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# The Genealogical Workshop

## 2. The Passport

Nils William Olsson

In the June issue of *SAG*<sup>1</sup> we presented a study and analysis of the exit permit, which every Swede was obliged to secure, at the time he left his home parish for another in Sweden, or when he decided to depart for America. The exit permit, variously labelled *flyttningsbevis*, *flyttningsbetyg* or *flyttningsattest*, was issued by the ecclesiastical authorities, i.e. by the clergyman or his assistant in the parish, where the person was residing at the time he moved either next door across parochial borders, or to faraway places.

As stated in the article on the exit permit, there also existed another document, used to control the movement of persons from one place to another. This was the passport, in Swedish known as *pass* or *res(e)pass* (travel passport). The issuance of this document was the responsibility of the civil authorities, either in the city where the applicant resided, or if in the country, the administrative unit or *län*, in which the parish was located. This document permitted the traveller to journey from his own domicile to another destination in Sweden. If it involved a visit to a foreign country, it cleared the way for the bearer of the passport to depart for foreign shores. Whereas the exit permit, issued by the church authorities, usually was reserved for more or less permanent moves out of and into a parish, the passport usually served as a one-time document, limited to one journey, or for a specified period of time. It had to be available at all times as proof of identity and was stamped, checked or annotated by the authorities as necessary.

### Swedish Passport Requests

In analyzing the passport and its role in identifying the bearer, let us look at some of the Swedish passport requests, some of which date back to the latter half of the 18th century. While we know that the civil authorities, whether in the *län* or in the cities, actually issued the passports, it is not certain how the traveller went about procuring the precious document. It appears, however, that a written request usually was submitted to the authorities, properly signed by the person responsible for the individual in question, such as the employer, the father, or the guardian. These applications were signed, sometimes also countersigned, and dated. They were then submitted to the authorities, who numbered them for registration purposes, and then issued the official passport, for which a small fee was charged. It is uncertain if the original applications were retained by the issuing office. Certainly, some of them were dispersed, since many have

surfaced in autograph collections, at book auctions or offered for sale in antiquarian book shops. A few of them have found their way into an American collection, from which have come the samples used as illustrations in this article.

The earliest passport request or application for domestic travel in Sweden in the cited collection is that of Pehr Högström, provost in Skellefteå, Sweden, who on Dec. 19, 1766 requested a passport for himself and his servant, Pehr Marckström, in order to be allowed to proceed from Stockholm to Västerbotten, Högström's home province (Fig. 1).

Anförens i Sveriges och Lap-  
 lands för mig och min tjänst,  
 ifrån Stockholm til Väster-  
 botten. Stockholm den 19 Decemb.  
 1766. Pehr Högström,  
 Provst i Skellefteå.  
 Min tjänst i vägen är  
 Pehr Marckström.

Fig. 1. Passport request for Pehr Högström and Pehr Marckström.

A request dated Dec. 3, 1801 from a Swedish naval captain named Jacob Lothsack Kjerrmansköld, asked that a passport be issued to his servant, Sven Wästbäck, so that he might return from Stockholm to his native city of Göteborg (Fig. 2).

No 7077.  
 Anförens om Resepass för betjänten Sven Wästbäck, som want-  
 mig följaktlig ifrån Göteborg, att frith få åter resa til min  
 Häd, där han hafver sitt hemvist. Stockholm 3. Decemb 1801  
 Jacob Kjerrmansköld  
 Capit. vid Kongl. Arméns flotta

Fig. 2. Passport application for Sven Wästbäck.

The Marshal to the Royal Swedish Court, Isak Lars Silfversparre, submitted his request to the Stockholm police authorities on April 5, 1803, asking that a passport be issued to his footman, Petter Lindholm, that he be permitted to travel to Riseberga estate in the province of Närke, in order to inform Lieut. Col. Thure Rudenschöld that his mother, Countess Christina Sophia Bjelke, had died that morning at three o'clock. The application stressed the urgency of the mission and asked that the footman be allowed to proceed as speedily as possible without hindrance (Fig. 3).

Nr 145.

H: Kong: Lollu Hammarus, Antsked  
 Om forpassning, för Lagqvæn Petter Lindholm  
 som en gäst hos Landet till Herr Grefven,  
 och Öfverste Lutenanten Thure Rudenschöld  
 samt på Riseberga herrgård i Närke  
 så att tillkännagifva Döds för Moder  
 och Radriqven Grefvinnan Rudenschöld  
 kunnade Döds, som till 3 på morgonstunden  
 denna dag inträffade. Och så samman  
 Lagqvæn måtte skyndsammelig och obe-  
 hindrad få Passera och Rejserera.  
 Stockholm den 5 April 1803

I Silfversparre  
 Hofmarskalk.

Fig. 3. Passport application for Petter Lindholm.

An application, dated Stockholm Sept. 22, 1806, signed by Henric Schults-Henricsson, a Stockholm apothecary, asked that a passport be issued to one of his apothecary apprentices, Isak Stålgren, so that he could proceed to Halmsted, his home town, and from there travel to the University of Lund (presumably to study pharmacy) (Fig. 4).

No 464.

Requiritur. Pass. pass. for Pharmac. Studios.  
 Isak Stålgrens Com. univ. i Min Condition  
 ej mi. pace under Häl. Halmstad of i vidare  
 till Kunds. Accademia. sedan för en konferens  
 Stockholm den 22 Sept. 1806  
 Henric Schults-Henricsson

Fig. 4. Passport request for Isak Stålgren.

On Dec. 21, 1812 Lieut. P. Christiernin asked that a passport be issued to his servant, Gust Lundgren, to enable him to travel from Stockholm to Göteborg. The passport stressed that Lundgren would journey by the way of the province of Östergötland (Fig. 5).

No 886

Requiritur Pass. för Östgöt. Gust  
 Lundgren från Häl. till Göteborg  
 Stockholm d. 21. Dec. 1812  
 P. Christiernin  
 Lieut. & Regt. Zwartman  
 Reson. öf. Östgötaländ

Fig. 5. Passport request for Gust Lundgren.

On Oct. 4, 1813 Isak Lars Silfversparre, now major general in addition to his duties as Marshal to the Court, asked permission for his footman, named Lundgren, to allow the latter to travel to Nyköping in order to visit relatives (Fig. 6).

N<sup>o</sup> 1009

Hof-Laquay Lundgren, som i sinna arnder  
 behöfver resa till sinas släktingars uti  
 Nyköping, samt åter till sin Storkötmä  
 nger dertill mede Bifal, och där för  
 anhåller Jaff. Stockholm: D. 4 oct: 1813.  
 J. S. Silfversparre  
 Gen. M. och Hofmarskalk.

Fig. 6. Passport request for a servant named Lundgren (apparently no relation to Gust Lundgren in Fig. 5).

An application for a passport was submitted June 3, 1804 from Räckelsta, an estate in the province of Södermanland, by its owner, Capt. Otto Gabriel Holst, requesting that his son, Gustaf Holst, be allowed to travel abroad. The request contained the father's assurances that he personally would be responsible for his son's return to Sweden. Also the elder Holst vouched for the fact that young Holst had no debts, neither to the Crown in the form of unpaid taxes, nor to any private creditor. This request was countersigned by Gustaf Holméen and Wilhelm Kyser, who affirmed that the elder Holst had written the passport application in his own hand (Fig. 7).

Gustaf Holst subsequently saw service in the French military forces as lieutenant. He returned to Sweden, as his father had promised, and saw service in both the Swedish-Russian as well as the Swedish-Norwegian military campaigns. He was the father of an early Swedish immigrant to the U.S., Hjalmar Gustaf Axel Holst, who came to New York in 1849, and who apparently was killed in action in the Civil War.<sup>2</sup>

nr 207.

Ansålles om Resepas till Utrikes Öfver för  
 minn Son Wälborne Herr Gustaf Holst,  
 varandes jag så väl enligt författningar  
 för desf öfverkomst till Riket ansvarig  
 som att han ej påstas för obetalde Krono-  
 utskylder, hushyra eller annan gald.  
 Rockelstad d. 3 Junij 1804.

Otto Gabriel Holst

Att Cyprianus Wälborne Gern  
 Otto G. Holst detta egenhändig  
 Skrifvel är uttygta med rättelsen  
 Gustaf Holmeen Wiljoms Kyster  
 Sjöman i Åbo  
 Regemäst

Fig. 7. Passport application for Gustaf Holst signed by his father, Otto Gabriel Holst, and countersigned by Gustaf Holmeen and Wilhelm Kyster.

### Domestic Passports

Few Swedish domestic passports have been studied, thus it is difficult to generalize. In the 19th century they usually furnished information on the age of the bearer, his or her height, color of eyes and hair as well as facial characteristics. One of these domestic passports has come to our attention, issued by the mayor and city council of the port city of Sundsvall, dated Aug. 18, 1836, for Anna Christina Magnusdotter, a servant, who was journeying from Sundsvall to Stockholm. The passport was valid only for the journey. Unfortunately, all references to her physical characteristics were omitted, as was her place of birth.

We know that Anna Christina Magnusdotter travelled by ship, since her passport was examined and annotated by the commandant of the fortress of Vaxholm, which guarded the northern approaches to Stockholm from the sea. The commandant, P. A. Enbom, signed the passport Aug. 31, 1836 (Fig. 8).

Bel. med Råd. st.  
 Sämpl. papper.

**BORGMÄSTARE OCH RÅD**  
 •UTI  
**SJÖ OCH STAPEL-STADEN**  
**SUNDSVALL**

Passhafvarens:  
 Födelseort  
 Ålder  
 Hå  
 Ögon  
 Ansigte  
 Växt

**G**öre vederligt: att som *Pigan Anna*  
*Christina Magnusdotter*  
*är sinnad af hvar Liur Backholms*

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

och därför om Rese-Pass anhållit; alltså varda veder-  
 börande, hvilka uppsigten öfver Resande tillkommer,  
 församt och vänligen anmodade, att låta bemälda  
*Pigan*  
 såsom uti den rätta resa stadd, fritt och obehindradt  
 pass era.

Gäller för *resan*

Sundsvalls Rådhus den 18 Augusti 1836

På Magistratens vägnar

*P. A. Enbom*

Fig. 8. Domestic passport for Anna Christina Magnusdotter.



### Foreign Passports

Few foreign passports have survived the ravages of time. These usually consisted of large legal size documents, difficult to handle, unless folded into a much smaller and handier size. After many foldings and re-foldings, those that



Fig. 9. Passport for Anna Cajsa Sandström and her daughter, Maria Elisabeth Sandström, issued in Uddevalla April 2, 1841.



# Konungens Befallningshafvande

öfver

## CHRISTIANSTADS LÄN

**Gör veterligt:** Att som *Dränggen*  
*Tufve Bengtsson* från  
*Knislinge* anhöll sig  
 vilja resa till *Norr*  
*Uppsala*

Passhafvarens  
Födelseort  
*Knislinge S.*

Ålder: *26* år

Växt *5 fot 9 1/2*

Ansigt *rond*

Ogon *bruna*

Hår *mörkbruna*

Särskilda kännetecken

Egenhändig namnteckning

Belagd med *21* St. p.p.

Christianstads Lunds-Can:K den *18* April 1854.

Lösen --- *16*

St. P.p. --- *24*

Sin *40/100*

och derfore om Resepass anhållit; Alltså var-  
 da å Kongl. Maj:ts samt dragande Kall och  
 Embetes väglar alla vederbörande, som på  
 resande hafva nppsigt, anmodade, att låta be-  
 mälte resand



fritt och utan hinder färdas. Detta Pass gäller för  
 resan och en månad uti Sverige.







Fig. 10. Passport issued for Tufve Bengtsson of Knislinge.

survived have come down to us badly mutilated and in very bad condition. Two of the examples, which somehow outlived their bearers, are illustrated here. The first was made out for Anna Cajsa Sandström, a widow, and her daughter Maria Elisabeth Sandström, both residents of the city of Uddevalla, Sweden. The mother and daughter travelled to New York on the same passport, made out by the mayor and city council of Uddevalla, and dated April 2, 1841. As with so many other passports, it was only valid for the journey (Fig. 9).<sup>3</sup>

The second passport is a good example of a document issued by a Swedish administrative unit, the *län*, rather than a city. This was issued by the governor of Kristianstad *län* April 18, 1854 for Tufve Bengtsson, a servant from Knislinge Parish for travel to America. The passport was valid only for the journey, plus an additional month in Sweden (presumably to give him time to prepare for the ocean crossing). We learn that Tufve Bengtsson was born in Knislinge, was 26 years old, was 5 ft. 9 in. tall, had a round face, brown eyes and dark brown hair (Fig. 10).

An identical passport is also extant for Tufve Bengtsson's brother, Måns Bengtsson Ahlberg, a journeyman blacksmith, whose passport is dated July 28, 1852, but instead of America, his document shows the destination as Hamburg, Germany, where he was scheduled to look for employment. The passport was valid for three months; however, Ahlberg did not stay long in Germany, instead continuing on his way to North America. His age was given as 22 years, and like his brother, he had brown eyes and dark hair. His face, though, instead of being round like his brother's was thin and narrow. Both of these passports are now in the possession of Måns Bengtsson Ahlberg's great grandson, Jos. B. Rosenbery, of Park Forest, IL.<sup>4</sup>

Another passport, but of U.S. origin and issued for travel in the opposite direction, is the one issued for Johan Olof Liedberg in Philadelphia Feb. 26, 1850 and signed by the mayor of that city, Joel Jones. This passport gives more information on the physical characteristics of the bearer than Swedish counterparts of that period. Johan Olof Liedberg, who had arrived in New York Aug. 16, 1843, had declared his intention of becoming a U.S. citizen in Milwaukee, WI already Aug. 28 of that year, only twelve days after his arrival in the new land.<sup>5</sup>

Interesting are the endorsements on the back of Liedberg's passport. They indicate that he arrived in Copenhagen April 14, 1850, where his passport was properly registered and stamped at the Registry Office for Travellers. He was then cleared for his onward journey to Göteborg, where he arrived the following day, registering with the Göteborg police headquarters immediately. On the following day, April 16, he showed his passport to the *län* authorities in the city and was given permission to proceed to Växjö (Fig. 11).

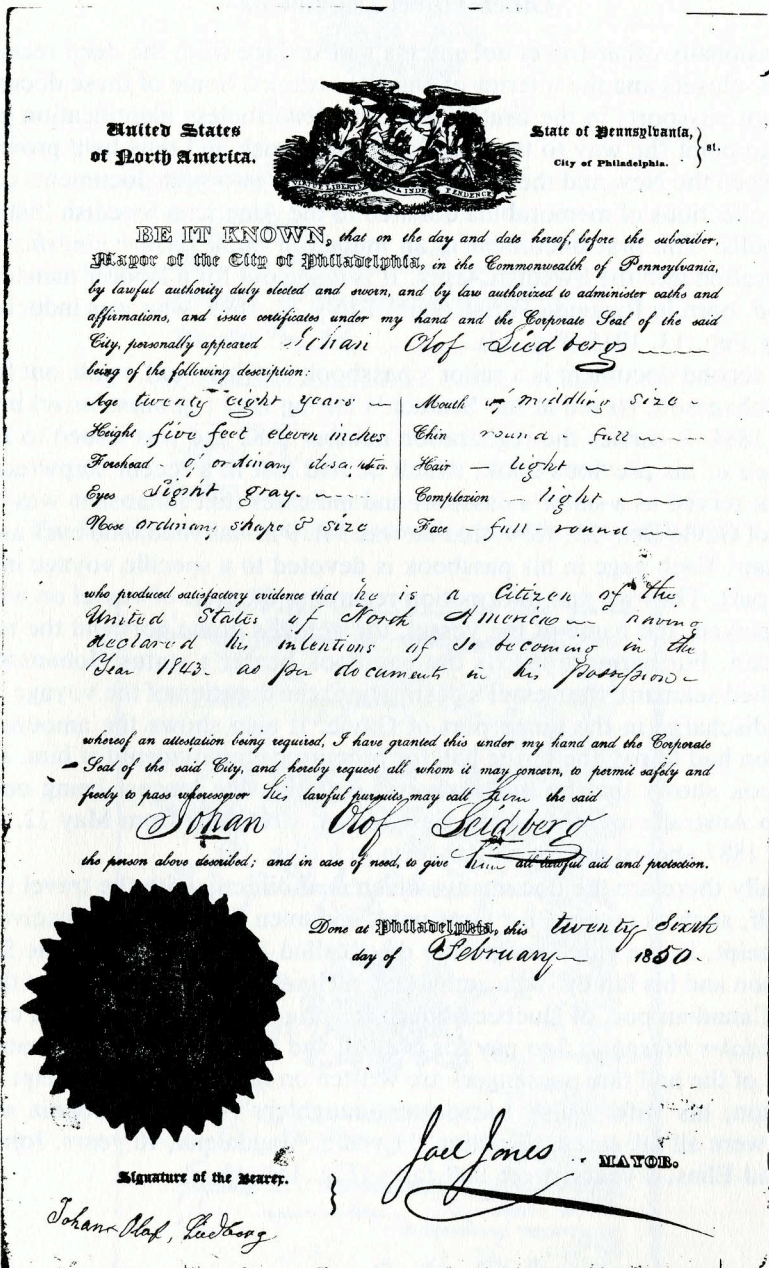


Fig. 11. Johan Olof Liedberg's American passport, dated Philadelphia February 26, 1850.

## Other Travel Documents

Occasionally other travel documents will surface from the deep recesses of old attics, closets and the interior of emigrant trunks. Some of these documents, though not passports in the usual sense, are nevertheless identification papers, which can point the way to the bearer's home parish and thus help provide the link between the New and the Old World. Recently two such documents came to light in collections of memorabilia donated to the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis. The first document is an induction book (*inskrivningsbok*) for a recruit drafted into the Swedish Army. It is made out for a laborer named Julius Backlund, born in Ragunda Parish (Jämt.) July 27, 1895, who was inducted into the army Feb. 13, 1915 (Fig. 12).

The second document is a sailor's passbook (*sjöfartsbok*), made out for Eric Gustaf Johansson, issued at the Seamen's Hiring Hall (*Sjömanshuset*) in Gävle April 7, 1884. It carries the registration number 2382 and was issued to Johansson in lieu of his previous book, which he had lost in a recent shipwreck. The passbook served as a sailor's passport and indicates that Johansson was born in the city of Gävle Dec. 25, 1859, that he was 5 ft. 9 in. tall, had blue eyes and dark brown hair. Each page in his passbook is devoted to a specific voyage in which he took part. Thus we find information regarding the type of vessel on which he was employed, the name of the vessel, the vessel's home port and the name of the captain. Furthermore it lists the passbook bearer's status (Johansson was able-bodied seaman), the vessel's destination, the duration of the voyage and the date of discharge in the home port of Gävle. It also shows the amount which Johansson had to pay the hiring hall for procuring employment for him. Johansson's book shows that he made several voyages, the longest being one from Gävle to Australia and the Dutch East Indies, stretching from May 12, 1886 to July 18, 1887 aboard a bark named *Monarch* (Fig. 13).

Finally there are the documents which deal directly with the travel transaction itself, such as receipts for fares paid, and even the tickets themselves. One such receipt, in the early emigration days called *quittance*, was made for Olof Andersson and his family, who embarked in Göteborg June 12, 1858 for the U.S. via the Canadian port of Quebec aboard the brig *Christiana*. The total cost was 645 *Riksdaler Riksgälds*,<sup>6</sup> to pay for five full and four half fares. The names and the ages of the half fare passengers are written on the back of the receipt — Olof Andersson, his wife, Cajsa Larsdotter, daughters Anna and Sophia and son Anders were all full fares, Christina, 11 years, Magdalena, 10 years, Johanna, 8 years and Elias, 5 years, were half fares (Fig. 14).



# Inskrivningsbok

(upplaga 1915)

för n:r 225<sup>64</sup>/<sub>7915</sub> Backlund

Julius

Född: 27 juli 1895

Födelseort: Ragners Jämtlands län

Yrke eller titel: arb.

Inskriven 7/6 1915

Överförd

Fig. 12. Induction book for Julius Backlund, a recruit in the Swedish Army.

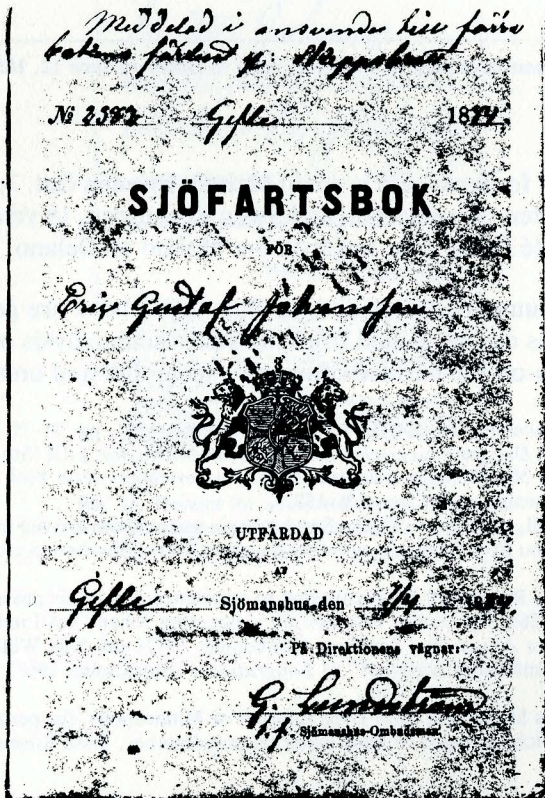


Fig. 13. Sailor's passbook for Eric Gustaf Johansson.

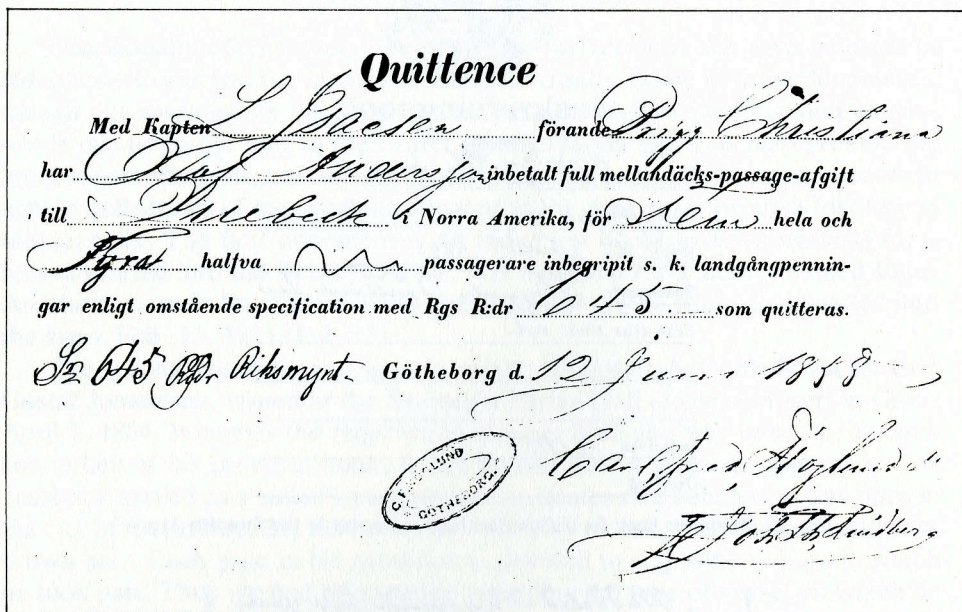


Fig. 14. Receipt for ocean fares paid by Olof Andersson in Göteborg June 12, 1858.

A later receipt for fares paid is dated Malmö, Sweden Oct. 7, 1898 and shows that Sissa Rosengren, 56 years old, and Swan Rosengren, 18 years old (her son?) paid a total of \$116.30 for two tickets from Malmö to Delano, Wright County, MN (Fig. 15).

All of the documents described and illustrated above are good examples of how valuable clues can be gained from the study and analysis of old papers and documents, which on the surface often may seem dull and uninteresting.

<sup>1</sup> *Swedish American Genealogist* (SAG), Vol. 1, No. 2, June, 1981, pp. 71-77.

<sup>2</sup> Elgenstierna, Gustaf, *Den introducerade svenska adelns ättartavlor*, I-IX (Stockholm, 1925-1936), III, p. 664; Olsson, Nils William, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in New York 1820-1850* (SPANY) (Stockholm and Chicago, 1967), pp. 156-157.

<sup>3</sup> Anna Christina Starell, the widow of Elias Sandström, a sea captain, arrived in New York June 18, 1841 aboard the *Svea* from Göteborg with her daughter Maria Elisabeth Sandström. SPANY, pp. 36-37.

<sup>4</sup> I am indebted to Mr. Rosenbery for permission to reproduce one of his passports.

<sup>5</sup> SPANY, pp. 52-53, 269. For further information concerning Johan Olof Liedberg, see Sten Almqvist, *Guldgrävaren Johan Olof Liedberg* (Jönköping, 1972) and Nils William Olsson, "Johan Olof Liedberg — småländsk argonaut" in *Emigrationer* (Stockholm, 1968), pp. 190-200.

<sup>6</sup> Ca. \$110.00.

<sup>7</sup> I am grateful to Miss Mabel and Miss Lyly Johnson of Minneapolis, for permission to reproduce this document, which belonged to their maternal grandmother, Sissa Rosengren.

**AMERICAN LINE.**

---

**STEERAGE PREPAID.**

No. 153391

**RECEIPT.**

(TO BE KEPT BY PURCHASER.)

Bought of  
*C. G. Rosenbaum* Agent.

Date Issued *October 7<sup>th</sup>* 1898.

PASSENGERS' NAMES.	AGE.
<i>Lissa Rosengren</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Swan Rosengren</i>	<i>18</i>

---

Bought by  
*G. M. Johnson*

From *"Malmö" Sweden*

To *Delano Wright Los Min*

Amount of Ocean Fare, . . . \$ *61.00*

Amount of American Railroad Fare, \$ *55.30*

Total, - \$ *116.30*

Should the passenger refuse to travel, within the specified time for which the Certificate is available, the Company will refund the amount paid, less 10 per cent. discount, on the production of this Memorandum, together with the corresponding Certificate of passage.  
 Money forwarded to INTERNATIONAL NAVIGATION COMPANY, 6 Bowling Green, New York, for the use of the passenger on arrival, will be delivered on application and identification.

Fig. 15. Receipt for ocean tickets for Sissa and Swan Rosengren, dated Malmö Oct. 7, 1898.<sup>7</sup>