

## A Nose for a Story

By Brian Bold



Jenny and I always play “Spot our ancestors” in portrait galleries. We focus on noses. They run in families. I have a squashed nose, so did my father and grandfather. Jenny’s is more retroussé, her term, I never comment on her beak. She calls it her family’s badge.

In most galleries, we find a family nose or two and laugh about our possible lost inheritance but normally it ends there. Today, I am shaking in front of a picture of a woman in white in the Watford Museum.

I find Jenny and drag her to the picture.

“Look, it’s you from nose to toes.”

“I suppose there’s some resemblance. I’d love to have that white dress though.”

“Resemblance! If the picture wasn’t dated 1892, I’d think you were keeping secrets.”

“Who is it, anyway?”

“Adele Capel, she’s local aristocracy. Her family owned Cassiobury and lots more. She’s the best match to you I’ve ever seen. We’ve got to follow this up, find your family link.”

“This is only a game, David. Don’t get all *Richard the Third* serious. Next thing you’ll be suggesting DNA tests and tracing living relatives.”

“Not yet. We can do something easier first. Stand by the portrait; I want to take a picture of you both.”

“Whatever for?”

“I’ve downloaded the Find Your Family app which uses AI to match people. We can ask for DNA tests later.”

Jenny's turning up, yes, her nose.

"Smile, Jenny. I am sure the museum will love our story and help us find your rich living relatives."

As I guessed, the app rates Jenny and Adele a 90% match. I'm shaking and can hardly get my words out when I speak to the museum archivist and show her my phone screen.

"Can you give us more information about Adele Capel and her descendents?"

The archivist laughs. "I see you have that new phone app. You're the fifth person this week claiming facial matching with the Capels. It's either chance or the family were more active in Watford than we thought. But the good news is so are we."