

Barbara Brosz – A Distant Cousin on the Wennström Side of my Family

by Burks Oakley II
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Introduction

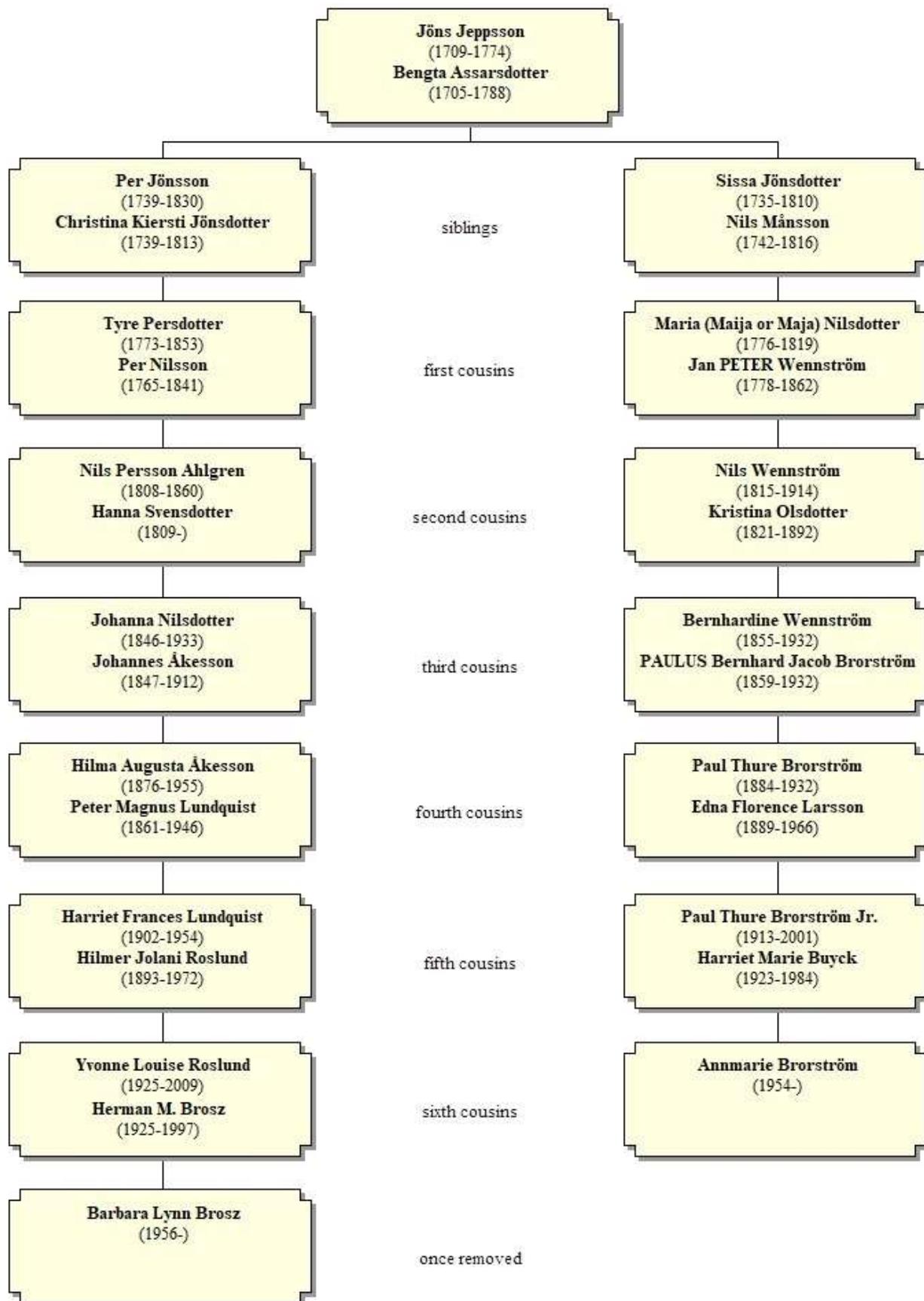
My mother's four grandparents all were Swedes who immigrated to America in the 1880's. In the past few years, I have become very interested in using DNA to find living individuals who are related to me on my mother's side of the family. Through these DNA matches, I hope to confirm my ancestors in my existing family tree, and also to add new branches to it.

To expand the scope of my searches, I have looked for individuals having DNA matches with my Swedish-American cousins, Annmarie Brorström DeMattia, Susan Brorström Baker, and Stuart W. Eck. Their father, Paul Thure Brorström Jr. (1913-2001), was my mother's older brother. My reasoning is that if I find their Swedish ancestors, I also am finding my own.

Barbara Brosz

I am the administrator of Annmarie's DNA profile on the Ancestry.com website. In early November 2017, I received an automated e-mail from Ancestry.com, informing me that Annmarie had a new "Shared Ancestor Hint" with a woman having the username **BBrosz**. If two people (1) have a DNA match and (2) have a common ancestor (or ancestors) in their family trees, Ancestry.com creates a "Shared Ancestor Hint", showing how the two people might be related. Unfortunately, **BBrosz** had a family tree on Ancestry.com that was private, so I couldn't see how she and Annmarie were related. I sent her a message using the Ancestry.com message system, and she responded right away. It turns out that her name is Barbara Brosz and she lives in California. And she gave me access to her family tree.

Barbara and Annmarie are both descended from Jöns Jeppsson (1709-1774) and his wife Bengta Assarsdotter (1705-1788), as shown in the following chart:



The chart on the previous page also shows that Annmarie and Barbara are sixth-cousins once-removed. The Jeppsson-Assarsdotter husband and wife constitute Annmarie and Barbara's Most Recent Common Ancestor (MRCA).

This Jeppsson-Assarsdotter couple were the 2nd-great grandparents of Bernhardine Wennström (1855-1932), who immigrated to America in 1882. Bernhardine was Annmarie's great-grandmother. So the Jeppsson-Assarsdotter couple were Annmarie's 5th-great grandparents. Of course, they also were my 5th-great grandparents.

The MRCA couple appears in "Carinas tree", which is owned by *carahl*:



The screenshot shows a genealogy entry for a couple in a software interface titled "Carinas tree". At the top, there is a search icon, a magnifying glass icon, and a user profile icon labeled "carahl". Below this, there are two entries, each with a silhouette icon and text details:

- Jöns Jeppson**
BIRTH 19 APR 1709 • Långhult, Tåssjö (L)
DEATH 27 NOV 1774 • Långhult, Tåssjö (L), Sweden
- Bengta Assarsdotter**
BIRTH 29 DEC 1705 • Hallagården, Tåssjö (L)
DEATH 17 APR 1788 • Tåssjö, Långhult, Skåne, Sweden

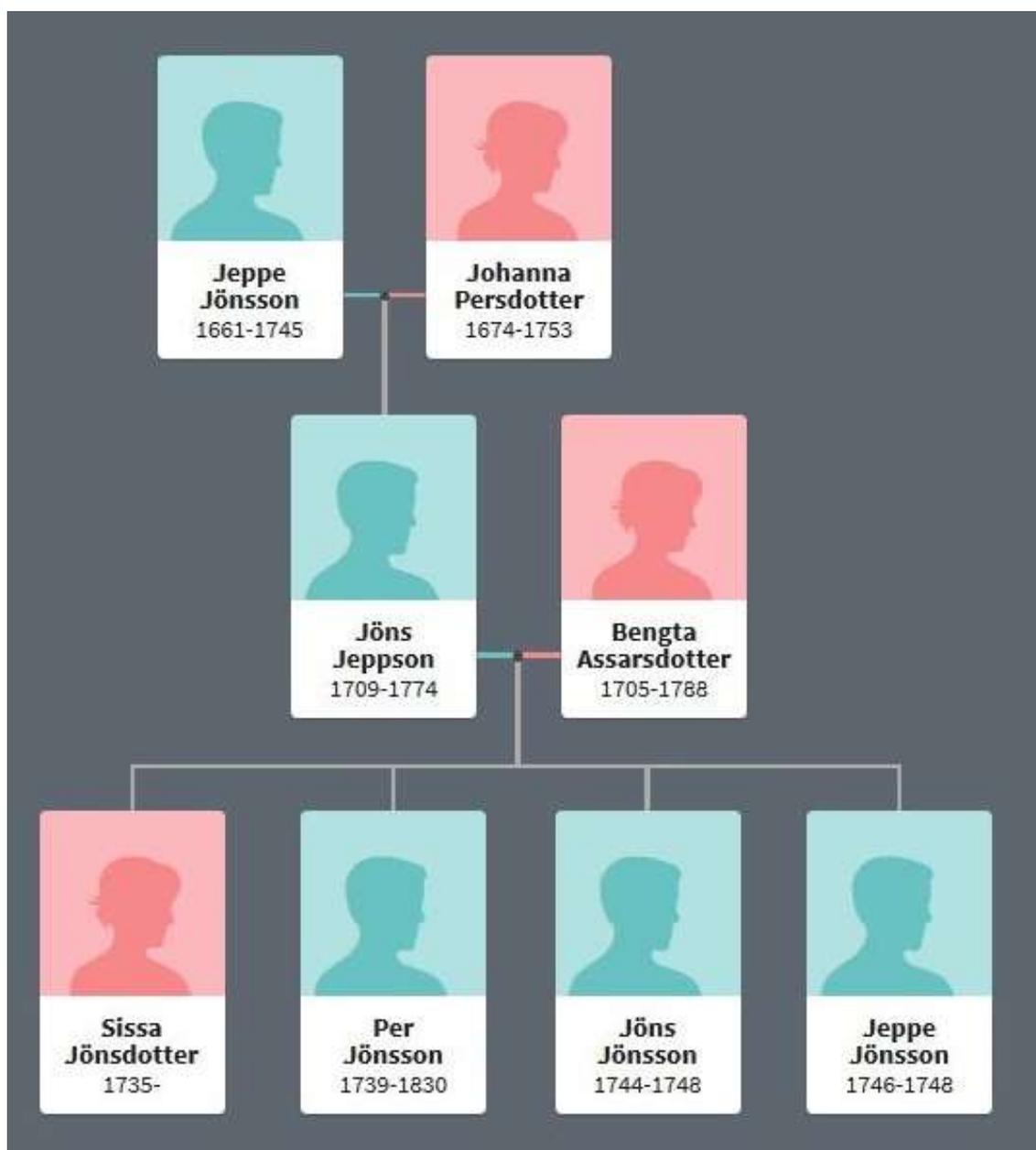
This entry shows that the Jeppsson-Assarsdotter couple lived in Tåssjö, Sweden, which is the town where my 2nd-great grandfather Nils Wennström (1815-1914) was born. Tåssjö is located in northwest Skåne, very close to the border with Halland County. Nils lived much of his life in Menlösa, just over the border into Halland. I still have a number of Wennström cousins living in the area – in Hasslöv, Menlösa, Våxtorp, Laholm, Halmstad, and Hjärnarp.

The Jeppsson-Assarsdotter couple had seven children, as shown in the following screenshot from "Carinas tree":

Children	
	Sissa Jönsdotter 1735-
	Påhl Jönsson 1737-1741
	Per Jönsson 1739-1830
	Påhl Jönsson 1742-1748
	Jöns Jönsson 1744-1748
	Jeppe Jönsson 1746-1748
	Karina Karna* Jönsdot- ter 1748-1830

Anmarie and I are descended from their first child, Sissa Jönsdotter (1735-1810), while Barbara is descended from their third child, Per Jönsson (1739-1830).

As an aside, I have to say that the Swedish patronymic names that were used at that time were incredibly confusing. This family is a great example. It starts with Jeppe Jönsson (1661-1745) and his wife Johanna Persdotter (1674-1753). The male surnames were created by taking the father's first name and adding -son or -sson, while the female surnames were created by taking the father's first name and adding -dotter. So we can imagine that Jeppe's father was named Jöns.



Screenshot from “Carinas tree” on Ancestry.com

Of course, Jeppe Jönsson’s son had the surname Jeppson. Since the son’s first name was Jöns, his name was Jöns Jeppson, and his children had the surname Jönsson or Jönsdotter. Since this family liked the names Jöns and Jeppe so much, they had sons named Jöns Jönsson and Jeppe Jönsson. Oh my – how confusing!!

Specifics about the DNA Match

Annmarie's match with Barbara is 13.6 cM:

[AncestryDNA Home](#) > Member Matches for Annmarie Brorström

  **BBrosz**
Member since 2012, last logged in today

 **Predicted relationship: Distant Cousins**
Possible range: 5th - 8th cousins ([What does this mean?](#))

 Confidence: Moderate 

Amount of Shared DNA
13.6 centimorgans shared across
1 DNA segment

It turns out that Annmarie's sister Susan also has a match with Barbara, which is 13.4 cM in size:

[AncestryDNA Home](#) > Member Matches for Susan Baker

  **BBrosz**
Member since 2012, last logged in today

 **Predicted relationship: Distant Cousins**
Possible range: 5th - 8th cousins ([What does this mean?](#))

 Confidence: Moderate 

Amount of Shared DNA
13.4 centimorgans shared across
1 DNA segment

And their half-brother Stuart Eck also matches Barbara, although his match is somewhat smaller at 7.4 cM:



The screenshot shows the 'Member Matches for Stuart Eck' page on AncestryDNA. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'AncestryDNA Home' and 'Member Matches for Stuart Eck'. Below this is a profile for 'BBrosz', a member since 2012, last logged in today. The predicted relationship is 'Distant Cousins' with a possible range of 5th - 8th cousins. A confidence bar indicates 'Moderate' confidence. A tooltip box displays the 'Amount of Shared DNA' as 7.4 centimorgans shared across 1 DNA segment.

The noted genetic genealogist Blaine Bettinger found that sixth-cousins once-removed (6C1R) average 9 cM, with a range of 0 to 19 cM. The DNA matches that Annmarie, Susan, and Stuart have with Barbara are exactly within that range.

It is worth noting that I do NOT have a DNA match with Barbara that Ancestry.com thinks is significant (typically, a DNA match need to be at least 7 cM in size for Ancestry.com to deem it significant). I wouldn't have found Barbara just using my DNA profile on Ancestry.com – thank goodness that I have access to the DNA profiles of my three Swedish-American cousins.

I have often thought that these small DNA matches, right at the brink of vanishing in the next generation, are the best to find, since they go back the farthest.

I note that the children of Annmarie, Susan, and Stuart do not have a DNA match with Barbara, so in fact, this DNA match is indeed right at the brink of vanishing.

Summary

In this brief narrative, I have described how I learned about Annmarie's Shared Ancestor Hint with Barbara Brosz, and how they both are descended from Jöns Jeppsson (1709-1774) and his wife Bengta Assarsdotter (1705-1788), who lived in Tåssjö, in the northwest part of Skåne. Barbara and Annmarie are sixth-cousins once-removed, and they share 13.6 cM of DNA; this is about the size DNA match that is expected for their 6C1R relationship. And while Barbara also has DNA matches with my Swedish-American cousins Susan and Stuart, she and I don't have a DNA match. Nevertheless, I can claim her as MY sixth-cousin once-removed, as well.