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biography, genealogy, and personal history*



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Swedish American Genealogist

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Cover picture:

Photograph of the 1700 block of 2nd Avenue looking west from 18th Street in downtown Rock Island, Illinois. McCabe Dry Goods Company located at 1723-1731 2nd Avenue is visible on the right side of the photograph. Automobiles are parked along both sides of the streets. (Photo from Augustana College Special Collections).

A tragic 130th anniversary

The murder of a Småland immigrant in Northfield, Minnesota

BY MAGNUS EKSTRAND AND BIRGER BRING

Christdala Church

The more than 120-year old church of Christdala rises close to the country road a couple of kilometers west of the town of Millersburg, Rice County, in southeast Minnesota, about 50 kilometers south of the state capital of Saint Paul. This simple wooden church, erected by Swedish immigrants, is in this area the foremost building that links the present Swedish-Americans and the immigrants of the 1870s to this part of Minnesota. Christdala church has recently been the object of interest to the antiquarian authorities and was in 1995 placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service. It has recently been thoroughly restored.

When the first Swedish settlers arrived in the neighborhood of



Christdala church around 1870, one of them was Peter Ljungquist, born 2 January 1844 in Vittsjö parish in Skåne. He was followed shortly by a great number of his countrymen, including the “*smålänning*” Peter Gustafsson, born 3 February 1842 in Fiddekulla, Vissefjärda parish in Kalmar *län*, and his younger brother Nicolaus Gustafsson, born 20 August 1846 in the same place. The Swedes who arrived in the Millersburg area during the 1870s came mostly from Småland, Skåne, and Blekinge.

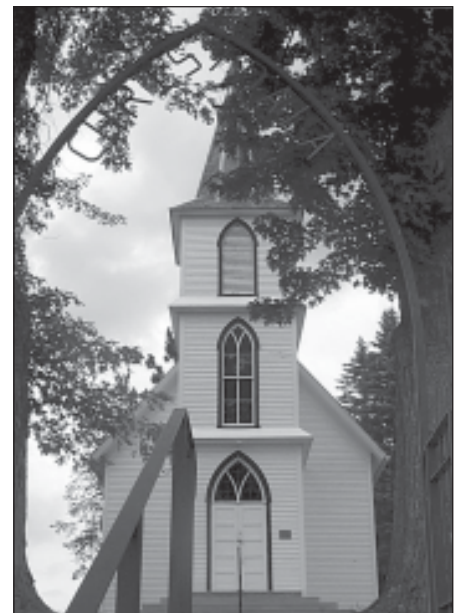
The Christdala Congregation

The Swedes soon started to cater to the spiritual needs and in 1877 founded a congregation, in the beginning consisting of 13 Swedish families. When they had to choose a name for the congregation, they finally chose Christdala, and it is said that it was their spiritual leader, Pastor A. Wahlin, who suggested this name.

Several Swedish place names with the same spelling are found in several instances in Sweden. The name Kristdala though is unique and only found in one place – as a parish in the city of Oskarshamn. Is it probable that a small group of immigrants, consisting of 13 families without knowledge of the ancient Swedish name, would construct a similar name in an old form of the language far away in Minnesota?

Well, hardly. The choice of name points to the possibility that somebody in the group knew about the Swedish parish in Oskarshamn. By this time several inhabitants from the *småländska* Kristdala had immigrated to the town of Andover in Illinois, not far from Minnesota. Perhaps it was through his contacts with his ministerial colleagues there that pastor Wahlin obtained information about Kristdala in Småland, and found the name so pleasing that he chose to use it for his new congregation at Millersburg.

The building of the church started in 1878. The foundation was laid by John Lundberg and for the majority of the carpentry work John Olsson



Christdala church.

from nearby Northfield was responsible. In the summer of 1878 the church was ready to be used. John Olsson had an indelible memory of something that had happened about 2 years earlier, but more about that later.

Clouds of trouble

Life for the first immigrants to the Christdala congregation was not without its share of burdens and hardships. The breaking of the untilled Minnesota soil and the building of necessary houses demanded enormous physical efforts.

The first houses of the immigrants were often small, cold, and dark, sometimes even worse than what they had left in the old country. In the beginning many of the Swedes also had problems finding cash to buy all the tools that were necessary to farm properly. In the beginning most of the Swedes in Minnesota led a fairly primitive life, not without its worries.

The settlers sometimes heard stories about the bloody Indian uprising in Minnesota in 1862, when many Europeans, including a number of Swedes, had been killed. But the immigrants of the 1870s no longer had any cause to fear the Red Man. Instead soon eight white Americans were going to become a short-lived but deadly threat to two of the Swedish immigrants, and the Swedish colony would lose a member.

The 6th of September 1876: preparations

Peter Ljungquist had the only team of mules among the Swedish settlers around Millersburg. Thus he owned the fastest means of transport in the colony and his countrymen used to go with him on his travels. On 6 September he decided to go to Northfield the next day. Some other Swedes were coming along, including Nicolaus Gustafsson.

On the same day, the 6th of September, Cole Younger and three other horsemen came to Millersburg in the heart of the Swedish colony, where they lodged at the Cushman Hotel

for the night. These men were probably not known by sight in the area, but the hotel staff might have noticed their heavy armament. The following day they were to meet with four other men on a common errand in Northfield.

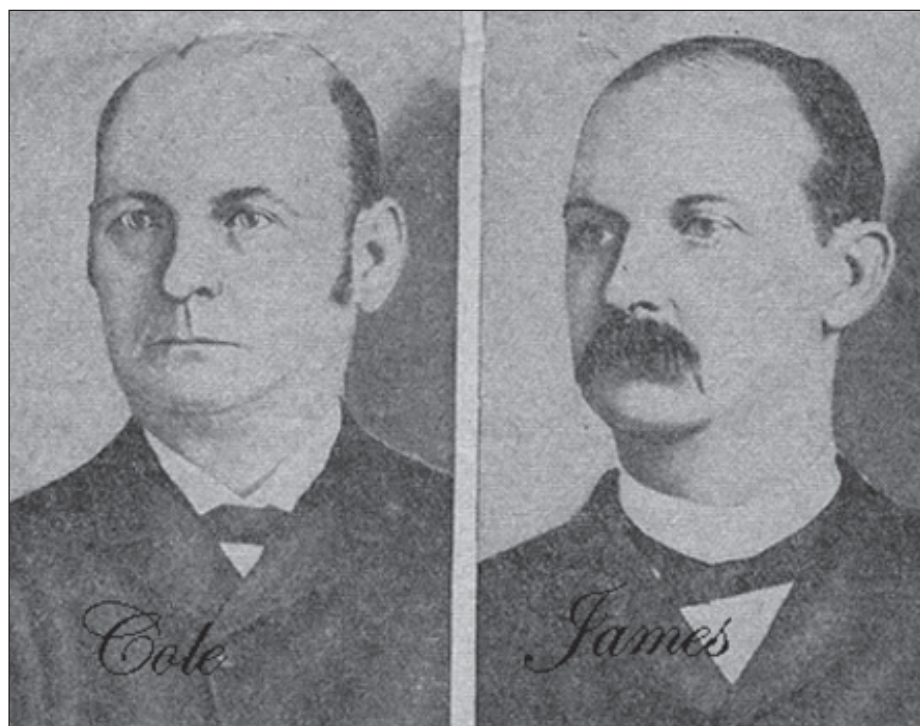
In the morning of 7 September 1876: on the road to Northfield

On the morning of 7 September Peter Ljungquist harnessed his mules and started on the road to Northfield. At the Gustafsson farm, not far from Christdala Church, lived the former Vissefjärda resident Peter Gustafsson and his wife Anna Carin Andreasdotter, born 1846 in Sillhövda parish, Blekinge *län*. Near them also lived Gustafsson's younger brother, Nicolaus Gustafsson, age 30, who had just arrived from Sweden. There Ljungquist fetched the latter and Peter Gustafsson's wife, and when they all had settled in the wagon pulled by the mules there was a total of five Swedes. They had all brought some farm produce that they intended to barter in the town. Cash was not often found among the settlers, so a condition for trading was you had something to trade with.

The company hoped to reach their goal at noontime.

But more people had an errand in Northfield that day. Eight horsemen were getting close to the town. Four of them had spent the night at the Cushman Hotel in Millersburg, and the other four someplace else in the vicinity. Otherwise they had travelled a long way – through several states of the union – for an errand that was well-planned. They did not come like the Swedes to exchange produce or services peacefully with the townspeople, nor to just make a friendly and polite visit. They had other things on their minds, and the goal of their long travel was the First National Bank of Northfield. But it was not a question of making a deposit or a withdrawal, as none of them owned any honestly-earned money. They supported themselves in a different way. They brought the equipment that always accompanied them on their travels – rifles, guns, and ammunition – by the use of which they aimed to make the biggest withdrawal in the short history of the Northfield bank: the bank was going to be robbed of all cash.

The eight-man gang was led by the 29-year-old Jesse James, the most feared bank, train, and stagecoach



Cole and James Younger.

robber in North America. By his side rode his brother Frank James, the hardened brothers Robert, James, and Cole Younger and three more men. Partly schooled during the Civil War, these men were a highly dangerous group with several murders and robberies on their consciences, and who did not hesitate to use violence to reach their goals. It was Cole Younger who soon enough was to meet eye-to-eye two Swedish immigrants.

Afternoon 7 September 1876: the bank robbery and the fatal shooting

The eight Americans rode into Northfield about 11 in the morning. A few hours later, about 2 in the afternoon, they regrouped according to their plans. Three of them dismounted and went into the bank, while the other five, including Cole Younger, stayed mounted to watch the closest streets.

By one o'clock the five Swedes arrived in town, where they started their trading. It was then still quiet and peaceful in the town. When the first shot was heard by the bank around two in the afternoon, Nicolaus Gustafsson was not far away, possibly on the same block. The shooting created, naturally enough, some excitement in town, and several persons, including John Olsson, who lived in Northfield and was later to build the Christdala Church, rushed towards the town center.

By the street crossing just south of the bank he was stopped by one of the robbers, Cole Younger, who with a gun in his hand told him to leave the street. At the same time more shots were fired and a man was seen falling to the ground on the other side of the street, and Olsson turned around and started to run towards the basement where he had come from. Shortly before he reached the basement stairs he met Nicolaus Gustafsson who seemed to walk towards the center of the shooting without understanding the danger. Gustafsson, who despite the alarm along the Main Street, did not understand the danger for some reason, ended up



Frank James.



Jesse James.

face-to-face with the 32-year-old Cole Younger, who was mounted on his horse and watched the street corner just to the south of the bank. He told the Swede to leave, but Gustafsson had not yet learned enough English, and did not seem to listen to Younger, who then fired his gun and hit Gustafsson in the head.

Bleeding profusely from a wound close to his eyes Nicolaus Gustafsson fell down on the street just by the feet of John Olsson, where he laid on his back. Olsson continued a few meters more and took shelter by the basement door. When he soon tried to rescue his wounded countryman, he was ordered by Younger "Stay where you are, or I will kill you too!" Younger evidently believed that his shot of Gustafsson had been instantly killing him.

Later the shocked *smålänning* would rise and walk on his own to

the nearby river to wash his bleeding head. On his way back he met John Olsson, who took him to the *Norska Hotellet* (Norwegian Hotel), from where they sent for a doctor. He stated that Gustafsson had a fracture in his skull and that a piece of bone had intruded into the brain.

Gustafsson's condition deteriorated quickly, and after four days in a coma under the care of John Olsson and others, he died in Northfield on Monday 11 September 1876. He was buried in the town cemetery.

The hunt

One of the shots that was fired in the bank killed the cashier, who paid with his life for refusing to open the safe. But with alacrity not expected by the robbers, the townspeople got out their arms to defend themselves and their money. A gunfight started outside the bank, during which two



Gun used by Cole Younger.

of the robbers were killed and left dead in the street. Wounded and without other booty than just some coins, the other six had to flee the town.

Hunted by a huge posse, the outlaws divided into two groups, so that Jesse and Frank James managed to escape their pursuers. The other group was not so lucky: on the 21st of September they passed a Norwegian farm, where the escapees were observed by a watchful 17-year-old youth by the name of Oscar Sorbel, who sounded the alarm.

The local sheriff immediately organized a posse, which is said to have included a couple of Norwegians, and that later in the same day managed to surround the robbers. During the gunfight that followed another of them lost his life. Unable to defend themselves any longer, the much-wounded Youngers had to surrender. During the trial that followed they were all sentenced to life in prison for taking part in the attack on Northfield.

Epilog

The 17-year-old Norwegian youth Oscar Sorbel's part in the catching of the Younger brothers was soon common knowledge. To shield him from unwanted attention from other members of the Younger gang, his name was changed to Oscar Oleson Suborn. His true identity was not known until about 50 years after the bank robbery.

Jesse James, the man who led the attack on the Northfield bank, was murdered in 1882, 35 years old. His brother Frank left the outlaw career later the same year. After a short trial he was acquitted of all his crimes. Together with Cole Younger he participated for some time in a Wild West Show. On and off he supported himself by showing his and Jesse's parental home to tourists, and his last years he worked as a starter at trotting races. He died 1915, 72 years old.

Robert Younger, the youngest of the brothers, never regained his liberty. He became ill with tuberculosis and died in prison in 1889. Cole Younger, the man who killed Nicolaus Gustafsson, was released from prison in 1901 together with his brother James. They had then made amends for the attack on Northfield with 25 years of their lives. James committed suicide in 1902. Cole worked for a while as a tombstone salesman. Later he joined his old pal Frank James and the once feared bandits now went on tours and gave lectures on the plight of being an outlaw. Cole Younger was the last of the men around Jesse James. He died in 1916, aged 72 years.

The further details on John Olsson's life are unknown. Peter Ljungquist, the man with the mule team, died in the 1920s. He was then in his 80s and was buried in the cemetery by Christdala church.

The Swedes in southeastern Min-

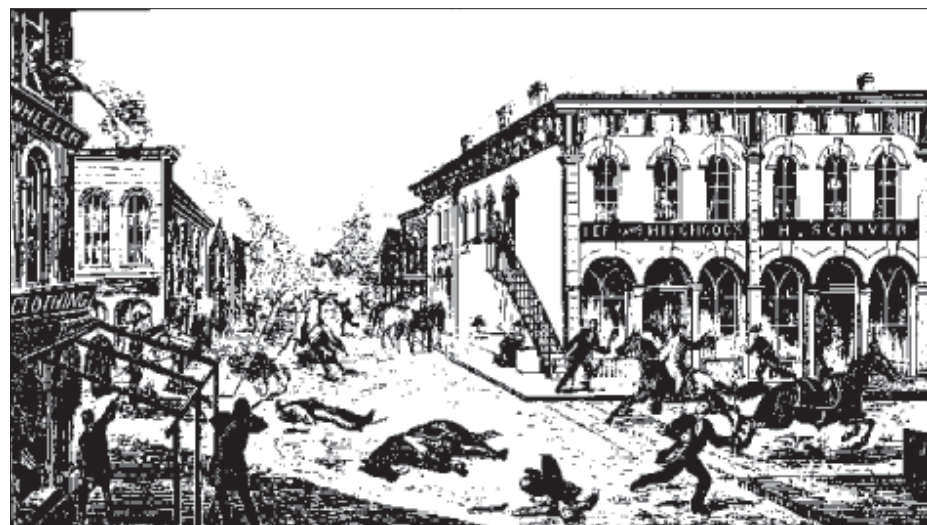
nesota for many years talked about Nicolaus Gustafsson, who only lived for 30 years, of which just a few months in North America. His burial place in the Northfield cemetery was unmarked for a long time and was thus forgotten. In May 1994 it was found again, and 7 September the same year, on the anniversary of the bank robbery, the townspeople erected a stone on his resting place.

In his Småland home parish he seems to be totally forgotten; nobody seems to know who he was. But since the 1940s the people of Northfield every year in September celebrate the memory of the failed bank robbery. Before thousands of spectators eight amateur players ride into town and group themselves around the bank. Shots are fired along the street, and close to the street crossing at the end of the block every year one of the main characters falls to the ground, a Swedish farmer's son from Vissefjärda who already long ago wrote his name in the history of Minnesota.

The Christdala congregation was disbanded in 1966.

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Translated by Elisabeth Thorsell and Christopher Olsson.



The Northfield Raid.

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Glimpses from SAG Workshops 2005 and 2006

A report from a happy camper

BY LOIS HARALDSEN

My sisters, Alice Johnson and Karen Weiner, and I have been looking for our Swedish heritage for a long time. Since all of our grandparents and our father were born in Sweden, this has been quite a task. We have talked for years about attending the SAG Workshop in Salt Lake City. 2005 was the year!

Karen e-mailed Karna Olsson to make our reservations. Karna e-mailed back that they had never had three in a room. She asked, "Did we know how small the room is?" We, of course, do. We shared a room as young children. We had been to family functions, doll conventions, and even toured Sweden together. Our reservations were placed.

A few weeks before the trip we heard from Gunilla Johansson, a "cousin" in Sweden, who was planning a trip to California and would like to meet us. Karen contacted Karna again and asked for four in the room. Karna made no comment, just accommodated us.

"Nilla" enjoyed the conference and thought she would be a big help. She couldn't read the old Swedish much to her chagrin. She was a hit with everyone and was able to tour Salt Lake City where she wouldn't have gone otherwise.

The staff are all very helpful and will go out of their way to help you solve a problem. Even when you can't find a birth record they do not make you feel stupid when you are looking at a death record. We enjoyed the workshops, the dinner, and meeting people interested in genealogy.

We learned that our carpenter ancestor could read and write so he became a teacher which was a permitted job. We also learned our tailor ancestor made clothes only for men,

never for women! This helped make our ancestors more personal than just names and dates.

The 2006 workshop has just ended. The time flew by. The staff was just as patient, helpful, and friendly. We found the workshops informative. This year an auction was added to benefit The Swenson Center. It was fun!

We learned that our soldier ancestors lived in very small "stugas" and about the wars that Sweden was involved in.

We learned about "Tomtar och Troll" and how superstitious our ancestors were. Some of the stories were similiar to stories we learned in school, like the "Three Billy Goats Gruff."

Our biggest find

Our *mormor* immigrated in 1904 from Mistelås in Kronoberg to Chicago. In the 1950's she wanted to return to Sweden and had no birth record. None could be found in Sweden. One of her many Swedish friends went with her to the post office to say she knew her in Sweden. She didn't of course. We have looked for many years for her birth record and this time we found it. There was a new listing for some records in her parish. It's nice to know she was born! We wonder where the records were all these years?

Thank you all!

Lois Haraldsen lives in Wheaton, IL. Her e-mail is <loispaul1957@yahoo.com>



A corner in Salt Lake City we will never see again, as the whole block will be torn down in 2007.

SVAR

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Your link to your history!



Swedish Church Records 1860 – 1905

The Swedish church records for the counties of *Kalmar, Kronoberg, Östergötland, Jönköping, Gotland, Stockholm, Uppsala, Södermanland, Örebro, Västmanland, Kopparberg (Dalarna), Gävleborg, Västernorrland, Jämtland, Västerbotten, and Norrbotten* are now online on our web site.

We are in the process of scanning the records for the counties of *Göteborg och Bohus, Älvsborg, and Skaraborg*. The database is updated with more than 10,000 and up to 15,000 digitized documents every day.

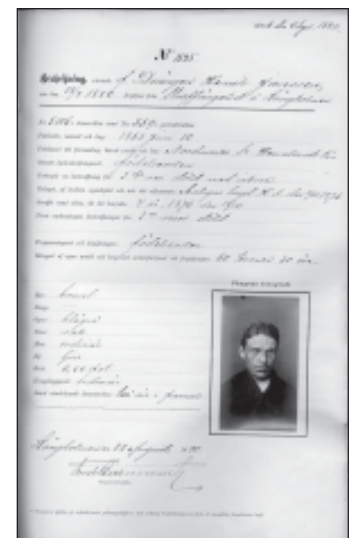
Swedish Censuses

You can search the whole Swedish population in the 1890 and 1900 censuses. A great part of the 1880 census is ready, and we are working on completing it.

In these databases you will find information on family status, occupations, places of birth, other members of the household with different names, and much more. In the 1900 census most posts are linked to images of the original pages.

Released prisoners

At www.svar.ra.se there is a database of released prisoners (*fångförteckningar*) during the period 1876–1925. The information on each prisoner contains information on his name, place of birth, current sentence, previous convictions, personal description (hair and eye color, etc.), and a photograph. See example to the right.



The Swedish Tax records (*Mantal*) 1642–1820

The Tax records are now online at www.svar.ra.se They list all able-bodied people from age 15 to age 62, household by household.

Other databases

At www.svar.ra.se there are many other databases of interest to genealogists. We have databases with seamen (*sjömanshus*) and much, much more. The number of databases is constantly growing.

How do I get access to all these resources?

By contacting SVAR and getting a subscription. You can subscribe for just a single visit or anything up to a whole year.

Contact us at kundtjanst@svar.ra.se
SVAR, Box 160, S-880 40 Ramsele, Sweden.
Phone + 46-623-725 00. Fax + 46-623-726 05.

From 'Lucy' to Åby!

The discoverer of the roots of mankind finds his own roots in Östergötland

By ANDERS KÖHLER

A couple of years ago I received a letter from a professor Donald Johanson at The Institute of Human Origins in Arizona. Donald Carl Johanson, born 1943 in Chicago, is the son of two immigrants from Sweden.

Professor Johanson asked me if I could check if he had any Walloons in his family tree. The tradition in the Johanson family claimed that.

I started the research and soon I found names like Allard, Bonnivier, and Qwarfordt among his ancestors. At least it is possible to trace the Bonnivier family back to Belgium. So the tradition in the family about a Walloon background was correct.

Now I had enough information to start planning a trip in Johanson's ancestors' footsteps. I met Johanson at the home of his cousin Inga Britt in Norrköping. The first place we visited was the old iron industry site, Hävla *hammarsmedja* [Hävla forge] in Skedevi parish of Östergötland's *län*, where Johanson's forefather had been a *hammarsmed* [forge smith]. It is a very interesting place to visit. We stopped at Skedevi church where some of Johanson ancestors are buried. Then we went to Finspång and on to Kullerstad church.

In Kullerstad church Johanson and I have a common relative buried; he was *Mäster* [master smith] Christian Qwarfordt, who died in 1694.

Johanson said, "Even more exciting was the discovery that Anders and I are distantly related and are descended from a common ancestor, Anders Qwarfordt, who lived in the early 17th Century."

Professor Johanson really enjoyed

the trip in Sweden. He attained more knowledge about his ancestors and their history, and found Walloons in the family tree. He recommended that other Americans with Swedish background do the same, take a tour to the Old Country.

Donald Johanson is a professor of anthropology at the Institute of Human Origins at Arizona State University. Johanson was the anthropologist who discovered our prehistoric ancestor 'Lucy' in Ethiopia in East Africa. 'Lucy' is over 3 million years old. Professor Donald Johanson is a good example of an American with Swedish ancestors who has become famous all over the world.

Professor Johanson is not the first member in the Johanson family to be successful. His uncle Ivar Johansson¹ was a gold medalist in wrestling in the Olympic Games in Los Angeles 1932. For me it was a nice experience to get in contact with a person like Donald Johanson, a contact I still have.



Anders Köhler (left) and Donald Johanson in Kullerstad church by the tombstone of Christian Qwarfordt.

Note:

1) Ivar Valentin Johansson, born 31 January 1903 i Kuddby (Östg.), died 4 August 1979 i S:t Johannes (Östg.)

Anders Köhler is a Swedish genealogist living in Åby, near Norrköping. His e-mail is: <anders.kohler@swipnet.se>

The Dahlstedts – a family tale

The origins of a Småland family

BY CAROL J. BERN

Långemåla is a parish in Kalmar *län*. It is slightly southwest of Oskarshamn near the east coast of Sweden. Parish church records go back to 1734. It is here that our story begins.

In the year 1771 on the 22 of April, Magnus Dahlstedt began his service as a soldier in the J.W. Sprengtporten's Infantry Regiment. He was designated soldier No. 22 and his age is recorded as 21 years and 5 months which would indicate his year of birth was 1749. Magnus was single when he joined the service and was trained as a carpenter. He was recorded as a Lutheran from the province of Småland. He was shown on the military rolls as 5 feet 8 inches tall. He participated in the Finnish War of 1788-1790.

He served in that unit until 1805 which entitled him to a pension. Magnus was assigned to Långemåla parish in Kalmar *län*.

The allotment system

During this period of time Sweden had a regular system of military service which allowed for permanent soldiers to be stationed throughout the land. Each soldier was supported by a small allotment of land with maybe a cow supplied by the community. He worked for the other farmers when not taking care of his military duties. In time of war his wife and family would be looked after by the community.

Many years after his retirement, a notation appears in the records that he had become blind. It was an



A typical soldier's cottage.

affliction which was passed down through the generations.

The start of the family

It did not take long for Magnus to find and marry Stina Ericsson who the records say was born in 1750. Stina's birthplace is also unknown. Their first child was a daughter named Anna Maja, born 5 June 1777, followed by Lars Magnus in 1780, Ingeborg in 1783, and Eric in 1786. The father Magnus died in

Långemåla 11 November 1821,

Although she was unmarried, Anna Maja had a son named Carl Dahlstedt on 27 April 1808, when she was 31 years old. She did not marry during her lifetime, and died in Långemåla on 12 December 1863. She raised her son, Carl, all by herself. Census records indicate that Magnus, Anna Maja, and her son, Carl, lived together in the parish while Carl was growing up.

Carl Dahlstedt met and married Stina Lisa Nilsdotter, who was born 28 December 1809. Stina Lisa was from Fliseryd parish and they were married there 29 December 1839. The couple had four children – Carl Eloff and Johan Fredrick were born in 1842 and 1845 respectively. Carl Eloff died 26 December 1848 and his brother, Johan Fredrick, died 9 December 1859. By this time they had had their third child, Carl August, who had been named to replace the first Carl. Carl August was born 4 October 1849. Frans Oscar was born 1 September 1854.

Carl was the first in his family to have a trade. He worked as the village blacksmith in Långemåla his entire life, and the Dahlstedt family became the village blacksmiths for several generations. Carl died 18 October 1867 in Långemåla, and his widow Stina Lisa followed him on 13 October 1891.

Fire in the house

The next generation of this blacksmith family was Carl August again in Långemåla. Carl August was second in his family to carry the blacksmith trade forward. They lived above the blacksmith shop. This later proved to be a catastrophic problem as the blacksmith shop caught fire and burned up all of family's belongings about 1900. It was rebuilt, but many of the old photos and other family articles were lost in the fire. During a visit to Sweden we had taken some photos from my grandfather's belongings in the hope that we could learn the identity of the people. The Swedish cousins knew immediately who all the people were and we were able to replace some of their old photos lost in the earlier fire.

Carl August married Johanna Fredrika Gustafsdotter on 15 March 1873 in Långemåla parish. She was from the nearby parish of Högsby. To this union were born six children. Carl Oskar was born in 1874, Johan August in 1877, Augusta in 1879, Sigrid in 1882, Axel Edward in 1885, and finally Albin Herman in 1889.

Carl August died on 20 June 1915

of gallstone and kidney problems at age 65, and was buried in a family plot in the Långemåla churchyard. Relatives helped us locate his tombstone which had been placed against the wall of the cemetery. When asked why the tombstone was no longer at the burial plot in the cemetery, the relatives explained that if no one tended the grave, the stone would be removed and someone else would be buried in the plot. Carl August's widow Johanna Fredrika Gustafsdotter died 19 August 1922 in Långemåla 2.

The immigrants

Of this family, the youngest two children, Axel Edward and later Albin Herman immigrated to the United States. Axel left Copenhagen 27 August 1902 with a ticket for Chicago, and arrived at Ellis Island on 8 September on the *Oscar II*. Although Axel had been trained as a blacksmith in Sweden, he worked as a hired man and was able to save enough money to buy a farm of his own near Bishop Hill, Illinois.

Axel married Jennie Christine Lind in Henry County, Illinois, on 5 March 1913. Jennie was a first generation American. Her parents were Johan Erik Lind from Hvena (modern spelling: Vena) in Småland and Martha Hanson from Svärdsjö in Kopparberg, Sweden. Axel and Jennie's first child was Francis Marguerite Dahlstedt, who was my mother, born on 25 March 1914. Then



Carl August and Johanna Fredrika Gustafsdotter.

came Herman Edward in 1916, Beverly Marie in 1919, and finally Dorothy Mae in 1926. In 1930 they all lived at Walnut Grove in Knox County, Illinois. Axel was blind with glaucoma in later years as was his ancestor before him.

Albin left Göteborg 13 October 1909 with a ticket for Galesburg. In 1930 he lived in Moline with his wife Emma, son Edward, and daughter Jeane. Albin was a smith in a plow factory.

Carol Bern lives in Longview, WA. <Halby5443@aol.com>



Axel and Albin Dahlstedt.

News from the Swenson Center

Swedish-American lodges and other organizations

BY JILL SEAHOLM

One of the lesser-known aspects of the lives of Swedish immigrants in the U.S. and Canada is the organizations that they formed and belonged to. At the Swenson Center we generally point people to the Swedish-American church records and the information that they contain, and I admit that we often forget about the records of Swedish-American lodges, which occasionally contain a wealth of information about their Swedish immigrant members.

According to Dag Blanck's dissertation *Becoming Swedish-American*, during the mass migration period there were an estimated 115,000 members of secular Swedish-American organizations such as the Independent Order of Vikings, the Independent Order of Svithiod, the Vasa Order of America, and the Scandinavian Fraternity of America, to name a few. That number represented approximately 10% of first- and second-generation Swedish-Americans, which is partly why we at the Swenson Center concentrate more on the Swedish-American churches, which about 25% of Swedish immigrants joined (*Becoming Swedish-American*, p. 36-37).

The Swedish-American church population was bigger, and it was essentially here first. The earliest immigrants tended to come over as families, and the Swedish-American churches served their needs with those families in mind. Within the church, there were schools, social evenings, choirs, and youth groups to keep the immigrants occupied and out of trouble.

The social classes were separated by clubs for more successful or upper-class immigrants which excluded some people by charging substantial dues. The first known Swedish secular organization in the U.S. was started in 1836 in New York City and was called *Svenska Societeten*. It was formed by and attracted the educated and liberal. In Chicago in 1857 came *Svea*, which also catered to the "leading Chicago Swedes." It had its own library of Swedish-language books and newspapers and gave its members a place to go. It was so exclusive that at times it had trouble attracting new members. In 1867 came the first Swedish women's organization, *Svenska Fruntimmers-föreningen*.

The 1880s brought many young, single immigrants to the big cities, and secular organizations filled a void for a good number of the immigrants who preferred not to join a church. This tended to describe young, single Swedish male laborers who were not as likely to feel that they belonged within such a family-oriented church community the way the single immigrant women could fit in. Except as a place to find single Swedish women, the church did not hold much incentive for young, single men to join. Organizations such as lodges gave them a place to gather with other young men who were far from home and ease themselves into American life while still using the Swedish language and gathering with fellow countrymen. They held festivals, dances, picnics, concerts, theater performances, lectures, and

often took financial care of the immigrants by offering life and health insurance coverage for members and their families (Beijbom: *Scandinavia Overseas*).

Special Interests

Groups were formed based on common interests, too. There were Good Templars, numerous singing clubs, gymnastics clubs, labor organizations, and mutual aid societies, to name a few. The American Union of Swedish Singers (AUSS) still thrives today with choruses in 13 states, with choruses for men, women, and children. There were and still are groups of accordion players, fiddle players, key-fiddle players, and folk dancers, all coming together in their own way to make or enjoy Swedish music.

Historical groups

There were and still are organizations for immigrants from individual provinces or counties in Sweden, though nowadays the members are more likely descended from immigrants long ago. A small group of descendants of people from Kristdala parish in Kalmar län meets once a month in Andover, Illinois, to talk about Sweden, their Swedish ancestry, and to socialize. Others with no ancestry from Kristdala also join their meetings. Third- and fourth-generation Swedish descendants who are discovering their Swedish roots late in life are also discovering and starting new organizations. According to the *American Swedish Hand-*

book, which is published by Swedish Council of America in Minneapolis, there is a group called "Vestgota Gille of Chicago." Its description says "to unite men born in the province of Västergötland, Sweden, and their male offspring to revive memories of their birthplace and forefathers' virtues."

Orders

As more Swedish immigrants were living in the U.S. and the cities filled with young laborers, more organizations appeared to give them places to go. The lodges started to spread and formed stabilizing orders such as the Independent Orders of Svithiod [Svithiod is the viking age name for Sweden, Ed:s note.] and Vikings and the Scandinavian Fraternity of America. This provided constancy from one lodge to the next throughout each order. Women were allowed to join and to form their own lodges, making for more well-rounded groups that could sometimes take membership away from the churches. This made the churches frown upon the secular immigrant groups, calling them unchristian and denying church membership to such people (Beijbom: *Scandinavia Overseas*).

Some of the individual orders

The *Independent Order of Svithiod* was formed in 1880 in Chicago and chartered in 1881. The Svithiod Grand Lodge began in 1893 complete with its first Grand Master. Men were the sole members until 1916 when women were allowed to join,

and in 1962 it was decided that "persons of Scandinavian birth or extraction" (anyone from the five Nordic countries) could now join rather than only Swedes. Over 700 people attended events celebrating the Svithiod's 100th anniversary in 1980. Web site: <www.svithiod.org>

The Swenson Center has on microfilm Svithiod lodge records from Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Oregon, and Washington.

The *Independent Order of Vikings* was formed 115 years ago in Chicago by 11 Swedish immigrants with a desire "to establish a fraternal organization to help one another, both financially and communally" in order to alleviate their concerns about what would happen to their families should anything happen to them. They established "a sick benefit and a burial fund." In 1892 a Grand Lodge began.

"As the IOV expanded across the country, these men would advertise in local papers that a new lodge within the Independent Order of Vikings was going to hold its first meeting on a certain date at a local, rented hall. Swedish men of a certain age, generally from 16-50 = it differed from lodge to lodge = were invited to become Charter members. These Charter members must be of "good character" and must undergo a doctor's examination. The name of a local Swedish doctor, along with his telephone number and office hours, was usually included in the ad. Organizers were employed by the IOV from 1892 through 1929."

Another interesting tidbit from their web site: in 1896 an "Indepen-



dent Order of Viking's Band was organized and played in parades, at concerts, IOV meetings, and for private parties, often without remuneration. There were about 30 musicians, all in uniform, with the base drum imprinted with their name: IOViking's Band."

The Thor Lodge #9 in Moline, Illinois, organized in 1901, was the first successful lodge outside of Chicago. In 1905 Omaha formed the first Viking lodge outside of Illinois.

In 1904 the Independent Order Ladies of Vikings (I.O.L. of V.) came into existence, with the same constitution and bylaws as their male counterparts and their own Grand Lodge officers.

In 1934, however, Swedish women were allowed to become members in the IOV, which brought about the subsequent demise of the Independent Order Ladies of Vikings.

By the end of 1910, there were 36 lodges with membership of over 6,700. In 1919 there were 59 lodges with membership of 9,204. By 1929, 95 lodges in 19 states with membership of close to 15,000. Nowadays the



IOV consists of 27 lodges in 9 states with a membership totaling about 7,300. In 1986 the Grand Lodge moved from its lifelong space in Chicago to the suburb of Des Plaines.

The IOV sponsors the Scholarship Fund for high school, with grants to study Swedish at Uppsala University in Sweden and at the Concordia Language Villages in Moorhead, Minnesota.

Web site: <www.iovikings.org>

The Swenson Center has Viking lodge records on microfilm from California, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin.

The *International Order of Good Templars*, an organization which thought that drinking was endemic and was directly affecting the growth of commercialism and industrialization, was begun in North America already in the 1840s. The Grand Lodge of New York was formed in 1852, and to meet the needs of all ages, women, youth, and children's sections were organized. More Good Templar lodges followed and by 1891 as many as 8 million people worldwide had pledged not to drink, including many who were at first hard drinkers.

In the late 1860s the movement spread throughout Europe and by the mid-1870s to the rest of the world, including Sweden, but by then the Swedish-Americans were already in it, and Swedish IOGT lodges started popping up in Chicago, Rockford, and Minneapolis.

A major split occurred from 1876 to 1887 on the issue of separate lodges for blacks and whites. Dual lodges and Grand Lodges had been allowed after the Civil War "to allow for the sensitivities of Southern states." Some thought that all races should be allowed, others did not.

Prohibition in the 1920s brought a decline in membership because Americans thought that the battle had been won, and after prohibition was repealed, Alcoholics Anonymous filled the role that had previously

been the IOGT's.

Web site: <www.iogt.org>

The Swenson Center has IOGT lodges on microfilm from California, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wisconsin.

"The *Vasa Order of America* was founded in New Haven, Connecticut, on the 18th of September, 1896, by Swedish immigrants. The purpose at first was to assist those who through sickness needed help, but also to give



their countrymen the opportunity to get together during dignified meetings. Sweden got its first lodge in 1924.

"The VOA is open to all of Scandinavian descent, together with their spouses, regardless of their heritage. It is not necessary to have relatives or other contacts in the U.S.A. to be eligible for membership."

Starting in 1924, the *Vasa Order of America* has lodges in Sweden, too, sparked by a visit of Vasa children's clubs to Sweden. The first lodge in Sweden was in Göteborg, and some of its members were immigrants who had returned to Sweden. Today there are 43 local lodges in Sweden. They routinely send representatives to America for conferences and Grand Lodge meetings.

Web site: <www.vasaorden.se>

Web site: <www.vasaorder.org>

For Vasa records, contact the Vasa Archives, Box 101, Bishop Hill, IL 61419-0101, ph/fax 309.927.3898

The *Independent Order of Odd Fellows* began in England in the mid-1700s. According to a history on the

IOOF web site "There are several different reasons given for our strange name. One old and apparently authoritative history of Odd Fellowship gives the explanation, 'That common laboring men should associate themselves together and form a fraternity for social unity and fellowship and for mutual help was such a marked violation of the trends of the times (England in the 1700s) that they became known as 'peculiar' or 'odd,' and hence they were derided as 'Odd Fellows.' Because of the appropriateness of the name, those engaged in forming these unions accepted it. When legally incorporated the title 'Odd Fellows' was adopted. Another, similar explanation is that the original Odd Fellows were men who were engaged in various or odd trades, as there were organizations for some of the larger trades. Modern references state that the true reason for the name Odd Fellows isn't known or documented."

The first recorded O.F. Lodge in America was in New York City in 1806. Then as usual the lodges made their way westward. "The Odd Fellows started a Chicago Swedish lodge in 1872." (*Beijbom*). In Europe the O.F. did not catch on until the 1860s and '70s.

Web site: <www.ioof.org>

The Swenson Center has archival collections from IOOF's Swedish Olive Lodge and Rebekha Lodge in Moline, Illinois, and other smaller, local IOOF lodges. This material was donated to the Swenson Center in the early 1990s when the Swedish Olive Lodge ceased to exist. The Center also has microfilmed Swedish-American IOOF records from California, Colorado, Illinois, and Nebraska.

The *Scandinavian Fraternity of America* was founded in 1915, probably in Chicago, Illinois. The Scandinavian Fraternity's mission was principally to aid its membership in sickness, unemployment, or death. It was called a fraternity, but allowed women in its membership. The fraternity attracted new immigrant members through the early 1920s, and possibly after World War II,

reflecting the influx of Scandinavians in to the country, but only had about 2,500 members nationwide by 1991.

The theory on the Balch Institute website is that the organization's decline could partly be due to its members' ability to integrate into American society, marrying other ethnicities, "finding their social and cultural needs satisfied outside of ethnic constraints." The fact that it accepted all Scandinavian people and their non-Scandinavian spouses may have made the focus too broad in such a way that it was too hard to please everyone enough. (From the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies web site <www2.hsp.org/collections/Balch%20manuscript_guide/html/sfa.html> by Sandy Van Doren).

The Swenson Center has microfilmed records of Scandinavian Fraternity lodges in Idaho, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Washington.

One of the newest Swedish organizations is *SWEA*, the Swedish Women's Educational Association, which was started in 1979 and today has more than 8,000 members in 77 local chapters in 33 countries around the world.

The purpose of *SWEA* is to promote Swedish culture and the language and serve as a personal and professional network for Swedish women living abroad. This is accomplished with a wide variety of cultural programs such as lectures, exhibits, musical performances, and Swedish holiday celebrations, and at the international level by awarding annual scholarships to graduate students. *SWEA* International publishes a biannual newsletter that is available online and sent to all members. Most local chapters also have a website and a newsletter. To become a member of *SWEA*, you must be at least 18 years of age, have lived abroad for at least 1 year, and speak Swedish.

Web site <www.swea.org>.

The Swenson Center houses the *SWEA* archives, which includes meeting minutes, newsletters, financial papers and statements, and correspondence.

There are likely plenty of organizations for modern-day Swedish immigrants; one example is in the San Francisco Bay area and is called *Scandinavius*. It has a web site that is a directory of Scandinavian events and businesses in the Bay Area, such

as stores like *IKEA* and the Copenhagen Danish Bakery in Burlingame CA.

Web site: <www.scandinavius.com>

Some of the organizations that still exist today, according to the *American-Swedish Handbook*, are the Scandinavian Old-Time Fiddle Association in Duluth, Minnesota, and the Uff Da Band in Albuquerque, New Mexico, which plays Scandinavian music at Albuquerque's Scandinavian Club get-togethers, and for the Scandinavian Dancers of Albuquerque. Swedish heritage, historical, and genealogical societies are going strong in the U.S., and a few Swedish-American publications hang on today, such as *Swedish American Genealogist*.

Sources:

Becoming Swedish-American, Dag Blanck, Uppsala, 1997.

American-Swedish Handbook, Thirteenth Edition, Swedish Council of America, 2004.

"Swedish-American Organizational Life," by Ulf Beijbom, an article in *Scandinavia Overseas*, Dag Blanck & Harald Runblom, eds., 1986.



Dag Blanck is 50!

Dag Blanck, the director of the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center is turning 50 on 18 December, and SAG joins the long line of people that wants to congratulate him on reaching a mature age.

Dag Blanck was born in Uddevalla on the western coast of Sweden in 1956, where his father, a journalist, worked at that time. Later the family moved to Stockholm and Dag went to Stockholm University and to Augustana College. In 1997 he published his Ph.D. thesis *Becoming Swedish-American: The Construction of an Ethnic Identity in the*

Augustana Synod, 1860–1917 in Uppsala.

Since 1985 he has been the Director of the Swenson Center. He is also Director of the Centre for Multiethnic Research at Uppsala, and evidently spends a lot of time in the airspace between Uppsala and Rock Island. This gives him time to read and prepare many publications that have to do with being Swedish-American, both nowadays and in times past.

SAG says "Grattis!" and appreciates his continued support for the journal, and hopes for future articles.

A Handwriting Example XI

Med stöd af 2 mem. 12 G. uti Kongl. Fabriks- och
Handtwärks Ordningen den 22 December 1846 och
i förväg af bilagade Trädebesvär för gäld-
myntkast anhaltta om gunstigt tillstånd, att
här i staden få hålla brödbakning, såsom
försvinningsmedel. Kalmar den 13 Augusti
1853.
Maria Lovisa Jacobson
Gift med Hedgärdskaren Wernström

This document was found in the loose papers of the Kalmar magistrate. It is an application from a married woman to open her own bakery shop.

Before 1846 there were many restrictions that kept women from opening their own businesses. Partly that was because they were considered to be legally incapable (*omyndiga*), and partly because to do business in a town you had to become a burgher, and you had to be a man to attain this status. But there was nothing to hinder women from working in the mines, on farms, on building sites carrying bricks, or other heavy jobs.

Widows of craftsmen, however, were allowed to carry on his business

and his workshop in their own name, until they remarried. Women were not allowed to become members of the guilds (*skrå*), except that there seems to have existed a midwife guild in Stockholm in the early 1800s.

As the population grew during the early 1800s the number of unwed women also grew, and it was a big problem for them to find jobs. Thus the government in 1846 came with the *Fabriks- och Handelsordning* (Resolution on factories and trade), which stated that every man or woman was free to start their own enterprise, and it was for instance now possible to open grocery shops in the countryside, provided that

they were more than 30 kilometers from the nearest town. The guilds lived on but no longer had the right to hinder new craftsmen from opening new workshops in the cities. The guilds ceased to exist after a new law in 1864.

The handwriting examples

We have now published eleven different handwriting examples, and I would like to hear from the SAG readers if you find them too easy, too difficult, or just plain dull? Please, e-mail me at <sag@etgenealogy.se> and tell me what you think about them!

Elisabeth Thorsell

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 tif 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 shows an interior from the home of a lower middle class family in Stockholm around 1910.

The father, *August Vilhelm Johansson*, born 12 August 1870 in Bällefors (Vägö.) came to Stockholm as a young man before 1890, and worked as a stablehand in a livery stable. Later he became a foreman of the janitors at the Stadion sports arena in Stockholm.

He married 16 June 1901 in Ja-

kob-Johannes, Stockholm, to the seamstress *Hulda Johansson*, born 20 March 1876 in Karlskrona Stadsförsamling, and they had one daughter *Märta Hulda Charlotta*, who was born in 1902, and died in 1995.

The family seems to have quite a small apartment as they have furnished one room as both a parlor and a bedroom; you can see the bed to the right. Maybe the daughter slept in the *paneldivan* (couch), where the

bottom can be turned around to become a bed at night. The coffee table is ornate and they have a large mirror and a chandelier, so it seems that they tried to emulate an upper class home, even though the resources were limited.

The little girl has a doll carriage and three dolls, which shows that the family had a good standard for their time.

The last Swedish survivor of the Titanic has passed on

BY ELISABETH THORSELL

Lillian Gertrud Asplund passed away on Sunday 7 May 2006 in Shrewsbury, Mass. at age 99.

Her claim to fame was an involuntary one – as a child she was one of the survivors of the *Titanic* catastrophe on 15 April 1912. By 2006 she and two younger persons in Great Britain were the only living survivors, and she was the only one old enough to have memories of that fateful night.

Lillian was born 21 October 1906 in Worcester. She had a twin brother Carl Edgar, and two older brothers, Oscar Filip, born 12 December 1898, and Clarence Gustaf Hugo, born 17 September 1902, both also born in Worcester. A younger brother was Edwin Roy Felix, born 19 March 1909 in Alseda, Jönköpings län, in Sweden.

The parents of the children were the wire-worker Carl Oscar Vilhelm Gustafsson Asplund and his wife Selma Augusta Emilia Gustafsdotter Johansson, both born in Alseda.

Carl's family

Carl was born 7 May 1871 in the cottage Petersborg on the lands of Germunderyd Skattegård in Alseda, son of the smelter and sharecropper Gustaf Johansson and his wife Christina Adelina Jönsdotter. Gustaf was born 28 December 1842 in Alseda, son of the sharecropper (*torpare*) Johan Magnus Samuelsson and his wife Anna Samuelsdotter. Christina Adelina was born 13 September 1844 in nearby Skede parish.

Somewhere in the early 1870s Gustaf changed his surname to Samuelsson, the same as his father used.

On 4 August 1874 a daughter,

Hulda Christina Wilhelmina, was born, the second and last child of the family.

In 1880 Gustaf got a work permit for Stockholm, but what kind of work is not mentioned.

In 1886 the Samuelsson family moved to another cottage, now on the lands of Repperda Gustafsgård, also in Alseda.

In 1890 son Carl immigrated the first time, he left Göteborg on 18 April and had a ticket for Worcester in the name of Asplund. He stayed for a short time and then went back home again. On 18 October 1892 he immigrated again, now as the American Charles Asplund with a ticket for New York.

Next year his sister Hulda left her home on 30 May with a ticket for Worcester.

The parents, Gustaf and Christina stayed on at Repperda Gustafsgård. Gustaf died 18 July 1906 from pneumonia, and Carl decided to take his family home for a while to sort out his father's business, and they seem to have left Worcester in 1907. Son Felix was born in Alseda in 1909.

Eventually the Asplund family was on its way back to America, and had booked tickets on the very modern ship *Titanic* of the White Star Line, leaving from Southampton 10 April 1912.

Selma's family

Selma Augusta Emilia was born 10 October 1873 at Vagnhester Pilagård in Alseda, the first daughter to Gustaf Otto Johansson and his wife Johanna Larsdotter. Gustaf Otto was born 6 April 1849 in Alseda, and his wife Johanna 18 August 1850, also in Alseda.

Lillian G. Asplund, 99

SHREWSBURY — Lillian G. Asplund, 99, died at home, Saturday, May 6, 2006.

She leaves a dear friend, Philip K. Maloof, of Worcester; several cousins, including Alden Carlson and Ronald Carlson. She was predeceased by her twin brother, Felix R. Asplund.



Lillian was born in Worcester, daughter of Charles O. and Selma A. (Johnson) Asplund. She was the last survivor who witnessed the sinking of the *Titanic*. She was a clerk for the State Mutual Life Insurance Co. for many years, retiring in 1971.

Funeral services will be held Wednesday, May 10, at 2 p.m., in Nordgren Memorial Chapel, 300 Lincoln St., Worcester. Burial will be in All Faiths Cemetery (Old Swedish). For directions and on-line guestbook, please visit: NordgrenMemorialChapel.com

Telegram & Gazette (Worcester, MA) Sunday 7 May 2006.

They married 10 May 1872 and soon after their son Gustaf Adolf Rodrik was born, on 11 June 1872. Then came Selma in 1873. Elin Maria Sigrid was born 2 February 1875, Anna Serafina and Johan Vilhelm were twins, both born 18 August 1877. Next was Thekla Josefina, born 23 September 1880, followed by Karl Eugén, born 31 January 1884, and Hanna Elisabeth, born 4 November 1886.

Selma and her siblings

Most of Selma's sisters ended up in America. The oldest brother, Gustaf Adolf Rodrik Gustafsson, in 1900 is recorded as being a worker in a copper smithy in Vetlanda. He was married and had three children.

Selma herself left Göteborg on 17 April 1893, according to *Emibas*.

Sister Elin Maria Sigrig Johansson immigrated in 1898, leaving Göteborg on 29 April 1898 with a ticket for New York, but the Ellis Island records shows that her real destination is Worcester and that Ch. Asplund had paid her ticket.

Sister Anna Serafia Johansson left from Skede parish, where she had worked as a maid, and went through the port of Göteborg on 1 June 1900 with a ticket for Worcester.

Brother Johan Vilhelm moved to Vetlanda in 1896.

Sister Thekla Gustafsson left Göteborg 20 May 1904 with a ticket for Worcester.

Brother Karl Eugén and sister Hanna Elisabeth were still at home in 1900, and are not found in the emigration databases.

Catastrophe night

When the ship struck the iceberg, the two younger children and Mrs. Asplund were in one of the lifeboats that had been lowered too far down for the rest of the family to be able to get into it.

In a rare interview shortly after the accident Mrs. Asplund said "Then we went to the upper deck. I could see the icebergs for a great distance around ... It was cold and the little ones were cuddling close to one another and trying to keep from under the feet of the many excited people ... My little girl, Lillie, accompanied me, and my husband said, 'Go ahead, we will get into one of the other boats.' He smiled as he said it."

Then she recalled watching from the lifeboat as her husband waved to her with a handkerchief.

And that was the last she saw of him. Afterwards she and children Lillian and Felix lived for a while at 151 Vernon Street in Worcester, the

VÄRLDEN

Svenskättad från Titanic död

STOCKHOLM (TT)
Den troligen sista överlevande med personliga minnen från Titanics undergång 1912 har dött. Svenskättade Lillian Asplund som var fem år när ett isberg sänkte fartyget dog i lördags 99 år gammal.

Lillian Asplund, hennes mamma Selma och 2-åriga lillebror Felix räddades av en besättningsman som såg till att de kom med i en livbåt. I en intervju många år senare berättade hon att någon lyfte ut henne genom ett fönster på första klass promenaddäck och ner i båten.

När hon tittade tillbaka såg hon det sjunkande skeppet. Kvar ombord var pappa Carl, tvillingbrodern och två bröder till. Ingen av dem överlevde.

Lillian Asplund räddades från Titanic. ARKIVBILD. PRESSENS BILD

Mamman berättade i en intervju att hennes man Carl log mot henne och sa: "Fortsätt, vi går i en av de andra båtarna".

- Vi gick upp på övre däck. Jag kunde se isberg runt omkring på stort avstånd, berättade hon för Worcester Telegram & Gazette.

- Det var kallt och de små tryckte sig tätt till varandra. Lillian och hennes familj var på väg hem till USA efter att ha bott några år på pappa Carls släktgård i Småland, skriver nätsidan Encyclopedia Titanica. Hans far hade dött och de reste över till Sverige för att ta hand hans mor.

1912 skulde Carl och hans familj återvända till Worcester i Massachusetts där han arbetade på Spencer Wire Works.

I ett brev till en syster berättade han att familjen såg fram mot hemresan. I Worcester bodde fler släktingar, tre mostrar och en faster till Lillian.

Bara Lillian, Felix och mamma Selma återsåg Worcester. Och de anlände utblottade, alla deras signeldelar försvann i djupet med Titanic.

Invånarna i Worcester samlade in nästa 2 000 dollar, pengar som sattes i en fond och vars avkastning gick till familjen Asplunds försörjning.

Bortsett från någon enstaka intervju ville inte Lillian Asplund berätta om sitt livs stora katastrof.

Enligt nätcyklopedin Wikipedia finns två kända överlevande från Titanic kvar i livet. De är 94 och 95 år gamla och boer i England.

The news of Lillian Asplund's death made it into the Swedish newspapers too. Svenska Dagbladet 9 May 2006.

house of Selma's sister Anna and her husband Olof Ahlquist. Lillian's mother was devastated by the loss of her husband and three of her five children and reportedly wore black for the rest of her life. She refused to speak about the *Titanic* and urged her children to do the same. As a result, unlike many survivors, Mrs. Asplund turned down opportunities to become a celebrity of sorts. In 1951 she and the children, who never left their mother, moved to Shrewsbury.

Mrs. Selma Asplund died 15 April

1964, 52 years after the *Titanic* shipwreck. Felix Asplund, who was a draftsman before retiring, died 1 March 1983 in Shrewsbury. Lillian, the last survivor of the family, worked for many years as a clerk for the State Mutual Life Insurance before retiring in 1971.

Special thanks to Joan and Frank Foss of Worcester for providing newspaper clippings and a tour to the Old Swedish Cemetery.



The Asplund grave in the Old Swedish Cemetery (All Faith's) in Worcester.

Bits & Pieces



The 2006 Olov Isaksson Award

The Swedish Bishop Hill Society decided that the 2006 award should go to a long-time member who has worked to get Bishop Hill on the list of National Historic landmarks, and also been an excellent representative for Sweden, namely the former Swedish ambassador to the U.S. Count Wilhelm Wachtmeister.

(<http://home.swipnet.se/bishophill/>)

Ancestry opens a dialog with SVAR

During *Släktforskar dagarna* (Genealogy Days) in Nacka in August, *Ancestry* was an exhibitor and also took the opportunity to learn more about Swedish databases. SVAR, a branch of the Swedish National Archives, caught their interest as they have a growing number of on-line resources, not just church records, but also tax records, prison records, and much more. Josh Hanna, a vice president of Ancestry Europe has since visited with SVAR in Ramsele for discussions with Anders Nordström, CEO of SVAR.

(*Tidningen Ångermanland* 2 oct. 2006)

Emigranten Populär

with 8 different Swedish databases is here! This includes *Emihamn* with more than 1.2 million immigrants from Sweden. This database is the only one that gives the immigrant's destination.

See *SAG* 2/06 for a closer description of the CD.

Price U.S. \$60 incl p.&h.

Elisabeth Thorsell

<sag@etgenealogy.se>

Gloria Dei records now in print!

Now the first two volumes of the series *Colonial Records of the Swedish Churches in Pennsylvania* are available! The first volume, *The Log Churches at Tinicum Island and Wicaco, 1646-1696*, has documents on the early New Sweden period and the decades after. The records include minutes of vestry meetings and appointments, details on parsonage and church improvements, pew assignments (*bänklängder*), and church censuses. These records are supplemented by records from the archdiocesan archives of Uppsala, where the "American Mission" was supervised, and sometimes saw matters in another light than the people in the colony. The second volume is *The Rudman Years, 1697-1702*, which tells what was going on during the time Andreas Rudman was the minister of Gloria Dei.

In the works now is the time of Andreas (Anders) Sandel's ministry, 1702-1717.

The books are 240 pages in a library binding with an every-name index. They cost \$30 each (incl. postage and handling), and checks or money orders can be sent to **Gloria Dei (Old Swede's) Church, 916 South Swanson Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147-4332.** (www.old-swedes.org)

More passenger lists!

Ancestry.com has now added more years to the New York arrival lists, that now go to 1957. They also say they have re-indexed the Ellis Island lists. Another new list at Ancestry is the *Detroit Border Crossings and Passenger and Crew Lists 1905-1957*, that contains at least 1,578 individuals born in Sweden.

Scandinavian Folk Festival in Jamestown

The fifth festival was held in Jamestown, NY, this summer and was a great success with more than 3,000 participants who enjoyed concerts, lectures, workshops, and much more. Next summer the festival will be held 27-29 July, and more participants are welcome! The more, the merrier.

<http://scandinavianjamestown.org/>

Swedish Texans now indexed

Diligent student workers at Augustana College also help the Swenson Center to index old books with many Swedes in them. The latest magnificent effort has been to make a total name index to *Svenskarne i Texas i Ord och Bild 1838-1918, I-II* (publ. 1919), and to *The Swedish Texans* (publ. 1990). See the link on page 31.

The LDS have started to scan Swedish films

According to an article by *David Rencher* who is the Director of Records and Information Division at the Family History Library, in *Digital Genealogist* 1/06, the scanning of the original microfilms is now under way. Nifty programmers have managed to get the machines to scan 3 million pictures/month and soon will be able to do 10 million pictures/month. When the 15 new scanners are working, they expect to be able to scan 370,000 films/year. The first scanned Swedish films are to be found on the SVAR web site (by subscription) and are of much better quality than the old microfilms and fiche.

Genealogical Abstracts from Rock Island County, Illinois, Newspapers

Editors note: During my recent visit to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City I browsed the shelves, and found many interesting books, including this one. I have excerpted all notices with Swedish-sounding names for the first years and hope they may fill a gap in someone's genealogy.

Genealogical Abstracts from Rock Island County, Illinois, Newspapers. Volume I

The Moline Review Dispatch 1878-1882. Abstracted by Janet K. Pease, 2509 5th Street, Moline, IL 61265 (1973)

(Newspapers are missing for 1880 and 1883-1888)

4 Jan. 1878

Coroner Morris was notified of the sudden death of John Peterson; a coroner's jury was heard at residence of N.J. Erickson, where the body lay. The deceased was found lying dead in the road near Mr. Erickson's house. The jury decided he died from exposure and exhaustion.

Frank Johnson of Altona, Ill., and Miss Anna Peterson were married at the bride's uncle on Thursday. The bride is from Moline.

1 Feb. 1878

John Peterson and Miss Minnie Fries were married on Thursday evening of last week.

22 Feb. 1878

The body of an infant child was buried in the city cemetery; its mother was Miss Hannah Anderson. The female child had been

born Sunday morning, Feb. 3rd. Miss Anderson stated that the father of the child was John Peterson, formerly of the firm of Peterson brothers.

29 March 1878

Administrator's notice: estate of Jonas P. Malum, deceased. Matilda Malum, administrator.

26 April 1878

Saturday afternoon, many friends took the son of James First, named Gustaf First, to his final resting place.

7 June 1878

At the residence of B.P. Oakley, A.A. Anderson married Alice B. Frick. Administrators notice: the estate of John Peterson, deceased. F.A. Peterson, administrator.

21 June 1878

A coroner's inquest was held for the 12 year old son of John Hertzell who lives about 4 miles up the river; the decision was that the boy "came to his own death by the accidental discharge of a pistol in his own hand." An elder brother had carried the boy home after the accident.

28 June 1878

John Johnson married Miss Hattie Malm on Thursday.

5 July 1878

Last Saturday at Rock Island, Alfred Celene married Maria Lydehn.

26 July 1878

The little son of Nels and Celia Lofquist, aged 15 ½ months, died Sunday and was buried Tuesday.

2 Aug. 1878

Executor's Notice: estate of Eric Wennerlund, deceased. H.P. Oakley, administrator.

18 Oct 1878

On Sunday morning last, Swan Johnson, Frank Westburg, Andrew Blom, and John Pierson, all Swedes, were drowned. The bodies were brought to Moline and were buried on Wednesday.

A double wedding has taken place – J. C. Wallace of Davenport married Miss Lizzie Hartzell of Moline, and J.F. Jacques has married Miss Estella Hartzell, of Moline. They were married at the residence of the brides' father, Michael Hartzell by the Rev. J.C. Hartzell, a brother of the brides.

The Moline Review 1879

7 Jan. 1879

Allie P. Fisk, a 3 year old son of Mr. and Mrs. A.P. Fisk, died last week on Thursday of scarlet fever and was buried on Saturday.

7 Feb. 1879

The funeral of Charles Victor Anderson was Monday at the Congregational Church. He died last Friday.

21 March 1879

C. Peter Peterson, the 1st Ward druggist, married Miss Josephine Lindstrom at the residence of the bride's parents.

12 July 1879

John Swanson coming home from Cable was thrown from his horse and died on Saturday.

9 August 1879

A 3½ year old daughter of Mr. Blombergson, the painter, died of scarlet fever.

Mr. Bock, shoedealer, died a few days ago; he was 52 years old.

16 August 1879

Nels Hansen, a Swede, accidentally drowned on Thursday near Cleveland. His body was buried that afternoon.

23 August 1879

Andrew Friberg gave his son Chas. D. Friberg a gold watch for his 21st birthday.

Milan. William Tengis and Miss Mary Peterson were married.

Milan. The funeral of Mrs. Lizzie Nelson, the daughter of Mr. H.W. Buffim was Wednesday. The parents and sisters have our sympathy.

27 Sep. 1879

John Peterson, a grinder at Deere's shops, died in this city Wednesday morning last of consumption.

11 Oct. 1879

John Aug. Toren married Mrs. Christina Nelson.

22 Nov. 1879

Lars Axel Blombergson, the painer [sic], was buried on Wednesday afternoon. He was born in Soderham[sic], Sweden, 17 Aug. 1841 and hence were [sic] 38 years old. The Rev. Mr. Olsen of the Swedish M.F. Church conducted the funeral. The deceased is survived by a wife and 2 children, the youngest being only 2 weeks old.

Alfred Erickson, a tailor in Moline, died in Davenport on Wednesday. He was buried in Riverside Cemetery on Friday afternoon, the 28th.

13 Dec. 1879

Administrator's notice: the estate of Anders F. Erickson, deceased. Bengt Erickson, administrator.

1880 is missing. For 1881 the newspaper is called Moline Review Dispatch

13 January 1881

Mrs. Matilda Peterson, aged 49 years, wife of J. S. Peterson, died Sunday.

At the residence of Charles Efflund, Mr. Wampler married Miss Theresa Efflund on Saturday. The bride is the daughter of John Efflund, one of our oldest citizens. *Marriage licenses* issued by the Rock Island County Clerk during January 1881:

Gustaf O. Nelson – Mrs. Matilda Malum

20 January 1881

The father of N.P. Benson is said to have been the first Swede settler in Moline. N.P. himself is one of our oldest residents.

J.P. Johnson, a Swede man, who worked at the Moline paper mill for 18 years, as did his father before him, died last Wednesday morning. His parents had both died years ago leaving J.P. without a relative in this country. He was 29 years old, single and was buried this morning by his parents.

Andrew Peterson of Moline, insane, died at the county farm this week; he was buried in the county cemetery.

Mrs. Lundblad died at the county farm this week; she was from Moline and was buried in the county cemetery.

Probate record:

Estate of Charles V. Anderson; Andrew N. Anderson, administrator. Estate of A.J. Swanson, deceased.

Estate of Andrew Palmquist, deceased.

Gus Peters married Miss Anna Day on Wednesday at the residence of the groom's parents.

Twenty years ago on January 25th Mr. and Mrs. Wm Evans were married. Mr. Evans is a mechanic in Moline and was born in Chester, England. He came to Moline 26 years ago and for 12 years worked for Deere & Company, and for the last 14 years has worked for the Moline Plow Company. He married Miss Anna Anderson on 25 January 1861, to which union there have been born 5 children.

3 February 1881

Mrs. A.L. Wickstrum, a longtime resident of Moline, died Monday. She leaves a husband and 7 children, the youngest a boy of 4 years. Alfred Anderson died last week, aged 54 years, 10 months, of consumption.

The body of Mrs. Bjorkland, of Osage City, Kansas, accompanied by Mr. Gust Bjorkland, was taken to the resident[sic] of Frank Gunnell where the funeral was held on Tuesday. The ceremony was partly in English and partly in Swedish. The body was buried at Riverside Cemetery. She had died at Osage City yesterday of typhoid fever. She was formerly Miss Mary Anderson, and had lived with the Gunnell family for a number of years. Last April she had married Mr. Bjorkland, a jeweler.

John Ericson, Swede, single, aged 38 years old, died at his boarding house on Saturday of consumption. He was buried today.

J.F. Peterson who with his wife and daughter were taken to the Poor House last August, died there on Friday last. He was 60 years old and died of consumption. He was buried from the Old Swede M.F. Church on Sunday.

10 Feb. 1881

John Peterson, a Swede, died on Tuesday night of consumption. He leaves a wife and 5 children.

Marriage licenses issued between Feb. 1st and Feb. 9th:

August Anderson and Miss Emma M. Gustafson

Christina Wickstrom, aged 42 years, died last week of inflammation of the bowels.

About a year ago Mrs. George Anderson was divorced from her husband and the husband was to have custody of the child after 31 January 1881, a little boy, aged 2 years.

Marriage licenses issued since Feb. 10

Andrew F. Carlson – Lottie J. Anderson

Eric Englund – Christine C. Piker

Probate court records

Guardianship for minor heirs of Jonas P. Hanson

3 March 1881

Nels Baugren, a Swede, died at his home near Halfway House on March 1st, aged 38 years. He leaves a wife and 4 children.

A.L. Wickstrom, an old settler of Moline, died Monday afternoon. He leaves liberal insurance for his family. The funeral will be held at the Congregational Church tomorrow in English and Swedish. He will be interred with his wife who died shortly ago, in one grave.

10 March 1881

Charles Gustus, an old grinder died Monday.

Mr. Dahlberg who buried his wife on Monday, has made arrangements for his 2 boys, aged 3 years and 9 years, to live with their grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Squires in Hanna township, Henry county, a few miles from Cleveland. Mr. Dahlberg will remain in Moline.

Mrs. S. Dahlberg died Saturday morning. Her maiden name was Mary A. Squires. She came to this country in 1869 and married Mr. Dahlberg. She would have been 30 years old next April 20th. She leaves 2 children, a boy aged 3 years and a boy aged 9 years. 6 children have been born to the family, 1 girl and 2 boys having died in infancy. Mrs. Dahlberg will be buried on Monday from the residence in East Moline.



2nd Avenue East, Rock Island, Ill. Photo belonging to the Augustana College Special Collection.



The Åland Islands' Emigrant Institute

A Swedish-speaking archipelago in the Baltic also had immigrants to America

BY EVA MEYER

The Emigrant Institute's goal is to document the emigration from the Åland Islands in the Baltic to the mainland of Finland and the rest of the world during different time periods. During the period of 1897–1924 ca. 7,200 individuals, about a quarter of the islands' population, received passports to travel abroad. The Institute's headquarter is located in Mariehamn since the middle of the 1990's. In the future we hope to widen our sphere of activities to include other forms of migration as well as the growing immigration to our own province.

The origin of our Emigrant Institute

The initiative was taken by the Åland emigrant John Wennström (1916-1989) who immigrated to the U.S.A. at the age of 16 and spent his

life in New York. Later he was chairman of The Society Åland of New York for many years and there he had the idea of starting an emigrant institute on Åland in honor of and to recognize the many thousands of Åland emigrants who through skill, financial assistance, and increased knowledge, benefitted their homeland. He was also inspired by the Swedish Emigrant Institute in Växjö, Sweden.

The Åland Islands' Emigrant Institute was established in 1995 and in July the following year the then chairman of The Society Åland of New York, Jeanne Eriksson Widman, came to officially inaugurate our Institute. By the following summer our first project leader Susanne Österlund was hired for a three-month period, and during this time she made detailed plans for the Institute's future development, docu-

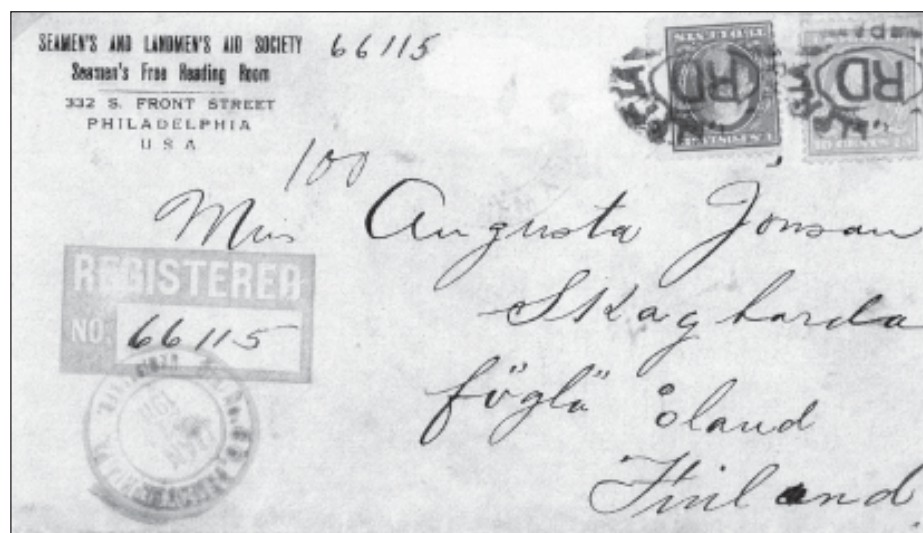
mented the available emigrant material, and made the first contacts both at home and in the U.S.A. The subject of emigration caught her interest enough for further advanced studies. Since 1999 the project leader is employed part-time.

The Emigrant Institute's Sphere of Activities

The Institute's purpose is to create, maintain, and promote the interest and research into Åland emigration and to gather, protect, and share material of the emigration, and to function as a link for Ålanders the world over.

This means gathering documents, letters, and photos in connection with the Åland emigration. Part of this material is on display in the Institute's exhibition. In a personal way it tells the story of some Åland emigrants who made their living in the U.S.A, as well as in other parts of the world. The exhibition also features two well-known Åland emigrant descendants, both from Chicago, Ill., who made a name as artists with achievements known the world over. One is Warner Sallman (1892-1968) whose oil painting *The Head of Christ* is one of the world's most esteemed sacred painting. The other is Haddon Sundblom (1899-1976), well-known for his achievement in the advertising world and especially for his beloved Santa Claus for the Coca-Cola Co.

Another, very much appreciated, activity are the individual county



exhibitions in different communities, where each village has a chance to see photos of its own emigrants exhibited. These exhibitions usually last for a month or so and are mainly shown at the local libraries.

In spreading knowledge to the younger generation about the strong Åland emigrant tradition, the Institute has on several occasions cooperated with the Åland Vocational School. The theme has been the large Åland emigration to Sweden, the U.S.A., Australia, and New Zealand, resulting in an exhibition around Ålanders in Sweden, a short film about three Åland emigrants in the U.S.A., and a combination of material used for school geography lessons on emigration to Australia and New Zealand.

“The Emigrants’ Day”

One of the yearly recurrent popular events that the Institute arranges is, no doubt, “The Emigrants’ Day,” featuring programs connected to our emigration. The guest speakers are usually guests from faraway lands, among them the director of the Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle, Wash., Marianne Forssblad, who a few years ago visited and told about the Scandinavian and Åland emigrant descendants in that part of the world. Another memorable day was held on a musical theme when the Åland descendant Garfield Sallman from Chicago travelled over the Atlantic in order to give us a piano concert. This year the guest speaker was David Jansson, Prof. at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York, who spoke to a full house about his Åland ancestry and his America-Åland identity.

This event attracts more and more people every year and is appreciated not only by the emigrants and their visiting relatives, but also attracts Ålanders living in Sweden and the local people with emigrants in their family. Next year will be the 10th anniversary of this event! And the date will probably be 8 August.

Collection of Emigrant Material

The Institute also collects emigrant information in the form of recorded interviews of emigrants who have returned home or are visiting their homeland, or emigrant descendants who are children and offspring. They come to Åland to seek their roots or to visit the village or remnants of the homesteads which their ancestors left so long ago. There is a growing interest today in wanting to know more about one’s forefathers’ background as the emigrants very rarely told their offspring about the poor conditions they came from.

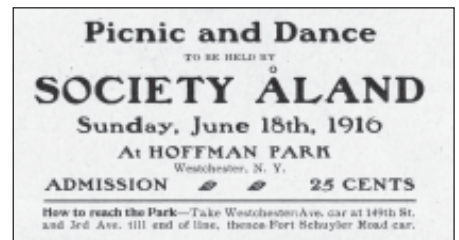
Worldwide Contacts

The Åland Islands’ Emigrant Institute is also reaching out to other countries, and is receiving an increasing number of inquiries from abroad. Thanks to today’s technology, the major number of inquiries are by e-mail. Many are requesting assistance in finding their relatives on Åland, but there are also Ålanders seeking help in finding their relatives in the U.S.A. or in Australia. At our Institute we have tried our best to play detective – sometimes with a happy ending!

Written documents of Åland emigration

Unfortunately, much too little has been written about the vast emigration from the Åland Islands. But one rather special emigrant story appears in a book which the Emigrant Institute released in 2003, and two years later in English. It is written by Hjördis Sundblom from Åland who shares her experiences in her book *En föglöemigrants memoarer*. The title in English is *My Name is Sunnu Now: A Scandinavian Emigrant’s Story*. At the age of 17, she ventured to the U.S.A. and returned to Åland in 1987, after almost 50 years of life in New York.

An academic publication dealing with identity among both the Finnish-Swedes and the Ålanders and their offspring in the U.S.A. is the



doctoral thesis *American Plus. Et-nisk identitet hos finlandssvenska ättlingar i Nordamerika. (American Plus. Ethnic Identity among Finnish-Swede descendants in North America)*. The thesis is written by Dr. Susanne Österlund-Pötzsch, the first coordinator of the Åland Islands’ Emigrant Institute.

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The Solution to the Handwriting Example XI

Transcription

Med stöd af 2 mom. 12 § uti Kongl. Fabriks- och Handtvärks Ordningen den 22 December 1846 och i förmåga af bilagde Fräjdebevis får jag ödmjukast anhålla om gunstigt tillstånd, att här i staden få idka brödbakning, såsom försörjningsmedel. Kalmar den 13 Augusti 1853.

Maria Lovisa Jacobsson
gift med Vedgårdskarlen Wernström

Translation

With support from the 2 moment of the 12th paragraph of the Royal Resolution on Factories and Trade of the 22nd December 1846 and by the power of the included testimonial of conduct I humbly ask for kind permission to, in this city, start as a bread baker, as a means for support [of myself and family]. Kalmar the 13th August 1853.

Maria Lovisa Jacobsdotter
married to the woodyard worker Wernström

Grandmother Alma's *kola* (fudge)

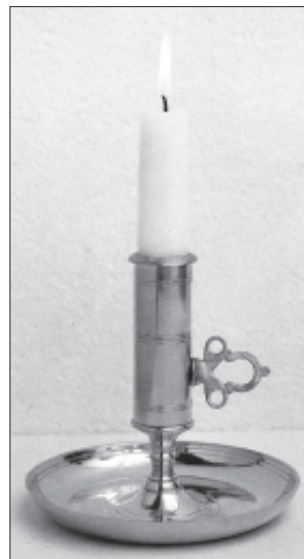
As the holiday season is getting close, here is a simple recipe for fudge (*kola*) that has been handed down in the family:

1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup molasses (Swedish *ljus si-rap* is best if you can get it)
2 cups heavy cream

Put all ingredients in a saucepan and boil slowly for about 20 minutes. Drop a little of the fudge into a cup

of cold water and see if it forms a ball. If that works, then pour the fudge into a flat pan lined with parchment paper. Chill it overnight, then cut into 1-inch squares. Next, cut out squares of parchment paper and wrap the fudge in those.

If you want to, you can wrap the *kolor* in fancy paper and hang them on the Christmas tree.



The Bridge Conference in Karlstad

At the end of September, Wednesday the 27th, to be precise, there was held an unusual conference in Karlstad, the capital of Värmland in western Sweden. It was a joint arrangement by Swedish Council of America (SCA), the Kinship Center, and the Swedish Local Heritage Federation (*Sveriges Hembygdsförbund*). This was the first time SCA ventured over the ocean to establish closer contacts with Swedish organizations with an interest of preserving Swedish culture.

On Wednesday the conference gathered at its first meeting, and there were about 220 participants, of which almost 100 were Americans. We had a nice meal and were entertained by a performance of a part of

the musical play *Wermleuningarne*, to get a first taste of the local culture.

Thursday was Workshop day, and I held a workshop on useful Swedish and American databases on the internet, which seemed to be popular. Other workshops had subjects such as newsletters, Swedish-American churches, woodcrafts, old textiles, folk costumes, and much more. The Swenson Center director, Dag Blanck, also held a workshop.

Thursday evening was the SCA evening with lots of music, ballet, and Olle i Skratthult singing his old songs. The high point of the evening was the presentation of Awards of Merit to seven happy recipients, all long-time emigration researchers.

The next day we all went on buses

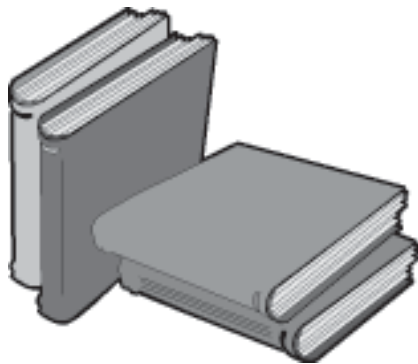
to various parts of Värmland. My bus went northeast, to Norra Råda, where we were given a delicious morning coffee at the local museum, and Hagfors, where we had a nice lunch. In the afternoon we ended up in Sunnemo, home of Pastor Olof Olsson and his group of immigrants to Lindsborg, Kansas. In his memory we sang hymns, even a Christmas one, in the old wooden church. The day ended with a tasty dinner at the Ransäter Museum.

The Saturday workshops all had the same theme – ideas to bring Sweden and America closer. A more interactive SCA web site was one idea – and more conferences!

Elisabeth Thorsell



The Award recipients (from left): Lars-Göran Johansson, Bo Björklund, Per Clemensson, Lars Dahlgren, Tommy Hellström, Alf Brorson, and Elisabeth Thorsell. Photo by Elise Peters, Swedish Council of America.



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 Swedish maid solves the crime

Crimson Snow, by Jeanne M. Dams
Palo Alto and McKinleyville, CA:
Perseverance Press/John Daniel &
Company, 2005. Paperback, 246
pages, ISBN 1880284790.
Amazon.com \$13.85.

Jeanne M. Dams's Hilda Johansson mystery novels offer something special for Swedish-American genealogists: a turn-of-the-century Swedish immigrant as a heroine, and well-researched historical plots that dramatize the immigrant experience.

When the series begins in 1900, Hilda is 19 years old and working as a housemaid for the wealthy Studebaker family in South Bend, Indiana (the home of author Jeanne Dams, herself a descendant of Swedish immigrants). *Death in Lacquer Red* introduces Hilda as an immigrant heroine. When she discovers a murder victim behind the lilac hedge at the Studebaker mansion, she fears that the police will try to scapegoat a foreigner, and discovers that she has a talent for detective work herself.

While Hilda is a fictional character, the Studebaker family (yes, the automobile manufacturers) and their mansion really existed, and the mysteries Hilda solves are inspired by historical events. The experiences of immigrants provide many key plot points. In *Red, White, and Blue Murder* the threat of anarchists and the

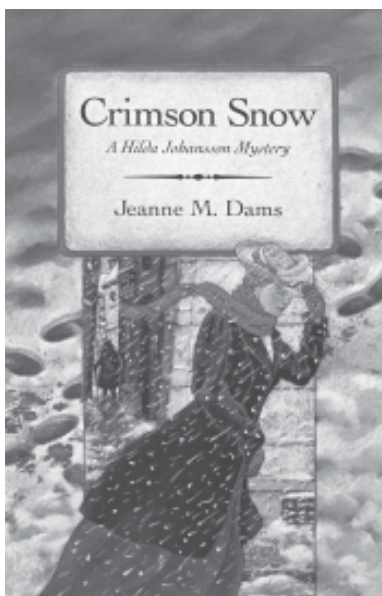
1901 assassination of President McKinley cause ordinary immigrant workers to come under suspicion. In *Green Grow the Victims*, when a local political candidate is found murdered, the mystery turns out to be mixed up with crooked immigration agents; Hilda and her siblings have given their savings from five years of work in the U.S.A. to an agent who promises to arrange passage for the rest of the family from Sweden. The daily challenges of immigrant life make for compelling characterizations.

The author depicts the lives of servants in vivid detail. In addition to Hilda, the Studebaker household staff includes an Irish waitress, an English butler, and a half dozen other immigrants, an ethnic mix that broadens Hilda's horizons. We learn the servants' schedules, the endless chores – from scrubbing the floor to polishing the chandeliers – and what

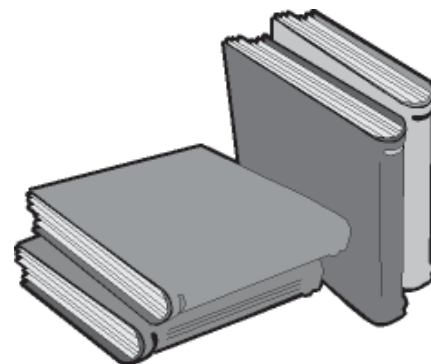
they do for fun on their precious afternoons off. We see Hilda sweating in her winter uniform on a warm spring day because uniforms were dictated by the calendar, not the weather. In addition to solving crimes, Hilda ponders mysteries of the heart, such as: can a Swedish maid and an Irish fireman live happily ever after? “An Irish Catholic was not an appropriate friend for a Swedish Lutheran,” worries Hilda's older sister in *Green Grow the Victims*.

As the series develops, Hilda assimilates, becoming more American and serious about her Irish Catholic beau. Yet she remains proud of her origins; when the police Americanize her name to Hilda “Johnson,” she makes sure they correct the name to “Johansson.” And she maintains strong family ties. In *Silence Is Golden* we see her going to church every Sunday, followed by dinner with her family: “It was Hilda's one chance in the week to see her family, to speak Swedish, to eat Swedish food, to revive fading memories of her roots.” By the time of *Crimson Snow*, the housemaid finds herself entering the middle class: “Hilda, for the first time in her life, pulled a bell rope and thought again about America, where a servant, one to be summoned at her master's will, was now the summoner.”

Many of us have a female Swedish ancestor whose occupation, on an Ellis Island ship manifest or a census form, is given as servant, maid, or housekeeper. In my case, it was a great-grandmother who immigrated on her own in 1903 at age 24. I know almost nothing about her working



Book Reviews



life in America, so I was delighted to meet Hilda Johansson. Jeanne Dams's entertaining series solved some mysteries for me about what my great-grandmother's daily life might have been like, minus the body behind the lilac hedge ... at least as far as I know!

These are the other Hilda mysteries:

Death in Lacquer Red

New York: Walker & Company, 1999. Hardcover, 225 pages, ISBN 0802733298

Red, White, and Blue Murder

New York: Walker & Company, 2000. Hardcover, 189 pages, ISBN 0802733417

Green Grow the Victims

New York: Walker & Company, 2001. Hardcover, 216 pages, ISBN 0802733557

Silence Is Golden

New York: Walker & Company, 2002. Hardcover, 226 pages, ISBN 0802733735

Erica Olsen

The Swedish maid and her sisters

Utvandrarkvinnor. Svenska kvinnoöden i Amerika, av Ulf Beijbom. Norstedts 2006. ISBN 91-1-301494-5. Hardcover, 450 pages, ill., index. Ca. 200 SEK + postage.

Professor Ulf Beijbom, former director of the House of Emigrants in Växjö, and a prolific writer, has done it again. His new book, on female immigrants contains a wealth of information. The female destinies you will find in this book could well be the material for several novels and movies.

Unfortunately the book is yet only

available in Swedish, but we hope for a translation as it contains so many things that would be of interest to all the descendants of the Swedish female immigrants.

In the first chapter, Dr. Beijbom discusses the conditions for women in past times in Sweden, when she was mostly "legally incapable" (*omyndig*) and had to have the consent of her closest male relative (father, brother, uncle) whenever she wanted to do something. Only as a widow was she regarded as a person who could make her own decisions.

The female immigrants were about just as many as the male ones, and one of the reasons for that was that there was a surplus of women in the Swedish population in the 1800s, and everyone could not count on getting married. Still they had to find ways to support themselves, which was especially difficult for educated women, who could not do farm labor, and most other jobs were a male privilege. During the second half of the 1800s the authorities recognized the problem and abandoned most of the stricter rules. Now women could work as telegraphists or as

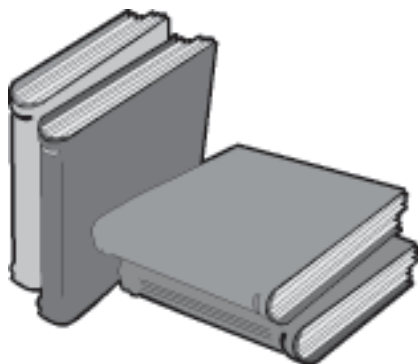


bank tellers. They were also allowed access to the higher schools and universities.

During the first period of immigration it was mostly families who left Sweden, and often they also brought their servants. After about 1880 most of the immigrants were young and single. But that is not the start of female immigrants. To find them we have to go back to New Sweden and the 1630s and for instance make the acquaintance of Armegott Printz, the daughter of "Big Belly" Printz, the first governor of New Sweden and married to his lieutenant Johan Papegoja. Armegott ran her own farm for a while in New Sweden and had to take part in many court cases to protect her property. She also received a permit to produce aquavit and kept an inn, before she sold everything and returned to Sweden, where she died in 1695.

The women immigrants who ended up on the prairie or in the huge forests often had a hard time to adjust to the primitive way of life on the frontier. They had left a fairly comfortable dwelling at home and now had to make do with a sod hut with a grass roof, where snakes could curl in, or a drafty log cabin with just the old chest as a table and tree stumps to sit on. At home they might have lived in a village with neighbors close by, and now they were alone with the children and the closest neighbor a mile away. Often the male members of the household went away for long periods to work on railroads etc., to earn some badly needed cash, so they could buy farm implements, and seeds.

But soon more immigrants came,



Book Reviews

perhaps relatives they had managed to send tickets to, churches were founded, and social activities started, and life got better.

The typical female immigrant of the later period seems to have been a girl ca. 20 years old, with a very basic schooling and used to heavy farmwork, but hoping for an easier life as a domestic servant.

A table shows that in 1900 the vast majority of the females born in Sweden worked as domestics (61.5%) or as seamstresses (12.9%), laundresses (6.1%) or housekeepers (3.7%). For the next generation, born in the U.S., the figures show that women now expanded into other areas also. We still see a lot of domestics (44.5%), more seamstresses (19.9%), but also teachers (9.1%) and women employed in trade and communications (13.5%). These figures probably have something to do with younger women being able to use English easily and correctly.

The domestic positions were well-paid when compared to what a maid could earn in Sweden. The conditions maids lived under in America also sounded almost too good to be true. Back at home the maid may have slept in the kitchen in a sofa bed, perhaps sharing it with another maid. From America she heard rumors of having her own room and even having time off on Thursday afternoons and Sundays, which sounded like a dream.

The majority of the Swedish maids lived in the cities and could take part in the lively Swedish-American social life, either at one of the churches or one of the many lodges that started at the end of the 1800s.

Male immigrants more often had temporary jobs, and in the period between jobs they often relied on sisters or girlfriends to support them, which they did.

The domestic jobs often became a way of life, and the maid stayed for years with “her” family, and became almost a family member. But if she wanted to change her position, she could give notice and leave after a week, which also was a big difference to Sweden, where you had to stay a year, and where the bailiff might arrest you if you left early.

One problem for the “raw” girl from Sweden was her lack of knowledge of English, but usually they learned fast, especially if they were to take care of the children in the family, as those helped her with words.

My father’s cousin Anna left the Värmland countryside in 1916, and wrote many letters home to her aunt. After about three months in McKeesport she wrote “I like it fine here, the American way of cooking is much easier than at home, and now I am starting to understand what the Old lady [the lady of the house] says. But I still need someone to come with me, when I want to go shopping, as I don’t know the words.”

In the latter half of the book we meet with many stories about Swedish females that had successful lives in the U.S. A step up from being a domestic was to start a boarding-house or a restaurant, of which there are many examples, from Johanna Wirström who kept a hotel in California during the Gold Rush, to Ingrid Bergström, who kept the Verdandi Restaurant in Chicago in the 1960s.

Nobel Prize laureate Harry Martinson’s mother left him and her other children and went to Portland, Oregon, and ran a popular lunch counter there for years, but never saw her son again.

As Swedish girls were good seamstresses, they often obtained work in the big textile factories in Chicago, where they earned good wages. The job was stressful, but several opened their own workshops later and sewed for society people.

There were around 1900 several Swedish hospitals, and they often also started schools for nurses, where ambitious girls could get a good education and then go on to good positions. Some even made it into medical schools and became proper doctors.

Many others felt the lure of the printed word and became journalists or writers of various kinds. One of these was Lina Knutson from Värmland who for several years owned the weekly *Skandinavia*, published in Worcester, Mass. They all had a market in the numerous Swedish-American newspapers and calendars that were published in the early 1900s, but are now mostly forgotten.

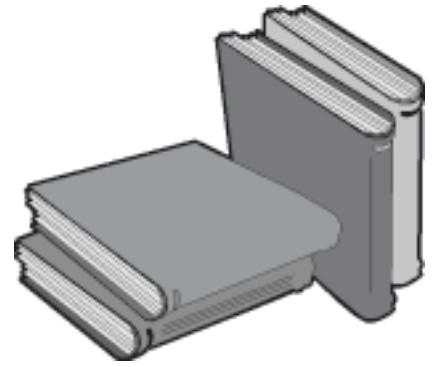
Many Swedes are good singers and some of the immigrants made a career in music, like the famous Jenny Norelli, born in 1863. A strange observation is that male choruses were very common, but female choruses were unusual, but today I think the opposite is correct, at least in Sweden.

Swedish actresses have made their mark, especially in the movie industry, from Anna Q. Nilsson and Greta Garbo in the early 1900s to Lena Olin and Maggie Gyllenhaal in the early 2000s.

This is just a small sample of the rich content of this book, and we must all sincerely hope that it will be available in English within the foreseeable future.

Elisabeth Thorsell

Book Reviews



Swedish estates and farms

Svenska gods och gårdar. DVD publication by Mats Ekedahl, Visby. 2006. 3 DVD discs, each 399 SEK + postage. All three for 999 SEK + postage. See link on link page.

In the 1940s almost 50 books were published in Sweden about many estates and farms, province by province. Each farm had a picture of the farmhouse and a little description of the farm's history and the present owner. The books are in Swedish, but the information should still not be too difficult to understand. Each book has an index in front where you can find the parish you want, and then you just have to scroll through the parish until you find the place. However, people had to pay to



Matsbo, Janpers

Postadr.: Hedemora. Tel. 231 A.

Areal: Total 43,5 har, därav 22,5 åker, 21 skog. Tax.-v. 25.900.

Jordart: Lätt jord o. mulljord. Skogsbest.: Barrskog. Manbyggn. uppf. omkr. 1840. Ekonomibyggn. uppf.: Stall o. loge 1875, ladug. 1916. 3 hästar, 1 unghäst, 14 kor, 2 ungdj., 6 svin, 30 häns. Reakt.-fri besättn. av bl. ras. Gården till släkten 1910 genom köp. Ag.: Per Torsell f. 25/12 1876. Son till Erik Andersson o. h. h. Margareta Andersdotter. Gift 04 med Elin Matilda Johansson f. 9/11 1881. Barn: Per Gunnar f. 25/12 04, Johan Elis f. 31/7 06, Nils David f. 1/5 08, Erik Holmfrid f. 17/11 09, Klas Gösta f. 17/6 12, Inga Kristina f. 7/1 14.

Ag.: F. d. led. av komm.-fullm., led. av styr. för Södra Dalarnes hästnämnd.

get into the book, so there are many places that are missing.

The books have been very much sought after, but now they are available on three DVDs that are easy to navigate. You can open the pages in a picture program and cut and paste as much as you like. This is still something new, so the web site is still

in Swedish, but Mats Ekedahl has promised to have an English version in early 2007. You can e-mail him also, if you have questions.

This is a very nice resource and gives a fine picture of Sweden in the 1940s, before houses were torn down or "modernized."

Elisabeth Thorsell

New and Noteworthy

(short notes on interesting books and articles)

A good book about life in Rockford, *A Swedish-American Family (My Early Years in Rockford, Illinois)* was written by Rudolph E. Peterson and published in 1978 by himself, sponsored by the Swedish Historical Society of Rockford. Mr. Peterson was born 1901 in Oregon, Illinois, to Olof Peterson (born 1871 June 29 in Skogsberg, Sunne, Värm.) and his first wife Selma Pettersson (from near Lännäs, Närk., who died in 1905). In 1906 Olof Pettersson remarried the widow Alma Larsson Härnquist (from Västergötland), the only mother little Rudolph remembered. In his book he gives a very detailed description of daily life, customs at home, and during the year, and in school and society, pranks boys played and much more.

In the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* one always finds useful and interesting articles. In SAHQ 2/06 Joy K. Lintelman writes about Peter Bergstrom: Worker and Entrepreneur in Moorhead, Minnesota 1898–1940, who had a mixed career. He had a restaurant and candystore, then moved on to farming, and next to the police force, did some real estate deals, kept a hotel, and many other things. James M. Kaplan describes "The Swedish Pavilion at the Panama Pacific International Exhibition of 1915," which was held in San Francisco. Among the book reviews we will mention that "Enfield: A Swedish-American Farm Community 1850–2002" by Dean Anderson, published in 2003 by Arcadia Publishing in their "Images of America Series" tells a lot about a small Swedish farming community in Wright County, Minnesota.

In SAHQ 3/06 editor Byron Nordstrom discusses migration to and from Sweden through the ages in "Editor's Corner." Then Per Anders Rudling writes about "Scandinavians in Canada: A community in the Shadow of the United States," which is so true; there is very little written about this part of the migration history.

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.

Andersson, Magnusdotter

Jonas Andersson was born 22 October 1817 in Grolanda parish (Vägö.). His wife was Maria Lisa Magnusdotter, born 26 Sep 1819, in neighboring Hällestad parish where the couple was married 22 Nov 1846. They had two children born in Sweden, Pehr August born 6 September 1850 and Frans Gustaf born 22 February 1853. They immigrated to North America in 1854. I have been unable to locate this family in the United States.

Please send any information to

Hal Bern, 2341 E. Lynnwood Dr., Longview, WA 98632. E-mail: <Halby5443@aol.com>

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Pehrsson, Pehrsdotter, Olsson

I am seeking information on three of my great-grandfather's cousins who immigrated to North America. All three were children of Pehr Swensson (1812-1891) and Karna Göransdotter (1815-1869) and were born in Hedvigsberg, Färlöv, Kristianstad (Skån.):

- 1) Göran Pehrsson, born 18 March 1841 and immigrated 27 April 1866;
- 2) Sven Pehrsson, born 6 July 1843 and immigrated 28 June 1870; and
- 3) Sissa Pehrsdotter, born 18 September 1834 and immigrated 19 August 1893 from Hedvigsberg in Färlöv. Sissa was the widow of Sven Olson and presumably joined three of her children already in North America: son Karl Olof (born 16 March 1871 in Rödeby, Blekinge; immigrated 9 April 1888); daughter Emma Kristina (born 12 March 1869 in Rödeby, Blekinge; immigrated 6 September 1888 from Färlöv); and son John, born 17 May 1874 in Färlöv, immigrated 27 March 1889).

Contact:

Duane P. Swanson, 3169 State Highway 70, Braham, MN 50066. E-mail: <bswanson@pinenet.com>

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Editor's note: The widow Sissa Persdotter left the port of Malmö on 24 August 1893 with a ticket for Portland, OR. Her daughter Emma Kristina Svensdotter left the port of Malmö 13 September 1888 with a ticket for Chicago. Her son Karl Olof left the port of Malmö on 12 April 1888 with a ticket for St. Peter, Minn. All from database *Emihamn*.

Pehrsson, Andersson, Mathiason

1) My grandfather August Persson was born 11 January 1882 in Skivarp, (Skån.) Sweden. He immigrated 30 January 1914 from Malmö with a ticket for Boston.

He left his wife and two daughters and he never returned. I, his grandchild, have been able to follow him a little bit on his way in my research. The information I have, I have got from Ellis Island on the internet. Probably he was employed on an American ship named S.S. *Kankakee*, which was seized during its way to Uruguay. The seamen were saved by *Macedonia*, which took them to Montevideo. My grandfather is number 8 in the passengers list in the papers from Ellis Island. The seamen were sent back to America, my grandfather should go to a man named Mr. Hansen, at the address 238 Summer St., Brooklyn, N.Y. They return to America 10 December 1915 on the ship *Voltaire*. In the Ellis Island records they arrived 3 January 1916. Now I wonder if anyone knows something about my grandfather's destiny? If he remarried, where he lived and when he died?

2) My grandmother's brother: Anders Andersson, born 19 March 1871 in Nelleröd, Genarp, Sweden. He immigrated 26 February 1891 with a ticket for Emitsburg, Iowa. Information I have about him: He never returned, I got an address from his mother's will, which is very difficult to interpret; Dickens Cle Cr [!?!], Iowa.

(cont.)

Interesting Web Sites

(All links have been tried in December 2006 and should work)

All about Carl Linnaeus (von Linné): <http://www.linnaeus2007.se/>

The Swedish Bishop Hill Society: <http://home.swipnet.se/bishophill/indexeng.htm>

Immigrants from Bullaren in Bohuslän (use Internet Explorer):

<http://www.bullaren-emigranterna.se/index1.html>

Upper Mississippi Valley Digital Image Archive: <http://www.umvphotoarchive.org/index.html>

Index to Swedes in Texas (see p. 16) <http://www.augustana.edu/swenson/books105-106-a-b.htm>

Useful genealogy portal: <http://genealogyinc.com/>

Gravesite locator (veterans): http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL_v1

Rootstelevision: <http://www.rootstelevision.com/>

On-line obituaries: <http://www.deathindexes.com/>

Free newsletter about databases: <http://genealogyroots.googlepages.com/>

To find veterans' burialplaces: http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL_v1

3. My grandmother's father, Anders Mathiasson (Mattisson), born 2 October 1848 in Nelleröd, Genarp, (Skån.). He immigrated 13 December 1892 from Gustaf (Böringe) parish (Skån.), and left the port of Malmö on 27 December 1892 with a ticket for New York (*Emihamn*). He returned to Sweden in 1906 to bury his wife and went back to America 1 October 1907.

4. My grandmother's sister, Hanna Andersdotter (Andersson), born 4 December 1872 in Orehus, Genarp, (Skån.). She left the port of Malmö on 24 March 1892 with a ticket for Ruthwen, Iowa. She married Alfred Eriksson from Sweden. They lived on East Side Street in Chicago.

Inger Wildenfeldt, Björkliden Länghult 106, S-243 92 Höör, Sweden. E-mail: <ingermansson@gmail.com> **1265**

Geist

My great-grandmother Sofia Palm had a sister Maria Palm, born 14 August 1837 in Skärstad (Smål.). She married the brewery worker Peter Magnus Geist, born 22 March in Rogberga (Smål.) and settled in Jönköping where their children were born. Three of them emigrated and I am curious to know what happened to them.

1) Thilda Christina Geist, born 20 November 1866 in Jönköping Sofia. She left Göteborg 16 October 1891 with a ticket for Boston.

2) Anna Maria Geist, born 25 September 1870 in Jönköping Sofia. She left Jönköping 7 October 1895, not found in *Emihamn*.

3) Carl Johan Geist, born 1 August 1873 in Jönköping Sofia. In 1890 he was a carpenter's apprentice and lived with his aunt Sofia and her family in Stockholm. He left Göteborg on 20 April 1894 with a ticket for Quincy, Mass. Here I found him in the 1900 Census with his wife Ella, born April 1875 in Sweden and their son Elmer, born in September 1899 in Quincy. After that I have no idea what happened to them.

All information most welcome!

Elisabeth Thorsell, Hästskovägen 45, S-177 39 Järfälla, Sweden. E-mail: <elisabeth@etgenealogy.se>

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The Last Page

Dear Friends,

We are getting close to the end of the year, and this has been a strange fall. It has not been so warm for centuries, and you do start to wonder if there might be something in the talk about global warming?

I spent the major part of October in Worcester, Massachusetts, among other places, and saw the glorious fall colors of New England. We have them too in Sweden, but our forests are mostly coniferous and don't change color in this spectacular way.

I also had the opportunity to meet with many genealogist friends, and as usual appreciated their kindness and generosity.

As a coincidence *The Family Tree Magazine* for October had a long article about Swedish research,

which I hope many noticed. I met the author, David Fryxell, several years ago, and we have kept in contact, and now I was able to help him a little with some hints on things in Sweden.

The workshop in Salt Lake City was a huge success, as you can read in this issue. We were a bit astonished at the plans to tear down most of the central city and build a new huge mall or shopping center, so familiar landmarks will be gone next year.

Well, what is happening in Sweden? We have a new government, an alliance between the four more liberal-conservative parties. They took over in early October and seem to be doing fine. We hope fervently that they will tackle a huge problem, the preservation of the vital records after

1991, when the tax authorities took over. The records for the last 15 years only exist in digital form, and they need to be transferred to some medium that will be readable still in 2300, as we now can read records from the 1680s, and the modern records must be there for our descendants. This will cost a lot of money, and the Tax Ministry and the Culture Ministry can not agree on who is to pay.

Otherwise we continue as usual, seeing more and more CDs and databases. The Genline company is now almost finished with their huge scanning project, most church records are online, for a subscription, but we always hope for more, and more.

Till next time!

Elisabeth Thorsell

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Welcome to join our happy group of
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The SAG Workshop is the highlight of the year – a fun learning experience and a chance to do your Swedish genealogy with hands-on help from experienced Swedish genealogists.

The social side includes welcome and farewell receptions, a buffet dinner & entertainment, Swedish movies, etc.

Contact Karna Olsson at 207-338-0057
or e-mail: sagworkshop@yahoo.com

Limited number of spaces!

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.		

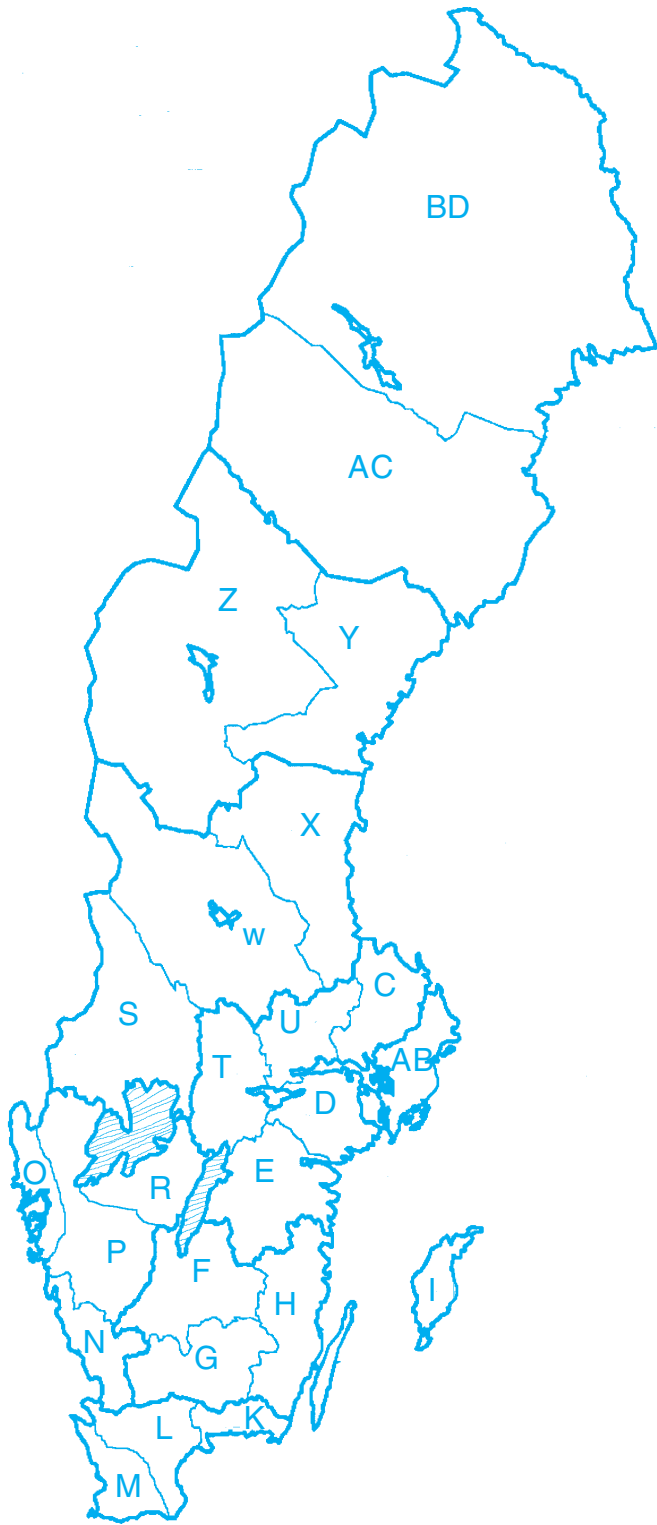
Table 2. Abbreviations and codes for Swedish counties (*län*) formerly used by *Swedish American Genealogist* (1981-1999) and currently used by *Statistiska centralbyrån* (SCB) (the Central Bureau of Statistics, Stockholm).

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 ^a		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 ^c		Vgöt.	O
Kronoberg	Kron.	Kron.	G	Örebro	Öre.	Öreb.	T
Norrbottn	Norr.	Nbtn.	BD	Östergötland	Ög.	Östg.	E
Skåne ^b		Skån.	M				

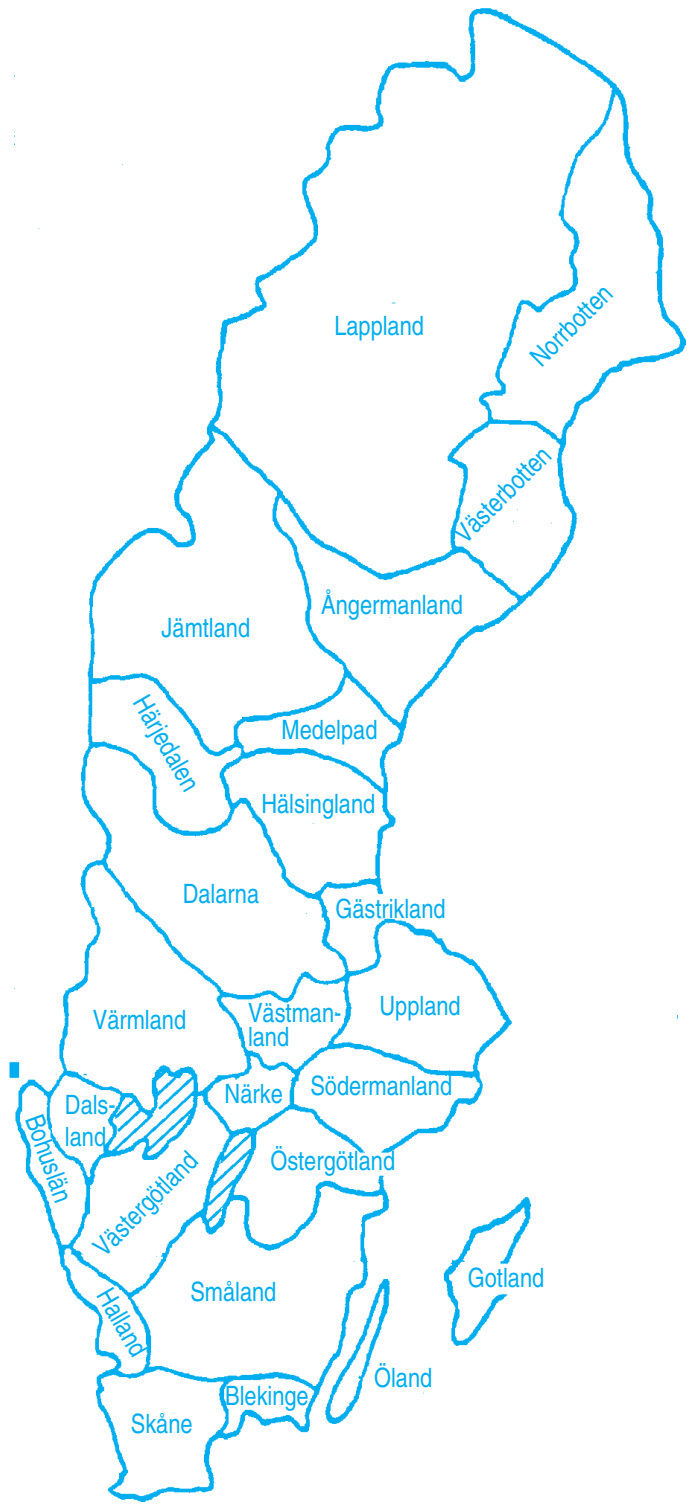
a formerly Kopparberg (Kopp.; W) *län*.

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*).