

Alan Olstein – A Brorström Relative

By Burks Oakley II
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Introduction

I am interested in genetic genealogy; that is, using DNA to confirm and to extend my family tree. I have my DNA profile and my family tree on the Ancestry.com website, and I regularly check this site for new DNA matches.

It is possible to view a person's DNA matches from the largest to the smallest, which roughly translates into the closest relatives to the most distant relatives. In my case, I have one DNA match at the level of "Parent/Child" – and that is with my daughter Amy Oakley. I have twelve DNA matches at the level of "Close Family". These matches include:

- Peter Larson (born Brorström) – first-cousin
- Stuart Eck (Paul Brorström's son) – first-cousin
- Susan Brorström Baker – first-cousin
- Annmarie Brorström – first-cousin
- Jessica Lynn Eck (Stuart Eck's daughter) – first-cousin once-removed
- Robert Baker (Susan B. Baker's son) – first-cousin once-removed
- Lauren Meier (Annmarie Brorström's daughter) – first-cousin once-removed
- Hal Oakley – first-cousin once-removed
- Mark Eidem – first-cousin once-removed (his mother was an Oakley)
- David Eidem (Mark Eidem's son) – first-cousin twice-removed
- Stephen Slane – second-cousin (his mother was a Burks)
- Brittany Bunce – first-cousin twice-removed (her mother was an Oakley)



I then have thirty-seven DNA matches that are considered "Extended Family". Fourth on this list is Alan Olstein:

Burks Oakley's DNA Matches

List Map

Filter by: Unviewed Common ancestors [Search](#) | [Sort](#) v


Extended Family

 **Alan Olstein** 2nd – 3rd Cousin
149 cM | 2% shared DNA  No Trees

Alan and I share 149 cM of DNA. And I have absolutely no idea who he is! This narrative is about how I finally figured out how Alan and I are related.

The Search for Alan Olstein

Based solely on the size of our DNA match, software on the Ancestry.com website predicts that Alan Olstein and I have a 47% chance of being second-cousins once-removed (or equivalent) and a 41% chance of being second-cousins (or equivalent):



You and Alan Olstein

Shared DNA: **149 cM** across **10 segments**
Unweighted shared DNA: **149 cM**
Longest segment: **51 cM**

Possible DNA relationships

This table shows the percentage of the time people sharing 149 cM have the following relationships:

Percent	Relationship
47%	2nd cousin 1x removed
	Half 2nd cousin
	1st cousin 3x removed
	Half 1st cousin 2x removed
41%	2nd cousin
	1st cousin 2x removed
	Half 1st cousin 1x removed
	Half great-grandaunt/granduncle
	Half great-grandniece/grandnephew

I view these percentages as about equal – so take your pick. Second-cousins share great-grandparents. In this case, a second-cousin once-removed would mean that the DNA match was between a person and a child of his/her second-cousin.

I looked at my DNA match with Alan, and the first thing that hit me was that he doesn't have a family tree on the Ancestry.com website:

No Trees

Alan Olstein hasn't built a searchable tree.

Alan Olstein hasn't built a searchable tree yet, but your DNA results show you are related. Comparing trees is one way to find out how.

Darn! How am I going to be able to figure out who he is and how we are related?

I went on to look at our “Shared DNA Matches” – that is, the set of people with whom Alan and I both have DNA matches. I knew that I could use this information to narrow down our potential common ancestors. In order to be included on this list, the DNA match between the two people must be at least 20 cM in size.

Here is a list of the Shared DNA Matches that I have with Alan Olstein, from my largest to smallest DNA matches:



You and Alan Olstein

2nd – 3rd Cousin

2% shared DNA: 149 cM across 10 segments

Trees Ethnicity Shared Matches

Filter by:

Unviewed

Common ancestors

Search | Sort

Parent/Child

	Amy Oakley	Parent/Child 3,455 cM 50% shared DNA	Public linked tree 2,106 People Common ancestor
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Close Family

	PTB Larson	1st – 2nd Cousin 964 cM 14% shared DNA	Public linked tree 141 People Common ancestor
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	Stuart Eck	1st – 2nd Cousin 917 cM 13% shared DNA	Public linked tree 135 People Common ancestor
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	Susan Baker	1st – 2nd Cousin 881 cM 13% shared DNA	Public linked tree 423 People Common ancestor
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	Annmarie Brors...	1st – 2nd Cousin 793 cM 11% shared DNA	Public linked tree 423 People Common ancestor
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	jessicalynn_eck	1st – 2nd Cousin 571 cM 8% shared DNA	Unlinked Tree
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	Robert Baker	1st – 2nd Cousin 440 cM 6% shared DNA	No Trees
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	L.M. Managed by Kmeier5..	1st – 2nd Cousin 436 cM 6% shared DNA	Public linked tree 18,238 People Common ancestor
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Well, this certainly simplifies things. This list includes my Swedish-American Brorström first-cousins and their children. All seven of the individuals in the “Close Family” category are descendants of my mother’s older brother, Paul Thure Brorström Jr. (1913-2001). My DNA matches with the individuals in the “Close Family” category range from 436 cM to 964 cM.

The list of Shared DNA Matches continues with the “Extended Family” category:

Extended Family		
	wceder 2nd – 3rd Cousin 193 cM 3% shared DNA	Public linked tree 6 People Common ancestor
	Kendall Perks 2nd – 3rd Cousin 135 cM 2% shared DNA	Public linked tree 624 People Common ancestor
	Stanley Church 2nd – 3rd Cousin 100 cM 1% shared DNA	Unlinked Tree
	Jamie Watson-Chatelain-McG... 3rd – 4th Cousin 74 cM 1% shared DNA	Public linked tree 9 People Common ancestor
	Peterhorton58 3rd – 4th Cousin 70 cM 1% shared DNA	Public linked tree 15 People Common ancestor
	Rochelle Abrah... 4th – 6th Cousin 38 cM < 1% shared DNA	Unlinked Tree
	Deborah Schule 4th – 6th Cousin 34 cM < 1% shared DNA	Unlinked Tree
	Birgit Tesch 4th – 6th Cousin 30 cM < 1% shared DNA	Unlinked Tree
	Brian Abraham 4th – 6th Cousin 24 cM < 1% shared DNA	Public linked tree 4 People
	Jason Abraham 4th – 6th Cousin 23 cM < 1% shared DNA	No Trees

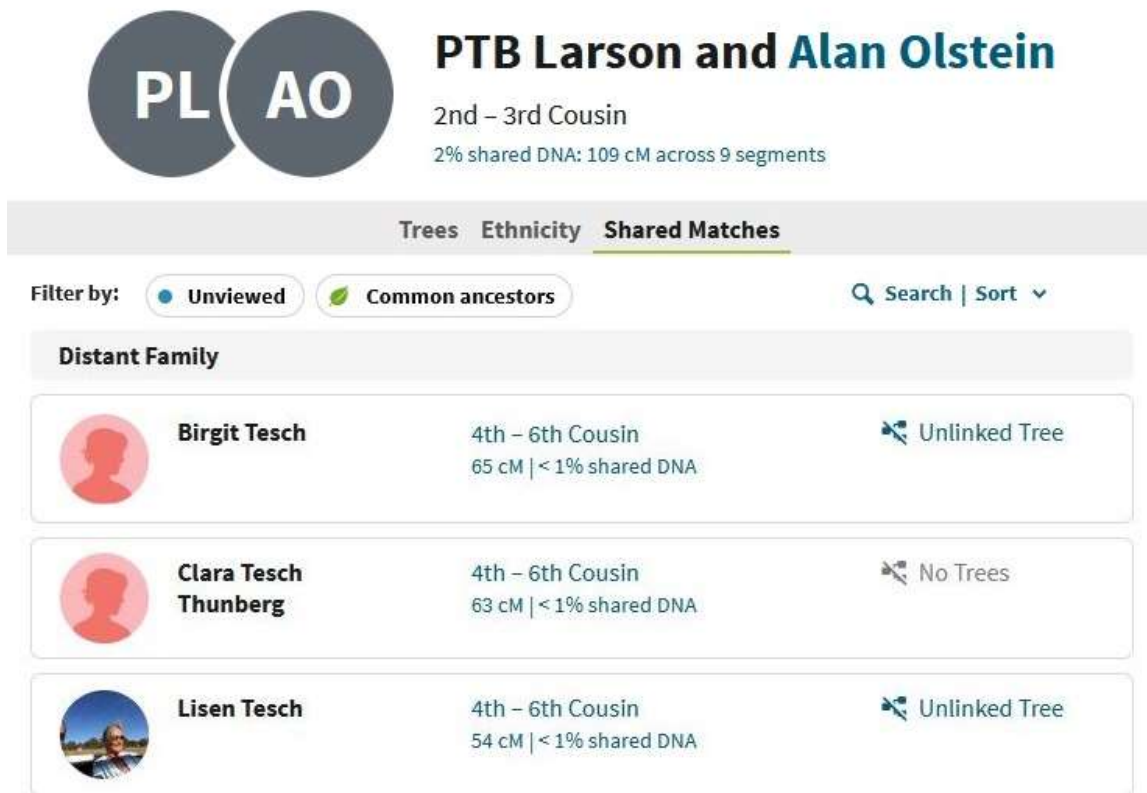
The individuals in this category include a number of **Cederholm** descendants. Based on DNA evidence, I have concluded that the biological father of Gustaf Göran Cederholm, who was born out of wedlock in Sweden in 1841, was Malte Brorström (1816-1877). Malte was my second-great grandfather. The Cederholm descendants were detailed in a previous narrative:

<http://www.burksoakley.com/SwedishGenealogy/CederholmRelationship.pdf>

As far as I am concerned, a DNA match with a Cederholm descendant is just as helpful as a DNA match with a Brorström descendant (they are one in the same). Shared DNA matches in the “Extended Family” category also include Peter Horton, whose maternal grandfather was Paulus Brorström (1859-1932), and Birgit Tesch (née Brorström), whose great-grandfather was Malte Brorström. Birgit is a Swede who lives in the Stockholm area.

I also looked at the DNA match that my first-cousin Peter Larson (born Brorström) has with Alan Olstein. In their “Shared DNA Matches” section, I found

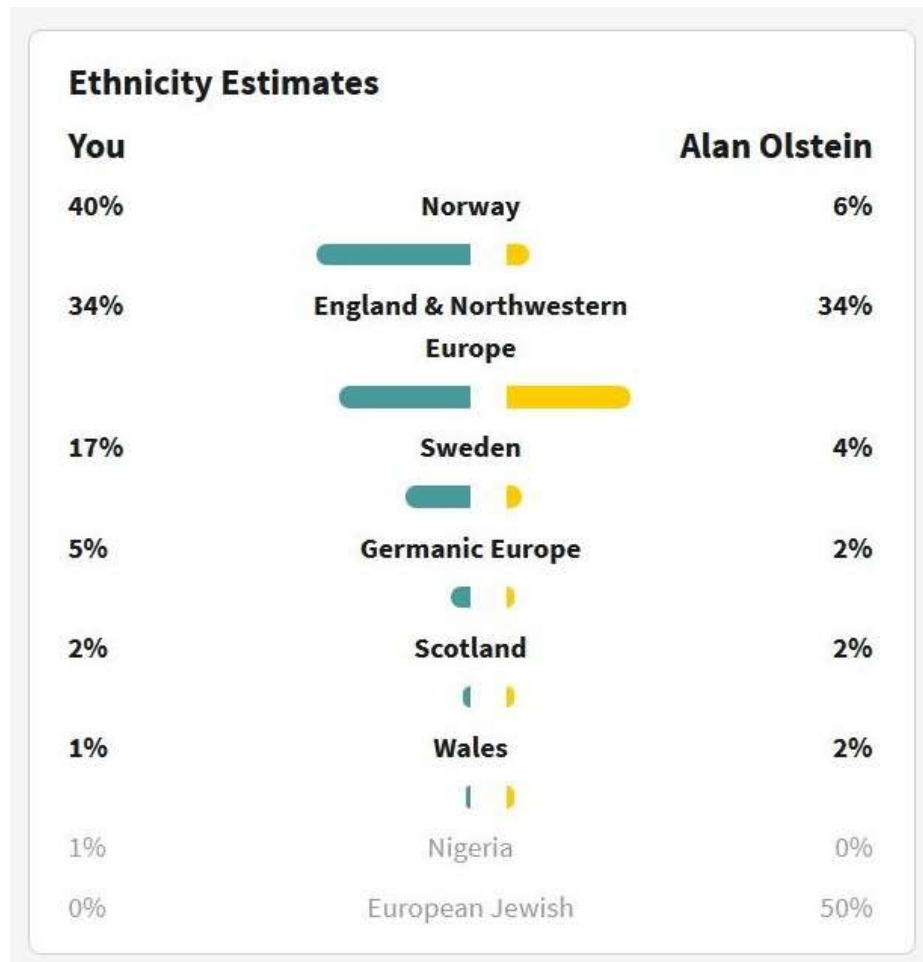
that they both have DNA matches with Birgit Tesch's daughters, Clara Tesch Thunberg and Lisen Tesch:



Clara and Lisen are Swedes who live in the Stockholm area.

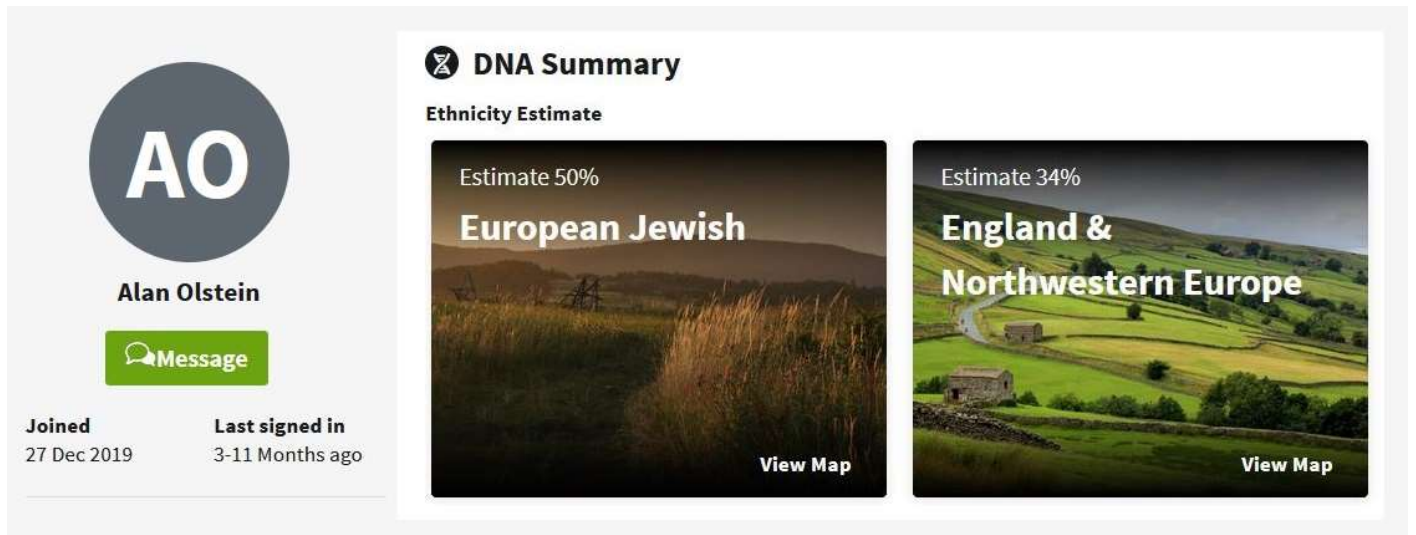
Based on the overwhelming number of DNA matches that Alan Olstein has with Brorström family members, I conclude that he has to be a Brorström relative.

I next looked at Alan's "Ethnicity Estimates", which are shown in the following panel:



Alan's ethnicity is estimated to be 6% Norwegian and 4% Swedish. But what really stands out is that Alan is estimated to be 50% European Jewish. I wasn't aware of a branch of the Brorström family tree with significant Jewish ancestry (but I was quite ill-informed).

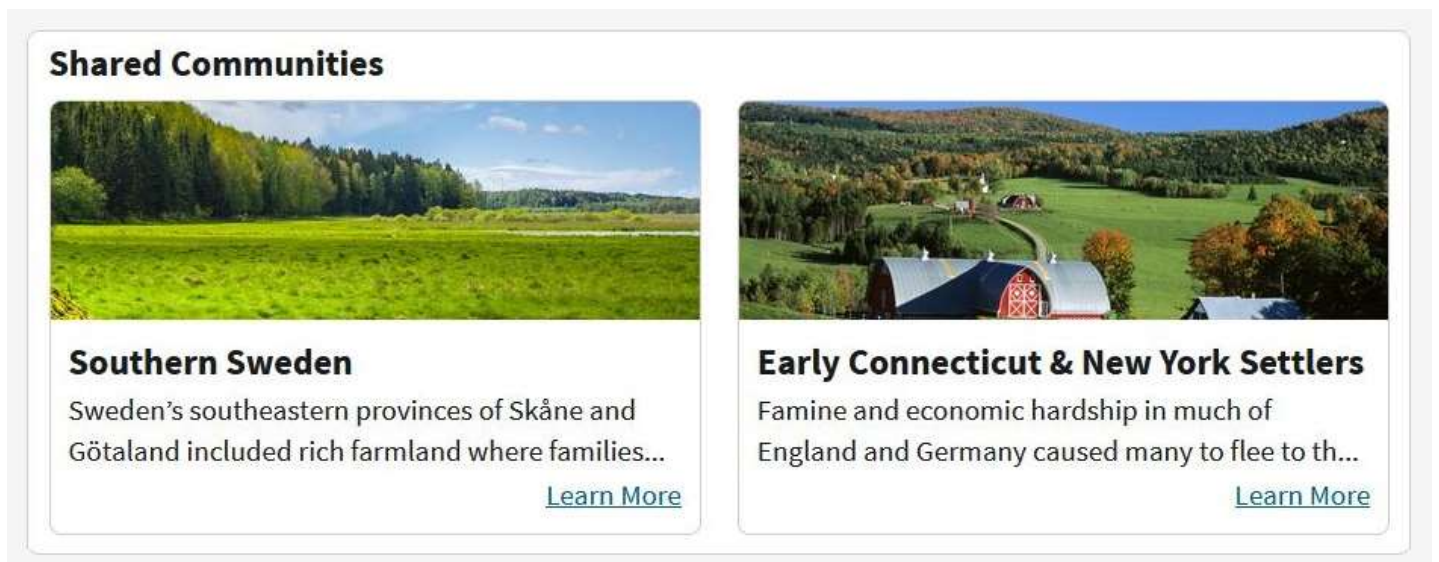
Here is more about Alan's ethnicity estimate:



The screenshot shows Alan Olstein's AncestryDNA profile. On the left, there is a circular profile picture with the initials 'AO' and the name 'Alan Olstein'. Below the name is a green 'Message' button. To the right of the profile picture, it says 'Joined 27 Dec 2019' and 'Last signed in 3-11 Months ago'. The main section is titled 'DNA Summary' and 'Ethnicity Estimate'. It features two large cards: one for 'European Jewish' at 50% and another for 'England & Northwestern Europe' at 34%. Each card has a 'View Map' button at the bottom right.

His largest ethnicity (50%) is European Jewish.

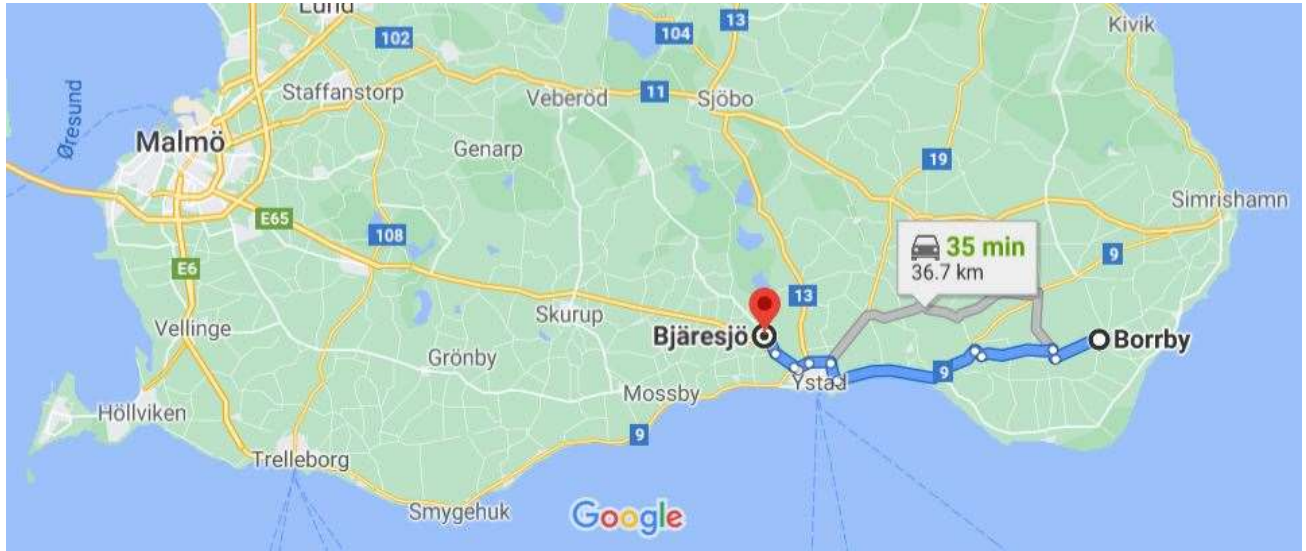
I looked at my daughter Amy's DNA match with Alan Olstein, and in their "Ethnicity Estimates" section, Ancestry.com listed their "Shared Communities":



The screenshot shows the 'Shared Communities' section. It has two cards. The first card is titled 'Southern Sweden' and features a landscape image of a green field and forest. The text below the image says 'Sweden's southeastern provinces of Skåne and Götaland included rich farmland where families...' and has a 'Learn More' link. The second card is titled 'Early Connecticut & New York Settlers' and features a landscape image of a red barn and rolling hills. The text below the image says 'Famine and economic hardship in much of England and Germany caused many to flee to th...' and has a 'Learn More' link.

I'm impressed that the software on Ancestry.com could narrow down their match to "Southern Sweden" – Malte Brorström lived his entire life in Skåne (the southern-most county in Sweden). He was born in Bjäresjö (just a few miles northwest of Ystad). He is buried in the church cemetery in Borrby. And you can't get more "Southern Sweden" than that!

Here is a Google map showing the locations of Bjäresjö, Ystad, and Borrby:



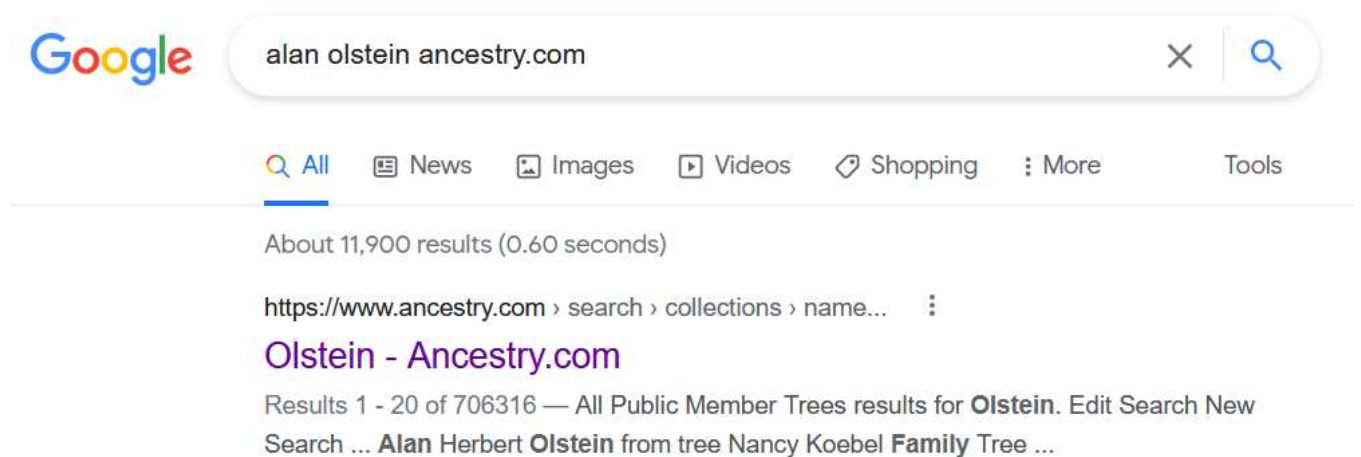
Alan Olstein also appears in the “Early Connecticut & New York Settlers” community. Paulus Brorström immigrated to New York in 1882; I’m not sure that this counts as an “early” settler.

I sent several messages to Alan Olstein using the message system on the Ancestry.com website, but he didn’t respond. In all fairness, his profile on Ancestry.com indicates that he last signed in 3-11 months ago, so it doesn't look like he is very active on this site, and my guess is that he didn’t even see my messages.

My last message included “Do you know anything about your Swedish ancestors? Did you have ancestors who lived in the New York City area in the 1880’s or 1890’s?” I had a hunch that Paulus Brorström (who immigrated to New York in 1882) would be a key figure in figuring out how Alan and I are related.

At this point, I didn’t see a path forward. Alan doesn’t have a family tree, and since he is living, his name doesn’t appear in other trees on the Ancestry.com website.

Out of frustration, I Googled “alan olstein ancestry.com” (no quotes). Here is the top search result:



This search found a man named Alan Herbert Olstein in the “Nancy Koebel Family Tree”. I clicked on this link and learned that Alan Herbert Olstein is found in two public trees:

All Public Member Trees results for Olstein

Alan Herbert Olstein found in 2 public trees

[View all](#)

Alan Herbert Olstein from tree Nancy Koebel Family Tree

Birth	19 Jan 1929 New York City, New York, USA	Father	Harry Olstein (1899-1966)
Residence	1947 Huntington, Suffolk, New York, USA	Mother	Sally Barkan (1902-1948)
Marriage	1966 New York City, New York, USA	Spouse	Eunice G Townsend (1928-2003)
Death	15 Nov 2017 Boynton Beach, Palm Beach, Florida, USA		

2331 People 9 Records 9 Sources

OMG! Alan Herbert Olstein lived in Huntington, New York – in Suffolk County on the north shore of Long Island. And his wife was Eunice G. Townsend (1928-2003). And there is a Townsend branch of the Brorström family with members who live in that general area!!!

Here is the entry for Alan Herbert Olstein (1929-2017) from the “Nancy Koebel Family Tree”:

Nancy Koebel Family T... Tree search Nancy Koebel

Alan Herbert Olstein

BIRTH 19 JAN 1929 • New York City, New York, USA
DEATH 15 NOV 2017 • Boynton Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, United States of America

Family

Parents

Harry Olstein
1899–1966

Sally Barkan
1902–1948

Spouse & Children

Eunice G Townsend
1928–2003

Richard G. Olstein
1956–2008

Private

Private

Private

Alan and his wife Eunice Townsend had five sons, and four of them are living.

Here is the entry for Eunice G. Townsend (1928-2003) from the “Nancy Koebel Family Tree”:

Nancy Koebel Family T... Tree search Nancy Koebel

Eunice G Townsend
 BIRTH 4 DEC 1928 • Huntington Station, New York
 DEATH 25 JUL 2003 • Centerport, Suffolk, New York, USA

Family

Parents

- Unknown father
- Unknown mother

Spouse & Children

- Alan Herbert Olstein 1929-2017
- Richard G. Olstein 1956-2008
- Private
- Private
- Private

Eunice Townsend died in Centerport, New York. A few years ago, I visited my second-cousin William “Bill” Townsend Perks (born 1951) at his home in Centerport. I also met his daughter Kendall Perks on that visit – recall that I have a DNA match with her. Bill Perks’ mother was Alice Bernice Townsend (1920-2011) and his maternal grandmother was Alice Bernhardine Brorström (1889-1972).

And now we have another Townsend in Centerport. This has to be the Brorström connection that I’ve been seeking!

I looked for other profiles of Eunice G. Townsend on the Ancestry.com website. She appears in five trees:

All Family Trees results for Eunice G Townsend Olstein

Eunice Grace Townsend found in 5 trees [View all](#)

Eunice Grace Townsend from tree Sieber Clark Verified

Birth	4 Dec 1928 Huntington Station, Suffolk, New York, USA	Father	Richard Edwin Townsend (1884-1950)
Residence	1940 Huntington, Suffolk, New York, USA	Mother	Alice B. C. Brorstrom (1889-1972)
Death	25 Jul 2003		

2000 People 4 Records 4 Sources

And look! Her mother was Alice Bernhardine Christina Brorström!

I did a Google search to find Eunice Townsend’s obituary. It is on the *Miami Herald* website at:

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/herald/name/eunice-olstein-obituary?pid=1205324>

Here is an excerpt:

Eunice Townsend Olstein

OLSTEIN EUNICE TOWNSEND passed away in her sleep in the early hours of July 25, 2003. She was born Eunice Grace Townsend on December 4, 1928 in Huntington, NY to Richard Edwin Townsend and Alice Brorstrom Townsend. Eunice lived most of her life in her beloved Centerport and always had a deep emotional connection with its lovely waters. She moved to Pembroke Pines, Florida five years ago where she was very comfortable in her lakeside condominium. Eunice raised 5 sons, had a very successful sales career at WGSM radio in Huntington and worked for Newsday for 10 years until her retirement. She was predeceased by her parents and a brother, Edwin Daniel Townsend. Eunice is survived by her children and grandchildren, Alan Olstein of Hollywood, FL and his children, Chase and Toni Olstein of Hamden, MA; Stephen Olstein and his wife, Linda Morel of Lyme, CT; and their children, Sydney Olstein of Lyme, CT; William Porter of Denver, CO; and Elizabeth Porter of Arlington, VA;

Note that this obituary mentions her five sons, the eldest being Alan Olstein. Nailed it!

I pulled out a blank piece of paper and started to put together a chart showing how Alan and I are related (yes, I still remember how to use pen and paper). I wanted to use the information that I have about the Brorström family, rather than depend on random entries on the Ancestry.com website. On my home computer, I have a program called RootsMagic, and I have my entire family tree in a RootsMagic database.

I opened the RootsMagic program and I went to the entry for Paulus Brorström (1859-1932) and his wife Bernhardine Wennström (1855-1932):

The screenshot shows the RootsMagic 6 software interface. The main window displays the profile of Paulus Bernhard Jacob Brorström, born 19 Apr 1859 in Borrbj, Kristianstad, Sweden, and died 17 Apr 1932 in Great Neck, Long Island, New York. His parents are listed as Malte Joachim August Brorström and Mathilda Augusta Billing. His wife is Bernhardine Wennström, born 16 Apr 1855 in Våxtorp, Halland, Sweden, and died 23 Mar 1932 in New York, New York. The software also displays a list of children:

Children	Sex	Born	Birth Place	Died	Death Place	Relation
1 Malte Bernhard Brorström	M	21 Oct 1882	New York, New York	25 Jan 1946		birth
2 Paul Thure Brorström	M	18 Oct 1884	Poughkeepsie, NY	13 May 1932	Pleasantville, NY	birth
3 Ebba Maria Cecilia Brorström	F	6 Jan 1887	Poughkeepsie, NY	4 Apr 1967	Marcy, Oneida, New York	birth
4 Alice Bernhardine Christina Brorström	F	9 Feb 1889	Poughkeepsie, NY	14 Nov 1972		birth
5 Lillian Alma Mathilda "Lily" Brorström	F	1 May 1891	Jersey City, New Jersey	19 Sep 1965	Boston, Massachusetts	birth
6 Grace Anna Elisabeth Brorström	F	3 Jul 1893		24 Jun 1969		birth
7 Pauline Hanna Beata "Polly" Brorström	F	12 Jul 1897	Hyde Park, Dutchess, New York, United States	2 Jul 1986	Riverside, California	birth

Paulus and Berhardine had two sons and five daughters. Their fourth child was Alice Bernhardine Christina Brorström (1889-1972).

Moving on to Alice's family, her husband was Richard Edwin Townsend Sr. (1884-1950):

The screenshot shows the RootsMagic 6 software interface. The main window displays the family tree for Alice Bernhardine Christina Brorström and Richard Edwin Townsend Sr. The interface includes a menu bar (File, Edit, Lists, Add, View, Search, Reports, Tools, Internet, Window, Help) and a toolbar. The main window has tabs for Pedigree, Family, Descendants, People, WebSearch, and Timeline. The Family tab is active, showing the parents' information and a list of their six children.

Alice Bernhardine Christina Brorström
Spouses: 1 b: 9 Feb 1889 in Poughkeepsie, NY
Parents: 1 m: 25 Nov 1916 (age 27)
 d: 14 Nov 1972 (age 83)

Richard Edwin Townsend Sr.
b: Jun 1884
m: 25 Nov 1916
d: Jun 1950

Alice Bernhardine Christina Brorström
b: 9 Feb 1889, Poughkeepsie, NY
d: 14 Nov 1972

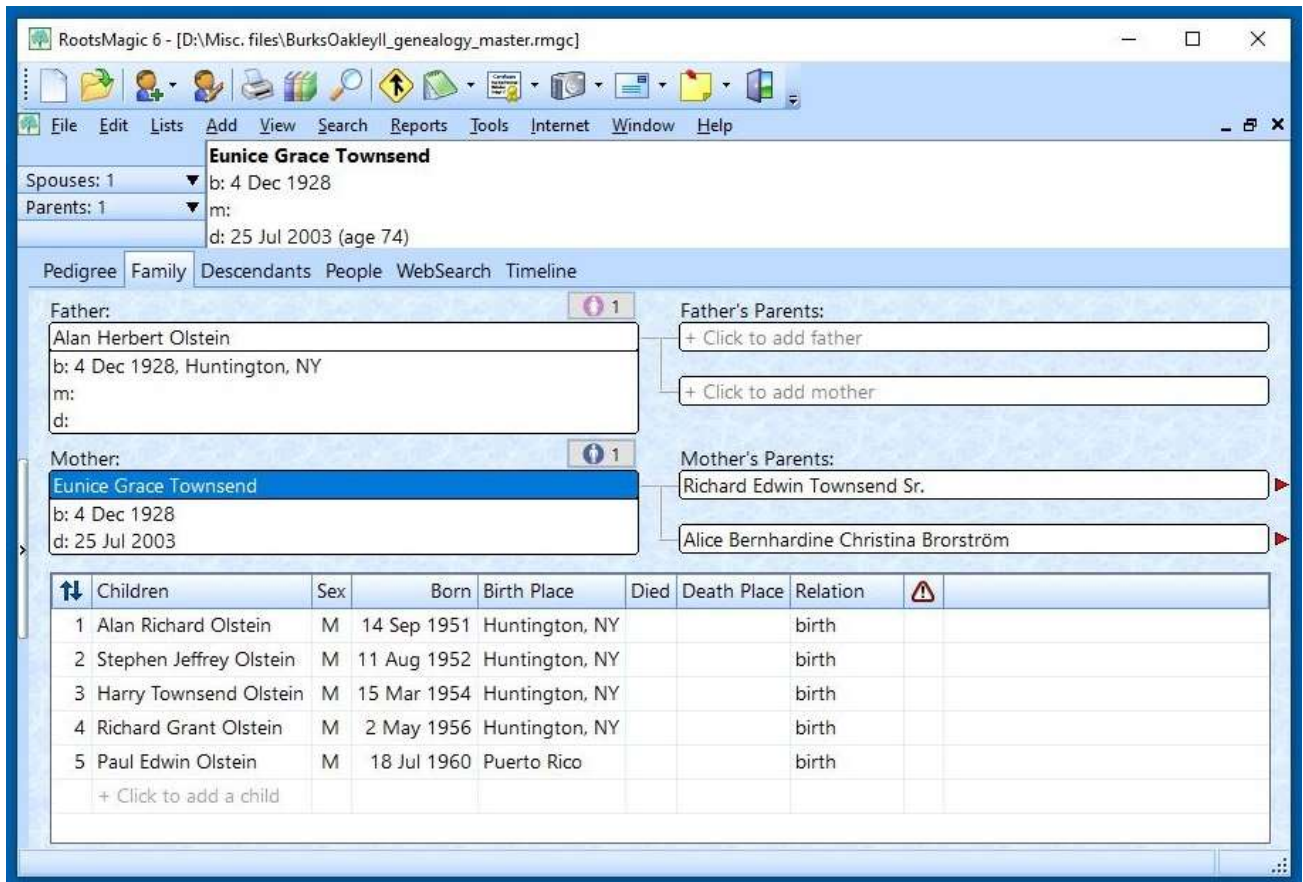
Children	Sex	Born	Birth Place	Died	Death Place	Relation
1 Richard Edwin Townsend Jr.	M	7 Dec 1917		18 Jan 2009	King Ferry, NY	birth
2 Paul Brorstrom Townsend	M	22 Feb 1919	Port Washington, New York	30 Apr 2005	Bellport, Suffolk, New York	birth
3 Alice BERNICE Townsend	F	22 Dec 1920	Port Washington, New York	18 Sep 2011		birth
4 Edwin Daniel Townsend	M	25 Aug 1922	Port Washington, New York	7 Apr 1975		birth
5 Daniel Grant Townsend	M	2 Apr 1927		2 Apr 1927		birth
6 Eunice Grace Townsend	F	4 Dec 1928		25 Jul 2003		birth

Alice and Richard had six children, and their youngest was Eunice Grace Townsend (1928-2003). I was amazed to see all of this in my RootsMagic database. My mother must have updated my father's family tree (which was on a long roll of blueprint paper) with all this information. My father died in 1969, and some of the dates in this part of the tree are much later than that. And my guess is that my cousin Hal Oakley copied all of this information into a GEDcom file, which I then imported into RootsMagic.

At any rate, I then looked at Eunice Grace Townsend's family – and what do you think I found?

Any guesses?

The suspense is killing me.....



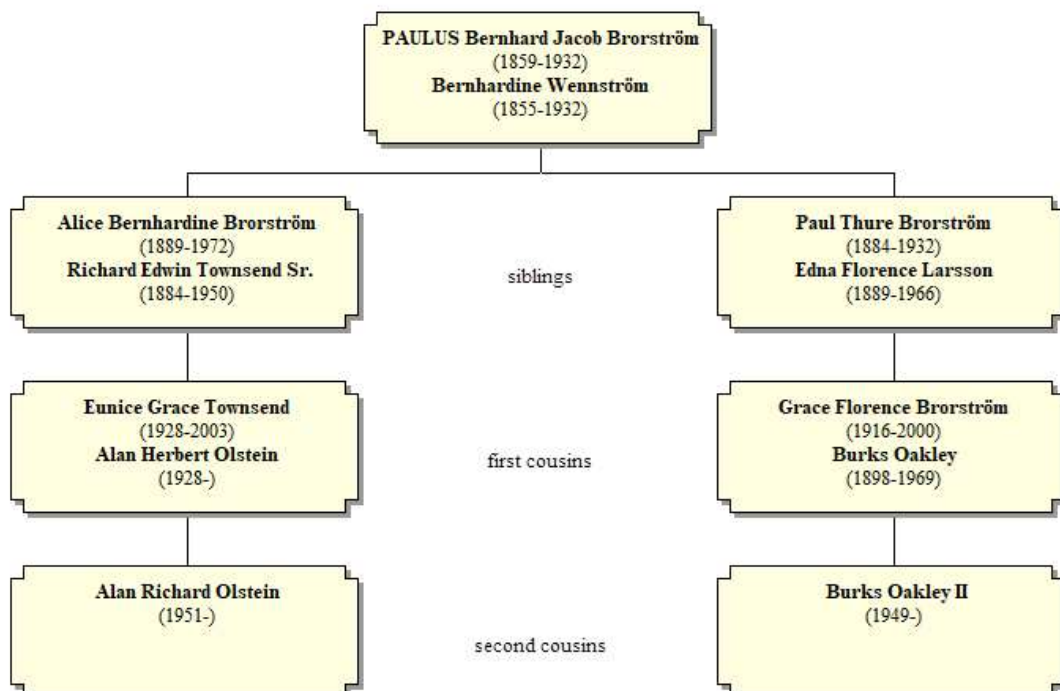
OMG!! This entry shows that Eunice Grace Townsend was married to Alan Herbert Olstein (born 1928), and that they had five sons – the oldest of whom was Alan Richard Olstein (born 1951).

My relationship with Alan Olstein was right there all this time – hiding in plain sight!! It was already in a database on my home computer!

Relationship Charts

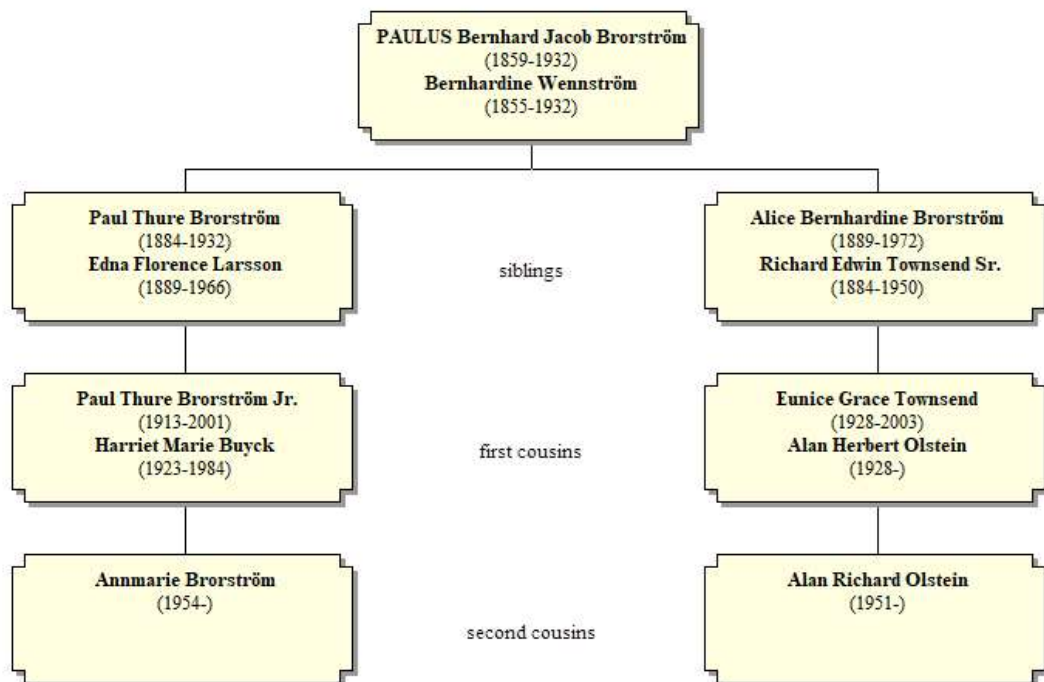
Once I realized that I already had the information about how Alan Olstein and I are related in my RootsMagic database, that was the end of my pen-and-paper relationship chart.

Here is a chart showing how Alan and I are related:

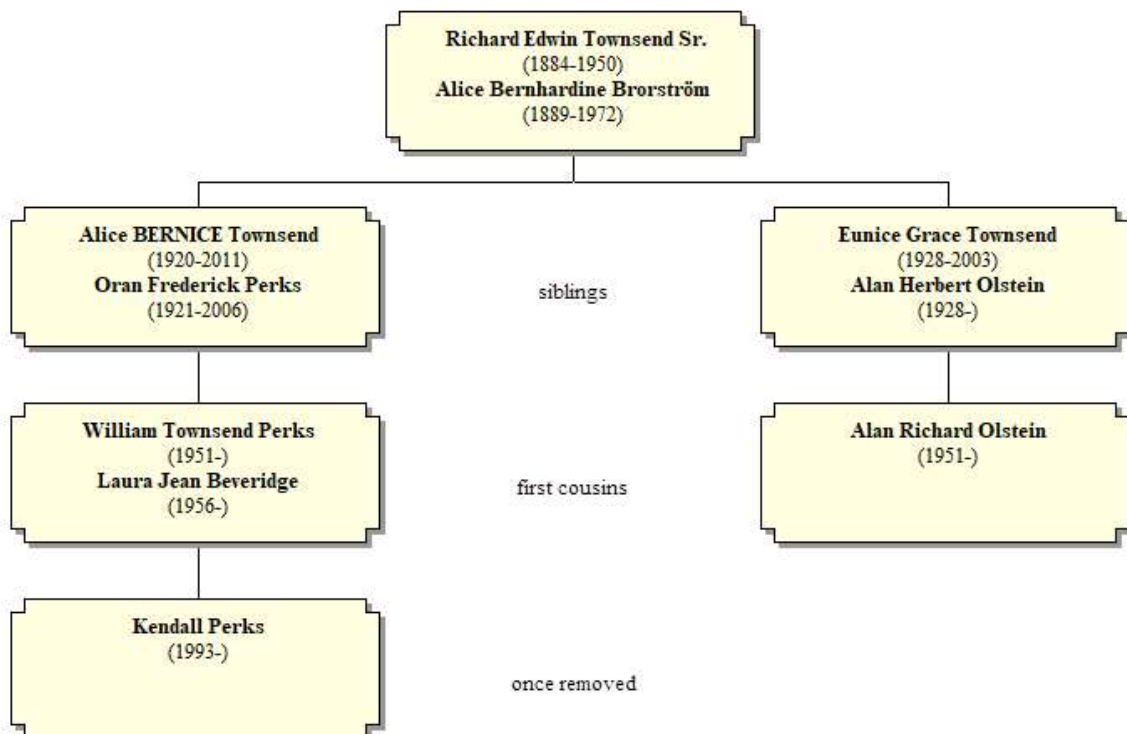


Alan and I are second-cousins, and we both are descended from Paulus Brorström and his wife Bernhardine Wennström. Recall that this couple were Swedes who immigrated to America in 1882. Based on the size of my DNA match with Alan, software on Ancestry.com predicted that we could be second-cousins once-removed (47% chance) or second-cousins (41% chance). Amazing how this turned out to be the case.

Of course, my Swedish-American Brorström first-cousins have the same relationship with Alan that I do. Here is the relationship chart for Annmarie (although the chart would be exactly the same for Annmarie's siblings Peter, Susan, Beth, and Stuart):

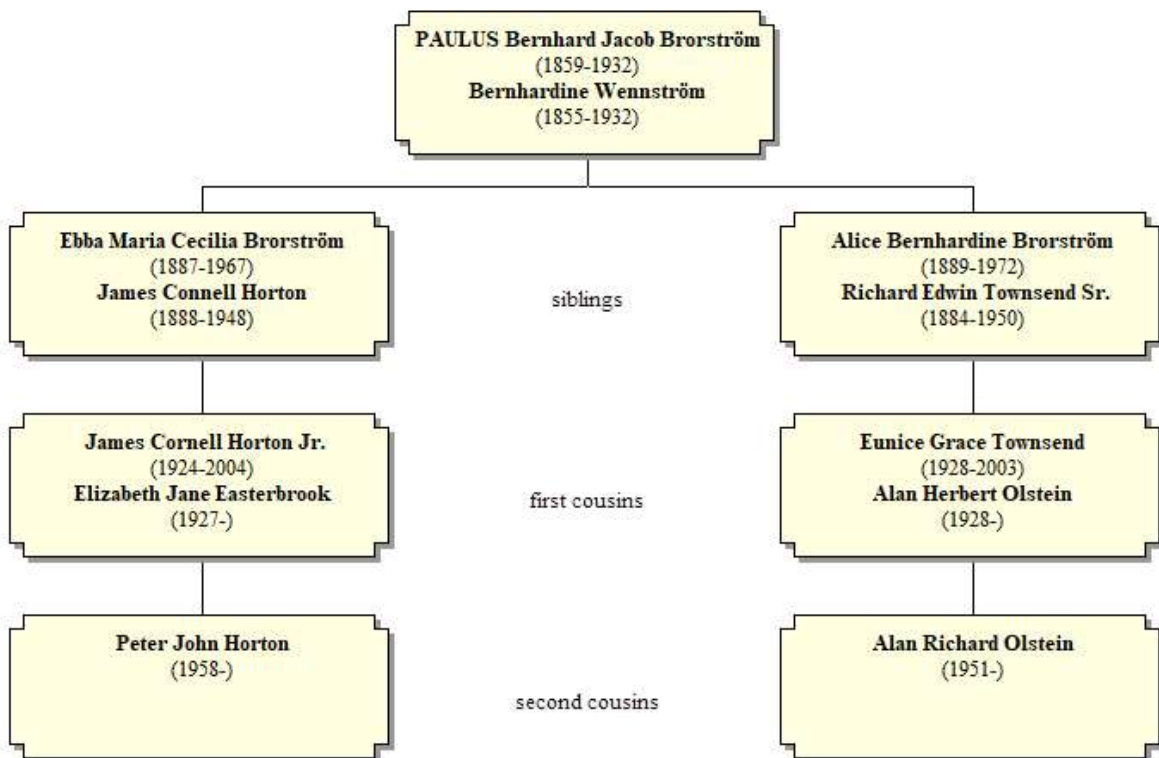


I mentioned a number of other people in this narrative, and I thought I should show how a number of them are related to Alan Olstein. Here first is Kendall Perks:



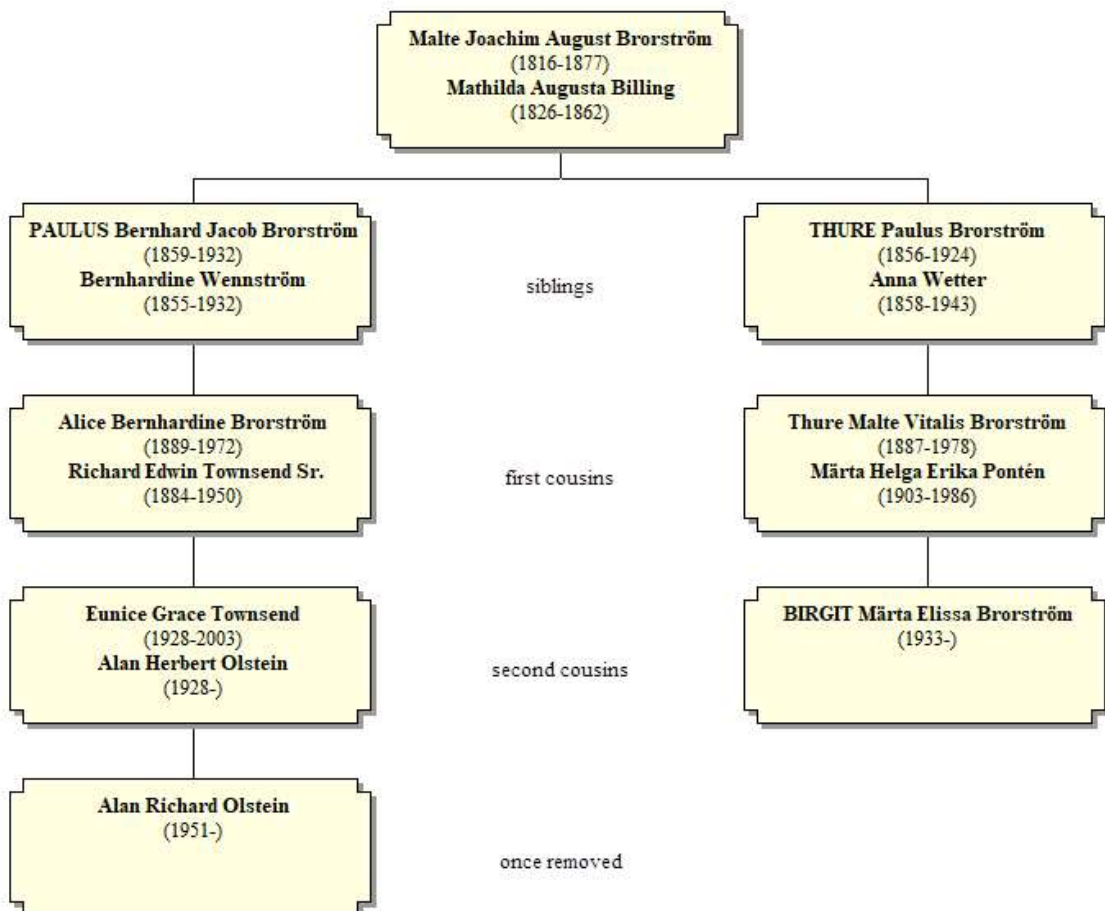
Kendall and Alan are first-cousins once-removed. My guess is that they have a rather large DNA match.

Next is Peter Horton:



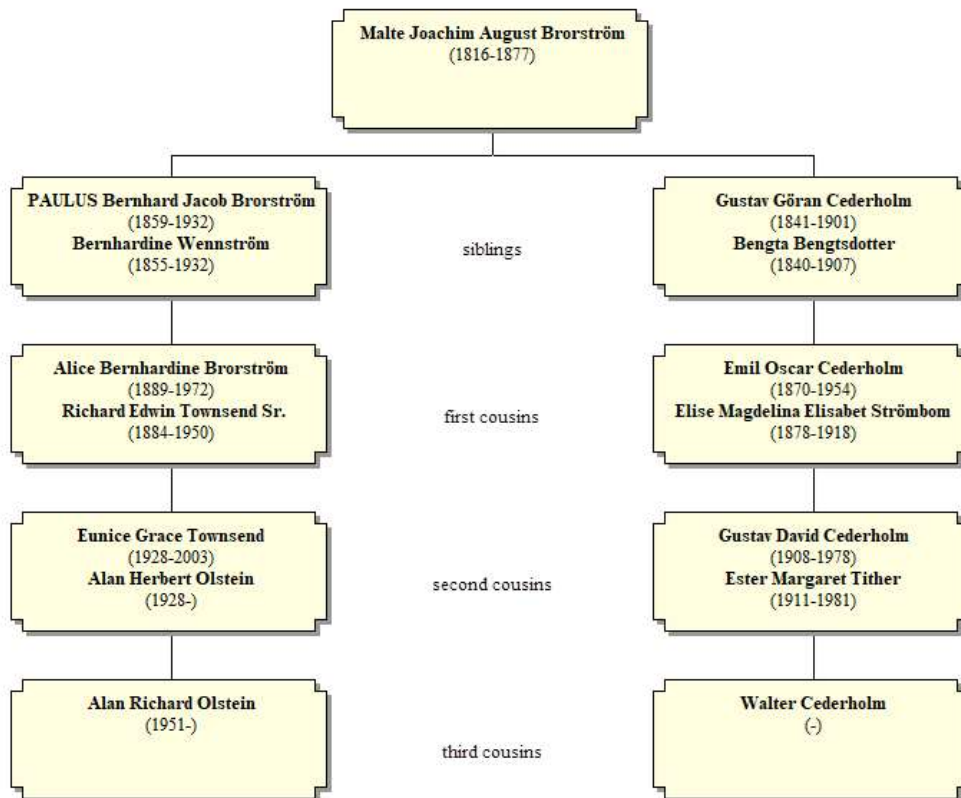
Peter and Alan are second-cousins, just like Alan and I are second-cousins, and just like Peter and I are second-cousins.

Here is Birgit Tesch (née Brorström):



Birgit and Alan are second-cousins once-removed.

Here is Walter Cederholm:



Alan and Walter are third-cousins.

One big happy DNA family!

Summary

Alan Olstein and I have a 149 cM DNA match, and this is my seventeenth-largest DNA match on the Ancestry.com website. In this narrative, I described the process that I went through to figure out how Alan Olstein and I are related, since Alan doesn't have a family tree on the Ancestry.com website.

Alan and I have "Shared DNA Matches" with a large number of my Brorström relatives, both in the USA and in Sweden, so he has to be a Brorström descendant.

I finally learned that Alan's mother was Eunice Grace Townsend and his maternal grandmother was Alice Bernhardine Brorström. And Alice was a daughter of Paulus Brorström, the Swedish immigrant.

It turns out that all of this information was already in my RootsMagic database on my home computer. Hiding in plain sight!

The DNA matches described in this narrative provide strong support for the genealogical record.

Appendix A

On 23 June 1991, the extended Brorström family held a reunion in Oyster Bay, Long Island, New York. The family published a special edition of a newspaper to commemorate the event. See:

http://www.burksoakley.com/SwedishGenealogy/PaulBrorstromNewspaperSpecial_23Jun91.pdf

The front page of the newspaper included a family photo that was taken on the Golden Wedding Anniversary of Paul Brorström and Bernhardine Wennström (on 6 March 1932). Here is that photo:



Note that Alice Townsend appears in the center of the back row, just over Paulus Brorström's right shoulder. And Alice's daughter Eunice Townsend is the littlest girl sitting in the front row (4th from the right). Eunice grew up to be Alan Olstein's mother.

My mother Grace Brorström is seated at the right of her grandmother Bernhardine (who is holding the bouquet of flowers).

Appendix B

According to several family trees on Ancestry.com, Alan Herbert Olstein's parents were Harry Olstein (1899-1966) and Sallie Barkan (1905-1948).



Harry and Sallie were immigrants from Poland and Russia. My guess (and only a guess) is that Alan Herbert Olstein was 100% European Jewish, which would account for Alan R. Olstein (my DNA match) having an ethnicity estimate of 50% European Jewish.