

## **PEHR AUGUST JOHANSON & MARIA JACOBSON**

Pehr August Johanson and Maria Jacobson were our great-great-grandparents from Sweden. Their son, John Alfred Peterson, was our great-grandfather.<sup>1</sup> No other information is known about them at this time.

## **JOHN ALFRED PETERSON (MARY JOHANNA CARLSON)**

John Alfred Peterson was our great-grandfather. He was born 28 January 1864<sup>2</sup> (or 1866<sup>3</sup>) in Kolaretorp, Kalmar Län, on the east coast of southern Sweden.<sup>1</sup> His parents were Pehr August Johanson and Maria Jacobson. It is not known if he had any siblings. (It is possible that John's birth name in Sweden was not the same as his American name. For example, it might have been Johan Pehrson, since the family seemed to follow the Scandinavian tradition of taking the father's first name for the son's last name.)

John emigrated to the U.S. about 1885, when he was about 20 years old. The 1900 U.S. Census states his immigration date as 1883 and says he has been in the country for 17 years, but the 1910 Census states that he arrived in 1885. The 1920 Census says he arrived in 1886. John settled in the Ogema, Wisconsin area, where he had a dairy farm.<sup>3</sup>

John's daughter, Nannie Melquist, later stated that her father was "a black Swede from way up north by Lapland." This would indicate that he was of Sami heritage.<sup>1</sup>

John married Mary (Maria) Johanna Carlson on 16 October 1897, when he was about 33 and she was 25. The marriage was a civil ceremony on a Saturday at 7:30 P.M. in the Town of Ogema, Price County, Wisconsin. The marriage record states John's occupation as a farmer. Witnesses to the ceremony were P. Emil Carlson (Mary's brother) and Anna Peterson (who may have been a relative of John's).<sup>1</sup>

The 1910 Census says that Mary bore three children, but only two survived. This confirms information stated by John and Mary's daughter, Nannie Melquist. Son John Edward, later known as Edward, was born on 19 July 1896 in Ogema, Wisconsin<sup>4</sup> Daughter Nannie Karolina was born 24 March 1901 in Ogema, Wisconsin. Daughter Louise was born 26 March 1903 in Ogema, but died in 1905 at the age of 2 years.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Marriage records, Price County, Wisconsin

<sup>2</sup> Death records, Price County, Wisconsin

<sup>3</sup> 1910 & 1920 U.S. Census records

<sup>4</sup> Research of Gladys (Peterson) Bagrowski

The Petersons of Sweden



**Mary Carlson**  
**Photo by S. A. Johnson, Phillips, Wisconsin**

The Petersons of Sweden



**John Alfred Peterson and Mary Johanna Carlson Peterson circa 1910  
Children Edward and Nannie**

The Petersons of Sweden



**John Peterson**



**John and son Ed Peterson on right**

The Petersons of Sweden



**John Peterson**



**Peterson farm in Ogema, Wisconsin circa 1995**

## The Petersons of Sweden



**Peterson grave at Hillside Cemetery, Ogema**

Mary died at St. Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield, Wisconsin on 4 October 1918, at the age of 45. Cause of death was a gastric hemorrhage, with stomach ulcers a secondary cause<sup>2</sup>. She is buried at the Ogema Cemetery. John died 9 November 1942 at the age of 78. Cause of death was cancer of the stomach. He is buried at the Ogema Cemetery.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> The Sami, formerly known as Lapps, were the nomadic reindeer herders of far northern Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. The Sami people of Scandinavia were persecuted similarly to the Native Americans. They were forbidden to use their native language, practice their religion, or use their healing traditions. Many of their children were forced to go away to boarding schools and become Christians. When the Sami people emigrated to the U.S., they often stated their ethnicity as Swedish, Norwegian, etc. to avoid the stigma associated with the Sami in their home country. They were often called "black Swedes" or "black Norwegians" to indicate their heritage, and because they were not the typical blue-eyed, blonde Scandinavians.

For more information on the Sami, see <http://www.baiki.org/>