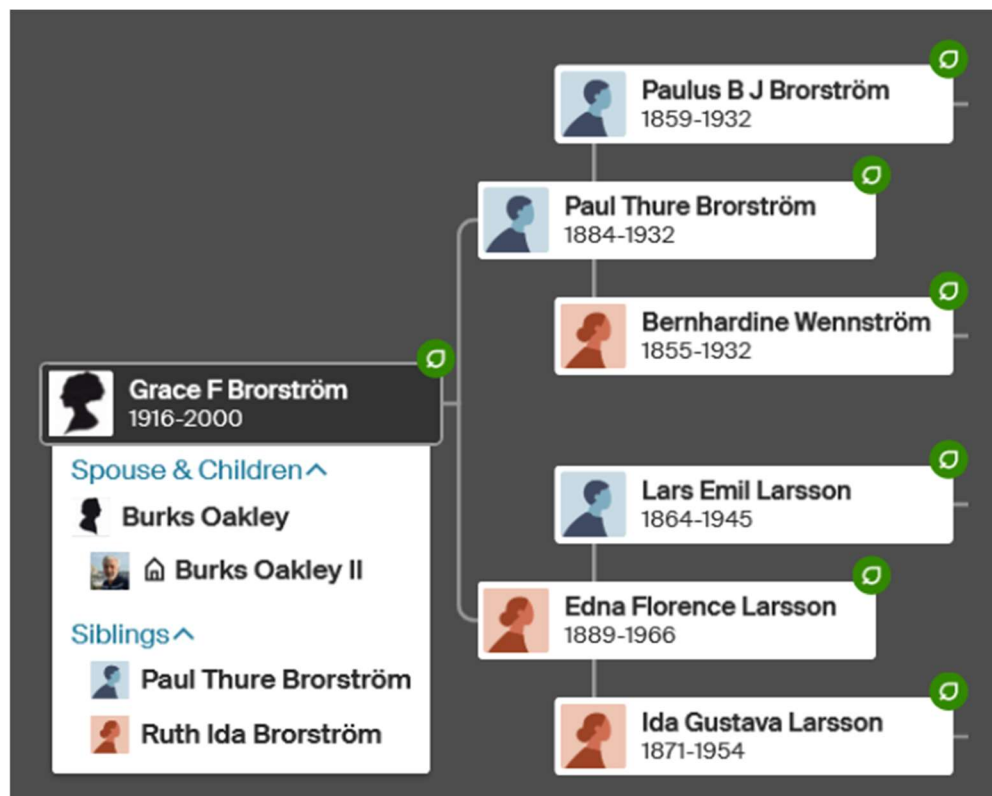


Our Family's New DNA Match with a Swedish-American Relative – Courtney Owens

By Burks Oakley II
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I am interested in genetic genealogy – that is, using DNA to confirm and to expand my family tree. In the past few years, I have become particularly interested in my maternal ancestry. My mother was Grace Florence Brorström (1916-2000). All four of her grandparents were Swedes who immigrated to America in the 1880's. This means that she was 100% Swedish, and in turn, I am 50% Swedish.

Here is the relevant part of my family tree on Ancestry.com, showing my mother's pedigree:



I recently looked at my new DNA matches on the Ancestry.com website. I filtered my matches so that I only saw those matches I had not viewed previously (“unviewed”), and I viewed the list of matches from largest to smallest. My largest unviewed DNA match was with a woman named Courtney Owens:

Burks Oakley's DNA Matches

[All matches](#) [By parent](#) [By ancestor](#) [By location](#)

Filter by: Unviewed Common ancestors Notes Search | Sort

Extended Family

Courtney Owens

2nd – 3rd Cousin
109 cM | 2% shared DNA
Maternal side

Public linked tree
2 People

Courtney and I share 109 cM of DNA, and we could be as close as second- or third-cousins. Wow! This is a close DNA match, and I hadn't heard of Courtney previously.

I next looked at Courtney's family tree on the Ancestry.com website:

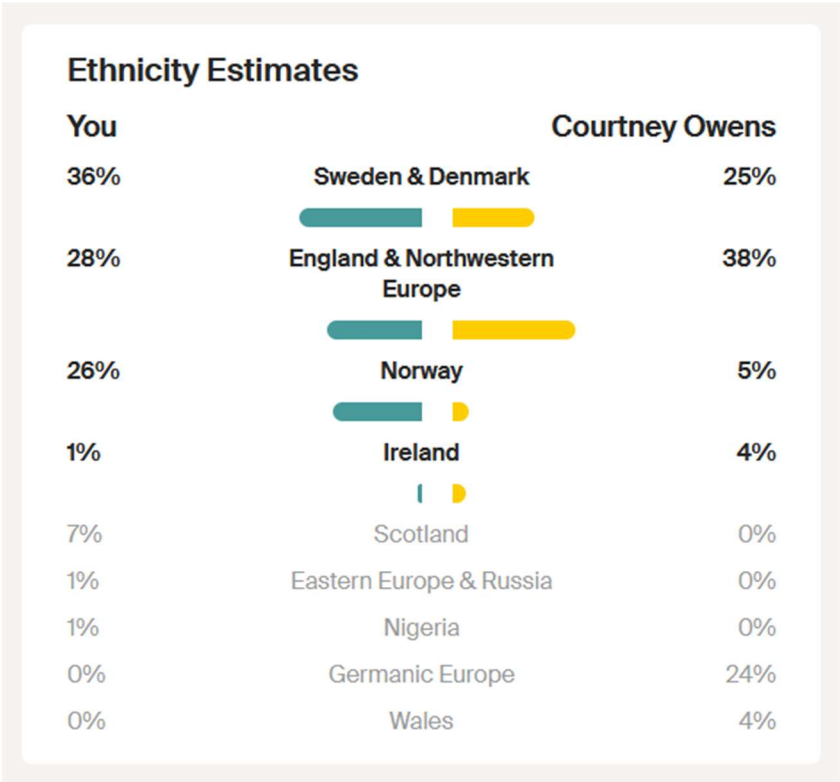
Owens Family Tree

Courtney Owens's Linked Tree 2 People

This is a preview of the public tree linked to Courtney Owens's DNA results.

Unfortunately, this tree provides no helpful information whatsoever. It just lists her mother, who is labelled "Private" (presumably because she still is living).

I next looked at Courtney's Ethnicity Estimates:



Courtney's largest ethnicity is England & Northwest Europe (38%), followed by Sweden & Denmark (25%). I have large percentages of both these ethnicities (28% and 36%, respectively); however, this type of information provides no help in figuring out how Courtney and I are related.

At this point, let me digress and look at the DNA matches that my Swedish-American cousins have with Courtney Owens. My mother's brother was Paul Thure Brorström Jr. (1913-2001), and four of his children have their DNA profiles on Ancestry.com – Peter, Annmarie, Susan, and Stuart. Each of them has given me access to view their DNA matches. Here are their DNA matches with Courtney:

PTB Larson and Courtney Owens

4th – 6th Cousin | Unassigned

< 1% shared DNA: 52 cM across 5 segments

Annmarie Brorström and Courtney Owens

2nd – 3rd Cousin | Unassigned

2% shared DNA: 123 cM across 8 segments

Susan Baker and Courtney Owens

4th – 6th Cousin | Paternal side

< 1% shared DNA: 56 cM across 4 segments

Stuart Eck and Courtney Owens

2nd – 3rd Cousin | Parent 1's side

2% shared DNA: 111 cM across 6 segments

It is somewhat strange that Peter and Susan have relatively small DNA matches with Courtney (52 cM and 56 cM, respectively), while Annmarie and Stuart have relatively large DNA matches with Courtney (123 cM and 111 cM, respectively). Recall that I have a 109 cM match with Courtney. These findings point out the randomness by which autosomal DNA is inherited. But I digress...

I then looked at the DNA matches that Courtney and I have in common – which Ancestry.com refers to as “Shared DNA Matches”, or just “Shared Matches”. In order to be considered a Shared Match, an individual has to have DNA matches with both Courtney and me that are at least 20 cM in size. This requirement limits the number of people on the Shared Matches list.

Here are the first seven individuals on our Shared Matches list (ranked in descending order of the size of the DNA match that I have with the individual):



You and Courtney Owens

2nd – 3rd Cousin | Maternal side

2% shared DNA: 109 cM across 6 segments

Trees Ethnicity Shared Matches

Filter by:

Unviewed

Common ancestors

Search | Sort

Parent/Child



Amy Oakley

Daughter
3,455 cM | 50% shared DNA
Both sides

Public linked tree
2,144 People
Common ancestor

Close Family



PTB Larson

1st – 2nd Cousin
964 cM | 14% shared DNA
Maternal side

Public linked tree
141 People
Common ancestor



Stuart Eck

1st – 2nd Cousin
917 cM | 13% shared DNA
Maternal side

Public linked tree
136 People
Common ancestor



Susan Baker

1st – 2nd Cousin
881 cM | 13% shared DNA
Maternal side

Public linked tree
429 People
Common ancestor



**Annmarie
Brorström**

1st – 2nd Cousin
793 cM | 11% shared DNA
Maternal side

Public linked tree
429 People
Common ancestor



jessicalynn_eck

1st – 2nd Cousin
571 cM | 8% shared DNA
Maternal side

Unlinked Tree



L.M.

Managed by
Kmeier59




1st – 2nd Cousin
436 cM | 6% shared DNA
Maternal side

Public linked tree
19,235 People
Common ancestor

I immediately recognized everyone on this list. Amy Oakley is my younger daughter. PTB Larson (Peter Larson, born Peter Thure Brorström), Stuart Eck, Susan Baker (born Brorström), and Annmarie Brorström are all my Swedish-American first-cousins. Jessica Lynn Eck is Stuart's daughter, and Lauren Meier (*L.M.*) is Annmarie's older daughter.

These "Shared Matches" indicate that Courtney Owens is related to me on my mother's side of the family, but doesn't narrow down the branch within my mother's Swedish ancestors (remember, all four of her grandparents were Swedish immigrants – see the pedigree chart on the first page of this narrative).

The next three individuals on the list of my Shared Match with Courtney are:








Extended Family			
	Alan Olstein	2nd – 3rd Cousin 149 cM 2% shared DNA Maternal side	No Trees
	Kendall Perks	2nd – 3rd Cousin 135 cM 2% shared DNA Unassigned	Public linked tree 624 People Common ancestor
	Peterhorton58	3rd – 4th Cousin 70 cM 1% shared DNA Maternal side	Public linked tree 17 People Common ancestor

OK – I know all three of these individuals and this is helpful information. All of them are descended from Paulus Brorström and his wife Bernardine Wennström, who were my mother’s paternal grandparents. This means that Courtney could be a Brorström or a Wennström descendant (or both), and it rules out the other two lines (Larsson and Larsson) shown in my mother’s pedigree on the first page of this narrative.

Let me fill in the missing details here. Alan Olstein and Kendall Perks are both descended from the Brorström-Wennström couple through their daughter Alice Bernhardine Christina Brorström. Peter Horton is descended from the Brorström-Wennström couple through their daughter Ebba Maria Cecilia Brorström.

Based on the large size of my DNA match with Courtney Owens (109 cM), as well as the large sizes of the DNA matches that my first-cousins Annmarie and Stuart have with Courtney (123 cM and 111 cM, respectively), my thought was that Courtney and I are both descended from the Brorström-Wennström couple. Based on this hypothesis, Courtney would be descended from one of the children of the Brorström-Wennström couple (other than my grandfather Paul).








Here is a listing of the seven children of the Brorström-Wennström couple:

	Malte Bernhard Brorström 1882-1946
	Paul Thure Brorström 1884-1932
	Ebba Maria Cecilia Brorström 1887-1967
	Alice Bernhardine Christina Brorström 1889-1972
	Lillian Alma Marhilda Brorström 1891-1965
	Grace Anna Elisabeth Brorström 1893-1969
	Pauline Hanna Beata Brorström 1897-1986

The oldest child of the Brorström-Wennström couple, Malte Brorström, did not have any children that survived infancy. This leaves the five daughters – Ebba, Alice, Lillian, Grace, and Pauline – to be the ancestor of Courtney Owens. But all this is an educated guess at this point – I honestly don't know how Courtney fits into our family tree.



I went on to look at more people on my Shared Match list with Courtney. Here are another three:

Extended Family

	wceder	2nd – 3rd Cousin 193 cM 3% shared DNA Maternal side	 Public linked tree 6 People  Common ancestor
	Deborah Schule	4th – 6th Cousin 34 cM < 1% shared DNA Maternal side	 Unlinked Tree
	Birgit Tesch	4th – 6th Cousin 30 cM < 1% shared DNA Maternal side	 Public linked tree 3 People

Well, this is interesting! Again, all of these people are known to me. Walter Cederholm (**wceder**) is a second-great grandson of Malte Brorström. Deborah Schule is also a Cederholm descendant (her mother was a Cederholm), and Birgit Tesch (née Brorström) is a great-granddaughter of Malte Brorström. So Courtney has DNA matches with all of these Brorström descendants. Note that this would be expected if Courtney was a descendant of the Brorström-Wennström couple, as I have hypothesized above.

The last person on the list of Shared Matches that I have with Courtney Owens is with Jared Wennstrom:

	Jared Wennstrom	4th – 6th Cousin 24 cM < 1% shared DNA Maternal side	 Unlinked Tree
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I have never been able to figure out how Jared and I are related, but he does have the Wennström surname, and he and I have Shared DNA Matches with a number of my Wennström relatives, including Robert Lipot, Sam Lipot, Stephen Reed, Trisha Gable, Judy McCombs, Eva Josefsson, and Christine Stein.

I am going to treat the Shared DNA Match with Jared Wennstrom as good evidence that Courtney Owens indeed has Wennström ancestors, and this is completely consistent with my hypothesis that Courtney is a descendant of the Brorström-Wennström couple (my great-grandparents).

At this point, I know that Courtney Owens is not a Cederholm descendant, since she has Wennström ancestors. (The Cederholm line goes back to Malte Brorström, who fathered the first Cederholm out of wedlock in 1841.)

My hypothesis is that Courtney Owens is a descendant of one of the daughters of the Brorström-Wennström couple – Ebba, Alice, Lillian, Grace, or Pauline.

Ebba married James Connell Horton, so I should ask my Horton cousins if they know Courtney.

Alice married Richard Edwin Townsend, Jr., so I should ask Kendall Perks if she knows Courtney.

Lillian married Charles Alexander Meunier Sr., so I should ask Joanne Meunier if she knows Courtney.

Grace married John Henry Eggers, so I should ask Nancy Eggers if she knows Courtney.

Pauline married Charles F. Beck, Jr., but I don't have any connections with their descendants.

Of course, I should send a message to Courtney via the message system on Ancestry.com. Perhaps she knows more about her ancestors than is in her family tree on Ancestry.com.