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# Genealogy kicks!

## A longtime genealogist tells about some of his thrills

BY NORMAN SANDIN (PONO)

I know that some of you who read the things I write about genealogy think I'm nuts and I admit that before I started I might have thought the same thing, but there are some parts of it that are real kicks. Granted, the data input and organizational activities are pretty boring. That's why my website, database, charts, and files are never quite up to date. It is more fun researching! Long before I started seriously researching my ancestry, my ex-wife and I tried to contact contemporaries on both sides and gather as much data as they had and were willing to share. We filled two large notebooks with data about aunts, uncles, cousins, and their spouses.

After retirement, I got into the ancestry of my mother and father, whose parents immigrated from Sweden to the U.S.A. Since all four of my grandparents were from Sweden, in pursuing my own ancestry I became very familiar with Swedish records and found that they were accurate, quite extensive, and readily available.

That initial effort resulted in the discovery of some 567 direct ancestors and many more siblings, spouses, and in-laws. Every one of these discoveries was a kick and I suppose that might have been enough, but apparently I am obsessive, compulsive, or otherwise committed to filling in blanks, such that I looked for other trees to climb. Once in a while a discovery gives me a big kick. I'd like to share a few of these with you to see if you get a feeling for what I'm seeking.

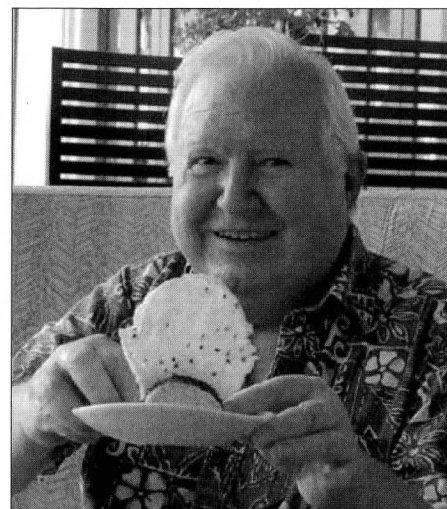
### 1. What became of great-uncle Erik?

My father's father Karl Erik (b. 1873 Ljusnarsberg [Örebro län]) was born out of wedlock. His mother Brita Stina Jansdotter (b. 1846 Ljusnarsberg) married two years later and grandpa took his surname from her husband Per Erik Sandin (b. 1840 Ramsberg, Örebro län).

Three years later grandpa's half-brother Erik Victor Sandin (b. 1878 Ljusnarsberg) joined the family. Grandpa immigrated to "Amerika" in 1891 when he was 18 and never saw Erik again. Grandpa told the family that Erik also immigrated, but I had no luck finding him in the U.S.A.

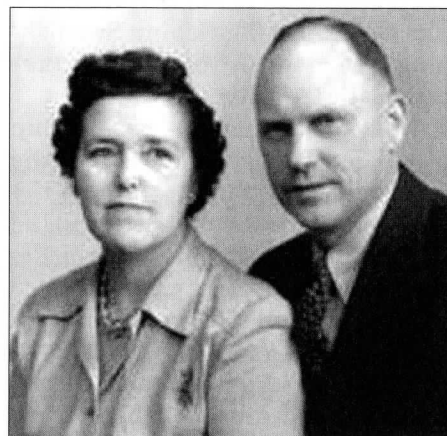
As the years passed, more and more Swedish records were released, and more and more have been made available online. Some time ago, I found church records indicating that Erik made arrangements to immigrate in 1898 when he was 20 years old. But still no indication in the U.S. records or the Swedish records of such a journey. Another batch of church records became available and I found Erik *after* the scheduled date of departure. With help, I found that instead of immigrating he had become a chauffeur, married a girl from Norway, lived some in Sweden and some in Norway, and died in 1902 when he was only 24 years old.

The mystery of Uncle Erik was now solved. But wait, I followed his bride, Inga Sofia Jensine Andersen, only to find that Erik had left her pregnant, and a son was born in 1903. This research and the balance of this



Norman Sandin (Pono) in 2013.

story all took a lot of time and effort, but let me condense it. Erik's orphan son Victor Birger Sandin immigrated to the U.S., settled in Washington State, had two sons, and eventually, I am now in touch with one of his sons, Vern Sandin, a half-first cousin!



Mamie and Clarence Sandin, Norman's parents.

## 2. We are all related (apparently)

Two of my mother's (Mamie Eleanora Tillner [b. 17 July 1896 in Bessemer, MI]) sisters (Beyda Cecelia and Edna Emelia) married two young men who happened to be Lindberg brothers, Evald Theodore and Karlton Axel.

This concentration of relationships provided an opportunity that was difficult to ignore. To add to the temptation, the brothers had Swedish ancestry. Their father was called Charles Lindberg, born in 1867 in Nordmark, Värmland. Research in Swedish sources was by now familiar to me. The older sister and her husband had two daughters while the younger had one son. These three are my first cousins. These cousins were (and the two remaining are) quick to inform me of family events to keep the contemporary trees current.

A few years ago I dug out several generations of Lindberg ancestry and shared a nearly 200 page report and some charts with these first cousins. Included in that report was a bit of data I found about the wife of the male cousin. The two female cousins (Jean Charlotte and Janet Charlene Lindberg [sisters]) married two men who happened to be brothers named Wiersbe. Once again I was faced with the opportunity and temptation of digging into a concentration of genes and once again I succumbed to the temptation.

I didn't get very far with the Wiersbe line because the paternal grandfather of the brothers came from Germany and I really don't know my way around German records. However, the maternal grandparents were born in Sweden and immigrated to the U.S.A., so I was off and running. As usual, some of the lines petered out after about four generations, but one eventually went out to nine generations with earliest births in the mid-1600s.

A birth in 1806 on that line took place in the parish of Hällefors (Örebro län) where some of my ancestors came from. This encouraged me to go



The Tillner family: Carl Henning, Margaret Marian, John Leonard, Edna Emelia, Viola Alfhilda, (front row l to r) Mamie Eleanora, Rubie Eloise, Frederika, Albert, Myron Albert, and Beyda Cecelia, taken in about 1921.

on, and the next generation produced a man named Nils Nilsson Zander (b. 1775 Hällefors), which rang a bell. I checked my database and, sure enough, I had that very person listed. He was not a direct ancestor, but I had significant information about him. To make a long story short, the maternal grandfather of the Zander I ran into was Sven Larsson (b. 1726 Hällefors) and he married twice.

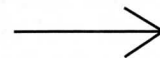
His first wife had a daughter that led to the Wiersbe line and his second wife had a daughter that led to my line. The Wiersbe brothers who married my two first cousins turn out to be half fourth cousins once removed!

The "half" is due to our lines coming from two different wives of our common ancestor, Sven Larsson. Now that alone was a big thrill, but on closer examination, Sven's *boupp-teckning* was one that I had translated and have online. The Swedish *boupp-teckning* is kind of like probate papers, but includes an inventory of the deceased's estate with values, information about heirs, and sometimes an indication of the estate's distribution. It is a wealth of insight into the life of the deceased.

I was not done yet. Another *boupp-*

*teckning* I have online was for Sven's son-in-law, the husband of Sven's daughter who is in the Wiersbe line, and the father of the Zander I first ran into. Even though this person was not in my direct ancestry, I chose to translate the *boupp-teckning* to see if any items listed could be identified as the same ones that were passed down from Sven. There's still more. I wrote and put online two Ponograms that describe the life of Sven from the eyes of Sven's widow, using his *boupp-teckning* as a source for details.

And then there is the frosting on the cake of discovery. When I made the announcement of my discovery of the common ancestor, I heard from a 5<sup>th</sup> cousin in Sweden who now lives just two miles from the Sven Larson farm Hyttbacken and on the same property of the Zander farm Södra Torpen! The kicks just keep coming. To summarize, the Lindberg sisters are my first cousins through my mother's side, and they married Wiersbe brothers who are my half fourth cousins once removed through my father's side!





The pulpit in Grangärde church. Made during the 1600s.

### 3. Four brothers marry four sisters

Per Nilsson Västgöte (b. ca 1586 in Lekeryd (Jönköpings län) was an ancient ancestor who I learned quite a lot about. Per and his wife Sara Olofsdotter had several children including four daughters, Elisabet, Kerstin, Kari, and Margreta Persdöttrar who were born between 1643 and 1653. Per had a good friend, neighbor, and business associate named Wellam Bononi, who lived as a mining farmer (*bergsmän*) in Hällsjön, in Grangärde parish (W).

Wellam and his wife Sara Mårtensdotter had several children including five sons, Frans, Erik, Mårten, Abraham, and Wellam Wellamsöner, born between 1632 and 1649.

Nature and proximity prevailed,

and between 1664 and 1674 all four of Per's daughters found matches with four of Willam's sons!

The part that tickled me the most was that while the parents (Per and Sara) of the four sisters were my direct relatives, it was their *son* Hans Persson (b. 1632 Grangärde (Dalarna län) who perpetuated my line, not one of the four sisters, and furthermore Hans did not marry Wellam's only daughter.

### 4. Did Grandma travel alone at 19 years old?

Early in my research, I was able to find in the church records that my maternal grandmother Fredrika Johannesdotter (b. 1872 Ärtemark (Älvsborgs län) came to the U.S.A. in 1891, when she was 19 years old.

I was shocked that a girl of that age would have the courage to make a journey like that alone. But then, her mother and her sister had died, her older brother had immigrated, and all that was left of the family was a younger brother. Her father Johannes Andersson (b. 1846 Ärtemark) had been away in the U.S.A. for several years while she was cared for by her father's mother, Anna Svensdotter (b. 1810 Ärtemark).

When he returned he remarried

and my grandma didn't get along with the new wife, so grandma was probably incentivized to get away from home for a new life. But did she travel alone?

New records shed light on the story. It turns out that grandma's older brother Albin Johannesson (b. 1868 Ärtemark) apparently returned from the U.S.A. for the sole purpose of picking up and traveling with grandma in her grand journey! I breathed a sigh of relief.

### Afterword

I hope these four summaries give you a bit of the flavor of genealogy and why I spend so much time on it. The kicks are unexpected and really rewarding, but I'm told that the real benefit of the genealogy research is keeping my mind sharp. Is it working? You tell me.

The author is Norman Sandin (also called Pono). His e-mail is: <kapono@maui.net>

**Editor's note:** Pono's articles about *bo-uppteckningar*, etc. can be found in SAG 2008/4, 2009/3, and 2009/4.

There are also links to those articles, and more on page 30 in this issue.

## The 1753 change of the Swedish calendar

Before 1753 Sweden still used the Julian calendar, while Pope Gregory XIII had instituted the Gregorian calendar in 1582. The difference is that in 400 years there are 3 leapdays too many. The Gregorian calendar solved this problem by taking out the leapdays that fell on years ending in two 00s and where the first figures were not divisible by four.

By 1753 they difference between the two calendars had grown to be 11 days. You may understand that this caused problems for international trade when contracts were to be signed and when they went into force, and even within countries. Thus the Swedish government decided to change to the Gregorian

calendar in 1753 instead of continuing using the Julian calendar.

That it was not easy to just take away 11 days is understandable. Even that far back in time there were contracts that stated when fees were to be paid, etc. There were also yearly markets that were supposed to be held on a special day at the end of February. They could not just be cancelled.

In the 1753 calendars the month of February ended on the 17th, after which March started. This change left space on the February page to inform people of when the taxes should be paid and when the markets should be held, and other useful information.

Öfver Månad.			
Waniga St.	D up	Nöd St.	
10 D Schelastica	2, 3	långvarigt	21
11 S Euprosina	11, 1	sunnan moder	22
12 S Juliana	12, 2	botar	23
13 S Agabus	1, 3	med 16 och	24
Om fyrstunda föderaf, Luc. 2.			
14 S Cyregesi	2, 3	Öf. o. 44. f.m.	25
15 M Sigfrid	1, 3	regn, samt	26
16 S Juliana	4, 2	och 17	27
17 D Pelochron	5, 0	och 18	28
Selen 69.	1	ned.	69.
D. 2. min.	15	fl. 6255.	fl. 6255.
11 fl. 7: 5.	fl. 4: 55.	17	6: 49
15: 11.			

måten offroad bdr, wistet till den 7 Marsi, som detta de  
 Nöwre Wärdhemsböcker.

1. Jansfönde till de Ellosta dagar, som wärlennas  
 wid slutet af Februari Månad, stola skölande: Helgeda-  
 gar detta år fäst. 24 Söndagar: nemligen Werdtsmåbo  
 dagen på fjerde Söndagen efter Werdtsmåbo, samt  
 de den 18 Januari: Maria Werdtsmåbo, 18da Sönd-  
 ag efter Werdtsmåbo; Werdtsmåbo-dagen 18da  
 Söndag efter Söndags-Söndagen; Maria Werdtsmåbo  
 dag 18da Söndag i Juli Månad; Michelsdag 18da  
 Söndag efter Werdtsmåbo; och Werdtsmåbo 18da  
 18da Söndag uti November Månad. 1 1

February was also called Gøjemånad, which supposedly means "Snow month".