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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  $l\ddot{a}n$  (AB) and part of Uppsala  $l\ddot{a}n$  (C), with the city of Norrtälje as the center. Another area is Bergslagen (where the farmer is called bergsman), which consists of the old mining and metal-working areas of the interior of Svealand, i.e., the northwestern part of Västmanland  $l\ddot{a}n$  (U), the northern part of Örebro  $l\ddot{a}n$  (T), the eastern part of Värmland  $l\ddot{a}n$  (S) and the southern part of Kopparberg  $l\ddot{a}n$  (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:

- Kalixbygdens Forskarförening c/o Högdahl, Börjelsbyn 3468 S-952 00 Kalix, SWEDEN
- Pitebygdens Forskarförening Box 721 S-941 28 Piteå, SWEDEN

AC Västerbotten län Capital - Umeå Societies:

- Föreningen Skelleftebygdens Släktforskare Skellefteå Museum, Nordanå S-931 33 Skellefteå, SWEDEN
- Södra Västerbottens Genealogiska Förening (SVGF) Storgatan 99 S-902 44 Umeå, SWEDEN

<sup>\*</sup>Has really never been a landskap.

Y Västernorrland *län* Capital - Härnösand Societies:

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

X Gävleborg *län* Capital - Gävle Societies:

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

# Östersund Regional Archives

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

Z Jämtland *län*Capital - Östersund
Society:

 Jämtlands läns Släktforskareförening (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:

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

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

T Örebro *län*Capital - Örebro
Societies:

- Hällefors Släktforskarklubb c/o Ståhl, Hammarvägen 89 D S-712 00 Hällefors, SWEDEN
- Nora Släktforskarklubb c/o Dalhammar Rådstugatan 13 S-713 00 Nora, SWEDEN.
- Hallsbergs Släktforskarklubb
   Box 2010/Eriksson
   S-694 02 Hallsberg, SWEDEN

U Västmanland *län* Capital - Västerås Societies:

 Sällskapet Släktforskarna c/o Håkansson Forsbackavägen 13 S-773 00 Fagersta, SWEDEN

C Uppsala *län* Capital - Uppsala Society:

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

AB Stockholm län Capital - Stockholm Societies:

- Genealogiska Föreningen (national in scope)
   Box 2029
   S-103 11 Stockholm, SWEDEN
- 1BM-klubbens Släktforskarsektion
   Oddegatan 5, Kista
   S-163 92 Stockholm, SWEDEN

- 15. Karlskoga-Degerfors Släktforskarklubb c/o Rosenberg Ängslyckevägen 7 S-691 41 Karlskoga, SWEDEN
- Örebro Släktforskare
   Box 266
   S-701 04 Örebro, SWEDEN
- Askersunds Släktforskarklubb c/o Hammervik, Tikanäs S-696 00 Askersund, SWEDEN
- Västerås Släktforskarklubb c/o Ekström Jaktplansgatan 3 A S-723 48 Västerås, SWEDEN

- Personhistoriska Samfundet (national in scope)
   SBL, Box 34106
   S-100 26 Stockholm, SWEDEN
- Sällskapet Vallonättlingar (national in scope)
   Strandvägen 5 A
   S-114 51 Stockholm, SWEDEN

- Stockholms Finska Släktforskarförening (in the Finnish language)
   Svennebygränd 33
   S-163 72 Spånga, SWEDEN
- Norrtälje Släktforskarförening (NSFF)
   Box 280
   S-761 00 Norrtälje, SWEDEN

Förening (SSGF)
c/o Bergwall
Ringvägen 123 III
S-116 61 Stockholm, SWEDEN

28. StorStockholms Genealogiska

 Södertälje Släktforskarförening c/o Hedlund Tältvägen 15 S-151 31 Södertälje, SWEDEN

D Södermanland *län*Capital - Nyköping
Societies:

- Södermanlands Släktforskareförening c/o Nilsson Krattvägen 6 S-633 69 Eskilstuna, SWEDEN
- Katrineholm-Flen-Vingåkers Släktforskarklubb Stensgatan 29 A S-641 46 Katrineholm, SWEDEN
- Eskilstuna-Strängnäs Släktforskarklubb c/o Nilsson Krattvägen 6 S-633 69 Eskilstuna, SWEDEN
- Nyköping-Oxelösunds Släktforskareklubb 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
Socities:

- 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:

- 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

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

# P Ålvsborg *län*Capital - Vänersborg Societies:

- Västgöta Genealogiska
   Förening
   c/o Andersson
   Topasgatan 9
   S-421 48 Västra Frölunda, SWEDEN
- Ulricehamnsbygdens forskarklubb c/o Svensson Solsäter 20

S-520 15 Hökerum, SWEDEN

Sandelhielmsgatan 3 S-462 00 Vänersborg, SWEDEN 43. Marks Härads Släktforskar-

S-511 02 Skene, SWEDEN

41. Vänersborgs Släktforskare

c/o Ericsson

förening

c/o Nilsson

Rådmansgatan 18

# R Skaraborg *län*Capital - Mariestad Societies:

- Skaraborgs Släktforskarförbund c/o Borg Storegården, PL 3004 S-533 00 Götene, SWEDEN
- 46. Götene Släktforskarförening c/o Hagman, Hemvägen 9 S-533 00 Götene, SWEDEN
- 48. Skara Släktforskarförening c/o Andersson Härlundagatan 58 S-532 00 Skara, SWEDEN
- Hjo-Tibro Släktforskarförening Box 93
   S-544 00 Hjo, SWEDEN
- 52. Tidaholms Genealogiska Förening c/o Bergvall Gärdesvägen 26 S-522 00 Tidaholm, SWEDEN
- 54. Habobygdens Släktforskarförening Box 106 S-556 00 Habo, SWEDEN

- Finnerödja Släktforskarklubb c/o Wahlbäck, PL 2226 Gårdsjö S-540 70 Hova, SWEDEN
- Lidköpingbygdens Släktforskare
   c/o Svensson, Bergkullen
   S-531 98 Lidköping, SWEDEN
- Skövde Genealogiska Förening Box 96068
   S-541 06 Skövde, SWEDEN
- Vara-Grästorps Släktforskarförening Mellomgården, Längjum S-534 00 Vara, SWEDEN
- Mullsjö Genealogiska Förening Västansgårdsvägen 10B S-565 00 Mullsjö, SWEDEN
- 55. Mariestadsbygdens Släktforskarförening 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:

- 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
- Östgöta Genealogiska Förening (ÖGF) (Linköping-Norrköping) c/o Lindahl, Ödegårdsgatan 10 S-582 57 Linköping, SWEDEN

F Jönköping *län*Capital - Jönköping
Societies:

- Mellersta Götalands
   Genealogiska Förening
   Box 151
   S-551 13 Jönköping, SWEDEN
- Njudungs Genealogiska
   Förening
   Östersandsvägen 15
   S-574 00 Vetlanda, SWEDEN
- Nässjöortens Genealogiska Förening Trädgårdsgatan 69 S-571 00 Nässjö, SWEDEN
- Sällskapet ANE, Finnveden c/o Hultin, Blomstervägen 38 S-331 00 Värnamo, SWEDEN

G Kronoberg län Capital - Växjö Society:

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

H Kalmar *län*Capital - Kalmar
Societies:

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

# **Lund Regional Archives**

Comprising the *län* of Halland, Blekinge, Kristianstad and Malmöhus, Landsarkivet, Fack 2016, S-22002 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 Thoren Köpmansgatan 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:

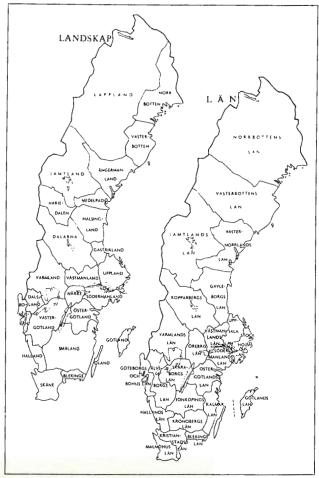
- 68. Helsingborgs Släktforskaroch bygdeförening c/o Vuxenskolan Drottninggatan 3 S-252 21 Helsingborg, SWEDEN
- Lundabygdens Genealogiska Förening c/o Levenstam Thulehem 27 S-223 67 Lund, SWEDEN
- 72. Staffanstorps Släktforskarförening Box 7
   S-245 00 Staffanstorp, SWEDEN
- 69. Kävlingebygdens Släktoch Folklivsforskare c/o Lundin Klövervägen 15 S-240 21 Löddeköpinge, SWEDEN
- 71. Skånes Genealogiska Förening (SGF), c/o Rosencrantz Midgårdsgatan 17
   S-216 19 Malmö, SWEDEN
- 73. Söderslätts Släktoch Hembygdsforskarförening Algatan 51 S-231 00 Trelleborg, SWEDEN

# Visby Regional Archives

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

I Gotland *län* Capital - Visby Society:

(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 lan (districts), the administrative units. (© Generalstabens Litografiska Anstalt, Stockholm 1974.)