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Finding Johanna Albertina Johansson. Or maybe not

A research example

By JILL SEAHOLM

We got a query at the Swenson Center about an immigrant *Johanna Albertina Johansson*, from Sibbarp in Halland county. She was born 22 June 1868 at Gödeby 5 in Sibbarp, a daughter of the *åbo* (tenant farmer) Johan Niklas Petersson and his wife Anna Beata Larsdotter.¹

By 1885 her family had moved to the nearby parish of Dagsås, where her father owned a little house.² Johanna Albertina left from there for America on 17 July 1885.

She left in the company of an older girl Anna Beata Andersdotter, born 23 Jan. 1858 in Dagsås, who left from her mother's home at Dagsås 6.³ Johanna Albertina and Anna Beata left the port of Göteborg on 24 July 1885 with tickets for San Francisco.⁴

Anna Beata had a little daughter, Alma Hildur Mühl, born out-of-wedlock 28 Aug. 1877 in Dagsås, that she left with her mother. Later on Alma Hildur left for Clinton, IA, on 28 June 1895.⁵

The person that sent in the question about Johanna Albertina had already found that Anna Beata had come to the U.S. on the *S/S Indiana* that arrived in Philadelphia on 10 Aug. 1885, but no sign of Johanna Albertina.

Where was Johanna?

Now the question was how did Johanna Albertina get to America, and on which ship? These are the steps I took to try to find her.

The following sources have been searched: Swedish Passenger index database *Emihamn* 1869-1930; In-

dex to New York passenger arrivals 1850-1891; Göteborg port police records at arkivdigital.net; free U.S. passenger arrival images at familysearch.org.

The first place I always look is in a set of New York arrival indexes 1850-1891, and I tried that, unsuccessfully. Then there are several tricks I use when a person is hard to find in arrival indexes.

After some time spent researching this in various indexes, I have a theory about Johanna Albertina's arrival. I think she actually is on the *S/S Indiana* with the others that left

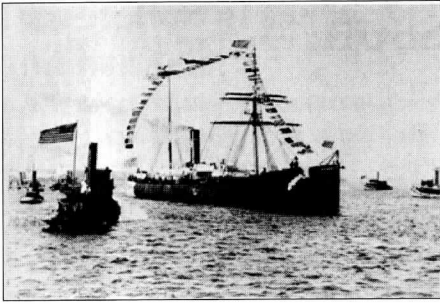
Sweden with her on the *Orlando* but they have her on the manifest incorrectly.

I went to *Emihamn* and printed out a list of people whose contract/ticket numbers were consecutive with Johanna Albertina's.

It felt to me like it was incomplete – the list was too short, so I went to the police records for Göteborg showing her departure on the *Orlando* and found that there were indeed additional names at the bottom of the page that were not in *Emihamn*.⁶ In the end this did not matter to my search, but I did not

Förteckning "Orlando", som öfver utvandrare, som af undertecknad befordras med Angsfartyget den 24 Juli 1885 härifrån afgår till Hull.							
Konst- nr till No	Utvandrans yrke och namn.	Födelseort till län och socken.	Ålder	Man	Qvinn	Summa	Bestämmelseort.
468	Niklas Ström	Amerika	33	1	1	1	San Francisco, Cal.
469	Anders Andersson	"	22	1	1	1	"
470	Olle Hansson	Höckholmen	47	1	1	1	Piston, Ill.
477	Anders J. Forsberg	Lövskog, Västerbotten	18	1	1	1	Vermillion, Ark.
* 478	Johanna Albertina Johansson	Källands, Sibbarp	17	1	1	1	San Francisco, Cal.
* 479	Anna Beata Johansson	" Dagsås	27	1	1	1	"
365	Anders E. S. Sjöström	Widby, Buttle	20	1	1	1	"
366	Anders Andersson	Källands, Ramster	17	1	1	1	"
367	Erik S. Nilsson	"	28	1	1	1	"
368	Albert Nilson	Amerika	30	1	1	1	Springfield, Mich.
369	Nils John Engström	Källands, Söderbotten	52	1	1	1	Chicago, Ill.
370	Nils E. Engström	"	17	1	1	1	"
371	Eran Persson	Karlstens, Skövde	22	1	1	1	Richmond, Virginia
372	Anders Jansson	Finland	67	1	1	1	San Francisco, Cal.
480	Mathilda Niska	"	22	1	1	1	"
						20	17
						37	

Gbg: Göteborgs poliskammare (-1900) EIX:27 (1885-1885) Image 1080 / page 213. (Arkiv Digital)



S/S Indiana, picture from 1873.

know that at the time. I first used this list when unsuccessfully searching the above New York arrival indexes. After New York did not work, I went to familysearch.org and found the S/S Indiana's manifest images and printed them all out; there were only a dozen pages.

The Indiana's manifest had been hand-copied from the departure manifest, but rather than copying them in order, they were grouped semi-alphabetically by last name. I went to the J-names and found a suspicious-looking 17-year-old John Johanson from Sweden, a clerk, listed there.⁷ From experience I know that indexes to images like this are full of data entry errors and it is common to find people listed with the wrong gender, age, country of origin, etc. and I have seen my share of transcription errors in Swedish parish records and Swedish-American church records too. So, out of habit, it did not occur to me to dismiss this person because he was labelled as a male.

Next I went one-by-one through the S/S Orlando registration list and compared about 25 names (I started

with contract #473, Pelli family) to the names on the Indiana manifest, and I found every one of them. On the manifest, some names had been copied with errors equal to what I think was the Johanna vs. John error.

On the S/S Indiana manifest there are several mistakes in names, gender, and other matters, just for these 25 persons, and I am also listing them here the way they are on the manifest and how they should be:

- *Börjesson, John, 4, male, from Norway; should be Johanna, 4, female, from Sweden.
- *Johansson, John, 17, male; should be Johanna, female.
- *Niska, Noth, 22, male; first name should be Mathilda, 72, female
- *Nersson, Frank, 22, male; should be Frans Persson.
- *Petti: husband, wife, and two children from Sweden; should be Pelli: mother and three children from Finland. They rearranged the group and made a husband out of the 5-year-old son.

Unfortunately this is a theory that I cannot prove because the records I would use to prove it are (I think) in error, but from my experience with transcription errors and the above examples that fit the error pattern, I do not feel the need to look to any further arrival ports or ships. I really think this John Johanson is the right Johanna (Albertina) Johansson. Anna Beata Anderson was also found on this list as Anna B. Anderson, but

listed as being a wife, which she was not.

To try to solidify the theory, I searched Emihamn for other 17-year-olds with the initials J.J. or A.J., male or female, leaving Sweden or Copenhagen 20-29 July 1885, and apart from this Johanna Albertina there were no others.

Had the names been copied to the Indiana manifest in order and not grouped alphabetically, one would have seen the pattern and known it was actually the missing Johanna.

Footnotes:

- 1) Sibbap CI:2 (1862-1881) Image 41 / page 37.
- 2) Dagsås AI:4 (1883-1899) Image 360 / page 32.
- 3) Dagsås AI:4 (1883-1899) Image 390 / page 35.
- 4) Emihamn.
- 5) Emihamn. She left Göteborg on 2 Aug. 1895.
- 6) (Göteborgs poliskammare (-1900) EIX:27 (1885-1885) Image 1080 / page 213). Arkiv Digital.
- 7) "Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Passenger Lists, 1883-1945," index and images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.3.1/TH-1942-21555-6564-88?cc=1921481&wc=M616-JTP:214200701> : accessed 30 January 2015), 006 - v. G, Jul 5, 1885-Dec 28, 1885 > image 114 of 448; citing NARA microfilm publication T840 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.).

Passenger List of Steamship		from		Arrived		1885	
NAME	Age	Sex	Place of Birth	Last Legal Settlement	Occupation	Height	Weight
Hjalmar Amie	25	M	Sweden	Sweden	Wife	5 1/2	140
Anna David	25	M	U.S.	U.S.	Chick	5 1/2	140
William Paul R. H.	22	"	England	England	Farmer	5 1/2	140
Harley David	24	"	Ireland	Ireland	"	5 1/2	140
James H.	21	"	"	"	"	5 1/2	140
" K. J.	23	"	"	"	Wife	5 1/2	140
* Johanson John	17	M	Sweden	Sweden	Chick	5 1/2	140
James James	24	"	English	England	Labourer	5 1/2	140
Justice W.	18	"	Norway	Norway	"	5 1/2	140
Johnson Henry	46	"	U.S.	U.S.	Carpenter	5 1/2	140
James David	28	M	England	England	Wife	5 1/2	140
" Emma	4	"	"	"	"	5 1/2	140
" Alfred	3	M	"	"	"	5 1/2	140
Johanson John	11	"	Sweden	Sweden	Child	5 1/2	140
Johnson Charles	33	"	England	England	Labourer	5 1/2	140
Johnson C. B.	35	"	U.S.	U.S.	Blacksmith	5 1/2	140
Johnson Martha	67	F	Sweden	Sweden	Labourer	5 1/2	140

The transcribed passenger list from the port of Philadelphia 10 Aug. 1885.

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