born: Feb. 20, 1967, Aberdeen, Grays Harbor, Washington

Died: Apr. 5, 1994

Married: Courtney Michelle Harrison (Courtney Love)