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Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

Here you will find information about interesting books on the immigration experience, genealogical manuals, books on Swedish customs, and much more. We welcome contacts with SAG readers, suggestions on books to review perhaps.

If you want to review a book yourself, please contact the SAG Editor, at <sag@etgenealogy.se> so we know what you are working on.

Quilts by Swedes

Quilts and Women of the Mormon Migrations: Treasures of Transition, by Mary Bywater Cross. Paperback, 251 pages, color illustrated. Published by Rutledge Hill Press, (1997.) ISBN 1-55853-409-1. Available as used book at Amazon.com.

When trying to clean my desk, this book popped up. It must have been there for years. Checking the index I found at least two Swedish names there: *Christina Erika Forsgren Davis* and *Mary Mortensen Bjork*.

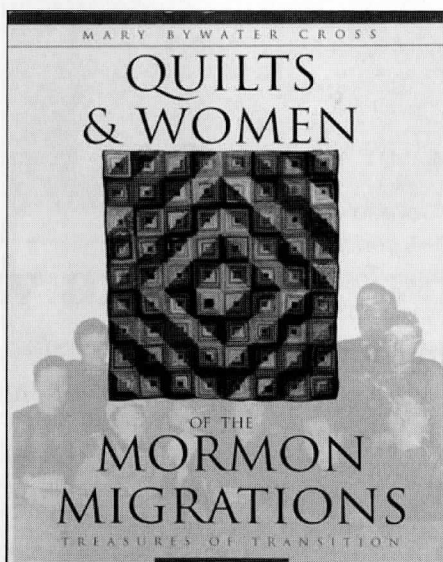
Christina Erika, (b. 26 April 1822 in Gävle, Sweden, daughter of the sailor Johan Olof Forsgren and his wife Anna Stina Hollstrand) became a Mormon in 1850 and came in 1853 with her brothers John and Peter, and settled in Box Elder County in Utah, where she later became a plural wife of William Davis. One of her striped quilts is preserved as well as small quilt fragments, made from homespun, handwoven dresses.

Mary Mortensen (b. July 1869 in Ålborg, Denmark) was the daughter

of Peder Mortensen and his wife Dorteja Justsen. The parents became Mormons and wanted to emigrate. To save up for this they sent their children one by one to Utah, where they lived for a time with childless couples. Mary immigrated at age 6 to Pleasant Grove, Utah. In 1890 she married *Johan Gustaf Björk*, a Swede (b. ca 1833, origins not known) and lived in Orem and Holladay in Salt Lake County.

Her preserved quilts include two Crazy Patches, both shown in this interesting book. This book also tells about the experiences of the early Mormons and how they coped with their different life in Utah.

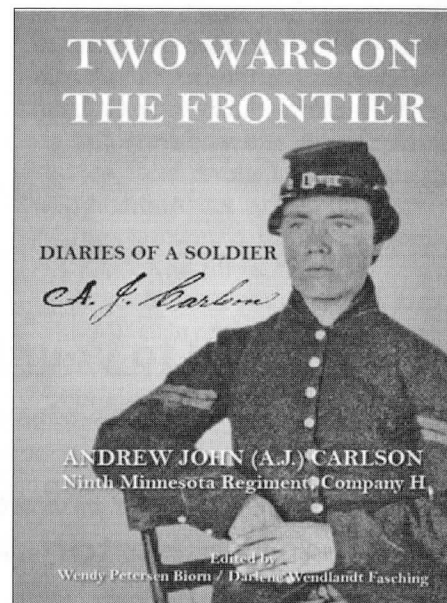
Elisabeth Thorsell



Mycket läsa gör dig klok – därför läs varenda bok!

(Much reading makes you wise – Thus read every book!)

A soldier's memories



Two Wars on the Frontier, by A.J. Carlson. Editors: Wendy Peterson Biorn and Darlene Wendlandt Fasching. Published by Carver County Historical Society, (2014). 284 pages. ISBN: 0991563905.

Two Wars on the Frontier is the journal of A.J. Carlson, a Swedish immigrant and Minnesota soldier, who fought in both the U.S. Dakota and Civil Wars. A.J. enlisted in Company H, Ninth Minnesota Regiment and relates daily experiences including his observation guarding the gallows, as 38 Indians were hung at Mankato, MN, the largest mass hanging in U.S. history. After serving in the Dakota War, Carlson is sent to fight in the Civil War. There, he documents his flight from the Union disaster at Brice's Crossroads and his encoun-

SALE!

Swedish Voters in Chicago 1888

By Nils William Olsson
302 pages of Swedes, comments, and indexes.

\$10 + \$5 S&H

Contact Jill Seaholm at
<jillseaholm@augustana.edu>

Book Reviews



Swedish festivities

Pole Raising and Speech making, by Jennifer Eastman Attebery. Published by Utah State University Press; 2015. Hardcover, 208 pages. ISBN 0874219981.

In *Pole Raising and Speech Making*, author Jennifer Eastman Attebery focuses on the beginnings of the traditional Scandinavian Midsummer celebration and the surrounding spring-to-summer seasonal festivities in the Rocky Mountain West during the height of Swedish immigration to the area—1880–1917.

ters with a number of Black Americans. Carlson's urgent and lively narrative showing his role in keeping secession only attempted is a worthy reminder of how much was at stake during the Civil War. What makes A.J.'s writing different than all other Civil War era journals is Carlson's ability to see the war from the perspective of both sides.

(*Amazon.com*).

Combining research in folkloristics and history, Attebery explores various ways that immigrants blended traditional Swedish Midsummer-related celebrations with local civic celebrations of American Independence Day on July 4 and the Mormons' Pioneer Day on July 24. Functioning as multimodal observances with multiple meanings, these holidays represent and reconsider ethnicity and panethnicity, sacred and secular relationships, and the rural and the urban, demonstrating how flexible and complex traditional celebrations can be.

Providing a wealth of detail and information surrounding little-studied celebrations and valuable archival and published primary sources – diaries, letters, speeches, newspaper reports, and images – *Pole Raising and Speech Making* is proof that non-English immigrant culture must be included when discussing “American” culture. It will be of interest to scholars and graduate students in ethnic studies, folklore, ritual and festival studies, and Scandinavian American cultural history.

(*Amazon.com*)

Add to your family history

Learn what Sweden and America were like when your ancestors emigrated

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Four issues a year of the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly*

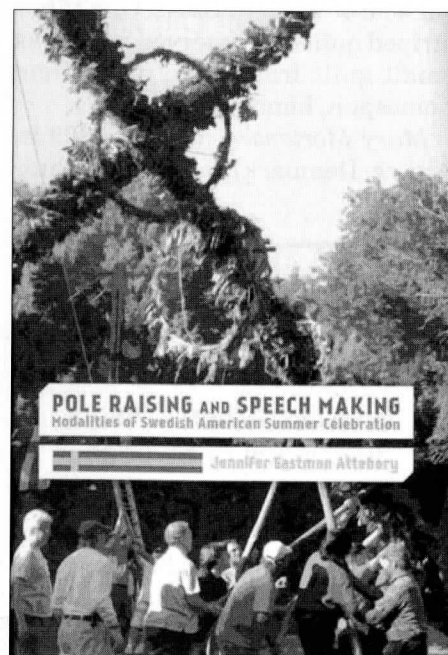
The Society's latest book is *Conrad Bergendoff's Faith and Work: A Swedish-American Lutheran, 1895–1997*, by Thomas Tredway.

For more information, write

Swedish-American Historical Society
3225 W. Foster, Box 48
Chicago IL, 60625

or see www.swedishamericanhist.org

Mention the Genealogist when you join or order books



Book Reviews



Moberg as a small boy

When I was a child, by Vilhelm Moberg, translated and abridged by Gustaf Lannestock. Paperback, 288 pages. Published by Minnesota Historical Society Press, (2015). ISBN: 0873519256.

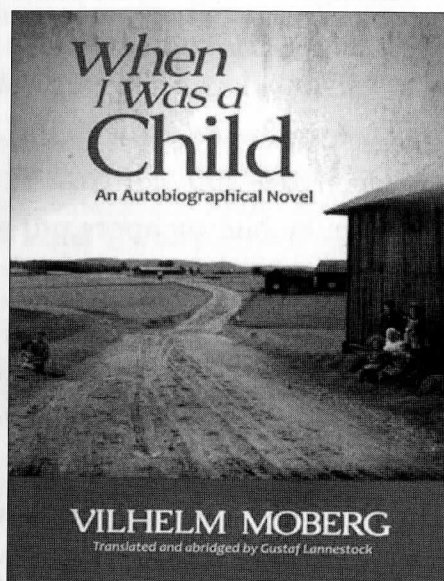
At the beginning of the twentieth century, in the poverty-stricken Swedish region of Småland, young Valter, the son of a soldier, explores the world around him and watches his older brothers emigrate to America. In this novel of the life of a farm boy, first published in three volumes in 1946, Vilhelm Moberg sensitively explores his own childhood.

When Valter, a boy with great imagination, describes the exciting things he sees so vividly, he is punished for lying, so he learns to write his stories down instead. He willingly

leaves school and helps support his family by working in lumber camps and a glass factory. His father's ill health and death bring even harder times. Through all his toil, he debates whether to honor his father's wish and remain in Sweden to support his mother.

With gentle irony and a loving knowledge of the landscape, the people, and the larger issue of class struggle, Moberg offers American readers a deeply moving view of the other side of Swedish immigration.

(*Amazon.com*)



SAG needs your help!

We regard the reviews as a very important part of SAG, as the readers are spread all over the U.S., Canada, and Sweden and a lone subscriber even in Australia.

For all of them it is very difficult to keep track of the many interesting books (and movies) that are published with a *Swedish* or *Swedish-American* theme.

We need you to keep your eyes open. And we are extremely pleased if you will write a review and send it to the SAG editor.

Family histories, church histories, local group histories, and lodge histories are among the things we would like to present in SAG. And all in English.

A good book review contains the full title of the book, name of author, year of printing, name of publisher, where it can be bought, and the price of the book.

Send all book reviews to the SAG editor!

Elisabeth Thorsell
SAG editor

New and Noteworthy

(short notes on interesting books and articles)

The journal *Sweden & America*, published by the Migration Center in Karlstad, Sweden, and Swedish Council of America in Minneapolis, MN, has an interesting article in issue 2015/4 about *Johan (John) Ottosson*, born in Blekinge in the 1950s, who immigrated with his Mormon parents and three sisters in 1963 to Salt Lake City. As John grew up he got scholarships and advanced academically, and is now president of William Penn University in Oskaloosa, Iowa.

Family Tree Magazine has published a collection of useful articles in *Discover Your Roots*, which came out in the summer of 2015. Among the articles are 18 top genealogy tips from the researchers of TV's "Who do you think you are?", how to use city directories, what you can expect to find on a marriage license, or a Declaration of Intentions (to become a U.S. citizen). There is also an article on the WWI registration draft cards, which is where you may find the ancestor's own signature and his true birth date, and much more useful data.

Another section of this publication is devoted to how to use the internet to the best advantage, with descriptions of many helpful web sites, like Cyndi's List, state web sites, and military web sites, and web sites from other countries. It also contains a manual on how to best use the resources at Ancestry.com, which boasts of having more than 16 billion records, and which keeps growing. This publication seems to be very useful even for experienced genealogists.