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## Genealogical Workshop: Records of an Immigrant Family. Part 4

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# Genealogical Workshop: Records of an Immigrant Family. Part 4.

James E. Erickson

This is the fourth and final part of the series featuring documents associated with my paternal great-grandparents, John E. and Ida C. Erickson. For purposes of comparison, two types of American sources associated with the end of life (i.e., newspaper accounts/obituaries and death records) are juxtaposed with one Swedish source associated with the beginning of life (i.e., birth records).

As you read through the first newspaper account,<sup>1</sup> ostensibly written about my great-grandmother's ninetieth birthday party (see document 17a), you will probably be struck, as I was, by the wealth of genealogical/family history information that it contains. Only four of the ten paragraphs that appeared in the *Iron River Reporter* dealt with her party; the remaining six summarized the Erickson family story. It is a surprisingly detailed recapitulation of many major dates and events that have been highlighted and documented in the previous three parts of this series. By comparison, her obituary (see document 17b) is quite brief, although it does mention the fact that she had a brother in Stambaugh and three siblings in Sweden. The take-home lesson learned from these two newspaper accounts is simple—don't rely solely on obituaries when researching local newspapers for information on your immigrant(s).

For ease of comparison, the American death records and Swedish birth records for John E. and Ida C. (see documents 18-21) are illustrated together. Note that in at least one important category—the names and birthplaces of the deceased individual's parents—the information provided is, in one case, incomplete; in the other, incorrect. In spite of the fact that an American death record is considered a primary document, it should be obvious from this example that the veracity of the information on a death record is only as good as the knowledge of the informant who supplied the information!

So, with these last two documents, we have come full circle in the lives of two Swedish immigrants. **Jan Erik Jansson**, who was born at Småland in Hjulsjö Parish on 5 November 1849, died as **John Erick Erickson** in Stambaugh, Iron County, Michigan, on 14 December 1920. His wife, who was born as **Ida Carolina Andersdotter** at Havsjön in Hjulsjö Parish on 14 July 1850, died in Stambaugh on 30 September 1940. They, along with all of their children save two,<sup>2</sup> are buried in the Stambaugh City Cemetery.

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<sup>1</sup> Newspaper accounts associated with John Erick Erickson are unavailable, since copies of the *Iron River Reporter* prior to 1921 are no longer extant.

<sup>2</sup> Viktor Emanuel Jansson is buried in Hjulsjö, Sweden, and Solomon Erick Erickson is buried in Iron Mountain, Dickinson Co., MI.

## Birthday Party Marks Settler's 52d Year Here

ST AMBAUGH — "Grandma" Erickson celebrated her ninetieth birthday last Sunday, with six of her boys and girls on hand among a crowd of nearly 75 relatives and friends that joined in the day of well-wishing.

Grandma—Mrs. Ida Erickson—is one of the Stambaugh area's oldest settlers, coming here 52 years ago, and most of her children are still here in the neighborhood with her. The birthday party was held at the home of a daughter, Mrs. Ellen Lindblom, one of the two girls and boys who came to this country from Sweden in 1888, with their parents. The Lindblom farm is a mile west of M-189, south of the Iron River Country club.

Mrs. Erickson has five sons, all but one living near here. Victor and Fritz live in Stambaugh, Solomon in Iron Mountain, Oscar is farming across the way from Lindbloms, and Arthur lives at the Lindblom farm. Son Fritz is in Minnesota. Another daughter was the late Mrs. Jenny Lindstrom, of Iron River.

There are 18 grandchildren, and 19 great grandchildren.

The Ericksons first settled in Iron county in the fall of 1888, after homesteading for a while near Cannon Falls, Minn. Grandpa came here to work in the booming mines. He worked at the old Riverton and Isabella mines until 1892, when the family again moved to a farm, homesteading near the Brule on section 23. They moved back into Stambaugh in 1910.

Grandpa Erickson died in 1920, and until 1932, Grandma kept house in Stambaugh. Then she moved to her daughter's home.

At 90, she enjoys life, and wants to work. But the children won't let her. Grandma sees the men out haying, and wants to aid in wiping the dishes so the women can get out and help too.

Mrs. Erickson has been a charter member of Mission Covenant church of Stambaugh since 1889, and attended services when they were held in the Christ Presbyterian church.

Grandma knows she hasn't her old strength. "I have the will," she told one of the family. "If I had the strength, I'd go out and hoe the quack right out of those potatoes."

In pictures Sunday, the family snapped four generations, with Grandma the proudest and happiest of all.

## Mrs. Erickson, Pioneer, Dead

Mrs. Ida Erickson, 90, who came to Iron county a half century ago, died last evening shortly before midnight at the home of a daughter, Mrs. Ellen Lindblom, near the Edison school in Stambaugh township.

She was born in Sweden July 14, 1850, and came to this country in 1888. Mr. Erickson died 20 years ago.

Surviving her are five sons, Oscar, Victor, Fritz, Arthur and Solomon, and one daughter, Mrs. Lindblom. She also leave a brother, Ulric Anderson, of Stambaugh, 18 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren. Two sisters and a orother remain in Sweden.

Mrs. Erickson was a member of the Mission Covenant church of Stambaugh.

The body will lie in state at the Stambaugh funeral home until the hour of services set tentatively for 1:30 p. m. Friday from the parlors and 2 p. m. from the church. Rev. Daniel Bloomquist will officiate. Interment will be in Stambaugh cemetery.

**Document 17.** Two newspaper accounts associated with Ida C. Erickson: (left) her ninetieth birthday—"Birthday Party Marks Settler's 52d Year Here," *Iron River Reporter*, 19 July 1940, 6; and (right) her obituary—"Mrs. Erickson, Pioneer, Dead," *Iron River Reporter*, 1 October 1940, 2.

**STATE OF MICHIGAN**  
Department of State—Division of Vital Statistics.

**TRANSCRIPT OF CERTIFICATE OF DEATH—LOCAL REGISTER.**

1 PLACE OF DEATH  
County Iron  
Township Sambaugh  
or  
Village  
or  
City (No. \_\_\_\_\_ St.; \_\_\_\_\_ Ward) Registered No. 11

2 FULL NAME John Erick Erickson (If death occurred in hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number.)

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS			MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH	
3 SEX <u>m</u>	4 COLOR OR RACE <u>w.</u>	5 MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED (If female word) <u>Married</u>	6 DATE OF DEATH <u>Dec 14, 1920</u> (Month) (Day) (Year)	
7 DATE OF BIRTH <u>Nov 5, 1849</u> (Month) (Day) (Year)			8 I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from <u>Dec 1, 1920</u> to <u>Dec 14, 1920</u> , that I last saw him alive on <u>Dec 14, 1920</u> , and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at _____ m.	
9 AGE <u>71</u> yrs. <u>2</u> mos. <u>14</u> da. If LESS than 1 day, _____ hrs. or _____ min.?			The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows: <u>Heart Rupture</u>	
10 OCCUPATION (a) Trade, profession or particular kind of work <u>Farmer</u> (b) General nature of industry, business or establishment in which employed (or employer)			11 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (FOR HOSPITALS, INSTITUTIONS, TRANSIENTS OR RECENT RESIDENTS) At place of death _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ da. In the State _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ da. Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? _____ Former or usual residence _____	
12 BIRTHPLACE (State or country) <u>Sweden</u>			13 PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL <u>Sambaugh Mich</u> DATE OF BURIAL <u>Dec 20, 1920</u>	
PARENTS	14 NAME OF FATHER <u>Jno Erickson</u>		Contributory <u>Chronic Intestinal</u> (Secondary) <u>Chronic Intestinal</u> (Primary) <u>Chronic Intestinal</u> (Signed) <u>W. E. Erickson</u> M. D.	
	15 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or country) <u>Sweden</u>		State the DISEASE CAUSING DEATH, or in deaths from UNKNOWN CAUSES, state (1) MALARIA OF INTEREST; and (2) whether ACCIDENTAL, SUICIDAL, or HOMICIDAL.	
	16 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <u>Elsie Borg</u>		17 UNDERTAKER <u>William J. Johns</u> ADDRESS <u>Iron River</u>	
18 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or country) <u>Sweden</u>		19 THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE (Informant) <u>Victor Erickson</u> (Address) <u>Sambaugh Mich</u>		
20			21 REGISTRAR <u>W. E. Erickson</u>	

**Document 18.** Certificate of Death of John Erick Erickson, 14 December 1920, Sambaugh Township, Iron County, Michigan, Registered No. 11. Note that the informant, Victor Erickson, incorrectly identified his father's parents as Jno (John) Erickson and Elsie Borg (compare with names in document 19 below).

87	11	5	Jan Erik	11	5	Jan Olsson	11	Småland	26
						Eva Gustafsdotter			

**Document 19.** Birth and christening record (födelse- och doplängd) for Jan Erik Jansson (alias John Erick Erickson), Hjulsjö Parish, C:4, No. 87, 5 November 1849. Note that his parents are Hemmansbrukare (farmer) Jan Olsson and Eva Gustafsdotter, age 26, from Småland.

SOCIAL SECURITY NO.		CERTIFICATE OF DEATH		State File No.	
If veteran, name war		MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH		B13-P257	
Bureau of Records and Statistics					
FULL NAME Mrs. Ida Erickson		Local File No.		6457	
PLACE OF DEATH: Iron		USUAL RESIDENCE OF DECEASED: Mich. Iron			
County: Iron		State: Mich. County: Iron			
Township: Stambaugh		Township: Stambaugh			
City or Village:		City or Village:			
Name of hospital:		Street No.:			
Length of stay in hospital: In this community:		If foreign born, how long in U. S. A.:		years	
Sex: Female		Color or Race: W		Single, Married, Widowed or Divorced: Widow	
NAME OF HUSBAND OR WIFE:		MEDICAL CERTIFICATION		Date of death: Sept, 30, 1940	
Name: _____ Age, if alive: _____		I hereby certify that I attended the deceased from Sept, 30, 1940 to Sept, 30, 1940. I last saw him alive on Sept, 30, 1940. Death is said to have occurred on the date stated above at 11:30 P. M. Duration			
Birth date of deceased: July 14, 1850		Immediate cause of death: Premem (Labor) 2 days			
Age: Years 90 Months 2 Days 16		Bilateral			
Birthplace: Sweden		Other contributory causes of importance: Myocarditis Chronic			
Usual occupation: Housewife		Major findings and dates of operations:			
Industry or business:		Of autopsy:			
Name: Audero Johnson		In case of violence, state if accident, homicide or suicide:			
Sweden		Date: _____ 19 _____			
Birthplace:		Where did injury occur? (Specify city, county, or state):			
Maiden Name: Caroline		In industry, home or public place?:			
Sweden		Was disease or injury related to occupation of deceased?:			
Birthplace:		Signature: R. E. White M. D.			
Informant: Fritz Erickson		Address: Stambaugh Mich.			
Address: Stambaugh Mich.		Address:			
Burial, cremation or removal (Circle the word which applies):		Filed: Oct. 5 1940		Local Registrar	
Place: Stambaugh Mich.					
Cemetery: Stambaugh Date: Oct. 4, 1940					
Funeral director's signature: M. L. Fansher					
Address: Stambaugh Mich.					

Document 20. Certificate of Death of Ida C. Erickson, 30 September 1940, Stambaugh Township, Iron County, Michigan, Local File No. 6457. Note that the informant, Fritz Erickson, correctly (Audero is an obvious misspelling of Anders) but incompletely (he did not know his grandmother's maiden name) identified his mother's parents (compare with names in document 21 below).

45	12	14	Ida Carolina	12	15	Anders Jansson	Hbruk	Rosén	
						Carolina Rosendal			21

Document 21. Birth and christening record (födelse- och doplängd) for Ida Carolina Andersdotter (i.e., Ida Carolina Erickson), Hjulsjö Parish, C:4, No. 45, 14 and 15 July 1850. Note that her parents are Hbruk [= hemmansbrukare] (farmer) Anders Jansson and Carolina Rosendal, age 21, from Havsjön.