12-1-2000

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Genealogical Workshop: 
Records of an Immigrant Family. Part 2

James E. Erickson

Four documents are featured in this article, which represents part two of a four-part series featuring my paternal great-grandparents, John E. and Ida C. Erickson. They are all from American sources and include a page from a passenger list for the port of Boston, Massachusetts; a birth record from Cannon Falls, Minnesota; a page from the register of a Covenant church in Stambaugh, Michigan; and two pages from the Erickson family Bible.

Part one of this series ended with the Johan Erik Jansson family leaving the port of Göteborg, Sweden, on 6 April 1888.1 On 24 April 1888, just eighteen days later, Johan E. Johnson and his family arrived in Boston, Massachusetts aboard the SS Catalonia, which had embarked from Liverpool, England (see document 5). His wife, Ida C., was five months pregnant.

The family proceeded directly to Cannon Falls, Minnesota, where they undoubtedly stayed with Ida’s maternal aunt (moster), Mathilda Charlotte Rosendahl, and uncle, Per Gustav Jansson (Johnson), who had arrived in Cannon Falls six years earlier.2 During these first four months in the U.S., John and Ida obviously made a decision to change their surname, because a son named Fred Erickson (alias Fritz, my paternal grandfather or farfar) was born in Cannon Falls on 15 August 1888 to John E. and Carolina (see document 6).

Sometime during the next four months, the Erickson family moved to the iron-mining village of Stambaugh in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, where a number of John and Ida’s relatives already lived.3 John and Ida became charter members of Svenska Missionsförsamlingen (the Swedish Mission [now Grace Covenant] Church) on 26 January 1889 (see document 7). This document is surprisingly detailed; more Lutheran-like than a typical Covenant record. Note the use of the surname Erickson and the fact that all of the dates recorded are consistent with those that appear in the Swedish records already highlighted. The only mistake on this record is the date of arrival in America. Document 5 clearly shows that it was 24 April (not 20 April) 1888.

The Erickson family Bible (see document 8) is also surprisingly detailed. Although it represents a classic example of a record that must be used with

3 Ibid., 26.
extreme caution, it proved to be reliable and accurate, save that it failed to indicate that the family surname in Sweden was Jansson. In particular, the birth dates used are consistent with those appearing in other Swedish and American sources (but see document 6). Interestingly, for the Swedish birthplaces, individual farms and the county (län) are listed, but not the name of the parish. I have a special fondness for this document, because it was clearly the record that got me interested in my own family’s history and allowed me to easily bridge the Atlantic and enter the Swedish records (in spite of the unusual name change from Jansson to Erickson!).

Document 5. Portion of the passenger list for the SS Catalo, which arrived in Boston, Massachusetts, on Thursday, 24 April 1888. Columns 8 through 12 are not shown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column 1. No.:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>129 - 1300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column 2. Names:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johan [sic] E. Johnson; Ida C. √; Ellen √; Oscar √; Jeanne [sic] √; Victor √</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columns 3 and 4. Age in years and months:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35; 35; 15; 11; 4; 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column 5. Sex:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M[ale]; F[female]; √; M; F; M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column 6. Calling [i.e., occupation/profession]:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourer; Wife; Servant; Child; d[itt]o; d[itt]o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column 7. The country of which they are citizens:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d[itt]o, i.e., Sweden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Erickson family Bible, Sjelf-förklarande Svensk Bibel: Den Heliga Skrif, was published by Chandler Bros., Rockford, IL in 1889. The birth data recorded (except Solomon and Arthur) not only precede the publication date but also appear to have been recorded by one individual at one sitting. See Ralph Crandall, Shaking Your Family Tree: A Basic Guide to Tracing Your Family’s Genealogy (Dublin, NH 1986), 33.

Column 8. Intended destination or location: ditto, i.e., U.S. America
Column 9. Date and cause of death:
Column 10. Location of compartment, or space occupied: Steerage
Column 11. Number of pieces of baggage: [4]
Column 12. Transient, or in transit, or intending protracted sojourn: Protracted Sojourn

Document 6. Certificate of Birth of Fred (alias Fritz) Erickson, 16 [sic] August 1888, Village of Cannon Falls, Goodhue County, Minnesota. The information shown was recorded in a large Register of Births. The top image is the left-hand part of the page; the bottom image is the right-hand part of the page. Neither the name (Fred) nor the birth date (16 August) in this certificate agree with the information in the Erickson family Bible, i.e., Fritz and 15 August (see document 8b).

| Column 1. No.: | 23          |
| Column 2. Date of Birth / Month, Day, Year: | Aug. 16 [1888] |
| Column 3. Name (if any): | Fred Erickson |
| Column 4. Sex (And Condition, as Twins, Illegitimate, etc.): | Male |
| Column 5. Color: | White |
| Column 6. Place of Birth of Child (Town or City): | Village of Cannon Falls |
| Column 7. Full Christian Name of Each Parent: | John E. & Carolina |
| Column 8. Birthplace of Each Parent (Give the State or Nation): | Sweden |
| Column 9. Occupation of Father: | --- |
| Column 10. When Registered: | Aug. 2? [1888] |

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6 From Register of Births, Village of Cannon Falls, County of Goodhue, State of Minnesota. Goodhue County Courthouse, Red Wing, MN.
**Document 7.** Church Register, Record of Families, *Svenska Missionsförsamlingen* (the Swedish Mission [now Grace Covenant] Church), Stambaugh, Michigan, showing the John E. and Ida C. Erickson family. The top image is page 44; the bottom image is page 45.\(^7\)

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**Transliteration and explanation of document 7**

| Column 1. Chro. No. (Chronological Number): | The numbers listed (top to bottom)—7, 8, 11, 13, 16, 22, and 56—represent the chronological order in which family members joined the church (i.e., John and Ida were the seventh and eighth individuals, respectively, to join the church; Elin, the eleventh; Carl Oscar, the thirteenth; etc.). |
| Column 2. Date Rec'd (Received); Mo./Date/Yr. (Month/Day/Year): | The dates family members joined the church were (top to bottom): 1-26-1889; 1-26-1889; 3-16-1893; 5-26-1900; 5-26-1900; 1-26-1906; and 7-25-1907. |
| Column 3. Comm.[?]; Male/Fem[ale]: Note the marks in respective columns. |  |
| Column 4. Name: |  |

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\(^7\) *Church Register Record and Ministerial Accounts*, compiled by Rev. E. G. Hjerpe, Published by The Swedish Evan. Mission Covenant Book Concern, 81 South Clark Street, Chicago.
The surname Erickson (not Jansson, Johansson, Johnson) is being used for all members of the family. First and middle names are consistent with those in the husförhörslängd,\(^8\) save for minor spelling differences. For example, Jän Eric has become John Erick; Ida Carolina, Ida Karolina; Elin Carolina, Elin Karolina; Carl Oskar, Carl Oscar; Jenny Kristina, Jennie Kristina; and Viktor Valdemar, Wicktor Waldemar. Interestingly, the name of another son, Wicktor Emmanuel, who was born 2-22-1880 in Hjulsjö Sock[en] (Parish) and died there as an infant, is also. His death date (7-23-1880) is listed on page 45 in Column 14 (Died) (but not shown in document 7).

Column 5. Birth; Mo./Date/Yr.; Place:
Note that the birth dates of the family members born in Hjulsjö Sock[en] (Parish) are consistent with those listed in the husförhörslängd.\(^9\) Birth dates and places for the sons born in the U.S. are as follows: Fritz, 8-15-1888, Cannon Falls, Minnesota; Solomon, 6-8-1892, Stambaugh, Michigan; and Arthur [sic], 11-8-1894, Stambaugh, Michigan.

Column 6. Baptismal; Mo./Date/Yr.; Place:
The baptismal years of the six family members born in Hjulsjö Sock[en] (Parish) are 1849, 1850, 1873, 1876, 1882 and 1885. Baptismal dates and places for the sons born in the U.S. are as follows: Fritz, 1888, Cannon Falls, Minnesota; Solomon, 1892, Stambaugh, Michigan; and Arthur, 1894, Stambaugh, Michigan.

Column 7. Married; Mo./Date/Yr.; Place:
John E. and Ida C. were married in 1872 in Hjulsjö Sock[en]; Elin Karolina, 1892, Stambaugh, Michigan; Carl Oscar, 1901, Stambaugh, Michigan; and Jennie Kristina, 1901, Stambaugh, Michigan.

Column 8. Arrived in America; Where From; Mo./Date/Yr.:
The six immigrants arrived from Örebro, Sverige (Sweden) on 4-20-1888. Note that document 5 establishes the correct date as 24 April 1888.

Column 9. Arrived At This Place; Where From; Mo./Date/Yr.:
The six immigrants and their newborn son, Fritz, arrived at this place (i.e., Stambaugh, Michigan) from Cannon Falls, Minnesota 10-20-1888.

Column 10. Removed; Place; Mo./Date/Yr.:
Column 11. Remov’d (Removed):
Column 12. Disciplined:
Column 13. Dropped:
Column 14. Died: The date listed for John Erick is December 14, 1920; the date listed (but not shown) for Wicktor Emmanuel is 7-23-1880.

Column 15. Dismi. No. (Dismissal Number):


\(^{9}\) Ibid.
Fig. 2. The John E. and Ida C. Erickson family ca. 1891. From L-R: Jennie, Carl Oscar, Ida C., Fritz, John E., Victor, and Ellen.
Document 8a. Birth dates (Födelsedagar) recorded in the John E. and Ida C. Erickson family Bible.¹

¹ This Bible is currently in the possession of the author's father, C. Eldred Erickson, Iron River, Michigan.
Document 8b. Birth dates (Födelsedagar) recorded in the John E. and Ida C. Erickson family Bible.
Transliteration and translation of documents 8a and 8b

**Document 8a:**
John Erickson, född i [born in] Småland [a farm in Hjulsjö Parish], Örebro län (county), Sverige (Sweden), den (on) 15 November 1849.

Ida Karolina Erickson, född i Jönshyttan [a farm in Hjulsjö Parish], Örebro län, Sverige, den 14 July 1850.

(1) Ellin Karolina Erickson, född i Jönshyttan, Örebro län, Sverige, den 20 Feb. 1873.

(2) Oscar Erickson, född i Jönshyttan, Örebro län, Sverige, den 8 Feb. 1876.


(3) Victor Emanuel Erickson, född i Småland, Örebro Län, Sverige, Den 22 Feb. 1880.

**Document 8b:**
(5) Victor Waldemar Erickson, född i Ösjöhøjden [a farm in Hjulsjö Parish], Örebro Län, Sverige, Den 15 Feb. 1884.


(7) Erik Solomon Erickson, född i Stambaugh, Michigan, U.S.A., Den 8 Juni 1892.