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Augustana Seniors Fall 1884: Lars Herman Beck

Patti Grod

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Lars Herman Beck

Lars Herman Beck was born on November 20, 1859 in Alingsas, Vastergotland, Sweden.¹ He was born to Johan Olofsson, born on December 27, 1810 in Bälinge, Alvsborgs Ian, Sweden, and Maja Stina Pettersdotter, born May 5, 1812 in Bälinge, Alvsborg Ian, Sweden.² Like many who emigrated to the United States during this time, Beck's original last name was Olofsson but was changed once his family made the move.

Beck grew up with five other siblings, including four brothers and one sister. Their names were Svante Johansson Olofsson (b. October 9, 1849), Sofia Carolina Johansdotter Olofsson (b. November 11, 1851), Constantin Alfred Johansson Olofsson (b. October 29, 1854), Janne Edvard Johansson Olofsson (b. March 22, 1857), and Anton Johansson Olofsson (b. November 11, 1862).³ While living in Sweden, the Olofsson family attended the Alingsas parish in Alvsborg county, Sweden.⁴ On April 10, 1868, the Olofsson family, including both parents and all the children, emigrated to the United States.⁵ Their destination was St. Peter, Minnesota.⁶

When settled in Minnesota, Lars and his father continued farming, just as they had done previously in Sweden.⁷ When Lars was old enough to attend university, he started off by going to G.A. College in Minnesota (1878-1881), on the track of eventually becoming a pastor.⁸ He then transferred to Augustana College to be apart of the graduating class of 1885, and ultimately become a pastor.⁹ After graduating Augustana, Beck went on to complete two years of seminary, and later earned a PhD from Yale University in 1892.¹⁰ Further research is to be

¹ Conrad Bergendoff, *The Augustana Ministerium* (Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana Historical Society, 1980), pg 85. *The Ministerium* was compiled from other sources. It is a transcription. When the original sources were in Swedish, it is also a translation.

² *Emibas*, The Swedish Emigration Databases and Indexes, obtained as a printout from the Swenson Center on January 10, 2017 (Augustana College, Rock Island, IL). *Emibas* provides basic information about Swedish families that moved to the United States, including names, birthdates, birthplaces, and death dates.

³ *Emibas*, the Olofsson family records.

⁴ *Alingsas Parish Church Records*, Balinge AI:11 (1860-1877). Image 54, page 47. Obtained as a photocopy from the Swenson Center at Augustana College, Rock Island, IL. Source: Arkiv Digital AD AB

⁵ *Emibas*, the Olofsson family records.

⁶ Bergendoff, *Augustana Ministerium*, 85.

⁷ Permanent record card for L. Herman Beck, 1881, MSS 241 Augustana College Office of the Registrar records.

⁸ Bergendoff, *Augustana Ministerium*, 85.

⁹ Bergendoff, *Augustana Ministerium*, 85.

¹⁰ Bergendoff, *Augustana Ministerium*, 85.

conducted to determine where he attended seminary, as well as what he earned a PhD in.

Once a pastor, Lars traveled to the east coast of the United States to practice and preach christianity. He was a pastor at churches in Waterbury, CT, Naugatuck, CT, Arlington, NJ, Kenilworth, NJ, Kane, PA, and St. James, MN.¹¹ Research thus far has not been able to determine the exact churches he was registered at. Somewhere along the way, Lars met Thorborg Charlotta Soderberg, who he later married.¹² The couple were the parents of eight children, only five were listed in church records and research.¹³ It is possible that records were not yet found that included all of their children, or they passed away when they were very young. The names of some of the children included: Thorborg H. Fredericks (b. January 22, 1896), Rolf Herman (b. September 7, 1901), Carl Alfrid (b. January 28, 1903) , Tyra Amalia Maria (b. August 31, 1906), and Tord Svan (b. February 5, 1908).¹⁴ His family was last registered with the New Jersey Kenilworth Trinity Lutheran Church, in Kenilworth, New Jersey.¹⁵

Lars Herman Beck later passed away on September 17, 1935, in Albany, New York.¹⁶

¹¹ Bergendoff, *Augustana Ministerium*, 85.

¹² Bergendoff, *Augustana Ministerium*, 85.

¹³ Bergendoff, *Augustana Ministerium*, 85.

¹⁴ *New Jersey Kenilworth Trinity Lutheran* church records, unknown year. Obtained as a photocopy from the Swenson Center, Augustana College, Rock Island, IL.

¹⁵ *New Jersey Kenilworth Trinity Lutheran* church records for the Beck family.

¹⁶ Bergendoff, *Augustana Ministerium*, 85.

Ancestors of Lars Herman Beck

Generation 1

1. **Lars Herman Beck:** For more information about Lars, see the biography in the main part.

Generation 2

2. **Johan Olofsson:** Johan was born on December 27, 1810 in Bälinge, Alvsborgs, Sweden¹⁷
3. **Maja Stina Petersdotter:** Maja Stina was born on 5 May 1812 in Baligne, Alvsborgs, Sweden¹⁸

¹⁷ *Emibas*, the Olofsson family records.

¹⁸ *Emibas*, the Olofsson family records.

Descendants of Lars Herman Beck

Generation 1

1. Lars Herman Beck. Lars married Thorborg Charlotta Soderberg¹⁹. For more information about Lars and Thorborg, see the biography in the main part.

Lars and Charlotta had eight children²⁰. However, research thus far has only uncovered the names of five children.

2. Thorborg H. Fredricks was born 22 January 1896 in Brooklyn, New York.²¹

3. Rolf Herman Beck was born on September 7, 1901 in Orange, New Jersey.²²

4. Carl Alfrid was born on January 28, 1903.²³

5. Tyra Amalia Maria was born on August 31, 1906 in Kenilworth, New Jersey.²⁴

6. Tord Svan was born on February 5, 1908 in Kenilworth, New Jersey.²⁵

¹⁹ *New Jersey Kenilworth Trinity Lutheran church records for the Beck family.*

²⁰ Bergendoff, *Augustana Ministerium*, 85.

²¹ *New Jersey Kenilworth Trinity Lutheran church records for the Beck family.*

²² *New Jersey Kenilworth Trinity Lutheran church records for the Beck family.*

²³ *New Jersey Kenilworth Trinity Lutheran church records for the Beck family.*

²⁴ *New Jersey Kenilworth Trinity Lutheran church records for the Beck family.*

²⁵ *New Jersey Kenilworth Trinity Lutheran church records for the Beck family.*

Questions for Further Research

Since I was able to discover both names, birthdates and birthplaces of Lars' parents, further and more investigating may help me to answer the question: Who are Lars' grandparents, great-grandparents, and other ancestors?

What were the names of Lars and Thoroborg's three unidentified children? Based on the information I found in the *Augustana Ministerium*, it recorded the couple to have eight children. I was only able to find information about five of them.

My research on Lars Herman Beck allowed me to discover that he went to college to become a pastor. I was able to find the locations of the churches he was a pastor at, but not the names. A further research question could be: what were the exact churches Lars Herman Beck was a pastor at?

I have created a record for Lars Herman Beck in the Family Tree on *FamilySearch*. The record locator is KH81-5H9. I would hope to be able to add more information about Lars Herman Beck's descendants and ancestors.

Source List

Augustana Office of the Registrar records (MSS 241), Special Collections,
Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois.

Alingsas Parish Church Records.

Bergendoff, Conrad. *The Augustana Ministerium: A Study of the Careers of
the 2,054 Pastors of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Synod/Church
1850-1962*. Rock Island, Illinois, Augustana Historical Society, 1980.

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