

Our Family's DNA Matches with Ginger Greenzang – A Swedish-American with Roots in Fjärås, Sweden

By Burks Oakley II
13 July 2021

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; we share 3,455 cM. I have twelve DNA matches at the level of "Close Family", and I most definitely know who all of these people are. 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 Brorström 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**)

My DNA matches with these individuals range in size from 213 cM to 964 cM.

My DNA Match with Ginger Greenzang

The next set of my DNA matches is called "Extended Family" and I have thirty-seven individuals in this category. My DNA matches with these people range in size from 50 cM to 196 cM. Thirteenth on this list is a woman named Ginger Greenzang:



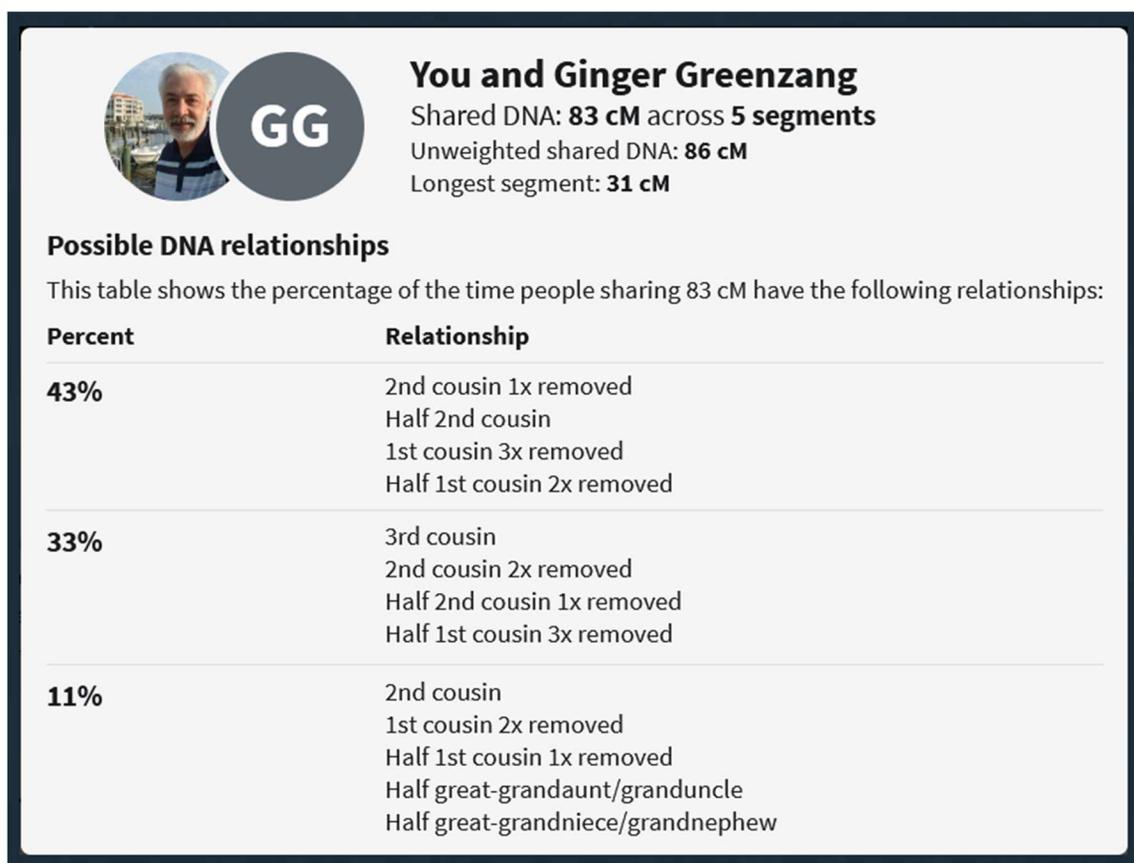
You and Ginger Greenzang

3rd – 4th Cousin

1% shared DNA: 83 cM across 5 segments

Ginger and I share 83 cM of DNA on five segments and based solely on the large size of this DNA match, we could be as close as third-cousins.

I clicked on the “1% shared DNA: 83 cM across 5 segments” link (shown in the screenshot on the previous page), and that brought up a panel showing the probabilities of various relationships:

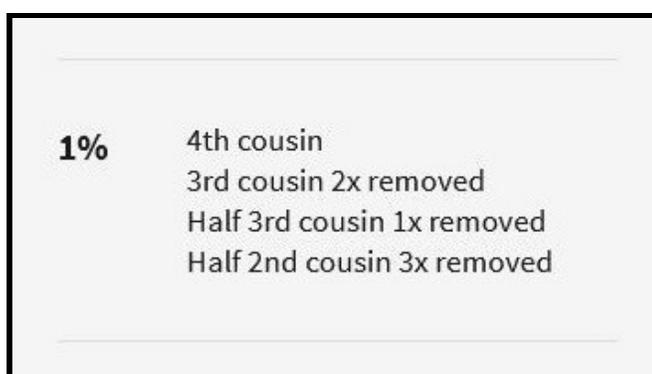


You and Ginger Greenzang
Shared DNA: **83 cM** across **5 segments**
Unweighted shared DNA: **86 cM**
Longest segment: **31 cM**

Possible DNA relationships
This table shows the percentage of the time people sharing 83 cM have the following relationships:

Percent	Relationship
43%	2nd cousin 1x removed Half 2nd cousin 1st cousin 3x removed Half 1st cousin 2x removed
33%	3rd cousin 2nd cousin 2x removed Half 2nd cousin 1x removed Half 1st cousin 3x removed
11%	2nd cousin 1st cousin 2x removed Half 1st cousin 1x removed Half great-grandaunt/granduncle Half great-grandniece/grandnephew

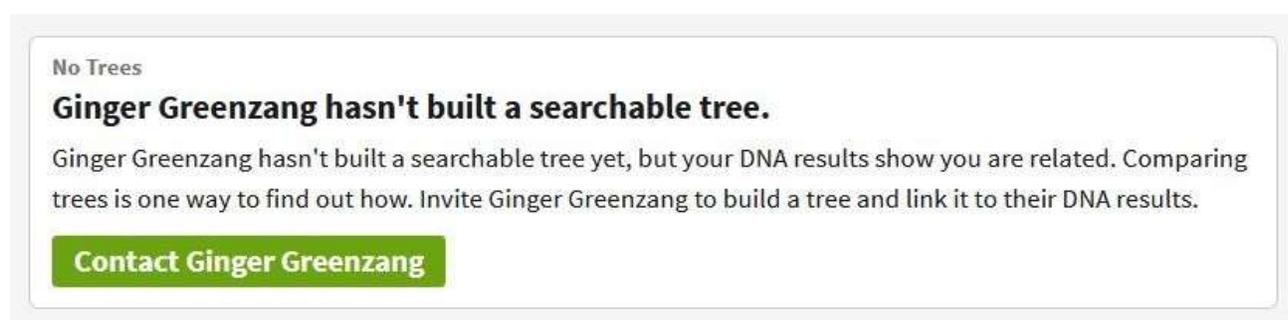
Ginger and I have a 43% probability of being 2nd cousins 1x removed (or equivalent), 33% probability of being 3rd cousins (or equivalent), and 11% probability of being 2nd cousins (or equivalent). Here is more of the panel:



1% 4th cousin
3rd cousin 2x removed
Half 3rd cousin 1x removed
Half 2nd cousin 3x removed

We only have a 1% probability of being 4th cousins (or equivalent). Basically, our DNA match appears to be too large for us to be as distant as 4th cousins.

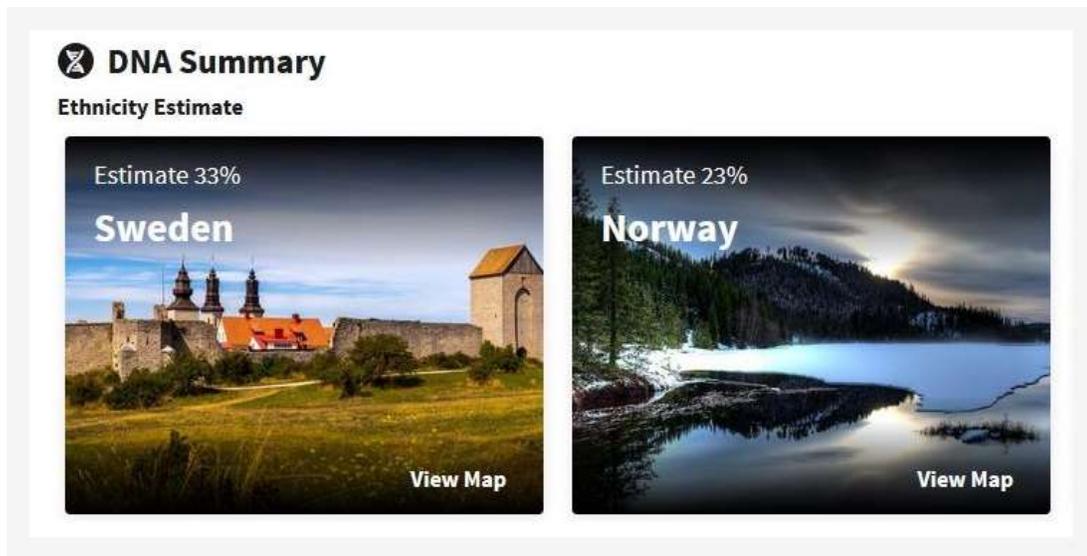
I went on to look at more details of my DNA match with Ginger Greenzang. Unfortunately, she doesn't have a family tree on the Ancestry.com website:



No Trees
Ginger Greenzang hasn't built a searchable tree.
Ginger Greenzang hasn't built a searchable tree yet, but your DNA results show you are related. Comparing trees is one way to find out how. Invite Ginger Greenzang to build a tree and link it to their DNA results.
[Contact Ginger Greenzang](#)

Darn! How can I figure out how we are related if she doesn't even have the basics of a family tree?

I next looked at Ginger's ethnicity estimates:



Ginger is estimated to be 33% Swedish and 23% Norwegian, so my initial guess was that she is related to me on my mother's side of the family (my mother's four grandparents were all Swedish immigrants).

When I looked at my DNA match with Ginger, I learned that our "Shared Communities" are "Central & Southern Sweden":



Amazing that the software on Ancestry.com can pinpoint our common roots to such a specific part of Sweden. And this location is certainly accurate for me, given all my ancestors who lived in the Göteborg (Gothenburg) area.

I next went on to look at our "Shared DNA Matches" – that is, the set of people with whom Ginger 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.

Ginger and I have "Shared DNA Matches" with:

- Amy Oakley (my daughter)
- Peter Larson (born Brorström)
- Stuart Eck (his father was Paul Brorström)
- Susan Brorström Baker

- Jessica Lynn Eck (Stuart Eck's daughter)
- Robert Bergmark (Lars Emil Larsson's great-nephew)
- David & Michael & Martin Engels (DNA matches with people having roots in Fjärås, Sweden)
- Bert Andersson (common ancestor Lars Hansson from Fjärås)
- Michael Baumann (common ancestor Lars Hansson from Fjärås)
- **Bunkers93** (common ancestor Lars Hansson from Fjärås)
- **M.T.** – Mark Thackaberry (common ancestor Lars Hansson from Fjärås)

My great-grandfather, Lars Emil Larsson (1864-1945), was born and raised in Fjärås, Sweden, before he immigrated to America. He was a grandson of Lars Hansson. I conclude that all the individuals listed above connect back to my ancestors in Fjärås. So I know that Ginger Greenzang has to have an ancestral line back to Fjärås.

I should add that Fjärås is less than 40 km south of Göteborg, along the west coast of Sweden. So pinpointing our "Shared Communities" to "Central & Southern Sweden" is very, very impressive.

I decided to Google Ginger Greenzang's name and see if I could find out more about her. Fortunately, I found her name in her mother's obituary:

The Morning Call (Sunday)

Doris E (Reiss) Walgren

26 Jul 2020

Doris Elaine Walgren, formerly of Whitehall, died on 11 July 2020 at her daughter Elaine Hamill's home in Kinnelon, NJ.

She was born in Easton on 22 July 1932 to Earl and Gladys (Herster)

Reiss. After graduating from William Allen High School, Doris earned her registered nursing degree from Lankenau School of Nursing and then worked at Allentown Osteopathic Hospital and in Oregon and Florida. She also served as a USAF flight nurse. Later, she reviewed hospitals for the PSRO, inspected nursing homes for the state and worked part-time at Hess's. Doris will be lovingly remembered by her family and friends. Survivors: Daughters Elaine Hamill and husband Jay; Ginger Greenzang and husband



esterfield, NJ. Sons Phil of Anchorage, AK, and Frank of New York, NY. Grandchildren Robert and Patrick Walgren; Morgan and John Hamill; Hannah, Jason and Jared Greenzang; Sierra, Derek and Chloe Hessinger. Sister Joyce Stout and brother Stanley

Reiss and wife Patricia. Predeceased by four brothers (Melvin "Bud"

Reiss, Earl Reiss Jr., Sterling "Pete" Reiss and Glenn Reiss) and two sisters (Erma Snyder and Donna Reiss). Burial: Private in Farmersville Cemetery. Cremation performed by Neptune Cremation Society of Paramus. Contributions: In lieu of flowers to Planned Parenthood.

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THE MORNING CALL

SUNDAY

Health checks begin

Move jolts area's heart

Friends and family honor Phoebe resident

'Nervous' teachers face dilemma

The Morning Call (Sunday)
26 Jul 2020 (27)

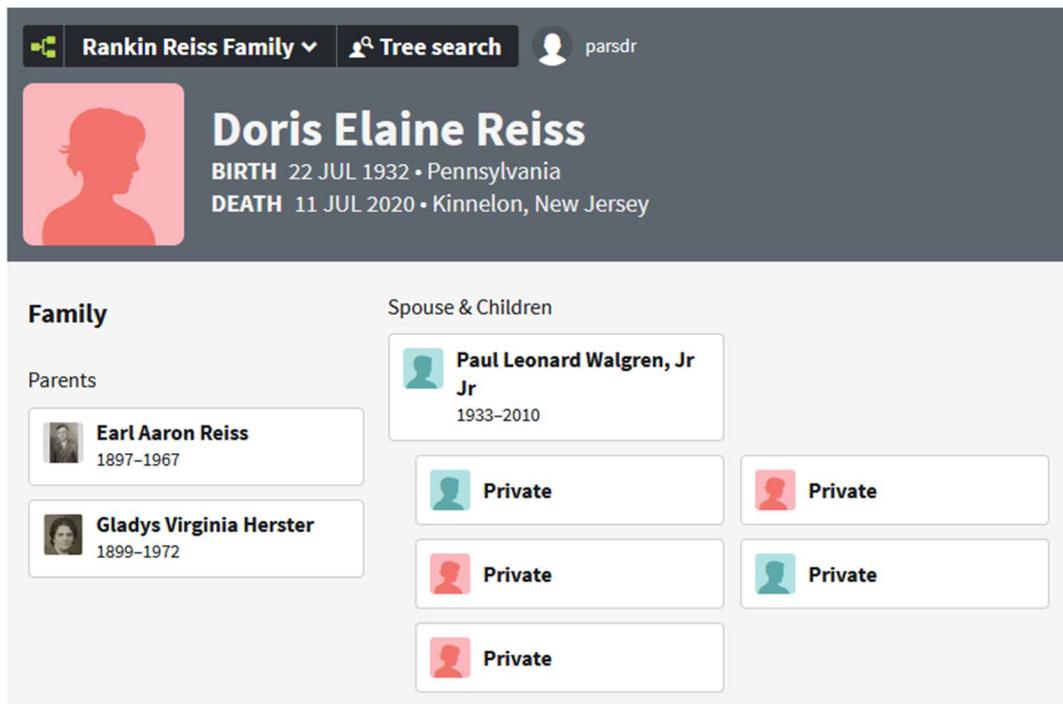
<https://www.pressreader.com/usa/the-morning-call-sunday/20200726/282003264749163>

Interesting that this obituary doesn't mention Ginger's father by name, but I know his surname had to be Walgren, since Ginger's mother was Doris Elaine Walgren (née Reiss). I know from past research that have DNA matches with other **Walgren** descendants going back on ancestral lines to Fjärås, Sweden. So

this was encouraging – and I felt that I was getting close to figuring out how Ginger and I are related.

At this point, I knew that Ginger’s maiden name was Walgren, so from now on, I’ll refer to her as Ginger Walgren.

I reasoned that since Doris Walgren (née Reiss) is now deceased, she should appear in family trees on Ancestry.com (living people are marked “Private”). So I searched for her on the site – and here is one of her profiles:



Doris’ husband (Ginger’s father) was Paul Leonard Walgren Jr. (1933-2010).



Paul Leonard Walgren Jr. appears on the FindAGrave.com website:



<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/62943051/paul-l-walgren>

I traced Paul Leonard Walgren Jr. to his father, Paul Leonard Walgren Sr. (1893-1990):

kathy_2011-03-10_201... Tree search khuehl



Paul Leonard Walgren Sr.
 BIRTH 22 JAN 1893 • Chicago, Cook, Illinois
 DEATH 14 APR 1990 • St Petersburg FL-Bay Pines Nat'l Cem.

Family

Parents

- Johan Frans Andreasson Walgren** 1851-1945
- Britta Betty Stina Christenson** 1860-1957

Spouse & Children

- Nevelyn Dena Aikman** 1903-1997
- Paul Leonard Walgren Jr.** 1933-2010
- Private**

Paul Sr.'s father was Johan Frans Walgren (1851-1945), and this person is known to me. In fact, he is in my family tree on the Ancestry.com website:



Johan Frans Walgren
 BIRTH 28 AUG 1851 • Fjärås, Sweden
 DEATH 13 JUL 1945 • Chicago, Illinois

Note that he was born in Fjärås and immigrated to America, eventually settling in Chicago, Illinois (as many other Swedes did).

As an aside, Johan Frans Walgren was the son of Andreas Olsson (1816-1902), and at birth, he would have been named Johan Frans Andreasson (using the patronymic naming convention). This birth name can be found in a number of his profiles on Ancestry.com:

Frank John (Johan Frans) Walgren (Andreasson) found in 30 public trees

Frank John (Johan Frans) Walgren (Andreasson) from tree ofsthun Family Tree

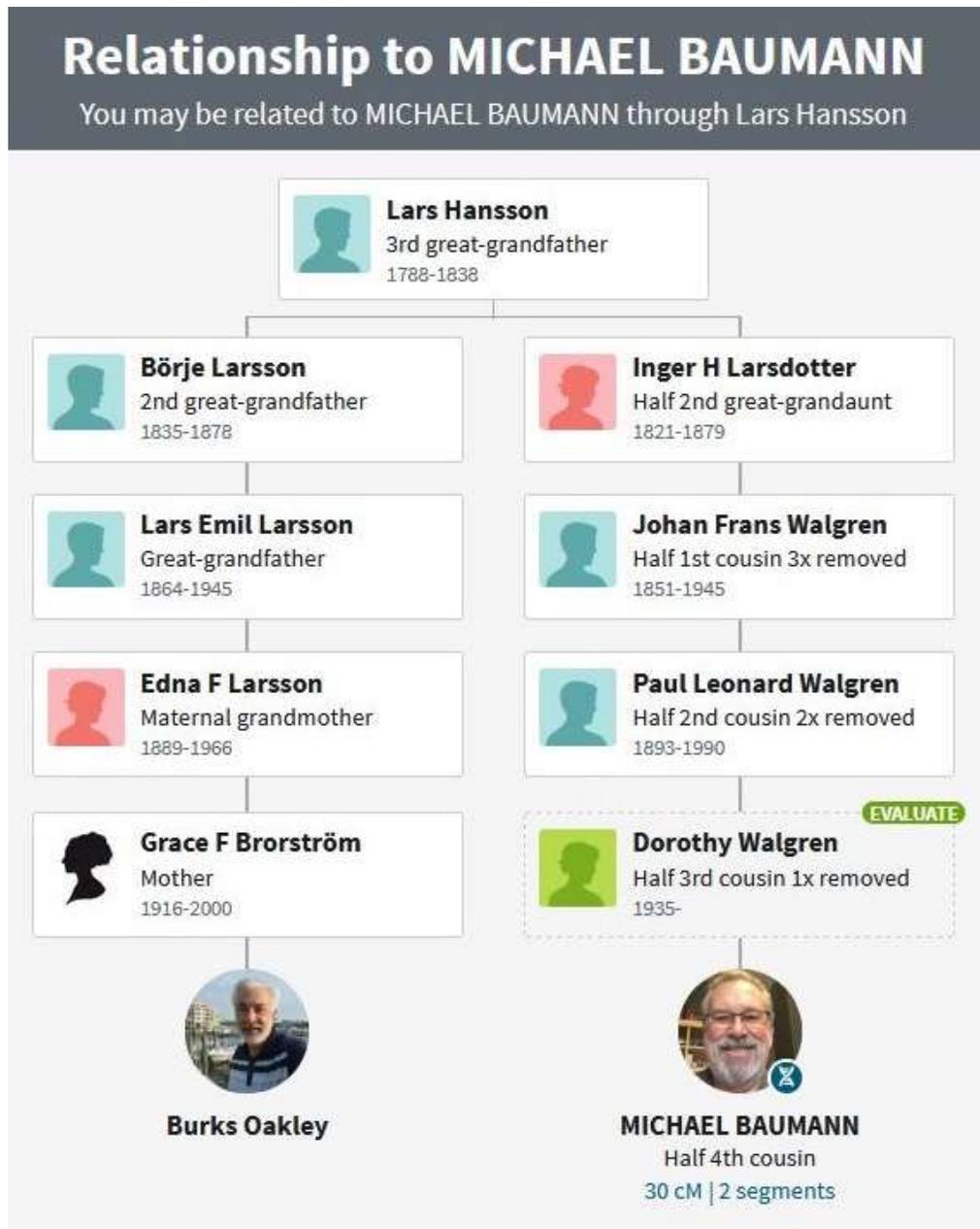
Birth	28 Aug 1851 Fjärås, Halland, Sweden	Father	Andreas Olsson (1816-1902)
Marriage	5 Dec 1885 Cook, Illinois, USA	Mother	Inger Helena Larsdotter (1821-1879)
Residence	1930 Chicago, Cook, Illinois, USA	Spouse	Bettie Christianson (1860-1957)
Death	13 Jul 1945 Chicago, Cook, Illinois, USA		

6106 People 16 Records 20 Sources

It would appear that Johan Frans was the first in his line to take the inheritable surname of **Walgren**. It seems that he also might have Americanized his name to Frank John Walgren when he immigrated.

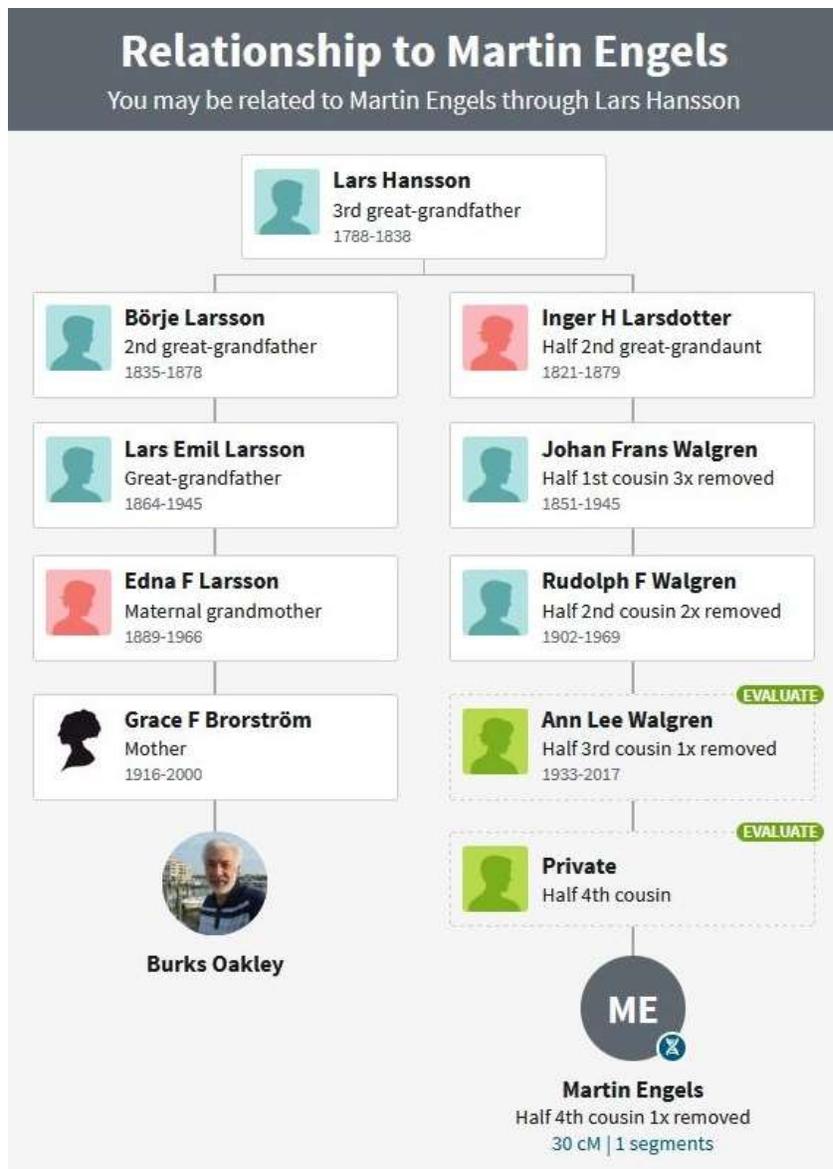
An as another aside, Walgren could be an Americanized version of Wahlgren, which was the inheritable surname adopted by the family of the founder of Walgreen's Drug Stores. According to Ratsit.se, there are 4893 adults in Sweden with the surname Wahlgren, but just 19 adults with the surname Walgren.

But I digress.... Now let me get back to Johan Frans Walgren. He appears in various relationship charts that I have for DNA matches going back to Fjärås. Here is one such chart – for Michael Baumann:



Oh my! Michael Baumann is descended from Paul Leonard Walgren Sr. (1893-1990) through his daughter Dorothy Walgren (born 1935). Dorothy would have been a sister of Paul Leonard Walgren Jr. (born 1933). I note from this chart that Johan Frans Walgren was a first-cousin of Lars Emil Larsson (my great-grandfather); they both lived in Fjärås and it is very likely that they knew each other well.

Here is my relationship chart for Martin Engels:



Martin's line to Johan Frans Walgren goes through his son Rudolph F. Walgren (1902-1969). Rudolph would have been a younger brother of Paul Leonard Walgren Sr. (born 1893).

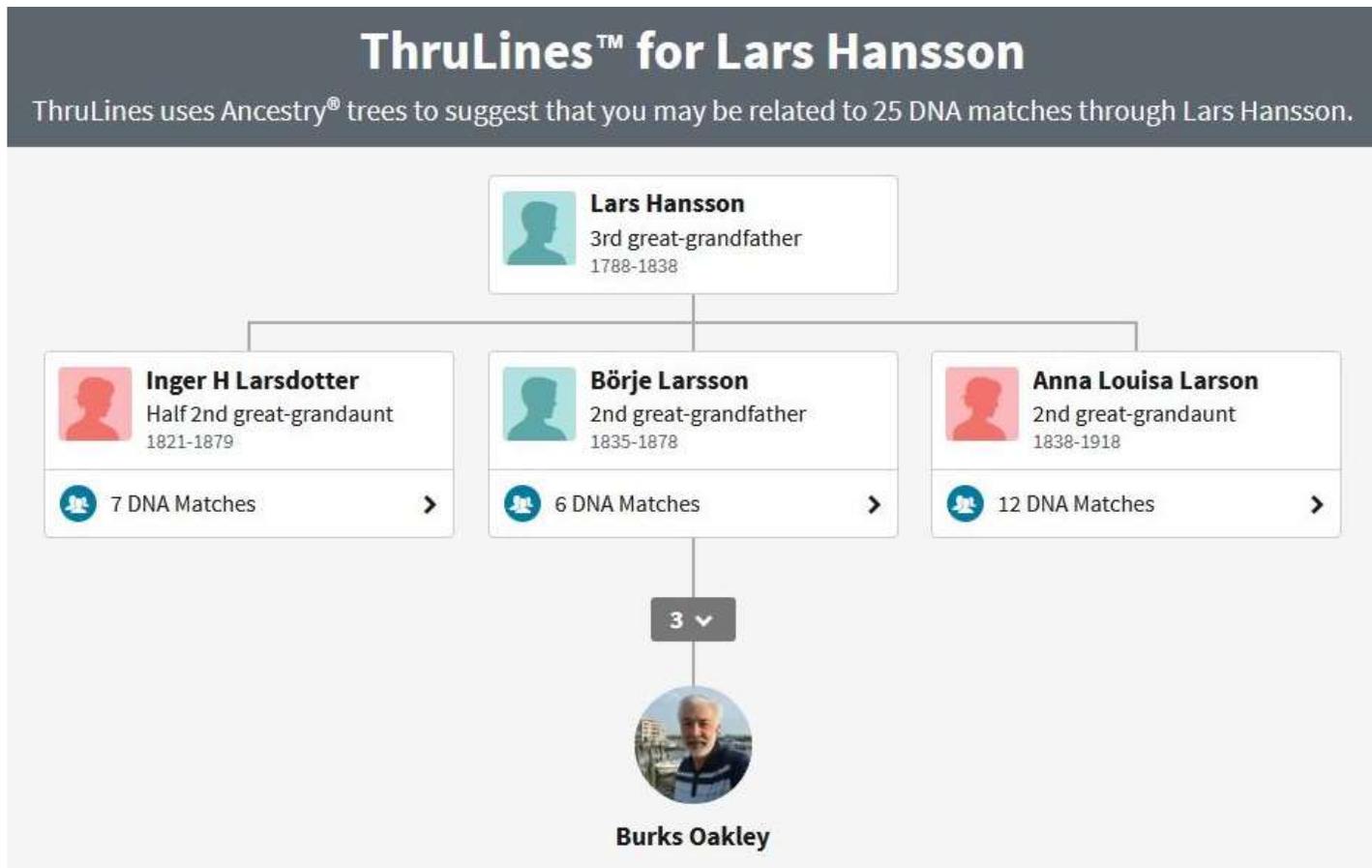
At this point, I had enough information to construct Ginger Walgren's line back to Lars Hansson:



Based on this ancestral line, Lars Hansson was Ginger's third-great grandfather. He also was MY third-great grandfather, meaning that Ginger and I are fourth-cousins. Recall that the probability of us being fourth-cousins (given our large 83 cM DNA match) was only 1%. Our DNA match is larger than would be expected for fourth-cousins. But it is what it is – autosomal DNA is inherited in some strange ways.

ThruLines™ for Lars Hansson

For completeness, I'll review my ThruLines™ chart for Lars Hansson. Here it is with all the lines closed:

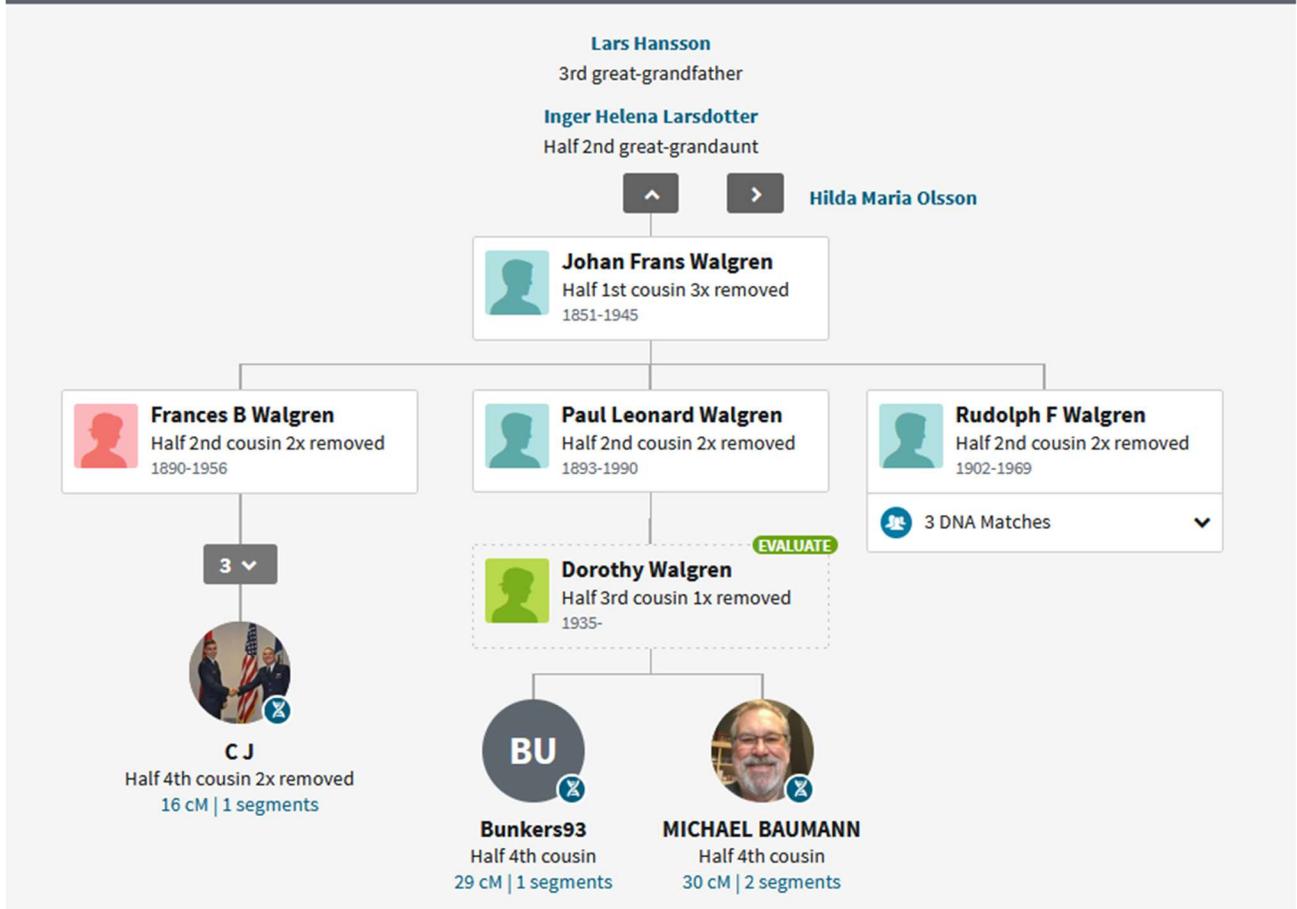


I have DNA matches with twenty-five descendants of Lars Hansson. These matches connect back to Lars Hansson through his daughter Inger Helena Larsdotter (1821-1879), his son Börje Larsson (1835-1878), and his daughter Anna Louisa Larsson (1838-1918). Note that Anna Louisa Larsson Americanized her family name to “Larson” when she immigrated to America.

Here is my ThruLines™ for Lars Hansson with the line through Inger Helena Larsdotter opened:

ThruLines™ for Lars Hansson

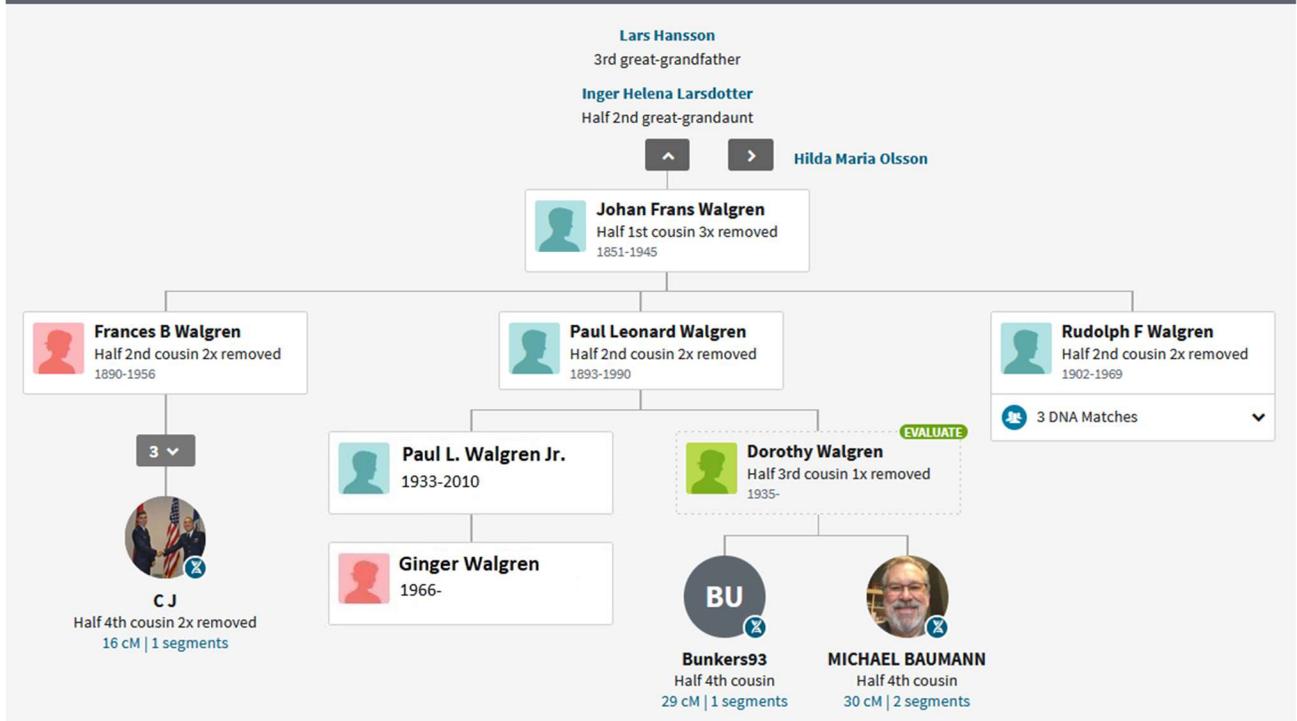
ThruLines uses Ancestry® trees to suggest that you may be related to 25 DNA matches through Lars Hansson.



This is the branch of the ThruLines™ chart where Ginger Walgren would be if she had her family tree on Ancestry.com. In fact, let me add her to this chart:

ThruLines™ for Lars Hansson

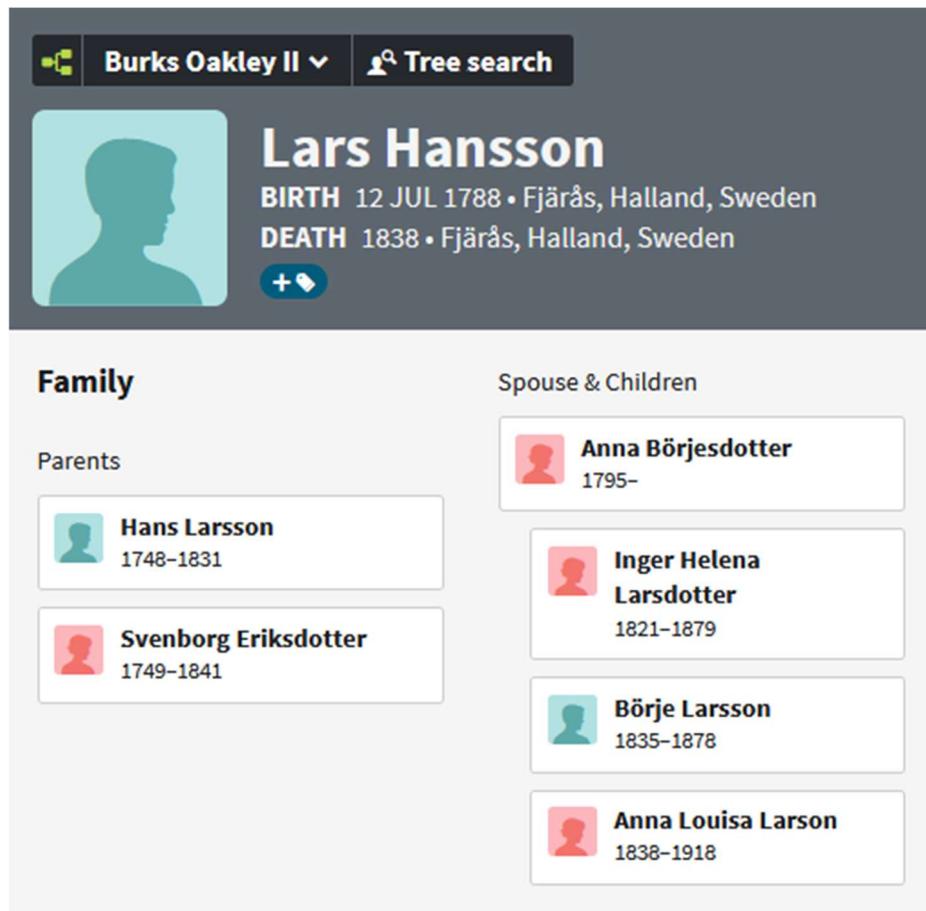
ThruLines uses Ancestry® trees to suggest that you may be related to 25 DNA matches through Lars Hansson.



This chart shows that Ginger is a first-cousin of Michael Baumann and his sibling **Bunkers93**.

What about Lars Hansson's Wife?

Lars Hansson was married to Anna Börjesdotter (born 1795), and the astute reader of this narrative will realize that I haven't mentioned her thus far. Here is the profile for Lars Hansson from my family tree on Ancestry.com:



The image shows a screenshot of an Ancestry.com profile for Lars Hansson. At the top, there is a navigation bar with "Burks Oakley II" and a "Tree search" button. The profile header includes a silhouette icon, the name "Lars Hansson", and his birth and death information: "BIRTH 12 JUL 1788 • Fjärås, Halland, Sweden" and "DEATH 1838 • Fjärås, Halland, Sweden". Below the header, there are two main sections: "Family" and "Spouse & Children".

Family

Parents

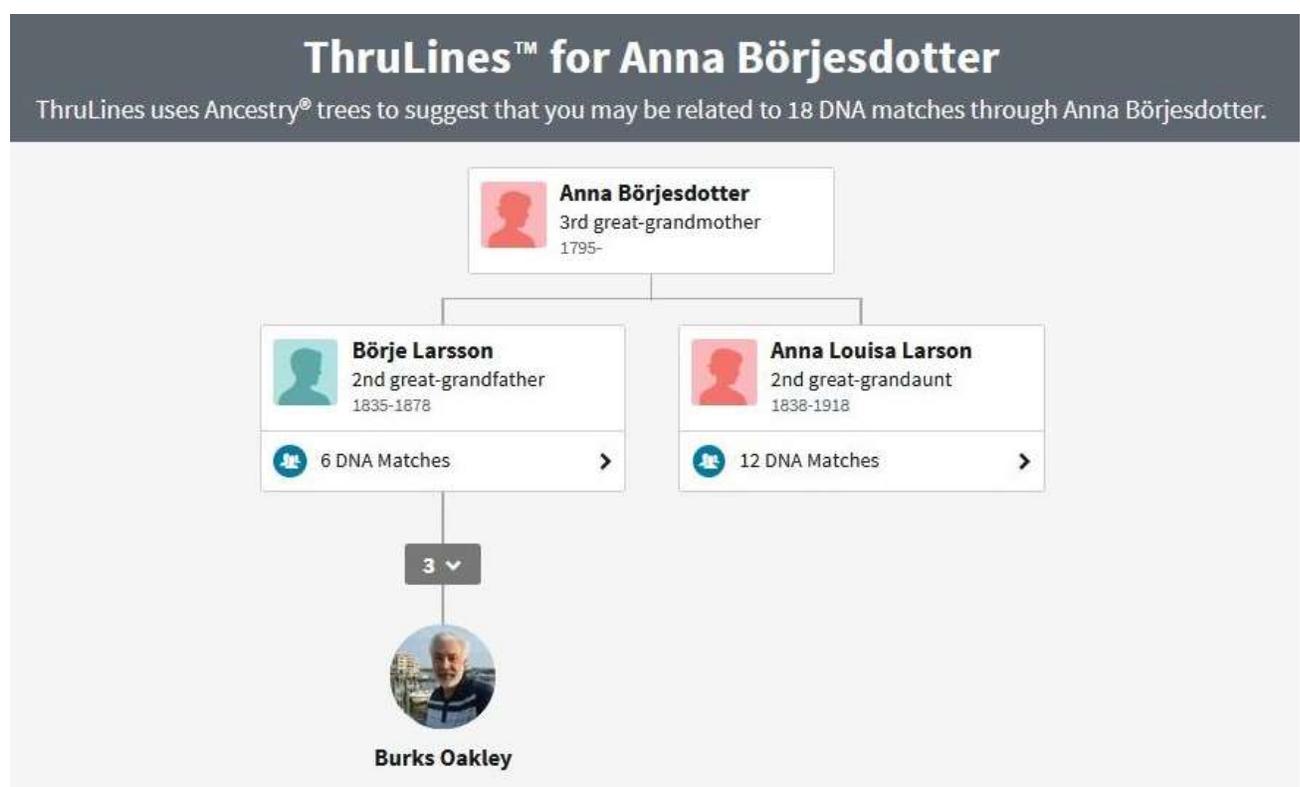
- Hans Larsson (1748-1831)
- Svenborg Eriksdotter (1749-1841)

Spouse & Children

- Anna Börjesdotter (1795-)
- Inger Helena Larsdotter (1821-1879)
- Börje Larsson (1835-1878)
- Anna Louisa Larson (1838-1918)

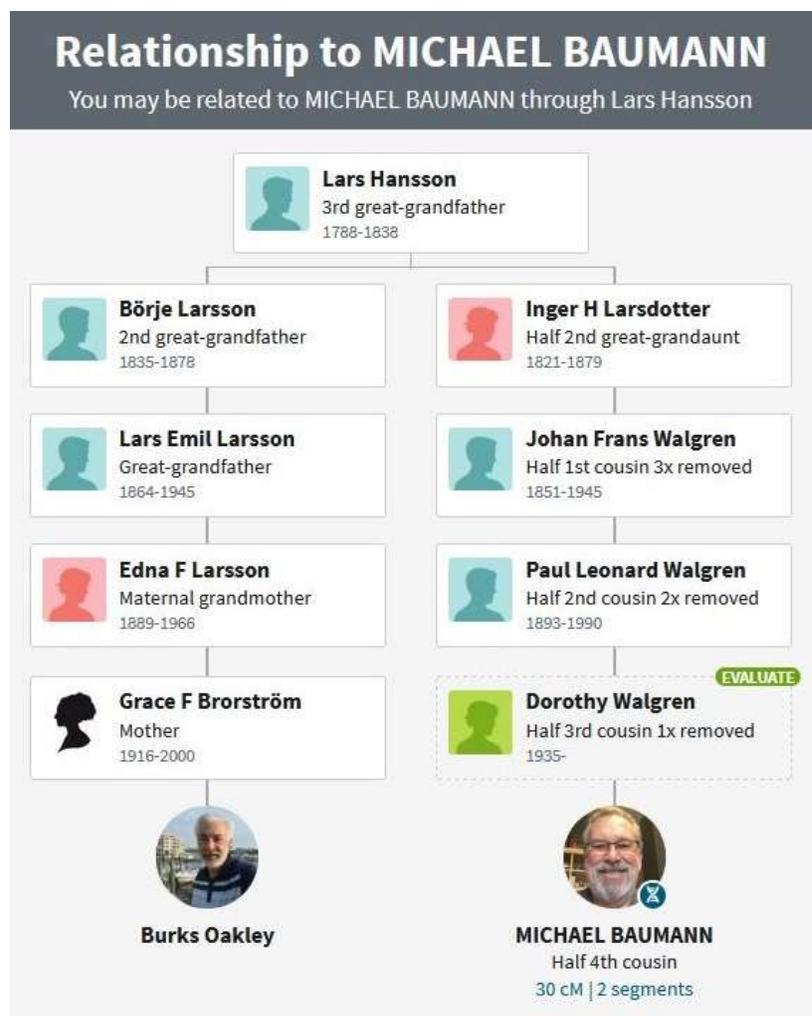
This profile shows that Lars and Anna had three children: Inger Helena, Börje, and Anna Louisa.

When I looked at my ThruLines™ for Anna Börjesdotter, I only saw two of the three lines:



The image shows a ThruLines™ report for Anna Börjesdotter. The title is "ThruLines™ for Anna Börjesdotter". Below the title, it says "ThruLines uses Ancestry® trees to suggest that you may be related to 18 DNA matches through Anna Börjesdotter." The report shows a family tree starting with Anna Börjesdotter (3rd great-grandmother, 1795-). She has two children: Börje Larsson (2nd great-grandfather, 1835-1878) and Anna Louisa Larson (2nd great-grandaunt, 1838-1918). Below Börje Larsson, it shows "6 DNA Matches" and a right arrow. Below Anna Louisa Larson, it shows "12 DNA Matches" and a right arrow. At the bottom, there is a dropdown menu with "3" and a downward arrow, followed by a circular profile picture of Burks Oakley.

Somehow the software doesn't recognize Inger Helena Larsdotter as being the daughter of Anna Börjesdotter. Note that in my relationship chart for Michael Baumann, Inger Helena Larsdotter is listed as my "half" 2nd great-grandaunt:



It certainly is possible that there are other family trees on Ancestry.com that have a different mother for Inger Helena.

When I searched for Lars Hansson's wife on Ancestry.com, I found a number of different names:

- Anna Brita Börjesdotter
- Anna Brita Börgesdotter
- Anna Borgesdr
- Anna Brita Börjesdr
- Anna Börgesdotter

Note that the "dr" ending is the way that Swedes often abbreviate "dotter". It could be that these various spellings are confusing the software on Ancestry.com.

At any rate, I'm 99% sure that Lars Hansson only had one wife, and she was the mother of all of his children. There are a number of profiles for Lars Hansson on Ancestry.com that support this. For example, here is the profile for Lars Hansson in the "Paul Nelson Family Tree", which is owned by **scnelson53**:

Paul Nelson Family ▾ Tree search scnelson53

Lars Hansson
 BIRTH 12 OCT 1788 • Torpa, Fjärås, Halland, Sweden
 DEATH Unknown

Family

Parents

- Hans Larsson 1748–
- Svenborg Ericksdotter 1749–

Spouse & Children

- Anna Börjesdotter 1795–
- Anna Helena Larsdotter 1818–1839
- Elena Larsdotter 1820–1820
- Inger Helena Larsdotter 1821–
- Brita Stina Larsdotter 1823–
- Anders Larsson 1825–1825
- Börje Larsson 1829–1834
- Nils Larsson 1831–1834
- Larsson 1834–1834
- Börje Larsson 1835–
- Anna Lovisa Larsdotter 1838–

This tree shows many more children than I have in my profile for Lars Hansson – and note that a number of these children died at birth or as very young children.

Summary

In this narrative, I started with my DNA match with Ginger Greenzang. I learned that her ethnicity estimate includes a significant amount of Swedish ancestry. Ginger and I have shared DNA matches with a number of individuals, all of whom ultimately can trace their roots to Lars Hansson (1788-1838) and his wife Anna Börjesdotter (born 1795), who lived in Fjärås, Sweden.

Starting with Ginger’s mother’s obituary, I learned that Ginger’s father was Paul Leonard Walgren Jr. (1933-2010), so her maiden name was Ginger Walgren. I was able to trace their **Walgren** ancestral line back to the Hansson-Börjesdotter couple in Fjärås. On this line, Ginger and I are fourth-cousins. Our DNA match (83 cM) is larger than would be expected for fourth-cousins.

I also reviewed my ThruLines™ charts for Lars Hansson and his wife Anna Börjesdotter. I have DNA matches with twenty-five descendants of Lars Hansson. My ThruLines™ chart for Anna Börjesdotter does not pick-up that one of her daughters was Inger Helena Larsdotter, perhaps due to the various spellings of Börjesdotter.

Overall, the DNA matches provide strong support for the genealogical record. And now I know how Ginger Greenzang (née Walgren) and I are related.

Appendix

Here are some photos that I took on my first visit to Fjärås in July 2016:



Road sign on the way into Fjärås.



The church in Fjärås.



The view from the church in Fjärås – looking southwest toward the sea.