

Eva Josefsson – A Wennström Relative from Sweden

by Burks Oakley II
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Introduction

During the past few years, I have become very interested in genetic genealogy, that is, using DNA to help me research my family tree. I have my DNA profile and my family tree on the Ancestry.com website, and I visit this website daily to search through my DNA matches to see if I can connect them to my family tree. I have learned from experience that finding the DNA matches is relatively easy, but learning how they connect to my family tree is much more difficult.

My mother's four grandparents all immigrated to America from Sweden in the 1880's, which means that her ethnicity was 100% Swedish. I am always looking for new DNA matches with Swedes, with the goal of learning more about my Swedish ancestry. Finding new cousins living in Sweden also gives me a good excuse to travel to Sweden every year to meet them.

Connecting with Eva Josefsson

On a whim, I searched my DNA matches on the Ancestry.com website for someone having an ancestor with the surname ***Olsdotter*** who was born in Sweden.¹ The name ***Olsdotter*** turned up in my DNA match with Lise-Lotte Kolmberger, who lives outside of Gothenburg, Sweden, and works at the Volvo Museum in Gothenburg. This was just a random choice of a surname for a search, in hopes of finding a distant Swedish cousin, and it worked out very well!

In looking at the results of this search, I found that I have a DNA match with a woman named Eva Josefsson, who has an ***Olsdotter*** ancestor born in Sweden, as shown in the following screenshot:

¹ The name ***Olsdotter*** is a patronymic name, indicating that this woman was the daughter of a man whose first name was Ols – literally, she is Ols' daughter – hence the surname Olsdotter in Swedish.

AncestryDNA Results for Burks Oakley

Filters **Search Matches**

Olsson Sweden

Include similar surnames

4TH COUSIN

★  **Eva Josefsson** (managed by SternerJosefsson)

Possible range: 4th - 6th cousins

Confidence: Good

Eva's DNA profile is managed by Sterner Josefsson, who I assume is her husband. In looking at Sterner's profile on Ancestry.com, I learned that they live in Halmstad, which is on the west coast of Sweden. I have gone through Halmstad a number of times on the train going between Gothenburg (Göteborg) and Helsingborg (or other destinations farther south, such as Lund or Malmö). Here is a map showing the location of Halmstad:



Eva has an extensive family tree on the Ancestry.com website, and we share a large number of surnames between our family trees:

Eva Josefsson's tree

3,156 people

SHARED SURNAMES

Direct ancestor surnames that appear in both **Eva Josefsson's** tree and **Burks Oakley's** tree

Andersdotter	Andersson
Gudmundsdotter	Hansdotter
Hansson	Johansdotter
Johansson	Jönsdotter
Jönsson	Knutsson
Larsdotter	Larsson
Månsson	Nilsdotter
Nilsson	Olofsdotter
Olstdotter	Olsson
Persdotter	Persson
Pålsdotter	Pålsson
Svensdotter	Wennström

Eva clearly is a Swede through and through! Since my mother was 100% Swedish, I have all these Swedish surnames in my pedigree, as well.

The Ancestry.com website has several features that help users search their DNA matches for common ancestors. One of these tools lets a user see if there are shared locations where their ancestors were born. Here is what I found in this search for shared birth locations with Eva Josefsson's ancestors:

SHARED BIRTH LOCATIONS

Birth locations that appear in both **Eva Josefsson's** tree and **Burks Oakley's** tree

- Sweden, Halland, Haslöv
- Sweden, Halland, Våxtorp
- Sweden, Skåne, Tåssjö

We both have ancestors who were born in Hasslöv, Våxtorp, and Tåssjö. These small towns are located very close to each other in southern Halland County and northern Skåne County. I visited several of these locations in May 2017 with my Wennström cousin Lena Kannesten. My second-great grandfather, Nils Wennström, was born in Tåssjö and is buried in the church cemetery in Hasslöv; his home was just a few miles away from Hasslöv in Menlösa.

When I clicked on the link for Tåssjö, I was amazed to see that Eva has Wennström ancestors who were born in Tåssjö:

People born in Sweden, Skåne, Tåssjö

From Eva Josefsson : S Josefsson Släktträd (4)

Karna Andersdotter
1767 - 1832

Jan Petter Wennström
20 aug 1778 - 6 jul 1862

Johanna Persdotter
12 nov 1801 - 12 apr 1888

Hans Petter Wennström
5 sep 1835 - 3 maj 1923

From Burks Oakley : Burks Oakley II (5)

Bengta Assarsdotter
1705 - 1788

Jöns Jeppsson
1709 - 1774

Sissa Jönsdotter
1735 - 1810

Maria Nilsson
1776 - 1819

Nils Wennström
7 JAN 1815 - 19 JAN 1914

I examined Eva's entry for Jan Petter Wennström (1778-1862), who was born in Tåssjö:



OMG – According to Eva’s family tree, Jon Petter Wennström was the father of my 2nd-great-grandfather, Nils Wennström (1815-1914). I looked at MY family tree, and I had Nils’ father as Petter Venström (1778-1862).

According to this chart, Jon Petter Wennström’s first wife Maja Nilsson died in 1819, and he remarried a much younger woman named Johanna Persdotter. Note that Johanna was about one year younger than Jon Petter’s oldest son from his first marriage. Jon Petter Wennström had six children with his first wife and seven children with his second wife.

Eva is descended from Jon Petter’s youngest son, Hans Petter Wennström (1835-1923), who was born in Tåssjö and died in Våxtorp. Hans Petter was Eva’s 2nd-great grandfather, just as Nils Wennström was my 2nd-great grandfather.

Eva's family tree has Jan Petter's wife as:

Maja Nilsson
1776 - 26 Jul 1819

and my family tree had Petter's wife as:

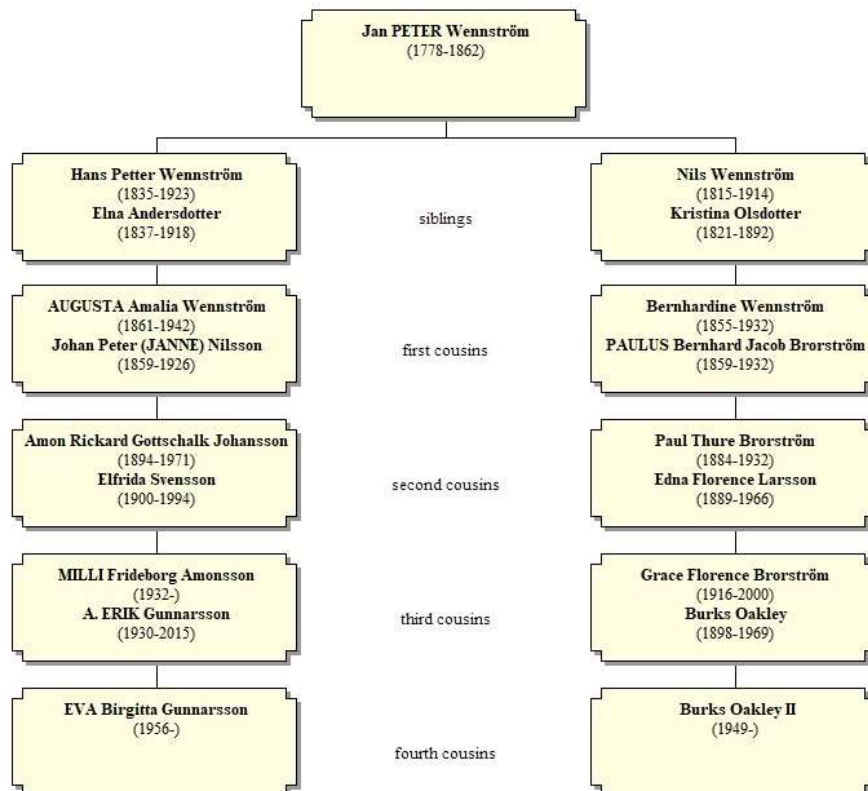
Maria Nilsson
1776-1819

However, the updated tree that I recently received from Lise-Lotte Kolmberger (another cousin on the Wennström side of my family) has Petter's wife as:

Maija Nilsson
25 Aug 1776 - 26 July 1819

Son of a gun! Another Wennström cousin has been found through my DNA match! As an aside, my cousin Lise-Lotte Kolmberger wrote that "Women named Maria was often called Maja in Sweden at this time".

Here is a chart showing how Eva and I are related as fourth-cousins:



Eva is descended from Hans Petter Wennström (1835-1923), while I am descended from Hans' older brother Nils Wennström (1815-1914). And recall that while Hans Petter and Nils had the same father, they had different mothers.

In going back to look at our relationship, I found that if I searched my DNA matches for someone having Wennström ancestors who were born in Sweden, Eva turns up as a hit:

The screenshot shows the AncestryDNA search interface. At the top, the title "AncestryDNA Results for Burks Oakley" is displayed in blue. Below the title is a search filter section with a "Filters" tab on the left. Under "Search Matches", there are two input fields: "Wennström" and "Sweden", each with a clear button (X). A green "Search" button is to the right. Below the search fields is a checkbox labeled "Include similar surnames" which is currently unchecked. The search results are displayed in a white box with a blue border. At the top of the results box is a blue button labeled "4TH COUSIN". Below this is a match card for "Eva Josefsson". The card features a star icon, a red silhouette profile picture, and the text "Eva Josefsson (managed by SternerJosefsson)". To the right of the name is a green icon and the text "5,322 people". Below the name is the text "Possible range: 4th - 6th cousins" with a question mark icon, and "Confidence: Good" with a green progress bar. A green "View Match" button is located at the bottom right of the match card.

So while she showed up in my search for *Olsdotter*, I would have found her if I had only searched on the surname *Wennström*. Go figure!

I next examined my DNA match with Eva Josefsson. It turns out that my match with Eva is 24.7 cM (centiMorgans) on a single DNA segment:

The screenshot shows the AncestryDNA member profile for Eva Josefsson. At the top, there is a breadcrumb trail: "AncestryDNA home > Member Matches for Burks Oakley". Below this is a star icon, a red silhouette profile picture, and the name "Eva Josefsson" in bold. Under the name is the text "(managed by SternerJosefsson)" and "Member since 2011, last logged in Dec 23, 2017". A green "SEND MESSAGE" button is located to the right of the profile information. Below the profile information is a section for the predicted relationship, featuring a yellow hourglass icon and the text "Predicted relationship: 4th Cousins". Below this is the text "Possible range: 4th - 6th cousins (What does this mean?)" and "Confidence: Good" with a green progress bar and an information icon (i). A dark grey tooltip box is positioned below the information icon, containing the text "Amount of Shared DNA", "24.7 centimorgans shared across", and "1 DNA segment".

Recall that a centiMorgan (cM) is a measure of the size of a DNA match; one cM is very roughly one million base pairs in length. I also looked at my three Brorström-Wennström cousins who have their DNA profiles on Ancestry.com – Anmarie Brorström DeMattia, Stuart Eck, and Susan Brorström Baker. Anmarie’s DNA match with Eva is 23.7 cM on two DNA segments:

AncestryDNA home > Member Matches for Anmarie Brorström

Eva Josefsson SEND MESSAGE
(managed by SternerJosefsson)
Member since 2011, last logged in Dec 23, 2017

Predicted relationship: 4th Cousins
Possible range: 4th - 6th cousins ([What does this mean?](#))
Confidence: Good

Amount of Shared DNA
23.7 centimorgans shared across
2 DNA segments

Surprisingly, Stuart’s DNA match with Eva is much larger than mine or Anmarie’s – 63 cM across 4 DNA segments:

AncestryDNA home > Member Matches for Stuart Eck

Eva Josefsson SEND MESSAGE
(managed by SternerJosefsson)
Member since 2011, last logged in Dec 23, 2017

Predicted relationship: 4th Cousins
Possible range: 4th - 6th cousins ([What does this mean?](#))
Confidence: Extremely High

Amount of Shared DNA
63 centimorgans shared across 4
DNA segments

For completeness, Susan's DNA match with Eva is exactly the same size as Stuart's – 63 cM across 4 DNA segments:



The screenshot shows the AncestryDNA interface for a member match. At the top, it says "AncestryDNA Home > Member Matches for Susan Baker". Below that is a profile for "Eva Josefsson", managed by "SternerJosefsson", who is a member since 2011 and last logged in on Jun 22, 2018. The predicted relationship is "4th Cousins" with a possible range of "4th - 6th cousins" and a confidence level of "Extremely High". A callout box highlights that "63 centimorgans shared across 4 DNA segments".

Anmarie, Stuart, Susan, and I are fourth-cousins of Eva. Based on the 2016 study by Blaine Bettinger, fourth-cousins average 31 cM of shared DNA, with a range of 0 to 90 cM. So the sizes of our DNA matches with Eva are consistent with the genealogical record.

Visiting Eva Josefsson in Halmstad, Sweden

On 31 December 2017, I sent Sterner Josefsson a message using the Ancestry.com message system, informing him about my DNA match with Eva and how I thought she and I were related. He responded via e-mail in mid-January 2018, and his message included:

“If you come to Sweden this summer, I and my wife think it would be fun to meet you. I am sure that my mother-in-law, Milli Gunnarsson, 86 years old, would also appreciate.”

Well, one thing led to another, and in May 2018, I spent several weeks in Sweden. I was able to spend a day in Halmstad visiting Eva and her husband Sterner.



Eva Josefsson (nee Gunnarsson) and her husband Sterner Josefsson.
Photo taken in their backyard in Halmstad in May 2018.

I met Eva's mother, Milli Amonsson Gunnarsson, and two of her sisters, Iréne Gunnarsson Jonsson and Marie Gunnarsson. We visited towns mentioned earlier in this narrative, including Våxtorp, Hasslöv, and Menlösa. We visited the house in which Nils Wennström lived and saw his gravestone in the churchyard at Hasslöv. What a great visit with my Swedish cousin and her family!

Conclusion

In this narrative, I have identified another Wennström cousin in Sweden, Eva Josefsson. Eva and I both go back our third-great grandfather, Jan Petter Wennström, who was born in northern Skåne County in 1778. How cool is this!!

The DNA match that Eva shares with me, as well as my Swedish-American cousins Stuart, Annmarie, and Susan, provide strong support for our Wennström family connection.

Appendix A – Additional Photos from my Visit with Eva Josefsson

Wennström family photos from Sweden, taken in May 2018.



Summer lunch with Eva, her sister Marie, and her mother Milli, at Milli's home in Laholm, Sweden.



Eva's sister Iréne, at her pottery shop in Hasslöv, Sweden – very close to the churchyard where Nils Wennström is buried.



Nils Wennström's gravestone in the churchyard in Hasslöv, Sweden



Selfie of Burks in front of Nils Wennström's house in Menlösa, Sweden.



The barn adjacent to Nils Wennström's house in Menlösa, Sweden.
Note the large iron letters N and W on the side of the building.

Many more pictures from this trip to Sweden are at:

<https://burksoakley.smugmug.com/Sweden2018/>

Appendix B – Photo of all of Milli's Children

On 5 August 2018, Iréne celebrated her 50th birthday. Here is a photo of Irene with her five siblings taken that day (and posted to Facebook):



Iréne, Marie, Lisen, Ingrid, Anders, and Eva.

From Iréne's posting to Facebook (August 5 at 10:31 pm):

Det spelar ingen roll hur gammal jag fyller....för i den här flokken är jag alltid yngst! 🥳

In English:

It doesn't matter how old I feel.... because in this pack, I'm always the youngest!