

The Falks of Sweden

JOHN (NILS JOHAN) FALK DAUGHTERS - LILLIAN FALK GREINKE & VIOLET FALK

John Falk (aka Nils Johan, N.J.Falk) was our great-great-uncle. His cousin, Hannah Falk, was our great-grandmother. His sister, Mathilda, was married to Hannah's brother, our great-great-uncle Oscar. John's given name was Nils Johan when he was born in southern Sweden 28 August 1858. His parents were Anders Falk and Sofia Svensdotter. He had a younger brother, Gustaf, and a younger sister, Mathilda.¹ His father, Anders, was the miller (*Mjöltnare*) in Kulla Gunnarstorp, Sweden.



Possible photo of John Falk circa 1880-90.

From first page of Mathilda's photo album.

John emigrated to the U.S. in the 1880's and settled in Chicago, Illinois. According to the 1910 Census, his occupation was foreman for the railroad. In 1910, he had been married for 10 years to Amanda. It was the first marriage for both of them. He was 51, she was 42, and they had a 7 yr. old daughter named Lillian. Lillian would have been born in 1903-1904. Violet would have been born later, in about 1911.

¹ Swedish records

The Falks of Sweden



Violet and Lillian Falk, 1911-2
Photo by Wood, 6250 Wentworth, Chicago

The Falks of Sweden



Violet Falk, 1912

This photo of Violet Falk was sent from her father John Falk in Chicago as a postcard Christmas greeting to his sister Mathilda Falk in Pennington, Wisconsin, December 1912. Mathilda was Violet's aunt.

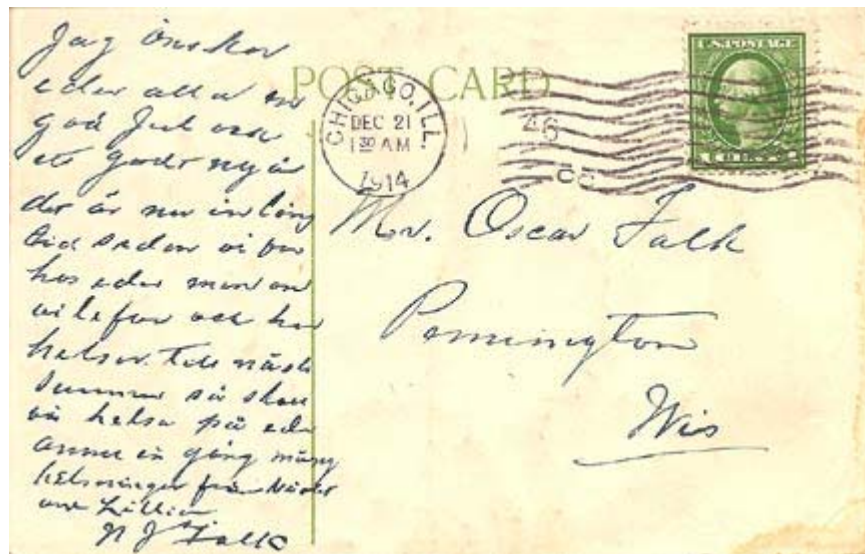
By December 1914, Lillian and Violet were both mentioned on a Christmas postcard from John to his cousin Oscar Falk in Pennington.² John's sister, Mathilda, married to Oscar, would have been there in 1914 too.

² Family artifact

The Falks of Sweden



Post card from **N J Falk** to Oscar Falk, 1914 (front)



Christmas post card from **N J Falk** to Oscar Falk, 1914 (back)

“I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. It is now a long time since we were at your place but if we are still alive and are feeling good we will come and visit you next summer. One more time, Best regards from Violet and Lillian. N.J. Falk”
(Translation by Cecilia Stahl)

The Falks of Sweden

It would seem that John and his family visited Pennington in the summer of 1915. In July 1915, John wrote a postcard in English from Chicago to 15 yr. old Harold Melquist in Pennington, Wisconsin. It says, "Dear Harold, We are all safe home in the city. Raining all the time here also. Yours truly, J Falk"²

Lillian and Violet Falk also wrote postcards to their cousin Harold Melquist in 1915. They gave their address as 1038 W. 59 St, Chicago. In 1915, Lillian and Violet also sent a Christmas postcard to Oscar and Mathilda Falk, calling them "Auntie & Uncle."²



Post card from **Violet and Lillian Falk** to Mrs. O. Falk, 1915

We have not found John or his wife, Amanda, in the 1920 Census. Neither Lillian or Violet were living with their parents in 1920, according to census information. Lillian Falk, age 16, was living in Chicago with her cousin Walter Swanson, 24, his wife, Minnie, 23, and their small child, Hazel. Lillian was working as a stenographer for a furniture company, and her cousin Walter was the manager of a fish store. The census shows that Lillian was born in Illinois, and that both of her parents were from Sweden. Note: Since Walter Swanson is Lillian's cousin, he would have been the son of her mother's sibling (since her father was a Falk). Therefore, John's wife's maiden name would have been Amanda Swanson. The census says that Walter was born in Illinois, of Swedish parents. Minnie's parents were German.

In the 1920 census, there is a Violet Falk who is 9 years old, living with her 50 yr. old uncle, John Swanson, a farmer, and his wife in DuPage County, Illinois. This could be John Falk's daughter. We do not know why the girls were living with different maternal relatives named Swanson in 1920. Perhaps John Falk and his wife had died by then.

The Falks of Sweden



In July 1921, 17 yr. old Lillian Falk visited her relatives in Pennington, Wisconsin. She took the group photograph, which Nannie Melquist identified left to right as Bengt, Oscar, Mathilda, and Gustaf Falk. Oscar's head is mostly cut from the photo, and on the back of the photo Lillian wrote, "Excuse me Unk for not getting the rest of you in. Ha ha." In a later letter she wrote, "Am sending you the pictures we took, and am glad I got all the heads in this time."²

Note: It is possible that the man on the right is Lillian's father John Falk, and not Gustaf. In 1921, Lillian was 17, so it is not likely that she would have come to Pennington by herself. She may have come with her father, as they had done in previous years. However, John may have died prior to 1921.

In 1929, Lillian wrote to her Uncle Oscar, and by then she was married to Chuck Greinke. Their address was the same as it had been when she lived with her parents in 1915: 1038 W. 59 St., Chicago.² Presumably, her father, John Falk, had owned this house.

In the 1930 Census, Lillian was 26 and had been married for 5 years to Charles Greinke, age 31. Violet, age 19, was living in their household, and lists her occupation as bindery worker for a map publisher. Lillian was not employed in 1930. Charles was a clerk in a fish store. (This was probably the same fish store that Lillian's cousin, Walter Swanson, managed at the time of the 1910 Census.)

In August 1940, Lillian wrote to her Uncle Oscar after another visit to Pennington, and indicated that she was enclosing photos. She wrote, "Am quite a poor one at letter writing as I never have very much to say (guess us Falks are all alike – ha ha) but it's nice to say "hello" anyway and know we're still here." She signed the letter "with love from Violet and us all, as ever, your niece Lillian."² By this time, Lillian would have been about 36 and Violet would have been about 29. Oscar was then 75.

There is a death record in Cook County, Illinois dated 28 November 1947 for a Charles Greinke. We do not know if this was for Lillian's husband. He would have been about 46, if it is him.

There is still much research to be done on John, Lillian and Violet Falk.

The Falks of Sweden



Lillian Falk

Nannie Melquist identified the woman in this photograph as Harold Melquist's cousin and Mathilda Falk's niece, Lillian Falk. The man is probably her husband, Charles (Chuck) Greinke.