

Stuart W. Eck – A Brorström Cousin

by Burks Oakley II
13 August 2018

Introduction





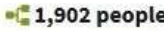
For the past five years, I have been using DNA on Ancestry.com to find new relatives, and thereby expand my family tree. I look at the Ancestry.com website almost daily to see if I have any new DNA matches. Occasionally, I find an interesting DNA match that leads to many days of research. This narrative is about one of those incredibly interesting DNA matches that I never expected to find when I put my DNA on Ancestry.com.

DNA Matches on Ancestry.com





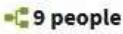
My DNA matches on the Ancestry.com website are shown in order of decreasing size, with the largest match first. In mid-July 2016, I found that I had a new #2 match (after my daughter Amy, who is #1). And that was with a man named Stuart Eck. Who the heck is Stuart Eck?

AncestryDNA Results for Burks Oakley

PARENT/CHILD


★  **Amy Oakley** 
Possible range: Parent, Child - immediate family member 
Confidence: Extremely High   [View Match](#)


1ST COUSIN


★  **Stuart Eck** 
Possible range: 1st - 2nd cousins 
Confidence: Extremely High   [View Match](#)

When I looked at his match, I found that we shared 917 cM of DNA on 41 segments:

AncestryDNA Home > Member Matches for Burks Oakley

 **Stuart Eck**
Member since 2016

 **Predicted relationship: 1st Cousins**
Possible range: 1st - 2nd cousins ([What does this mean?](#))

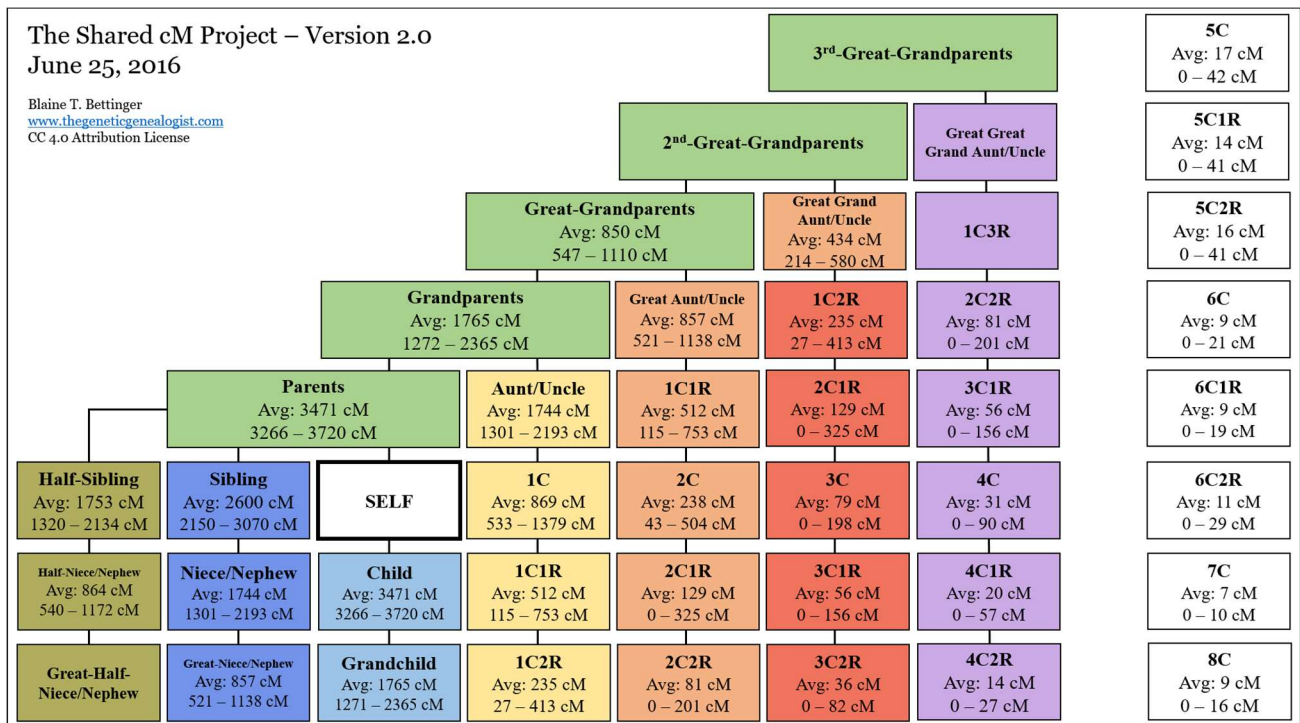
 Confidence: Extremely High 

Amount of Shared DNA

917 centimorgans shared across
41 DNA segments

A centiMorgan (abbreviated cM) is a measure of the size of a DNA match; very roughly, it is one million base pairs in length. Based on the size of this match, Ancestry.com predicted that Stuart and I are in the range of 1st to 2nd cousins.

In 2016, the noted genetic genealogist, Blaine Bettinger, did a study of the size of DNA matches. The results of this study are summarized in the following graphic:



First-cousins (1C) average 869 cM, with a range of 533-1,379 cm. Second-cousins (2C) average 238 cM, with a max of 504. Since Stuart and I have a DNA match of 917 cM, it sure looked like Stuart was my first-cousin. But I thought that I knew all my first-cousins. What gives?

Stuart didn't have a DNA match with Mark Eidem, a first-cousin once-removed (1C1R) on my father's side of the family. So I had to look on my mother's side of the family – the Brorström side of my family – for a connection with Stuart.

Stuart's ethnicity was said to be Scandinavian, which is consistent with a match on my mother's side of the family (all four of her grandparents were Swedish immigrants).



I did various online searches for Stuart Eck. I learned that he was born on 9 April 1956, and that he lived in Florida. He certainly was the right age to be my first-cousin, but I had no idea how we could be related.

At that time, there weren't any other of my Swedish-American cousins on Ancestry. Then in a very short period of time, Lauren Meier's DNA profile showed up on Ancestry.com on 20 February 2017, and Kendall Perks' DNA profile showed up on 28 February 2017.

And they both matched Stuart.

Lauren Meier is a daughter of my Swedish-American cousin Annmarie Brorström DeMattia, and Kendall Perks is a great-granddaughter of Alice Brorström (1889-1972), who was a younger sister of my grandfather Paul Thure Brorström Sr. (1884-1932).

Here is a screenshot showing that I match Lauren Meier, and we share this DNA match with Stuart:

The screenshot shows the AncestryDNA interface for "Member Matches for Burks Oakley". At the top, it says "Shared matches with L.M.". Below this, there is a section for "1ST COUSIN" with a star icon. The match is for "Stuart Eck" with a profile picture. To the right of the name, it says "9 people". Below the name, it says "Possible range: 1st - 2nd cousins" with a question mark icon, and "Confidence: Extremely High" with a green progress bar. A green "View Match" button is on the right.

Similarly, here is a screenshot showing that I have a DNA match with Kendall Perks, and we share this match with Stuart:

The screenshot shows the AncestryDNA interface for "Member Matches for Burks Oakley". At the top, it says "Shared matches with Kendall Perks". Below this, there is a section for "1ST COUSIN" with a star icon. The match is for "Stuart Eck" with a profile picture. To the right of the name, it says "9 people". Below the name, it says "Possible range: 1st - 2nd cousins" with a question mark icon, and "Confidence: Extremely High" with a green progress bar. A green "View Match" button is on the right.

Stuart's DNA match with Kendall Perks means that he has to be descended from my great-grandparents, Paulus Brorström (1859-1932) and his wife Bernhardine Wennström (1855-1932).

Based on the size of my DNA match with Stuart, I know that he is my first cousin. And based on Stuart's DNA matches with Lauren and Kendall, I know that Stuart is related to me on my mother's side of the family. The only way for this to fit together is that Stuart has to be a child of one of my mother's siblings – Ruth or Paul. My Aunt Ruth had four children, but no child born in 1956. So that leaves my Uncle Paul to be Stuart's biological father.

I concluded that Paul Thure Brorström Jr. (PTB Jr.) fathered Stuart in the summer of 1955 while he was married to his wife Harriet and Stuart's mother, Sue Helen Eck, was married to her husband George Eck. As I have thought about this, it is highly possible that neither Paul nor Sue Helen Eck knew that Paul was Stuart's biological father.

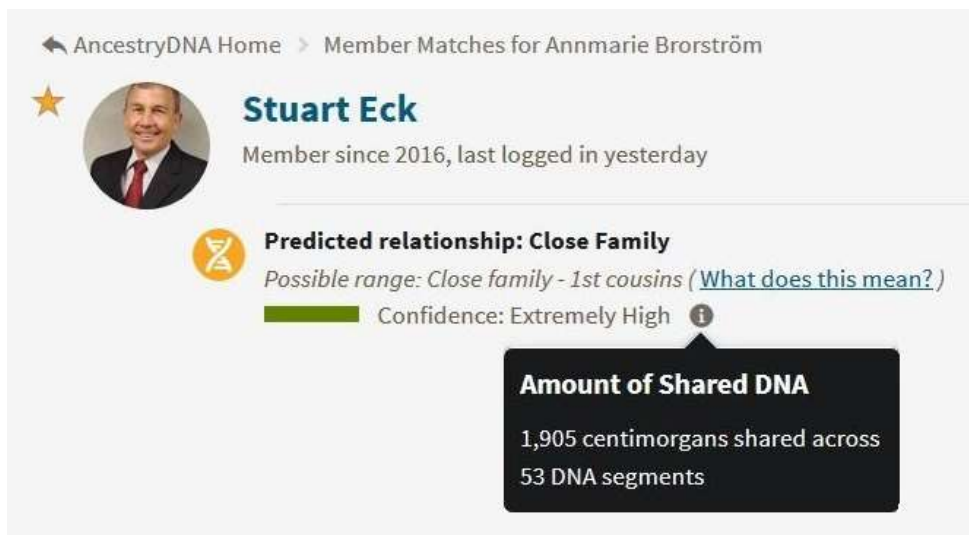
Both of these families, the Brorströms and the Ecks, lived in southeast Florida. Paul and Sue Helen Eck both worked in real estate. And I'll leave it at that.

If indeed PTB Jr. was Stuart's biological father, then my Brorström cousins, Peter, Beth, Annmarie, and Susan, are Stuart's half-siblings – they have the same father, but a different mother. Of course, Stuart is biologically my first-cousin, since his father and my mother were siblings. I am just as related to Stuart as I am to Paul's other children: Peter, Beth, Annmarie, and Susan. [Paul and Harriet had a fifth child, David, who drowned in 1953 while still a toddler.]



DNA Matches between Stuart, Annmarie, and Susan


Let me digress and mention more recent DNA findings. Fast forward a year or so, and by then, both Annmarie and Susan had their DNA profiles on the Ancestry.com website, so it became possible to compare their DNA profiles with Stuart (and with each other).



Annmarie and Stuart share 1,905 cM across 53 DNA segments:



← AncestryDNA Home > Member Matches for Annmarie Brorström

  **Stuart Eck**
Member since 2016, last logged in yesterday

 **Predicted relationship: Close Family**
Possible range: Close family - 1st cousins ([What does this mean?](#))

 Confidence: Extremely High 

Amount of Shared DNA
1,905 centimorgans shared across
53 DNA segments

Susan and Stuart share 1,651 cM across 46 DNA segments:

AncestryDNA Home > Member Matches for Susan Baker

Stuart Eck
Member since 2016, last logged in yesterday

Predicted relationship: Close Family
Possible range: Close family - 1st cousins ([What does this mean?](#))
Confidence: Extremely High

Amount of Shared DNA
1,651 centimorgans shared across 46 DNA segments

According to the study by Blaine Bettinger, half-siblings share 1,753 cM, with a range of 1,320 – 2,134 cM. So Annmarie’s match with Stuart (1,905 cM) and Susan’s match with Stuart (1,651 cM) are exactly what is expected for their half-sibling relationship.

When I looked at the DNA profiles for Susan and Annmarie on Ancestry.com, I found that their DNA match with each other was much larger than their match with Stuart (as I would expect, since they are full siblings). They share 2,664 cM on 57 DNA segments:

AncestryDNA Home > Member Matches for Susan Baker

Annmarie Brorström

Predicted relationship: Immediate Family
Possible range: Immediate family - close family ([What does this mean?](#))
Confidence: Extremely High

Amount of Shared DNA
2,664 centimorgans shared across 57 DNA segments

The Bettinger study found that full siblings average 2,600 cM, with a range of 2,150 – 3,070. So the match between Susan and Annmarie is exactly what would be expected.

Contacting Stuart, and then Meeting Him

I spend winters at my condo in Naples, Florida. By the time I learned of the shared DNA matches with Lauren and Kendall in late February 2017 and took some time to figure out exactly what this meant, it was almost time for me to head north for the spring and summer. But I wanted to meet Stuart as soon as possible, knowing that we both were living in south Florida at the time. I sent Stuart a lengthy letter about the Brorström family in late March 2017, and he responded on 29 March 2017 in a note on the Ancestry.com message system.

I must say your letter got my attention but was no surprise. That has been the rumor in my family for most of my life, but no one knew who it was. Most speculated my Uncle Stuart I'm named after. Maybe we could have lunch this Friday.

We arranged to meet for lunch at PF Chang's in the Sawgrass Mall on Friday, 31 March 2017 (I was leaving for Illinois the following Monday). How fun to meet a first-cousin and tell him all about his Brorström family. And to learn about his Eck family – he was his mother's sixth child, with three older brothers and two older sisters. Of course, he was the sixth child of PTB Jr., as well.

Stuart is just as related to his Brorström half-siblings (PTB Jr.'s children) as he is related to the Eck half-siblings he was raised with.



Burks & Stuart, 31 March 2017

Stuart's Family

I mention Stuart's family here because they are my Swedish-American relatives. Stuart has a daughter, Jessica, and a son David. Jessica has a young daughter Jordan. I've met Jessica several times and Jordan once, but I'm still waiting to meet David – hopefully we can connect when I am in Florida this coming winter.



Jessica, Jordan, and Stuart, 20 April 2018



David and Stuart, April 2016

Stuart has an older brother, Donald Eck, and two older sisters, Dorothy Gill and Theresa Hockaday. Here is a photo of the four of them:



Dorothy, Donald, Stuart, and Theresa

Subsequent Interactions with Cousin Stuart

As soon as I met Stuart, I informed my Swedish-American Brorström cousins about their half-brother, Stuart, and they have gotten together a number of times.



Selfie with Stuart and Anmarie, 28 July 2018.

Stuart and some members of his family on both sides helped me celebrate my 68th birthday at the Sea Watch restaurant on the beach in Ft. Lauderdale:



(L-R): Peter Thure Brorström, Wayne Harrell (Theresa's guy), Annmarie Brorström DeMattia, Theresa Hockaday, Don Eck, Jacki Eck (Don's wife), Rob Baker (Susan's son), Jessica Eck, Burks (the birthday boy), Stuart Eck, Don Baker (Susan's husband), and Susan Brorström Baker. 4 November 2017.

In late January, several of us had brunch at a restaurant on the Intercoastal Waterway in Delray Beach:



Burks, Stuart, Susan, Don, and Jacki. 28 January 2018.

Photos – Definitely a Swedish Connection

I remember that my Uncle Paul (Paul Thure Brorström Jr.) had incredible blue eyes. So I wasn't at all surprised to see that Paul's granddaughter, Jessica, and great-granddaughter, Jordan, also have intense blue eyes.



Jessica and Jordan.

My Uncle Paul's children also share the blue eyes, as evidenced by this photo of Peter Thure and Annmarie.



Peter Thure and Annmarie.

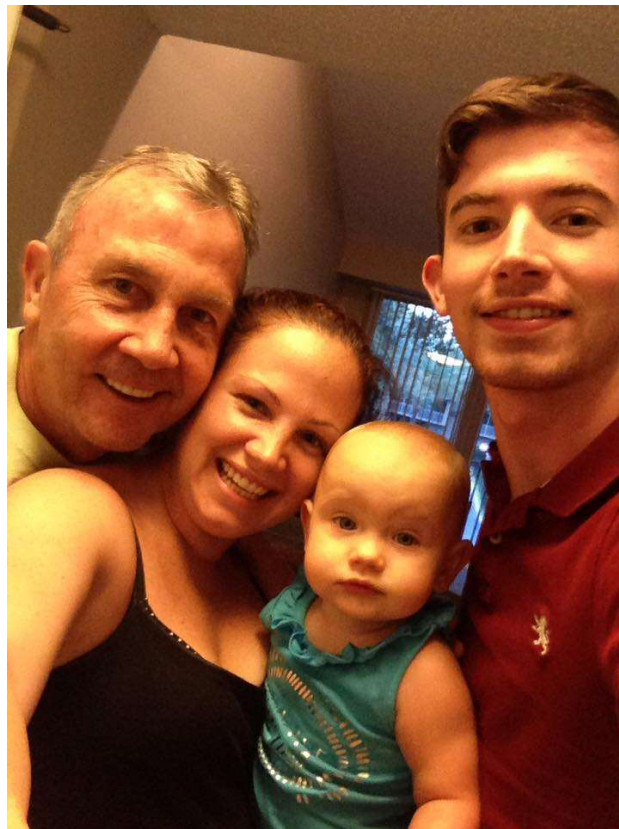
Summary

In this narrative, I have described how I learned about my DNA match with Stuart Eck, and the process that I went through to determine that Paul Thure Brorström Jr. was Stuart's biological father. This absolutely is the most amazing discovery that I have made on the Ancestry.com website, and I doubt that I will ever top it.

My new first-cousin Stuart Eck is a really great guy, and I have enjoyed getting to know him and some of the half-siblings that he was raised with.

Of course, my connection to Stuart means that his children, Jessica and David, are my first-cousins once-removed, and Jessica's daughter Jordan is my first-cousin twice-removed.

Appendix – More Photos of Stuart's Family



Stuart, Jessica, Jordan, and David.



David, Stuart, and Jessica.



Jessica and Stuart with their catch. Stuart enjoys fishing, and has had a fishing boat for most of his life.



Stuart and his catch.



Stuart and his catch – obviously he has enjoyed fishing for much of his life.



Stuart and Jessica with her catch.



Annmarie and Stuart, on "The Avenue" in Delray Beach. 1 June 2018.