

Kendall Perks – A Brorström-Wennström Cousin from Long Island, New York

by Burks Oakley II
7 February 2019

Introduction

It seems that all the introductions to the narratives I am writing about my Swedish ancestry begin the same way, and this one is no different. My mother was Grace Florence Brorström (1916-2000), and all four of her grandparents immigrated to America from Sweden in the 1880's. This means that her ethnicity was 100% Swedish, and in turn, that I am 50% Swedish.

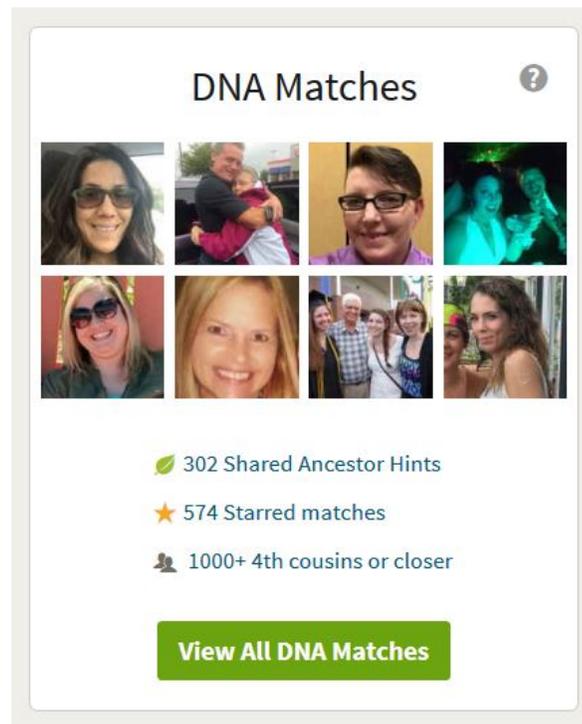
Subsequent to finding a DNA match with a distant Swedish cousin in 2013, I have become very interested in learning more about my Swedish ancestors. Since finding the first relative in 2013, I have continued to find DNA matches with distant Swedish cousins, as well as Swedish-American cousins. In each of the past three years, I have visited Sweden to connect with distant cousins – which is a wonderful benefit of my interest in my Swedish genealogy.

In early March 2017, I found a new DNA match on the Ancestry.com website, and this match was with a woman named Kendall Perks. It turns out that Kendall is a Swedish-American cousin, and this narrative describes how we are related.

Kendall Perks

As of late July 2018, I have over 1000 individuals on the Ancestry.com website with whom I have a DNA match at the level of fourth-cousin or closer; a DNA match means that we have common ancestors sometime in the past. Unfortunately, many of the individuals with whom I have DNA matches don't have family trees, or if they do, these trees don't go back far enough into the past to show our relationships. However, when the software on the Ancestry.com website identifies an individual where (1) we have a DNA match and (2) we have a family tree showing a common ancestor, it creates what is called a Shared Ancestor Hint.

The following screenshot shows that as of late July 2018, I have 302 of these Shared Ancestor Hints:



The Shared Ancestor Hints on Ancestry.com are shown in order of decreasing size of the DNA matches. In early March 2017, I saw that I had a new Shared Ancestor Hint with Kendall Perks:



The software on the Ancestry.com website suggested that she was perhaps a third-cousin (this is a rough estimate, based on the size of our DNA match).

I learned that we share 135 cM across 7 DNA segments, which is consistent with a third-cousin relationship:

← AncestryDNA Home > Member Matches for Burks Oakley

  **Kendall Perks**
Member since 2016, last logged in 6 days ago

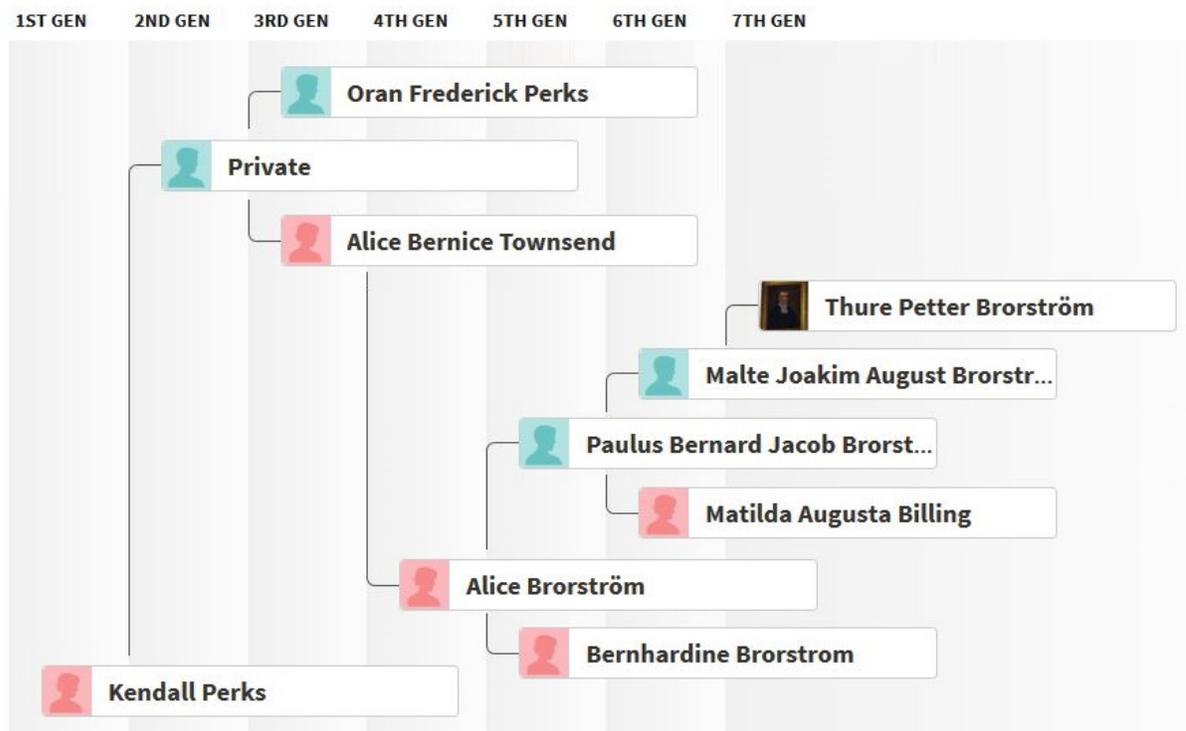
 **Predicted relationship: 3rd Cousins**
Possible range: 3rd - 4th cousins ([What does this mean?](#))

 Confidence: Extremely High 

Amount of Shared DNA

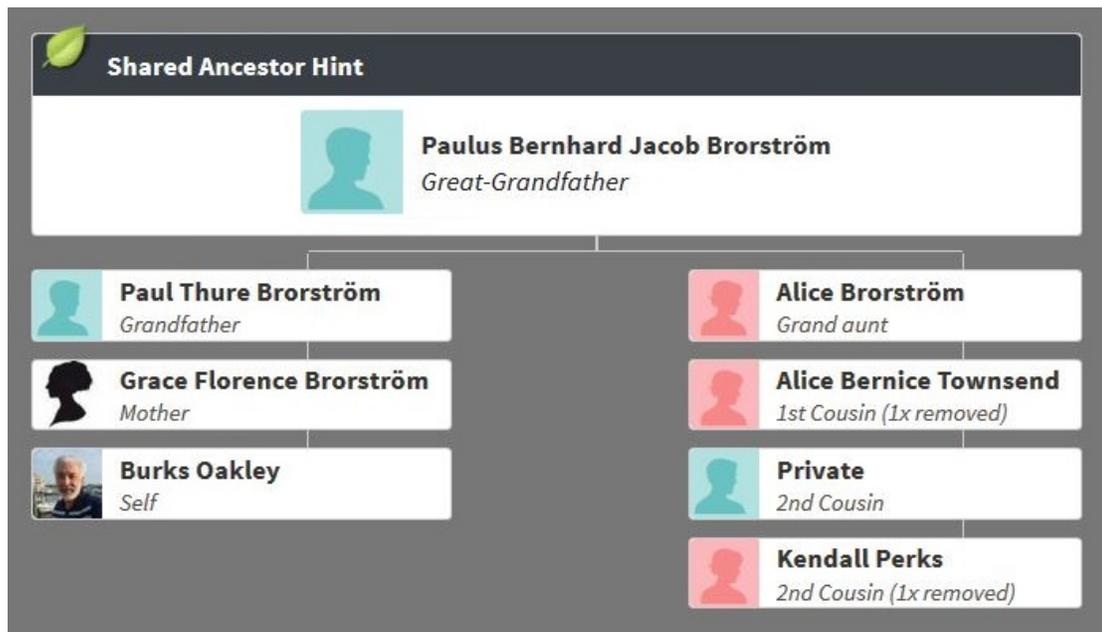
135 centimorgans shared across 7 DNA segments

I looked at her family tree on the Ancestry.com website, and I learned that Kendall is a great-granddaughter of Alice Bernhardine Christina Brorström (1889-1972):



Alice was a younger sister of my grandfather Paul Thure Brorström Sr. (1884-1932). Kendall's tree also shows that her 2nd-great grandparents were Paulus Brorström and his wife Bernhardine Wennström Brorström (although Kendall's tree doesn't include her maiden name).

Our Shared Ancestor Hint is shown in the following screenshot from the Ancestry.com website:



This chart doesn't show Paulus' wife Bernhardine, since I have her listed using her maiden name of Bernhardine Wennström, while Kendall has her listed using her married name of Bernhardine Brorström.

Cool! Kendall is my second-cousin once-removed (2C1R). Put another way, my mother and her grandmother were first cousins.

The noted genetic genealogist Blaine Bettinger found that 2C1R average 129 cM of shared DNA, with a range of 0 to 325 cM. So my 135 cM match with Kendall is exactly in the expected range for our 2C1R relationship.

I contacted Kendall using the message system on the Ancestry.com website, and I was pleased that she responded right away.

Mar 01, 2017

Hi! Wow how cool is this! I am 23 years old and currently getting my master's in Occupational Therapy at Stony Brook University. I live in Centerport, New York.

So I just reviewed all of this with my father William Townsend Perks and he remembers a family reunion here in Centerport, Long Island, NY. Paul

Thure Brorström Jr. stayed aboard our houseboat at the end of our dock for the week of events. My father was very close to his Uncle Paul Brorström Townsend and his daughter Wendy Townsend Baker lives in Seattle, Washington. Her brother Tobin Townsend just recently passed away this year. Paul Brorström Townsend's wife Terry Townsend is still alive and lives in a beautiful home on the water in Bellport, Long Island, NY. We see her all the time and she recently turned 96. My Grandmother Alice Bernice Townsend Perks is buried at the Cedar Hill cemetery in Port Jefferson, Long Island, NY, alongside her mother, Alice Brorström Townsend.

If you ever happen to come visit New York we would love to meet you!

My father took my grandmother's position as a board member at the Townsend Society of America where he is the Treasurer. They have a very interesting website with a lot of Townsend family history, which is published in a quarterly journal. One of the last projects that Paul Brorström Townsend was to re-dedicate the President Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Park in Oyster Bay, Long Island, NY, where his grandfather, Paul Brorström, created the memorial park. If you are interested my dad has an extra copy of the journal that Paul Brorström Townsend and my grandmother, Alice Bernice Perks, created for the Brorström family reunion back in the early 1990's.

I hope to hear from you again!

Sincerely,
Kendall Perks

How great to have a young Brorström-Wennström cousin who is so interested in our family history!

DNA Matches with Other Brorström-Wennström Descendants

Three of my Swedish-American first-cousins have their DNA profiles on the Ancestry.com website: Annmarie Brorström DeMattia, Susan Brorström Baker, and Stuart W. Eck. Their father, Paul Thure Brorström Jr. (1913-2001), was my mother's older brother.

It turns out that all three of them share my DNA match with Kendall:

← AncestryDNA Home > Member Matches for Burks Oakley

Pedigree and Surnames Shared Matches Map and Locations

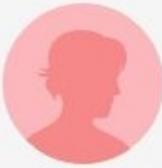
Shared matches with Kendall Perks

1ST COUSIN

★  Stuart Eck 	Possible range: 1st - 2nd cousins  Confidence: Extremely High 	 9 people View Match
★  Susan Baker	Possible range: 1st - 2nd cousins  Confidence: Extremely High 	 No family tree View Match
★  Annmarie Brorström 	Possible range: 1st - 2nd cousins  Confidence: Extremely High 	 277 people  View Match

My first-cousin Annmarie actually has a larger DNA match with Kendall than I do:

← AncestryDNA Home > Member Matches for Annmarie Brorström

★  **Kendall Perks**
Member since 2016, last logged in yesterday

 **Predicted relationship: 3rd Cousins**
Possible range: 3rd - 4th cousins ([What does this mean?](#))
 Confidence: Extremely High 

Amount of Shared DNA

187 centimorgans shared across 8 DNA segments

They share 187 cM across 8 DNA segments.

To my knowledge, Kendall is the first Brorström-Wennström descendant to have her DNA tested on Ancestry.com who is not a descendant of my maternal grandfather, Paul Thure Brorström Sr. (1884-1932). My grandfather had six siblings:

- Malte – He married Grace Mary Smith, but they did not have any children.
- Ebba – She married James Cornell Horton Jr.; their grandson William P. Horton is on Ancestry.com (username ***jhorton95***), but has not had his DNA tested.
- Alice – Her great-granddaughter is Kendall Perks.
- Lillian – She married Charles Alexander Meunier Sr., and their two children were adopted.
- Grace – She married John H. “Jack” Eggers, but to the best of my knowledge, her two granddaughters have not had their DNA tested.
- Pauline – She married Charles F. Beck Sr., and I am not in contact with her grandchildren.

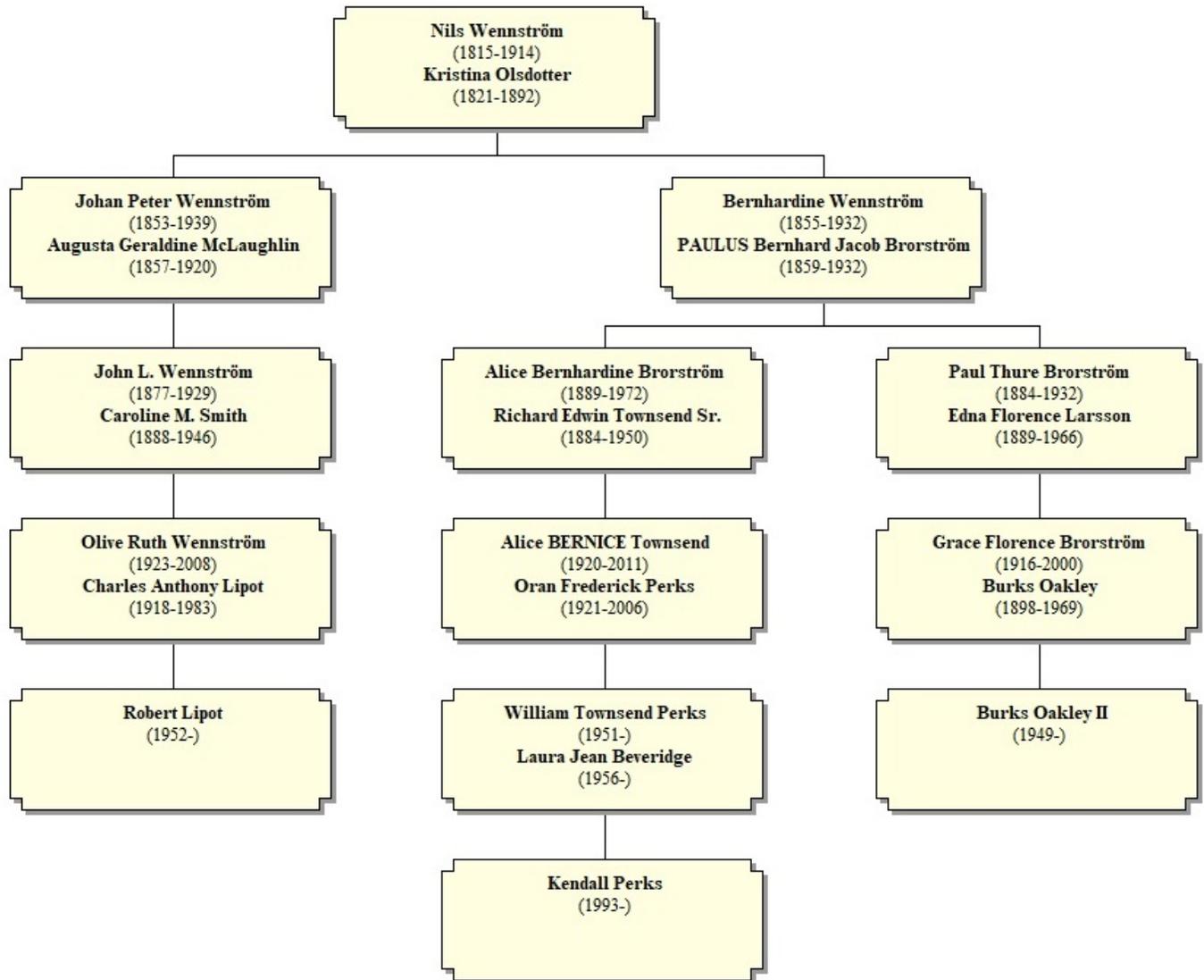
Another Shared DNA Match

Kendall and I have also have a shared DNA match with Robert Lipot, as shown in the following screenshot:

The screenshot shows the AncestryDNA interface for a shared DNA match. At the top, there are navigation tabs: "Pedigree and Surnames", "Shared Matches" (which is selected), and "Map and Locations". Below the tabs, the title "Shared matches with Kendall Perks" is displayed in large, bold, dark grey text. Underneath the title, there is an orange button labeled "4TH COUSIN". To the left of the match details is a star icon and a circular profile picture of a person. The name "Robert Lipot" is shown in blue text with a document icon next to it. Below the name, it says "Possible range: 4th - 6th cousins" with a question mark icon. Underneath that, it says "Confidence: High" followed by a green progress bar that is nearly full. To the right of the match details, there is a green icon with a minus sign and the text "No family tree". Below this, there is a green button labeled "View Match". At the top left of the screenshot, there is a breadcrumb trail: "AncestryDNA Home > Member Matches for Burks Oakley".

Robert Lipot doesn't have a family tree on the Ancestry.com website, but his daughter, Trisha Gable (nee Lipot) does. Robert is descended from Nils Wennstrom (1815-1914) and his wife Kristina Olsdotter (1821-1892).

Combining our three family trees gives:



Amazing to see that Robert, Kendall, and I all share a DNA match, which had to originate with our Wennström-Olsdotter ancestors, who lived in Menlösa, Sweden, in the mid-1800's.

Summary

In this short narrative, I have described my genetic and genealogical relationships with Kendall Perks, who is my second-cousin once-removed. Of course, the DNA match that I have with Kendall had to come from her father, William Townsend Perks, so I can infer that I also have a significant DNA match with him.

My Swedish-American cousins (Annmarie, Susan, and Stuart) all share this DNA match with Kendall on the Ancestry.com website. Kendall and I also have a Shared DNA Match with a Wennström descendant, Robert Lipot.

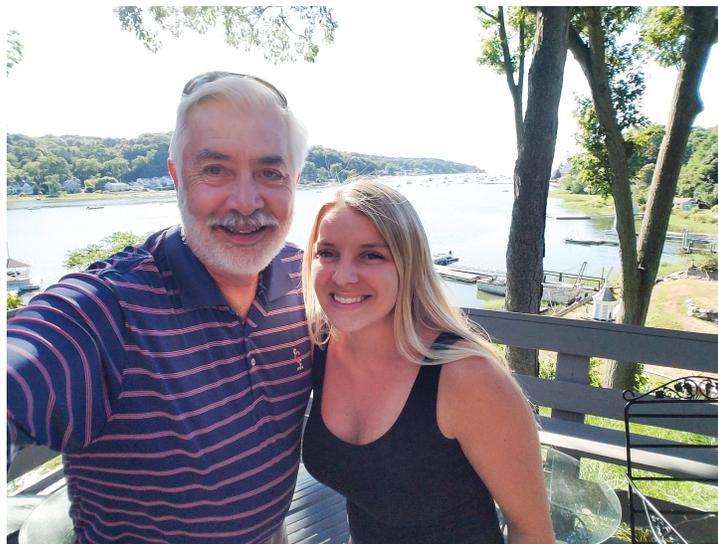
I was able to travel to Long Island in July 2018, and I was able to spend a great afternoon with Kendall and her father Bill. How wonderful to make this connection through a DNA match! [Photos from this visit are in the Appendix.]

Appendix – Photos

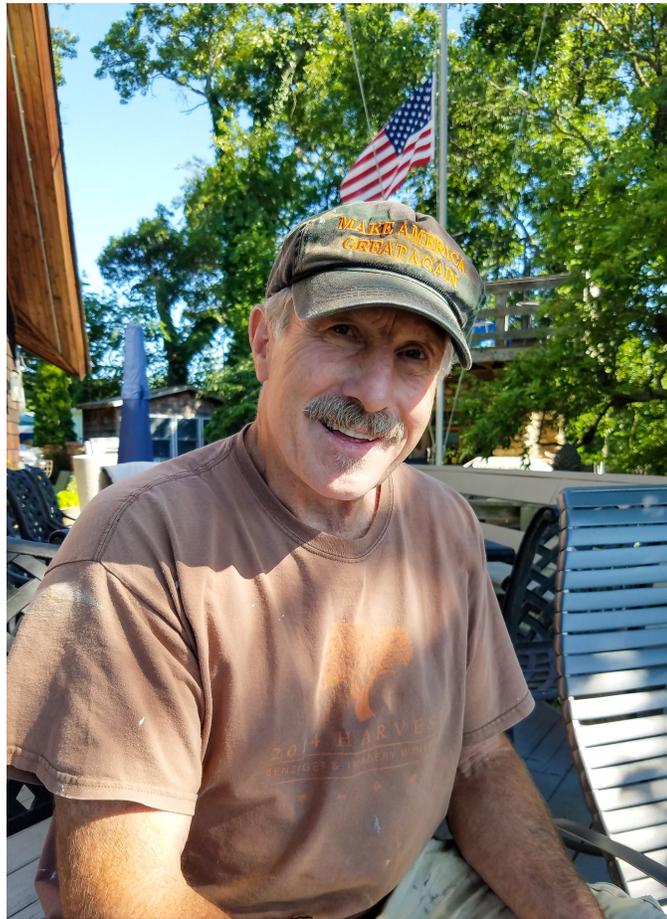
Here are some photos that I took when I visited Kendall and her father William Townsend Perks in Centerport, NY, on 19 July 2018:



Bill Perks on the deck in his backyard.



Selfie with Kendall on the deck in Bill's backyard.



Bill Perks on the deck in his backyard.



The view of the harbor from Bill's deck in Centerport, NY.



Bill's motor yacht *Victory*.



Selfie with Kendall and Bill on Bill's yacht.