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## Genealogical Queries

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# Genealogical Queries

Genealogical queries from subscribers to *Swedish American Genealogist* will be listed here free of charge on a "space available" basis. The editor reserves the right to edit these queries to conform to a general format. The inquirer is responsible for the contents of the query.

We would like to hear about your success if you receive useful information as a result of placing a query in this publication. Please send us your feedback, and we will endeavor to report your new discoveries in this section of the journal.

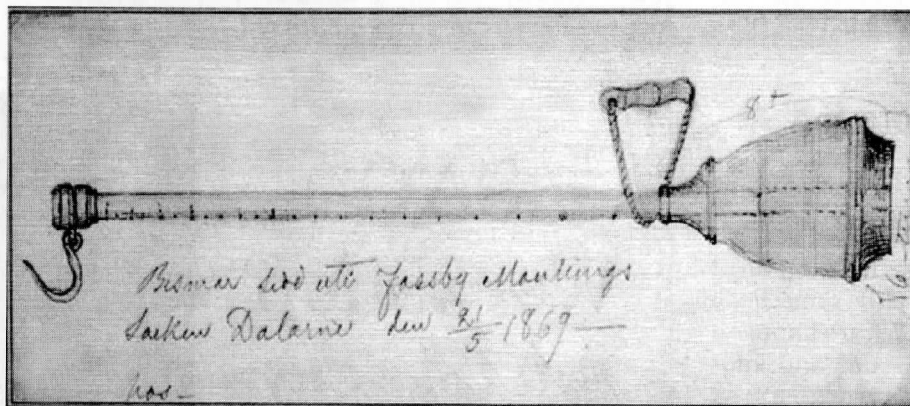
## John Bengtsson

I am searching for any information on John Birger Anselm Bengtsson, born 1885 June 5 in Vara parish (Vägö), son of the grain merchant Johan Bengtsson and his wife Sofia Abrahamsdotter Berg. John is said to have left for the U.S. in 1906 or somewhat later. He may have had a connection to Goldendale in the state of Washington.

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## The mystery item from page 7



Lisa Huntsha, archivist/librarian of the Swenson Center contacted the Nordiska Museet in Stockholm, and got an answer from Annika Tyrfeldt of the Museum. She informed Lisa that in Swedish this item is a *besman* or a handheld balance weight. In English that translates to a steelyard balance.

The text on the bottom of the weight reads "bought from antique dealer Hagander in Stockholm, March 27, 1893." Anders Gustaf Hagander (1858-1919) was a well-known antique dealer in Stockholm. Apparently, Nordiska museet also has items from Hagander. Additionally, from 1863 it was forbidden to use wooden balance weights as the weight was easy to fake, by adding or subtracting lead from the end.

**Editor's note:** The *besman* at the Swenson Center lacks the sliding part with the handle.

According to a story from my father Sven, born in 1908, his maternal grandfather Johan Svensson of Dalen in Nordmark (Värml.) born in 1821, supposedly killed the last wolf in the area on his porch with a heavy *besman*. If the story is true is not certain, but there are records of killed wild animals in the archives of the local county government (*Värmlands länsstyrelse*) kept in the *Värmlandsarkiv* in Karlstad, so that is a further case to research some day. If you showed the ears of the killed animal, you got a small amount of money for each animal.

A picture of another *besman*, made of steel, is found at Norm Sandin's dictionary of words from the *bouppteckningar* (probates) at <http://www.sandinfamily.com/genealogy-resources/dictionary/pdfs/besman.pdf>