An Outline Concerning the Association Between Quaker Families & The Nobel Prizes.

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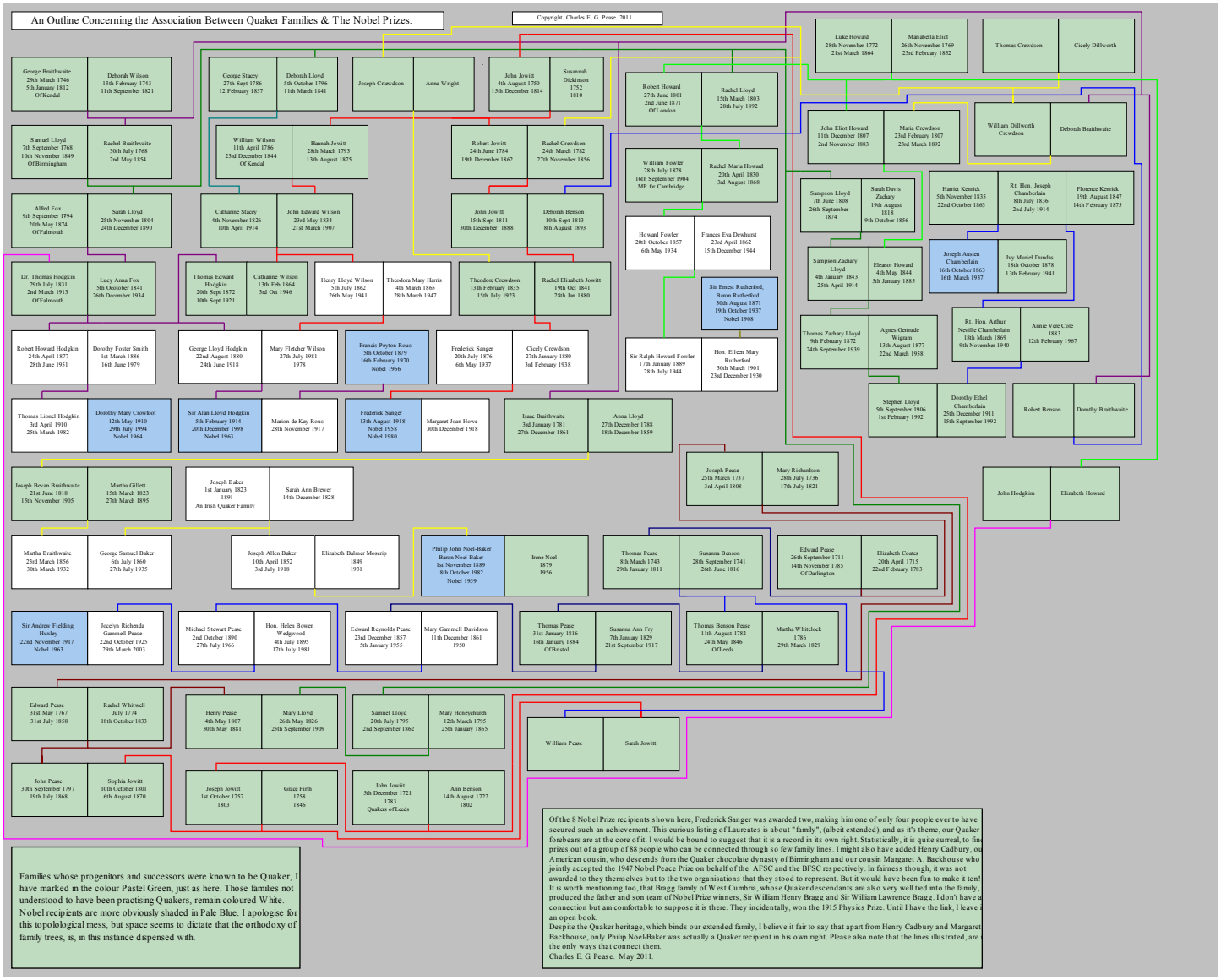

Families whose progenitors and successors were known to be Quaker, I have marked in the colour Pastel Green, just as here. Those families not understood to have been practising Quakers, remain coloured White. Nobel recipients are more obviously shaded in Pale Blue. I apologise for this topological mess, but space seems to dictate that the orthodoxy of family trees, is, in this instance dispensed with.

Of the 8 Nobel Prize recipients shown here, Frederick Sanger was awarded two, making him one of only four people ever to have secured such an achievement. This curious listing of Laureates is about "family", (albeit extended), and as it's theme, our Quaker forebears are at the core of it. I would be bound to suggest that it is a record in its own right. Statistically, it is quite surreal, to find prizes out of a group of 88 people who can be connected through so few family lines. I might also have added Henry Cadbury, our American cousin, who descends from the Quaker chocolate dynasty of Birmingham and our cousin Margaret A. Backhouse who jointly accepted the 1947 Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the AFSC and the BFSC respectively. In fairness though, it was not awarded to they themselves but to the two organisations that they stood to represent. But it would have been fun to make it ten! It is worth mentioning too, that Bragg family of West Cumbria, whose Quaker descendants are also very well tied into the family, produced the father and son team of Nobel Prize winners, Sir William Henry Bragg and Sir William Lawrence Bragg. I don't have a connection but am comfortable to suppose it is there. They incidentally, won the 1915 Physics Prize. Until I have the link, I leave it an open book.
Despite the Quaker heritage, which binds our extended family, I believe it fair to say that apart from Henry Cadbury and Margaret Backhouse, only Philip Noel-Baker was actually a Quaker recipient in his own right. Please also note that the lines illustrated, are the only ways that connect them.
Charles E. G. Pease. May 2011.