

# At Long Last – A Brorström Connection in 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 to confirm and to expand my family tree. I have my DNA profile on the Ancestry.com website, and I regularly visit this website to search through my DNA matches to see if I can connect them to various branches of my family tree.

My mother was Grace Florence Brorström (1916-2000). Her paternal grandparents were Paulus Brorström (1859-1932) and his wife Bernhardine Wennström (1855-1932), who immigrated from Sweden to America in 1882. I have DNA matches on the Ancestry.com website with a number of descendants of this couple who live in America, including my first-cousins Susan Brorström Baker, Annmarie Brorström DeMattia, and Stuart Eck, as well as Kendall Perks, who is my second-cousin once-removed.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to my DNA matches with my Swedish-American cousins, have DNA matches with Swedes who are related to me through my Wennström ancestors; these matches help to confirm my Wennström heritage in Sweden. However, as of the summer of 2018, I did not have any DNA matches with Brorström relatives living in Sweden, which was somewhat disconcerting to me. Two possibilities could account for the lack of DNA matches with Brorström descendants in Sweden: first, no Brorström descendants in Sweden had submitted their DNA for testing on the Ancestry.com website, or second, there was a non-paternal event in the past, meaning that my Brorström immigrant ancestor was not really a Brorström.

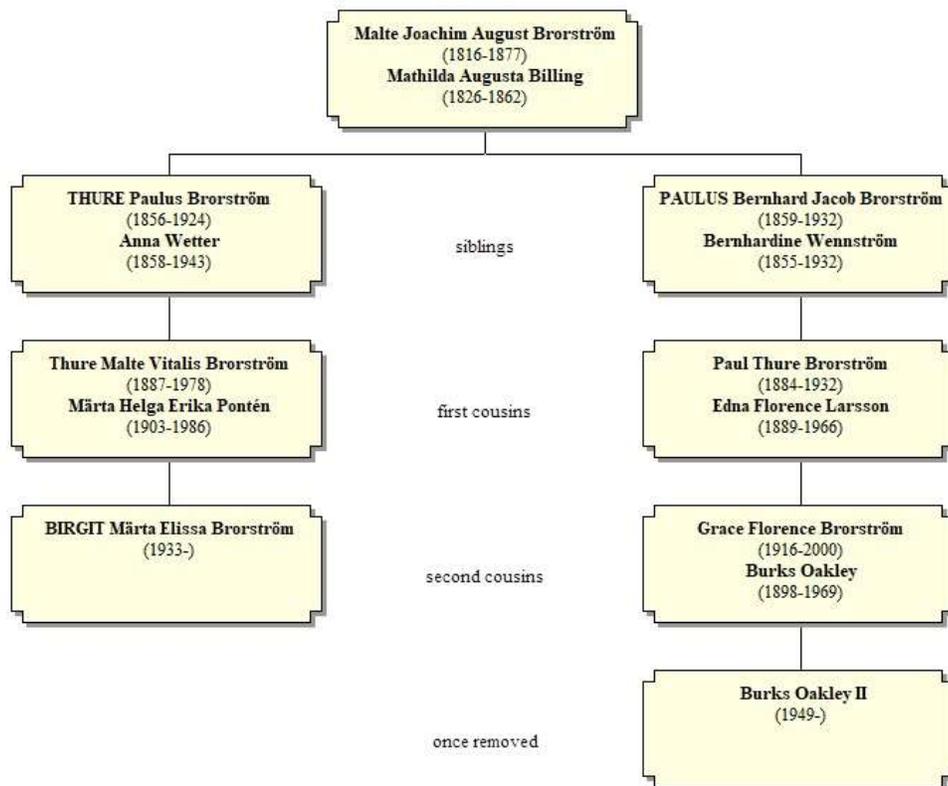
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<sup>1</sup> Kendall Perks is a great-great granddaughter of the Brorström-Wennström immigrant couple; she is descended from their daughter Alice Brorström (1889-1972).

To address this issue, I asked several of my Brorström cousins in Sweden to submit their DNA to Ancestry.com, and this narrative describes what I learned through this process.

### ***Birgit Märta Elissa Brorström – A Brorström Relative in Sweden***

One of my Brorström relatives living in Sweden is Birgit Brorström (married name of Tesch). She was born in 1933, and currently lives in Lidingö (a suburb of Stockholm). She also has a summer home on the island of Utö, in the Stockholm archipelago. She is my second-cousin, once-removed, as shown in the following chart:



Birgit and I both are descended from Malte Brorström (1816-1877) and his second wife Mathilda Augusta Billing (1826-1862).

Birgit submitted her DNA to the Ancestry.com website in the late summer of 2018, and the results recently became available on the Ancestry.com website.

And the result is.....

← AncestryDNA Home > Member Matches for Birgit Tesch

★  **Burks Oakley**  
Champaign, Illinois - Member since 2005

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

 Confidence: Good 

**Amount of Shared DNA**  
29.7 centimorgans shared across  
3 DNA segments

Yes, Birgit and I indeed do have a DNA match!! We share 29.7 centiMorgans across three DNA segments. Recall that one centiMorgan (abbreviated cM) is approximately one-million base pairs in length. Any match that is larger than 7 cM is considered to be significant. Note that based on the size of this DNA match, Ancestry.com estimates that we are fourth-cousins.

Birgit also has DNA matches with my Swedish-American cousins, Susan Brorström Baker and Annmarie Brorström DeMattia, as well as Susan's son Robert Baker and Annmarie's daughter Lauren Meier. Birgit also has a DNA match with my younger daughter Amy Oakley. Of all these people, Susan's match with Birgit is the largest:

← AncestryDNA Home > Member Matches for Susan Baker

★  **Birgit Tesch**  
Member since 2018, last logged in last week

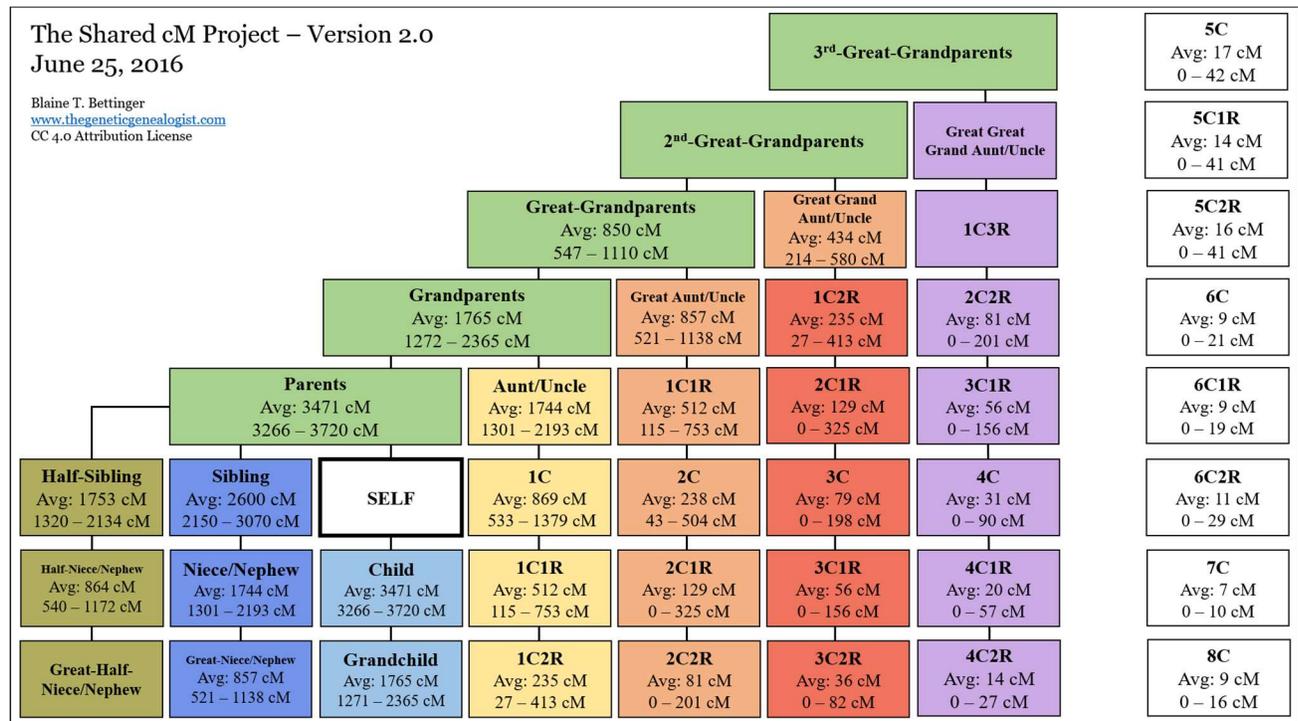
 **Predicted relationship: 4th Cousins**  
*Possible range: 4th - 6th cousins ([What does this mean?](#))*

 Confidence: Very High 

**Amount of Shared DNA**  
51 centimorgans shared across 3  
DNA segments

Susan and Birgit share 51 cM across three DNA segments. I should add that Annmarie and Birgit share 28.6 cM across two DNA segments. Interestingly, Birgit does NOT have a DNA match with Stuart Eck, who is another one of my Brorström first-cousins.

In 2016, the noted genetic genealogist Blaine Bettinger published the results of a study examining how much DNA is shared between known relatives.

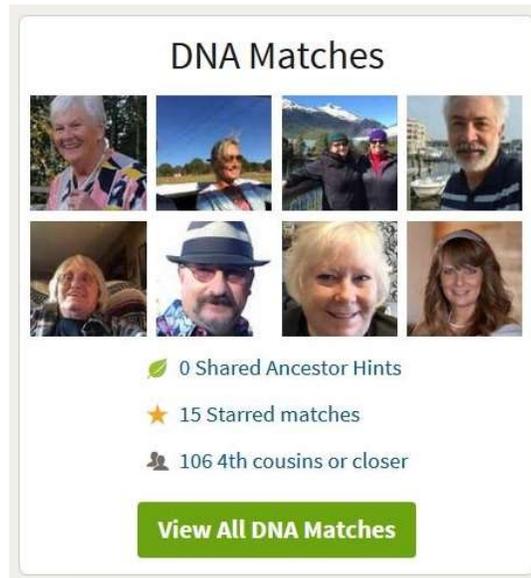


He found that second-cousins once-removed (2C1R – my relationship with Birgit) average 129 cM of shared DNA, with a range of 0 to 325 cM. So the DNA matches that my first-cousins and I share with Birgit (28.6, 29.7, and 51 cM) are much smaller than average, which is why the Ancestry.com website estimates that we are fourth-cousins.

But the important finding for me is that I now have a DNA match with a known Brorström relative in Sweden, and this match goes back to Malte Brorström and his wife Mathilda Billing.

## ***More About Birgit's DNA Analysis***

Birgit's daughter Lisen Tesch gave me permission to view Birgit's DNA profile on the Ancestry.com website. I learned that Birgit has DNA matches with 106 individuals who are at the level of a 4<sup>th</sup> cousin or closer:



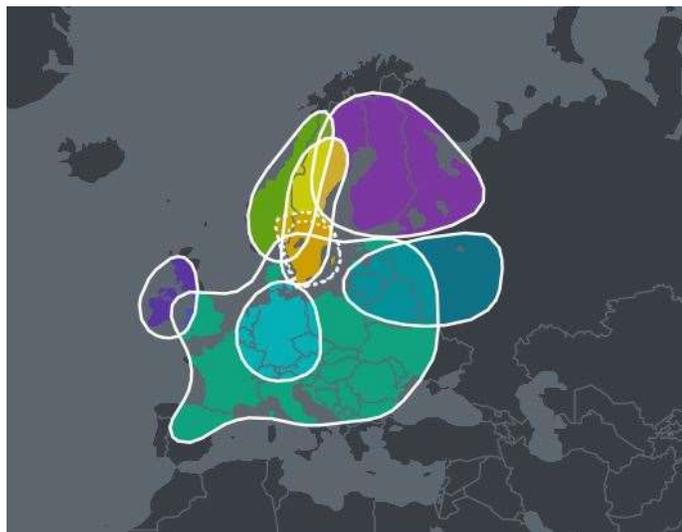
I have over 1000 matches at the level of fourth-cousin or closer, but that is because many more Americans than Swedes have submitted their DNA to Ancestry.com.

Ancestry.com also provides an "Ethnicity Estimate" by comparing an individual's DNA profile with profiles of "reference panels", that is, DNA profiles of people whose families have lived in one area for generations. Here is Birgit's estimate:

### **Ethnicity Estimate**

● Sweden	59%
● Norway	22%
● European Jewish	8%
● Germanic Europe	4%
● Baltic States	3%
● Ireland and Scotland	2%
● Finland	2%

Birgit's ethnicity estimate shows that she is predominately Swedish, but also has ancestors from Norway and other areas of Europe. A map of this is shown below:



Interestingly, the Ancestry.com estimate actually locates the Swedish component of Birgit's ethnicity to southern Sweden – and the Brorström family was indeed from Skåne (the southern-most county in Sweden).

The Ancestry.com website lists an individual's DNA matches in order of size – from largest to smallest. Here is Birgit's:

## AncestryDNA Results for Birgit Tesch

### PARENT/CHILD



[Lisen Tesch](#)

Possible range: Parent, Child - immediate family member

Confidence: Extremely High

No family tree

[View Match](#)

### 3RD COUSIN



[wceder](#)

Possible range: 3rd - 4th cousins

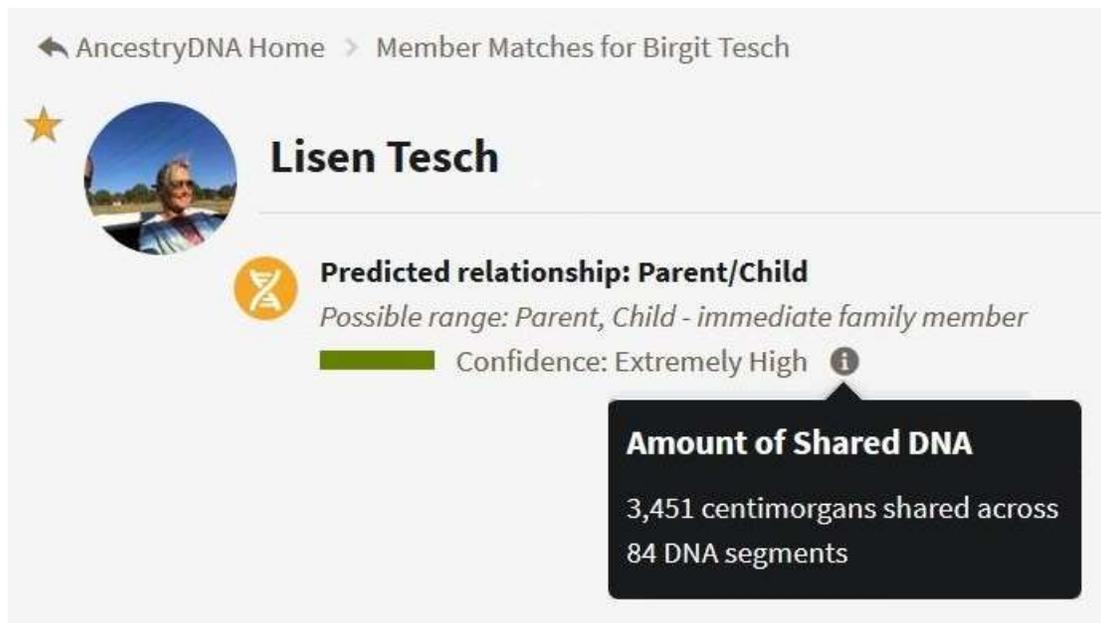
Confidence: Extremely High

5 people

[View Match](#)

Birgit's largest DNA match is with her daughter Lisen Tesch, while the next largest match is with a man having the username of **wceder**, and this latter match is at the level of a third-cousin. I also have a DNA match with **wceder**, and I know from my research that his name is Walter Cederholm, and he is descended from a family who immigrated to America from Sweden [more about the match with Walter Cederholm in a subsequent narrative].

The details of Birgit's match with Lisen are shown here:



The screenshot shows the AncestryDNA interface for a match with Lisen Tesch. At the top, it says "AncestryDNA Home" with a back arrow and "Member Matches for Birgit Tesch" with a right arrow. Below this is a star icon and a circular profile picture of Lisen Tesch. To the right of the picture is her name "Lisen Tesch". Below the name is a DNA double helix icon and the text "Predicted relationship: Parent/Child". Underneath that is "Possible range: Parent, Child - immediate family member". A green progress bar is shown with the text "Confidence: Extremely High" and an information icon. A dark grey callout box on the right contains the text "Amount of Shared DNA" followed by "3,451 centimorgans shared across 84 DNA segments".

Birgit and Lisen share 3,451 cM across 84 DNA segments. The Bettinger study in 2016 found that a parent-child relationship averages 3,471 cM of shared DNA, with a range of 3,266-3,720 cM. So the DNA match between Birgit and Lisen is right on the average for their parent-child relationship.

### ***Conclusion***

I now have a DNA match with a Brorström relative living in Sweden – Birgit Tesch (born Brorström). I conclude that the reason that I didn't have a match prior to September 2018 was due to the fact that no Brorström descendants in Sweden had submitted their DNA for testing on the Ancestry.com website. I share the DNA match that I have with Birgit with my Swedish-American cousins. This DNA match helps to confirm my Brorström heritage in Sweden.

## ***Appendix A – More about the Tesch Family***

Birgit Tesch (born Brorström) was married to Tomas Erik Tesch (1933-2015). Tomas was a son of the noted Swedish architect, Nils Tesch (1907-1975).<sup>2</sup>



Nils Tesch (1907-1975)

Nils Tesch graduated from the Royal Institute of Technology in 1930 and attended the KKH Architecture School from 1932 to 1934. His design projects included the Rotundan at the Royal Opera in Stockholm and the Ministry of Commerce building in the Norrmalm district of Stockholm, which is considered to be of great cultural historical value. Nils Tesch also designed the Östra Mölna Radhus (Townhouses) on the island of Lidingö, and interestingly, Birgit lives in one of these homes.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nils\\_Tesch](https://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nils_Tesch)



The Rotundan at the Royal Opera House in Stockholm.



Ministry of Commerce building in central Stockholm.



Östra Mölna Radhus in Lidingö.

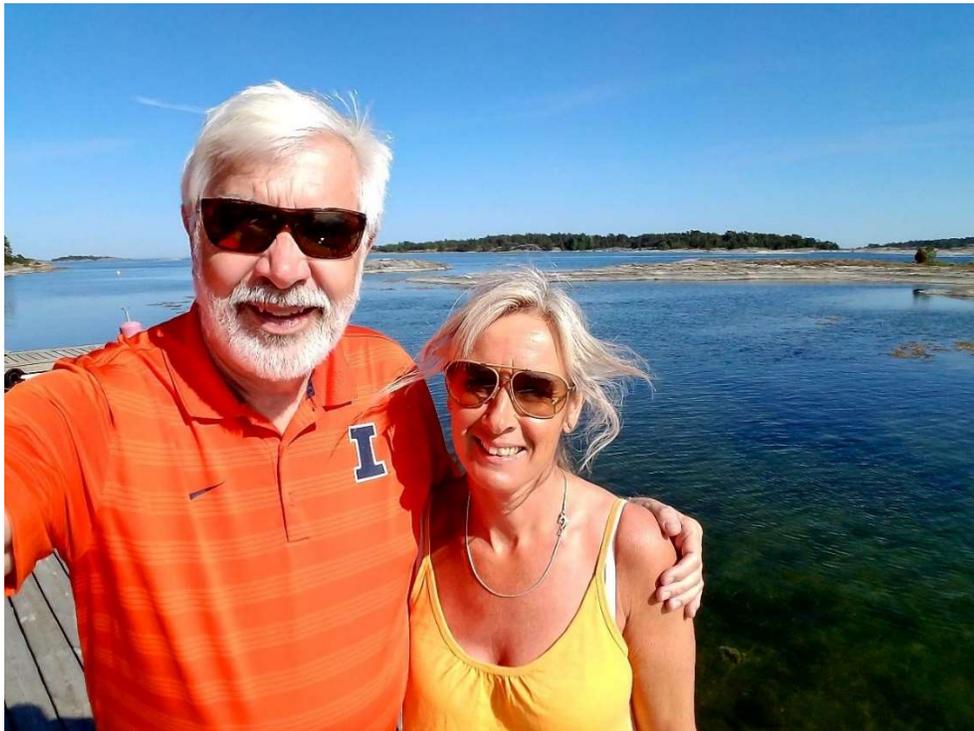
### ***Visiting with Birgit and Lisen***

I have been fortunate to visit with Birgit during two of my visits to Sweden. I visited her at her home in Lidingö in 2017, and at her summer place on the island of Utö in 2018.

I also have visited Lisen several times at her beautiful floating home in Nacka Strand, as well as at her summer place on Utö. In November 2017, Lisen spent a few days visiting me at my condo in Naples, Florida.



Burks & Birgit outside her home on Utö, May 2018



Burks & Lisen near her home on Utö, May 2018



Birgit with her daughters Clara (L) and Lisen (R) at Clara's home on Utö, May 2018



Selfie with Lisen on the beach in Naples, Florida, November 2017



Satellite view of Lisen's floating home in Nacka Strand (suburban Stockholm).  
From Google Maps.