

Did Zacharias Become Charlie?

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Zacharias was born in Sweden. He immigrated to the Midwest as a child then disappears from the records. Charlie marries, raises his family, and dies of old age in Minnesota. No record can be found prior to his marriage. Are they the same person? During this presentation, we will analyze the documents and discuss the strategies to prove one man or two. The genealogical proof standard will be applied to this case study.

Who is Zacharias?

Zacharias was born 1858 in Sweden to Johannes Larson and Anna Svensdotter. He is the youngest of nine children, seven of whom reached adulthood. He immigrated with his mom and two siblings in 1872. Family members immigrated to Minnesota before and after him.

Who is Charlie?

Charlie was born 1858 in Sweden to [?] Johanesson and Anna Svensdotter. He immigrated to the US in 1872 and settled in Minnesota. Charlie married Mathilda about 1888. They had 11 children. Charlie died in 1920 in Minnesota.

Genealogical Proof Standard

“A genealogical conclusion is proved when it meets all five GPS components. Each part contributes to a proved conclusion’s credibility:

- Reasonably exhaustive research...
- Complete and accurate source citations...
- Critical tests of relevant evidence through process of analysis and correlation...
- Resolution of conflicting evidence...
- Soundly reasoned, coherently written conclusion...”¹

This process can be over simplified to 1)targeted research, 2)cite the sources, 3)analyze and compare, 4)expect and resolve conflicts, and 5)write it out.

Step 1 - Targeted Research

Targeted research starts with defining what we are trying to prove. Then determining what records might prove it and are they available for this

¹ Board for Certification of Genealogists, *Genealogy Standards*, Second edition (Washington, D.C. : Ancestry.com, 2019), 2-3.

ancestor's/ancestors' time and place. Do not stop with online records. Onsite records may be the key to proof.

Which of the following records should be researched for Zacharias & Charlie?

<u>Swedish Genealogical Records</u>			
Censuses	Court Records	Land Records	Online Trees
Church Records	Emigration Records	Military Records	Probate Records
Civil Registration	Household Exams	Newspapers	Taxation Records
<u>U.S. & Minnesota Genealogical Records</u>			
Censuses- US	Immigration Records	Naturalization	Vital Records – State
Censuses – MN	Land – County	Newspapers	Vital Records – Other
Church Records	Land – Federal	Online Trees	Voter Lists
Court Records	Military Records	Taxation Records	Histories

Step 2 - Cite the Sources

Citing does not have to be complicated. Answer these questions. What am I looking at? Where did I find it? How did I find my person in it? What information does my cousin need to find it quickly?

Step 3 – Analyze and Compare

What does each document say? Do the different documents agree? To analyze a document, start by reading the document out loud, then transcribe it. Finally, summarize, abstract, or extract it. Timelines and tables can aid in analysis and correlation.

Step 4 – Expect & Resolve Conflict

There will be conflicts between the documents. The person of interest may not be in the documents expected. An ancestor may have lied about anything and everything.

Step 5 – Write it Out

Whether on paper or digitally, present a well thought out case for why this theory is correct and other theories are incorrect.

Share It!

With the time and effort involved in completing the components of the Genealogical Proof Standard, don't stop there. Share it! The form does not matter. Share it using a private email, a blog, or upload to FamilySearch Memories. Make it available for the cousins to find. It is much easier to prove or disprove a sourced write up than researching from scratch. In fact, the cousins may have a family bible or family stories to share.

One Man, Two Men, or More Research Needed?
You decide.

Recommendations

1. Use multiple websites.
2. Research onsite.
3. Use timelines and tables for analysis and correlation.
4. Record where the ancestors were expected but not found.
5. Research the family not just the individual.
6. Understanding the location helps us locate the records.
7. Understanding the law around a record helps us interpret it correctly.

Resources

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