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A Malung family in America

- what happened next?

In SAG 2008/2, p. 10, the sad story was told about the immigrating family of Torspers Mats Halvarsson, his wife Joni Marit Jonsdotter, and their children, and how they lost newborn twins in Nordmark (Värml.) when on their way to the port of Göteborg.

The family left Göteborg 1869 June 15 on the *S/S Scandinavian* for Leith in Scotland.¹ From there they probably travelled to Glasgow and got on a big steamer for America.

When the family was found on the Göteborg passenger lists, the family were recorded on two different pages. The daughters Kerstin, Brita, and Anna were listed among other passengers, and the parents, Mats and Marit, among people with prepaid tickets.¹ This shows that somebody, probably a relative in America, had sent them a ticket, but who could that be? Was there anyone in Mats's or Marit's family that had immigrated to America earlier?

Next step

The next step was to check on the siblings of Mats and Marit, so I started with Marit.

Marit was born in 1833 Oct. 28 in Östra Fors village in Malung,² one of the children of Jonas Larsson and his wife Brita Nilsson. Jonas and his family lived at Östra Fors #31, and had the farm name Lindjo, which alternated with the farm name Joni.

This couple had several children,³ all born in Östra Fors:

- d. Karin, b. 1819 Feb. 12.
- d. Anna, b. 1822 Mar. 23.
- d. Brita, b. 1824 Nov. 14.
- s. Lars, b. 1827 Sep. 26.
- d. Marit, b. 1833 Oct. 28.
- s. Jonas, b. 1837 Jan. 8.
- d. Kerstin, b. 1842 Jun. 19.

When following the family forwards in time, it was found that daughter Brita "ran away to America" in 1846.⁴

This indicates that she had joined the prophet Erik Jansson and his followers that immigrated in 1846 to Bishop Hill in Henry County, Illinois.

According to the Bishop Hill database, built by Bob Nelson of Trempealeau, WI,⁵ Brita married first in 1848 July 30 in Bishop Hill to Erik Sallin, who seems to have died before 1851.⁵ By 1864 she was married to Anders Olsson Nordin, born 1823 Aug. 27 in Buckarby, Nora parish (Västmn.), who died in Bishop Hill in 1908.⁶ Their daughter Christina Mathilda Nordine was born 1864 May 8 in Bishop Hill.⁵

Mrs Brita (Jonson) Nordin, one of the few remaining of the older Bishop Hill colonists, passed away Saturday night, October 16 1909, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Halverson where she had gone for a visit about a month ago and was taken sick almost as soon as she arrived there. Mrs. Nordin was born Nov. 17, 1824 in Östra Fors, Dalarna, Sweden. In 1846 she left Sweden and with a party of Jansonnists came to this country, arriving in Bishop Hill the following spring and here in this vicinity she has lived ever since. Since her husband, Andrew O. Nordin, died in April '08 she has had her home with her daughter, Mrs. J. O. J. at the old home for a few miles west of Bishop Hill. She is survived by her daughter, five grandchildren, one sister here and three in Sweden, two brothers in Sweden and many other relatives. The funeral occurred from the Colony church on Tuesday afternoon, the services being conducted by Rev. A. J. Strandell and were attended by a large number of old friends and neighbors to pay their last respects to the departed one.

Galva News 1909 Oct. 21.

In Brita's obituary⁶ it is mentioned that she had a sister in Bishop Hill, which was her younger sister Marit, widow of Torspers Mats Halvarsson, and mother of Ed Halverson (americanized spelling), where Brita died.

So it seems very likely that Brita was the one who sent the tickets to



Joni Marit Jonsdotter, married Halvarsson, (1833–1917). (Photo from private collection in Malung, courtesy of Margaretha Hedblom.)

the Halvarsson family, but perhaps did not know that they also had the three girls. Maybe children's tickets were less expensive, so Mats and Marit could pay for the children themselves.

Marit lived longer and did not die until 1917 Dec. 21 of a stroke in her home in Bishop Hill. She was survived by her daughter Mrs. Christine Alstrom of Clay Center, KS, Anna, who lived with her mother, and Edward Halverson in Bishop Hill.⁷

End notes:

- 1) Göteborg Passenger Lists, volume SE/GLA/12703/E IX/1, 1869, picture ID A0056890_00353 (SVAR).
- 2) Malung C:2, page 176.
- 3) Malung AI:4b, page 32.
- 4) Malung AI:5b, page 32.
- 5) <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?db=bishophill>
- 6) Brita Nordine obituary, *Galva News* 1909 Oct. 21.
- 7) Martha Halverson obituary, *Galva News* 1917 Dec. 27.

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