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Cover picture:
This photo shows the new little water wheel at the Storbrog Blast Furnace (hytta) in Filipstad (Värml.). The new wheel has been reconstructed by a group of volunteers. In the back is shown the local museum, Munkeberg. (Photo by E. Thorsell, July 2012).
The Johnsons of Moline, Illinois

Part II: Gust Johnson, house builder

BY CURTIS C. ROSEMAN

This article highlights the work of Swedish immigrant Gustaf Adolf Reinhold Johnson, (born 1880 Sep. 25 in Alseda) (see also SAG 2012/1 p.10), a carpenter and contractor who built eighty houses in Moline and neighboring communities. It is drawn from the book, Building the American Dream¹, which utilizes Gust’s remarkable set of detailed records that describe his working procedures, work places, and the people with whom he forged business relationships and with whom he labored.

Gust arrived in Boston on November 18, 1899, after crossing the Atlantic on the steamship New England. He travelled in the company of his older sister Hilma Hanna Maria (b. 1877 Dec.19 in Alseda) who had immigrated in 1894, and now had been home for a visit. Hilma and Gust were both going to Chicago, where Gust visited his brother Carl (Carl Johan Viktor, b. 1871 April 16 in Alseda, who had immigrated in 1888). Both Hilma and Gust soon afterwards settled in Moline.

The Johnson siblings, six of whom survived to adulthood, were born to Jonas Peter Danielson and Johanna Kristina Johansdotter. They grew up on the family farm, Holsby Frugård, near Holsbybrunn in southern Sweden, and all but one of them immigrated to the United States.

For the next nine years, Gust worked primarily as a carpenter, both in Moline and for two and a half years in Oakland, California – returning to Moline shortly after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake! He attended night school classes in English, mathematics, drawing, and accounting, which substantially aided his subsequent career as a contractor.

In 1906, Gust purchased passage from Göteborg to Moline for his younger sister Esther (Anna Vilhelmina Ester, b. 1889 Dec. 22 in Alseda) and her friend Esther Ekval. They left Göteborg on April 6.

According to family lore, the Esthers each brought only wool dresses for their summer trip, and they were very hot on the train from the East through Chicago to Moline. Fortunately, tags specifying their destination had been pinned to their dresses. Not speaking English – and no doubt motivated by the early summer heat – they apparently tried to get off the train at every intervening stop. Luckily they were prevented from doing so by people who could read the tags.

Gust built this cottage on his own lot in 1911 and rented it out for the rest of his life.

From carpenter to contractor

Soon after Gust married Selma Anna Sofia Carlson in 1908, he started building his first house. In the spring of 1909 the couple moved in. Then Gust started his contracting career, which saw three periods of intense house-building activity. The first ended with the entry of the United States into World War I in 1917; the second covered the 1920s, ending with the onset of the Great Depression in 1930; and the third extended from 1937 until 1942 before the United States entered World War II.

During World War I, he worked for the U.S. government, and during the Depression and World War II he completed scores of carpentry jobs, ranging from repairing storm windows and building cabinets to repairing fire-damaged homes and building garages.
In the 1910s, Gust built 21 houses, two of which he built for himself to rent. For eighteen of the houses he was the general contractor, hiring others to help with the carpentry and to complete such tasks as plumbing, wiring, and painting. A typical house project took about three months to complete. Gust usually was working on at least two houses at a time, with smaller jobs added to the mix.

During the 1920s, Gust completed 38 houses and after the Depression another 21. The housing types he built were typical of middle-class residential construction of the time. In the 1910s he built mostly two-story structures, either of “four-square” or vernacular design. In the 1920s the majority were one-and-a-half story bungalows with craftsman features. After the Depression, most were rather small, plain structures, often referred to as “minimal traditional” houses.

Gust was a hands-on contractor. Most of his houses required a total of 100 to 120 eight-hour days of carpentry labor. On his first contracting job, for Emil Olson in 1911, he supplied most of the labor, but for the vast majority of other projects throughout his career, he supplied about half of the carpenter labor.

Many of the people for whom Gust built houses were not of Swedish descent. He had built a solid reputation for residential construction well beyond his ethnic and family social circles. In contrast, the army of carpenters he hired was composed mainly of Swedes, some of them long-time employees. A total of 31 carpenters helped Gust build houses during his career. Only two did not have Swedish surnames.

In 1924, Gust built a second house for his family, a large bungalow in which Gust and Selma would live the rest of their lives and daughter Dorothy would live most of her life. Seven years later, after the family returned from a second trip to Sweden, the Depression was in full swing and Gust was short of work. He took advantage of the situation by building a smaller house next door, a one-and-a-half story stylish brick bungalow. It was to be the empty nest home for Gust and Selma after the girls moved on. However, that dream did not come true because of Selma’s death in 1937.

After working through World War II on scores of small and medium-sized jobs, Gust decided to visit California for a second time. On October 1, 1946—six days after his 66th birthday—Gust drove from Moline to Los Angeles where he had numerous friends, most of whom were from Moline. There he worked as a carpenter over the winter, then returned to Moline in April 1947 where he continued working. He was done building houses; instead he took on a series of smaller jobs, reminiscent of his work regimen during the Depression and World War II. On Gust’s last working day, June 20, 1947, he put in a full eight hours. It was ten years to the day after Selma had died. One week later, on June 27, Gust died.

**Lasting legacy**

Gust Johnson’s professional legacy is easily visible in the early twentieth-century residential neighborhoods of Moline and nearby communities. The vast majority of the eighty houses he built remain on the urban landscape today. In addition, countless garages, porches, additions to homes, and other smaller crafted items remain as products of Gust’s hands.

**Endnote:**


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*Four-square house built by Gust Johnson for Charles Chillberg in 1916.*

*Brick bungalow completed by Gust in 1931. The curved array of windows on the front of the house was inspired by similar windows on a castle Gust had seen the year before when he and his family were visiting Switzerland.*

2  *Swedish American Genealogist 2012:2*
Who was little Bertha Louise Peterson?

I do not usually read the *Augustana Heritage Newsletter*, but during the spring Jill Seaholm told me of an item in the Spring 2012 Newsletter, that might interest the SAG readers too.

So here it is:

"Those of us who go to yard sales and thrift stores sometime buy old prints and paintings for little or nothing, not for the picture but for the frame. Viewers of the Antiques Road Show know that we occasionally make unusual discoveries when we open up the frame. A treasure may be lurking underneath the picture, out of sight for many years.

"Early this year, Debbi Siebert of Caddo Mills, Texas, contacted Ronald Englund, *Augustana Heritage Newsletter* editor, about such a discovery. She wrote:

"I am not sure who to go to, so I will start with you. Here is the story:

"My mother-in-law, in Wichita, Kansas, found a very pretty frame with a picture in it at a thrift store years ago and bought it to give to me. I opened up the frame and took out the picture, and behind it was a very pretty certificate in a foreign language. I have figured it out as Swedish.

"The bottom right of the certificate form says 'Lutheran Augustana Book Concern' and at the bottom left side it says, 'No. 76.'

"This is the death certificate for Bertha Louise Peterson, born February 1, 1905; died June 29, 1909; and buried July 2, 1909. There is nothing to state the place of birth or death.

"I would like to find the family to whom it belongs and give it to them. Our Swedish community in Kansas is in Lindsborg.

"We're grateful that Debbi Siebert made the effort to track us down.

"Neither she nor her husband, Bill Siebert, have any links with Lutherans. She says that "I am from Wichita and my husband is from Salina. We lived in Manhattan and Wamego before moving south to Texas in 1982.

"We much miss Kansas, but not the winters."

"Is there a SAG reader who can help solve this mystery? Who are the Peterson family, certainly Swedish and from the Augustana Synod, who sadly lost a four-year-old, Bertha Louise, in 1909?"

Please contact Rev. Roland Englund at <englund@cape.com> if you have any clues. Or the SAG editor at <sag@etgenealogy.se>.

[Reprinted from the 2012 Spring Newsletter of the Augustana Heritage Association, by permission from Rev. Englund.]

Elisabeth Thorsell

![The handwritten text is the Swedish version of Jesus’ speech about the children: “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”](image)
No, Family names were not changed at Ellis Island!

A popular myth is denied again

BY DICK EASTMAN

There is a family myth amongst tens of thousands of American families: "The name was changed at Ellis Island." The stories claim the immigrant arrived at Ellis Island and was unable to communicate with the officials. A record was then created by someone who assigned the immigrant a descriptive name.

This fairy tale refuses to die

Let's look at a few simple facts:

1) Passenger lists were not created at Ellis Island. They were created abroad, beginning close to the immigrant’s home, when the immigrant purchased his ticket. In 99% of the cases, the clerk filling out the forms and creating the passenger list in “the old country” knew how to speak, read, and write your ancestor’s language. That clerk filled in the proper name. In the case of Eastern European or Oriental languages, those forms even included the correct non-Roman characters. To be sure, spelling variations were common as the immigrants usually were illiterate and often didn’t know their own alphabets or how to spell their own names. The clerks wrote what they heard, which may or may not be the same spelling used elsewhere. In fact, there might not be a “correct” spelling. However, what was recorded always sounded correct, especially when pronounced in the immigrant’s language.

It is unlikely that anyone at the local steamship office in “the old country” was unable to communicate with the immigrant or his/her family. Names were most likely recorded with a high degree of accuracy at that time. Those lists of names were later delivered to immigration officials at Ellis Island.

2) The idea that the immigrant was unable to communicate with officials at Ellis Island is ludicrous. In fact, one third of all immigrant inspectors at Ellis Island in the early twentieth century were themselves foreign-born, and all immigrant inspectors spoke at least three languages. In addition, Ellis Island and other ports of entry also hired an army of interpreters, most of them as part-time employees. These interpreters always (repeat: always) could speak, read, and write the languages of other immigrants. If a new immigrant arrived and no interpreter was available for his or her particular language, that immigrant was detained at Ellis Island until a qualified interpreter was located and brought in for the interview. Most immigrants were processed through Ellis Island within a day or two but there were cases where immigrants were detained for several days until an interpreter became available and proper documentation could be completed. Nobody passed through the process without being interviewed by someone in a suitable language.

3) The passenger lists were always prepared in “the old country” by steamship company officials. If any immigrant arrived at Ellis Island and provided a different name to officials, he or she was always denied entry. If a brief investigation could not clear up the mystery, the immigrant was shipped back to the old country on the steamship’s return trip.

Note: Many immigrants were refused entry for a variety of reasons and were returned. Estimates seem to vary from 12% to 18% of all would-be immigrants were denied entry.
into the United States and instead were sent back to their originating countries. The fates of most of these returnees has not been well documented.

4) Later immigrants had to verify their correct names every year. Starting in July of 1940, the Alien Registration Act required every alien resident in the United States to register at their local post office in January. As part of the registration process, the immigrant had to provide **ALL** names by which he or she had ever been known, including his or her full name as used in “the old country” as well as the name used currently. Alien registration requirements applied to all aliens over the age of fourteen, regardless of nationality and regardless of immigration status.

Despite these facts, the Ellis Island name-change story (or Castle Garden, or earlier versions of the same story) is as American as apple pie. However, there is little to no truth to these stories.

**When did the names change?**

After processing through Ellis Island and settling within the borders of the United States, many immigrants **did** change their names. In numerous cases, the names were changed for them by public officials, schoolteachers, shopkeepers, and neighbors. Anyone from Eastern Europe, with a name long on consonants and short on vowels, learned that his name often got in the way of a job interview or became the subject of ridicule at his child’s school. Any change that might smooth their way to the American Dream was seen as a step in the right direction. In many cases, these later name changes were made without court papers or any other official recognition.

In any case, the records at Ellis Island and other ports of entry always contained the original names, although with frequent spelling variations.

**Further reading:**


*Ellis Island, Gateway to the American dream*, by Pamela Reeves (1998).

*Island of Hope, Island of Tears*, by David M. Brownstone, Irene M. Franck and Douglass Brownstone (1979, 2000).

*When Anna traveled to America: An example of findings in the Ellis Island’s database*, by Elisabeth Thorsell (SAG 2002:3).
Your link to your history!

NEW!
The Swedish Census database (Förkäntning) for 1910 has now 2 million individuals. 105,110 posts were just added.

The Digital Research Room
Here you can do research about people and their property, their life, work and taxes. Contact us at the address below to find out much more!

NEW!
The Swedish Census of 1990 – the way to find your living cousins. A DVD with millions of Swedes 20 years ago.

Stockholm Tax Rolls
Mantalslängder and Kronotaxeringslängder from 1652 to 1915. Indexes too for some of them.

One of the released prisoners in the SVAR prison records.

www.riksarkivet.se/svar

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Swedish American Genealogist 2012:2
Jennifer Vanore explained her research project in her application for the scholarship:

My dissertation project, *The Call to Care: Religion and the Making of the Modern Hospital Industry in Los Angeles, 1895-1965*, examines the role different ethnic religious groups in Los Angeles have played in the development, expansion, and maintenance of the growing hospital industry in Southern California in the 20th century.

Overwhelmingly, the historiography of medicine, science, and health care uses a top-down perspective by focusing on the development of government policy and its effects on directing health care as a privatized industry in the United States. My project assumes a different lens and considers how the private industry was built from the basic ground up. Specifically, individual communities bound together by ethnic ancestry and religious beliefs have composed a substantial portion of hospital owners in the health care landscape. Small immigrant and religious groups, especially in the early part of the 20th century, constituted an important set of hospital founders and managers as they strove to build long-lasting institutions that served their own communities while reaching out and building bridges with their neighbors.

One unexamined group in this story is Swedish Lutherans, who in the first decade of the 20th century built one of the largest and most respected hospitals in Los Angeles. One of the difficulties I have encountered in conducting this kind of research is that very few hospitals have kept their board minutes more than a few decades back. And those that have tend to be quite reluctant to share them with researchers due to HIPAA laws (which ensure health privacy to patients). As such, it is rare for a researcher to find sources that shed light on the founders and board members of hospitals and the ideas and beliefs that motivated them in their institutional decisions.

The archives at the Swenson Center would allow me to get at these beliefs via a slightly more circuitous route. The sources that the Center has on the Swedish Angelica Lutheran Church in Los Angeles would allow me to get at the Swedish voices of those who bought, founded, and expanded California Lutheran Hospital. This is a rare opportunity for me, and as such I hope the committee will consider funding me for a visit to the Swenson Center.

### A glimpse of the history of the California Hospital

California Hospital was founded in 1887 in a small and unpretentious two-story brick building on 6th Street in Los Angeles (population 80,000 at that time) by Dr. Walter Lindley, an enterprising young man born in Indiana.

Shortly thereafter he gathered together 21 fellow physicians, who each chipped in $1,000 to buy a plot of land on South Hope Street, where they built the first physician-owned hospital in the U.S. It opened for business at 1414 South Hope in 1898, and was an attractive four-story wood-framed structure with gables, corner cupolas, awnings over the windows and a large well-landscaped garden facing 15th Street. It had 30 beds. In 1916 an enterprising group of staunch Lutherans of Scandinavian heritage from the American Midwest formed the Lutheran Hospital Society of Southern California, with the express purpose of “establishing hospitals, dispensaries and clinics.” The Society bought California Hospital in 1921, and successfully operated it and several other L.A. and San Diego hospitals for the next 70 years.

The turn of the century brick and wood buildings proved inadequate for “modern” healthcare, and in 1926 a new nine-story brick hospital was inaugurated at 1414 South Hope Street on the site of the old buildings. It was deemed to be the most progressive medical building in the country at that time. It served Los Angeles well until the Northridge Earthquake of 1994 damaged it to the extent that patients could no longer be housed there, and it was demolished in 2000. Meanwhile the current patient tower at 1401 South Grand Avenue was opened in 1987 – Tibbitts Tower, named after a much-respected hospital administrator, Samuel J. Tibbitts.

(Source: http://www.lacityhistory.org/blog/category/events/)
The Lodge Engelbrekt No. 8, Meriden, Conn., U.S.A., was organized/started on November 12th, 1897, and had 15 members. Mathilda Louisa Swenson was the chaplain, and her husband, Bernard Swenson, was the vice-chairman. On October 25th, 1911, the 16th district meeting for District Lodge No. 1 was held in the Odd Fellows’ Hall, Waterbury, CT. The meeting was chaired for the first time in the district lodge’s history by District Master Mathilda Swenson who led this meeting in a meritorious way.

She was one of the most active members in the district lodge and in her own Lodge Engelbrekt No. 8, where she was a charter member. During her service she visited all 30 lodges in the district and today there are only 6 lodges left. Through her pleasant manner Mathilda received the members’ respect and trust. The district lodge awarded Mathilda an “order emblem” in gold at the end of her service.

This information can be read in the commemorative publication — “25-year history of the District Lodge of Connecticut No. 1, Vasa Order of America, 1896-1921.” I bought this book in an antique store in Borås, Sweden, but the commemorative publication is also available on the internet.

So, who was Mathilda Swenson?
I read the commemorative publication, and I searched for information on “Ancestry.com” for the U.S. sources. With that information, I went on to find her background in Sweden. Some of the information I found varied with regard to names and years. Because of different information about her birth, I did not at first find her in the Swedish church records or other documentation. The information I had obtained from the publication was that she was born on April 4th, 1857, in Persberg, Nerike. The date when she came to America varies between the years 1880-1883 on Ancestry.com.

Mathilda married Bernard Swenson in America and they were both employed by the Connecticut School for Boys in Meriden. Mathilda was the school’s laundress and Bernard was the shoemaker for many years. During one period they even lived at the school. They belonged to the “The Swedish Baptist Church” in Meriden, where Bernhard was a member of the planning committee.

Vasa Order’s archives in Bishop Hill, Illinois
When I contacted the Vasa Order’s archives in Bishop Hill, IL, I received from archivist Lars Jenner scanned images from Mathilda’s and Bernard’s lodge’s member-directory. There, it appears a Mathilda that was born in Nora Bergslag’s parish, which is in Örebro county in Västmanland, and both of them became members of the VASA Order on November 12th, 1897. The corresponding information is also reflected in EmiVasa,

Information on Matilda in EmiVasa.

which is a register of 58,000 members of the Vasa Order of America.³

There is no Mathilda in the birth record with the birth date April 4th, 1857, in Nora Bergslag’s parish. In the register of emigrants, I can’t find her either. I am now looking in the registers of buried in Connecticut to see if I can get some more information. At the website “Find A Grave” I find the gravestone in a picture taken in the Walnut Grove Cemetery in Meriden. On the headstone there are just the names and the years of birth and death. Besides Mathilda and Bernhard there was also a daughter, Hanna O. born in 1884, but she died only 9 years old.⁴

Mathilda’s birth record

I still believed that Mathilda was born in Nora Bergslag’s parish, so I returned to the birth record again and went through all who were born from 1852 on. Now I find a Mathilda Lovisa born April 4, 1854, in Gamla (Old) Pershyttan. The mother is a maid, Christina (Stina) Andersdotter, and Mathilda was born illegitimate and no father was listed.⁵ These data are worth following as Pershyttan is likely listed as Persberg in America. Mathilda and her mother moved around a lot in the parish over the years, and probably lived a hard and poor life. In the household records it says that the mother Christina is punished and has to pay penance for theft.⁶ Mathilda had a sister, Johanna, born 20 July 1864, who was also illegitimate without a named father.⁷ She died 7 April 1865 of a “swelling in her throat”.⁸ Her mother is then recorded as a “grufpiga”, which means that she worked in one of the mines. In the spring of 1869 Mathilda ran away from the communion, and she was accused of unchaste living according to the household record.⁹ Her mother married in 1869, but the marriage did not last long, as she died on January 27, 1871.¹⁰

Mathilda got married twice

When Mathilda married the miner Gustaf Löfgren (b. 30 Jan. 1849) on 16th December 1871 in Nora Bergslag’s parish, she was a minor without parents, so her deceased mother’s husband, Anders Persson, had to give his consent to the marriage instead.¹¹ In connection with the marriage, it is also the first time that Matilda’s surname, Gustafsdotter, is recorded.¹²

Mathilda and Gustaf moved in 1874 from Gamla (Old) Pershyttan to live at various mines and mills in Färnebo parish, Värmland. From that time on her name is Lovisa in the parish registers, and it states that she had good knowledge in reading and had knowledge of the Lutheran catechism.¹³

When they move from Värmland in the year 1883, they first settled at Västjädra in Dingtuna¹⁴ parish and then in Kolbäck parish, both in Västmanland. In the household records in the following years, Lovisa is mentioned, but with the statement that Gustaf’s wife had run away to
America around 1883.\textsuperscript{14} The household records for 1888 show that Gustaf had received a letter of divorce, from the Västerås diocese, from his wife on April 27, 1888.\textsuperscript{14} Gustaf, now a lumberjack, remarried in 1893, had children, and died in January 1927 in Rytterne parish, Västmanland.\textsuperscript{15}

I have found no documentation as to when Matilda left Sweden or where and when she arrived in America. Yet I am sure that this is the correct Mathilda Lovisa that I have found, and who married Bernard Swenson in America.

**Origins of Bernard**

Bernard was born in November 18th, 1857, in Skyekarr, Hallaryd parish, Blekinge.\textsuperscript{16} In the birth record he is called Bernt, and he was a stonemason in Sweden. During the 1870s he moved to Karlskrona, but came back to Skyekarr from Karlshamn in 1879.\textsuperscript{17} After that date there is nothing recorded about him in Hallaryd. In 1887 he is listed among those who left without notifying the clergyman, but with a note “living in America”.\textsuperscript{18} When he emigrated, and when he arrived in America is not yet known.

There are different dates given on when Mathilda and Bernhard got married in the sources that I have had access to, from 1882 to 1888. Jill Seaholm of the Swenson Center at Augustana College in Rock Island, IL, has found Mathilda and Bernhard as members of the Calvary Baptist Church in Meriden. There the wedding date is noted as April 14th, 1883. If this date is correct, then Mathilda was still married to Gustaf Löfgren, as the divorce record was from 1888.

Matilda's and Bernard's daughter Hannah was born March 1, 1884, and in connection with her death, her parents are said to be Mathilda L. Anderson and Bernard Swanson. Mathilda died in her home May 19th, 1917, of a heart problem she had had for a long time. This information I got from an obituary found by Janis Franco, Meriden Public Library, CT.

There are still gaps and questions remaining about Mathilda and her life. In any case, it is probably true that both Mathilda and Bernhard had a better and more satisfying life in America.

**Unanswered questions**

Why they left Sweden, I think I will never figure out. Where did they first meet? Why is Hannah's mother's name Mathilda Anderson? Had she emigrated as Anderson and not as Gustafsdotter or Gustafsson? Why is she three years younger in America? Some of the answers I might find when I find the documentation on when and where Mathilda arrived in America.

**Notes:**

1. Website: http://issuu.com/vasaorder/docs/25rshistorik00vasa
3. This database is available on the CD “Emigration 2001” and “Emigranten Populär 2006.” The Vasa Archives in Bishop Hill has now doubled the information in the database, and has a research request form, see the link page!
4. Website: www.findagrave.com with Memorial # 13256614.
5. Nora Bergsförsamling (Öre.). Birth records (1842-1858), C:8b (picture 78).
6. Nora Bergsförsamling (Öre.).

The author:

Charlotte Börjesson, Culture leader in VASA Orden av America, Lodge Göteborg no. 452.

She is also a member of the SwedGen group.

E-mail: <charlotte.borjesson@telia.com>

SALE!

**Swedish Passenger Arrivals in U.S. Ports 1820–1850**


Contact Jill Seaholm at <jillseaholm@augustana.edu>
Bits & Pieces

Sweden's New World Heritage Objects: Decorated Farmhouses of Halsingland

Seven timber houses were recently listed by UNESCO. They are located in the east of Sweden, representing the zenith of a regional timber building tradition that dates back to the Middle Ages. They reflect the prosperity of independent farmers who used their wealth in the 19th century to build substantial new homes with elaborately decorated ancillary houses or suites of rooms reserved for festivities. The paintings represent a fusion of folk art with the styles favored by the landed gentry of the time, including Baroque and Rococo. Decorated by painters, including known and unknown itinerant artists, the listed properties represent the final flowering of a long cultural tradition. Link on page 30!

The 2012 Swede in the World

The organization Svenskar i Världen (Swedes in the World) has chosen Hans Rosling as the 2012 Swede in the World to be honored at a conference and lunch in Stockholm August 21. Hans Rosling is also on the lists of Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the world, Foreign Policy Magazine's 100 Leading Global Thinkers, and Fast Company Magazine's 100 Most Creative People in Business. Hans Rosling (b. 1948 in Uppsala) is a professor of International Health at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, and is one of the founders of the website Gapminder, which aims to make important statistics easily available. Link p. 30! (Swedish Press on Facebook 2012, 4th of July).

Swedish Conference in Massachusetts

A "Swedish Genealogy Conference" will be held October 5-6 in Sturbridge, Massachusetts, arranged by the Swedish Ancestry Research Association (SARA) of Worcester, MA.

There will be lectures by renowned Swedish and American genealogists (Patricia McGrath, Karen Bickford, Anneli Andersson, Anna-Lena Hultman, Elisabeth Thorsell, Ingrid Nilsson, Olof Cronberg, and Charlotte Börjesson).

The topics are both for beginners and more advanced people, and among other things they will touch on How to find your Swedish Roots, Searching Online, Swedish Church records, Soldiers, Costumes of Skåne, Historical maps of Sweden, Legal records, and more.

A link to the SARA website for more information and a registration form can be found on the link page, p. 30.

Swedish American Institute

The new Nelson Cultural Center addition opened in June 2012, and added a welcoming reception area, café, gallery, event center, studio craft classroom, terrace, courtyard, and new Museum Shop space.

Visitors can tour the Turnblad Mansion, enjoy exhibitions in the Mansion and Osher Gallery, experience contemporary Swedish and Nordic culture alongside Minneapolis history, find unique Nordic designed products in the Museum Shop, dine at FIKA, and share stories and experiences.

In Memoriam Count Carl Johan Bernadotte

King Carl XVI Gustaf's paternal uncle, Count Carl Johan Bernadotte passed away on May 5, 2012, in Båstad, Skåne. Prince Carl Johan was born Oct. 31, 1916 at Stockholm palace, as the youngest child of then Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf and his first wife, Princess Margaret of Great Britain. Prince Carl Johan lost his royal privileges in 1946 when he married the commoner Kerstin Wijkmark without royal consent. He was then a businessman in New York as plain Mr. Bernadotte, until in 1951 his relative, Grandduchess Charlotte of Luxemburg, gave him the title "Count Bernadotte of Wisborg." After the death of Countess Kerstin in 1987, he remarried in 1988 to Countess Gunilla Wachtmeister of Johannishus, who survives him.

In his first marriage he had two adopted children.

Genealogy Days

in Gävle Aug. 24-26, 2012
http://www.sfd2012.se/
Carl Roos travels to America in 1853

BY ELISABETH THORSSELL AND CARL ROOS

Some time in the early 1800s a little boy was born and was baptized Carl. He was born Aug. 28, 1801,\(^1\) in Långbanshyttan in Färnebo parish in eastern Värmland. His mother was the servant Anna Olsdotter, who already had a daughter Maria out of wedlock. The father was, according to Carl's memoirs, the mine overseer Nils Bruse, also of Långbanshyttan, who was not married then, but later on married a mining farmer's daughter, Anna Ersdotter.

Carl first lived alone with his mother, who received some child support from the boy's father, but she had a hasty temper and soon quarreled with him. From then on she had to support herself and her son by doing housework for wealthy farmers.

When Carl was about 4 years old, his mother married a poor mining farmer, Petter Jansson Ros, from nearby Gåsborn parish, and later on Carl took his surname. Carl did not like his stepfather, who was a rough and brutal man. His mother on the other hand adored her younger husband, and always served him the best food, while Carl had to look on.

Carl went to school in Långban, and also claims that he was a playmate of the Ericsson brothers (John, the inventor, and Nils, the railway builder). As a young man he first worked as a clerk at the Stöpsjön blast furnace, and also for a short time at the Persberg mines. In 1830 he enlisted in the Värmland Riflemen (fältjägare), and was a noncommissioned officer for a short time. Then he changed course again and went to the Filipstad mining school (Bergsskolan), and after this education was a bookkeeper in Brattfors at the blast furnace.

He was an unruly soul, and in 1839 he suddenly moved to Västra Ny in Östergötland to learn to be a surveyor. Then in 1841 he moved back to Värmland and leased a farm near Arvika, where he married and had children.

Finally he decided to emigrate, and ended up in Vasa, Goodhue County, in Minnesota, where he started his own farm, and helped build the community. He enlisted in 1861 in Company "D" of the Third Minnesota Infantry Regiment. He became a POW at Murfreesboro, and was then sent back to Minnesota and took part in the putting down of the Dakota Uprising.\(^2\)

He was by now in his mid-sixties, and spent his last years in writing his memoirs. He wrote a very detailed history of his childhood and upbringing, and did not hide his views of his mother and stepfather and the people of his childhood village. He wrote in good Swedish and it is unusual to find anglicisms in his stories. His manuscripts are now kept in the library of the Goodhue County Museum in Red Wing, MN, and on microfilm at the Minnesota Historical Society.


Carl writes his own story

The following is a rough translation and summary of what he wrote about his travels to America:

"As it now is almost 23 years since I left my home in Mellgården of Ålgå parish, many details have been forgotten. Before leaving I tried to put my affairs in order, as suits a considerate property owner. I left at least 2/3 of my assets for the benefit of my family, and asked my wife to have the court assign her a guardian."

"As she was slow to do all her chores, I told her numerous times to mend and get my clothes in order, (there were not many, not more than I could pack in a satchel, as I wanted to go to the gold mines, where a lot of luggage would be a problem. But when packing late that night she had still not mended my socks, and I became very upset that on my last day at home I should still not be obeyed, even though I had planned my departure for a long time. I had not forgotten to remind her about these chores, chores that she should have been able to perform without reminders."

"As we slept in separate beds, I had in mind to punish her for her idleness by leaving her without saying goodbye very early in the morning, but people give me money that they owed me, as well as for my wife's keep for the year. When we were dividing the money, there was a difference in the amounts in bills and coins, and my wife wanted the larger share, saying that she would put it to good use."

"The evening before my departure, I went around the area and had people give me money that they owed me, as well as for my wife's keep for the year. When we were dividing the money, there was a difference in the amounts in bills and coins, and my wife wanted the larger share, saying that she would put it to good use."

"As she was slow to do all her chores, I told her numerous times to mend and get my clothes in order, (there were not many, not more than I could pack in a satchel, as I wanted to go to the gold mines, where a lot of luggage would be a problem. But when packing late that night she had still not mended my socks, and I became very upset that on my last day at home I should still not be obeyed, even though I had planned my departure for a long time. I had not forgotten to remind her about these chores, chores that she should have been able to perform without reminders."

"As we slept in separate beds, I had in mind to punish her for her idleness by leaving her without saying goodbye very early in the morning, but
my plan failed, even though I left at 2 o’clock in the morning of May 23, 1853. My travel started by walking on foot with my satchel on my back to Otterbol in Gillberga parish, from where I went in an innkeeper’s wagon and arrived the same night in Amål, where I stayed the night at the publican Bergström. In the night of the 24th I arrived in Vänersborg, from where I went by a steamship to Göteborg and arrived there on the 25th. I lodged with a longshoreman, which only cost me 12 skilling (7 cents) for the night.

“"My idea was to immigrate to Australia, where the gold harvest was at its peak at that time. But the ships that had this destination, both from Göteborg and Copenhagen, had already left. So I had no other resource than to travel to England, and perhaps there find a ship destined for the South Seas. But I found that my money was insufficient; I might even have to wait for a month or two in London. My money at that time consisted of 797 riksdaler riksgäld (ca $200), so I decided to go to America and from there go on to my destination, or stay there for the winter, learn the language, and augment my monetary resources.

"On the 29th of May I went on board the Norwegian barkp Christiana. I had already slept a few nights there to save money. I had to pay 120 riksdaler for my fare, including my food on board. As I had no bedding, I supplied myself with the simplest I could find, a bed of such value that I could toss it overboard without a loss on arrival.

"Not until the 31st of May did we leave Vinga-Sanna, and the last glimpse of the land of my fathers’ disappeared in the blue sky.

"Twenty years ago such a departure would have happened with a sense of loss, and with a wish to return there. Now this happened to me without a sense of caring; nothing worse could happen to me in my new homeland than it had done in the old. I now had no special fortune left to lose in my life, and the friendships that I had worked so much for in my youth and valued so much, I now found were just a delusion, as my best friends became the biggest fraudsters, and caused the wreck of my fortune.

"At sea I did not have an especially good time; according to my contract I was to live on the middle deck, or rather below deck, as were the other emigrants, but have my meals with the crew. Those men were Norwegians, except for two Swedes, and a very rough gang with whom I could not avoid coming in conflict. If I was polite and submissive, as I was in the beginning, they thought they could handle me as they pleased with incivilities and dirty language. If I kept silent, that was not to their liking either, as they then tried to make fun of me. My patience ran out, and I threatened them with a beating, and they did believe that for a while, as I grabbed the Captain’s brother and the cook, one in each hand, and threatened to throw them overboard. Their hearts were in their mouths and they immediately changed their tune. This was a much better method than being civil, as they, after some incidents such as this, left me alone, and finally even became civil. To have as little to do with them as possible,
I arranged with the constable to give me as much as possible of my food to keep with me below deck, where I was given a chest to keep it in, so I only had to come in contact with the crew just a few times in their mess.

What happened next

Carl then describes the rest of his voyage and writes unflattering comments on his fellow passengers. He arrived in Boston 1853 Aug. 10 and had planned to go on to New York and from there continue to Australia, but found out that his funds were almost gone. Instead he went with some of his fellow passengers to Chicago, and finally ended up in Minnesota where he settled in Goodhue County.

His wife Clara Sophia Persdotter and his son Carl Emil (b. 1848) and daughter Carolina Gustava (b. 1853) joined him in 1854, and then more children were born: Cecelia Fredrica (twin, b. 1856); Cornelia Sofia (twin, b. 1856); Camilla Rosalia (b. 1860); Carline Hjalmar (b. 1862); Celinda Armida (b. 1866); Clodamir Nino (b. 1867); and Tialinda Cassandra (b. 1874).²

Notes:
1. Carl's birth is not found in any church records, neither in Fårnebo, nor in Gäsborn, where he was baptized, according to his memoirs.
3. There were several Norwegian barks with names like Christiana at this time, but none fits Carl's description. See link on p. 30.

On Swedish names, and why they were changed

An incitament for Swedes to change their names might have been that they often had patronymics, which are very common.

Still today in Swedish statistics of surnames for 2011 the 16 most common surnames are patronymics.

The leading surname – if variations on the name Johan like Johansson, Jonsson, Jansson, and Jönsson are counted – today totals more than 410,000 bearers. Most of these variations became Johnson in the U.S., so there could be a number of Jonssons on the same street, causing confusion. This might have led some of them to change surnames, and then often to typical Swedish surnames like Lindberg or Berglund.

Surname #17 is Lindberg (27,000), a non-patronymic name, but still followed by some less common patronymics, like Jakobsson, Magnusson, Axelsson, and Fredriksson.

Swedish genuine male patronymics are always spelled with the double “ss”, as they really mean Fredriksson (son of Fredrik) with the first “s” being the genitive marker.

In the table to the right the two first columns shows the “ranking” for 2010 and 2011. The two columns to the right shows the number of name bearers for those years. Remember that the Swedish population is just over 9 million.

Source: Swedish Bureau of Statistics (SCB). www.scb.se
This is a part of Carl Roos’s continued story of his travels to America. Transcription and translation will be found on p. 22.
Social networking aids the genealogist!

BY JILL SEAHOLM

This is a story about how social networking can aid in genealogy. My experience is in Facebook. Sure, there are genealogical query websites, email lists, and even Facebook pages for Swedish genealogy where one can post queries. However, sometimes we need to think outside the obvious.

In the spring of 2012 at the Swenson Center we received an email from a woman in Sweden named Christina F., who was looking for some lost relatives in the U.S. She had met them when they visited Sweden in the 1950s, and wanted to reconnect. Specifically she was looking for the daughters of someone named Ewald Lawson. Strangely, Christina had sent her query directly to the president of Augustana College, who sent it on to the Swenson Center’s employee email group. I replied to Christina with our usual answer, that we did not have access to records to look for people after 1930, and sent her to our Swedish-language web page that has suggestions for Swedes.

Within an hour, I heard from our director, Dag Blanck, who asked “You know that Lawson was president of Upsala College, right?” Upsala was a Swedish-American college in East Orange, New Jersey, until it closed its doors and filed for bankruptcy in 1995. I did not know that Lawson was an Upsala president, and was quite relieved that our director had also received the query email. Blanck added that Lawson may also have been a Lutheran minister ordained in the Augustana Synod. Knowing both of those things about him gave me some real hope of finding something in our records. Christina’s email did not mention Upsala College, but perhaps she found out that the Swenson Center had received their administrative archives when Upsala closed in 1995. She must have thought it fitting to write to Augustana’s president, since Lawson had been an Upsala president. We also have a number of resources related to Augustana Synod ministers. I wrote right back to Christina saying that there was some hope after all.

Lawson had been president 1938-1965, but had died in 1965. I started with our Augustana Synod resources and exhausted them right away. Our records tend to stop before he died. I thought about consulting Augustana College’s special collections, but they were closed and under construction, and had no access to their materials until autumn of 2012.

We do not have Upsala student or alumni records, but I looked at our plentiful online listings of Upsala College archives, and found that Ewald Lawson’s presidential papers consisted of 64 archival boxes divided into over 1,000 folders. I selected a dozen or so folders to check. Unfortunately, because 1965 was Lawson’s last year as president and in life, all of our information by him and about him stopped in 1965.

There was a family tree among his papers, but it also stopped at 1965 with the then unmarried daughters. We have an entire set of Upsala student yearbooks in our library, and Lawson’s daughters were in them, graduating in the 1960s, but that was where it stopped for the Lawsons. There was very little information about any specific alumni in our collection, but we did have one Upsala Alumni Directory, a book published in 1980. Only one of the daughters was in the directory, but it gave me her married name and address, at least as she was in 1980. Internet searches did not yield anything after that.

Facebook to the rescue!

I am on Facebook and maintain our Swenson Center page, so I looked for this Lawson daughter’s account on Facebook, and found too many with the same names, but then I had another idea. I had started a Facebook page for former students of my Moline, Illinois, elementary school,
which closed and was razed in a citywide downsizing in the 1980s. It was a beautiful, brick neighborhood school for which people felt great nostalgia; but maybe not for all of the teachers. This reminded me that there must be a Facebook page for alumni of Upsala College that would have a similar nostalgic draw, since that school had also closed.

There was one and I joined it right away. First I looked at the names of the members of the Upsala alumni Facebook group and determined that Lawson’s daughters were not in it. Most of the posts were things like “What was your favorite meal in the cafeteria?” and “Who was your favorite professor?” I posted a query to see if anyone knew what happened to President Lawson’s daughters. One person responded right away that she had known one of the Lawson daughters in college and that the daughter had been active in their sorority alumni group. The woman said she would check her sorority alumni materials to see if there was a current address for the Lawson daughter. This is where the story goes downhill for a while; a few weeks went by and the responder did not follow through with her offer, and these months later, she still has not. So, this idea did not pan out, but it definitely could have, and I thought it important enough to write an article about. After I posted my query, others followed suit and started asking whether anyone had heard from so-and-so from the class of 1975 or “Whatever happened to so-and-so from the Theta sorority?”

I had been updating Christina every week or so only with bad news it seemed, but now I felt I had to stop stringing her along. I told her that I had tried everything I was able to do for her, and gave her a few suggestions that I did not think would pan out. One suggestion I gave was to sign up for a Facebook account and search for Lawson’s daughters’ accounts, contact people with the right names, and even join the Upsala alumni Facebook group in case one of the daughters would show up in the group later.

Over a month after giving Christina my bad news, she wrote to me saying that she had found one of Lawson’s daughters! (I must interject to say how happy it makes me to hear when something I’ve done has resulted in a connection across the Atlantic.) Christina had started a Facebook account and written to a few people with the right names, and eventually heard back from her Lawson cousin after almost 60 years. She was ecstatic and so thankful for the Facebook idea.

Social networking can lead to all types of connections with the past! Give it a try!

Web sites mentioned in this article:

Augustana online listings of Upsala College:
www.augustana.edu/x14858.xml

Swenson Center Facebook Group:
(www.facebook.com/SwensonCenter [please like us!])

Upsala College Facebook Group:
(www.facebook.com/groups/2355638947/)

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Ewald B. Lawson ca 1950. SSIRC collection.


Information from The Augustana Ministerium, by Conrad Bergendoff (1980).
The story of an immigrant family

SUBMITTED BY LuANN SCHIEFARDECKER

PETERSON FAMILY HISTORY

Niels Peter Peterson and wife Eva Corin Mannosdotter came from Lonneberga, Sweden. Niels was born November 28, 1812 in Gummarp, Lonneberga, County of Kalmar, Sweden. Eva Corin was born February 10, 1821 in Majohult, Sodravi Parish, Lonneberga, Sweden. They married March 27, 1842 in Sodravi Parish and received their passport for America May 15, 1849. They left from the port of Gotenburg, Sweden June 8, 1849. They traveled in a sailboat. The ocean journey lasted 3 months. Both Mr. and Mrs. Peterson became very sea sick. When Mr. Peterson began recovering from his first attack of sea sickness, he got out a pipe and began smoking. The sea captain said, if Peterson can smoke now he will be fit for a sea captain. Mr. Peterson was able to keep off the felling of nauses by smoking. Calmness caused their boat to stand still for two weeks. Mr. & Mrs. Niels Peterson had 3 daughters with them. Christina, age 6, Anna Marie, age 3, and Charlotte Margareta, age 1. Niels Peterson had a brother named Carl Johan who had a wife Anna Lovisa and 3 or 4 children. Mrs. Peterson had 2 girls cousins that came on the same boat. The cousins helped Mrs. Peterson with daughters. Carl Johan's children were Kristene, Tilda, Charlotte, August and Gus. (We do not know how many were born in Sweden.)

Niels Peterson daughter Christina became ill on the boat. She died after they landed in Pennsylvania. She was buried in Penn. Due to sickness the Petersons temporarily stopped in Penn. The trip from Penn. to Chicago, Illinois was made by railroad. They went from Chicago to Peru, Ill. by canal boat. The boat was pulled by either a horse or a mule. From Peru, Ill. they went to Andover, Ill. in a wagon. (In 1849 Chicago had six railroads).

The Petersons settled on a farm of 40 acres which Mr. Peterson bought. It was between Orion and Andover, Ill. The farm was 1 mile from Orion and 7 miles from Andover. Orion was formerly been called Deanigton and La Grange. While the Petersons first house was built, they camped in a wagon barn loft. The barn belonged to a Mr. Lloyd. Mr. Peterson bought 1 horse for farming purpose, paid $50.00 in gold for it. Before he bought a wagon he borrowed one from a neighbor for 75¢ for each use of it. Mrs. Peterson brought a spinning wheel from Sweden. After they came to Ill., Mr. Peterson made her a hand loom for weaving. Their first house was temporarily covered with slough grass. The following children were born to them in Illinois: Johan Peter (Will) born Apr. 13, 1851; Carl Erick (Albert) born March 11, 1854; Alfred born Sept. 12, 1856; Christina Augusta born Aug. 30, 1859 (She died of Typhoid Fever at the age 8 years); Otto Edward born March 27, 1862; Niels August born Nov. 10, 1865. Mrs. Peterson died in 1883 at age 62 (She had poor health several years before she died). Mr. Peterson died in 1888 at age 76 (He died of a heart attack, was found dead in the yard). When he died he owned 160 acres of land and 2 houses on the land. Niels Peterson's brother settled near Orion also. Mrs. Peterson's cousins went to Galesburg, Ill. Niels Peterson's father was the foreman of a farming estate in Sweden. Niels oldest brother was lost in the woods and died there. This caused the death of Niels mother (grief). Niels had one sister and some younger half brothers who never left Sweden. Niels wife father was farmer in Sweden. (It is said she was a dandy ice skater). Mrs. Peterson had a brother who moved to Ill. in 1887, his name was Nichols August Magnusson. Mrs. Peterson left 3 brothers and sister in Sweden. One sister was the mother of the late Mrs. Issacson of Louise, Tex. Her brother, Nichols had a daughter the late Mrs. Lena Bard, the mother of John, Freeman, Luther and other children of Elcampo, Texas and a son Aloc of El Campo, Tex. Mr. and Mrs. Niels Peterson were members of the First Swedish Lutheran Church at Andover, Ill. This was the first Swedish Church to be built in Ill. Niels Peterson was an active church worker. It is said he could read shaped notes and that he led the singing in this church.
This interesting story has some information about the family's life in Sweden, and it might be interesting to see how it tallies with the church and other records.

**The birth of Nils Peter**
The Löneberga church records do show that Nils Peter's birth date was correct [the spelling Niels is Danish] and that his parents were the sharecropper Petter Nilsson and his wife Stina Johannisdotter in Gummarp. Petter was born 1780 Mar. 12 in Karlstorp, and Stina 1785 Sep. 5 in Eshult.

**The birth of Eva Carin**
Eva Carin (Catharina) was born 1821 Feb. 10 in Mjöhult 2, Södra Vi parish. Her parents were Magnus [Mâns is a short form of the name] Jonsson and his wife Catharina Ericsdotter. Magnus was born 1791 Mar. 9, and Catharina was born 1788 Sep. 29 in Rumskulla parish.

**The marriage**
Nils Petter Petersson and Eva Carin Mânsdotter were married 1842 Mar. 28 in Södra Vi. Nils Petter is recorded as being a sharecropper at Saxemâla in Löneberga, and Eva Carin as a farmer's daughter from Mjöhult.

**Children**
Nils Peter and Eva Carin lived at cottage Gummarp, which was situated on Saxemâla manor lands in Löneberga, where their children were born:
Christina Catharina, b. 1843 Sep. 5.
Anna Maria, b. 1846 Jan. 8.
Margareta Charlotta, b. 1848 June 8.

**Passport records**
In the Löneberga household records it shows that this family left for America in 1849. This is good, as then there is a chance that they will be found in the book *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in the United States 1820-1850* (SPAUS), by Nils William Olsson [SAG founder] and Erik Wikén (1995).
And so they are! They are listed as emigrants #3055-3059 on p. 351. From the notes on the family we learn that they received their passport 1849 May 15 in Kalmar city. The passenger list shows that they sailed from Göteborg on the ship Brödrene, and arrived 1849 Aug. 17 in New York.
Further it is recorded that Nils Petter became an American citizen in Rock Island County on 1856 June 22.
Daughter Anna Maria is recorded as having married Johan Victor Svensson in 1863.
Daughter Margareta Charlotta is recorded as having married A.P. Falk in 1867.

**Nils Peter’s brother**
Carl Johan Petersson was born 1815 Sep. 8 at Gumarp, Löneberga. His wife was Anna Lovisa Nilsdotter, b. 1816 Nov. 17 in Vena parish. She was born to an unmarried mother, Catharina Larsdotter from Hultenäs.
Carl Johan and Anna Lovisa lived at Saxemâla in Löneberga and had the following children:

1. Löneberga household records AI:3 (1812-1816), p. 271.
2. Södra Vi household records AI:5 (1826-1832) p. 305.
Nobel Prize Laureate and her husband with Swedish roots dies
– Elinor and Vincent Ostrom

BY ELISABETH THORSELL

In the middle of June 2012 there was a notice in the newspapers in Sweden that Elinor Ostrom had died 2012 June 13 in Bloomington, IN. In 2009 2009 she was awarded the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, which she shared with Oliver E. Williamson, Mrs. Ostrom was born 1933 Aug.7 in Los Angeles, CA.

Her surname sounded like a Swedish name, which would have been spelled Åström in Swedish, but it was not her maiden name, which was Awan.

The Ostrom name came from her husband Vincent A. Ostrom, whom she married in 1963. Vincent A. Ostrom was the founding director of the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, based at Indiana University and the Arthur F. Bentley Professor Emeritus of Political Science.

Vincent Ostrom died just 16 days after his wife on 2012 June 29 in Bloomington, IN.

According to biographical information on the internet, Vincent Alfred Ostrom was born 1919 Sep. 25 in Whatcom County, WA, son of Alfred Ostrom and Alma Knutson. Alfred and Alma married in 1918 May 9 in the city of Bellingham, Whatcom County, WA.¹

An Alfred Ostrom was not found in the Swedish immigration databases, but what did the U.S. censuses tell about his family?

In 1920² Alfred, Alma and little Vincent lived in Maple Falls in Whatcom County, WA. Alfred was 25 years old, born in Sweden. Alma was 20 years old, born in Washington with Norwegian parents, and little Vincent just 3 months old. Alfred is said to be a laborer in a logging camp.

In 1930³ the Ostroms lived at Nooksack, also in Whatcom County, and now had two more children, d. Lena C. H., 8 years, and Gordon S., 6 years. Alfred is recorded as having immigrated in 1901. On the same census page is found an older Ostrom woman, Kristina, 69 years old, born in Sweden, and a widow. She lived with her son Peter Ostrom, 30 years old, also born in Sweden.

Going back in time to 1910⁴ an Ostrom family was found in Nooksack, which looked interesting.

The head of household was Peter Ostrom, 57 years old, born in Sweden, his wife Christine 47 years old, and
children Alfred, 15; Peter, 13; Otto, 10; all born in Sweden. They also had a son Oscar, age 4, born in Washington.

As they still could not be found in the Swedish records, the next step was to look for a family consisting of father Peter, mother Christina, sons Alfred, Peter, and Otto, in the CD database “Swedish Population 1900,” as Alfred was said to have come to the U.S. in 1901.

A search for a child Alfred, born around 1894, with parents Per (Swedish version of Peter) and Christina, did not give any good hits. But by trying different spellings of names a likely family turned up.

This was the Per Olofsson family of Kläppe #2 of Marby parish in the province of Jämtland.

According to the clerical survey\(^5\) Per owned a very small farm in Marby, and as the family grew it might have been very difficult for them to survive in this rather poor farming area. The children had not been baptized, and that might also have contributed to the decision to emigrate – in many communities belonging to a “free denomination” was not popular. Also it is shown that the parents were married in 1883 Feb. 8 in a civil ceremony (borg. = borgerlig), another indication that they had left the Church of Sweden.

Son Karl Johan, born 1897 Jan. 30, died already on 1897 Mar. 2. The oldest son Olof, born 1883 Apr. 24, seems to have enlisted in the Jämtland Rifles (Fältjägare), where he was given the soldier’s name of Eklund. To be able to emigrate legally he must apply for the King’s permission, which he did not bother with, so he is recorded as “run away to America in 1901.” In 1918 he was a witness at his brother Alfred’s marriage.\(^1\)

Per Olofsson and his family left for America on 1901 Sep.2 and travelled by way of Trondheim in Norway, which was their closest port of departure. On Sep. 18 they left Liverpool on the S/S Germanic and arrived in New York on Sep.27. Their destination is given as New Watcom in Washington State.\(^6\)

They travelled as the Olofsson family, but probably changed their surname soon to Ostrom.

**The final dates**

Per Olofsson a.k.a Peter Ostrom died 1913 Sep.5 in Whatcom Co., WA.\(^7\) His widow Christina died 1936 Dec.1 Eversen, Whatcom Co., WA.\(^7\)

Alfred Ostrom (Ostrom) died 1931 Sep.24 in Eversen, Whatcom, WA.\(^7\) Alma Ostrom, widow of Alfred, died 1996 Dec.12 in Lynden Co, WA.\(^7\)

**Notes:**

The solution of the Handwriting Example 31

Transcription:
Ehuru jag för ingen del öfvergaf mitt guldslands-project, ty oaktat Femtio Ett år gammal ville jag än en gång pröfwa lyckans ynnest, om än jag skulle dervid gå i qvaf, ty jag kunde inte förliga mig med mitt öde, hålst jag, för få år tillbaka var en förmögen man, men nu ------------ jag wille der före göra min lefnads sista pröfkast.

Afresan till Chicago skedde andra dagen på aften och kostade hvad jag will minnas 8 dollar. När halften af wart sällskap förklarade sig utfattiga med och utan skål, och fingo alltså åka gratis.

Translation
As I in no way was giving up my prospecting for gold project, regardless of being fifty-one years old, I still wanted to try my favor of luck, even if I were to perish in this, as I could not be reconciled with my destiny, especially as I just a few years back had been a prosperous man, but now-------, I wanted to make one last effort in this life.

The journey to Chicago took place on the second day in the evening, and as far as I can remember, cost $8. Almost half of the company declared themselves to be destitute, with or without reason, and thus were able to travel for free.

Gustaf Kempe was very satisfied with my change of travel plans, and suggested that we should travel as a team during the journey, and also that he could use me in connection with his overweight luggage, as I only had a small suitcase.

Between Boston and Chicago one of the luggage cars caught fire and was burned.
The SwedGen Tour of Swedish genealogists are now planning their new tour to the U.S.

This time the group consists of Anneli Andersson, Charlotte Björjeson, Olof Cronberg, and Anna-Lena Hultman.

Their schedule is as follows:

* Friday and Saturday, October 5-6, 2012 - Sturbridge, MA
* Tuesday, October 9, 2012 - Cranston, RI
* Saturday, October 13, 2012 - Pittsburg, PA

(Olof is not coming here).

**Lectures**

Each day they offer lectures about:
* Swedish church records online.
* Other Swedish online records and CD:s.
* DISBYT, the Swedish family tree database
* Lantmäteriet - the Swedish mapping, land taxation and registration authority.
* Swedish culture.

**One on one sessions**

They also offer individual research help. Sign up for 30 minutes with one of them and they will help you with your Swedish genealogical problems, give some ideas on where to look for more information, and how to get in touch with living relatives in Sweden.

**Prepare yourself**

To get the best result from the One on one sessions they suggest you prepare yourself by making notes about the names you are looking for, birthdates, birthplaces (if known), immigration year, and family members.

In order to save some time at the meetings, you will be able to submit your query before the tour. They will then do some research in advance and share the results at the meetings. The better data you are able to provide, the better is the probability that they can help you.

More information can be found at [http://www.lilleskogen.se/](http://www.lilleskogen.se/) or e-mail: anneli.andersson@brunshult.se

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**Old photos**

David Borg, the president of the SweAme organization, recently sent the following e-mail to SAG:

“Ken Madsen of Aurora, Colorado, has received and has now posted some “unknown” photos to the SweAme Most Wanted section.

“He needs your help in identifying the individuals in these photos. The odds are low that you might recognize some of these individuals as members of your own family, but who knows for sure until we share and ask?

“So please take a look at the most recent 5 photos that Ken as added to the Most Wanted. You just might be surprised.


“Click on the thumbnail image to get a better view of the individuals.

Thank you for your help. Ken Madsen and David Borg”

The SweAme organization was presented in SAG 3/11, p. 14, in an article by David Borg. In this he explained how a group of dedicated genealogists all over the U.S. had felt the need for a new type of organization, and what their goals are.
Book Reviews

Here you will find information about interesting books on the immigration experience, genealogical manuals, books on Swedish customs, and much more. We welcome contacts with SAG readers, suggestions on books to review perhaps. If you want to review a book yourself, please contact the Book Review Editor, Dennis L. Johnson, at <i_viking@verizon.net> or Dennis Johnson, 174 Stauffer Road, Bucktown Crossing, Pottstown, PA 19465, so he knows what you are working on.

The real last letter home

Nicholas, the Neighbor, who wrote “The Last Letter to Sweden,” by Tord Ericsson, Qwack text and bild, 2010, 101 pages, softcover, illustrated, Qwack text and bild, Sweden, about $21.00 (140 SEK) plus shipping. More information from http://qwack.se/

The title of this book refers to the letter ending the last volume of Moberg’s The Emigrants series, in which a neighbor of the fictional Karl-Oscar Nilsson writes to his sister in Sweden to inform her of the death of Karl-Oscar in Minnesota. The author, Tord Ericsson, has learned that Moberg used in his book (with some minor changes) an actual letter written by Nicholas Swenson to the relatives in Sweden of Nicholas’s own neighbor, Andrew Peterson, on his death in Scania, Minnesota. The letter by Swenson has actually survived in the hands of Ivar Wideen, organist in Skara Cathedral, who loaned a copy to Moberg in 1949.

From this connection, Tord Ericsson has researched, in Sweden and with American descendants of Nicholas Swenson, the life of Nicholas in Sweden and as a pioneer immigrant in Scania, Carver County, Minnesota. The book also includes materials about Swenson’s wife Elna, their children, Nicholas’s close neighbor and relative Andrew Peterson, and others who were his fellow immigrants, neighbors, and friends. He has dedicated his book to “Dena-Lynn Swenson Merwin, Joy E. Strommer, and all other descendants of Nicholas and Elna Swenson.”

Nicholas (Swenson), the neighbor, was born in 1834 in Yngsjö, Skåne, the youngest of eight children of Sven Persson and Karna Hansdotter. He married Elna Persdotter from Ahus, born in 1829. The family immigrated to North America in 1861. Together with his family were Nicholas’s older brother Per and his wife, and also Elna’s mother Ingar Andersdotter. Nicholas’s sister Pernilla followed two years later. Swenson settled in an area then called Scandia, near Waconia in Carver County, about 25 miles southwest of Minneapolis, in 1861. He claimed land next door to Andrew Peterson, also from Yngsjö in Skåne. The two men were second cousins and knew each other in Yngsjö. They were all part of a Baptist community of about 60 in Yngsjö who were then under sanctions from the (State Lutheran) church as potential heretics.

A small group of Swedish Baptists had begun the settlement in Scandia in 1855, and by 1861 had begun to build a church and cemetery known as the Scandia Church. Joined by the Swenson and Peterson families in 1861, services were for a time held in the home of Andrew Peterson. The two men built homes for their families and then set about the work of establishing their farms, crops, and animals.

Fortunately for historians, Andrew Peterson kept a diary over his lifetime which is used as an important reference by Tord Ericsson in Nicholas, the Neighbor. This same diary was also used as a resource by Vilhelm Moberg in writing The Emigrants series in the 1950’s. In 1984, Peterson’s diary was published as Andrew Peterson and the Scandia Story, by Josephine Mihelich and Ford Johnson Graphics, 202 pages.

Together with his own research in Sweden and the U.S., Tord Ericsson’s book has provided a look into the lives of two Swedish pioneers and their families and neighbors in Minnesota, including their involvement with the American Civil War which began in 1861, the year of their arrival. One son, Hans, was drafted into the Minnesota Regiment at age fifteen and served for two years, 1864 and 1865, finally returning home. Many others from the area were also drafted, and many died of disease, in
combat, or in the notorious Andersonville prison. The Dakota uprising of 1862 also had an impact on many settlers in the area, and frightened many more until the uprising was put down by the army, including soldiers drafted from the Scandia area.

The author includes other materials which give a picture of early farming activities at the time, the beginnings of the use of machine threshers, farm life, and the aging of the two close neighbors. They had supported each other and other neighbors for most of their years in Minnesota, often working together on each other’s farms. Both, with their families, were active leaders of the Scandia Baptist Church. Elna Swenson, Nicholas’s wife, died in 1895 after living 34 years in Minnesota.

Nicholas was six years younger than his friend Andrew, who died at the age of 79 years in 1898. The last entry in his diary on March 29 was two days before he died, he wrote: “The boys drove manure - I was in bed - it is fair weather, but not warm.” Three weeks later, on April 18, Nicholas Swenson wrote to Ivar Wideen, a relative of Peterson, to tell him of Peterson’s death. This is the letter on which Moberg based “The last letter home” in his book of that title.

Nicholas followed his friend Andrew in death five years later, in 1903, at age 79, and both are buried in the Baptist cemetery in Scandia. The author expresses regret that he could only portray a fraction of their lives, based on the information available to him. Like Karl Oscar in The Emigrants, Nicholas left a large family – three daughters and seven sons. His farms (two other farms in Kandiyohi County to the west were purchased by Nicholas later on) were inherited by the children and sold soon after his death, as the children pursued their own separate lives.

Some readers familiar with Minnesota and the Moberg books may be confused by the location where Nicholas and Andrew lived. The little village of Scandia in Carver County has since been absorbed into nearby Waconia, and no longer exists by that name. The area today is close enough to the southwest fringe of Minneapolis that it is the scene of suburban development, around Lake Waconia and other lakes nearby. The old log cabin Scandia Baptist Church, the second Baptist church to be built in Minnesota, is no longer there. It was sold in 1973 and removed to the campus of Bethel University in St. Paul, where it is preserved as a chapel at the college. The only remaining trace of Scandia is the small Scandia Baptist Cemetery along Island View Road, close to Clearwater Lake, and its Coney Island, the place where settlers took shelter during the Dakota War of 1862. Many of these original settlers and their families are buried in this cemetery.

Tord Ericsson’s book adds another important dimension to the chronicles of Swedish pioneers in Minnesota, filling in many details about the families involved and their lives both in Sweden and after their settling in America. The book is well illustrated with photographs, maps, and other materials relating to the settlement and farm life during the period 1861 through 1900. This reviewer’s own great-grandfather and his family homesteaded near Bernadotte, MN, only five years later and certainly faced similar challenges and circumstances on the prairie some 40 miles further southwest from Nicholas Swenson.

Book Reviews

Reviewer’s note to readers:
Moberg’s settlers, “The Emigrants” readers will recall, claimed their land east of Minneapolis and up the St. Croix River near Taylors Falls. The present towns of Lindstrom, Scandia, and Forest Lake are all in this vicinity, and the existing Scandia in Washington County is not to be confused with Nicholas Swenson’s no longer existing Scandia about 60 miles to the southwest. The well-known statue of Karl Oscar and Kristina Nilsson stands in the center of Lindstrom, MN, along with other Swedish-American sites and tourist attractions in the vicinity. It is easy to understand, however, how Moberg found inspiration from the Swenson letter and the Peterson diary to create his epic novels.

Dennis L. Johnson

A Chicago childhood


The author’s father and his life is the theme around which Lindberg has created this book, which also provides a vivid picture of Sweden in the first two decades of the twentieth century, and immigrant life in Swedish Chicago through the next six decades. His father, Oskar Waldemar Lindberg, was born in Sweden Feb. 2, 1897 on Kallebarga farm near Ronneby, in Blekinge. Oskar was the eighth of eleven children born to Kalle and Sophia Lindberg. The life story of Kalle and Sophia would be worth another book. Karl Johan Andersson

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In Göteborg, Oskar polished his skills as a carpenter, sired two children by two girlfriends, and became more deeply involved in the Labor movement. He sent a little money home to his mother, Sophia, who was in dire need after the death of his father Kalle om 1922. By 1924, at age 27, Oskar had decided to leave for America and Chicago to seek his fortune. He left behind a girlfriend, Elma, pregnant, with promises to send for her when he could. He never did.

Oskar sailed to Montreal, and made his way to Detroit, then to Chicago where he settled in Swedetown, a settlement hub for Swedes on the near north side where new arrivals, legal and illegal, first settled in Chicago. He found odd jobs as a carpenter and managed to survive the crash of 1929 and the Depression, even managing in 1932 to marry his first wife, Svea Anderson, the daughter of a man who had befriended him. He started his own business as a construction contractor soon after. He recruited some Swedish carpenter friends to work for him and managed to get a contract building Sears Roebuck pre-cut homes. This led to more contracts and his eventual career as a master-builder of custom homes in suburban Chicago. But Oskar’s wife Svea was sickly and unable to bear children, eventually passing away of tuberculosis only seven years after their marriage.

By 1943, Oskar had met Evelyn Benson in the ballrooms of Chicago. Evelyn was the youngest and most lively daughter of an Evanston dairy farmer who had come to Chicago for its excitement. She was very much a social climber, and apparently found Oskar to her liking. After a few months of steady dating, she told that she was pregnant, and Oskar did the right thing by marrying her. Six months later, Charley was born. The marriage was a disaster, however, and Evelyn soon sued for divorce and moved to California to live with her sister. This short-lived “Aragon Ballroom” marriage provided the yet-to-be-born author only with a future half-brother, Charles.

By 1947, Oskar had met Helen Stone, daughter of one his closest employees, who was looking for a spouse for his only daughter. After a time, he proposed to her and Helen agreed, torn by the attraction of marrying an older, more wealthy man, but who was also looking for a mother for his son Charlie, a feisty seven-year-old. They were married in February, 1948, at the Methodist church near where she had lived as a child. After a brief period, Helen lost interest in the marriage and soon moved back to live with her parents, taking Charlie with her. They struggled along while Oskar continued his pattern of drinking with his friends and living in the house Helen had abandoned.

In late 1952, Helen felt badly and was finally convinced to see a doctor who, to everyone’s surprise, including Helen’s, declared that she was pregnant. This child, born in June of 1953, was our author, Richard Lindberg. He soon came home to his mother, grandmother, and half-brother Charles, now eight years old. (Helen’s father had died the previous year, of cancer). This third marriage was now broken beyond repair amidst a messy divorce settlement that continued to leave Richard’s mother, Helen, in poverty. Helen returned home to her

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mother again along with Richard, who in his book remembers visits with his father on occasion. New girlfriends were often present, and he was to marry for a fourth time. Oskar remained with his last wife, Marie, and eventually died in 1986, at the age of 89. His mother, Helen, died in 1992, thirty-seven years after her separation from Oskar.

Later in the book, the author adds diary passages that he had written soon after Oskar's death reflecting on his father's life. After earlier alienation, he has reconciled with his half-brother Charles, and together they returned to Sweden to make contact with relatives of his father.

Help from Swedish relatives resulted in translations of many of his father's old letters that were valuable source materials for this book, and the author clearly engaged in much additional research in various archives, documents, and other papers to assemble the colorful descriptions of people and places in the book, especially Swedish Chicago.

While this book is interesting to the follower of stories about Swedish immigrants and their families in Chicago, it proved a hard book for me to like. Lindberg focuses much of the story on his father, Oskar Lindberg, and how his father never had much time or affection for him and treated him and his mother very badly. As one whose own father died when I was only 14, I had a little trouble relating to his view of his early life. Lindberg seems to view himself as a victim of a bad father and comes off as a bitter whiner, despite having attained some success as a writer. Perhaps this is because he is a child of the 1950's and has little understand-

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in the 1920's through the 1960's. In many ways, however, the reader learns as much about the author and his own outlook on life as about Swedish Chicago. All people, places, and events are described in an embittered, cynical way throughout. Few of the people in the book have idealistic motives or live happily or free of selfish ulterior motives or guilt. For me, an interesting book to read as one man's point of view, but a hard book to like.

Dennis L. Johnson

Professor Ulf Beijbom, former director of the Swedish Emigrant Institute has now published a new book, in Swedish, about the Great Depression, and how it affected the Swedish-American population, especially in the Chicago and Rockford areas. He has used the oral history interviews done by Lennart Setterdahl, and also many other sources, such as newspapers, and official statistics. In this book you hear the voices of the victims of the Depression. This is a book that should be translated into English, so the present-day Swedish-Americans can understand the elder generation better.

Elisabeth Thorsell

An allotment soldier's cottage, situated near Sköde in Västergötland. This soldier belonged to the Skaraborg infantry regiment.
Old booklet about New Sweden for sale!

This is a revised and expanded version of an article that originally appeared in Church History Volume 7, September 1938. It was reprinted in 1988 with the permission of the original publisher.

This little booklet (38 pages) is a good introduction to the remarkable history of New Sweden. Some of the information is outdated, but it is still a good read.

The booklet is illustrated with pictures in black and white of many of the early books on New Sweden, a map, and pictures of a number of the Swedish pastors: Israel Acrelius, Carl Magnus Wrangel, and Nicolas Collin. The latter lived until 1831, and passed on just a few years before the first wave of the new Swedish immigrants came with Peter Cassel and Erik Jansson.

This booklet can be bought for just $2 each, including postage and handling.

from

Swenson Center, Augustana College
639 38th St, Rock Island
IL 61201-2296

New and Noteworthy
(short notes on interesting books and articles)

In the newest issue of Family Tree Magazine (July/August) there are several useful articles. There is a listing of the 40 top genealogy blogs for international research tips. There is only one for Sweden, but you might have ancestors from many other countries as well, so this can be something to check out.

There are some thoughtful hints on how to organize photos and research material, so the next generation will be interested, and not throw it in a dumpster.

In this issue there are city research guides for Buffalo, NY, and San Francisco, CA, that can help researchers from out-of-town. The same goes for an article about Ukraine There is also an article about how to research Lutheran ancestors, but it is very general, and does not mention, for instance, all the records of the Swedish-American churches. Those records are not so well-known as they are not available online, but can be crucial to finding the Swedish origins.

The Swedish-American Historical Quarterly 2012/1 has a long article by Henrik Williams, called “The Kensington Runestone: Facts and Fiction,” in which he explains the current research positions in connection with the stone. He writes “In this case, the evidence supports the conclusion that the Kensington Runestone is a nineteenth-century inscription.”

Tidningen, the quarterly newsletter of the Swedish Genealogical Society of Minnesota, summer of 2012 has a good article about a computer program, Kyrkohögtider, that helps with keeping track of the Swedish Liturgical Calendar that was used for centuries. Author Jeff Benson can be reached at <jabenson43@yahoo.com>

There is also a nice travelogue by Sandy and Ken Enstrom of their recent travels in Sweden.
Interesting Web Sites

A Swedish march ("Under the blue and yellow flag"): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Lsba-u-Buk&feature=share

The Peshtigo fire of 1871: http://www.peshtigofire.info/

Steve Morse's site for finding marriages in New York City:
http://stevemorse.org/vital/nymarriages.html?index=groom

Online Historical Directories Website: https://sites.google.com/site/onlinedirectorysite/Home

Swedish surname statistics (in Swedish): http://www.scb.se/Pages/TableAndChart_31063.aspx

Research request for the Vasa archives (VOA) in Bishop Hill, IL:
http://www.vasaorder.com/bishophill/geninq/genealogy_inquiry.htm


Gapminder (world wide statistics): http://www.gapminder.org/

Swedish Ancestry Research Association (SARA):
http://sarassociation.tripod.com/sara/SARA_Home_Page.htm

Database on emigrant ships: http://www.norwayheritage.com/query_s.asp

Abandoned mines in Sweden: http://www.phase.com/jakobe/mines

Atlas of Regional Divisions in Sweden, 1992:

Sweden Thoughts (blog by Yvonne Henriksson): http://swedenroots.blogspot.se/

Rhode Island Swedish Heritage Association: http://www.riswedishheritage.org/

A blog with Swedish connections: http://theancestorfiles.blogspot.se/#uds-search-results

10 Questions to Ask a Research Facility Before You Visit:
http://genealogy.about.com/od/libraries/a/questions.htm


Information on naturalization records: NaturalizationRecords.com

Homicide in Chicago 1870–1930: http://homicide.northwestern.edu/

Progress in the indexing of the 1940 census by FamilySearch:
https://familysearch.org/1940census/

Library and Archives Canada: http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Pages/home.aspx

San Francisco Call 1869-1900 (database of birth, marriages and deaths):
http://www.jwfgenersearch.com/SFCallIndex.htm

Where did the Swedes go?: http://www.kindredtrails.com/Where-Did-The-Swedes-Go-2.html

Utah digital newspapers: http://digitalnewspapers.org/
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.

Rehn, Swenson, Johnson

This photo was taken in 1946 in Austin, TX. The ladies are my grandmother’s aunts, Nora and Hilda.

Hulda Eleonora [Nora] Rehn was born 1882 Feb. 14 in Barkeryd (Smål.). She moved to Jönköping Sofia from where she immigrated 1900 Nov.1, travelling from Göteborg Nov. 23 with a ticket for New York. She married in 1904 John Svensson, born 1874 in Järnsnäs (Smål.).

In the 1920 Census they live at Nichols Street in Kenedy, Karnes Co., TX, and have the following children: Edith, age 14; Eric, age 12; Ruby, age 7; Irene, age 5; Annabel, age 2; and Doris, age 5 months.

According to the Texas Birth index Annabelle Estelle was born 1918 Feb. 18 in Kenedy, Karnes Co.

In the 1930 Census they live in Precinct 8 in Williamson Co., TX, and all the children are still at home. Edith is a school teacher and Eric a bank clerk. Nora died 1952 May 7 in Williamson Co., and is buried in the Hutto Lutheran Church Cemetery. John died 1969 and is buried in the same grave as Nora.

Hilda Sofia Rehn was born 1883 Oct. 17 in Barkeryd. She also moved to Jönköping, from where she immigrated 1904 Jan. 26. She left Göteborg on Mar. 2 with a ticket for New York. According to the New York passenger lists she was on her way to sister Nora, who then lived in Hutto, Williamson Co., TX.

In 1912 she married Oscar F. Johnson, born 1871 Jan. 14 in Norra Sandsjö (Smål.), and died 1952 in Williamson Co., TX. In 1920 U.S. Census Oscar and Hilda lived in Hutto, where he had a hardware store. Hilda died 1964 Mar. 2, and is buried in the same cemetery as her sister. The couple is not known to have had any children.

Nora and Hilda had a brother Karl Oscar Rehn, born 1886 Nov. 23 in Barkeryd, who immigrated in 1905 Nov. 11 from Forserum (Smål.), and travelled from Göteborg on Nov. 24 with a ticket for New York, but he really went to his sister Nora, whose husband John had sent him a ticket. Oscar married Bessie Almquist 1916 Dec. 14 in Williamson Co. She was born 1893 Sep. 29 in Texas of Swedish parents. In 1920 Oscar and Bessie also lived in Hutto, where Oscar was a farmer. They had a daughter Margret, born in 1917. Later they also had a son Charles H., born in 1922.

Oscar Rehn died 1948 July 24, and his wife Bessie Otelia in 1968 Apr. 6, both in Williamson Co.

Charles is said to have married Betty Jean, born 1931 May 24, and they had a son Karl William, born 1966.

Any information on these families will be much appreciated!

*Ann-Christin Gählin, Lundaängsvägen 6, S-872 32, Sweden. E-mail: <annki_gollan@hotmail.se>*
Dear friends,

SAG has now entered the high-tech stage with the above sign. If you have one of those new smart phones, I think you can just show the phone this sign, and you will be connected to Swenson Center’s SAG page. I do not have such a phone, but one of my technical sons says that it works.

Summer is here finally, but so far it has been a rather wet one. Every other day brings us more rain, and then the next day is sunny, and then rain again. But this helps the blueberries and chanterelle mushrooms to grow, which is very nice.

This is also the season for our American friends to come to Sweden and look for the ancestors, or at least the places where they lived, and the churches where they sat every Sunday, maybe more looking forward to chats with friends outside the church than long and boring sermons.

One American friend, at age 83, was a bit teary-eyed when he finally saw the baptismal font where his father had been baptized in 1872 – a great experience for him.

The annual Genealogy Days are not far off in time, this time in Gävle. And this time we will have company from Lindsborg, KS; Worcester, MA, Brooklyn Park, MN; and Salt Lake City, UT. This will be another good memory to think about in the dark days in December. But before then comes the SAG Workshop in late September, and a visit to the Twin Cities to see the new version of the American Swedish Institute.

We, my friend Ingrid and I, will also take part in the Swedish conference (see p. 11) in Sturbridge, MA. Being in the area it is also necessary to visit Old Sturbridge, and make comparisons between this outdoor museum and our Skansen (Stockholm) and Kulturen (Lund), and see that life was much the same whether you lived in Sweden or in the U.S.

Till next time!

Elisabeth Thorsell

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SAG Workshop
Salt Lake City
23 – 30 Sept. 2012!

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Contact Jill Seaholm at 309-794-7204, or e-mail: <sag@augustana.edu>.

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Swedish American Genealogist 2012:2
Table 1. Abbreviations for Swedish provinces (landskap) used by Swedish American Genealogist (as of March 2000) and Sveriges Släktforskarförbund (the Federation of Swedish Genealogical Societies, Stockholm [SSF]).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landskap (Province)</th>
<th>SAG &amp; SSF Abbr.</th>
<th>Landskap (Province)</th>
<th>SAG &amp; SSF Abbr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blekinge</td>
<td>Blek.</td>
<td>Närke</td>
<td>Närk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohuslän</td>
<td>Bohu.</td>
<td>Skåne</td>
<td>Skån.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalarna</td>
<td>Dala.</td>
<td>Småland</td>
<td>Smål.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalsland</td>
<td>Dals.</td>
<td>Södermanland</td>
<td>Södm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gotland</td>
<td>Gotl.</td>
<td>Uppland</td>
<td>Uppl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gästrikland</td>
<td>Gäst.</td>
<td>Värmland</td>
<td>Värnm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halland</td>
<td>Hall.</td>
<td>Västerbotten</td>
<td>Väbo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hälsingland</td>
<td>Häls.</td>
<td>Västergötland</td>
<td>Vägö.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Härjedalen</td>
<td>Härj.</td>
<td>Västmanland</td>
<td>Väsm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jämtland</td>
<td>Jämt.</td>
<td>Ångermanland</td>
<td>Ånge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lappland</td>
<td>Lapp.</td>
<td>Öland</td>
<td>Öland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medelpad</td>
<td>Mede.</td>
<td>Östergötland</td>
<td>Östg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norrbotten</td>
<td>Nobo.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Abbreviations and codes for Swedish counties (län) formerly used by Swedish American Genealogist (1981-1999) and currently used by Statistiska centralbyrån (SCB) (the Central Bureau of Statistics, Stockholm).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Län (County)</th>
<th>SAG Abbr.</th>
<th>SCB Abbr.</th>
<th>SCB Code</th>
<th>Län (County)</th>
<th>SAG Abbr.</th>
<th>SCB Abbr.</th>
<th>SCB Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dalarna a</td>
<td>Dlrn.</td>
<td>W</td>
<td></td>
<td>Södermanland</td>
<td>Söd.</td>
<td>Södm.</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halland</td>
<td>Hall.</td>
<td>Hall.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Västerbotten</td>
<td>Vbn.</td>
<td>Vbmn.</td>
<td>AC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norrbotten</td>
<td>Norr.</td>
<td>Nbmn.</td>
<td>BD</td>
<td>Östergötland</td>
<td>Ög.</td>
<td>Östg.</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skåne b</td>
<td>Skån.</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a formerly Kopparberg (Kopp.; W) län.
b includes the former counties (län) of Malmöhus (Malm.; M) and Kristianstad (Krist.; L).
c includes the former counties (län) of Göteborg and Bohus (Göt.; O), Skaraborg (Skar.; R), and Älvsborg (Älvs.; P).
The counties (läns) as they were before 1991.

The provinces (landskap).