

# Swedish American Genealogist

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Volume 27 | Number 3

Article 1

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9-1-2007

## Full Issue Vol. 27 No. 3

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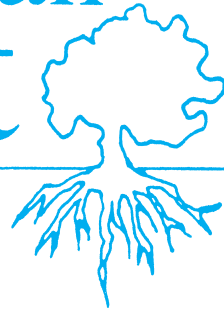
(2007) "Full Issue Vol. 27 No. 3," *Swedish American Genealogist*: Vol. 27 : No. 3 , Article 1.

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(ISSN 0275-9314)

# Swedish American Genealogist



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



Volume XXVII

September 2007

No.3

# Swedish American Genealogist



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(ISSN 0275-9314)

*Swedish American Genealogist*

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Correspondence regarding change of address, back issues (price and availability), and advertising should be directed to the publisher in Rock Island.

**Subscriptions.** Subscriptions to the journal are \$28.00 per annum and run for the calendar year. Single copies are \$8.00 each. Swenson Center Associates are entitled to a special discounted subscription price of \$15.00. Direct all subscription inquiries to the publisher in Rock Island.

In Sweden the subscription price is 225.00 Swedish *kronor* per year for surface delivery and 275.00 *kronor* per year for air mail. This subscription fee may be deposited in a *plusgiro* account: 260 10-9, *Swedish American Genealogist*, c/o Thorsell, Hästsковägen 45, S-177 39 Järfälla, Sweden.

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## **Cover picture:**

*The Monitor again meets with the Merrimac, but this time in Filipstad in July 2007 (Photo: E. Thorsell)*

# Family Ties to the Dakota Uprising – Minnesota 1862, Part 2

## Connections to the Lundborg and Broberg victims

BY HELENE LEAF

When I was searching for information about Mary Anderson, I asked Pastor Robert Kruger if he had any memories of people talking about an East Union person who was killed in the Sioux uprising. Pastor Kruger had served for many years at the East Union Lutheran Church, Carver Co., Minnesota, but now he is retired. He said that he did not remember any connection with the East Union Church, but he thought that there was something about the Lundborgs from West Union being connected with the Massacre. Immediately I thought this is something to investigate as my husband had family ties to the Lundborgs at West Union Lutheran Church which is just about 8 miles from the East Union Lutheran Church.

In 1970 at my husband's first parish in Dunnell, Martin County, Minnesota, there was one parish-

ioner who said that she was related to John through the Wahlstroms. At that time I had no idea who the Wahlstroms were so that information was filed away somewhere in the back of my mind for about thirty years. In the past few years I had found out who the Wahlstroms were, but not how this parishioner was connected to the Wahlstroms. Last year I decided to figure this out. John's great-grandmother, Katarina Carlsdotter, had a sister, Ingri, who married Olof Wahlstrom. Ingri and Olof had married in Geneva, Illinois, but eventually moved to San Francisco Township, Carver County, Minnesota, and joined West Union Church. The West Union Church records were lost in a fire in 1943 so the best source for following these people was gone.

I turned to following the family in U.S. censuses. I was able to get the names and approximate ages of their children. The boys I could follow in federal censuses, but with the girls, I lost their trail.

### Mystery solved

The breakthrough came in January 2006 when my husband handed me a photo of his grandmother. This photo had been given to John by the parishioner from Dunnell; it had been her mother's. On the back were these words, "to my cousin Anna Lundborg." Now I had a last name and a place. I knew this parishioner had been raised mostly in Wright

County, Minnesota. Using the census records through Ancestry.com at a local library and church records at the Swenson Center, I was able to determine that Anna Wahlstrom, daughter of Ingri and Olof, had married August Lundborg at West Union where both had been born, confirmed, and started to raise a family. They had lived for some time in Isanti County and then had moved to Wright County and belonged to the Stockholm Lutheran Church. The parishioner from Dunnell was a daughter of Anna and August Lundborg, as was confirmed by census records and church records from Salem Lutheran Church, Dalbo, Isanti County, and Stockholm Lutheran Church, Wright County, Minnesota.

### Who were the Lundborgs?

At this point the research stopped until Pastor Kruger's remark. I had read about the Lundborgs who had been killed at the Broberg house in August 1862 during the Indian uprising. Now to find out if there was a family tie. Because the West Union Church records were not available, I looked on the Rootsweb.com website for Carver County; there is a listing of the readings from the West Union Lutheran Church Cemetery. There were the names of many Lundborgs. For several of them exact birth dates and places, and death dates and



places were given. Three of the names matched perfectly with the three Lundborgs who were at the West Lake cabins in August 1862 but escaped being killed: Anders the father, Johannes the oldest brother, and Samuel the youngest brother.

## Tombstones help

The tombstones said that the Lundborgs were born in Tumberg, Västergötland. A check of the birth records and HFL in Tumberg confirmed that these Lundborgs in the West Union Cemetery were the ones who had survived the massacre and that the three Lundborg brothers who died at the Broberg cabin were part of this family. Census records from 1870 and later confirmed that Samuel and Johannes lived in Carver County near the West Union Church. A look through the West Union Lutheran Church 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book showed that they both had been active in that congregation. There were even pictures of them in the book.

A further study of the 1870 census showed that Johannes and his wife Christina were the parents of August Lundborg who later married Anna Wahlstrom. I had found the family tie. Now I set out to find out a little more about these Lundborgs.

## Origins in Sweden

In the Tumberg records we find the family living at Lund Västergården. The parents were Andreas Larsson, b. 28 Feb. 1812, and Lena Johansdotter, b. 11 Oct. 1810. The children listed were: Johannes, b. 1832; Anders Petter, b. 1837; Gustaf, b. 1839;



*Kullings-Skövde church, which was also used by the people of Tumberg.*



*Membership records for the Anders Peter Broberg family, from the records of the Lebanon Lutheran Church.*

Lars, b. 1840; Sara, b. 1842; Johanna, b. 1848; and Samuel, b. 1853.

In 1858 three of the Lundborg brothers, Johannes, Anders Petter, and Lars, immigrated to Minnesota. In 1860 they claimed land by West Lake at the western edge of Monongalia County (now northern Kandiyohi County). The following year their parents, Andreas Larsson and Lena Johansdotter, brothers Gustaf and Samuel, and sister Johanna left Tumberg and came to the brothers' homestead near West Lake in Monongalia County, Minnesota. Also in 1861 two brothers, Anders Petter and Daniel Petter Broberg, and their families emigrated from Södra Härene, Älvsborg län. Södra Härene is close to Tumberg, and the families probably knew each other in Sweden. The Broberg brothers each claimed 80 acres of land about two miles west of the Lundborgs just over the line in what is today Swift County. Two other families from this same area in Sweden also settled in this area; they were the Sven Öman and Olle Larsson families. All the families became members of the Norway Lake parish which had been founded in 1859. There was no church building so services were held in homes.

## Indians were coming

On Wednesday, August 20, 1862, Pastor Andrew Jackson was holding a morning service at the Lundborg

home when young Peter Broberg (age 7) ran up and said that Indians were at the Broberg cabins and were bothering the children who had been left at home. This was not cause for great alarm but Anders Petter Broberg and four of the Lundborg brothers started for the Brobergs by taking a shortcut through the woods. Daniel Broberg took the women and children in the oxcart via the road. The Lundborgs did not take their guns with them as Pastor Jackson advised them so as to not incite the Indians. Father Andreas Lundborg forever after regretted that they had not taken their guns. He took his gun and also headed to the Broberg cabins.

When Anders Petter and the Lundborgs arrived at the cabin, they found that they knew all of these Indians and started talking to them. All of a sudden the Indians opened fire, killing Anders Petter Broberg, his brother-in-law Johannes Nilsson, Anders, Gustav, and Lars Lundborg, and four small children. The youngest Lundborg brother, Samuel, was shot; he pretended to be dead even when the Indians went through his pockets and beat him with their guns. He survived.

Andreas Lundborg arrived on the scene with his gun, but was badly outnumbered and fled. The Indians fired at him, but they did not hit him. They stopped chasing and shooting



Carver Church, New London, Kandiyohi Co., Minnesota. Microfilm R74 from Swenson Center.

shores of Norway Lake. On Thursday Johannes and some of the others returned to the Broberg cabin to bury the dead, but there were too many Indians around, and they returned to the survivors hiding in the grass. That evening they gathered with other settlers on an island in Norway Lake to spend the night; this island is to this day called Isle of Refuge. On Friday the survivors returned to bury the dead. Sam was not there; he had revived and crawled into the cellar for the night and then hid in the woods. He eventually was found by the Öman family. The people on the island had intended to leave on Friday, but there were too many Indians around and they returned to the island for one more night. On Saturday a group of 62 settlers set off for St Cloud going by way of Paynesville. These people stayed in the St Cloud area and then Anoka for a short time. The Brobergs and Lundborgs went to the Carver area where they had relatives.

## Many victims

About twenty members of Pastor Jackson's parishes were killed. Ten counties in Minnesota were emptied of white people and people in another eight counties were attacked. The refugees headed east; many of the Swedes went to Carver County and Goodhue County and remained there until it was safe to return in about three years.

Andreas Lundborg and his wife returned to the West Lake area later; she died there in 1870, and he died in the West Union area in 1899. Their daughter, Johanna, married Erik Paulson and lived in the Norway Lake area. Johannes and Samuel raised their families in the West Union area. Little Peter Broberg lived with the Lundborgs until after Christmas. Then he lived with John Ahlin in the West Union area until 1865 when Anna Stina Broberg married John Peterson (also a survivor of the massacre) in Carver. They returned to live in the Norway Lake area. Peter Broberg lived with them until he was 14 and then he

at him as Daniel Broberg came near. Daniel Broberg was shot and killed. The Broberg wives and children leaped from the wagon and ran for their lives. All were killed except one child from each family: Peter from the D.P. Broberg family and Anna Stina from the A. P. Broberg family.

## Hiding in the cellar

Peter Broberg ran to the home of Sven Öman. He and this family hid under the trap door in the floor while

the Indians rummaged through the house. The Indians did not discover them, and later at night these people along with the other settlers hid in the woods and grassy areas. Andreas Lundborg had grabbed Anna Stina and ran towards his cabin; they and other members of the Lundborg family hid in the grass nearby their cabin. Johannes Lundborg ran to warn Pastor Andrew Jackson who was holding afternoon services at the home of Thomas Osmundson on the



Map of the area where the Massacre took place. From "A Church is planted," by Emeroy Johnson, (1948).

lived with Lars Larsson in the town of New London where he made his home for the rest of his life.

## Monument in their memory

The remains of the 13 people killed at West Lake were removed June 20, 1891, from the scene of the massacre and buried in the cemetery at Lebanon Lutheran Church in New London. The State of Minnesota erected a monument at the cemetery August 20, 1891, in remembrance of the massacre.

## The memory lives

In 1927 the descendents of the survivors; Peter Broberg, Anna Stina Broberg Peterson, the two Lundborg brothers, and their sister Johanna Lundborg Paulson, and others who lived in the area of West Lake (now called Monson Lake) formed an organization known as the *Monson Lake Memorial Association* which met yearly for a number of years at the site of the massacre. In 1937 a State Memorial Park was established at this place.

A 1980 meeting included two Swedish descendents of one of Anders Petter and Daniel Petter Broberg's siblings who had remained in Sweden. The day's events included visiting the various Kandiyohi County sites, some of which have been designated historical sites from the uprising: the Lundborg cabin, the site of the Broberg cabins, the monument at the cemetery, the home of Anna Stina Broberg and John Peterson, past the Isle of Refuge, and the Guri Endreson Memorial Shrine (another good story).

The State of Minnesota and several counties have created monuments, parks, interpretive centers, and historical markers which tell the story of this uprising. Throughout southwest and west central Minnesota, along the Minnesota River from Fort Snelling to Big Stone Lake and some miles north and south of the river are signs of this chapter in Minnesota history. I have been to some of these places, but now that I have

discovered the family ties, I think that I will have to visit these places again and stop at some of the others.

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Swedish church records from the following parishes: Södra Härene, Älvsborg län, Kullings-Skövde, Älvsborg län, Larv, Skaraborg län, Tumberg, Älvsborg län, and Herrljunga pastorat, Älvsborg län.

United States Federal Censuses 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930. Ancestry.com and NARA – Chicago branch.



The monument at New London, MN.  
(Photo: Earl Leaf.)

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# *A memory of Nils William Olsson*

This story about Nils William goes back many years. The Olsson family and my wife's parents met in the early '20's in Pennsylvania. The family friendship continued for many years.

My contact with the family came in 1941 when Nils's brother Karl was a Sunday School teacher at the Englewood Mission Covenant Church in Chicago.

Fast forward to 1946. After my marriage to Iris Swensson in '46, we were looking for a place to live near the campus of the Univ. of Chicago. In '47 – our first was born in June – Nils and Dagmar offered to rent us a one-room basement apartment at their home on Woodlawn Avenue, two blocks from the campus. We jumped at it. Greg and Chris were infants.

Our awakening to our Swedish heritage came near Christmas of that year. Karna came down the steps to our place, costumed as St. Lucia, wearing a crown with candles (real live ones) and carrying a plate of *julebullar*. We moved out about a year later when veterans' housing became available on campus.

But, Nils had kindled my interest in genealogy. All my efforts through family contacts had failed. No one knew anything. In the early '70's a cousin found Grandpa Anderson's immigration paper. I sent it to Nils, and he translated the document. I had a start.

Our first visit to Sweden was in 1978 to visit Iris's family. We started our quest. First to the Swedish Emigrant Institute, Växjö. We found the

early church documents of the Englewood church, Chicago, and my grandma's entry as a new member and immigrant. It was a thrill to see Nils's name commemorating him as Swedish American of the Year.

Subsequent visits have been to the Uppsala and Vadstena archives. Since that time, Nils William was my consultant and mentor. He was unselfish in his guidance. We are saddened by his death but feel an everlasting debt to how he helped us to reconnect to our families in Sweden.

*Robert P. Anderson  
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*Mariann Tiblin, Eric Lund, and Kerstin Lane are studying Nils William Olsson's meticulous scrapbooks from the 1948 Swedish Pioneer Centennial, now archived in the Swenson Center. October 2007.*



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A: On the SVAR web site, look for the search window for Shortcuts – Scanned documents – Church records.

Q: My great grandfather was an officer in the army around 1870, where can I find a picture of him?

A: On the SVAR website, look for the search window for Shortcuts – Databases, and then for Image databases – *Krigsarkivet*.

Q: Where can I buy the 1900 Swedish Census in English on a CD?

A: On the SVAR web site, look for the Bookshop.

Q: My ancestors lived in Kisa parish in Östergötland. Where can I find documents before 1700 for that parish?

A: The Tax census (*mantalslängder*) could be a choice. Go to Shortcuts – Scanned documents, and click on Tax census, and then chose Östergötland county and the year you want. When the document opens you will find a link in the righthand margin with the parish names. Click on Kisa and the document opens at the start of the section for Kisa.

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# “The Honorable Exception”: Elder Anders Blomberg

## From Janssonist Apostle to Shaker Elder and Recruiter

BY JOHN NORTON



The Shakers were one of the many utopian sects that flourished in the 1800s. They had in 1807 founded a community in Pleasant Hill, Mercer county, Kentucky.

In 1848 they were visited by two of the Janssonists, Anders (Andrew) Blomberg and Olof Stoneberg. They had journeyed south from Illinois, via New Harmony, Indiana, as part of an organized effort to study American utopias, and establish relationships where possible.

They wrote back to their leader Erik Jansson on 3 April 1848, saying, in part “...When we came to Louisville, Kentucky, it was like we had come into another kingdom. There are nearly forty thousand inhabitants. There, we found five men from Sweden and one woman, and they were very hot against us in the beginning, especially since they had heard that it was we who were the ones that had burned books in Sweden...when we gave them our explanation, they thought it over and (found) we were not crazy.

“One said he would like to live among us, and we did not deny him, but we must be of the same faith. He said he would write you. His name is George H. Collini. He was storekeeper with Troline at Ovanåker in 1837-1838... And now we are among a colony they call Shakers. They are about 300 men and women, and they have all things in common, and work as they are able. It is forty years since they began to settle here, and they are very fine people in nature, well-meaning and friendly. They have both land and fine buildings and keep everything in fine or-

der, and they do everything for themselves. They believe the second coming of Christ is manifested in them, and they believe the whole world is in darkness, but only they have the true light and shall build the New Jerusalem, and can forgive sins in Christ’s place... and that they shall live perfectly holy, like Christ Jesus, for he that is born of God cannot sin, and all other denominations in the world they call “antichrist,” and they say that from the time the followers of the apostles took part in darkness, the darkness has remained, and they receive us like brothers.”

### A move from Bishop Hill

On 18 June 1855 Anders Blomberg, by then the self-taught colony “doctor,” left Bishop Hill, settling in Pleasant Hill with his wife and two of their daughters. He was quickly followed on 27 July 1855 by six other new settlers from Bishop Hill, including the four times-widowed Anna Sophia Pollock Jansson, last wife of colony founder Erik Jansson, and her family.

The connections between Bishop Hill and Pleasant Hill remained very good the following years, but in 1858 there was a decided cooling of relations, probably over the celibacy controversy in Bishop Hill, where the inhabitants had decided to abandon that principle. In 1860 the Bishop Hill colony was dissolved and lands and other assets distributed, not without many problems, between the former colonists.

Despite the Bishop Hill Colony’s failure and desertions, exchange

between the communities continued. On 18 July 1864, a Pleasant Hill journal entry noted that “Mary Jacobs moved from the North to the West Family, and Louisa Hoard (Lovisa Hård af Segerstad) left the North Family to Bishop Hill, IL, from whence she came...” A 28 July entry notes “... The remainder of the Swede Lindeleaf (Lindelöv?) family went to the world, Anna and Louisa from the Center Family, and their mother Charlotte – from the West Lot. The Swedes, with few honorable exceptions, have proved failures.” But the Swedish Shaker experiment was not yet over.

### An honorable exception

One of those “honorable exceptions” was former Janssonist apostle and self-taught doctor, now a Shaker elder, Anders (Andrew) Blomberg.

On 28 October 1866, during a “bark bread” famine year in Sweden, Pleasant Hill journals record a letter from Meyer(?) Olof Olson in Dalarna, Sweden, saying, “Come over and help us...there was a company there of 53 in number – including old and young – who had received faith by their epistolary correspondence with this society, and they now want somebody to come from here and see them and help them.” That “somebody” became West Lot Elder Andrew (Anders) Blomberg, himself a native of Dalarna, who set out alone a month later, on 28 November 1866, after having been duly commissioned, and funded with \$555.00, of which \$100.00 came from the Swedish West Lot family itself.

A 10 February 1867 journal entry

reported Anders Blomberg had written from Stockholm "... that his brother Peter and wife of that City had confessed their sins, and the prospect was that many others there would follow their example. Good news for Zion." Thus began the Pleasant Hill Shakers' ambitious foreign recruiting effort.

## Anders Blomberg goes to Sweden

A Pleasant Hill journal entry of 4 August 1867 noted Blomberg had "...returned home from a preaching tour in Sweden, and brought one brother and seven visitors with him, and reports about 110, including children, who have joined the Shakers in that land; but most of them have not the means to pay the expenses of emigration to America & hence they remain there for the present. This (Swedish Lutheran) Priesthood was bitterly opposed to the doctrine of celibacy & the Second appearing of Christ in Mother (Ann

...& began to wage persecution before he left for home." Four months later, on 25 December 1867, Pleasant Hill "... made a donation to the poor, and sent \$300.00 to the Believers in Sweden."

## Anders Blomberg's Swedish background

Elder Blomberg had planted Shaker seeds in Sweden. But they yielded a mixed harvest. A look at his background explains why.<sup>1</sup>

He was born 6 March 1818 at Myggsjö in Orsa Finnmark. He soon lost his father. His mother took him to Västerås, where he was confirmed and became an apprentice tailor. After five years, he was apprenticed to Falun, where he apparently developed a bad drinking habit. But, he came into contact with the "readers" (*läsare*) of that region, and joined a temperance society. After being licensed in his trade in 1840, he was appointed parish tailor at Färnäs near Mora, but also began working

as a lay preacher, holding illegal "conventicles." These soon came to the unfavorable attention of local clergy and sheriffs. He moved to Alfta, Hälsingland, one of the breeding grounds of the new Erik Janssonist movement. By February 1845 he had become a Janssonist apostle, returning home to preach in Dalarna.

The parish vicar at Mora, P.G. Svedelius brought him before the church council for hearing on his illegal preaching. He was dismissed as parish tailor for his religious beliefs. His case was then turned over to Crown authorities. Crown bailiff Robsahm felt Blomberg was insane, and summoned him to the Falun Chancery. He was jailed, and examined by both the County Governor and secretary, then brought to hearing before the Mora District Court on 8 December 1845, where he verbally abused both the clergy and Martin Luther. The county attorney forwarded court minutes to the Royal Sanity Board (*Sundhetskollegium*), which on 3 May 1846, found him



Bishop Hill, Bishop Hill Street, Oct. 2007.

insane in respect to religion, and recommended that he be institutionalized as a danger to the public. He was sent to the Central Mental Hospital in Uppsala after attempting to escape from jail. But by that summer, he was freed on his wife's appeal, and on 20 July 1846, received permission to emigrate with his family. They joined a large party of 164 Janssonists, including some 25 from Dalarna, emigrating aboard the *Solide* of Gävle, arriving New York on 14 October 1846.<sup>2</sup> His first visit to Pleasant Hill came just 16 months later, as a Janssonist "apostle." He left his post as self-taught Bishop Hill Colony doctor, and moved to Pleasant Hill on 18 June 1855, followed on 27 October by his daughter Sofia, Catherine Donaldson(?) (Carin/Katarina Danielsdotter?) and another Bishop Hill woman.<sup>3</sup>

By June of 1856, he felt firm enough in his new Shaker faith to author the Shaker song, "Friendly Exhortation," recorded in Sister Betsy Spaulding's book of 320 songs written 1855-58 in Pleasant Hill. It's second verse asked "... all ye simple hearted, Who know your Mother's Name, Come praise the great redeemer, Who made us free from shame. Show then to souls distressed, This new and living way, How they may find salvation, That will forever stay."

He appealed to many "simple hearted" in Dalarna during his 1866 visit. But others were hostile, remembering his Erik Janssonist past. After a series of five meetings at Hemus, Östnor, Öna, Färnäs<sup>4</sup>, and Garsås, he left for the Älvdalen valley on 15 March. There he won constable Säl Per Olsson of Holen, who joined his preaching efforts. Local clergyman C. J. Thunman, who had been forewarned, called a church council meeting on 31 March, and forbade "doctor" Blomberg (as he then called himself) from preaching. The warning was enforced by sheriff C.U. Säfvenström during a meeting at a nearby Baptist chapel. The sheriff ordered Blomberg to leave, and his host Säl Per drove him south, out of town. Both apparently soon departed

Sweden for Pleasant Hill. But Säl Per Olsson returned to his home area in the next year, recruiting some 63 emigrants for Pleasant Hill, who departed in 1868-69, some even illegally.

Initially, the experience of the new immigrants was positive. One, Tenn Margaret Larsson of Näset, who arrived in November 1869, wrote about it later, after returning home to Sweden "... The place is well-situated, as its name indicates, on a beautiful height, with a fine view in all directions. When the party approached, Blomberg came out with another of the Elders, George (Runyon?), and rode with us, asking if we were well, after which they rode ahead, probably to tell of our arrival. When we got there, we were welcomed, and were treated to fine food in a great room. The colony consisted of five large farms, one called North Family, a West Family, a Center Family, a Church Family, and a West Lot. We were to live at West Lot, where there already were many Swedes who had come from Stockholm at the same time as Blomberg. In Pleasant Hill, it was quite nice, though it was winter when we were there, we saw no shortages on the farms, and no one needed to work too hard. But according to Shaker beliefs, they must live as siblings, no one should own anything personally, everything was owned in common. There were other colonies in the area of the same sect. One was called Lebanon."<sup>5</sup>

Anders Blomberg stayed at Pleasant Hill, as one of the "honorable exceptions."<sup>6</sup> He made at least one more trip to Bishop Hill, where the *Galva News* of 17 February 1881 reported he had preached at the Old Colony Church the previous Sunday, as a guest of former colonist Jonas Malmgren.

In his later years, Elder Anders became ill. About ten days before his death on 26 December 1889, he was found lying nearly senseless in a field outside Pleasant Hill. When asked if he wasn't afraid of wild hogs, he answered that he "...would get to heaven, whether or not the hogs ate him!"<sup>7</sup> I suspect he made it!

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> See Swedish historian Emil Herlenius's article series "Anders Blomberg, Parish Tailor, Preacher and Emigrant" in the Swedish newspaper *Falu-Kuriren* 1932-33, later republished in the provincial genealogical society's *Dalfolk* nr. 2 1994.

Local historian Ewert Åhs also published excerpts of letters from the Älvdalen emigrants under the title "With Älvdal People Among the Shakers in America," in *Skansvaktens, Elfdalens hembygdsförenings midsommartidning*, nr. 39 1954. Translated manuscript at the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center at Augustana College, Rock Island, IL; the Bishop Hill Heritage Association Archives, Bishop Hill, IL; Pleasant Hill; and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Springfield, IL.

<sup>2</sup> Nils William Olsson, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in New York 1820-1850*, Chicago, Swedish Pioneer Historical Society, 1967, pp. 108-118.

<sup>3</sup> Pleasant Hill chroniclers Thomas D. Clark and F. Gerald Ham, in their book *Pleasant Hill and Its Shakers*, Pleasant Hill, 1996, assume B. Dunlavy and George Runyon converted Anders during their 15-27 October 1855 trip from Pleasant Hill to Bishop Hill. However, Anders had already moved to Pleasant Hill almost four months earlier.

<sup>4</sup> Three Erik Janssonist families, a total of 17 persons, emigrated from Färnäs in 1846 with a large group from the Falun-Malung area, bound for Bishop Hill. See Nils William Olsson, op. cit. pp. 83-85.

<sup>5</sup> Ewert Åhs, op. cit., translated manuscript pp. 7-8.

<sup>6</sup> See roster of Swedish immigrants to Pleasant Hill, compiled from Shaker records by archivist L. Curry. Filed at Pleasant Hill Archives and Bishop Hill Heritage Association Archives, Bishop Hill, IL 61419.

<sup>7</sup> See Emil Herlenius, op. cit. Translated transcription, p. 10.

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# Handwriting Example XV

1782		
<p>                     27 Jan. Lyftat följande gången för Carl Jönsson                      från Gården nr 100 i Antecknings församling                      Västmanlands län. Lyftat 2/31 mars.                 </p>		Carl
<p>                     14 Feb. Lyftat följande gången för David Jönsson                      från Åkeri församling och Hans och Greta                      från Åkeri församling. Lyftat 2/31 mars.                      Lyftat 2/31 mars i Philipstad.                 </p>		Ande
<p>                     28 Feb. Lyftat följande gången för Gustaf Jönsson                      från Åkeri församling och Hans och Greta                      från Åkeri församling. Lyftat 2/31 mars.                      Lyftat 2/31 mars i Philipstad.                 </p>		Olof
<p>                     26 Augusti. Lyftat följande gången för David                      Jönsson från Gården nr 100 i Antecknings församling                      Västmanlands län. Lyftat 2/31 mars.                      Lyftat 2/31 mars i Philipstad.                 </p>		Lars
<p>                     27 Okt. Lyftat följande gången för Gustaf                      Jönsson från Åkeri församling. Lyftat 2/31 mars.                      Lyftat 2/31 mars i Philipstad.                 </p>		Lars

This is a *Lysnings-och vigselbok* (banns and marriages book) from Nordmark in Värmland.

A couple usually married in the bride's home parish. When a couple wanted to marry they had to go and see the local clergyman and he would then write the banns (*lysning*) on a

sheet of stamped paper, and collect a fee for this. The amount varied according to the finances of the couple. The banns were read in church for three Sundays in a row, and if anyone was opposed to this marriage, this was the time to tell the clergyman. If one or both of the

parties involved had been married before, then there is often a note that the probate of the deceased husband/wife had been shown to the clergyman and all estate matters were completed.

*The solution to the handwriting is on p. 22.*

# News from the Swenson Center

## The 2007 Conference and 25th Anniversary

During the middle of October 2007 I had the opportunity to visit the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center in Rock Island, Illinois. I was able to spend some time doing research in the Swedish-American church records and newspapers.

At the end of the week I was able to take part of the seminar "Friends and neighbors? Swedes and Norwegians in the United States," organized by the Swenson Center. This seminar had attracted a lot of people, more than 120 individuals had registered for it, many more than for any previous seminar. The Swedish-American Historical Society was also one of the organizers.

The first part of the seminar was a lecture on Friday evening, the O. Frithiof Ander Lecture in Immigration History. Dr. Thomas Treadway, President Emeritus of Augustana College, talked about "Pinching Pennies in the Provinces: The Mid-Century Finances of an Immigrant College," which mainly was the story of how Augustana survived during World War II and the 1950s.

Early next morning Professor H. Arnold Barton from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Ill., opened the morning session with "Norwegians and Swedes in America: Some comparisons," followed by a number of interesting lectures by Odd Lovoll from St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., Terje Leiren from University of Washington, Seattle, and Jørn Brøndal from the University of Southern Denmark in Odense, Denmark.

After a coffee break it was time for Mark Granquist, from Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., and Ingeborg Kongslien from the University of Oslo, Norway, to give their views on the interaction between Swedes and Norwegians.

By then it was time for a nice

buffet lunch and you could hear from the sound level that many found old friends and visited with them. A number of people formed a little SAG corner and talked about old times in Salt Lake City.

The last session of this educational day comprised three more lectures. These were held by Philip Anderson of North Park University, Chicago, Byron Nordstrom of Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn., and Ann Legried of University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg, Missouri.

Afterwards concluding comments were given by Larry E. Scott of Augustana College and by Dag Blanck, Director of Swenson Center.

As a member of the audience, I found many things interesting, like Byron Nordstrom's talk about the Swedes and Norwegians in Willmar, Minn., and Ann Legried's about the Orphan Asylums, but some of the subjects of the lectures were a bit too

scholarly, and also difficult to hear, due to the poor acoustics in Wallenberg Hall.

It would also have been fun if someone had given a lecture on the Ole, Lena, and Sven jokes, as they might give another picture on how Swedes regarded their Norwegian neighbors, and vice versa.

It is to be hoped that the lectures will be published in the not too distant future, so both those in the audience and those who could not attend, can take part of all this information.

In the evening buses took the conference attendees to Steventon's Restaurant in LeClaire, Iowa, for the Anniversary Dinner to celebrate the Swenson Center's 25th year.

An important part of the evening was the very excellent food, and nice companions at the table, some old friends, and some new ones too.

*Elisabeth Thorsell*



*Dr. Thomas Treadway, president emeritus of Augustana College, was one of the speakers. (Photo by Christina Johansson).*



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# Bits & Pieces



## Changes at the American Swedish Institute

The American Swedish Institute (ASI) in Minneapolis is in a process of rethinking its mission.

Some of the results of this was the closure on 1 September 2007 of the library and archives. The archivist Marita Karlisch left her job at the same time.

The local Swedish-American genealogists are not happy about this, and are considering moving their meetings elsewhere.

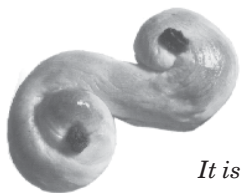
## The Kinship Center in Karlstad is moving

The Kinship Center (*Emigrantregistret*) in Karlstad, Sweden, has for some years been housed in the same building as the Värmland Regional Archives (*Värmlandsarkiv*) in a not so central area of the city, which has made it difficult for many to find the Center. Now they will be moving to larger and very central facilities in the county governor's mansion by the *Stortorget* (Main Square) in Karlstad. The Kinship Center is also functioning as the Swedish office for Swedish Council of America.

The director, Erik Gustavson, says that the move also will enhance the possibilities for research, as many collections that have been in boxes for years now can be unpacked and used more easily.

The move will take place during the spring of 2008.

(*The Bridge* 2007/3)



*It is Lussekat time!*

## Genealogy Days 2008

The annual Swedish Genealogy Days (*Släktforskardagarna*) in 2008 will take place in the city of Malmö. During the weekend of 30–31st August there will be exhibitions, lectures, demonstrations of computer program and much more, open to the public and free entrance.

If you are planning a trip to Sweden at that time, do plan to join the many genealogists that are coming to Malmö.

[www.malmo2008.se/enindex.htm](http://www.malmo2008.se/enindex.htm)

## Cook County records to go online

In an article in the *Chicago Tribune* the Cook County clerk David Orr is cited as saying that at some time in January 2008 genealogists will be able to search online for copies of birth and death certificates and marriage licences.

The web site will be the home for the county's 24 million vital records. Records date back as far as 1871, as earlier records were destroyed in the big Chicago fire that year.

The scanning and indexing of all the records was completed in June, and the county is uploading about a million records each week, a process that should be finished by the end of the year.

The web site will allow searches by name, and once a proper person is found, the researcher will have to pay a fee to download the document and print it out on their own computer. It is not mentioned how much that fee is going to be. Certified copies will not be available online.

The records will be birth certificates 75 years or older, death certificates 20 years or older, and marriage certificates 50 years or older.

(*Chicago Tribune* 7 Sep. 2007)

## Ancestry.com has a Swedish site

During the fall Ancestry has opened a Swedish-language site at

[www.ancestry.se](http://www.ancestry.se) where you can search some Swedish databases, like the Passenger lists (same as *Emigranten Populär*) and church records for Värmland. The list says Värmland but it also contains records from Älvsborg, Skaraborg, and Göteborg och Bohus län, which makes your SAG editor a bit doubtful about their competence to handle Swedish records. I have not been able to see the quality of the pictures of the church records as you have to have a World Deluxe subscription to see them, which I don't have.

## Swedish Council of America has a new logo and a new slogan



At the top is the three Swedish crowns and the three diamonds at the bottom symbolize the United States, Canada, and Sweden.

## Scandinavian Seminar works with SCA

Scandinavian Seminar is an organization that offers educational travel for everyone, regardless of age. Their trips are a mixture of adventure and discovery and an introduction to Scandinavian culture. They have now become a formal partner of the Swedish Council of America.

[www.scandinavianseminar.org](http://www.scandinavianseminar.org)



# A Family from Östra Husby, Östergötland



*The Sven Alfred Anderson family of Lund, Evansville, Douglas County, Minnesota. From left, standing: Alma (b. 1896), Phoebe (b. 1895), Ester, (b. 1888), Frida (b. 1893), and Ernst (b. 1889). Sitting: Sven Alfred, Elizabeth (b. 1892), and Mathilda Andersdotter. Photo from about 1905.*

On 19 May 1855 a daughter was born on the farm Ormestad in Östra Husby. Her name was Mathilda Helena and her parents were the farm owner Anders Olofsson and his wife Inga Stina Nilsdotter. Her family was quite well-to-do, the descendants of a long line of farm owners.

On her 32<sup>nd</sup> birthday, 19 May 1887, she married Sven Alfred Svensson, a former farmhand at a neighboring farm. Two weeks after their marriage

they immigrated to North America. Sven Alfred had visited the U.S. some years before, and had found a farm that he could rent. This farm was situated in Douglas County, Minn. After a few years the Svenssons bought some land near Evansville, also in Douglas County, where they lived until 1920, when daughter Ester and her family took over the farm.

Sven Alfred and Mathilda then

bought a house in Evansville, where they lived with their other daughter Elizabeth. Sven Alfred died in 1921 and Mathilda Helena in 1936. In her obituary one can read "The Lord has demanded it profitable to call home one of his loved ones, Mrs. Mathilda Swenson, who passed to the great beyond Saturday morning, July 18, at the age of 81 years and two months. She was born in Östergötland, Sweden, where she grew to

womanhood. After her marriage to S. A. Swenson they immigrated to America and settled in this community, which always remained her home." At her funeral they sang *Tryggare kan ingen vara* (Children of the heavenly father), one of Mathilda's favorites."

The family story says that Mathilda's mother took the emigration of her daughter so hard that she died in a year. The farms owned by Mathilda's family are still owned by relatives.

Mathilda and Sven's daughter Elizabeth was trained as a teacher, and started her career in a one-room school in the rural area and retired as the principal of Evansville High School.

One of Mathilda and Sven Alfred's descendants is Dr. Ross Anderson, who lives in Minnesota with his family. He is my father's 3<sup>rd</sup> cousin, and came here in 1993 with his wife Carol and visited me. We could then show them Mathilda's home in Ormestad and the area where she had lived prior to her immigration.

## Editor's addition:

Mathilda Helena emigrated 27 May 1887 from Oklunda in Östra Husby, where she had lived with her parents. Her groom, Sven Alfred Svensson, born 17 October 1855 in Jonsberg, (Östg.), was at home for a visit to get married, as he had emigrated already on 17 March 1882, also from Oklunda village. Mathilda Helena's parents were Anders Olofsson, born 23 March 1807 in Östra Husby, died at Oklunda 7 June 1882, and his wife Inga Stina Nilsson, born 18 October 1815 in Östra Husby, died 11 April 1888 at Oklunda.

The Swenson family was enumerated in the 1900 Federal Census on 6 June 1900 in the township of Lund in Douglas County, Minnesota. The father is indexed as Swan Swenson.

In 1920 they had moved to Evansville and still had three daughters at home: Elizabeth, a teacher in a rural school; Freda [Frida], a dressmaker, and Phoebe, who had no occupation listed.

In 1930 Elizabeth has rented a room in Evansville. Her mother and sister Phoebe lived in a little house there.

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In 1993, Ross Anderson, a descendant of Sven Alfred and Mathilda came to Östergötland for a visit. Standing, from left: Ross Anderson, Anders and Johan Köhler, Gunnar Vadman, Torsten Wiklöf, and Gösta Vadman. Sitting: Carol Anderson, Maud Wiklöf, Brita Wiklöf, and Maria Vadman. The house is the one Mathilda was born in at Ormestad, now renovated.

## The John Ericsson Day

Every year the *John Ericsson Day* is celebrated in the town of Filipstad in eastern Värmland. The reason is that the inventor was born in the village of Långban, which these days belongs to the Filipstad *kommun*. The date for this event is always on the Sunday closest to 31 July, his birthday.

The day usually start with a ceremony at his mausoleum in the cemetery, when wreaths are placed there and traditional songs sung.

Then in the afternoon there is pub-

lic entertainment in a park near the lake *Daglösen* in the middle of the town, which attracts a crowd, both local people and some prominent public figures. This year one could see both the present Swedish-American of the Year, E. Jan Hartman, and a former one, Agneta Nilsson. Elise Peters of Swedish American Council could also be found watching the big bang that came after speeches and music: the yearly re-enactment of the historic battle between the

*Monitor* and the *Merrimac*. This takes place on the *Daglösen*, as can be seen on the cover of this issue of SAG.

With the help of the Swedish Army there are many faked cannon shots, water is cascading over the audience, and every one has a good time. Finally *Monitor* wins the battle, and *Merrimac* tries to escape, but is apprehended and put in storage for next year.

*Elisabeth Thorsell*

# Swedes in Hollywood before World War II

**Greta Garbo was not the only Swedish film actress who felt the lure of Hollywood**

BY AGNIESZKA STASIEWICZ

The history of the early American cinema cannot be separated from the history of immigration to the U.S. What would American film have been like without Charlie Chaplin, Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo, or Pola Negri? Many actors and directors came to the U.S. looking for fame and fortune and the best of them were offered profitable contracts. Step by step the brightest cinema stars of the world concentrated in Hollywood.

The five biggest movie companies, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Twentieth Century Fox, RKO, Warner Bros, and Paramount were created there. In the 1920s, 75,000 people – actors, directors, producers, technicians, critics, fashion designers, and many others – were employed there. The greatest scenes of the world were recorded there as well. Moreover, in the first years of the twentieth century the U.S. imported a significant number of foreign films, many of which were from Sweden.

After 1923 Hollywood entered a period of uninterrupted prosperity. New, astonishing phenomena appeared: uncommonly high salaries for movie stars, enormous sums spent on construction of sceneries, etc. Considering all this, it is hardly surprising that America attracted both beginners and the most brilliant actors of the time. Many of them were of Swedish origin.

This article refers to the period before World War II. It cannot be forgotten, though, that after the war Swedes did not disappear from the American screen. It is enough to recall such movie stars as Ingrid Bergman, Max von Sydow, Bibi Andersson, or Peter Stormare to reassure us that the immigrants of the first decades of the twentieth century found many remarkable successors.

## Pioneers

Swedes came to Hollywood early enough to take part in the process of the American film industry's creation practically from the time of its birth. The first actress of Swedish origin who appeared there at the dawn of the twentieth century was *Linda Johnson Arvidson Griffith* (1884–1949), born in the U.S. Her first steps in the film industry were guided by the famous American Biograph Company. In 1906 she married the well-known director David Wark Griffith. Beginning in 1907 Arvidsson played in over 150 productions. Her most recognized role was Hester in *The Scarlet Letter* (1913), which was described by the English magazine *The Bioscope* as “extraordinary subtle and deeply moving.” Linda Arvidson contributed to the movie industry also as an author. Her memoir about the people of Hollywood of that time, *When the Movies Were Young* (1925),



*Anna Q. Nilsson (1888–1974).*

contained lots of valuable, although not always objective, information.

The significant presence of Swedes in American cinema began in 1911 when *Anna Q. Nilsson* (1888 – 1974) starred in *Molly Pitcher*. From then on she was regarded as one of the leading actresses in the silent cinema. Nilsson came to America as a teenager in 1907. At first she worked as a nurse, but soon became a popular model. Then her beauty was noticed by film producers. Already in her first movie, Nilsson revealed herself not only as a beautiful woman but also as a very gifted actress and she soon became famous, mostly for her roles in westerns and melodramas.

Unfortunately, her career was seriously shaken by a one-year pause she had to take after a serious horse accident. After treatment in Sweden and Austria, Nilsson came back on the screen in *Babe Comes Home* (1927). But with the dawn of the sound film Nilsson's fame faded. She was offered only minor parts such as a very short scene in *Sunset Boulevard* (1950) when she played herself as the movie star of yesterday. She retired in California.

In her finest days Nilsson performed in, among the others, *Seven Keys to Baldpate* (1917), *The Luck of the Irish* (1920), *The Lotus Eater* (1921), *The Top of the World* (1925), and *Babe Comes Home*. She also played a minor role in *An American in Paris* (1951). Anna Q. Nilsson was the first Swedish actress in Hollywood who achieved real stardom and whose name appears on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Among the Swedish pioneer actors in American film industry one of the brightest stars was *Warner Oland* (1879–1938). He became an expert in playing characters from the Orient, obtaining the desired look by contracting eyelid muscles and brushing the ends of his eyebrows up and his moustache down. To that ability he owed the role of a Chinese detective, *Charlie Chan*, which was offered to him by Twentieth Century Fox. This role brought him fame and a large group of admirers, not only



Warner Oland (1879–1938).

in the U.S. but also in China and Japan. The films starring Oland as Chan are considered an important step in cinema history as the longest and most popular series of feature-length films of those times.

Before creating the character of Chan, Oland performed in the well-known *The Jazz Singer* (1927). In the thirties he played in *Shanghai Express* (1932) and *The Painted Veil* (1934) with, respectively, Marlene Dietrich and Greta Garbo. In 1937 Oland unexpectedly resigned from his work, returned to Sweden, and died a year later.

### Victor Sjöström – the Swedish film school in Hollywood.

*Victor Sjöström* (1879 – 1960) was a highly talented director and one of the creators of Swedish movie industry; in America he is known as *Victor Seastrom*.

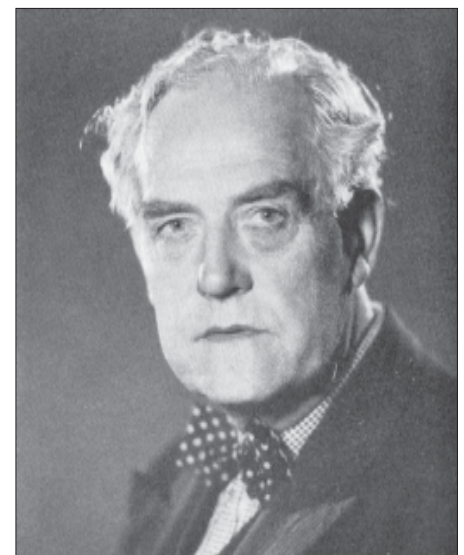
In the first decades of the twentieth century Scandinavian films were very popular in the U.S. American audiences were thrilled to experience their melancholic atmosphere, exoticism, spellbinding folklore, and the subtle play of light and semitones. These features were clearly visible in the works of Victor Seastrom. He treated film as a branch of culture close to poetry and in this spirit he created them, making nature one of the most important “characters” and passionately introducing mystical and supernatural phenomena into his works. These features, typical for Swedish film of that time, are also visible in his American works.

In 1923, already a successful director in Sweden, Seastrom came to America. Between 1924 and 1930 he directed nine films with the most famous stars of the time, among them Lillian Gish (*A Scarlet Letter*, 1926, *The Wind*, 1928), Greta Garbo (*The Divine Woman*, 1927), Lon Chaney, and Edward G. Robinson. Seastrom's first American work was *He who gets slapped*, but the most significant one was *The Wind* starring Lillian Gish and a very popular Swedish actor, Lars Hanson.

In *The Wind* Seastrom was faithful to his principle of simplicity of plot and characters. Delicate idealist Letty, righteous Lige and cunning Roddy, strong Cora and cordial Beverly mesh into a suggestive and clear composition. The end of the film, though, is not convincing. The main character suddenly declares love to her husband whom she previously despised and decides to stay in the land of winds, although she has hated it until then. Moreover, she claims not to be afraid of the storm anymore when a moment before she was close to death with fear.

Seastrom himself didn't plan this banal and inconsistent ending. In the original version Letty, in the claws of madness, runs outside into the sandstorm and dies. Such an ending, though, didn't seem attractive enough for an American audience, so Seastrom was made to change his vision and introduce a classic Hollywood happy ending. Such incidents were not uncommon.

Despite this incident, the American experience left a remarkable mark on the works of Victor Seastrom. Under its influence he directed, among the others, *A Scarlet Letter* with Lillian Gish and Lars Hanson, giving one of the best-known masterpieces of American literature a place on the screen. Gish praised highly Seastrom's vision in this film: “I felt that this film should be directed by a Swede. Swedes are



Victor Sjöström / Seastrom (1879–1960).

spiritually closer to our Fathers' Pilgrims . . . than contemporary Americans . . . . He perfectly understood the soul of this story and . . . turned out to be an excellent actor, the best I have ever worked with."

In an interview from 1924 Charlie Chaplin described Seastrom as "the most outstanding director of the world." And indeed, he achieved immortal fame as a master of silent cinema. Yet, in the era of sound films, his style started to be considered anachronistic. In 1930 he returned to Sweden where he played in the films of other directors (including in *Wild Strawberries* (*Smultronstället*) by Ingmar Bergman).

## The Divine Greta.

"What, when drunk, one sees in other women, one sees in Garbo sober" – Kenneth Tynan.

1925 was a turning point for the Swedish-American film. That year 20-year-old Greta Lovisa Gustafsson (1905-1990) left her Swedish homeland on the steamship named, prophetically, *Drottningholm* ("The Queen's Isle"). In Sweden Greta appeared on the screen in the role of Countess Elizabeth Dohna in *Gösta Berling's Saga* directed by Mauritz Stiller. Several months had passed, though, before the actress, now recognized all over the world as Greta Garbo, found a job in America. For after seeing *Gösta Berling's Saga* Louis B. Mayer from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer offered a contract only to Stiller and only reluctantly invited the latter's young protégé.

Garbo's first American part was in *The Torrent*, a banal melodrama, which nevertheless could not hide her extraordinary talent. Although at first the "Swedish colony in Hollywood" considered the film a disaster, media and audience appreciated the debut of a beginning actress. *The Torrent* created the image of Garbo and the type of roles she was offered for many years. They were usually love stories with a tragic end. The actress herself was not satisfied with this cliché. She said she could not notice anything interesting in silly

melodramas. Still, she managed to create fascinating characters even in the most banal and unimaginative stories.

At first, finding herself in a completely new environment, she felt intimidated and lost. She didn't know the language and the media showed no interest in a taciturn Swedish girl. In her next movie, *The Temptress* (1926), she appeared as a femme fatale and this image was received enthusiastically by American audiences. While in Sweden her movies were seen as awkward, in the U.S. they were admired for their intriguing "refined animalism."

Her next role, in *Flesh and the Devil* (1927), was still close to this image. Yet, in contrast to the banal *Temptress*, this movie was filled with mature eroticism. This was a completely new phenomenon in American cinematography and it became a symbol of the Swedish actress for many years. Although the simple plot of *The Temptress* was far from brilliant, and Garbo's acting style had not yet achieved its highest level, this film was the beginning of her unbelievable career in the U.S. Also, the next productions starring Garbo, *Love* (1927) (based on *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy) and *Wild Orchids* (1929), were very successful. It is worth mentioning that the first of these movies had two endings: tragic – for Europe and parts of America, and happy – for other American areas and for all distributors who preferred it.

With the growing popularity of sound films came also the anxiety about Garbo's future on the screen. She spoke with a low, husky voice with a foreign accent making many mistakes. But The Divine Garbo triumphed also in this field. Her first "speaking character," in *Anna Christie* (1930), was as a former prostitute whose Swedish origin built a proper excuse for the actress's accent. After the success of *Anna Christie* Garbo was famous enough to pick and choose her roles.

For sound films she developed a new style of acting which was called somnambulant or enigmatic and un-



Greta Garbo (1905–1990).

realistic. Mystery was Greta's company also in her private life: she neglected all the Hollywood rules by travelling incognito, avoiding interviews, photographers, and autograph seekers. "I want to be alone" – she repeated in most of her films and it seemed to be true also for her private life.

In the beginning of the thirties Garbo performed in three films: *Mata Hari* (1931), *As You Desire Me* (1932), and *Grand Hotel* (1932). The latter was awarded an Academy Award for Best Film and Garbo herself was acclaimed as "the best actress who played in this concert of stars." After *Grand Hotel* she suddenly left for her old homeland without prolonging her contract with MGM.

During her stay in Sweden Garbo read the biography of the seventeenth century queen of Sweden, Christina, which was recommended to her as perfect material for a movie. She laid down precise conditions: she would sign a new contract with MGM only if they created a film about Christina starring Greta Garbo. What is more, she wanted to be guaranteed the right to participate in no more than two productions per year and for each of them she demanded \$250,000. When all her conditions were accepted, the Swedish star began the second phase of Hollywood life with the main role in *Queen Christina* (1933), directed by Rouben Mamoulian.

## Garbo's most important film

*Queen Christina* is one of the most important films in the history of Swedish-American cinema. The Hollywood production about the Swedish queen with one of the most famous Swedes of all times in the main role was a fascinating enterprise, although it was far from a financial success.

In *Queen Christina* we see an interesting summary of the Swedish social and political situation. In the first moments of the film the audience's attention is drawn to the presence of the peasants and the middle class in the *Riksdag*. In the seventeenth century these two groups, besides the noblemen, and clergy, were represented in the parliament, and their position was relatively high against the background of Europe of that time. The dominant role in the country belonged, though, to the aristocracy which is clearly visible in this film. Their powerful position was established after Gustav Adolf's tragic death. Christina feels unbearably limited by the noblemen around her, who try to control her every step. She can resist them only by abdication.

Most fascinating is the psychological portrait of the queen. Raised like a boy, wearing men's clothes even in the parliament, deeply devoted to her homeland and people, at the same time she longs for something unknown: for Spain – the homeland of art, sun, and light, for love and freedom. She feels torn between a sense of duty, the spiritual inheritance from her hero-father, and the desire to be happy herself. After she met Antonio, she has been seen wearing dresses, but above all, she begins to wonder if it is worthwhile to sacrifice (or maybe waste) her life for others. She doesn't let misfortune discourage her and after Antonio's death she sets off for Spain alone.

Garbo's next roles brought her immense success. The second screening of *Anna Karenina* (1935) was announced to be the best foreign film during the International Film Festi-

val in Venice, and Garbo received the award for the best female role of the year from the New York Film Critics Circle. After *Camille* (1936) with a famous death scene, the king of Sweden, Gustav V, called her "ingenious Garbo." For this role Garbo was nominated for an Academy Award and received the award *Litteris et Artibus* from the king of Sweden. In *Camille* Garbo's acting achieved extraordinary maturity. Moreover, her English accent improved a lot without losing any of its exotic timbre.

In 1939 the Swedish star played in her first comedy *Ninotchka*, directed by Ernst Lubitsch and advertized with the slogan "Garbo laughs." In 1941 she performed in *Two-Faced Woman*. This film, an attempt "to Americanize" the Swedish actress and to adapt her acting style to the changing tastes of the American audience, turned out to be a complete disaster. This ended Garbo's career. Fearing another failure, the Swedish goddess of cinema never again appeared on the screen.

This early "retirement" became a significant element in the emergence of the Garbo legend. At the age of 36 she joined the circle of immortal cinema stars. Never before had any actress gained such fame. She was one of the few who played equally with grace and *artism* in both silent and sound films. She became one of the greatest stars in the history of cinema and the most famous Swede in Hollywood.

## The "Leopard Woman"

Directing and acting was by no means the only contribution Swedish immigrants made to the history of American cinematography. There were also many technicians, instructors, cameramen, costume designers, inventors, and others. One of the most original Swedish contributors to the development of Hollywood was *Olga Celeste* (1887–1969), whose real name was Knutson. She came to the U.S. as a young girl to start her career as a circus rider. There she



*Olga Celeste (1887–1969).*

learned how to handle wild beasts and soon was known as the "Leopard Woman" as she became famous for training leopards. In the beginning, she and her cats performed together in Vaudeville. Then she entered the film industry, above all as a tamer and a stand-in.

Olga Celeste was the first woman to train and control the leopards which performed in films, and she herself performed in the most dangerous parts. The best known productions "starring" her cats were *Tarzan and the Leopard Woman* and *Bringing up Baby*. In the latter one, one of Celeste's leopards played with Katherine Hepburn, who got on with the cat very well. In contrast, Hepburn's film partner, the famous Cary Grant, feared it. Hepburn's secret was a special perfume with a scent that calmed the beast. During the film production, the well-trained leopard wandered freely among people until it "attacked" its partner, Hepburn, annoyed with her rustling dress. Yet, just behind the cameras waited the Swedish tamer who calmed her "pet" at once.

## Conclusion

The presence of the Swedish immigrants in American cinematography in the beginning of the

twentieth century made an extraordinary contribution to the development of its leading position in the world. Not only did many of them create original film styles and images but they also transplanted many achievements of Swedish film onto American screens.

Victor Seastrom introduced the exotic Scandinavian features into his Hollywood productions but also used many elements of culture, landscapes, and tradition typical of American reality. He devoted his talent and experience to convince American audience that film is a real art. Greta Garbo brought on the Hollywood screens the new, brilliant style of acting, exceptional individualism, the mystery of the great star, and also a piece of Swedish history. Linda Griffith, Anna Q. Nilsson, and Warner Oland, although nowadays largely unknown, achieved in their finest days the status of stardom in Hollywood. And last but not least, Olga Celeste contributed her talent to create movies "starring" wild cats, so attractive to American audience.

Once again, I want to emphasize that the figures presented in this article are by no means the only Swedish immigrants in the Hollywood world at the beginning of the twentieth century. We cannot forget such actors as Nils Asther or Lars Hanson, who in their finest days conquered the American (especially female) audience and played with the greatest stars of their times. Also, the popular actresses of Swedish origin,

like Shirley Grey or Jean Rogers, ought to be mentioned here. Moreover, Hollywood appreciated not only Swedish actors and directors, but also screenwriters, cameramen, inventors, and many other specialists.

The remarkable position of Swedish people in Hollywood not only played an important role for American culture, but also for their compatriots in the U.S. Moreover, thanks to their achievements, Sweden and Swedes were more recognizable and respected in American society.

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The author Agnieszka Stasiewicz lives in Poland, and is a former recipient of the Dagmar and Nils William Olsson Scholarship at the Swenson Center. Her e-mail is <astasiewicz@poczta.onet.pl>

Editor's note: The ancestry of actors Greta Garbo and Warner Oland among others can be found in *24 Famous Swedish Americans and their Ancestors*, published by the Federation of Swedish Genealogical Societies in 1996. Some of the others are Signe Hasso, Tuve Nilsson Haselquist, John Ericsson, William H. Rehnquist, "Buzz" Aldrin, Mamie Eisenhower, Eric Wickman, and Charles Lindbergh.

The book is now out of print, but the SAG editor has a few copies for sale. <sag@etgenealogy.se>

Picture from "Svenskarne i Illinois" by Peterson & Johnson. 1880.



Chicago in 1833.

# The Old Picture

*On this page we publish old pictures sent in by our SAG readers. If you have a picture you want to see on this page, either send a digital copy, scanned in at no less than 300 dpi and saved as a jpg or tiff file, or send a good paper copy to the editor at the address shown on the inside cover. Do not send any originals, as we can not accept responsibility for them. Neither can we promise to publish all pictures.*



This picture, from about 1900, has been sent in by *Olle Andersson*, a member of the Nyed Local Heritage Association (*Nyeds Hembygdsförening*). Olle is very active in working with the association's collection of old pictures, which he scans and makes available on the web site of the association. <http://hembygd.nyed.se> (no English!).

Nyed is a parish in southern Värmland, mostly farming country but there was also iron manufacture in the old days.

The women in this picture are busy working with the many steps in con-

verting flax from the plant to linen yarn for weaving. At this stage they were "breaking" the flax.

As one American author writes "then comes that part of the work which only strong men can perform, called breaking the flax, to get from the center of the stalks the hard, wood-like "bun," which is of no value. This is done [125] with a machine made of wood, as if you were to set three or four broad knives on a bench, at a certain distance apart, with as many more on a lever to come from above, fitting; closely between the lower blades. The upper part of the

machine is pulled down with force upon the flax, so that every portion of it is broken." Evidently Swedish women were as strong as men in the old days, as the preparing of flax was women's work. When the work was done, the women often relaxed with a little party, and then the men were welcome.

A link to a web site on preparing flax is found on page 29.



# The Solution to the Handwriting Example XV

## Transcription

1782

d. 27 jan: lystes första gången för Carl Jonsson  
från Horsjön och Maria Andersdotter från  
Dalkarssjön wigdes d. 31 martii

Car[l]

d. 14 Julii lystes första gången för Bruks Patron  
Herr Anders Svensson wid Normarkshyttan och jum-  
fru Eva Lena Brattström wid Storbron  
wigdes den 1 Augusti i Philipstad

And[ers]

d. 28 Julii lystes första gången för grufdrängen  
Olof Nilsson wid Normarks grufwor och än-  
kan Lena Segelsdotter wid Normarkshyttan  
wigdes d. 19 Novemb:

Olof

d. 25 Augustii Lystes första gången för drän-  
gen Lars Jonsson från Philipstad och pigan  
Margareta Larsdotter wid Normarkshyttan  
Wigdes i Philipstad

Lars

d. 27 Octob: lystes första gången för gruf<sup>fir[ängen]</sup>  
Lars Svensson och Lisa Olofsdotter wid  
Normarksgrufwor wigdes d. 26 Jan. 1783

Lars

## Transcription

1782

27 Jan. the banns were read the first time for Carl Jonsson  
from Horsjön and Maria Andersdotter from  
Dalkarssjön were married 31 March

Car[l]

14 July the banns were read the first time for the Iron Works owner  
Mr. Anders Svensson of Normarkshyttan and Miss  
Eva Lena Brattström of Storbron  
The marriage ceremony took place in Philipstad

And[ers]

28 July the banns were read the first time for the mine laborer  
Olof Nilsson at the Nordmark mines and the wid-  
ow Lena Segelsdotter of Normarkshyttan.  
were married 10 November

Olof

25 August the Banns were read the first time for the la-  
borer Lars Jonsson of Philipstad and the servant girl  
Margareta Larsdotter of Normarkshyttan  
The marriage ceremony took place in Philipstad

Lars

27 October the banns were read the first time for the mine laborer  
Lars Svensson and Lisa Olofsdotter of the  
Normark mines were married 26 jan. 1783

Lars

# The dream came true

BY LOIS HARALDSEN

Most of our ancestors had a dream of a better life in America. My Lindstrom ancestors were among the dreamers.

**Johannes Svensson Lindström** was the first to come. Johannes was born 26 July 1857, in Mistelås, Kronoberg, Sweden. He was the son of Sven Petersson and Maria Petersdotter. On 12 March 1880, he married **Mathilda Justina Nikolaidotter** in Slätthög, Kronoberg, Sweden. She was born 13 January 1856, in Grönby, Gällaryd, Kronoberg, to Lisa Jonsdotter. Her father is unknown.

Johannes left his family in Mistelås in 1888 to work in the mines in the Denver, Colorado, area. The work was too difficult for him and he turned back to Sweden. We have often wondered how Mathilda and her young children lived while he was gone.

## Johannes and Mathilda had six children:

**1. Teodolinda Elise** born 22 December 1880, in Mistelås. She arrived in January 1901 in Chicago, Illinois, using the name Svenson. She became known as Linda Lindstrom. She worked as a housemaid. Her mother was ill and Linda returned to nurse her. After Mathilda died, Linda returned with her brother Johan to Chicago in 1906. On 15 Au-

gust 1908, she married *Carl E. Danielson* in Chicago. Linda died 17 March 1909, of complications of a pregnancy. Carl died about eighteen months later.

**2. Carl Edward Martin** was born 6 October 1882, in Mistelås. He arrived in Chicago in April of 1901. He worked in a piano factory and as a guard in a bank. He served as a cook in World War I. He married and had no children. He died 28 May 1969, in Chicago.

**3. Justina Maria** (our *mormor*) was born 22 August 1884, in Mistelås. She immigrated to Chicago in May of 1904. She worked as a housemaid. On 24 September 1910, she married *Alexander John Julian*. Alex was born *Jöns Jönsson* on 31 January 1881, in Vånga, (Krist.), Sweden. The marriage was not a happy one. They separated many times and for good in the 1930's. They had 6 children. Alex died 5 May 1955, in Chicago and Justina 15 April 1976, also in Chicago.

**4. Johan Ferdinand** was born 3 April 1887, in Mistelås. He arrived in Chicago in April of 1906. He was a carpenter. Sometime around 1910 he married *Helga Svenson*. By 1914 they had had their third child. Helga, trying to commit suicide, turned on the gas jets. As we now know, she was suffering from postpartum depression. The two little girls, Linda, age 4, and Mabel, age 2, died. Helga and

baby, Walter, about 6 weeks old and John were unconscious. They survived. Helga was charged with murder and later the charge was dismissed. The Swenson Center researched the incident for us and found two articles in *Svenska Amerikanaren* from 1914. We also found an article in the *Chicago Tribune*.

By 1920 the family was living in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They had two more boys, Stanley and John, and a daughter Edith. Before 1930 the parents were both dead and the children were in an orphanage.

We have often wondered what happened to the children of John and Helga. Just recently we found an obituary for their son John Lindstrom on the internet. As a result we have had some contact with his children.

**5. Ernst Gunnar** was born 21 January 1892, in Mistelås. He arrived in Chicago in April of 1910. He died of TB 16 October 1916, in Chicago.

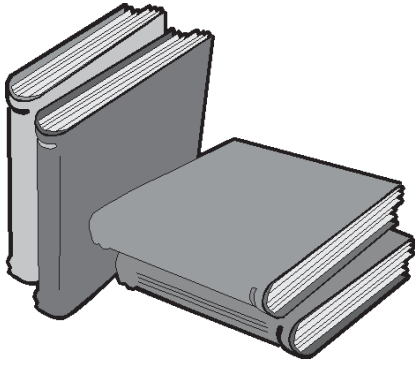
**6. Klas Edvin Herman** was born 9 May 1895, in Mistelås, and died 26 May 1987, in Ljungsåtra, Berga parish, in Kronoberg län, Sweden. Herman, as he was known, tried to immigrate but was turned back when they found his confirmation Bible that gave his real age. He decided to stay in Sweden. He never married.

We are grateful to the Lindstroms who immigrated. While they had many trials and tribulations, the ensuing years have been beneficial to their descendants.

Lysnings-	Fästeljones	Födelse-	Hösten af	Tillit År	Födelse-
3 Jan. 17	Johannes, dräng Mathilda Justina, pige	Mistelås län 1857			36

Marriage of Johannes and Mathilda in Slätthög.

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E-mail: <loispaul1957@yahoo>



# 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 <1\_viking@verizon.net> or Dennis Johnson, 174 Stauffer Road, Bucktown Crossing, Pottstown, PA 19465, so he knows what you are working on.

## The Monitor Man

*The Man Who Made the Monitor: A Biography of John Ericsson, Naval Engineer*, by Olav Thulesius, McFarland & Co., Jefferson, North Carolina, 2007, Softcover, ill., 255 pp., Amazon.com, \$35.00

“He was the greatest man of Swedish blood who ever came to the U.S.” These were the words of H. M. King Gustav VI Adolf when he was Crown Prince, speaking at the unveiling of the John Ericsson Memorial in 1925 in Washington, D.C. Eighty-two years later, few historians would argue with this statement. Many very prominent or highly celebrated Swedes came to this country before or since, but none have had the overall impact on the modern world of this great inventor and engineer.

This new book by Olav Thulesius is not the first biography of John Ericsson (1803-1889), but offers a fresh new look at the man, his work, his personal life, and numerous interesting anecdotes about this enormously creative man. The author is a former professor at Indiana University, the University of Trondheim in Norway, and Kuwait University. Thulesius now divides his time between the U.S. and Sweden. He is the author of several other biographies, including that of Harriet Beecher Stowe (2001), Thomas Edison (1997), and Nicholas Culpeper (1992).

John Ericsson was born July 31, 1803, in Långbanshyttan, Färnebo

(Värmland), Sweden, where his father worked as a mine supervisor and later as a director of blasting during the excavations for the Göta Canal. Ericsson and his brother Nils showed extraordinary skills at an early age. At the age of fourteen, Ericsson was working independently as a surveyor although barely tall enough to reach the instruments used. After a period of service in the Swedish Army as a lieutenant doing survey work and tinkering with his inventions in his spare time, these interests led him to resign from the army and move to England in 1826. A love affair with Carolina Lillieskiöld and the birth of a son, Hjalmar Elworth, in 1824 may have also had a part in this decision, since Carolina’s father fiercely opposed their marriage.

Ericsson remained in London from 1826 through 1839, working on several inventions including a steam engine, early experiments with the screw propeller, and other projects. His steam locomotive, the *Novelty*, narrowly missed beating Watt’s locomotive, the *Rocket*, in a race. Income was always a problem, and he was jailed for nine months in a debtors’ prison in 1832. By 1836, he had received a British patent for his screw propeller and a ship was built which utilized this means of propulsion. Another vessel, the *Stockton*, was launched in 1838 and became the first ship to cross the Atlantic using the screw propeller. While this was going on, Ericsson also found time to marry Amelia Jane Byam in London.

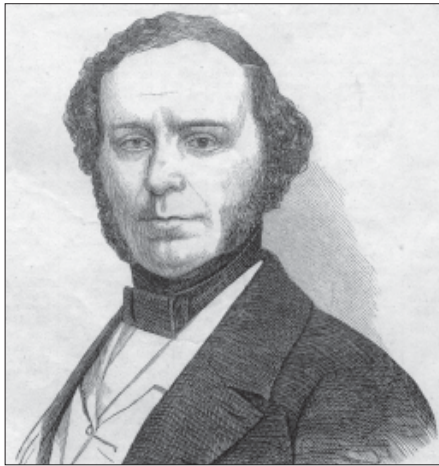
His ideas were not well received in London, however, and a friend, Captain Robert Stockton for whom

the 1838 ship was named, persuaded Ericsson to come to the U.S. to pursue his patent for the screw propeller and other inventions. In 1839, Ericsson moved to New York City with his bride, Amelia. Amelia soon found America not to her liking and she returned to London after a few months. She was to visit Ericsson one more time in New York, for less than a year in 1842, but they were not to see each other again after that.

Ericsson continued with his experiments and efforts to promote the screw propeller and other of his inventions. The book describes in detail the years in New York and his designs for ironclad ships with engines below the water line, his development of a caloric engine, and the development of a caloric-engined ship named the *Ericsson*. The author also mentions Ericsson’s becoming a U.S. citizen in 1848, a meeting with Alfred Nobel and with Jenny Lind in 1850, and the development of plans for armored vessels in the next decade. A high point in his career came when he was asked to design an armored ship in 1861 which became the USS *Monitor*. This ship made history when it defeated a confederate armored ship, the *Virginia* (formerly the *Merrimac*) in a small but world-shaking naval encounter in Hampton Roads, Virginia, on May 15, 1862.

After the Civil War, Ericsson remained in New York, working in his laboratory on the top floor of his house at 36 Beach Street, Manhattan, usually with only a single assistant. He continued experiments with the design of armored warships, torpedo technology, and the *Destroy-*

# Book Reviews



John Ericsson. From the *Illustrerad Tidning*, Stockholm, 1862.

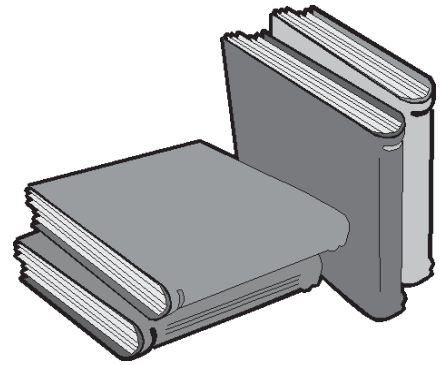
er, an advanced torpedo boat, a solar engine, and other projects. In 1876, he prepared *Contributions to the U.S. Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia*, and also received a visit from his son, Hjalmar Elworth, who was to die in 1887. John Ericsson received many honors in his lifetime and in the years following his death in 1889 at the age of 86. He was elected to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in 1850, The Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences in 1852, and was given an honorary doctorate from Lund University in 1868. Monuments in his honor have been erected on the mall in Washington, D.C., Battery Park in New York City, at Nybroplan in Stockholm, at Kungshuset in Gothenburg, and the John Ericsson Fountain in the Fairmount Park, Philadelphia. Three ships of the U.S. Navy were named after John Ericsson including a torpedo boat (1897-1912), a destroyer (1915-1922), and another destroyer (1941-1946).

The American Swedish Historical Museum in Philadelphia has a valuable collection of Ericsson memorabilia and a sizable archive of his correspondence. The John Ericsson Room, designed by Martin Hedmark in 1931 in an Art Deco style, has an exhibit and wall murals dedicated to the inventor's memory, including two

scenes by Swedish artist Olle Hjortzberg showing the great battle at Hampton Roads, and also Ericsson presenting his design for the *Monitor* to President Lincoln and the war cabinet. A second gallery has many of Ericsson's models of solar engines on display together with other related exhibits. The Ericsson collection catalog lists some 250 additional items including prints, photos, correspondence, lithographs, models, slides, paintings, medals, and other mementos.

The John Ericsson Society of New York was founded in 1907 to honor and perpetuate the memory of John Ericsson and the profession of engineering. The group promotes historic research and holds events annually to commemorate his life. On 9 March a Monitor Day and Annual Dinner is celebrated, and every 31 July the inventor's birthday is observed at the John Ericsson Statue in Battery Park, as well as in Filipstad. On 23 November, a dinner marks the date of John Ericsson's arrival in the U.S.

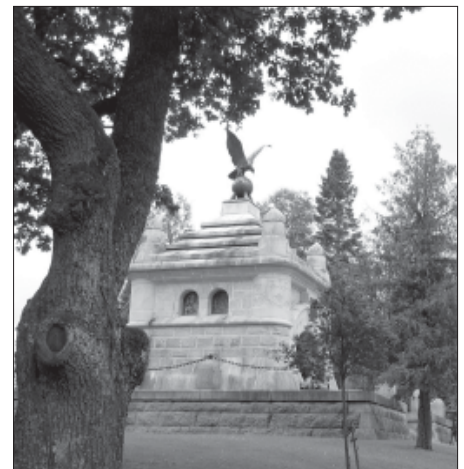
While the defeat of the *Virginia* by John Ericsson's ironclad, the *Monitor*, is the event for which John Ericsson is most remembered in the public mind, his impact on the modern world is far greater than this one naval battle. This battle, and the propeller-driven armored warships later designed by Ericsson, spelled the end of the age of sailing ships made of wood. Armored warships using rotating gun turrets like the *Monitor* made all wooden ships vulnerable and obsolete, changing naval warfare forever. Ericsson's invention of the screw propeller allowed the harnessing of steam engines to oceangoing ships and revolutionized sea travel and transport. Until his invention, the first steamers only had stern or side paddle wheels, unsuitable for ocean travel and taking up valuable space above the water line. Today, from the smallest outboard motor on small boats to the



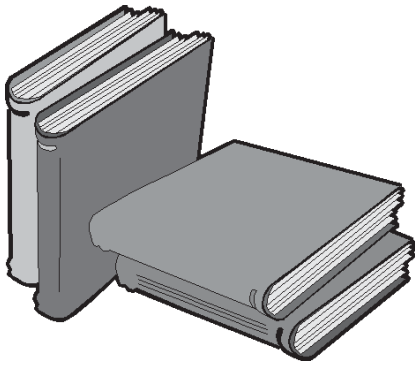
greatest giant tankers, all are driven by one or more screw propellers, from as little as eight inches in diameter to as large as 24 feet. All are descended from the experiments of John Ericsson. Diesel, turbine, and even nuclear power drives these ships, but all use the screw propeller.

Thulesius's new biography of John Ericsson spells out in detail the experiments, the successes and the setbacks to this great Swedish-American's career. The author includes not only the technical realm of his inventions, but provides much information about Ericsson's personal life, his personality, his involvements with his contemporaries, his romantic life, and his contempt for those who did not understand his work. This is surely must reading for all who have an interest in Swedish-Americans, the creative genius of inventors, engineering technology, and world history.

Dennis L. Johnson



John Ericsson's Mausoleum in Filipstad, Sweden.



# Book Reviews

## A Child Immigrant

*At Home in a New Land*, by Joan Sandin. HarperCollins, 2007. Hardcover, 64 pages, ISBN 978-0-06-058077-3. For ages 4-8. \$15.99.

*At Home in a New Land*, written and illustrated by Joan Sandin, settles young Swedish immigrant Carl Erik and his family in their new home in Minnesota. The book concludes the story begun in *The Long Way to a New Land* (1981) and continued in *The Long Way Westward* (1989). (See March 2006 SAG for a discussion of these and other children's books about immigration.)

As the story opens, Carl Erik wakes up in his uncle and aunt's cabin. "It was not a dream. The long, hard journey from Sweden was really over." In six short episodes, the boy, his little brother, and his parents start to make a home in the woods of Minnesota. Both in words and pictures, Sandin is a masterful storyteller. She captures the immigrant experience through the eyes of a young boy, making common, oft-told experiences seem fresh and new.

The story told in *At Home in a New Land* and the two earlier books is nothing less than an immigrant saga for young readers. The challenges that Carl Erik and his family face – learning English, interacting with their Native American neighbors, and surviving while the men go away for months to work at a logging camp – are all deftly conjured up. The story takes the family from summer days

through a snowy Christmas, when beloved old traditions blend with delightful new ones. Sandin excels at describing the everyday details of life: "The cabin smelled of pine branches, freshly baked wheat bread, rice pudding, and cinnamon. 'It smells like Swedish Christmas,' Mamma sighed."

At the beginning of the book, four Swedish words that will appear in the dialogue are defined, with a pronunciation guide. This is a marvelous feature for young readers who are just getting comfortable reading "real books." They will have fun learning some words in Carl Erik's language, too.

Sandin has dedicated her book to "all immigrants past and present. May they feel at home in their new land." This historically accurate tale – and its two predecessors – are highly recommended for introducing young readers and their families to the Swedish immigrant experience.

*At Home in a New Land* is available through Amazon.com and other online booksellers, or through bookstores with a good selection of new titles for children.

Erica Olsen

## Another Life

*The Healing House, A Memoir*, by Elaine Ostergren Adams, Publish America, Baltimore, MD, 2007, Softcover, Ill., 150 pages, Amazon.com, \$19.95 plus shipping.

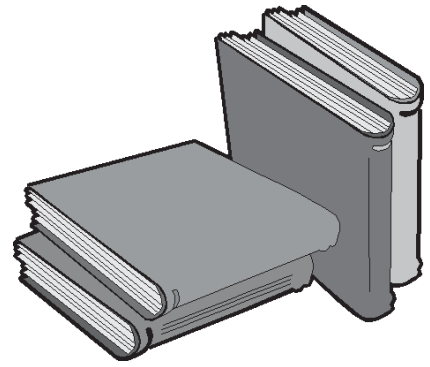
*The Healing House* is the personal recollection of a woman who grew up in Oakland, CA, in the 1930's and her visits to the farm of her grandfather each summer in northern Idaho. As a sickly child who suffered in turn from tuberculosis, pneumatic fever, and pneumonia, her parents believed that only fresh air in the country would return her to good health. For

about two months in July and August, she would travel with her mother to Idaho to her Swedish-born grandparents' farm every year from 1929 through 1940, missing only two years (1933 and 1934) during that time.

Elaine Ostergren had four Swedish grandparents, all of whom had come to the U.S. about 1890 and met in a boardinghouse in Spokane, Washington territory, a community in what is now eastern Washington State near the Idaho border. Her mother's parents, Jacob Thunborg and Christina Nelson (Nilsdotter), were married in November, 1890, near Spokane and, by 1892, had settled across the Idaho border on the east shore of Hayden Lake only 45 miles or so from Spokane, to farm. In a few years they had five children, including Elaine Ostergren's mother, their third child, Ruby. Their homestead was then in a remote area of northern Idaho on a beautiful lake, and they began to farm some 146 acres. Within a few years they had a self-sustaining farm, livestock, and had established crops and orchards. After an initial one-room log cabin, Jacob then built a barn and then a larger farmhouse in several stages. He also built a one-room schoolhouse for his and his new neighbors' children.

By 1925, when the author was born, her mother Ruby had married Carl Ostergren and settled in Oakland, California, where Carl worked for the railroad. This same year, her grandfather Thunborg at Hayden Lake died, her grandmother Christina was widowed, and the farm was now being run by the next generation including Elaine's Uncle Frank, his wife Frances, her Aunt Marie. Grandmother Thunborg lived on at the farm another twenty-five years and passed away at the age of 91 in 1950. Eventually, by about 1960, this second generation, too, became too old to farm and the land was sold to

# Book Reviews



developers in what was now fast becoming a popular resort and vacation home locale. The old farmhouse, as a unique example of hand-built construction in the Swedish style, was then entered on the National Register of Historic Places.

This memoir is not, however, so much the story of these early Swedish pioneers as it is the recollections of a young girl who grew up through the Depression and World War II, and her fond memories of summers spent at the distant farmhouse of her grandmother and other relatives who either lived there, or came to visit the farm each summer. The title, *The Healing House*, was chosen because of the effect these summer visits had on Elaine Ostergren, transforming her from a sickly young girl into a mature, healthy woman who married Clifford Adams in 1945 and went on to a distinguished writing career and long life as an author, wife, and mother. She has returned several times over the years to *The Healing House*, and in 1994 Elaine traveled to Sweden to meet many cousins and other descendants of her grandparents who had remained in Sweden.

The book is organized into chapters which describe in turn her first trip to the Thunborg farm, later trips year by year, and then several chapters relating various experiences as part of her visits and in growing up in the 1930's. An epilogue brings the reader up to date on what has happened in her life since her days at the Thunborg farm and concludes with a recipe for butterchip candy, an obviously favorite family treat.

Fascinating to me as a member of almost the same generation, being only a few years younger than the author, were the ways in which she wove in descriptions of farm life during that period, with no electricity, no running water or indoor toilets, and few modern comforts or conveniences to be found at the farm.

Also fascinating was her memories of the great Depression when I, too, was a youngster, with fathers who were either unemployed or reduced to working only three days a week, shortages of food, and making do on very little money. Traveling by train between Oakland and Spokane was vividly described, memories of the days when automobiles were owned by very few and train travel was the norm for most people, if they traveled at all. The nation entering into the war in 1941 and the attack on Pearl Harbor are also a part of my own memories and had a deep impact on all of us who remember that time.

Daily life at the farm and the experiences of a young girl from the city at *The Healing House* during these summers, however, are the most moving and enriching parts of this book, a confection to read for those of her generation and a glimpse of another time and place for young people now growing up and coming of age in an entirely different world. Childhood diseases are now mostly a distant memory in the age of antibiotics, vaccinations, and prevention of many common illnesses of the 1930's. But for many, these were fun times in spite of hardships and bring back many fond memories of family gatherings, travel, and special moments such as those so richly described.

Dennis L. Johnson

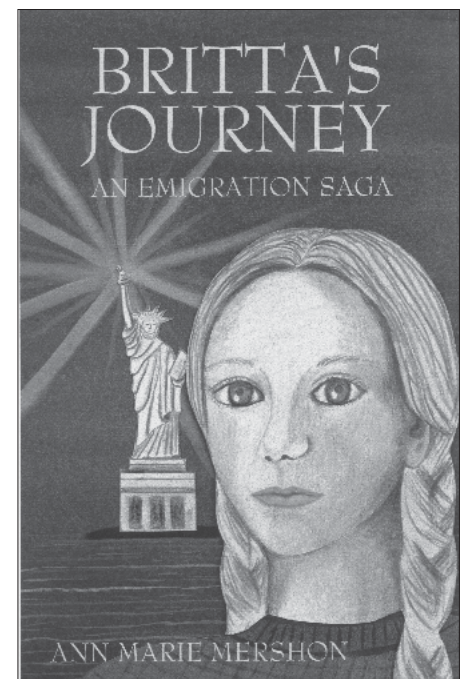
## Another Child Immigrant

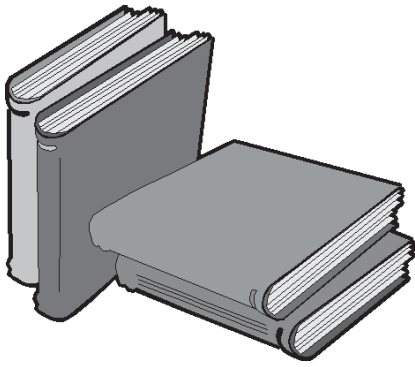
***Britta's Journey, An Emigration Saga*** by Ann Marie Mershon, Singing River Publications, Inc., Ely, MN, 2004, 210 pp., Ill., softcover, Amazon.com, \$12.00 plus shipping.

If you, as I, have teenage granddaughters now in 2007, you know

how difficult it is to get this young generation to sit down and read a book. A history book of a time a little over one hundred years ago is even more difficult to persuade a young girl to read. It seems their lives center around TV, the Internet, text messaging, a personal cell phone, and their social relationships with their peers. Yet, it is worth a try in the case of *Britta's Journey*.

This little paperback is a fictional account of the journey of a young girl traveling with her mother, brothers, and a sister to America in the year 1903. They are traveling to meet their father, who has preceded them by four years, in New York City. Their ultimate destination is a homestead in northern Minnesota. Johan Eric and Maria Jacobson, from the Swedish-speaking village of Kvevlax in Finland, have decided to immigrate to America to escape poverty. They





# Book Reviews

had already lost three of their children to illness, and were determined to find a better life in Minnesota for the rest of their family. Traveling with Britta were her mother Maria, older brother Johan, and the younger twins Arvid and Elsa.

While a work of fiction, this story was inspired by a family history written by a friend, Eleanor Jacobson Stone. The author, Ann Marie Mershon, is an English teacher and outdoor lover living in a wilderness home near Grand Marais in the arrowhead country of Minnesota on the north shore of Lake Superior. The book has a number of fine illustrations drawn by a friend, artist Gail Alden-Henderson, who also lives and has a studio near Grand Marais. The book is historically accurate, although much of the detail in the narrative of the story has been added by the author. The book is geared to be easily readable by young people, although the story is gripping and suspenseful to readers of all ages.

The story centers on Britta and therefore may be more attractive to young girls as an adventure seen through the eyes of a girl, not a boy. Her older brother Johan, 12, is a wanderer and unafraid to explore new places on land or on the ship, but is constantly worrying Britta and her mother by his constant disappearances. His adventurous spirit, however, often comes to the aid of the family, while Britta is more inclined to follow her mother's orders and avoid causing any extra worries. The story is humorous at times and also has an element of tragedy as the journey unfolds.

The family group takes a ship from

the port of Hangö in Finland to Hull, England, where they travel across England to Liverpool to await their ship to America. Coping with unfamiliar people and another language causes many frustrations and delays along the way as the mother struggles to keep the family together and survive on very little money until their ultimate arrival in New York and reunion with their father. A very convincing and realistic picture of travel in the time of the story (1903) is incorporated into the account of their travels. Hazards of travel by train and ship are described: getting lost, finding and making friends to share the journey only to be separated from them by circumstances, the challenges of traveling in steerage and surviving contagious childhood diseases, storms at sea, and other trials are all portrayed vividly and realistically through the eyes of Britta, barely eleven years old. She struggles hard to learn as many English words as possible during her journey and keeps her own homemade dictionary of all the new words she encounters.

In a brief epilogue, the author adds that the Jacobson family on which *Britta's Journey* is based, settled on the North Shore in Minnesota. The Jacobsons went on to further adventures and all three children who survived the journey went on to live long, full, and happy lives. The Jacobsons had four more children after settling on their homestead in northern Minnesota.

The author also encourages her readers to take the time to talk to their older relations, parents, and grandparents about their memories and childhoods. Regrettably, by the time the young are old enough to have a genuine interest in their heritage, the older generations are often no longer living to tell their stories. Elders should try and find the time to write down the essentials of their family history before it is too late.

So if you wish your own daughter or granddaughter to experience the challenges and adventures involved in this immigrant girl's experience of one hundred years ago, try and persuade her to read this book, possibly even by positive reinforcement (bribery) if necessary. It is much briefer and not as formidable to read as Moberg's masterpiece in four volumes on the same subject, yet it will provide your youngster who has Swedish roots with a taste of the experiences of her ancestors in making their way to the new world several generations ago; a difficult journey in a time long before air travel, e-mail, cell phones, computers, automobiles, and other modern devices became commonplace and inexpensive.

Dennis L. Johnson

## A helpful book

*Following the Paper Trail. A Multilingual Translation Guide*, by Jonathan D. Shea and William F. Hoffman. New edition 2007, 241 pages, softcover, published by Avotaynu, Inc. \$29 from [www.avotaynu.com](http://www.avotaynu.com)

This unusual and very helpful book lists documents in 13(!) languages (German, Swedish, French, Italian, Latin, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish, Czech, Polish, Russian, Hungarian, and Lithuanian), and gives translations and hints and tips on the different languages and their alphabets. There are 25 pages on Swedish, including "selected vocabulary terms" and "selected first names." The documents are of the type that an immigrant might save after his journey: his immigration contract, a confirmation certificate, a marriage certificate, and others. The translations from Swedish seems to be correct, so hopefully the others are too. A useful book.

Elisabeth Thorsell

# Interesting Web Sites

All links tested in  
November 2007 and  
should work

*Old medical terms:* <http://www.antiquusmorbus.com/Index.htm>

*About emigration through Hamburg, Germany:* <http://www.ballinstadt.com/en/index.php>

*Some digitized issues of the San Francisco Call:* <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/>

*Online death certificates for Utah before 1956:* <http://historyresearch.utah.gov/indexes/index.html>

*Digital archives of Washington State:* <http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov/default.aspx>

*If you know an address in Chicago, this might help:* <http://www.chicagoancestors.org/>

*Searchable newspaper articles in Oklahoma:* <http://okhistory.cuadra.com/star/public.html>

*Swedish Council of St. Louis:* <http://www.swedishcouncilstlouis.org/>

*Article by Emory Lindquist about the Swedes in Kansas:*

[http://www.kancoll.org/khq/1963/63\\_1\\_lindquist.htm](http://www.kancoll.org/khq/1963/63_1_lindquist.htm)

*Swenson Center's Genealogical Links:* <http://www.augustana.edu/swenson/Links.html>

*Roots Television (works with I E):* <http://rootstelevision.com/index.html>

*Index to Skarstedts "California och dess svenska befolkning":*

<http://www.augustana.edu/swenson/book110.htm>

*Preparing flax:* <http://www.mainlesson.com/display.php?author=otis&book=boston&story=flax2>

*Murders in Chicago 1870–1930:* <http://homicide.northwestern.edu/>

*Kip Sperry's Internet links:* <http://home.byu.net/ks4/?sssdmh=dm13.150380>

## New and Noteworthy

(short notes on interesting books and articles)

One thing that is important in genealogy is to evaluate the sources you are working with. Is this record true or false? Can I believe this family tradition? A useful, but not too serious, way of learning more about this is to read *The Daughter of Time*, by Josephine Tey, first published in 1952. The story in this book is the investigation of the old problem of Richard III, king of England. Did he, or did he not, kill his nephews? The detective is a trained policeman who is not willing to accept history, written long after the event. This book is available on Amazon.com.

For those of us who are interested in mining and the history of the miners and their dangerous jobs, it might be valuable to look for *Ancestry Magazine*, the September/October issue for 2007. This issue has a couple of articles on the miners and some illustrative photos. In a sidebar one can read that in 1848 there were 5,000 miners in California, just two years later the number had grown to 50,000. The mines were often the proverbial melting pot, where Swedes worked with Poles, Czechs, Italians, and many other nationalities.

The new *Svenska Släktkalendern 2007* (Swedish Family Register 2007) has come from the printers. It contains 79 family genealogies, following the families from ancient times until today. 25 of those have been presented in earlier volumes, and 54 are totally new. The thirty volumes in the series (from 1912- ) now covers a total of 1,992 different families. A list of the families presented can be found at <http://www.etgenealogy.se/slkalreg.htm>

The more one digs into life in the old days, the more one realizes that many things were not so different, even though the geographic areas were far away. Currently I am reading *A Little Commonwealth. Family Life in Plymouth Colony*, by John Demos, printed by Oxford University Press (2000). Life in Plymouth Colony was in many ways similar to life in Vadstena, Skänninge, Filipstad, and other Swedish small towns in the 1600s.



# 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.

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## **Andersson, Magnusdotter, Jonasson**

Jonas Andersson was born 22 Oct 1817 in Grolanda parish, (Skar.). His wife, Maria Lisa Magnusdotter, was born 26 Sep 1819 in Hällestad parish, (Skar.). They were married 22 Nov 1846. The couple had two boys, Pehr August born 6 Sep 1850 and Frans Gustaf born 22 Feb 1853 in Hällestad. On 12 Jun 1854 they left Sweden from Mjälldrunga parish (Älvsb.) bound for the United States.

According to the manifest of the ship *Humblatt*, the family arrived in New York harbor 25 Aug 1854. I have looked for years in Illinois and Minnesota for this family with no results.

*Hal Bern, 2341 E. Lynnwood Drive, WA 98632. E-mail: <halby5443@aol.com>*

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## **Maria Matilda Henriksdotter**

I am looking for Maria Mathilda Henriksdotter, born 29 December 1865 in Kärnberg, Norra Ny parish, (Värm.). Her parents were Henrik Henriksson and his wife Maria Eriksdotter in Kärnberg, Nyskoga parish (Kärnberg belonged to Nyskoga parish from 1873). Maria seems to have left Nyskoga 15 April 1887 to go to America. I know she is still alive in 1902, when her mother died, because she is named in the inventory after her.

I have heard from my father a long time ago (he died in 1980) that Maria visited Sweden one time with her three boys and that they lived in Washington State. Maria is a sister to my *farmor* (father's mother).

*Lisbet Önegård, Önet 1615, S-830 51 Offerdal, Sweden. E-mail: <l.onegard@swipnet.se>*

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## **Tufvesson, Åkesson, Olsdotter**

I am looking for descendants of Mary Kohlver, married to the farmer Wilhelm Kohlver in North America. Her maiden name was Maria Tufvesson, born 4 January 1872 in Källs Nöbbelöv (Malm.). Her parents were Tufve Åkesson and his wife Olu Olsdotter. Maria (Mary) emigrated from Malmö 28 March 1889 with a ticket for Winnipeg.

Thank you for all help.

*Elvy Fristedt, Säbygatan 7, S-261 33 Landskrona, Sweden. E-mail: <ess.eff@ipbolaget.com>*

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## **Alexanderson, Karlsdotter, Appelberg**

Hulda Josefina Karlsdotter was born 10 October 1865 in Höreda (Jönk.), a daughter of the sharecropper Carl Peter Johansson and his wife Catharina Johansdotter from Bergholm on Västra Näs lands in Höreda. Hulda Josefina left from Höreda in 1886 and travelled from Göteborg 23 April 1886 under the surname Appelberg with a ticket for New York.

In the 1900 U.S. Census she is found with her family in Omaha, NE. She is then married to Charles A. Alexanderson, born in June 1864 in New York of Swedish parents. They had the following children: Elsa J. (1892-1909), Hazel K. (1896-1961), and Russell Charles (1898-1954). The latter had a son, Russel Eugene (1925-2002), but it is not known if he had a family. He died in Los Angeles, CA. We are looking for all information on this family.

*Tore Sandh, Lyckås 1, S-575 93 Eksjö, Sweden*

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The gardener Johan Fredrik Larsson, born 12 December 1856 in Julita (Södm.) and his wife Lovisa Jansdotter, born 11 April 1852 in Linde (Väsm.) left Locknevi (Smål.) 14 October 1890 with their six children, all born in Locknevi: Anna Lovisa (b. 28 August 1880); Signe Christina (b. 12 October 1881); Johan Olof (b. 27 February 1883); Alfrida Maria (b. 3 December 1885), Clara Eleonora (b. 7 January 1889). In the U.S. daughters Lillie was born in Illinois in February 1892, and Mabel in March 1895 in Iowa.

In 1900 the Larson family is found in Rock Island, Rock Island County, Ill., and the children at home were Sigrid (Signe), Gustav, Freda (Alfrida), Lillie, and Mabel. In 1910 John, his wife, Gustav, Elfrieda, Lillian, and Mabel are still in Rock Island. But what happened then? I am very grateful for all information.

Dagmar Grieger, Flisvägen 3, S-296 72 Yngsjö, Sweden. E-mail: <hhgrieger@spray.se>

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## Acknowledging the Octogenarian Resource

BY P. ROBERT WILLEY

Frequently an often overlooked resource in researching family genealogy is "The Octogenarian Resource."

My experience in identifying and communicating with individuals who are eighty years of age or more has consistently proven to be a valuable resource in my continuing 36-year ancestral search. The octogenarians I have communicated with have not always been immediate relatives nor have we necessarily met. Several, like me, had been conducting their own independent genealogical research for years and welcomed the opportunity to make connections with someone interested in learning about their life experiences. Over time I discovered that gently prodding earlier memories was all that was needed to focus them on their recalling past events. Once the inquiry was made, they frequently followed up on a clue, an idea,

or memory that was graciously shared with me.

I have found that the octogenarian has memories that include information previously forgotten or unrecorded in letters, family records, and official documents. On the Swanson side of our family a family friend whom I had not communicated with in years sent old documents that brought new information re family experiences; a church archivist's, much to my surprise, communicated that her grandmother had purchased the home of my grandparents in 1916 and resided there as a child; a distant relative recalled as a little girl visiting our grandparents at Christmas time and having "glögg"; or someone related via one of my grandfather's sister's children leading to new information recently discovered and shared with a second cousin living in Sweden. On the Willey side, there was communication with a distant relative, previously unknown to me, living in Canada, who shared

significant information and photographs that led to my being able to make additional connections with our ancestors.

Over time I have come to appreciate that they are a treasure of knowledge, are most responsive to questions, and eagerly welcome reawakening old memories as they connect the many facets of their family history. My genealogical journey has shown that the octogenarians keenly understand the importance of sharing and documenting family history for present and future generations. Not many years from now, I, too, will be an octogenarian who may be asked similar questions.

P. Robert Willey resides in  
Bloomington, Illinois  
E-mail:  
<hogworc@insightbb.com>

# The Last Page

Dear friends,

Time passes quickly and now we are far into the fall, winter is just around the corner and it is a perfect time to spend a couple of hours (or maybe more) indoors with the computer and the records; online, on microfiche, etc.

During the centuries Sweden has had an important history of immigration. Think of the German and Walloon smiths that came during the 1600s, the “slash and burn” finns, also during the 1600s, many Scots fought in the Swedish armies. Other categories were the surgeons and apothecaries, mainly from Germany, who came with the princesses who married Swedish kings in the 1600s, the merchants from England that taught the Swedes in Göteborg how to run successful businesses, etc.

So if you have ancestors who belonged slightly higher up on the social scale there are good chances to find an immigrant somewhere among the distant ancestors.

My maternal grandfather’s (*morfar*) lines have many persons with interesting surnames, including my faraway ancestor Blasius Ludovico Teppati, an Italian language master at Uppsala university around 1670.

This summer my family and I spent two weeks in Italy, our first visit there, and saw many interesting and beautiful scenes. At home again I happened to mention old Blasius to one of my sons, a big fan of Italy. This has triggered his interest in that part of his ancestors, and he has now started to do research on Blasius, and

is e-mailing an Italian “dottoressa”, who is researching in the time when our ancestor lived.

It is fun to see that at least some of my own genealogy interest is at last showing up in the next generation.

A sad thing is that the Swedish discussion board “Anbytarforum,” where many Swedish-Americans have been helped to find their roots is no longer working. It was supposed to be upgraded and renewed, but that has already taken six weeks, and no signs of progress, so we are worried about its future. It would be so sad also to lose all the information that has been added to the Anbytarforum during the last eight years.

Yours till next! *Elisabeth Thorsell*

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## Limited edition NWO tote bag!

This very special tote bag was made for the 2007 SAG Workshop in Salt Lake City, and there are a few left for sale. The tote bag is of sturdy material and is perfect to carry genealogy notebooks and copies in, maybe even a laptop computer.

The cartoon of Nils William Olsson was drawn by his son Christopher in 1981.

The price is \$10 + \$3.50 for sales tax and shipping in the U.S. and Canada, each (\$13.50).

Checks (payable to “Swenson Center”) are to be mailed to:

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# Abbreviations

**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]).

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

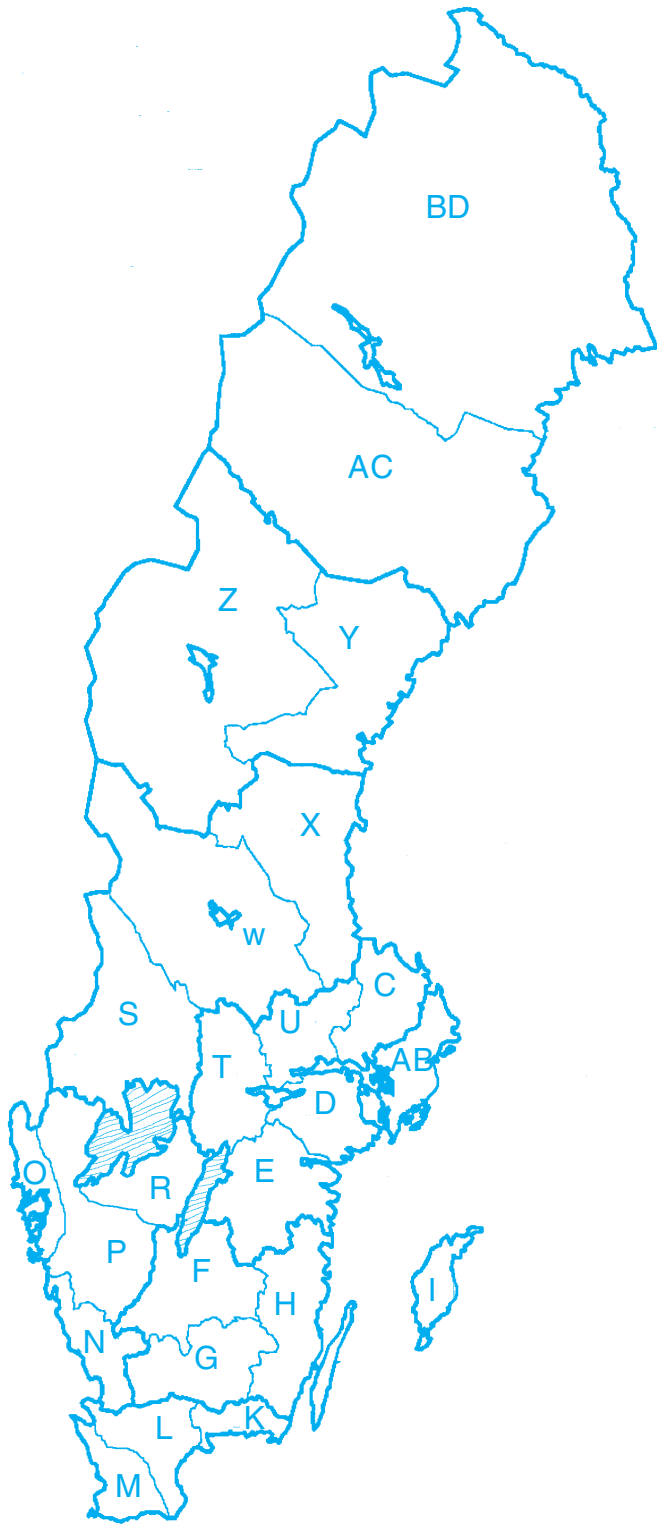
**Table 2.** Abbreviations and codes for Swedish counties (*län*) formerly used by *Swedish American Genealogist* (1981-1999) and currently used by *Statistiska centralbyrån* (SCB) (the Central Bureau of Statistics, Stockholm).

Län ( <i>County</i> )	SAG <i>Abbr.</i>	SCB <i>Abbr.</i>	SCB <i>Code</i>	Län ( <i>County</i> )	SAG <i>Abbr.</i>	SCB <i>Abbr.</i>	SCB <i>Code</i>
Blekinge	Blek.	Blek.	K	Stockholm	Stock.	Sthm.	AB
Dalarna <sup>a</sup>		Dirn.	W	Södermanland	Söd.	Södm.	D
Gotland	Gotl.	Gotl.	I	Uppsala	Upps.	Upps.	C
Gävleborg	Gävl.	Gävl.	X	Värmland	Värm.	Vrml.	S
Halland	Hall.	Hall.	N	Västerbotten	Vbn.	Vbtn.	AC
Jämtland	Jämt.	Jmtl.	Z	Västernorrland	Vn.	Vnrl.	Y
Jönköping	Jön.	Jkpg.	F	Västmanland	Väst.	Vstm.	U
Kalmar	Kalm.	Kalm.	H	Västra Götaland <sup>c</sup>		Vgöt.	O
Kronoberg	Kron.	Kron.	G	Örebro	Öre.	Öreb.	T
Norrbottn	Norr.	Nbtn.	BD	Östergötland	Ög.	Östg.	E
Skåne <sup>b</sup>		Skån.	M				

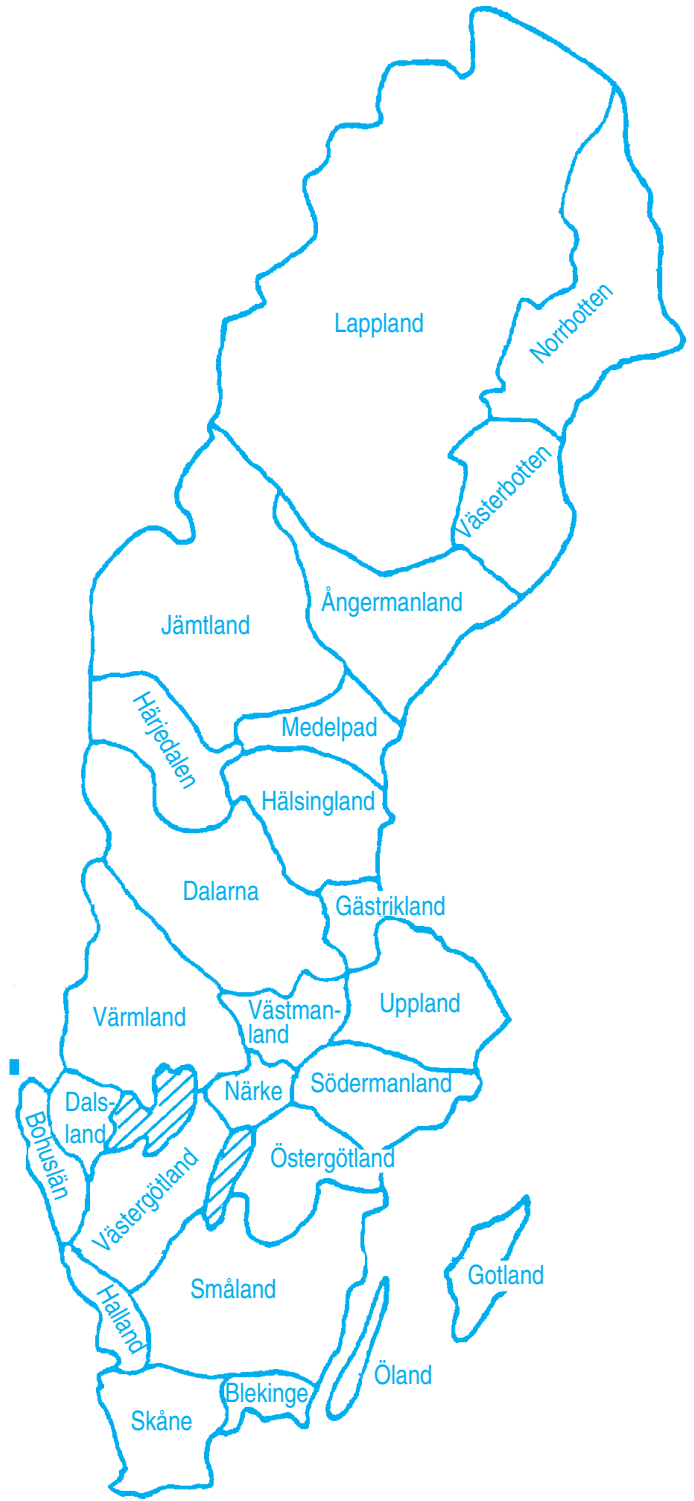
**a** formerly Kopparberg (Kopp.; W) *län*.

**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 (*län*) as they were before 1991.



The provinces (*landskap*).