

# **Göran Grotting – A Swedish Cousin on the Larsson Side of My Family**

by Burks Oakley II  
10 August 2018

## ***Introduction***

My younger daughter, Amy Oakley, has always had an interest in science, and more generally, in biology. She zealously reads every issue of National Geographic from cover to cover, and she has a collection of National Geographic magazines going back over 60 years. When the National Geographic Society started its Genographic DNA project<sup>1</sup> in 2005, Amy said that we both should participate. That was my introduction to DNA testing. Sometime after 23andme.com began doing DNA testing in 2006, Amy submitted her DNA sample to them, and then kept hounding me to do so as well – which I eventually did. I'm really glad that I listened to her, since I now am hooked on genetic genealogy.

My mother's four grandparents all were Swedes who immigrated to America in the 1880's. So ethnically she was 100% Swedish, which means that I am 50% Swedish. In the past few years, I have become very interested in my Swedish ancestry, and I have found a number of Swedish relatives with whom I have a DNA match. I'm very fortunate that I've been able to visit many of these people on my recent trips to Sweden.

This narrative goes back to the very first Swedish cousin that I made contact with through our DNA match on 23andme.com – Göran Grotting. His first name is pronounced "Yore-on", with the emphasis on the first syllable.

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<sup>1</sup> The Genographic Project, launched on April 13, 2005 by the National Geographic Society, is an ongoing genetic anthropological study that aims to map historical human migration patterns by collecting and analyzing DNA samples.

## ***Connecting with Göran Grotting***

In the fall of 2013, Amy told me that she had been contacted by a Swede named Göran Grotting, and that they had a DNA match on the 23andme.com website. She was too busy to follow-up on this, but since I also had a DNA match with Göran, she encouraged me to contact him. In early October 2013, I sent Göran a message via the message system on the 23andme.com website. Over the next few weeks, I ended up sending him everything I knew about my Swedish ancestors, which really wasn't much beyond the four immigrants who were my mother's grandparents. Göran methodically researched each family line. In one of his e-mail notes on 15 October 2013, he wrote:

Paulus Bernhard Jacob Brorström was born in Borrby in the south of Sweden. The name of the landscape is Skåne. He moved to Hasslöv and married Bernhardina Wennström (also spelled Vennström and Venström). I have traced them both very long back in time, and I can tell for sure, that you and I are not related through them. So it must be one of the other two great-grandparents.

My research of your family will amuse you a lot. I can see from their last names that most of them were very important persons in society. Also, your family members have mostly lived in the cities, there were hardly any farmers.

I have not had time to check their occupations, but some of them are vicars. And I guess that you didn't know that you have some blue blood in your body! There are several noble persons in your family. And the Swedish blood is mixed a little with German, Danish and Finnish!

On 17 October 2013, I wrote to Göran that I had learned that my great-grandfather Lars Emil Larsson (born 1 October 1865) was from the small town of Fjärås, which is south of Gothenburg near the coast of the North Sea. That was all the information that Göran needed. He immediately replied:

But Fjärås, wow! My grandfather's mother Maria Kristina Karlsdotter was born in Fjärås 1850. (My father's father's mother.) I guess that we will have our connection there somewhere. I don't think I have time for this research for a couple of days, but certainly I had to look him up in the "Birth book". But there was no Lars Emil born October 1st 1865. But the

birth year was not correct! He was one year older, as you can see from the attached pictures. He was born in Fjärås October 1st 1864.

Here are the two photos of the "Birth Book" that Göran sent me:

65

18 64 Ars Födelse- och Dop bok för Fjärås församling.

Födelse- nummer	Födelse-		Kon	Dopnamn.	Föräldrarnas		Bemärkt genom sida i Husförhörsboken	Födelse- nummer	Dopvittnen	Årskiften
	Månad	dag			Månad	dag				
91	Sept	20	Sept	25	1	Abdus Pethe	Top. Lars P. Sjögren h. Anna Maria Sjögren	n:o 2. 26		
92	"	21	"	25	1	T. Erik	Abt. Johan P. Sjögren h. Anna Beata Sjögren	n:o 1. 19		
93	"	23	"	26	1	Johanna Beata	Top. Erik Sjögren h. Beata Johansdotter	n:o 1. 20		
94	"	24	"	25	1	August Abraham	Top. Abdus Sjögren h. Beata Sjögren	n:o 9. 26		
95	"	29	Oct	5	1	Amanda Charlotta	Top. Erik Sjögren h. Anna Johansdotter	n:o 1. 13		
96	Oct	1	"	7	1	Lars Emil	Abt. Erik Sjögren h. Anna Beata Sjögren	n:o 1. 18		
97	"	1	"	5	1	Johan Petrus	Abt. Erik Sjögren h. Anna Beata Sjögren	n:o 2. 16		

The "Birth Book" - note the 1864 date at the top of the left page.

95	»	29	Oct 5	1	Amanda Charlotta	Torp Erik Börjesson i Lemnäs h. Anna Johansdotter p. 183	35	Peter Larsson i Lemnäs & Malina Börjesdotter ansökt & Malina Eders Maria Eriksson i Tomte
96	Oct 1	»	»	1	Lars Emil	eholm Börje Larsson i Lemnäs h. Anna Johansdotter p. 183	36	Johan Eriksson i st. Åker Hilma Andersson i Lilla & Torp, Lovisa Andersdotter Eriksson, & Anna Malina & Torp, & Anna & Hulma
97	»	1	»	3	Johan Berntsson	eholm Eriksson i Lemnäs h. Anna Johansdotter p. 183	37	Peter Larsson vid nr. Johanna Lona Johansdotter, &

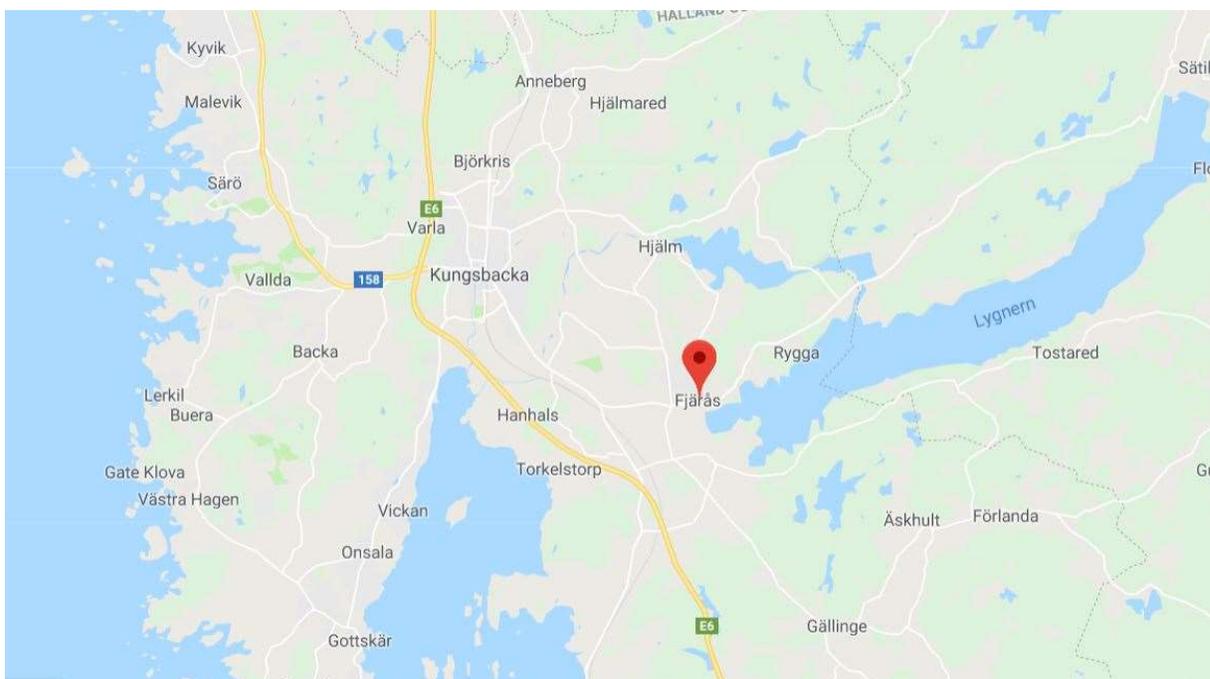
Close-up showing the entry for Lars Emil.

It is important to note that when Lars Emil was born on 1 October 1864, his name was Lars Emil Börjesson. At that time in Sweden, families used patronymic names. Lars Emil's father was named Börje Larsson, so Lars Emil was given the last name Börjesson (literally, Börje's son). His sister would have had the last name Börjesdotter.

Göran speculated that Lars Emil changed his last name to Larsson (which was his father's name) when he immigrated to America in 1887. Göran also wrote:

Something is tricky with the emigration from Sweden – maybe Lars Emil also “escaped” without legal papers. Because I cannot find him in the emigration registers, and in the ministerial books it doesn't say anything about America. But in 1887, the priest moved his name and his older sister's name (Anna Lovisa) to a special place in the book – a register in the end of the book. It looks just like the priest didn't know where they went!

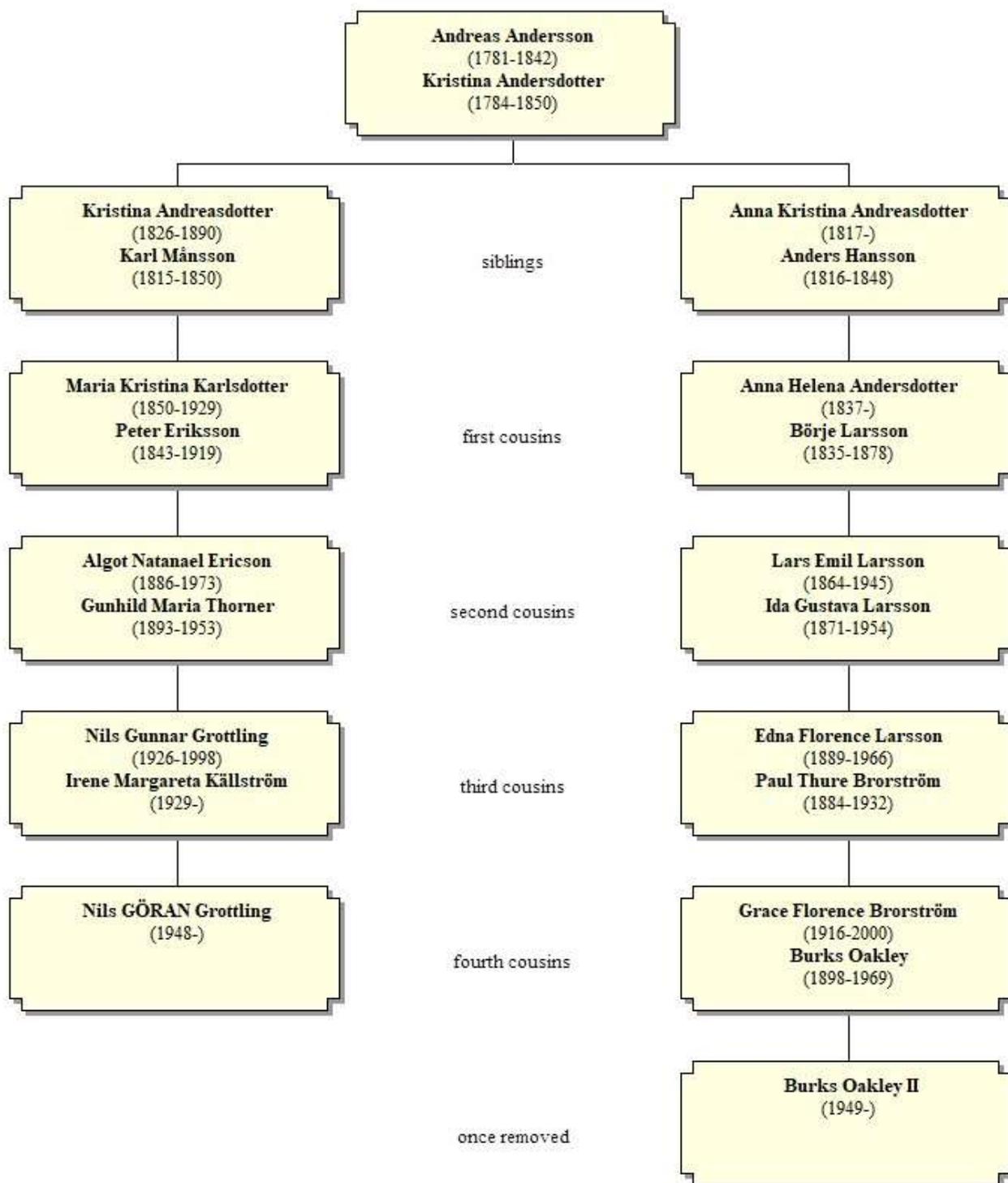
We can assume that Lars Emil and his sister Anna Lovisa immigrated to America in one way or another in 1887.



Google Map showing the location of Fjärås.

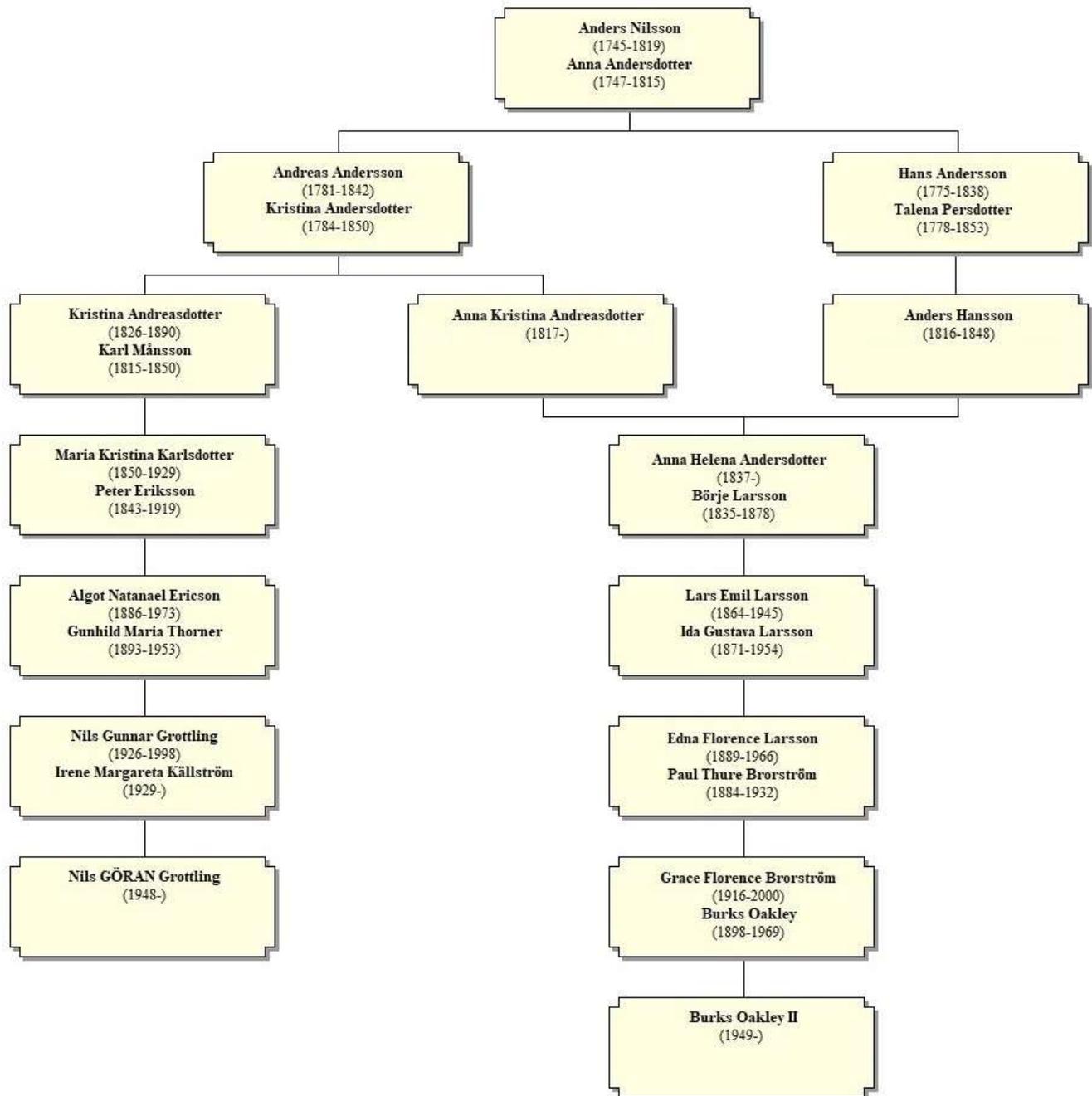
By early September 2013, Göran had found our most recent common Ancestors (MRCA), and they were Andreas Andersson (1781-1842) and his wife Kristina Andersdotter (1784-1850). They both were born in Fjärås and lived their entire lives in this town. It is amazing that Göran and I have a DNA match that goes back to this couple, who were my fourth-great grandparents, born in the late 1700's. My line to this couple goes back through Lars Emil Larsson's mother, Anna Helena Andersdotter (1837-), and then her mother Anna Kristina Andreasdotter (1817-). Anna Kristina's parents were the couple that are my Most Recent Common Ancestors shared with Göran.

My relationship with Göran is shown in the following chart:



Göran and my mother, Grace Florence Brorström (1916-2000), were fourth-cousins (4C), meaning that Göran is my fourth-cousin once-removed (4C1R).

While the previous chart shows our Most Recent Common Ancestors (MRCA), it turns out we have another connection, as shown in the following chart:



Lars Emil's mother's parents, Anders Hansson (1816-1848) and Anna Kristina Andreasdotter (1817-), were first-cousins. So Göran and I have another couple that we both are descended from – Anders Nilsson (1745-1819) and his wife Anna Andersdotter (1747-1815). My guess is that it was fairly common for first-cousins to marry at that time in rural Swedish villages with small populations.

## ***Details of our DNA Match***

Once Göran and I had established how we are related, Göran subsequently uploaded his DNA profile to the free GEDmatch.com website. This site has powerful software tools that allow users to make DNA comparisons at the chromosome level. Here is my comparison with Göran:

Comparing Kit A122463 (Burks Oakley II) and M418071 (Goran Grotting)

Chr	Start Location	End Location	Centimorgans (cM)
8	103,109,093	128,760,394	26.6

Largest segment = 26.6 cM

Total of segments >7 cM = 26.6 cM

1 matching segment

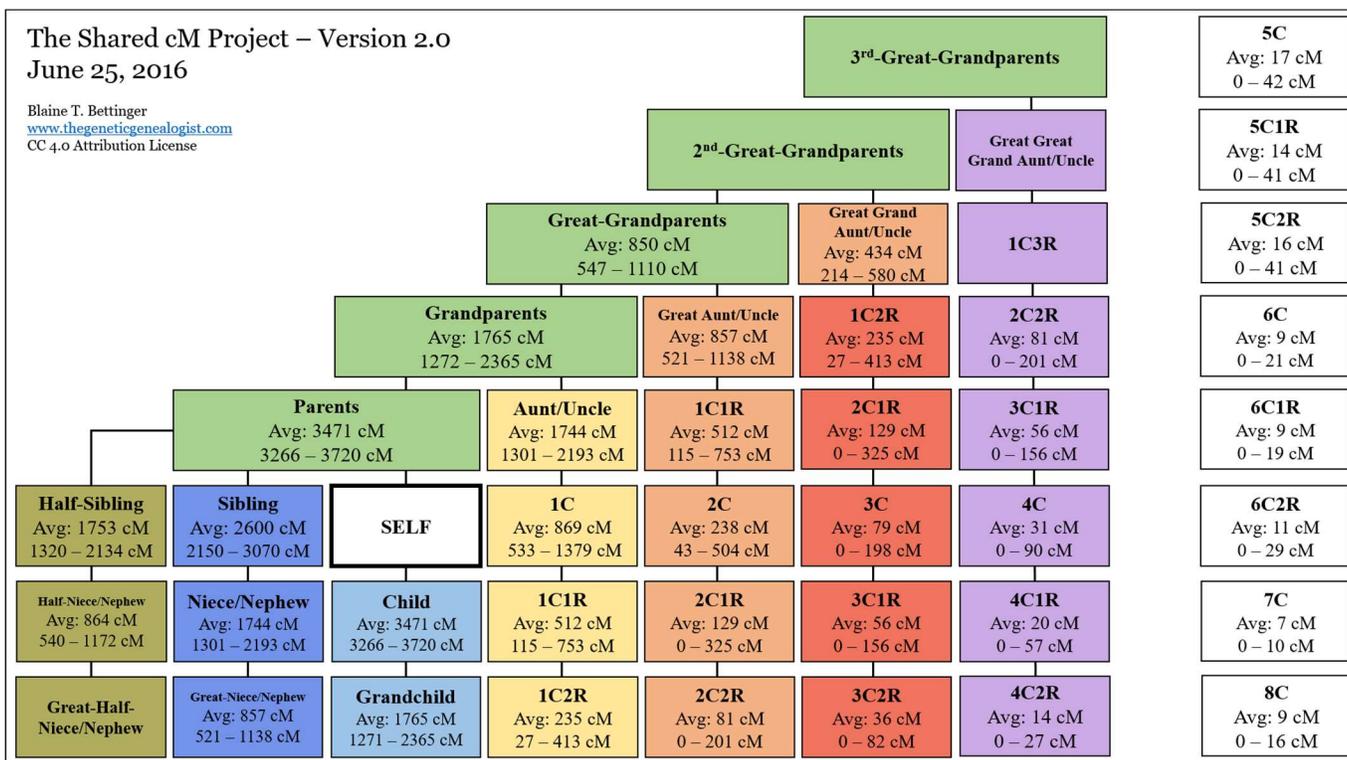
Estimated number of generations to MRCA = 4.5

Our match is on Chromosome 8, where we share 26.6 cM of DNA [a centiMorgan, abbreviated cM, is very roughly 1 million base pairs in length]. The software on the GEDmatch.com website estimated that our MRCA is 4.5 generations, which is off by 1.0. Our MRCA is 5 generations back for Göran and 6 generations back for me, so our actual MRCA is 5.5 (the average of 5 and 6). This means that our DNA match is larger than would be expected for our 4C1R relationship.

The noted genetic genealogist, Blaine Bettinger, found that 4C1R average 20 cM, with a range of 0 to 57 cM, as shown in the following table:

The Shared cM Project – Version 2.0  
June 25, 2016

Blaine T. Bettinger  
[www.thegeneticgenealogist.com](http://www.thegeneticgenealogist.com)  
CC 4.0 Attribution License



My daughter Amy has a very similar DNA match with Göran:

Comparing Kit M383845 (\*a-oakley) and M418071 (Goran Grotting)

Chr	Start Location	End Location	Centimorgans (cM)
8	103,074,034	128,714,137	26.5

Largest segment = 26.5 cM

Total of segments >7 cM = 26.5 cM

1 matching segment

Estimated number of generations to MRCA = 4.5

In fact, her match with Göran is essentially identical to mine, meaning that she inherited this entire segment from me.

My Swedish-American first-cousin Susan Brorström Baker also matches with Göran:

### Comparing Kit M209915 (\*S.B.B.) and M418071 (Goran Grotting)

Chr	Start Location	End Location	Centimorgans (cM)
8	66,434,168	80,724,814	13.9
8	93,568,993	115,080,765	19.2
10	128,837,885	135,283,755	17.2

Largest segment = 19.2 cM

Total of segments > 7 cM = 50.3 cM

3 matching segments

Estimated number of generations to MRCA = 4.1

Susan has two separate segments on Chromosome 8, and one of them overlaps with Amy and me. But Susan also has a matching segment on Chromosome 10 that Amy and I don't have. Because Susan has a significantly larger DNA match, the software on GEDmatch.com estimates that their MRCA is 4.1. The actual MRCA is 5.5. Her match with Göran is much larger than would be expected for their 4R1C relationship. But it is still smaller than the largest match (57 cM) found in the Bettinger study.

Finally, my Swedish-American cousin Stuart Eck also has a match with Göran:

### Comparing Kit A303490 (\*Stu) and M418071 (Goran Grotting)

Chr	Start Location	End Location	Centimorgans (cM)
8	66,424,463	80,916,576	14.1
8	93,424,214	105,710,749	14.5
10	131,019,646	135,218,153	9.8

Largest segment = 14.5 cM

Total of segments > 7 cM = 38.4 cM

3 matching segments

Estimated number of generations to MRCA = 4.3

Like Susan, Stuart also has the matching segment on Chromosome 10.

My Swedish-American cousins Annmarie and Beth also match Göran on Chromosome 8. But they are missing the match on Chromosome 10 that Susan and Stuart have.

We can view this graphically using the Chromosome Browser feature on the GEDmatch.com website. This image shows how all of us match Göran on Chromosome 8:



0-Göran, 1-Beth, 2-Susan, 3-Stuart, 4-Annmarie, 5-Amy, 6-Burks

My Swedish-American Brorström cousins all have two segments matching Göran, while Amy and I just have one slightly longer segment. But the important thing to note here is that all of us have significant DNA matches with Göran on Chromosome 8.

### ***Biography of Göran Grotting – A Very Interesting Life!***

Nils **Göran** Grotting was born on 22 April 1948 in Gothenburg, and was baptized on 26 April 1948 in Gothenburg's Oscar Fredrik Church.

From 1973 until 1975, Göran was educated as a journalist at the Journalisthögskolan Göteborg (JHG), which is a part of Göteborgs universitet (Gothenburg University). Prior to that time, he wandered the world and performed a variety of jobs, such as being a sailor for almost two years (1965-67). Other temporary jobs included working as a truck driver, a dock worker, and a construction worker.

Göran started as a trainee at the Göteborgs-Posten (GP) newspaper, which is a major Swedish language daily newspaper published in Gothenburg, Sweden. He became a permanent employee on 1 January 1976. He worked as a reporter, usually on the night shift, covering the city beat in Gothenburg.

After 20 years at the GP, Göran resigned and bought a small sundry store (kiosk) in Sävedalen, in suburban Gothenburg. Some years later, he bought Althallens Games & Tobacco and then the Sandås kiosk in Hovås. In 2006, he and his second wife bought Marina Vega Tanning and Linnaeus Tanning in Gothenburg. He definitely has the entrepreneurial spirit!

Göran first marriage was to Harriet Gunmarie Bennegård on 4 January 1979 in Gothenberg. She worked as a nurse. They divorced on 20 January 1999 after 20 years of marriage. They had three sons:

- Nils Herbert **Johan** Grotting, born 15 June 1979.
- Klas Valter **Mikael** Grotting, born 25 July 1980.
- Per Harald Stefan Grotting, born 25 September 1981.

Göran then married Marina Valentinovna Stoyanova in Odessa, Ukraine, on 14 January 2003. Marina was a Ukrainian educator, born 2 August 1959. As I recall, they met online, and then exchanged letters and phone calls – which was difficult, since Göran didn't speak Russian and Marina didn't speak Swedish. When they first met face-to-face, they needed to have a translator with them. And now Marina speaks Swedish like a native.

Göran's sons are married and have children – in fact, he now has six grandchildren, and all live in the Gothenburg area.

## ***Visiting Göran in Gothenburg – July 2016***

In early July 2016, my Swedish-American first-cousin Susan and I visited Göran in Gothenburg. One day, he took us on a tour of Gothenburg with our cousin Ingemar Nilsson. Another day, he took us in his car to Fjärås, where we saw several houses that Lars Emil Larsson lived in, as well as the church that he worshipped in. Here are some photos from that day:





A house in Fjärås in which Lars Emil Larsson lived.



Burks in front of one of the houses in Fjärås  
in which Lars Emil Larsson lived.



The church in Fjärås.



The alter in the church in Fjärås.



The view from the church; Lars Emil's house is in the center of this photo.



The view of the sea from the church cemetery.

Göran also took us to the town of Marstrand, northwest of Gothenburg, to see the old fortress, and he had us to his house for fika, where we met his wife Marina. He also took us to the house where one of his sons lives, and we enjoyed fika with the entire family. It was quite a memorable visit!! And how nice that I could share this experience with my first-cousin Susan.



Susan enjoying fika with Göran and his wife Marina.



Göran, Marina, and yours truly.



Susan and Göran in Marstrand.



Susan and Göran's son Johan.

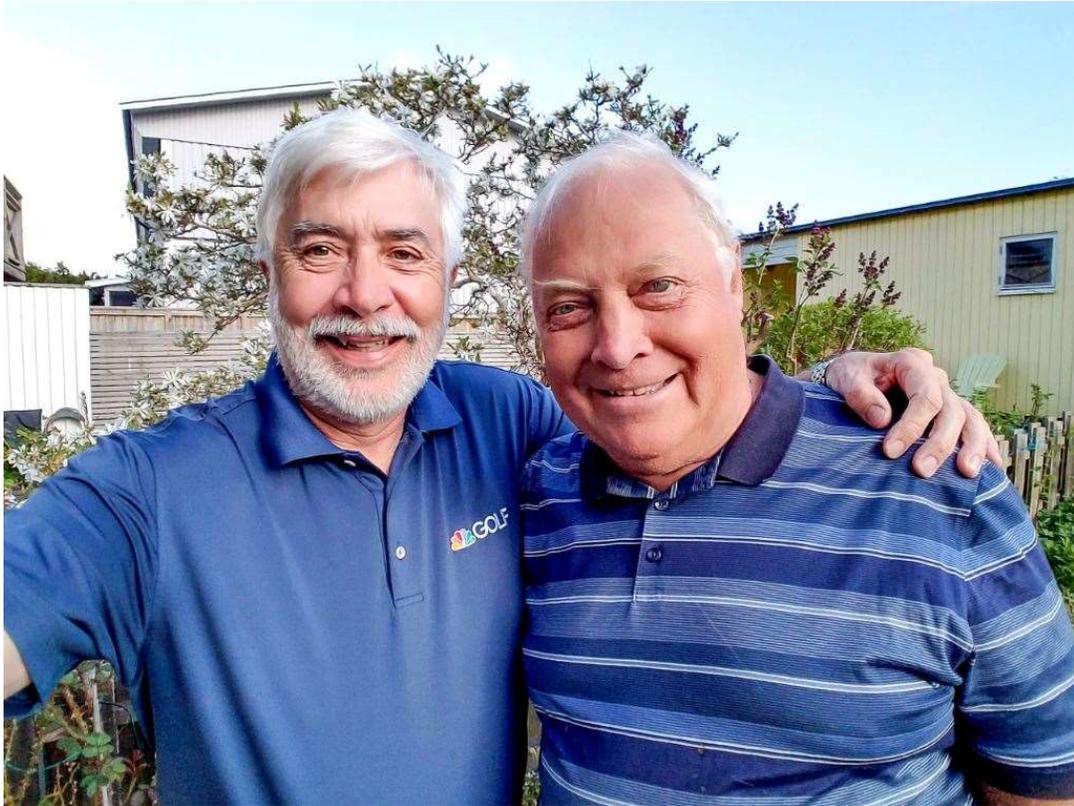
## *Visiting Göran in Gothenburg – May 2017*

I visited Göran in Gothenburg again in May 2017. We went sightseeing all over Gothenburg, but the highlight for me was touring the Volvo Museum with his son Mikael and Mikael's young child.



## ***Visiting Göran in Gothenburg – May 2018***

Once again, I had my annual visit with Cousin Göran in May 2018. We had a wonderful dinner at the house of Göran's first-cousin Ingemar and his wife Pia. We spent a wonderful day walking around Gothenburg, visiting the gardens, Immigrant House, and the art museum. Here are some photos:



Selfie with Cousin Göran in Ingemar's backyard.



Entering the Palmhuset (Palm House) on the grounds of the Garden Society of Gothenburg.



Ingemar and Göran.



Ingemar, Pia, and Göran enjoying ice cream near the Kronhuset (Crown House) in central Gothenburg.

## **Summary**

In this rather lengthy narrative, I have described how a DNA match on 23andme.com led Göran to contact my daughter Amy, and in turn, how Göran was able to figure out how we are related. We both are descended from Andreas Andersson (1781-1842) and his wife Kristina Andersdotter (1784-1850), who lived all their lives in Fjärås, Sweden. Their great-grandson Lars Emil Larsson (1864-1945) immigrated to America in 1887 – and he was my great-grandfather.

Göran was the first Swede I connected with using DNA, and I couldn't have been more fortunate that this first connection was with Göran. What a great guy! I really have enjoyed getting to know him, meeting his family, and seeing many locations in the Gothenburg area with him serving as a tour guide. He is an outstanding individual!

My DNA match with Göran is strengthened by very similar matches that my Brorström cousins share with Göran. Certainly the genealogical relationship I have with him applies to all of the descendants of Lars Emil Larsson in America (Ruth Brorström Nathe's children, Paul Thure Brorström Jr.'s children).



Lars Emil Larsson's gravestone, Kensico Cemetery, Valhalla, NY.  
Note the 1865 birth year.