

**Across Oceans, Across Time® ...**  
**Stories from the Family History & Genealogy Center ...**



**Capt. Erik Larsen, USA** was born in Aalborg in 1922, the son of Niels Christian and Julie Ester (Nielsen) Larsen. His father, a cabinet-maker, immigrated to the US in 1923 and was followed by his wife and three sons the following year. Erik grew up in the Humboldt Park neighborhood of Chicago and received his medical degree there prior to being drafted into the US Army in 1950. After initial combat training he was sent to Korea and assigned to the front lines as Battalion Surgeon with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division. Later, Capt. Larsen and his medics, shown above, were assigned to Task Force Zebra, and thus were on-the-ground witnesses to the "May Massacre," when Chinese Communist troops cut off and overran their unit on May 18, 1951. During the heat of the battle the medical unit tried to evacuate and Capt. Larsen was separated from his unit and medical team. Also having lost his glasses, he stumbled through the Korean countryside until a passing American tank heading south toward friendly territory saw him and took him along. After recuperating, partly on a Danish hospital ship, *Jutlandia*, Capt. Larsen served with the 1<sup>st</sup> MASH (8209) as a surgeon until his term of service was over. He returned home to his family in Chicago in 1952 and continued his medical career. For his service Erik Larsen was awarded the Combat Medical Badge and a Purple Heart. In 1972 he was knighted by King Frederick IX. In September 2000, Dr. Larsen was part of a veterans group that returned to Korea to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the police action. An account of his trip may be found at [www.koreanwar-educator.org/memoirs](http://www.koreanwar-educator.org/memoirs). He and his wife Lynda now enjoy retirement on Amelia Island, Florida.

**The Danish Immigrant Museum**

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