

Swedish American Genealogist

Volume 5 | Number 4

Article 1

12-1-1985

Full Issue Vol. 5 No. 4

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Recommended Citation

(1985) "Full Issue Vol. 5 No. 4," *Swedish American Genealogist*: Vol. 5 : No. 4 , Article 1.

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Swedish American Genealogist




*A journal devoted to Swedish American
biography, genealogy and personal history*

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Swedish American Genealogist



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Swedish American Genealogist

P.O. Box 2186

Winter Park, FL 32790 (ISSN 0275-9314)

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Subscriptions are \$12.50 per annum and run for the calendar year. Single copies are \$5.00 each.

In Sweden subscriptions are 100:-Swedish *kronor*, which can be deposited in *postgiro* account No. 260 10-9, *Swedish American Genealogist*, Box 2029, 103 11 Stockholm. For airmail delivery from the U.S. please add 25:-*kronor* to the subscription price.

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Genealogical Societies in Sweden Today

Erik Thorell*

During the last ten years a large number of genealogical societies have been organized in Sweden. A few of these are national in scope, in that they contain members from the entire country. The majority are regional or local and have their activities mostly confined to a certain area or even a certain community. Occasionally, however, when someone moves to Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, or to another corner of the country, he or she may continue the membership in the society of the home locality.

Totally Sweden today has approximately 75 genealogical societies with an aggregate membership of more than 12,000 members, of which ca. 5,000 belong to the largest, The Genealogical Society of Sweden (*Genealogiska Föreningen*).

For individuals searching for ancestors and kinfolk in Sweden, it has often proved valuable to have contacts with the society in the area where the family has resided or still resides. Below I have listed the addresses of the majority of these societies in Sweden. I must, however, point out that there are constant changes in the structure of these societies and some addresses may not be current when this article is printed. Letters are usually forwarded, even though a particular society has replaced its secretary with a new incumbent and a different address.

Earlier Articles in *SAG*

In an article in *SAG*, Vol. III, No. 3 (Sept. 1983) Håkan Skogsjö has related how Swedish genealogical societies have developed during the last one hundred years. He has also alluded to the situation as it pertains to the current situation. His article constitutes a good introduction to what I am about to say.

The person researching his family in Sweden must be conversant with the source materials, where they may be found and the methodology to be pursued. There are several good books available in Swedish on this subject and a couple of titles in English. An excellent guide in the English language, which also surveys the situation, is Nils Hård af Segerstad's article, which appeared in *SAG*, Vol. IV, No. 2 (June 1984). The latest guide is John R. Anderson's article on the

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household examination rolls, which appeared in *SAG*, Vol. V, No. 2 (June 1985). Both of these contributions should be consulted before proceeding with this article.

The Role of the Genealogical Society

Before determining whether the regional and local genealogical societies can be of help in the study of one's Swedish family, it is important to be aware of certain conditions. These societies vary in size, from a membership of several hundred, down to those containing a dozen or two members.

Some societies have been active for years and are made up of many experienced researchers. Others are recently organized and their memberships may consist mostly of beginners. Many Swedish genealogists are also students of local history. In some areas there is only one society serving the needs of both types of students. Usually this can be determined from the name and the objectives of the society.

The demographic changes within Sweden during the last one hundred years have been monumental. Many individuals have moved. There are Swedish communities where only a few of the residents have their roots in the locality. Usually, though, there are always a few members in a local society, who are conversant with local conditions and who have engaged in family research in these areas.

As can be seen in Nils Hård af Segerstad's article, the source materials are to be found in the central or regional archives. The parish records of the last 100 years, however, may be found in the local parish. It is also quite usual, that the local public library has a collection of microfilms or microfiche of the older material, particularly that which has a relationship to the local scene.

Quite often local researchers have made copies of parts of the parish's older material, sometimes even containing indexes, lists of farm owners, etc. These individuals can therefore swiftly and without too much effort pinpoint pertinent material dealing with inhabitants of a certain parish and their family connections.

As Nils Hård af Segerstad has mentioned, there are a number of printed family histories, genealogical collections, lists of professional groups, etc. available in the various libraries, sometimes fully indexed. But there is also a vast amount of literature dealing with local history, published in limited editions, which usually does not appear in the bibliographical lists of national character. Even if included in these bibliographies, they may not, by the title alone, indicate that they contain genealogical material. On the local level, however, these facts are well known, and individuals in the local societies can usually furnish this information.

Genealogical societies are now to be found in every section of Sweden. The national societies (see Håkan Skogsjö's article, pp. 99-102) may have members, residing in these areas.

Many genealogical societies have their own quarters, containing genealogical collections and may even publish newsletters, research directories, etc. This adds, of course, to the possibility of being able to help researchers by answering their questions. The larger and older societies often have extensive collections of literature, genealogical charts, ancestral tables, family histories, maps, microfilms, etc.

The society which contains the largest amount of these aids is The Genealogical Society (*Genealogiska Föreningen*), headquartered in Stockholm. This society contains the largest collection of genealogical items in Sweden: an index of vital record notices from Sweden's largest Swedish daily newspapers, going back fifty years, a prodigious quantity of pedigree charts and a number of finding aids, including a surname index containing more than 20,000 names, with references to literature and manuscript collections. This material is available to the researcher on a daily basis, and is used on the average by ten visitors per day. During the summer months a large number of Americans of Swedish descent visit the headquarters. The society also answers mail queries, averaging one per day, of which half are of foreign origin, mostly from the U.S.

Contacts with a Genealogical Society

One can correspond with all of these Swedish societies in the English language. One ought, however, to enclose an international postage coupon to pay for the return postage. These international coupons can be purchased in any U.S. post office. Swedish genealogists are usually quite helpful in sharing their information with others without compensation. One must assume that the same liberal policy pertains to Americans of Swedish descent. One may, however, have to reimburse the society for xeroxing genealogical materials.

If the query is directed to the society and it becomes necessary for a member of that society to do research in a library or an archives, or perhaps be obliged to borrow a roll of microfilm, the inquirer should be prepared to pay for such assistance. There is no fixed rate of reimbursement, but the charge is usually reasonable. It should be stated that the number of professional genealogists in Sweden is quite limited. Via the larger societies it is, however, possible to engage the services of such individuals.

A Little Genealogical Geography

When doing genealogical research in Sweden it is important to know in which *län* (county) and parish the person sought was or is domiciled. In the list below the genealogical societies of Sweden are therefore arranged according to the county (*län*) in which they are located. The counties (*län*) are then arranged in groups, coinciding with the districts covered by the various regional archives (*landsarkiv*), where all the older materials are housed (see Nils Hård af Segerstad's article).

The *län* is roughly equivalent to the county and is the administrative arm of the government. The boundaries between the *län* have been changed over a period of years, but the organization is in principle the same as it was when it was created 350 years ago. Before that the country was divided into *landskap* (provinces), which in many cases coincided (seldom exactly) with the *län* of today. The idea of the *landskap* is still used today, and it might be beneficial to know how Sweden is divided into *landskap*, even though today these units have no official function. By looking at the list of *län* one will note, for instance, that the *landskap* Småland is not included, although this geographical concept is well known to many Americans with Swedish roots. Småland as a *landskap* is today divided into three *län*. Sweden has adopted an official key to its *län* based upon the alphabet. In this list the letter of the alphabet denotes the *län*, but in parentheses the *landskap* or part of a *landskap* has been indicated.

into three basic units—Svealand, Götaland and Norrland. This division has no administrative significance, but is used mostly in the daily speech of the Swedes. Norrland (where a resident is called *norrlänning*) consists of the northern part of Sweden and includes Gävleborg *län* (X). Svealand is the central part of Sweden which includes the following *län*, Stockholm (AB), Uppsala (C), Södermanland (D), Värmland (S), Örebro (T), Västmanland (U) and Kopparberg (W). Götaland is the southern region of Sweden and contains such *län* as Älvsborg (P), Skaraborg (R) and Östergötland (E).

It might be appropriate at this time to mention two additional geographical names, often to be found in the genealogical literature, and which also have been incorporated into the names of some of the genealogical societies. Roslagen (where the inhabitant is called *rospigg*) is the coastal area of Stockholm *län* (AB) and part of Uppsala *län* (C), with the city of Norrtälje as the center. Another area is Bergslagen (where the farmer is called *bergsmän*), which consists of the old mining and metal-working areas of the interior of Svealand, i.e., the north-western part of Västmanland *län* (U), the northern part of Örebro *län* (T), the eastern part of Värmland *län* (S) and the southern part of Kopparberg *län* (W). Such cities as Nora, Ludvika and Filipstad are located in Bergslagen.

The *län* of Sweden and the (*landskap*)

Here is the list of Sweden's geographical divisions into *län* and roughly how they equate with the old concept of the *landskap*.

- AB Stockholm (including the city of Stockholm and Roslagen)
- C Uppsala (the main part of Uppland)
- D Södermanland (Södermanland)
- E Östergötland (Östergötland)
- F Jönköping (northwest Småland)
- G Kronoberg (southwest Småland)
- H Kalmar (east Småland and the island of Öland)

- I Gotland (Gotland)
- K Blekinge (Blekinge)
- L Kristianstad (northeast Skåne)
- M Malmöhus (southwest Skåne)
- N Halland (Halland)
- O Göteborg and Bohus (Bohuslän)
- P Älvsborg (Dalsland, also known as "Dal" and southwest Västergötland)
- R Skaraborg (northeast Västergötland)
- S Värmland (Värmland)
- T Örebro (Närke)
- U Västmanland (Västmanland)
- W Kopparberg (Dalarna)
- X Gävleborg (Gästrikland and Hälsingland)
- Y Västernorrland (Medelpad and Ångermanland)
- Z Jämtland (Härjedalen and Jämtland)
- AC Västerbotten (Västerbotten and south Lappland)
- BD Norrbotten (Norrbotten* and northern Lappland)

Swedish Genealogical Societies

Härnösand Regional Archives

Comprising the *län* of Norrbotten, Västerbotten, Västernorrland and Gävleborg, Landsarkivet, Box 161, S-871 01 Härnösand, SWEDEN.

BD Norrbotten *län*

Capital - Luleå

Societies:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Kalixbygdens Forskarförening
c/o Högdahl, Börjelsbyn 3468
S-952 00 Kalix, SWEDEN</p> | <p>2. Pitebygdens Forskarförening
Box 721
S-941 28 Piteå, SWEDEN</p> |
|--|--|

AC Västerbotten *län*

Capital - Umeå

Societies:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>3. Föreningen Skelleftebygdens
Släktforskare
Skellefteå Museum, Nordana
S-931 33 Skellefteå, SWEDEN</p> | <p>4. Södra Västerbottens Genealogiska
Förening (SVGF)
Storgatan 99
S-902 44 Umeå, SWEDEN</p> |
|--|---|

*Has really never been a *landskap*.

Y Västernorrland län

Capital - Härnösand

Societies:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 5. Sollefteå Släktforsknings-sällskap
c/o Strömberg
Sportgränd 7
S-881 00 Sollefteå, SWEDEN | 6. Midälva Genealogiska
Förening (MGF)
(Sundsvall), c/o Lindqvist
Lejdarevägen 13
S-865 00 Alnö, SWEDEN |
|--|---|

X Gävleborg län

Capital - Gävle

Societies:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 7. Forskarföreningen ALIR
(Söderhamn)
c/o Eriksson, Berga 6971
S-826 06 Söderala, SWEDEN | 8. Forskarföreningen Släkt och
Bygd
Box 277
S-821 02 Bollnäs, SWEDEN |
| 9. Gästriklands Genealogiska
Förening
c/o Näsström,
Karlsborgsgatan 28
S-803 57 Gävle, SWEDEN | |

Östersund Regional Archives

Comprising the *län* of Jämtland, Landsarkivet, Box 664, S-831 27 Östersund, SWEDEN.

Z Jämtland län

Capital - Östersund

Society:

10. Jämtlands läns Släktforskarförening (JLS)
Box 418
S-831 26 Östersund, SWEDEN

Uppsala Regional Archives

Comprising the *län* of Kopparberg, Örebro, Västmanland, Uppsala, Stockholm and Södermanland, Landsarkivet, Box 135, S-751 04 Uppsala, SWEDEN. The archival collections of the city of Stockholm are to be found in the Stadsarkivet, Box 22063, S-104 22 Stockholm, SWEDEN.

W Kopparberg län

Capital - Falun

Societies:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 11. Åsens Hembygds-och
Släktforskningsförening
c/o Bergman, Åsen 4457
S-796 00 Älvdalen, SWEDEN | 12. Föreningen Ovansiljans Släktforskar
c/o Lindqvist, Ö. Storbyn 2527
S-790 56 Våmhus, SWEDEN |
|--|--|

13. Västerbergslagens Släktforscare (VBS)
c/o Jansson,
Rotorvägen 20
S-771 00 Ludvika, SWEDEN

T Örebro *län*

Capital - Örebro

Societies:

14. Hällefors Släktforskarclubb
c/o Ståhl, Hammarvägen 89 D
S-712 00 Hällefors, SWEDEN
15. Karlskoga-Degerfors Släktforskarclubb
c/o Rosenberg
Ängslyckevägen 7
S-691 41 Karlskoga, SWEDEN
16. Nora Släktforskarclubb
c/o Dalhammar
Rådstugatan 13
S-713 00 Nora, SWEDEN.
17. Örebro Släktforscare
Box 266
S-701 04 Örebro, SWEDEN
18. Hallsbergs Släktforskarclubb
Box 2010/Eriksson
S-694 02 Hallsberg, SWEDEN
19. Askersunds Släktforskarclubb
c/o Hammervik, Tikanäs
S-696 00 Askersund, SWEDEN

U Västmanland *län*

Capital - Västerås

Societies:

20. Sällskapet Släktforskarna
c/o Håkansson
Forsbackavägen 13
S-773 00 Fagersta, SWEDEN
21. Västerås Släktforskarclubb
c/o Ekström
Jaktplansgatan 3 A
S-723 48 Västerås, SWEDEN

C Uppsala *län*

Capital - Uppsala

Society:

22. Björklingebygdens Släktforskarförening
c/o Norman
Puckvägen 16
S-740 30 Björklinge, SWEDEN

AB Stockholm *län*

Capital - Stockholm

Societies:

23. Genealogiska Föreningen
(national in scope)
Box 2029
S-103 11 Stockholm, SWEDEN
24. Personhistoriska Samfundet
(national in scope)
SBL, Box 34106
S-100 26 Stockholm, SWEDEN
25. IBM-klubbens Släktforskar-sektion
Oddegatan 5, Kista
S-163 92 Stockholm, SWEDEN
26. Sällskapet Vallonättlingar
(national in scope)
Strandvägen 5 A
S-114 51 Stockholm, SWEDEN

- | | |
|--|--|
| 27. Stockholms Finska Släktforskarförening
(in the Finnish language)
Svennebygränd 33
S-163 72 Spånga, SWEDEN | 28. StorStockholms Genealogiska Förening (SSGF)
c/o Bergwall
Ringvägen 123 III
S-116 61 Stockholm, SWEDEN |
| 29. Norrtälje Släktforskarförening (NSFF)
Box 280
S-761 00 Norrtälje, SWEDEN | 30. Södertälje Släktforskarförening
c/o Hedlund
Tältvägen 15
S-151 31 Södertälje, SWEDEN |

D Södermanland *län*

Capital - Nyköping

Societies:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 31. Södermanlands Släktforskareförening
c/o Nilsson
Krattvägen 6
S-633 69 Eskilstuna, SWEDEN | 32. Eskilstuna-Strängnäs Släktforskarklubb
c/o Nilsson
Krattvägen 6
S-633 69 Eskilstuna, SWEDEN |
| 33. Katrineholm-Flen-Vingåkers Släktforskarklubb
Stensgatan 29 A
S-641 46 Katrineholm, SWEDEN | 34. Nyköping-Oxelösunds Släktforskarklubb
c/o Nordström,
Skrakvägen 2
S-613 00 Oxelösund, SWEDEN |

Göteborg Regional Archives

Comprising the *län* of Värmland, Göteborg and Bohus, Älvsborg, Skaraborg, Landsarkivet, Box 3009, S-400 10 Göteborg, SWEDEN.

S Värmland *län*

Capital - Karlstad

Societies:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 35. Värmlands släktforskarförening (Karlstad)
c/o Höglund
Lisas Höjd 5
S-681 00 Kristinehamn, SWEDEN | 36. Släktforskarklubben
Probanden
c/o Gustavsson
Gamla vägen 154
S-664 00 Grums, SWEDEN |
|---|---|

O Göteborg and Bohus *län*

Capital - Göteborg

Societies:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 37. Uddevalla Släktforskare
c/o Persson
Pianovägen 34
S-451 62 Uddevalla, SWEDEN | 38. Genealogisk Ungdom (GU)
(national in scope)
Vasagatan 10
S-411 24 Göteborg, SWEDEN |
|---|---|

39. Västra Sveriges Genealogiska
Förening (VSGF)
Postgatan 4
S-411 13 Göteborg, SWEDEN

P Ålvsborg län

Capital - Vänersborg

Societies:

40. Västgöta Genealogiska
Förening
c/o Andersson
Topasgatan 9
S-421 48 Västra Frölunda, SWEDEN

42. Ulricehamnsbygdens forskar-
klubb
c/o Svensson
Solsäter 20
S-520 15 Hökerum, SWEDEN

41. Vänersborgs Släktforskare
c/o Ericsson
Sandelhiemsgatan 3
S-462 00 Vänersborg, SWEDEN

43. Marks Härads Släktforskar-
förening
c/o Nilsson
Rådmansgatan 18
S-511 02 Skene, SWEDEN

R Skaraborg län

Capital - Mariestad

Societies:

44. Skaraborgs Släktforskar-
förbund
c/o Borg
Storegården, PL 3004
S-533 00 Götene, SWEDEN

46. Götene Släktforskar-
förening
c/o Hagman, Hemvägen 9
S-533 00 Götene, SWEDEN

48. Skara Släktforskarförening
c/o Andersson
Härlundagatan 58
S-532 00 Skara, SWEDEN

50. Hjo-Tibro Släktforskar-
förening
Box 93
S-544 00 Hjo, SWEDEN

52. Tidaholms Genealogiska
Förening
c/o Bergvall
Gärdesvägen 26
S-522 00 Tidaholm, SWEDEN

54. Habobygdens Släktforskar-
förening
Box 106
S-556 00 Habo, SWEDEN

45. Finnerödja Släktforskar-
klubb
c/o Wahlbäck, PL 2226
Gårdsjö
S-540 70 Hova, SWEDEN

47. Lidköpingbygdens Släkt-
forskare
c/o Svensson, Bergkullen
S-531 98 Lidköping, SWEDEN

49. Skövde Genealogiska Förening
Box 96068
S-541 06 Skövde, SWEDEN

51. Vara-Grästorps Släktforskar-
förening
Mellomgården, Längjum
S-534 00 Vara, SWEDEN

53. Mullsjö Genealogiska Förening
Västansgårdsvägen 10B
S-565 00 Mullsjö, SWEDEN

55. Mariestadsbygdens Släktforskar-
förening
c/o Thonander
Gärdesgatan 11
S-542 00 Mariestad, SWEDEN

Vadstena Regional Archives

Comprising the län of Östergötland, Jönköping, Kalmar and Kronoberg, Landsarkivet, Box 126, S-592 00 Vadstena, SWEDEN.

E Östergötland län

Capital - Linköping

Societies:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>56. Föreningen för Datorhjälp i Släktforskningen
- DIS (Linköping)
(national in scope, specializing in computer use)
c/o Bergman
Hjortronvägen 89
S-590 54 Sturefors, SWEDEN</p> | <p>57. Östgöta Genealogiska Förening (ÖGF) (Linköping-Norrköping)
c/o Lindahl,
Ödegårdsgatan 10
S-582 57 Linköping, SWEDEN</p> |
|---|--|

F Jönköping län

Capital - Jönköping

Societies:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>58. Mellersta Götalands Genealogiska Förening
Box 151
S-551 13 Jönköping, SWEDEN</p> <p>60. Njudungs Genealogiska Förening
Östersandsvägen 15
S-574 00 Vetlanda, SWEDEN</p> | <p>59. Nässjöortens Genealogiska Förening
Trädgårdsgatan 69
S-571 00 Nässjö, SWEDEN</p> <p>61. Sällskapet ANE, Finnveden
c/o Hultin, Blomstervägen 38
S-331 00 Värnamo, SWEDEN</p> |
|--|--|

G Kronoberg län

Capital - Växjö

Society:

62. Kronobergs Genealogiska Förening (Växjö)
c/o Hjertquist
Storgatan 1
S-342 00 Alvesta, SWEDEN

H Kalmar län

Capital - Kalmar

Societies:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>63. Kalmar Läns Genealogiska Förening (KLGf, Kalmar)
c/o Jonmyren
3672 Tvärskog
S-380 20 Ljungbyholm, SWEDEN</p> | <p>64. Västerviks Släktforskarförening
c/o Holger Kanth
Esplanaden 19 A
S-593 00 Västervik, SWEDEN</p> |
|---|--|

Lund Regional Archives

Comprising the *län* of Halland, Blekinge, Kristianstad and Malmöhus, Landsarkivet, Fack 2016, S-220 02 Lund, SWEDEN. The archival collections of the city of Malmö are to be found in the Stadsarkivet, S:t Petrigången 7 A, S-211 22 Malmö, SWEDEN.

N Halland *län*

Capital - Halmstad

Society:

65. Hallands Genealogiska Förening (HGF)
c/o Thorén
Köpmanngatan 2 A
S-302 42 Halmstad, SWEDEN

K Blekinge *län*

Capital - Karlskrona

Society:

66. Blekinge Genealogiska Förening (BGF)
Box 2033, Jämshög
S-293 02 Olofström, SWEDEN

L Kristianstad *län*

Capital - Kristianstad

Society:

67. Bjäre Släktring
c/o Johansson
Vejby PL 697
S-262 00 Ängelholm, SWEDEN

M Malmöhus *län*

Capital - Malmö

Societies:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>68. Helsingborgs Släktforskar- och bygdeförening
c/o Vuxenskolan
Drottninggatan 3
S-252 21 Helsingborg, SWEDEN</p> | <p>69. Kävlingebygdens Släkt- och Folklivsforskare
c/o Lundin
Klövervägen 15
S-240 21 Löddeköpinge, SWEDEN</p> |
| <p>70. Lundabygdens Genealogiska Förening
c/o Levenstam
Thulehem 27
S-223 67 Lund, SWEDEN</p> | <p>71. Skånes Genealogiska Förening (SGF), c/o Rosencrantz
Midgårdsgatan 17
S-216 19 Malmö, SWEDEN</p> |
| <p>72. Staffanstorps Släktforskarförening
Box 7
S-245 00 Staffanstorps, SWEDEN</p> | <p>73. Södersläotts Släkt- och Hembygdsvetenskapliga Förening
Algatan 51
S-231 00 Trelleborg, SWEDEN</p> |

Visby Regional Archives

Comprising the län of Gotland, Landsarkivet, Box 2142, S-621 02 Visby, SWEDEN.

I Gotland län

Capital - Visby

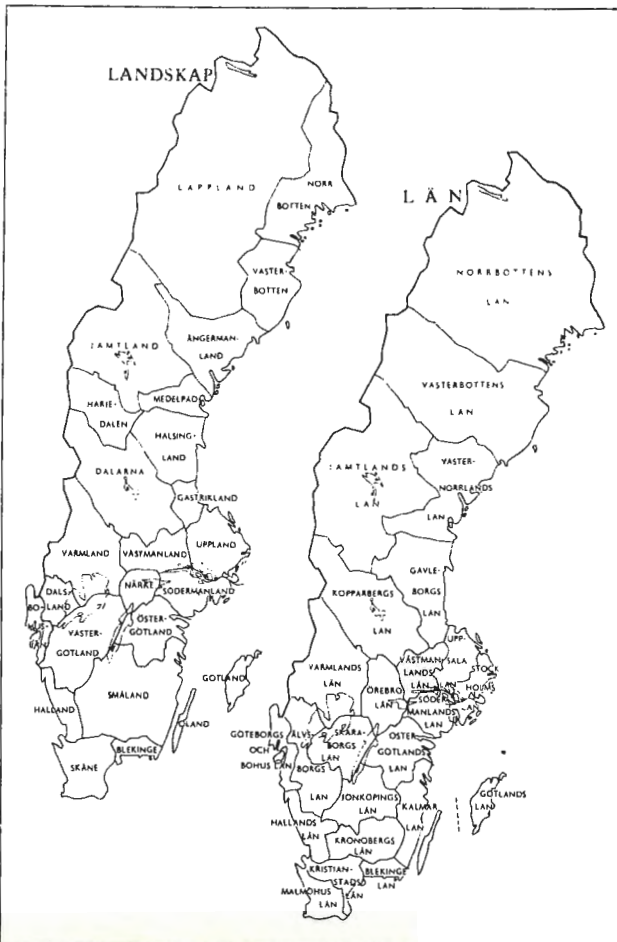
Society:

74. (Being organized)

c/o Swen Erik Öhman

Jungmansgatan 58

S-621 51 Visby, SWEDEN



Maps showing division of Sweden into landskap (provinces), the geographical units and län (districts), the administrative units. (© Generalstabens Litografiska Anstalt, Stockholm 1974.)

Two Early Swedes in New York

Erik Wikén*

The Swedish weekly newspaper, *Uddevalla Veckoblad*, published in Uddevalla, ran the following story on 13 Sept. 1833:

“Approximately thirty years ago a young man, the son of a clergyman in Bohuslän, left for America as a sailor. There he remained, without ever again contacting anyone in his homeland.

Carl Berg, which, with a minor change, is his name. In 1825 his nephew, the son of his sister, as a twenty-year old, also attempted to seek his fortune in America. We shall call him Dahl, which in reality was the final syllable of his name. In order to carry out his intention of going to America, he departed for Karlskrona, where a naval frigate was being outfitted for a journey. Young Dahl signed on the vessel and arrived safely at his destination. Since he had heard that New York was a place where one could make one's fortune, he went there. Though his cash reserves were low, he nevertheless decided to visit an inn, where several persons had congregated, reading the latest newspapers. During the course of his stay he asked if anyone could tell him where a young Swede might find employment. A person in the crowd stepped forward and asked the young man in Swedish, from what part of Sweden he hailed. Dahl answered: 'From Bohuslän and my name is Dahl.' The man asked him, 'What is your mother's name?' Dahl answered, 'Her name is Lena Berg.' The man rushed forward to take Dahl in his arms, saying: 'I am Carl Berg, who left Sweden long ago and you are my sister's son. Come with me home. I am married and am a wealthy man. In our home you will be received in the same warm manner as if you were in the home of your parents.' Dahl accepted the invitation of his maternal uncle with joy. He was immediately placed in a navigation school and became a clever sailor. His most recent letter to his parents tells of the fact that he is married, has a child and is the skipper of a steamship, with which he had earned a large income.”

Who were these two emigrants—the clergyman's son, whose name had been slightly changed to Carl Berg, and his nephew, who only used the final syllable of his family name, calling himself Dahl? According to the newspaper account, the nephew had departed in 1825 aboard a frigate out of Karlskrona. This information immediately calls to mind the episode of the naval vessel deal of 1825, which involved two Swedish naval vessels, the *Tapperheten* and the *af Chapman*, which according to Nils William Olsson “were involved in a deal

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between Sweden and Colombia, by which the Swedish vessels were to be sold to the new South American republic. When international complications threatened, the sale was stopped and the vessels went from Cartagena to New York in 1826 and were sold at auction there."¹ The crew lists for both ships have been preserved,² and in the crew list of *Tapperheten* we find Jonas D. Otterdahl. According to the biographical dictionary of the clergymen in the Diocese of Göteborg, we find that he was the son of an associate clergyman (*komminister*) in the Lyse church of Bro Parish (Göt.) by the name of Carl Magnus Otterdahl, and his wife, Helena Fredrika Svenberg, as well as the information that he emigrated to America.³

Helena Fredrika Svenberg (the Lena Berg of the newspaper story) was the daughter of an associate clergyman in the Bärfendal church in Tossene Parish (Göt.) named Jonas Svenberg and his first wife, Juliana Helin,⁴ and among the children we also find Carl Olof Svenberg (the Carl Berg of the newspaper account).⁵

Carl Olof Svenberg was probably born in 1788. I have found nothing concerning his life in America, beyond that which is mentioned in the Uddevalla newspaper. Nils William Olsson has found a notice of Carl or Charles Swenberg in the Port of New Orleans crew lists, which indicates that on 5 Aug. 1817 a Carl Swenberg, a native of Sweden and a resident of New Orleans, signed on board the brig *Free Love* of New Orleans, destined for Campeche, a city in Yucatan, Mexico. On 15 Nov. of the same year, a Charles Swenberg, a native of Göteborg and a resident of New Orleans, signed on board the brig *Tippo Saib* of New Orleans, also destined for Campeche.⁶

Jonas Daniel Otterdahl was born in Lassehaga, Lyse Parish (a part of Bro Parish) (Göt.) 12 April 1804. In 1820 he moved to the Cathedral Parish (*Domkyrkoförsamlingen*) in Göteborg and then departed 20 May 1825 "for sea voyages".

While the two Swedish naval vessels were docked in New York in 1826, he probably signed off or perhaps jumped ship in conformity with another Swede, Carl Gustaf Gripenschütz, who enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and who on 23 Oct. 1877 was honorably discharged after 51 years of service.⁷ Other crew members who came off the *af Chapman* were Olof Gustaf Hedström, who later became the well-known Methodist pastor of the Bethel Ship in New York Harbor,⁸ Johan Peter Hägerlund, who became a merchant in Richmond, Fort Bend Co., Texas,⁹ and Gustaf Fredrik Berghman, who for a time was employed at the U.S Army Academy at West Point, but who in 1837 was living in Mobile, AL.¹⁰

Concerning Otterdahl and his descendants in America, it has been possible for Nils William Olsson to come up with a few additional facts, partly from archival sources and partly from a couple of articles in *Encyclopedia of American Biography*.¹¹ Otterdahl married in New York 31 Aug. 1830 Mary Wanzer (Wonza) and by this time changed his name to Dale.¹² His son, Charles Gideon Dale (1831-1891), the oldest of nine children, was born 26 June 1831. He became an outstanding naval engineer. An exhaustive article concerning him

and his accomplishments is to be found in the *Encyclopedia* mentioned above.¹³ He married in 1854 Cordelia Lauretta Von Katten. A granddaughter of this couple was Ida Dudley Dale (who died in 1955), “artist and writer of Americana”, and who also has been given an article in the *Encyclopedia*.¹⁴

¹Nils William Olsson, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in New York 1820-1850* (Stockholm and Chicago, IL 1967) (SPANY), p. 5, n. 22.

²The crew list of *Tapperheten* is in the *Carl August Gyllengranat Collection* in the Royal War Archives in Stockholm, whereas the crew list of the *af Chapman* is in the *Nordenskjöld Collection*, Vol. 51 (E4928) in the National Archives (*Riksarkivet*) in Stockholm.

³Carl Wilhelm Skarstedt, *Göteborgs stifts herdaminne* (Lund 1885), p. 261. Ot(t)erdahl is a well-known family, which took its name from Otterhällan, a height in the old city of Göteborg. For more information concerning this family, see *Svenska Slaktkalendern* (Stockholm 1967), pp. 290-291.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 877, 1148. The parish records of Tossene and Bärfendal have been destroyed by fire.

⁵According to an estate inventory (*bouppteckning*) of Juliana Helin, dated 20 May 1790 in *Bouppteckningar från Tunge med flera härader (Estate Inventories from Tunge and other hundreds)*, 1790:1443 in Göteborg *Landsarkiv* (Göteborg District Archives).

⁶*Port of New Orleans Crew Lists for 1817* in the National Archives, Washington, DC.

⁷Nils William Olsson, “Gripenschütz” in *Swedish American Genealogist*, Vol. 1, No. 1, March 1981, p. 37. Gripenschütz received a passport in Göteborg 22 July 1820 for travel to America. If he actually left for America, he must have returned soon thereafter inasmuch as from 1822 to the time he boarded the *Tapperheten* he was a volunteer in the Fifth Squadron of The Crown Prince’s Hussar Regiment (*Kronprinsens husaregemente*). - The Archives of *Kronprinsens husaregemente*, Vols. 237-241 in the Royal War Archives (*Krigsarkivet*), Stockholm.

⁸SPANY, p. 13, n. 55.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 59, n. 36; Nils William Olsson, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in U.S. Ports 1820-1850 (except New York)* (Stockholm and Minneapolis, MN 1979), p. 92.

¹⁰Gustaf Elgenstierna, *Den introducerade svenska adelns ättartavlor*, I-IX (Stockholm 1925-1936), I, p. 347; “Svensk-norske konsuln i New York Henrik Gahn till Kommerskollegium 1 Nov. 1831” (Swedish-Norwegian Consul in New York, Henrik Gahn, to the Swedish Board of Trade 1 Nov. 1831) in *Kommerskollegii arkiv* (The Archives of the Board of Trade) in the National Archives (*Riksarkivet*) Stockholm; “Sven Magnus Svensson to Carl Reinhold Nordenskjöld”, dated Richmond, TX 1 April 1840 in Albin Widén, *När Svensk-Amerika grundades* (Stockholm 1961), p. 16.

¹¹*Encyclopedia of American Biography*, New Series (New York 1935).

¹²Jonas Daniel Dale of the City of New York and Mary Wonza, also of the City of New York, were married 31 Aug. 1830 by the Rev. Frederick C. Schaeffer, according to a certificate filed with the City of New York 13 Sept. 1830 (*Marriages Performed by the Various Mayors and Aldermen of the City of New York, as well as Justices of the Peace, etc. 1830-1854*), compiled and edited by Roy S. Sawyer 1936. (Typescript in the New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, MA). In 1838-1839 the sailor’s mate by the name of Jonas D. Dale was residing at 11 Essex Street in New York City according to *Longworth’s American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory* (New York 1838), p. 191.

¹³*Encyclopedia*, pp. 435-438.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 445-447.

Long Generations

Ruby Didrickson Sloane, b. in Roslindale, Meeker Co., MN 8 May 1895, d. in Arleta, CA 10 Aug. 1983. Her mother, Sara Mathilda Sandström, was b. in East Lake Lillian Township, Kandiyohi Co., MN 18 Oct. 1872, the dau. of Anders Ersson Sandström, who at the time of his daughter’s birth was 67 years old. He was b. in Färila Parish (Gäv.) 20 July 1805. The difference between the birth of the grandfather and the death of the granddaughter is here 178 years. A grandson, the last to bear the name Sandström, is still living in Seattle, WA.

James L. Didrickson
Valencia, CA

“A Second Cousin In Every Corner”

Janet Hobbs Johnson*

The search is over. Seated at the table in Jenny's immaculate kitchen, I am surrounded by newly-found relatives. Besides Jenny, there are her sisters, Dagny, Valborg and Ingrid. Another sister, Gunhild, is at work. There are Anita and Agneta, whose fathers, Gustav and Gunnar, are twin brothers of the five sisters. These seven siblings and a third brother, Stig, were born on this site in Västra Utsjö in the parish of Malung in Dalarna. Our great grandmothers, who were sisters, were also born here. In my husband's words, I had “hit the jackpot”.

I had prepared for this for five years. The search for living descendants of my Swedish ancestors included looking through countless microfilms at the genealogical library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Crystal, MN and the Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul. It meant studying the Swedish language at the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota. It meant reading Swedish travel books and studying Swedish maps. Ultimately, it required two trips to Sweden.

The search began with the discovery of my great grandmother's exit permit from Sweden (*flyttningsbetyg*). My mother, who lives in the house which my great grandparents bought almost a hundred years ago, found it there. The exit permit was dated 15 Oct. 1883, and gave the basic facts needed to begin my search—my great grandparents' names, dates and places of birth, and the date of marriage. The names and birth dates of their three sons, all *vaccinerade* (vaccinated), were on the back. Their three American-born daughters' names and birth dates were added later.

The following story about my great grandmother has come from her exit permit, from Swedish and American church records, and from books, letters, newspapers as well as family stories.

Ingeborg Ersdotter was born on a farm named Bränd in Västra Utsjö, a village in Malung Parish (Kopparberg *län*) 24 April 1847, the daughter of Eric Ersson¹ and Anna Persdotter, the youngest of seven children.

The only known facts about Ingeborg's childhood are her baptism and confirmation in the Malung Church. Compulsory education in Sweden began in 1842, five years before Ingeborg was born.² According to her exit permit, she could read and write well, so she must have attended the parish elementary school.

At the age of eighteen, Ingeborg moved to Skog Parish (Gävl.) and one year later she returned to the family farm and began working as a *piga* (maid) in the pastor's home in Malung. In 1867, twenty years old and unmarried, she became pregnant. Her pious mother turned her out of the family home.³ It may have been a face-saving act inasmuch as her mother was a good friend of the pastor's daughters who would come to visit in their long, black dresses with their father's sermons, wrapped in black cloths.⁴

Ingeborg moved in with her sister, Anna, in Böle.⁵ A daughter, Anna Josefina (Josie), was born to Ingeborg 2 March 1868. Had Ingeborg's mother, the village midwife, spurned her daughter during the childbirth?⁶ Anna Josefina was baptized three days after she was born.

On 3 May 1874 Ingeborg moved to the city of Falun, where on 30 Aug. the same year she was married to Sven Pettersson, who came from Hestra Parish (Jön.) Sven worked in the large copper mine in Falun and both belonged to Falu Kristine Parish. Within the next six years three sons were born to Ingeborg and Sven: Sven Axel, Ernst Petrus and Bernhard Amandus.

Sven left for America in 1880, where he found work as a bricklayer in St. Paul, MN. Ingeborg sold dress fabric, laces and ribbons door to door in Falun in order to support herself and the family. In 1882 she left the Lutheran faith in order to become a Baptist. She was preparing to be baptized into the Baptist congregation, when she received word to join her husband in America. She decided to wait so that she and Sven could be baptized at the same time.⁷

It was a long journey from Falun to St. Paul. Even for a strong-willed independent woman, it was a major undertaking. Alienated from her family, she probably arranged the move, packed and left on her own.

The journey most likely began with a train ride from Falun to Göteborg on Sweden's West Coast. All Swedish emigrants were recorded in the police registry in Göteborg, the city of their embarkation. According to this register, Ingeborg and her three sons left for America 19 Oct. 1883.⁸ Josie joined them later. In the meanwhile she may have returned to Böle to live with her Aunt Anna.

The usual route for emigrants departing from Göteborg was across the North Sea by steamship to Hull in England. Another train carried them across England to Liverpool, where they boarded the vessel for New York. The entire trip took from three to five weeks.⁹ A third train ride, this time across America, brought Ingeborg and her children to St. Paul and to Sven.

The family established itself in the Swedish-speaking community around Payne Avenue on St. Paul's East Side. “Swede Hollow”, in a gully cut by Phalen Creek near lower Payne Avenue, was the first American home for most Swedish immigrants in St. Paul.¹⁰ Sven and Ingeborg settled there. Like many immigrants, Sven changed his name, anglicizing it to Swan Peterson. Ingeborg assumed the surname Peterson, as did Josie when she arrived.

The reunited husband and wife were baptized and received as members into the First Swedish Baptist Church of St. Paul 28 Feb. 1884. Josie became a member 20 Nov. 1884. Three daughters were born to Swan and Ingeborg in St. Paul—Hulda, Selma and Amalia. Selma, born 17 July 1887, was my grandmother.

In November 1887 Ingeborg and Swan were stricken from the church membership rolls for *okristligt leverne* (ungodly behavior).¹¹ Without enough food to feed seven children or fuel to keep warm, and anticipating the long, cold winter, Swan and Ingeborg had asked the church fathers for help. They were told to go home and pray. Swan then went to the local saloonkeeper, who collected money to help the family. The church then terminated their membership for accepting “tainted” money. Ingeborg was later reinstated as a member, but Swan never again showed interest in the church.

In 1894 Swan and Ingeborg purchased a house and had it moved to its present site, one block off Payne Avenue, on Rose Avenue. They lived there for the remainder of their lives.

Swan died in 1923 at the age of 77. On 2 Aug. 1929 Ingeborg wrote a letter to her daughter Selma, who then was working in the Glacier National Park. She said that she was thinking of making a big change, that she could no longer care for herself or her home. Ten days later she suffered a stroke and on 15 Aug. 1929 Ingeborg died at the age of 82.

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In July 1983, one hundred years after my great grandmother had arrived in America, I carried her exit permit back across the Atlantic. My daughter, Jeannine, and I were the first of Ingeborg’s descendants to return to the country of her birth. Our non-stop jet flight from Minneapolis to Scandinavia took about eight hours.

Although my husband and I had toured other European countries, this trip, to the country of my origins, was an emotional experience beyond my expectations. We located my husband’s relatives in Finland. We visited several red farmhouses in Dalsland, Sweden, one where my father-in-law had been born and others where he had lived as a child. I shared my husband’s excitement as he discovered his family roots—but I wanted to find my own.

After a visit to Lake Siljan in Dalarna, we drove west from Mora to Malung. The road goes up and down hills covered with tall, dark pine trees. Occasionally, a clear shimmering lake comes into view, but the western Dalarna landscape is dominated by the forest. At last the trees thinned out and we came to the valley of the West Dal River and to Malung. We checked into a hotel and went out to explore this town of my ancestors.

The name Malung was in use as early as 1177, when the Norwegian King Sverre described his march through the district. This is the earliest known use of a place name in Dalarna.¹² In old Swedish, the word “malunghr” meant “sandy” and the word “malung” was thus interpreted as “the sandy place”. The broad river valley, with its sandy soil, was a natural place for early settlers whose main industry consisted of cattle-raising and farming.¹³

The farmers hunted in the forest and fished in the lakes and streams. The plentiful hunting soon gave rise to the leather industry which in time has made

this area world-famous. Today, animal skins are imported from as far away as China, in order to make leather goods, clothing and shoes.

After lunch in a cafe, we crossed the main street and bought some leather items. Down another street, we stopped in front of the Malung Hemslöjd, a small shop specializing in sewing and handcrafted items.

The one thing I wanted to buy most of all on this trip was a Swedish folk costume. I had the idea that it would be easy; that I could buy one “off the rack”, as a dirndl in Germany. I was not prepared for the resistance I encountered when I had asked in Rättvik where one could be made. “You could only get one from your grandmother or some other relative,” I was told and further questions were ignored. I had not realized how protective the Swedes would be about their traditional parish folk costumes. My husband suggested that I buy a picture of a Malung folk costume and copy it at home. “Maybe you could buy a kit to make a purse,” he said as we stood outside the Hemslöjd.

We went into the shop. A folk costume was hanging in the doorway and we stopped to admire it. The shopkeeper shook her head and said, “no,” when asked if one could be made for me. Another customer began talking to us in English and we told her how much I wanted a folk costume. She had lived in Malung as a young girl when her father was a pastor there. Now living in Göteborg, she had brought her daughter’s Malung costume to be altered. I told her that my great grandmother had been born in Malung. She talked for some time to the shopkeeper in Swedish and then turned to me and said in English, “She will make a costume for you.” Was I dreaming? Could it really be true?

With many gestures, I was ushered downstairs to the storeroom to try on the costume hanging in the shop. It belonged to Gun, the shopkeeper. It really was true. I could have a costume, a folk costume from the parish of my great grandmother.

The Malung folk costume, the oldest known folk costume in Dalarna, is brightly colored. The jumper is an embroidered red top with a blue handwoven wool skirt. It is worn over a white cotton long-sleeved blouse with red and white cuffs. A flowered shawl is tucked into the red handwoven wool apron and held in place by a silver brooch. The white cap has handmade lace and ribbons. The purse, with the year it was made and the owner’s initials, is made of leather, as befits Malung’s foremost industry. Red stockings and black leather shoes complete the outfit. Gun repeatedly told me to wear “whole black shoes”, as she pointed at my sandals and shook her head. The folk costume of Malung is similar to the dress described in the mid-1800s.¹⁴

Gun said that the costume would cost 2,500 Swedish *Kronor* and my husband left for the bank. It was 2:45 p.m. and most banks in Sweden close at 3:00 p.m. By the time Gun had me snapped and tied into her costume, my husband had returned. “Upstairs. Your husband. Take a picture,” she said. Later we made arrangements to return in the morning to take measurements.

As we walked back to our hotel, men and women, dressed in the Malung costumes, were gathering in the city park. A second stroke of luck that day—it

was Friday, and every Friday afternoon during the summer, festivals are held in the park. Dancers, fiddlers and actors perform; local craftsmen display their wares. There are refreshments and a makeshift "zoo", fenced-in sheep and goats for the children to see and touch. We stayed to watch the performance and strolled about the displays. Still, as in a dream, we went back to the hotel.

Too excited to sleep, I tossed and turned all night. The next morning I returned to the Hemslöjd and with much gasping, Gun and her assistant took my measurements. Saying "ja" with a quick intake of air is more pronounced here than in other parts of Sweden. By this time my husband wanted a costume too. Gun quickly adopted him into the Malung parish and took his measurements. Gun said that we would receive our costumes in about three months—"Före jul" (before Christmas).

The Malung Church, where my great grandmother had been baptized and confirmed into the Lutheran State Church, was our next stop. I wonder if she wore a folk costume at her confirmation, as young people in many Dalarna parishes still do today. The church, built in the 13th century, is located on the east side of the West Dal River at the edge of the town.¹⁵ It is a peaceful setting. On that bright sunny day, the white stone church tower, amidst the green of the trees, stood out against the clear blue sky. The white and black sheep, grazing across the river, completed the pastoral scene. Did my great grandmother and her family, who lived on the west side of the river, come to church by boat?

The Malung parish records are kept in the basement of the parish office building. These leather-bound volumes, 100 to 200 years old, are amazing to see. Meticulously handwritten in ink, they include information of births, baptisms, deaths and marriages, as well as each parishioner's standing within the church.

The pastor said that many of the records had been destroyed by fire, which is true all over Scandinavia. Malung is one of the few parishes exempt from keeping the records in the regional archives.¹⁶ This exception to Sweden's well-organized record-keeping system had caused me some aggravation earlier. Notebook in hand, I had gone to the National Archives in Stockholm. I was told that the Malung records were kept in the regional archives in Uppsala. In Uppsala we climbed the steep hill to the castle, where the archives are housed, arriving there just before closing. We were then told that the records were in Malung.

The pastor offered to show us how to use the records and we thumbed through the heavy paper pages. I located my great grandmother's family and learned that she had been born on a farm called Bränd in the village of Västra Utsjö. The pastor was unfamiliar with Bränd, but located my great grandmother's brother on a farm called Nygårds. He also said that there had been a death at Nygårds recently. He suggested that we drive out to Västra Utsjö and ask someone where Nygårds was, and that they might be able to tell us about Bränd.

Across a narrow bridge to the west side of the river, we drove and turned off the main road and in a few miles we came to a sign which declared that we were in Västra Utsjö. There were several houses on one side of the road and several more

up a hill on the other side. The hill sloped gently down toward the river, one quarter of a mile away, where fields of wild flowers grew. I recalled my mother telling me about my great grandmother's flower-filled backyard in St. Paul. Behind the houses on the hill were remnants of the large forest that once covered the area.

Hesitantly I asked a few people where Bränd and Nygårds were located, but they only shook their heads in consternation. Disappointed and confused, we took pictures of the houses and the wild flowers by the river.

With tears rolling down my cheeks, we drove away from Västra Utsjö and Malung; away from the valley up into the hills, where the road once again tunnels through the tall dark pine trees. Would I ever return? For now, I would have to be content with my folk costume.

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II

It is raining, the downpour making a river of the street below our hotel room window. I pace the floor. I look out of the window, wondering if I am related to anyone in the rain-soaked town. This is my second trip to Sweden and I am again in Malung, my great grandmother's birthplace.

The first stop we make this time is at the Malung tourist bureau. The receptionist circles the location of a store where we can buy shoes to wear with our Malung folk costumes. She also recommends a smörgåsbord at a guest house on the road to Yttermalung. She assures us that we will "like it there," when I tell her where we had eaten previously. It proves to be a survival test. A two-tiered table offers fish of every description—smoked, marinated, salted; fish and vegetables, fish and macaroni, fish and rice; and a variety of fresh and marinated vegetables. Another table holds the main course of roast beef, meatballs, potatoes, cooked vegetables and salad. A third table holds bread, crackers and fruit. We stuff ourselves as we sit on the porch overlooking the West Dal River.

On the way back to the hotel, we visit the Malung Church to look for the graves of my great great grandparents. By now we are a bit cynical about Swedish cemeteries because we have learned that some old graves are "recycled" and that others may be under the walking paths. We are not disappointed when our search is fruitless.

The pastor drives up and tells about his busy day. He asks if we know the Blue Lake Choir from Michigan. The choir has been visiting Malung for several years and had sung in the church the previous evening. The young choir members are housed in the homes of the parishioners. He invites us to look inside the church and to return in the morning to look at old records. Barbara, our oldest daughter, is with us on this trip and I want her to see these remarkable old books.

It begins to rain as we return to the hotel. My husband and daughter sleep, lethargic from overeating. Too restless to sleep, I pace the floor. I review the situation as I look out of the window. We have scheduled Sunday and Monday in Malung and it is now five o'clock Sunday afternoon. Will I go away empty-handed again?

In the January 1985 issue of *The Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* (formerly the *Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly*), Margareta Hedblom, director of the Dalarna Emigration Project, requested information from descendants of Swedish emigrants from that province.¹⁷ In answer to my letter, Margareta said that she would not be in Sweden when I planned to be, but that the "lady in charge" of Malung research "would love to talk" with me. The name, as I read it, was Lois Larsson from Yttermalung. Little did I know the difficulty I would have.

Three times I have gone down to the hotel lobby to ask the receptionist for help. The phone number of the one Larsson in Yttermalung in the telephone directory is no longer in service. The receptionist calls directory assistance to no avail. Finally, she suggests that I drive out to Yttermalung and ask someone. "It is a small village and everyone knows everyone else," she says.

Up in our room, my husband opens his eyes and asks if I have found "that lady" yet. "Why not?" he asks. His persistence irritates me, but without it, I would have given up long ago. We decide to take the receptionist's advice and drive to Yttermalung.

Along the east side of the river, past the church, and past the guest house, where we had eaten earlier, we come to the village of Yttermalung. The one store is not open on Sunday. A young man is checking his car tires in front of the store and I ask him if he is from the area. He is, but knows no one in this village. He tells me to go up to any house and ask for information. We drive down the road looking for some sign of life. The bleak rainy afternoon adds to the quiet which prevails after the midsummer festivities of the past two days.

At last we see a woman in a farmyard. We back around and I get out of the car and ask if she knows Lois Larsson. She quiets her dogs and calls to her young daughter, "Tyst, Jag talar engelska!" ("Quiet. I am talking English!"). She asks for more information about the woman I am seeking and I tell her that she is involved in Malung's research. "You must mean Iris Larsson. She works in the library," she says. When I have difficulty understanding directions to Iris' house, she says that she needs to tend the cows, "but I will take you there." She loads her dogs and child in the back of a station wagon and leads us down the road. She leaves her crying child in the car and knocks on the door of a house. She calls for Iris and soon a very startled woman comes down the stairs. I explain my errand. She invites us up to her apartment. Brushing crumbs from a recent meal off the table, she invites us to sit down.

Iris is very interested in genealogical research and is excited about helping me. She brings out several books, including a Swedish-English dictionary, which

she jokingly says she might need. I nod in agreement because my dictionary is in my bag at my side. I tell her my great grandmother's name and birthplace and she immediately turns to a story about Västra Utsjö in the 1961-1962 edition of *Skinnarebygd*, Malungs Hembygdsförenings årsbok (the annual of the Malung local history society). One of the chapters is about Bränd and its people.¹⁸ I found out later that the author of the article is Lars Bergman, a grandson of my great grandmother's brother, Lars.

Iris says that she is certain that I have relatives in the area. She does not know any of them personally, but has a friend who also works in the library, who does. She phones Ingeborg Jansson who comes over immediately, talking, smiling, joking and as excited as Iris is about my pursuit. Ingeborg looks at my notes and says, "You have a second cousin in every corner." She makes several phone calls and says that we would meet some of my relatives that very evening. My great grandmother had six brothers and sisters and all remained in the Malung vicinity. I was to meet but one branch.

Ingeborg leaves and Iris, my husband and I soon follow. We meet Ingeborg at her house, where she had gone to put clothes in the dryer for two Blue Lake Choir members who were staying with her. She had not expected to be called out so abruptly this evening.

There is a lot of discussion about who is to go with whom. I do not understand why we need two cars, but the reason soon becomes apparent. We turn into a cluster of houses just off the main road between Malung and Yttermalung. A white-haired woman, wearing glasses, comes out of one of the houses. "She looks like my mother," I think to myself. "This is Dagny, one of your relatives," says Ingeborg. I lean over the back seat and we shake hands. We continue into Malung where we stop to pick up two more women, Ingrid and Valborg. They are Dagny's sisters.

We cross the West Dal River and turn onto the road to Västra Utsjö. In a few miles we turn onto a gravel drive toward the same houses we took pictures of two years ago. Jenny, another sister of the women we have just met, lives in one of the houses. She and her nieces, Agneta and Anita, meet us outside. We stand in the summer twilight at 10 p.m. and take pictures on the exact place where these women and our great grandmothers had been born. After the rain, swarms of mosquitoes buzz around us as we become acquainted and discuss the location of various past and present buildings. This is complicated because my comprehension of Swedish is uncertain and the older women do not speak English. It is further complicated because we are all very excited and everyone is talking at once.

Our ancestors had lived on this property, known as Bränd, as long ago as the late 1600s.¹⁹ It has been more recently called Back, hence my problem to locate it two years ago. "Så synd" ("What a pity"), says Dagny. Nearby is Nygårds where Anita's father lives. Our great grandmother's brother, Per, built a house at Nygårds for his family.²⁰ When their father built a larger house at Bränd, brother Lars and his family moved into the old one.²¹

Eric Ersson, my great great grandfather, owned a considerable amount of property for his time. The beautiful spacious house he built at Bränd, "contrasted sharply" with the smaller cottages which other families shared with their animals.²² Eventually, most of the property was lost to the logging company.²³

Here I am, seated at Jenny's table, looking through old family photos with newly-found relatives. They are as excited as I. As I sort through the pile on the table, one catches my eye. "I have seen this picture in my mother's house," I say. I know for certain that I am in the right place.

The picture is of great grandmother's sister Anna, her husband, and their four children. At first I am confused because I had believed it to be of my great grandmother. However, the names are on the back. Anna must have sent a picture of her family to Ingeborg in America.

As we discuss our ancestry, Jenny brings out a copy of the 1961-1962 issue of *Skinnarebygd* and gives it to me. It is a special gift because it is no longer in print. Dagny is pleased that I think she resembles my mother. She invites us for lunch the next day. We make arrangements to meet at the church.

It has all happened so fast. I feel like I am dreaming. Afterwards I would think of many questions to ask, but right now everything is a blur. My head aches. My stomach aches. I am exhausted, but I have found my roots.

It is after midnight when we go our separate ways. Fog has quietly covered the valley, creating an ethereal atmosphere. We are engulfed in mist as my husband and I drive Iris home along the back road. An eerie sensation comes over me as we drive over the partially obscured bridge. The fog intensifies after we leave Iris' house and we momentarily lose our way into Malung. At last we are back at the hotel. "I'm glad you found your relatives," my husband says as he rolls over and falls asleep. With my arms crossed under my head, I lie awake, wondering if this evening really happened.

Monday morning we are up early to shop. A little too early, because the banks and the stores are not yet open. We wait outside the Hemsjöjd. At last the shades roll up and the door opens. A surprised Gun is inside. Either her English and my Swedish have improved a great deal or this meeting lacks the excitement of the last one. We are able to communicate much better. We take pictures with Gun protesting that she is not dressed properly. We thank her again for our folk costumes and leave to go to the church.

The church secretary remembers us, too, and takes us to the basement where the records are stored. Each person in the parish is listed, along with their date and place of birth, marital status, employment, and when Communion last was received. Notation is made when someone moves into or out of the parish. The story of my great grandmother unfolds on pages of century-old books.

Iris soon joins us, bringing copies of some materials I wanted, neatly encased in plastic and tied with a ribbon. Iris phones Dagny as prearranged. She soon arrives with her son, Hans, who will be our interpreter. We say goodbye to Iris, this kind new friend, the final link to my Swedish relatives.

Dagny and Hans lead us to a school. A tiny woman comes out to greet us. It is Gunhild. Now I have met all five sisters.

In her home Dagny shows family pictures to us. She has an enlarged copy of the local postcard depicting two of her grandchildren in their Malung folk costumes. Four places are set at the table. It is noon, but everyone has risen early for work and has already eaten lunch. Among other things, Dagny serves moose meat (*älg*) and cloudberry (*hjordron*). The *älg* is the equivalent of the North American moose and cloudberry are indigenous to the countries in the far northern latitudes.

Hans and Ulf answer my questions about the Malung dialect, one of the many dialects in Sweden. Hans and his family speak it at home, but Ulf's wife is from another part of Sweden and he is afraid that the language eventually will disappear. Iris told us earlier how amazed she had been to speak the Malung dialect with her relatives in Roseau, MN in the "old" form of the dialect. In Malung the dialect has undergone the inevitable linguistic change of all languages. In Roseau, lacking the influence of Swedish, it has remained the same.

Dagny's sons give us a tour of the family-owned and operated glove factory next to her house. Hans and Ulf manage the business end. Jenny is there cutting gloves from leather and Ingrid is sewing the pieces together. Dagny sews too, "Sometimes," as Hans teasingly tells it. Gloves are designed and made for firemen, motorcycle policemen and jockeys.

Hans takes us to buy shoes for our folk costumes. "Whole, black shoes", made of leather with soft yellow leather laces.

Once again we are on the now familiar route from Malung to Västra Utsjö. This time we continue past the Västra Utsjö sign, where the pavement ends and the gravel begins. The road goes up the reforested hills to a lake. Here and there are open spaces with stubby trees and large gray rocks—like an old man's balding head with tufts of hair and protruding growths of skin. The government has replanted some of the areas which were logged long ago. Slowly the forest will return.

A sharp turn into a rutted drive and a small cottage (*fäbod*) comes into view. It has been in the family for over one hundred years. Did my great grandmother come here as a young girl? Now owned by Dagny's brother, it once belonged to her parents. Dagny spreads a cloth on a picnic table and sets out coffee, rolls and cookies. Hans tells us about the *fäbod*.

Today the *fäbod* is a weekend retreat or vacation place for Swedish families. In the past, it was an escape also, for cows. Confined to close quarters in town during the winter, they were allowed to roam free in the woods at the *fäbod* (which in Swedish literally means cattle house or barn), returning to the buildings at night to be milked. Enough butter and cheese were made from the rich milk to last through the winter.

Dagny tells of the summers spent there as a child. The men would return home for two weeks in July for the haying season and often the women would go along to cook for the men. One summer, when Dagny was 13 or 14 years old, she was alone with the cows in the *fäbod* for two weeks.

A short distance away, overlooking the lake, Dagny and her husband have their *fäbod*. The cottage, on the edge of a hill, has a lovely view from the porch. Bunches of flowers are everywhere—in containers on the floor and hanging overhead. “För midsommar” (“For Midsummer”), says Dagny, as she waters them. Behind the cottage is a root cellar, a cool storage place built into the earth with grass growing on top. The air is cool up here in the hills. The breeze off the lake offers a welcome relief from the mosquitoes.

It has become warm and humid again as we return to town. We enjoy a glass of homemade currant *saft* (juice) at Dagny’s house.

It is late afternoon, time to continue our journey. After many hugs; Swedish thank yous (*tack*); Swedish farewells (*hej, hej*), we drive away from Malung. This time, my tears are of happiness.

¹Bränd Eric Ersson, a farmer in Västra Utsjö, was born there 19 April 1804, the son of Eric Persson and Kerstin Ersdotter. He died in Malung on his 63rd birthday, 19 April 1867. He was married in 1825 to Anna Persdotter, b. in Västra Utsjö 20 Sept. 1807, the daughter of Nygårds Per Halvardsson and Karin Olsdotter. She died in Malung 29 Oct. 1891. - Joseph Sjögren, *Acta Genealogica Malungensia* (Malung, Sweden 1963), p. 318

²H. Arnold Barton (Ed.), *Letters from the Promised Land; Swedes in America, 1840-1914* (Minneapolis, MN 1975), p. 16

³Lars Bergman, “Den tysta byn” in *Skinnarebygd: Malungs Hembygdsföreningens Årsbok 1961-62* (Malung 1963), p. 24.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Böle was another village in Malung, bordering on Västra Utsjö.

⁶*Skinnarebygd*, p. 24.

⁷*Veckobulletin för Första Svenska Baptistförsamlingen (Weekly Bulletin of the First Swedish Baptist Church)*, dated 25 Aug. 1929.

⁸*Göteborgs poliskammars emigrantlistor (Emigrant Lists of the Göteborg Police Headquarters)*, Register for 1883 in *Landsarkivet* in Göteborg.

⁹Barton, *Letters*, p. 109.

¹⁰Byron Nordstrom (Ed.), *The Swedes in Minnesota* (Minneapolis 1976), p. 29.

¹¹*First Swedish Baptist Church Minutes*, Vol. 2 (29 April 1882-January 1892), St. Paul, MN.

¹²*Semester: Malung-Lima Tourist Guide 1985-1986* (Malung 1985), p. 22.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Maximilian Axelson, *Vesterdalarne, dess natur, folkklif och fornminnen under vandringar derstädes tecknade* (Stockholm 1885), p. 114.

¹⁵*Dalarnas kyrkor - mer än minnen* (No place, no date).

¹⁶Carl-Erik Johansson, *Cradled in Sweden* (Logan, Utah 1972), pp. 32-33.

¹⁷Notice in “Communications” in *The Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* (formerly *The Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly*), Vol. 36 (Chicago 1985), p. 69.

¹⁸*Skinnarebygd*, pp. 5-16; 20-37.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 26.

²⁰Ibid., p. 21.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid., p. 22.


²³Ibid., pp. 7-8.

Swedish American Genealogist



Volume V 1985

Swedish American Genealogist



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Swedish American Genealogist

P.O. Box 2186

Winter Park, FL 32790

(ISSN 0275-9314)

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Contributions are welcomed but the quarterly and its editors assume no responsibility for errors of fact or views expressed, nor for the accuracy of material presented in books reviewed. Queries are printed free of charge to subscribers only.

Subscriptions are \$12.50 per annum and run for the calendar year. Single copies are \$5.00 each.

In Sweden subscriptions are 100:-Swedish *kronor*, which can be deposited in *postgiro* account No. 260 10-9, *Swedish American Genealogist*, Box 2029, 103 11 Stockholm. For airmail delivery from the U.S. please add 25:-*kronor* to the subscription price.

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Genealogical Queries

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Hultgren

Pertinent information is desired concerning the marriage and death of Christine Charlotte Hultgren, both of which ostensibly occurred in Cook County, Chicago, IL. Christine Charlotte Hultgren was b. in Aasen, Nord Trondelag in Norway in 1898 to Henrik Hugo Hultgren (born in Sweden) and his wife, Anna Julie Hegstad. She departed from Norway in 1915 and arr. in Chicago, where she supposedly m. a man with the surname Phil (perhaps Pihl), the given name unknown. She d. in Chicago at a tuberculosis sanitarium ca. 1930, and it is believed that she was divorced and without children at the time of her death. While living in Chicago, she may have been known as "Charlotte" Hultgren and may possibly have worked as a waitress at the Augustana Hospital in Chicago. Efforts to obtain her marriage and death certificates with the above information from the Clerk's Office in Cook County have proved futile.

John W. Grans, Jr.
6901 Old Sauk Road
Madison, WI 53717

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Ottosdotter, Adamsson

I am looking for descendants of Maja-Stina (Christina) Ottosdotter, b. in Gullered Parish (Älvs.) 30 Aug. 1843. She departed from her home parish for America 25 April 1864. According to my deceased father she was still alive at the beginning of this century and was then m. to David Adamsson in Porter, Porter Co., IN. Maja-Stina was a sister of my paternal grandmother's father.

Gerd Forsblad Krieg
Bymarksgatan 51
552 59 Jönköping, SWEDEN

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Skogsberg

I am looking for information concerning Lars Andersson Skogsberg, b. in Fröskog Parish (Älvs.) 4 Oct. 1813. He had the following children:

Julian, b. 27 March 1834
Carl Emil, b. 1 Oct. 1836
Anders Enok, b. 19 May 1839

Simon, b. 10 Oct. 1841

Adam (my grandfather), b. 22 Feb. 1844

Arthur T. Skogsberg

60 Emerson Place

Valley Stream, NY 11580

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Rudolphes

My great great grandfather was Peter Rudolphes, b. in Sweden in May 1813. He d. in New Orleans, LA 1 Sept. 1864. I have a mass of records detailing his life, such as marriage license, marriage certificate, service record in the War with Mexico, his wife's pension application, bounty land record, naturalization record, death certificate and obituary as well as the children's birth certificates. From this array I have found out that he came to this country and to New Orleans ca. 1830. I am stumped as to his origin in Sweden. Can anyone help?

Marilyn Fullam

6933 Prince Drive

Dublin, CA 94568

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Karlsson, Johansson

Can anyone help me find descendants of the following sisters, b. in Tived Parish (Skar.)?

a. Maja Kajsa Karlsson (or Karlsdotter), b. in Tived 23 Oct. 1856. She m. August Johansson, b. 1846 and had with him a dau. Ellen Charlotta, b. in Udenäs parish (Skar.) in 1880. The family emigr. to the U.S. in April 1886. According to the estate inventory (*bouppteckning*) after the death of her father in Tived in 1895, Maja Kajsa and her family were living in Boone Co., IA in 1895.

b. Kristina Karlsson (or Karlsdotter), b. in Tived 16 Aug. 1863. She emigr. to New York in May 1889 via Göteborg and Hull. According to the same estate inventory Kristina was living in Eddy (?) San Francisco in 1895.

c. Augusta Karlsson (or Karlsdotter), b. in Tived 16 Aug. 1863 (a twin of Kristina's). According to the Tived Parish records Augusta should have departed for America in Dec. 1881. She is not recorded in any of the Swedish police records as having emigrated. Supposedly she lived in the San Francisco area, where she also d.

Lars Öberg

Konduktörsgatan 11 B

981 34 Kiruna, SWEDEN

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Literature

American Log Buildings: An Old World Heritage. By Terry G. Jordan. Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985. x + 193 pp. Maps and illustrations. \$26.00.

Readers of this journal may be surprised to learn that most of the recent scholarly literature on log buildings in America either ignores, or denies, the role of New Sweden (1638-1665) in establishing that widespread tradition. Terry Jordan is to be commended for a fresh attempt at reopening this can of worms for American cultural historians—many of whom prefer to call themselves architectural historians, geographers, anthropologists or folklorists. Some few of us who toil in these academic vineyards were never fully swayed by the views, recently in vogue, of Fred Kniffen, Henry Glassie, and their numerous intellectual descendants. These latter adhere to the misbegotten credo that New Sweden had no importance to general American folk culture.

In a fundamental sense, the volume under review undertakes to do just what a religious creed is supposed to do: it responds to heresy by restating the old faith in a systematic way, and in so doing creates (for the first time) something called "orthodoxy." In the present case, the "old faith" was (a) that New Sweden gave America her first log dwellings (a widely acknowledged fact), and (b) that the New Sweden tradition of simple pioneer housing took root on the fertile American soil and spread like crab grass. For practical purposes we may say that this view became public (apart from the relatively ephemeral literature of the Swedish and Finnish American communities) in a 1921 work by Fiske Kimball. The theme was developed in some depth in a 1924 study by Henry Mercer of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Mercer, a world-class antiquarian and collector, maintained a friendly acquaintance with Amandus Johnson, the principal scholar on New Sweden; their exchanges of information and research suggestions are documented in the works of both men. Johnson orchestrated much of the Tercentenary literature on New Sweden in 1938, in which the log cabin got its due notice. Swedish Americans might reasonably assume, from glancing through their own libraries, that the impact of the Delaware Valley colony was axiomatic.

As time passed, this turned out not to be the case. A few more contributions to the architectural and geographical literature went along with the Swedish influence, but a tide of another sort was rising. Probably it had something to do with the rehabilitation of the image of Germans as the smoke from European battlefields became less blinding on this side of the Atlantic. Be that as it may, the pro-Swedish statements (some of which, particularly those of Carl Drepperd, were openly anti-German) began to be replaced by footnotes or parenthetical remarks, intellectually equivalent to a shrug of the shoulders. This one might stand for the lot:

The contributions of the Hudson River Dutch and the Delaware Swedes were lost in a sea of alien culture, so that they do not constitute source areas. The Germans of Pennsylvania were saved from cultural extinction especially by their two major contributions: log construction methods and basic barn types, for the principal dissemination of which they enlisted the widely spreading and aggressive Scotch-Irish.¹

The serious student of genealogy or family history in the are of dispute (the "Delaware Valley," including for purposes of cultural analysis the lower Susquehanna Valley and northeastern Maryland) can spot some flaws in this assertion in a second, beginning with the assumption that numbers translate to influence. Neither the Swedes nor the Dutch were lost, though the Dutch picked the wrong river if they aspired to impart traits to the westering

pioneers of the next century (the eighteenth). The Germans did not enlist the Scotch-Irish, and were saved more by cohesive than by expansive aspects of their society. For this review, particularly, we must note that the writer (Fred Kniffen, who trained many of the serious students of folk architecture working in America and inspired more) has transferred log architecture from the Swedes to the Germans without so much as a footnote in support of the procedure. To be sure, the footnotes were not long in coming; one of the characteristics of a really good heresy is its capacity for rapid growth. Another is that it appeals particularly to the young. An especially significant convert to this view of the landscape was the young folklorist Henry Glassie, who co-authored and illustrated Kniffen's next major article. More importantly, he propagated the new faith in a book that was to become a best seller and a textbook in its field before it was formally accepted as his University of Pennsylvania dissertation, *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States* (1968). His only allusion to New Sweden in the provocative and generally excellent work is a derisive comment on Martin Wright's attribution (which was essentially correct) of the American "dog-trot" house to Scandinavian influence.

By 1968, then, the tables had turned pretty completely against the idea that New Sweden was a source for our pioneer culture. They had turned without protest, and largely without evidence apart from the negative sort: a couple of articulate spokesmen for a different point of view failed to see the evidence that would support the Swedish-origin argument, and those who knew this evidence failed to parade it before them. A generation of geographers and folklorists was being brought up in darkness.

Suddenly, from out of the western haze, came riding Terry G. Jordan, bearing the altogether sensible notion that these various theories of European origin might best be addressed by looking in Europe; and not just on the broadest scale imaginable ("in Scandinavia, logs in walls project beyond the notch") but with specific reference to the areas of documented mass emigration to colonial America. Jordan obtained a series of travel and research grants that enabled him to publish a series of field reports; these have been revised and made to conform to a new logical framework in the volume at hand.

That new framework, while it may be of general value for the ongoing scholarly debate, has as much to do with Jordan's revenge on those who have reviewed his earlier works as it does with log buildings. It has much less to do with the concerns of this journal. One does, however, find a bit of Swedish American genealogy here and there in the book. One finds it because Terry Jordan, unlike many of his colleagues, remembers that cultural diffusion takes place mostly in families; that the locus of traditional learning is more likely to be a mother's kitchen or a father's toolshed than some more temporary but easily enumerated context such as a ship's list or a militia muster. Another thing Jordan remembers is the difference between leaders and followers, or the virtuoso and the rest of the band. Finally, he almost remembers the importance of the church: in one curious passage, he identifies all the putative bearers of the log architecture tradition *except* the Swedes and Finns by their religious affiliations (Moravians, Schwenkfelders, Lutherans, Swiss Reformed, and Mennonites).² Since the best evidence for the continuity and strength of the culture of New Sweden is found in the meticulously recorded archives of eight churches in four states (yes, Virginia, there is a Maryland) founded by Swedish Lutherans before our Revolution, one almost wishes he had dropped the other shoe and called the Delaware Valley pioneers after their church, too. But, no—we have to get by with "Fenno-Scandian."

It would be easy enough to find little things to pick on in this book. Jordan's genealogical work is completely incidental to the points he is attempting to reinforce, and as genealogy it is poorly done; however, it could be done well (as Peter Craig, Mildred Hollander, the late Ruth Springer and others have demonstrated) with the net effect of showing that Jordan is more right than he knows. His citation of sources, including my own published and unpublished

work, falls heavily on the side of proof-texting. He cites the parts of a work that support his view, ignores the points therein that might give ammunition to the other camp, and generally employs recent scholarship from the Germanic-origin viewpoint only as straw men. But, after all, they have done the same, and Jordan is in the business of creed-writing here. Who would accuse the Council of Nicaea of objectivity?

In the final analysis I have to side with Jordan on his major points, both theoretical and observational. More precisely I rejoice that he sides with me, since my own conversion experience (from the Germanic to the New Sweden viewpoint), antedates his by almost six years. On the theoretical side he is justified in applying the concept of first effective settlement to the Swedes and Finns on the Delaware; his other points proceed logically from that one (having to do with simplification of European features in the colonial environment, syncretism, and preadaptation of the New Sweden culture for the conditions of the American frontier). His observations in the European source areas from which our "Fenno-Scandian" and various Germanic colonists came agree with my library investigation of those areas, and field observations in America from the Delaware Valley westward. What he says about our log buildings is, moreover, applicable to many other spheres of the domestic economy of American frontier families.

Now, repeat after Terry Jordan:

... the greatest shaping influence on Midland American log construction was exerted by settlers from the Fenno-Scandian area.³

... In this category we would place V, diamond, square, half, and saddle notching; chink construction; the cornercrib and single-crib barn; the use of round logs and two-sided ax-and-adze hewing; the ridgepole and purlin roof with board covering; and the dogtrot and gable-entrance single-pen welling plans.³

... rather than cling to a seaboard ethnic enclave, many descendants of Delaware Finns and Swedes went west to be well represented even in the remotest backwoods of colonial Midland America. The price they paid for this diaspora was the loss of the last remnants of their ethnic identity; their reward, though they could not know it, lay in the incidental transferal of some part of their northern European culture to the Midland population at large, completing a diffusion begun before 1700 in the Delaware Valley cradle.⁴

Amen.

Richard H. Hulan
Arlington, VA

¹Fred Kniffen, "Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion," *Annals*, Association of American Geographers, 55:4 (December, 1965), p. 558.

²Jordan, p. 7.

³Ibid., p. 146.

⁴Ibid., p. 151.

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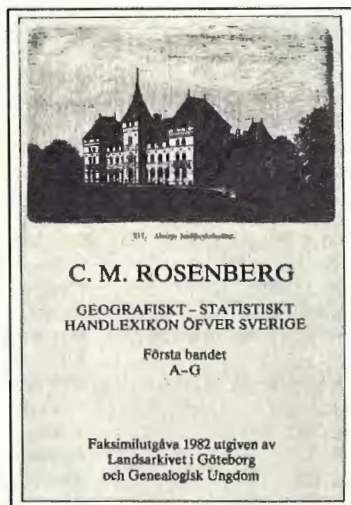
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