

# Swedish American Genealogist

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# Swedish American Genealogist

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



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*Swedish American Genealogist*

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## *Cover picture:*

Photograph of the *Empress of Ireland*, taken in 1910. See story on page 10.

# A pioneer from the 1850s – Hans Mattson tells the story of Vasa



## Part I

### Introduction

The *skåning* Hans Mattson was born 23 December 1832 in the parish of Önnestad in Kristianstad county in a farmer's family. He went to the village school and then to the high school in Kristianstad. In 1848 there was a war between Germany and Denmark and Hans Mattson wanted to join the army to beat the Germans. So in 1849 he became an artillery apprentice and stayed for a year and a half in the Vendes Artillery Regiment. When he realized that his possibilities of rising in the ranks were very limited, as he was not a nobleman, he decided to leave Sweden. In May 1851 he and some friends left for America.

After various adventures on the East Coast he decided to go west in the company of his father and brother who had now arrived. They travelled on the railroad to Buffalo, then

by water to Toledo, and at last again on the railroad to Chicago. To continue further west the travellers went on a canal boat to La Salle, and from there by horse and carriage to Galesburg.

They found that the area did not suit them, and they heard many stories about Minnesota and its fertile soil, and the stone-free prairie lands in Goodhue County.

### Hans Mattson's story:

After selecting this land my father returned to Illinois. In company with the other explorers, I went to St. Paul, where a council was held in which all participated, and at which it was decided that three of us, Messrs. Roos, Kempe, and myself, should go to our claims that fall and do as much work as possible, until the others could join us the following spring.

Having made the necessary preparations we three went to Red Wing by steamboat and found a little town with half a dozen families, among whom was the Rev. J. W. Hancock, who for several years had been a missionary among the Indians. The other settlers were Wm. Freeborn, Dr. Sweeney, H. L. Bevans, and John Day. Besides these we also met two Swedes, Peter Green and Nels Nelson, and a Norwegian by the name of Peterson.

On the bank of the river the Sioux Indians had a large camp. The country west of Red Wing was then practically a wilderness, and our little party was the first to start to cultivate the soil and make a permanent settlement.

At Red Wing we supplied ourselves with a tent, a cook stove, a yoke of oxen, carpenter's tools, provisions, and other necessities. Having hired a team of horses, we then packed our goods on a wagon, tied the cattle behind, and started for the new settlement. The first four miles we followed the territorial road; after that we had nothing but Indian trails to guide us. Toward evening we arrived at a grove on Belle Creek, now known as Jemtland. Here the tent was pitched and our evening meal cooked, and only pioneers like ourselves can understand how we relished it after our long day's tramp. The team was taken back the next day, and we were left alone in the wilderness. After a day's exploration



*The family home, Kellsagården in Önnestad, Skåne, Sweden.*



we moved our camp two miles further south, to another point near Belle Creek, where Mr. Roos had taken his claim.

## Haystack on fire

It was now late in September, and our first care was to secure enough hay for the cattle, and in a few days we had a big stack. Having read about prairie fires, we decided to protect our stack by burning away the short stubble around it. But a minute and a half was sufficient to convince us that we had made wrong calculations, for within that time the stack itself was burning with such fury that all the water in Belle Creek could not have put it out. Still, this was not the worst of it. Before we had time to recover from our astonishment the fire had spread over the best part of the valley and consumed all the remaining grass, which was pretty dry at that time of the year. Inexperienced as we were, we commenced to run a race with the wind, and tried to stop the fire before reaching another fine patch of grass about a mile to the north; but this attempt was, of course, a complete failure, and we returned to our cheerless tent mourning over this serious misfortune.

## Brother-in-law creates problems

The next morning we all started out in different directions to see if any grass was left in Goodhue County, and fortunately we found plenty of it near our first camping-ground. Having put up a second stack of very poor hay, we proceeded to build a rude log house, and had just finished it when my brother-in-law, Mr. Willard, surprised us by appearing in our midst, having left in Red Wing his wife and baby, now Mrs. Zelma Christensen of Rush City, who is, as far as I know, the first child born of Swedish parents in St. Paul.

Mr. Willard who was a scholarly gentleman and not accustomed to manual labor, had found it rather hard to work with shovel and pick on the hilly streets of St. Paul, and

made up his mind that he would better do that kind of work on a farm. Messers. Roos and Kempe having furnished all the money for the outfit, I really had no share in it, and as we could not expect Mr. Willard and his family to pass the winter in that cabin, I immediately made up my mind to return with him to Red Wing.

## Back to Red Wing

In an hour we were ready, and without waiting for dinner we took the trail back to that place. I remember distinctly how, near the head of the Spring Creek Valley, we sat down in a little grove to rest and meditate on the future. We were both very hungry, especially Mr. Willard, who had now walked over twenty miles since breakfast. Then espying a tempting squirrel in a tree close by, we tried to kill it with sticks and rocks; but we were poor marksmen, and thus missed a fine squirrel roast. Tired and very hungry we reached Red Wing late in the afternoon, and soon found my sister, Mrs. Willard, comfortably housed with one of the families there. Her cheerful and hopeful nature and the beautiful baby on her arm gave us fresh joy and strength to battle with the hardships that were in store for us. Mr. Willard and his wife had taken along what furniture they owned, a few eatables and five dollars and fifty cents in cash, which was all that we possessed of the goods of this world. But who cares for money at that age? Mr. Willard was twenty-five years old, my sister twenty-three, and I twenty, all hale and hearty, and never for a moment doubting our success, no matter what we should undertake.

## Wood chopping

Our first work was wood chopping, for which we were less fit than almost anything else. We had to go to a place about three miles above Red Wing, where a man had made a contract to bank up fifteen hundred cords of wood for the Mississippi steamers.

There was an old wood chopper's cabin which we repaired by thatching

it with hay and earth, putting in a door, a small window, and a few rough planks for a floor. In a few days we were duly installed, baby and all, in the little hut which was only twelve by sixteen feet, but to us as dear as a palace to a king. We began to chop wood at once. The trees were tall, soft maples and ash, and our pay was fifty-five cents a cord for soft and sixty-five cents for hard wood. At first both of us could not chop a cord apiece, and before the winter was over we often chopped three cords together in a day.

After a few days we were joined by four Norwegian wood choppers for whom we put up a new cabin to sleep in; but my sister cooked for us all, and the others paid for their board to Mr. Willard and myself, who had all things in common. Those four men were better workmen than we, and one of them, Albert Olson, often chopped three cords a day. They were quiet, industrious, and generous fellows, so that we soon became attached to each other, and we were all very fond of the little Zelma. My sister managed our household affairs so well and kept the little house so neat and tidy that when spring came we were all loth to leave.

## To the claim

The weather being fine and the sleighing good in the beginning of January, we hired John Day to take us with his team to our claims while there was yet snow, so that we might chop and haul out logs for the house which Mr. Willard and I intended to put up in the spring. My sister remained in the cabin, but Albert went with us for the sake of company. We put some lumber on the sled, and provided ourselves with hay and food enough to last a few days, and plenty of quilts and blankets for our bedding. John Day, who was an old frontiersman with an instinct almost like that of an Indian, guided us safely to Willard Spring. A few hundred yards below this, in a deep ravine, we stopped near some sheltering trees, built a roaring campfire, and made ourselves as comfort-

## A cold night

disturbed by a faint conception of something wrong, and by a desire to get up, but without sufficient energy to do so. This feeling gradually subsided into one of quiet rest and satisfaction, until consciousness ceased altogether, and, as far as pain was concerned, all was over with us.

Thus we were saved. It took a good while before we could use our limbs sufficiently to build a fire again, and during this time we suffered much more than before. From that experience I am satisfied that those who freeze to death do not suffer

## A struggle for life

[illegible]

*The location of Vasa is not exact*



he would never have left his cold seat again.

After a drive of eight miles we arrived at a house on Spring Creek, near Red Wing, where we found a warm room and a good shed for the horses. After an hour's rest we continued the journey, and safely reached our little home in the woods before dark. I do not know that I ever appreciated a home more than I did that rude cabin when again comfortably seated by its warm and cheerful fire-place.

A few weeks later I had an opportunity to visit St. Paul, and while there attended the wedding of a young Norwegian farmer from Carver County and a girl just arrived from Sweden. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Nilsson, a Baptist minister, who had been banished from Sweden on account of proselytizing. Among the guests was Mr. John Swainsson, who since became well known among the Swedes of Minnesota, and who died in St. Paul a short time ago.

## Meeting with Jacob Fahlstrom

I also made the acquaintance of one Jacob Fahlstrom, who had lived forty years among the Indians and devoted most of that time to missionary work among them. He was a remarkable man, and was well known among the Hudson Bay employees and other early settlers of the Northwest. As a boy he had deserted from a Swedish vessel in Quebec and made his way through the wilderness, seeking shelter among the Indians; and, by marrying an Indian girl, he had become almost identified with them. I think he told me that he had not heard a word spoken in his native tongue in thirty-five years, and that he had almost forgotten it when he met the first Swedish settlers in the St. Croix Valley. His children are now living there, while he has passed away to the unknown land beyond, honored and respected by all who knew him, Indians as well as white men.



*Mountain Chief, chief of the Sioux.*

## Returning home

On my return from St. Paul I stopped at the cabin of Mr. Peter Green, at Spring Creek, near Red Wing. The only domestic animals he had was a litter of pigs, and as Mr. Willard and I intended to settle on our land in the spring I thought it might be well to start in with a couple of pigs. Accordingly, I got two pigs from Mr. Green, put them in a bag which I shouldered, and left for our cabin in the woods. According to my calculations, the distance I had to walk ought not to be over three miles, and in order to be sure of not getting lost I followed the Cannon River at the mouth of which our cabin stood. I walked on the ice where the snow was about a foot deep, and, if I had known of the meandering course of the river, I would never have undertaken to carry that burden such a distance. From nine in the morning until it was almost dark I trudged along with my burden on my back, prompted to the greatest exertion by the grunting of the pigs, and feeling my back uncomfortably warm. These were the first domestic animals I ever owned, and I think I well earned my title to them by carrying them along the windings of the river at least ten miles. Both I and the pigs were well received when we reached the cabin. We made a pig pen by digging a hole in the ground

and covering it with poles and brush, and fed them on the refuse from the table. Before we were ready to move one of them died, while the other, after being brought to our new farm, ungratefully ran away, and was most likely eaten up by the wolves, which perhaps was just as agreeable to him as to be eaten by us.

## Indians

While living in this camp we saw more Indians than white men. A band of Sioux Indians camped near us for several weeks. They were very friendly, and never molested us. The men brought us venison and fresh fish, which they caught in great quantities by spearing them through the ice. We gave them bread and coffee, and sometimes invited one or two to dinner after we were through. Their women would stay for hours with my sister and help her take care of the baby. Indeed they were so fond of the white-haired child that they would sometimes run a race in vying with each other to get the first chance to fondle her. Sometimes we visited them in their tents (*wigwams*) in the evening and smoked *Kinikinick* with them.

Several of their dead reposed in the young trees near our cabin. When somebody died it was their custom to stretch the dead body on poles which were tied to young trees high enough to be out of the reach of wild beasts, then cover it with blankets, and finally leave some corn and venison and a jar of water close by. At some subsequent visit to the neighborhood they would gather the bones and bury them at some regular burial-ground, usually on a high hill or bluff.

Once we saw a regular war dance in Red Wing. A few Sioux had killed two Chippewas and brought back their scalps stretched on a frame of young saplings. At a given hour the whole band assembled, and, amid the most fantastic gestures, jumping, singing, yelling, beating of tom-toms and jingling of bells, gave a performance which in lurid savageness excelled anything I ever saw. The

same Indians again became our neighbors for a short time on Belle Creek the following winter, and we rather liked them, and they us. But eight years later they took part in the terrible massacre of the white settlers in Western Minnesota, and thirty-nine of their men were hanged on one gallows at Mankato in the fall of 1862 and the rest transported beyond our borders.

## To our new home

Thus our first winter in Minnesota passed without further incidents, until the beginning of March, when the weather turned so mild that we were afraid the ice on the Mississippi might break up, and we therefore hurried back to Red Wing. By our wood chopping and Mrs. Willard's cooking enough money had been earned to buy the most necessary articles for our new home. When we had procured everything and taken a few days' rest, we again hired Mr. John Day to take us out to our land with his team. Hundred of thousands of immigrants have had the same experience, and can realize how we felt on that fine March morning, starting from Red Wing with a wagon loaded with some boards on the bottom, a cook stove and utensils, doors, windows, a keg of nails, saws, spades, a small supply of provisions, a bedstead or two with bedding, a few trunks, and a little box containing our spotted pig, Mrs. Willard in the seat with the driver, her baby in her arms, her husband and myself taking turns as guides, John Day shouting to his horses, laughing and joking; all of us full of hope, strength and determination to overcome all obstacles and conquer the wildness. The snow was now nearly gone, and the air was spring-like. After a twelve miles' heavy pull we arrived at our destination, and made a temporary tent of sticks and blankets, very much after the Indian fashion. Two of the Norwegians had accompanied us to help build our cabin. Mr. Day stopped a couple of days hauling building material, and before night the second day the rear part of our

cabin was under roof. After a few days the Norwegians left us, and Mr. Willard and myself had to finish the main part of the building which was also made of round logs. For many a year this rude log cabin was the center of attraction, and a hospitable stopping place for nearly all the settlers of Vasa.

## Supplies running out

In the month of April cold weather set in again, and it was very late in the season when steamboat navigation was opened on the Mississippi. At that time all provisions had to be shipped from Galena or Dubuque, and it happened that the winter's supplies in Red Wing were so nearly gone that not a particle of flour or meat could be bought after the first of April.

Our supplies were soon exhausted, and for about two weeks our little family had only a peck of potatoes, a small panful of flour, and a gallon of beans to live on, part of which was a present from Messrs. Roos and Kempe, who had remained all winter on their claims, three miles south of us. They had been struggling against great odds, and had been compelled to live on half rations for a considerable length of time! Even their oxen had been reduced almost to the point of starvation, their only feed being over-ripe hay in small quantities. We would certainly have been starving if it had not been for my shot-gun, with which I went down into woods of Belle Creek every morning at day-break, generally returning with pheasants, squirrels, or other small game.

One Sunday the weather was so disagreeable and rough that I did not succeed in my hunting, but in feeding the team back of the kitchen some oats had been spilt, and a flock of blackbirds came and fed on them. Through an opening between the logs of the kitchen I shot several dozen of these birds, which, by the way, are not ordinarily very toothsome. But, being a splendid cook, my sister made them into a stew, thickened with a few mashed beans

and a handful of flour – in our estimation the mess turned out to be a dinner fit for kings.

## The steamboat comes

Our supplies being nearly exhausted, I started for Red Wing the next morning, partly to save the remaining handful of provisions for my sister and her husband, partly in hopes of obtaining fresh supplies from a steamboat which was expected about that time.

Three days afterwards the steamer arrived. As soon as practicable the boxes were brought to the store of H. L. Bevans. I secured a smoked ham, thirty pounds of flour, a gallon of molasses, some coffee, salt and sugar, strapped it all (weighing almost seventy pounds) on my back, and started toward evening for our cabin in the wilderness. I had to walk about fourteen miles along the Indian trail, but in spite of the heavy burden I made that distance in a short time, knowing that the dear ones at home were threatened by hunger; perhaps the howling of the prairie wolves near my path also had something to do with the speed. There are events in the life of every person which stand out like milestones along the road, and so attract the attention of the traveler on life's journey that they always remain vivid pictures in his memory. My arrival at our cabin that evening was one of those events in our humble life. I will not attempt to describe the joy which my burden brought to all of us, especially to the young mother with the little babe at her breast.

*To be continued*

Hans Mattson published his memoirs first in Swedish with the title *Minnen*, printed in Lund 1890. The following year they were printed in English as Mattson, Hans, *Reminiscences, The Story of an Emigrant*. St. Paul, MN: D. D. Merrill Co., 1891.

The subtitles in the present SAG version have been added by the editor.



# SVAR *Your link to your history!*

RIKSARKIVET

Q: Where can I find the newly scanned church records for Fellingsbro?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**www.svar.ra.se**



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# Moonshadows

Purple shadows etch the snow  
And silence speaks across the land  
Full moon above, the woods below  
Branches paint their lacework grand

My hound and I have ventured out  
To let him answer nature's call  
No other creatures roam about  
The forest sleeps, silence is all

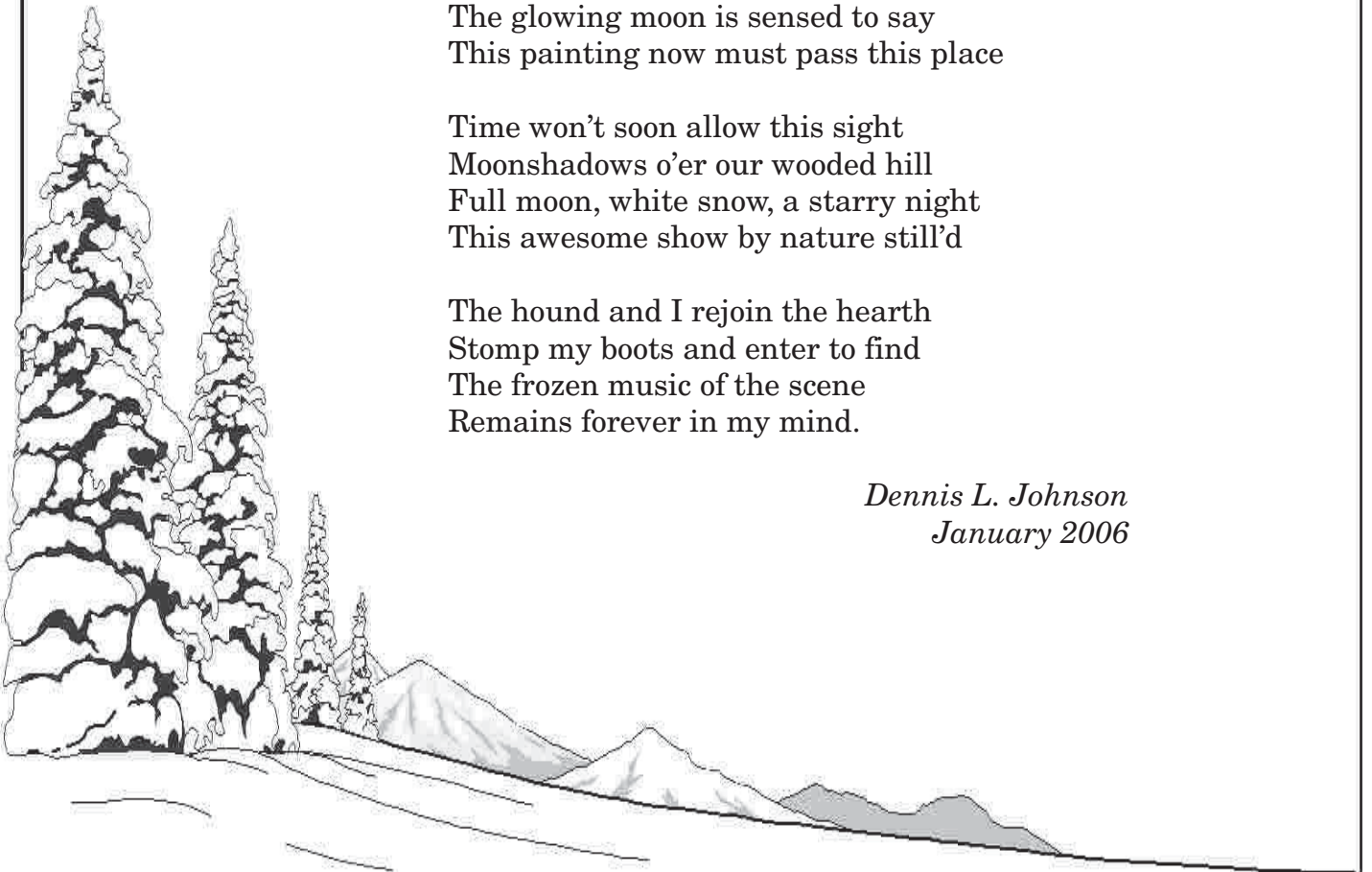
Across the lake in frosted white  
A faint lamp says we aren't alone  
Yet all is quiet in the night  
As Nature dwells upon her throne

We stand in wonder 'neath the milky way  
Overwhelmed by Nature's grace  
The glowing moon is sensed to say  
This painting now must pass this place

Time won't soon allow this sight  
Moonshadows o'er our wooded hill  
Full moon, white snow, a starry night  
This awesome show by nature still'd

The hound and I rejoin the hearth  
Stomp my boots and enter to find  
The frozen music of the scene  
Remains forever in my mind.

*Dennis L. Johnson*  
*January 2006*



# News from the Swenson Center

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## Augustana Summer School in Sweden (ASSIS)

The most incredible two months of my life began on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2006, as the Augustana Summer School in Sweden participants left the U.S. for Copenhagen en route to Göteborg! We arrived – some of us without luggage – in Grebbestad (in the province of Bohuslän) the next afternoon and soon learned that it was one of the coziest, most welcoming towns on Sweden's west coast. The locals look forward to the Americans visiting every summer and are anxious and willing to speak Swedish once you show them that you are as well. The laid-back attitude of the people in this tiny fishing town makes you feel at home before you know it. I wish that *everything* could have been carefree

while staying in Grebbestad, but we were there to learn! And so classes would begin immediately on our first full day!

Even though classes were a bit extreme, they were not too overwhelming. We had a lot to learn in only five weeks! The professors, both from home and Grebbestad's *folkhögskola*, were excited to be teaching and passed that eagerness on to the students. The daily schedule for each class level consisted of two intense morning classes separated by a 20 minute *kafferast*. We then had "conversational Swedish" with a wonderfully intriguing professor from the school who kept us on our toes! Toward the end of the five weeks, our 4<sup>th</sup> year group progressed

from mere dialogue to debating with one another and performing skits. To conclude our classes for the day, the four levels met in one room where we had *Kultur Klubben* with topics ranging from restaurant tipping (or lack thereof) in Sweden to the current political state of the nation. We were then let loose to have lunch (either at the cafeteria or in town) and get started on homework.

Afternoons were useful for exploring the area with friends on the trip, journaling, bike riding, and anything else we desired. In Sweden, everyone has the right to be out in the countryside (their right of public access, or *allemansrätten*) and for that we grew very grateful. We ransacked that town and its surrounding areas and





documented it with thousands of pictures. Our favorite spot was *Tjurpannan*, the nature reserve about 4 miles from Grebbestad. Hiking, swimming, playing in the waves (and on stormy days – probably not the smartest idea!), and rock climbing kept us going back to *Tjurpannan* every chance we found. Since the sun didn't even *begin* setting until after 11:30 p.m., we had plenty of sunlight for hours for journeying!

Weekends in Grebbestad were useful for traveling as a group or individually. One weekend we went together to the north in Oslo and another to the south in Göteborg. We took a trip to the Koster islands and rode bikes (no cars!) and climbed to its peak. Another weekend, many students took elaborate sequences of trains and buses to different towns

across Sweden to visit relatives – some of whom they had never met! After venturing out on our own and braving public transportation, we all made it back safely with memories to last a lifetime.

After five weeks on the west coast, we moved on to the east coast. We spent a week in Stockholm without any assignments except to *have fun*! We stayed in a hotel close to the subway with an unlimited riding pass to use throughout the week. We took boat tours through town, visited tons of indoor (and outdoor!) museums, saw the changing of the guard at the Royal Palace in Gamla Stan, rode out to Drottningholm Palace, and some of us even got a taste of the nightlife (thanks to an Augustana alumnus from Stockholm). Even though it was quite possibly the

busiest week of my life, we enjoyed the different feel of each island, ate at so many unique restaurants, and tasted all too much ice cream!

The things you learn about yourself, your attitude, and your overall outlook on life are drastically different after spending six weeks abroad and I would not have changed a thing about it. Last summer might have been the only chance for many of us to ever visit Sweden. That being the case, I could not be more thankful for the instructors we had, the friendships we formed, and the times that we shared.

*Christina Peterson*

*Text & photo*

*Augustana College class of 2007*



## Augustana College Summer School in Sweden

Augustana has been sponsoring Augustana College Summer School in Sweden (ASSIS) for over fifteen years. The program features intensive study in either first-, second-, or third-year Swedish for five weeks at Grebbestads folkhögskola, located on the west coast of Sweden. The pro-

gram concludes as students spend a week in Sweden's capital, Stockholm.

### Who can come on ASSIS?

Anyone with the desire to learn the language!

### When is it?

About every two years. Classes start around the end of May and finish at the end of June. Around the first week of July, the group spends a week in Stockholm.

For more information, check the web site:

<http://www.augustana.edu/academics/scandinavian/departments/assis.htm>

# An almost forgotten tragedy at sea

## The story of the *Empress of Ireland*

BY ELISABETH THORSELL

The *steamship Empress of Ireland* was launched at Liverpool on January 27th, 1906; she displaced 14,191 tons, and had accommodations for 1,700 passengers and a crew of 500. Her service speed was 18 knots (33 km/h). She had 2 propellers. She was owned by the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company.

On her departure on her fatal voyage on 28 May 1914 from Quebec City just 1,057 passengers and 417 crew were aboard, as she sailed down the St. Lawrence River that late Spring afternoon. Dinner was served; the Captain, Henry Kendall, entertained prominent guests at his table – actor Laurence Irving and his wife (he was the son of Sir Henry Irving); Sir Henry Seton-Karr (former British M.P.) and his wife were amongst the number.

Some years before, when Commander of the ship *Montrose*, Captain Kendall had been responsible for the arrest of the infamous murderer Dr. Crippen, and perhaps he would have told his guests of this adventure.

### The catastrophe

At 1:35 a.m., the ship's lookout, Jack Carroll, reported: "A ship's masthead spotted on the starboard bow!" It was a squat, graceless freighter, far ahead. Shortly afterwards, a blanket of fog descended, then lifted, and they saw that the boat was heading directly towards them. The *Empress* gave a long blast on the foghorn, then the fog descended again. Captain Kendall gave the order to go full speed astern, and the liner stopped as the engines were reversed.

Within two minutes, the ships

were about one length apart, and he gave orders to his engine room to go full speed ahead, to reduce the shock of collision. Just at that moment, the freighter came right in, and cut the *Empress* in a line between the two funnels.

The freighter was the *S.S. Storstad*, a Norwegian collier of 6,028 tons, and fully laden with coal. It was commanded by Captain Thomas Andersen, said to be a strict disciplinarian. For this reason, no doubt, First Officer Alfred Tuftenes, in charge on the bridge, didn't wake his captain until just before the collision. Had he done so, a thousand lives might have been saved.

Captain Kendall later reported: "When he struck me, I had stopped my engines. I shouted to him to keep full speed ahead, to fill the hole he had made and then he backed away!"

The ship began to fill, and almost immediately listed over to starboard. The wireless operator quickly sent out an S.O.S. Very few passengers even heard the collision, and others didn't stand a chance, being trapped in their cabins. Within five minutes, the ship was listing so badly that it was impossible to walk on the deck.

The first lifeboat just dropped into the water; the second one was more successfully launched; others were

almost impossible even to reach. In fourteen minutes, the ship went down, in 110 feet of near-freezing water. After the *Storstad* took aboard nearly all the survivors, they were later transferred to two smaller ships, the *Eureka* and the *Lady Evelyn*, which then took the survivors to Rimouski, a city on the Saint Lawrence inlet.

### The inquiry

Lord Mersey, who had presided over the Inquiry regarding the sinking of the *Titanic* in 1912, and would do so again when the *Lusitania* was torpedoed by a German submarine off southern Ireland, presided over the Board of Trade Inquiry into the sinking of the *Empress*.

Convened in Quebec City on June 16, 1914, the Inquiry found the *Storstad* at fault. A Norwegian Inquiry, conducted at the Norwegian Consulate General in Montreal, ultimately exonerated the *Storstad* and its captain, Thomas Andersen. To this day, the two conclusions are irreconcilable. The *Storstad* was seized as requested by the CPR in a \$2,000,000 lawsuit for damages and sold for a sum of \$175,000 to Prudential Trust.

This was Canada's worst peacetime maritime disaster.

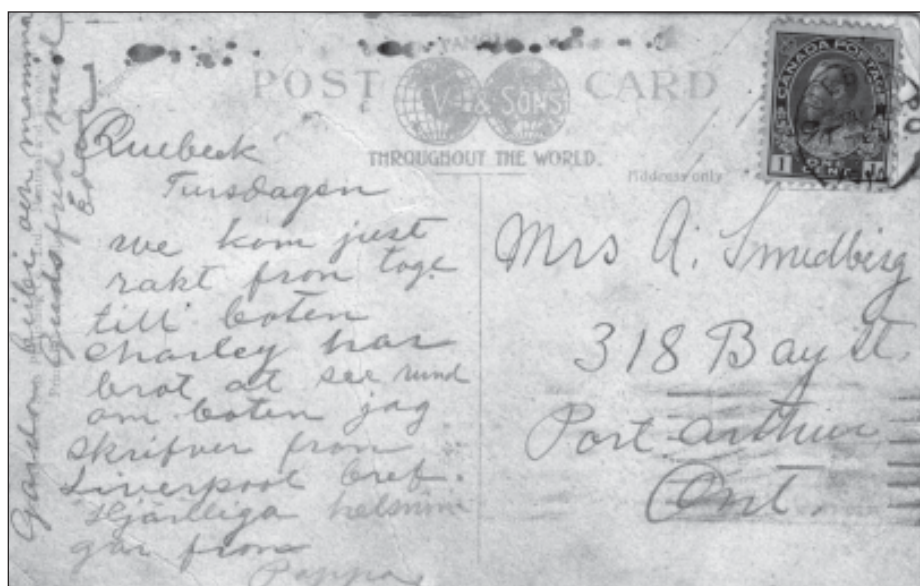
	Saved	Lost	Total
First Cabin - -	36	51	87
Second Cabin - -	48	205	253
Third Class - -	133	584	717
Crew (including Musicians)	245	175	420
Total - -	462	1015	1477

## Third class passengers with a destination in Sweden

Anderson, Mrs. Alvin, Minneapolis, MN	Gothenburg	lost
Anderson, A., Vancouver, B.C.	Malmö	lost, body identified
Blomqvist, August, Winnipeg, Manitoba	Gothenburg	lost
Blomqvist, Mrs., " "	Gothenburg	lost
Blomqvist, Fred " "	Gothenburg	lost
Blomqvist, Erik " "	Gothenburg	lost
Carlson, A., Minneapolis, MN	Gothenburg	lost
Clausen, David, Lethbridge, Alberta	Gothenburg	saved by <i>Corsican</i> 31 <sup>st</sup> May
Engstrom, John, Minneapolis, MN	Gothenburg	lost
Erickson, Eric J., Rossland, B.C.	Gothenburg	lost
Erickson, Nels I., Bellingham, WA	Gothenburg	saved by <i>Corsican</i> 31 <sup>st</sup> May
Evans, Russell, Chicago, IL	Gothenburg	lost
Fransen, Oscar, Fernie, B.C.	Gothenburg	lost
Gustafson, John, Minneapolis, MN	Gothenburg	lost
Johnson, Andrew, Minneapolis, MN	Malmö	saved by <i>Corsican</i> 31 <sup>st</sup> May
Johnson, Alida, Chicago, IL	Gothenburg	lost
Larson, Nels, Omaha, NE	Gothenburg	lost
Lindqvist, Jonas, Shellbrook, Sask.	Gothenburg	sailed on <i>Empress of Britain</i> 11 June
Lindqvist, Martha, Shellbrook, Sask.	Gothenburg	" " "
Nelson, Gust., Minneapolis, MN	Gothenburg	lost
Nilson, Sigfrid, Kamloops, B.C.	Helsingborg	saved by <i>Corsican</i> 31 <sup>st</sup> May
Olsen, Gustav, Racine, WI	Gothenburg	lost
Parsk (Barsk), Maria, Chicago, IL	Gothenburg	to Chicago 1 <sup>st</sup> June
Peterson, G., Sherbrooke, Que	Gothenburg	lost
Samuelson, Carl, Omaha, NE	Gothenburg	lost
Swan, Chas, Minneapolis, MN	Gothenburg	at Montreal 6 June
Swanson, Amandus, Kamloops, B.C.	Helsingborg	saved by <i>Corsican</i> 31 <sup>st</sup> May
Swanson, Martin, Maple Creek, Sask.	Malmö	saved by <i>Corsican</i> 31 <sup>st</sup> May
Towlander, Mrs., Winnipeg, Man.	Gothenburg	lost
Vinquist, C.J., Omaha, NE	Gothenburg	lost

This passenger list found at

[http://www.sea-viewdiving.com/shipwreck\\_info/empress\\_home/passengerindex.htm](http://www.sea-viewdiving.com/shipwreck_info/empress_home/passengerindex.htm)



## Postcard from victim

The *ålänning* Rafael Smedberg and his son Charley, age 10, from Port Arthur, Ont., decided to go back and visit relatives on Åland and in Finland. Just after boarding, Rafael wrote a postcard to his wife, and told her that they had just arrived at the ship and that Charley was eager to inspect the boat. He would write more from Liverpool, and wished the ones at home God's peace.

(We kom just // rakt från toge // till boten // Charley har // brot att se runt // om boten[.] Jag skrifver från // Liverpool bref. // Hjärtliga hälsningar från Pappa .

Across the card: Garda, Bibi [illegible name] och mamma // Guds frid med Eder)

Postcard belongs to Don Arril. Thanks to Elinor Barr and the Swedes in Canada project.





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You can check current exchange rates by going to [www.genline.com](http://www.genline.com) and selecting the tab Buy.



# Chris Olsson is 60!

Chris Olsson, the invaluable proof-reader and English master of SAG has just turned 60, and the SAG editor, of course, wants to join the line of people that congratulates him on reaching the age of maturity.

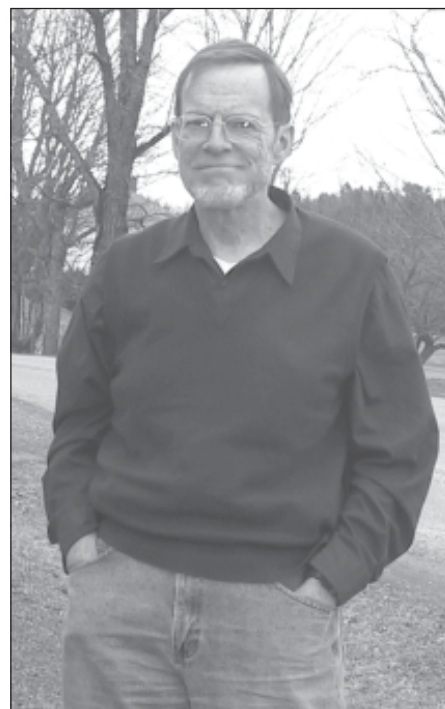
The SAG editor would never have dared to take on the job, if she had not known that Chris would be there and save her from all the dangers of a foreign language.

This is a job that would not be possible without the internet, e-mails cross the Atlantic most days during busy periods, and come back scrutinized, corrected, and ready to print.

Chris and his twin Greg (congratulations to Greg too!) are the sons of Nils William Olsson and his dear wife Dagmar. Chris was for-

merly the editor of *Sweden & America*, a journal published by Swedish Council of America. He retired for health reasons, and after many years in Minneapolis, he now finds himself and wife Debbie in Stockton Springs, Maine.

Every year for almost 10 years he has packed his bags and flown out to Salt Lake City to support sister Karna and the other staff members during the SAG Workshop week. As a child he lived for years in Sweden, so his language skills now comes in very handy during the workshop. He is also a member of the Early morning Brigade, who are outside the library long before they open, to save seats for others that can't get up in the morning.



GRATTIS! CHEERS!  
<olsson@localnet.com>

## The Eksjö Emigrant Monument



An emigrant monument was erected in the summer of 2006 in the *Järnvägsparken* (Railroad Park) in Eksjö to honor the memory of the 8,200 individuals that left the Södra Vedbo härad (legal district) during the emigration era to seek a new life in America.

The monument was an initiative of the Ingatorp *Hembygdsförening* (local historical association) and the Bruzaholm *bruksmuseum* (iron works museum).

The monument consists of an unfinished stone wall, typical for the area. In one end the farmer has left his iron crowbar in the wall and just left for the stone-free fields of Minnesota. On the spadelike iron shield is the text "Eksjö – North America. Towards bread and liberty".

Interestingly enough people have put information on their emigrant under one or two of the boulders in the stone wall.



[illegible]

In the early 1620s the king, Gustavus Adolphus, realized that he and the crown (*Kronan*) (the Swedish State) needed more income to be able to enter the Thirty Year's War. He and his advisors decided to tax the use of hand-mills in the homes, and for the first years that is what happened. But in a few years they decided that it was better if all adults had to pay a tax per person, and that is one of the meanings of the word *mantal* (tally of men). The sum to be paid was low, but still a worry for many, and there are many court cases where people were fined for

The tax records were written every year around the first of December, and they are organized by county, *härad* (legal district), and by parish. The record, as in the above example, was designated 1756, but really showed the situation for 1755. You need to trace someone in 1814? You should get hold of the record for 1815.

The information in these records is very scant, mostly just the first name of the farmer; the wife, children, and servants are just marked in columns. From 1812 you can often find the year of birth of the people, but still these records never become as detailed as the clerical surveys.

14



# Bits & Pieces



## The 2008 Swedish Genealogy Days

It has recently been decided that the 2008 Genealogy Days (*Släktforskar-dagarna*) will be held in Malmö. The exact date is not known yet, but probably towards the end of August.

## New Swedish Surnames

According to a note in the newspaper *Metro* on the 29 January 2007 more than 1,400 individuals had applied during 2006 to change their surname. In 2005 that figure was only around 870. In Sweden you have to apply to the Swedish Patent and Registration Office to have your named changed. You can make up your own name or use one that is suggested by the Office. Here is a list of names, made up at the Office web site: Brändbrant, Burbrant, Folkbrant, Gerdbrant, Brändhammar, Folkehammar, Gerdehammar, Linge hammar, Brändmalm, Folkmalm, Brändmossen, Burmossen, Folkmossen, Gerdmossen, Lingmossen, Brändtorp, Burtorp, Folktorp, and Lingetorp. All might not be accepted by the Office, but a surprising number are. There is a link to the Office on p. 31.

### 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. For PC.

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

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

**Elisabeth Thorsell**

<sag@etgenealogy.se>

## The Hamburg Passenger Lists

On *Ancestry.com* you can now find the passenger lists of emigrants from Hamburg, Germany, during the period of 1850–1934, with a gap 1915–1919 due to World War I. These are the scanned pictures of both the direct and indirect emigration from Hamburg. The “indirect” emigrants were those that transferred to another ship, in England for instance, before reaching their final destinations.

These lists cover about 5 million emigrants, of which about 80% went to North America.

The years 1890–1913 are indexed and searchable in a database, but the search language is German. So if you are looking for someone from Sweden, you should enter “Schweden” under *Ethnicity/Nationality*. 3342 Swedes were found that easy way. Then some of them have garbled names, so as usual, fill in as few fields as possible, and think of spelling variations.

*Ancestry.com* is a subscription site.

## A Swedish Monument in Iowa

A local group, *Swedish American Immigrant Commission*, in southeastern Iowa has been working since 2001 to build a monument in memory of their pioneering ancestors. The monument will be built at Munterville in Wapello County, where the first Swedes came in 1847. The focus of the monument will be a 7-foot bronze sculpture of an immigrant family centered on a circular base surrounded by a brick walkway.

For more information there is a web site at

**[www.swedishmonument.org/](http://www.swedishmonument.org/)**

(*The Des Moines Register* 28 Jan.2007)

## British Passenger Lists

It has been said that Liverpool was so badly bombed during World War II that there was no hope of finding any British lists of passengers. It appears that the facts were better than that. British *Board of Trade* kept lists of all ships between Great Britain and the rest of the world during 1786–1970. These lists, containing names of passengers, are kept in the National Archives in Kew, London, and have been known, but not microfilmed. They were regarded as being too difficult to use, as they were kept by port and date of departure.

Now the British online service *Findmypast* has started a huge indexing program, done in Asia, on these lists. The total is supposed to be around 30 million individuals. As a start, the period 1890–1909 is available on their web site. This is a subscription site and you buy time units. 50 units costs £5, and you can easily buy more.

**[www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com)**

## Great Swedish Heritage Award

Swedish American Council will present this year's Great Swedish Heritage Award at a banquet in April to Dr. *Nils Hasselmo*. Dr. Hasselmo is born in Sweden, but immigrated in 1956 and has since had a distinguished career in the academic world. He is a former president of the University of Minnesota, and was the president of the Association of American Universities 1998–2006.

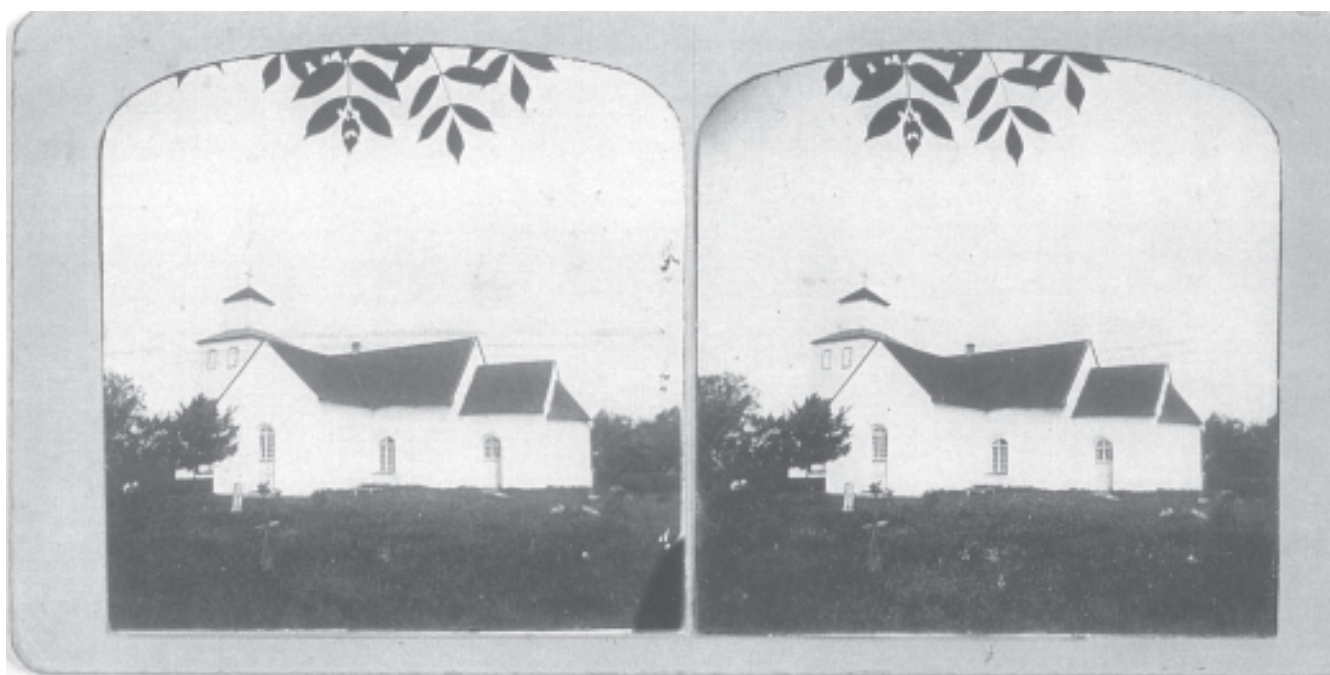


# The Old Picture

*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.*



*Stjärnarp – manor house and stable block, Eldsberga parish in Halland, ca. 1870–1890.*



*Tönnersjö Church, near Eldsberga, Halland, ca 1870–1890.  
The story about these pictures can be found on the next page.*



# Danielson Views of Halland

In August 2006, at an antiques show in Maine, I acquired five stereographs (stereoptican views) dating from ca. 1870-1890 of sites in Sweden. All bore on the reverse an old rubber stamp legend which evidently identifies the original owner: "Adolf B. Danielson, Providence, Minn." They were named in brief pencilled inscriptions as follows:

(1) "Stjernarp, Sweden" which depicts a manor house and stable, it was confirmed by Karna Olsson as Stjärnarp, a manor house in Eldsberga (Halland);

(2) "Tönnersjö Kyrka," a towered church standing in grassland, which the same lady tells me is 5.6 km north of Eldsberga;

(3) "Tönnersjö Kyrka taget från söder", the same, at a greater distance, seen from the south across a flat countryside;

(4) "Tönnersjö Kyrka," an interior view of the same church, with interesting vaulted ceilings, walls painted evidently white, two hanging chandeliers, organ pipes raised and framed on the wall, table (altar?) beneath with four painted cruciform motifs on what may be its drawers, with a ladder behind providing access to an opening. In the ceiling, the church fitted with dark, typically 19th century curved pews;

(5) "Slatat [*Slottet*] Halmstad", a town from across water, centered on a castle on the shore, being a well-known place in Halland also.

The pencilled identifications write the proper names in Swedish but no. 1 spells the country "Sweden," in English. Did Mr. Danielson emigrate from this region and was sent the views? Or did he secure them on a return visit to his homeland? Curiously, it is Providence in Minnesota, which has perhaps been given a modern name for I cannot locate it in standard gazeteers or maps!

*Francis James Dallett, FASG, Member, Swedish Colonial Society of Penna.*

## Editor's note:

Providence, MN, was found on the Epodunk website to be a small town (186 inhabitants) in Lac Qui Parle county in Minnesota, west of Minneapolis and not far from the South Dakota border.

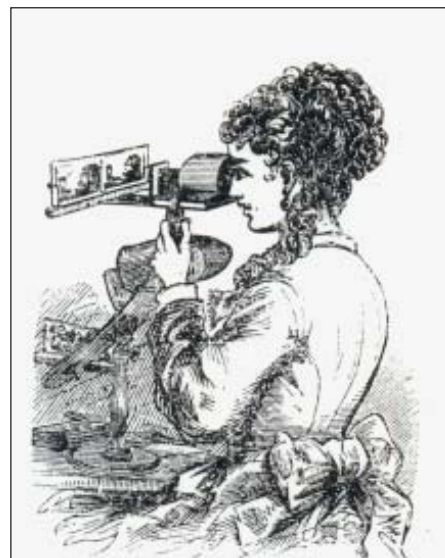
When checking the 1900 U.S. Census for Providence, one of the first families I noted was one where the head of household was Peter J. Danielson, born 1849 in Sweden, who had a son Adolph, born 1879 in Sweden. The year of immigration was given as 1884.

With some inventive searching in the database *Emihamn*, a Danielson family was found to have emigrated from Tönnersjö in the spring of 1884. Somehow they were not listed in *Emibas*, which would have given the direct page in the clerical survey. Luckily enough the removal records up to 1890 were found on Gonline,

and the Danielssons were found on page 54, Nybygget on Hilleshult lands in the cl. survey for 1880-1885.

The sharecropper *Peter Johan Danielsson*, born 1849 Apr. 29 in Lidhult, Kronoberg, and his wife *Börta Nilsdotter*, born 1848 May 26 in Veinge, Halland, and four of their five children emigrated in April 1884 for North America. Among the children was son *Adolf Bernhard*, born 1879 Sep. 29 in Tönnersjö! This boy is very likely the future owner of those stereographic pictures.

For some reason the names of the children in the cl. survey do not tally with the names given in *Emihamn*, but they do tally with the 1900 Census, so it is the same family.



## A new site that may help you find your cousins

Fairly recently a new site opened in Sweden. Though it is in Swedish, it is called Birthday.se, and there you can enter a person's name and maybe find out where this person is today.

The basic search is easy: enter your cousin's first name in the window labeled *Förnamn*, and the surname in the one labeled *Efternamn*, and then click on the arrow to the right.

The result shows to the left of the screen, and it tells you your cousin's full name, the town she lives in and

when she was born, and how many days to her next birthday, and her sign of the Zodiac. You can also click on *avancerad sökning* (advanced search) and be able to enter birthdates or street addresses.

This works well with more unusual names, but if you sign up for a *free* account, you will get much more exact information.

To do this you click on *Skaffa konto* (Get account) and fill out the form, and then you will receive an e-mail

with log-in information. As a member of the site you get the cousin's exact mailing address, not just the town, and that will make it easier for you to contact your Swedish cousins.

With this information you can also go to the online phone book at

[www.eniro.se](http://www.eniro.se)

[www.hitta.se](http://www.hitta.se)

[www.birthday.se](http://www.birthday.se)



# A Swedish Treasure-Trove

## Some things you might find on the SVAR web site (www.svar.ra.se)

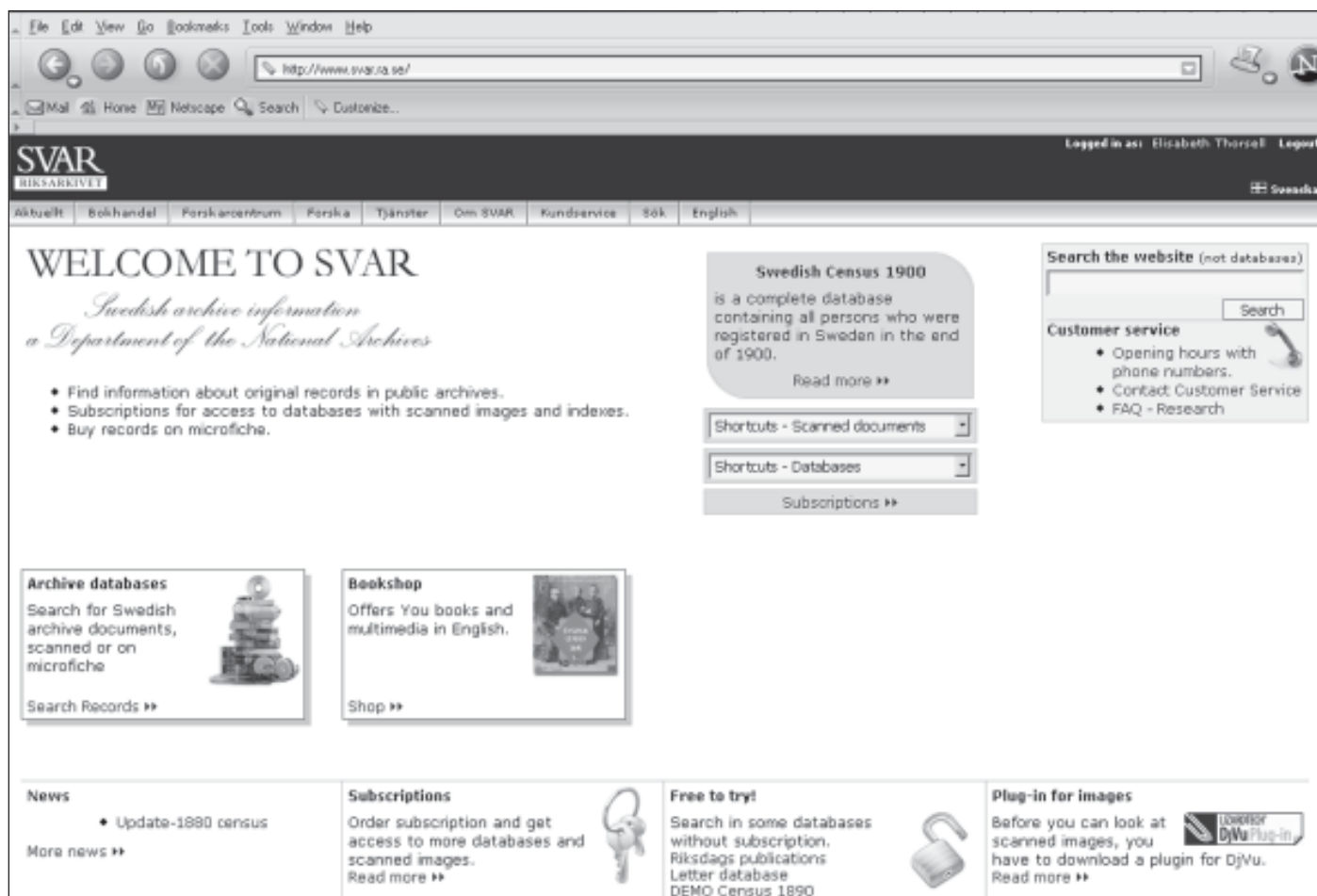
BY ELISABETH THORSELL

For the last few years there has been a full page ad in each SAG from the SVAR institution, but who are they and why are they of interest to genealogists?

It is a long story, and has to do with the Swedish labor market and the efforts to keep the countryside alive. Already in the early 1980s the

Provincial Archives (*Landsarkivet*) in Härnösand started a registry base in Ramsele, way up in the forests of Ångermanland, where there were many unemployed individuals, mainly women who had difficulties in finding proper jobs there. The men could at that time still find plenty of work in the forests. So the women went

through various kinds of documents and indexed them for the *Landsarkivet*; this was even before the age of personal computers. Later the workplace was transferred to *Riksarkivet* (National Archives) and put in charge of microfilming the Swedish church records after 1860 and producing microfiche of all of them. They



The first page of the SVAR web site. There is a little flag at the top on the right-hand side where you can change language.

also have produced microfiche of military records, court records, old manuscripts, and much more. They have a very nice research room in Ramsele which is free to use by all visitors.

With the advent of the internet, SVAR also went online and has now grown a very interesting web site, full of useful things for all researchers, not just genealogists.

The SVAR web site is mainly in Swedish, but has a large English language section also. Most of the contents are only accessible if you have a subscription.

## Church records

On the start page you will find the link to the English site in the upper right-hand corner, and that is also where you can log in.

After logging in, you will notice a window in the middle of the screen which says "Shortcuts – Scanned documents"; click on that and chose *church records*. Now you first get a list of the counties and you have to click on the county name, and then on the parish which interests you.

If you see a *blue arrow*, there are scanned records available.

**Note:** scanned documents are saved in the DjVu-format, which means you need a plugin to view the images. You will find a link to the plugin on the start page, and the parish page. You will not find church records that are younger than 100 years, as those are only available at the archives.

At the time of writing, scanned records for the whole period from the 1600s up to 1895 are available for the counties of Örebro and Uppsala. This is a result of the cooperation between the Genealogical Society of Utah and the *Riksarkivet*, where the goal is to scan the first generation films made in the 1950s to get clearer and sharper pictures than what is currently available on microfiche. This scanning is very fast and will probably be completed within a year or two.

Another set of films are scanned records for the time 1895-1905 which

are a result of SVAR scanning all the younger records, up to 1991, when the church records stopped.

The parishes in the districts of the *Landsarkiv* in Härnösand and Uppsala were filmed before they changed to scanning directly. Those northern records are on microfiche and can be bought from SVAR. The change of technology happened when half of the church records for the district of Vadstena (Östergötland, Småland, and Öland) had been filmed, the other half was scanned.

A *red arrow* shows what is on microfiche, and for some parishes you can buy those up to the middle 1920s, or even later.

## The Tax census (*Mantalslängder*)

From the early 1620s every adult person, with some exceptions, had to pay a yearly tax, called *mantalspeng*. To make sure that nobody evaded the tax, the officials kept yearly registers of all people in the country, called *mantalslängder*, and they have mostly survived through the centuries.

They are not as detailed as the *husförhörslängder*, but can be helpful in the times before those were kept.

They are kept by county and parish. People are listed by the farm they owned or leased, and people with patronymic names often were just listed with their first name. The wife and children were recorded as marks in columns, as well as farm hands and maids. Children under the age of 15 and people older than 65 were usually exempted, as well as soldiers, but not the soldier's family.

An example of a *mantalslängd* is the handwriting example in this issue.

You will find the *mantalslängder* 1642-1820 by going to "Scanned documents" on the start page and then clicking on "Tax Census." Then chose the county you like and the year, and click on the volume. When the pages appear you will find a very helpful list of parishes on the right-hand side, which you can click on and it will take you to the parish you

want. Remember that the boundaries of Sweden changed in the 1600s, so for Halland, for instance, you will not find these records before 1669. See an example of *mantalslängder* on page 14.

## The shortcut to databases

This useful window is found on the starting page and has links to many interesting databases. A short description of these follows here.

## Birth, marriage, and death databases

Some modern databases of Births, Marriages, and Deaths (*födelse, vigsel, and död*) are to be found here.

These databases do not cover the whole country, but only some parishes in Ångermanland, Medelpad, Småland, and a few ones in Östergötland and Västergötland are included. On the search page of the database there is a link to information on how to do the search and about the contents. If you are lucky it can be a convenient shortcut to looking up the original records.

## Census database

The Census database (*Sveriges befolkning*) consists of a modern database, compiled from excerpts of clerical surveys that the pastors had to send in to the Central Bureau of Statistics (*Statistiska Centralbyrån / SCB*) every 10 year. Here you find complete databases for 1890 and 1900, and several counties completed for 1880, and more to come. Databases for 1860 and 1870 have been started, but will take a long time to complete. It should be noted that both 1890 and 1900 are also available on CD:s.

## Convicts

This database contains records, with many photos, on 8,000 convicts from 1877 to 1925, searchable in many ways. If you find a relative here you will have all the information necessary to find him in the court records.

No 1918. Okt. d. 5/4 82.

**Beskrifning.** rörande *förrättaren Lars Johan Söderman,*  
som den 4<sup>te</sup> April 1882 frigifres från straffängelst i Carlskrona.

---

No 80 i stansrollen samt No 152 i porträttrullen.  
Födelseår, månad och dag: 1827 den 23 Oktober.  
Födelseort till förärvning, härad (stad) och län: Hedemora.  
Svaste kyrkskrifningsort: Hedemora.  
Undergår nu bestraffning för: 5<sup>te</sup> åren tillid och bedrägeri.  
Utsaget, af hvilken myndighet och när det afkunnats: Västerås Rådhus den 30 November 1875  
Straffet samt tiden, då det började: 4<sup>te</sup> Januari straffarbete samt 10 års förlust af medborgerliga rättigheter.  
Först undergåguna bestraffningar för: 4<sup>te</sup> åren tillid.  
Förpassningsort vid frigifningen: Carlskrona  
Beloppet af egna medel och besparad arbetsförtjänst vid frigifningen: 55 Riksdaler i ö.  
Fångens fotografi.

Hår: svartbrunt.  
Skugg: grågrönt.  
Ögon: blå.  
Näsa: Rakt.  
Mun: ordinarie.  
Höjd: 5 fot 5, 2 tum.  
Kroppbyggnad: ordinarie.  
Annat utmärkande kännetecken: Ofärdig i smärta.  
Sinfingert.

Carlskrona den 3 April 1882.  
M. Luthander  
Fängels-Direktör.

\* Namnerna ifylles af vederbörligaste polismyndighet i den ordning beskrifningarna från de särskilda fängelserna ingå.

An example of the information on a convict.

The man in the example is the former carpenter Lars Johan Söderman, who was released on the 4th of April 1882 from the penitentiary at Karlskrona. His roll number was 80 and his number in the portrait roll was 152.

He was born 23 October 1827 in Hedemora, which also is the place where he was last recorded. He has now undergone punishment for 5th

time for stealing and fraud. He was sentenced by the Västerås Magistrate on 30 November 1875. He was sentenced to 6 years and 7 months of hard labor and 10 years loss of his civil rights. He started his time in jail on the 4th of December 1875. He had previously been punished for 4th time for stealing. When he was released he was to stay in Karlskrona. During his time in jail he had

saved 85 kronor and 60 öre. His hair was dark brown, his beard speckled grey, his nose crooked, his mouth ordinary, his skin a bit dark, he was 5 feet 5.2 inches tall, his body was of ordinary build, and as an unusual mark his fourth finger on the left hand was unusable. And then his picture adds a lot to the information. It is not many of you ancestors, born in the 1820s, that you know this much about.

In the 1890 Swedish census he is listed under Hedemora, but with a note that nobody knew where he was. In 1900 he is no longer listed anywhere.

## Image database

This section has a few images of birth, marriage, and death (*födelse, vigsel, and död*) records for Jämtland, as well as *extracts from the clerical surveys* 1860 for Väster-norrland, and 1870 for Norrbotten and Västerbotten, and the whole country for 1880, 14 counties for 1890, and again the whole country for 1900.

An interesting database under this heading is the one from *Krigsarkivet* (War Archive) which has photos of officers both from the army and the navy.



From left: John Gustaf Nauckhoff (born 1867), Alfred Meyerson (born 1866).



## Inventory database

This database has indexes to probates in the counties of *Norrbotten*, *Södermanland*, *Uppsala*, and *Västmanland*. The indexes are searchable in many ways. Once you find that a person has a probate, you get the full citation to obtain a copy, either on microfiche or from the archive.

## Seamen's houses (also Seamen's registries) *Sjömanshus*

This database has information on thousands of merchant seamen from nine seamen's houses in Sweden and one in Finland. The seamen's houses in the database are the following: *Härnösand*, *Gamlakarleby* (Finland), *Västervik*, *Hudiksvall*, *Söderhamn*, *Gävle*, *Karlskrona*, *Oskarshamn*, *Visby*, and *Örnsköldsvik*. The information is uneven, but you usually get place and date of birth, maybe the father's name, the ship the man sailed on, etc. If he ran away or left his ship in some other irregular way that is also recorded in these rolls.

Record 1 - 20 of 21					
Refine search - New search					
Name of village/farm [Parish]	Volume	Year	Page	SVA number	Card number
Backågan Gaban [Onsala]	AI: 1	1810-1811	70-73	411605	2/6
Gaban [Onsala]	AI: 1	1810-1811	70-71	411605	2/6
Gaban [Onsala]	AI: 1	1818-1824	74	411605	4/6
Gaban [Onsala]	AI: 1	1824-1826	84	411605	5/6
Gaban [Onsala]	AI: 2	1826-1831	135	411606	2/3
Gaban [Onsala]	AI: 3	1831-1837	174	411607	3/4
Gaban [Onsala]	AI: 4	1837-1848	176-178	411608	3/4
Gaban [Onsala]	AI: 5	1849-1853	239-240	411609	5/7

An example from the village and farm database.

## Village and farm database

This database contains information on place names within a parish, and it also gives the page and the microfiche number for the place you are looking for. Unfortunately it does not cover the whole country, but it does cover the counties of *Blekinge*, *Gävleborg*, *Halland*, *Jämtland*, *Kronoberg*, and *Västerbotten*.

There are many other interesting things to find on the SVAR web site, but mainly in Swedish. However, SVAR has a good *online bookstore* with a number of books on Swedish history and culture in English which you can easily browse.

[www.svar.ra.se](http://www.svar.ra.se)

## Subscriptions

At the moment the following subscriptions are available for private persons:

### Prices in SEK

Annual subscription	1195:-
Half year subscription	695:-
Monthly subscription	245:-
10 visits (3 hours each)*	295:-
1 visit (3 hours)**	50:-

\* Valid 1 year.

\*\* Only credit card (not invoice).

Valid three consecutive hours and will be activated when payment is fulfilled.

All subscriptions gives access to all databases and scanned images on our website.

# The Dagmar and Nils William Olsson Fellowship

This annual fellowship is designed to help defray costs for one person doing research for an extended period of time at the Center and was established by Nils William Olsson, a leading authority in the field of Swedish-American studies (and founding editor of SAG), and his wife Dagmar.

The fellowship, which is in the amount of \$1,500 (taxable income), is open to anyone doing academic research on any aspect of Swedish-American history. It is not intended to be used for research on a person's individual family history. We particularly encourage graduate students and younger scholars to apply. The minimum stay required at the Swenson Center is three weeks, and the fellowship must be used within one year of notification.

Anyone interested in applying for the fellowship should submit a two-to-three-page proposal to the Swenson Center outlining the proposed research topic. The proposal should also include a current curriculum vitae, as well as a statement showing how the resources of the Swenson Center are appropriate for the particular project.

***The deadline for applications is May 1, 2007.***

### *Mailing address:*

Swenson Center, Augustana College,  
639 38th St, Rock Island, IL 61201-2296, U.S.A.

### *Past recipients:*

#### **2006**

Mr. Christopher Jaffe, Northern Illinois University.

#### **2005**

Ms. Agnieszka Stasiewicz of Krakow, Poland.

#### **2004**

Ms. Joanna Daxell, Université de Sherbrooke, Canada.

#### **2003**

Mr. Paul Lubotina, St. Louis University.

#### **2002**

Dr. Lars Nordström, The life and work of Samuel Magnus Hill, a pioneer educator and minister in Nebraska.

#### **2002**

Ms. Malin Glimäng, The history of Swedish female immigration.

Population ► General statistics ► Name statistics ►

## Name Search. How many are named...?

How many people in Sweden have the same name as you? Choose either a surname or a first name for one of the sexes. You can indicate at most 2 first names. Hyphenated names are counted as one name. The Search covers persons registered in Sweden on 31 December 2005.

**Name search** (Current as of 31 Dec 2005)

Surname: ☒ Both Sexes

First name: ☐ Woman ☐ Man

Write in a first name or a surname

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the Name Search
- More Name statistics including lists of the most popular names

**For more information:**  
E-mail: [befolkning@scb.se](mailto:befolkning@scb.se)  
Phone: +46 19 17 60 10  
Fax: +46 19 17 69 42

On the web site of Statistics Sweden (*Statistiska Centralbyrån*) you can find many interesting things. Just chose "English" and next go to "N" in the lefthand column. Click on that, and you will find "Names" on top of the list. This link will lead you to a page where you can find the most popular first names, both for boys and girls. Or you can search for a surname and see how many living Swedes have that specific surname.

There is much more available in English to help you learn about modern Sweden. You can also find population statistics from 1749. And facts about life expectancy 1751-2005. In 1751-90 a newborn male could not expect to live longer than 33 years now 78.4 years!

Thanks to Judy Olson Baouab for the idea of this notice.

## Välkommen hem!

Welcome home to your Swedish roots!

A road map will make your travels in Sweden a lot easier.

A family map of your roots will add other kinds of values to your travel.

Maybe your long lost relatives are waiting for you where it all started?

Or perhaps you are just curious about where and what kind of life your ancestors lived in that little country far up north, on the Arctic Circle.

The *House of Genealogy*, non-profit but professional, can help you discover your Swedish roots.

Our experienced researchers have access to church records from all over Sweden. We have all the necessary databases. We have a nationwide network that makes the search more effective.

Within 2 weeks from your first request you will have an answer from us. If you wish to continue working with us, you will have an answer as complete as possible within 2 months.

Our research-fee is 25 USD per hour + expenses.

Read more about us at [www.slaktforskarnashus.se](http://www.slaktforskarnashus.se) Contact us for further information.



# The Solution to the Handwriting Example XII

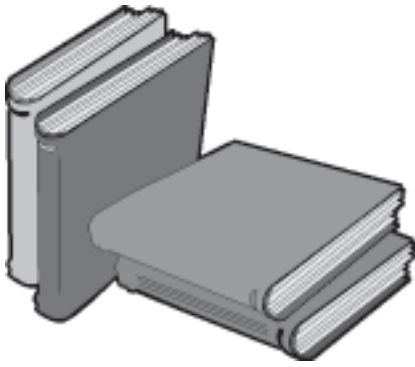
## Transcription

Gårdens namn		Ydre härad  Asby s:n	Röketalet	Hustru och barn	Ståndspersoner		Äbor och Bönder	Hustruer	Allmogens		Klockare glämningsmen mjölnare fjerdingsmän hofsleg	Torpere	Fattig bräcklig utan bruk	Summa	Annotationer		
					Drängar	Pigor			Söner och drängar							Döttrar och pigor	
									Helwuxna	Half wuxna							
Skårtebo	1	1/4 Johan p. Cajsa	/				/			/				2	h. gammal		
		1/4 Per och h.	/				/	/						2			
		1/4 Jonas och h.	/				/	/						2			
		1/4 Swen och h.	/				/	/						2			
		soldat Anders h.	/				/	/						1			
	3/4	Nämd. Jonas och h.; dr. Sven och Jonas p. Anna och Stina					/	/	2	2				6			
Marek	1	1/3 Nils P. och h.	/				/	/						2			
		1/3 Nils Sv. och h. dr. Nils, p. Caisa	/				/	/	/	/				4			
		1/6 Sven och h.	/				/	/						2			
		1/6 Jon och h.	/				/	/						2			

## Translation

Name of farm		Ydre härad  Asby parish	Households	Gentry with wives and children	Gentry		Tenants and Farmers	Wives	Peasant's		Veggers craftsmen millers constables farriers	Sharecroppers	Poor frail not farming	Sum total	Remarks		
					Farmhands				Majds	Sons and farmhands						Daughters and majds	
					Fully grown	Half grown				Fully grown							Half grown
Skårtebo	1	1/4 Johan m. Cajsa	/				/			/				2	w. old		
		1/4 Per and w.	/				/	/						2			
		1/4 Jonas and w.	/				/	/						2			
		1/4 Swen and w.	/				/	/						2			
		soldier Anders' w.	/				/	/						1			
	3/4	Jurym. Jonas and w.; fh. Sven and Jonas m. Anna and Stina					/	/	2	2				6			
Marek	1	1/3 Nils P. and w.	/				/	/						2			
		1/3 Nils Sv. and w. fh.Nils, m. Caisa	/				/	/	/	/				4			
		1/6 Sven and w.	/				/	/						2			
		1/6 Jon and w.	/				/	/						2			





# 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.

## New Sweden Churches

***Colonial Records of the Swedish Churches, Volume I and Volume II***, by Peter Stebbins Craig, Editor, and Kim-Eric Williams, Assistant Editor, Swedish Colonial Society, 2006, hardcover, 218 pp. (Vol. I) and 221 pages (Vol. II), Swedish Colonial Society, Philadelphia, \$25.00 each volume (\$20.00 for members), plus shipping.

Most Swedish Americans are quite familiar with the general picture of the populating of the American nation by immigrants from Sweden in the 19th century. Often referred to as "The Swarming of the Swedes," this migration occurred from the 1850's until the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Our own family histories usually include recollections of the stories of our grandparents or great-grandparents and their great adventure in coming from Sweden to the United States.

Less well known among most Swedish Americans is the story of the New Sweden Colony on the Delaware River, which took place more than 200 years before the beginning of the great migration. This was a time when many European nations were looking to establish colonies in North America, the time of Jamestown, Virginia, of Plymouth in Massachusetts, New Amsterdam on the Hudson River, and in other locations.

By 1637, over 150 years before the United States achieved independence, a group of Swedish, Dutch,

and German investors formed the New Sweden Company to trade for tobacco and furs in North America. Two sailing ships, the *Kalmar Nyckel* and the *Fogel Grip*, set sail for North America, reaching Delaware Bay in March of 1638. A fort was built in what is now Wilmington, Delaware, named Fort Christina to honor Sweden's young queen, then only twelve years old. During the next 17 years, eleven more ships arrived in New Sweden, bringing the little Colony about 600 more Swedes and Finns. Over the next twenty years the Colony established farms and small settlements along both shores of the Delaware River, on lands which were to later become Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and Maryland.

Swedish sovereignty over the Colony ended by 1655, when Governor Stuyvesant of New Amsterdam established his rule over New Sweden. They were allowed to govern themselves, however, and remained independent until 1681, when William Penn received his charter for Pennsylvania and Delaware and established English rule.

(For more information on the history of New Sweden, see the website of the Swedish Colonial Society at [www.colonialswedes.org](http://www.colonialswedes.org) )

The descendants of these early Swedes who remained in New Sweden in subsequent years were mainly interested in farming. They scattered throughout the Delaware Valley to claim lands and raise their families. Meanwhile, Philadelphia, Wilmington, and other towns in the area grew and became centers of trade, government, and industry. Many of these Swedes intermarried with English,

German, Dutch, and other settlers or townsmen, and became part of the social fabric of early Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and Maryland. In later years, their many descendants with family origins in this small New Sweden Colony were to spread all over the United States.

The Swedish Colonial Society of Philadelphia has just published in two volumes the records of the Swedish Churches in Pennsylvania, as part of its ongoing research and publication of books about New Sweden. These publications began with the well-known work of Amandus Johnson, *The Swedish Settlements on the Delaware*, in two volumes, printed in 1911. The Swedish Colonial Society was founded in 1908 by descendants of the Colonial Swedes, under the leadership of Dr. Amandus Johnson, "to collect, preserve, and publish records, documents, and other materials" relating to the history of the Swedes in Colonial America. These two new volumes are the latest in a series of over ten books and many other publications intended to fulfill this objective.

### **Volume I The Log Churches at Tinicum Island and Wicaco, 1646-1696**

Volume I was intended to collect in one place all available documentary history of the original log churches built in New Sweden by the Swedish colonists. The first log church was built in 1646 on Tinicum Island near the west side of the Delaware River, on land now washed away but near land part of which now is the site of

# Book Reviews

the Philadelphia International Airport. This log church served the settlers for 42 years under three Swedish pastors, ending with the death of the third, Lars Carlsson Lock, in 1688.

The second church, also of logs, was built in 1677, and was located in Wicaco close to the future site of downtown Philadelphia and also facing the Delaware River. After much debate about location, both of these log churches were replaced in 1700 by a new brick church on the site of the Wicaco log church, called *Gloria Dei (Old Swedes') Church*. The log churches disappeared, but Gloria Dei exists today as the oldest surviving church building in Philadelphia. Three more churches were founded later in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century by members of Gloria Dei as they dispersed further into outlying areas: St. Gabriel's in Douglassville, St. James in West Philadelphia, and Christ Church in Merion, Montgomery County. Further south, the Swedes built a church near Fort Christina, in what is now Wilmington.

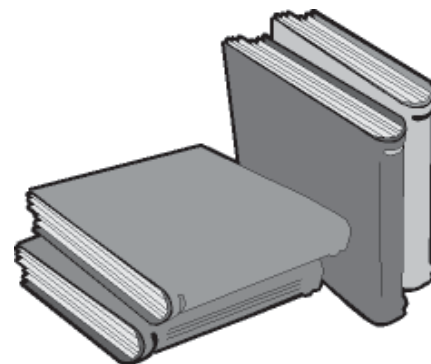
The editors of Volume I have laboriously assembled as many of the records as possible of the two original log churches which preceded Gloria Dei. Many of the parish records of these churches did not survive, but the authors were able to find many references relating to the time of these churches in old correspondence, journals, court records, land patents, deeds, minutes, and other documents. These were laboriously collected, translated where necessary, and incorporated into this volume. The documents are arranged in chronological order, well referenced, and with a minimum of editorial comment used mainly for clarifications of persons and place names. The documents speak for themselves, and are a rich source for those seeking records of the involvement of their own ancestors in

the New Sweden Colony. To the more general reader, the documents taken as a whole provide a fascinating picture of life at that time in the New Sweden Colony.

## **Volume II, The Rudman Years, 1697-1702**

During the log church years, Swedish pastors served these early churches built by the first settlers, most of whom retained the Lutheran traditions they had brought with them from Sweden. The few pastors from Sweden who had served these churches, and most of the original settlers, had passed on by the 1690's. The second and third generation had by then begun to drift away from the churches and Lutheran practices. Despite written requests by church elders, new pastors had not been sent from Sweden due mainly to the home country's preoccupation with its involvement in the wars against the Danes during the 1670s.

Letters sent by Church elders in 1696 finally bore fruit when Carl XI was King of Sweden. Two pastors and a shipment of Bibles and psalmbooks were sent by Archbishop Swebilius to the people in New Sweden and Sweden's "American Mission." Anders Rudman arrived in 1697 and he immediately set about to rejuvenate the congregation. He led the efforts to build the new brick church, completed in the year 1700. The other pastor, Eric Björk, provided



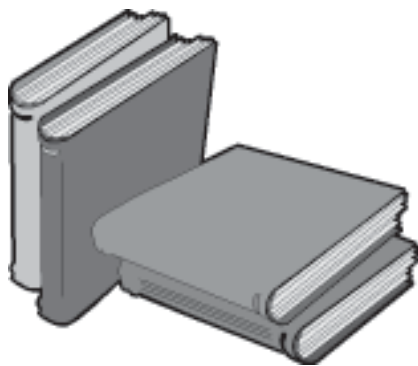
inspiration to the lower congregation at Crane Hook on the Christina River and caused a new brick church to be built there, now Old Swedes' in Wilmington, Delaware.

Volume II is a collection of documents from the years 1697-1702, focusing on this period and the work of Pastor Rudman in building up the Gloria Dei Church and congregation. About 50 documents in all are included, translated into English and with numerous editorial clarifications and comments. Rudman's narrative of the history of the church in New Sweden is especially informative. Other documents include various letters among the principal persons involved during these years, church records and accounts, minutes, construction accounts, and other papers. Maps and illustrations accompany these documents, and even a list of the assignments of church pews at Gloria Dei is included.

The editors have taken special care to correctly identify place names, many of which have had their spelling or names changed over the years. The names of colonists are also clarified, since most families abandoned the patronymic within a few generations after coming to America, and others in succeeding generations changed the spelling of their names in different branches of the same families.

Volumes I and II, intended to be the first in a series, contribute greatly to the reference works about the colonial period of New Sweden and these collections ease the burden of scholarship among scattered sources in several languages, for all





# Book Reviews

those interested in this period. Descendants and other readers will find this to be a rewarding source of information about the general character of life and times for colonial settlers in the Delaware Valley several generations before the American Revolution and at least a dozen generations before the present time.

*Dennis L. Johnson*

## A look at Sweden and America

***The Old Country and the New: Essays on Swedes and America***, by H. Arnold Barton, 293 pp., Ill., 2007, Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale IL, Hardcover, Amazon.com, \$48.40 + shipping.

This newly published book by H. Arnold Barton joins a long list of books, essays, and other publications by this leading scholar of Swedish American studies. A collection of some seventeen essays and six editorials, the book was compiled from research conducted by the author between 1974 and 2004. Wide-ranging in focus, the articles taken as a whole provide a concise history of Swedish migration to the U.S. from the earliest settlers up to the present day. Eminently readable by scholar and lay reader alike, interesting and little known facts about the migration turn up in nearly every chapter. Many anecdotal stories about individual migrants are used to illustrate the overall sweep of this great mi-

gration experience.

The author is a great-grandson of Swedish migrants to the Midwest, to Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska. The surname Barton was taken by his grandfather Ernest Swenson in the 1880s when Ernest became a physician. He took the name in admiration of Clara Barton, the heroic Angel of Mercy in the American Civil War and later founder of the American Red Cross.

H. Arnold Barton was trained as a historian and is now Professor Emeritus of History at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL. In 2000, he received the Order of the Polar Star from King Carl XVI Gustav, and in 1988 he was named Swedish American of the Year by the Royal Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Vasa Order of America.

In his first chapter, Barton reviews the works of many of his predecessors in writing about the history of Scandinavian immigrants to the New World. He includes a brief nod to the small group of Swedes and Finns involved in the New Sweden settlement in the Delaware Valley beginning in 1638. The next two chapters discuss the early individual Swedish visitors and migrants to America and, in 1846, Eric Jansson and his followers who founded the Bishop Hill settlement in Illinois. Succeeding essays address the reactions of Swedes in the homeland to the migration, the experiences of those who moved to Swedish America, the experiences of women, and the cultural conversion from Swede to Swedish American in the new land. Barton discusses the influence of immigrant letters, and the images of Sweden held by the new Americans.

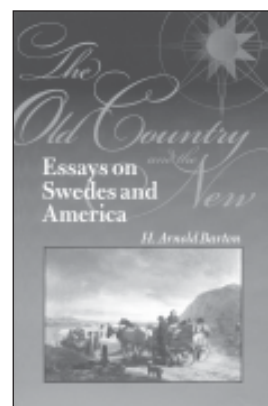
An interesting sidelight is an article about William Widgery Thomas Jr., an American of Welsh background who became American Consul to Sweden at the time of our Civil War and later served for many

years. He was a devoted Sweden enthusiast who wrote admiringly about Sweden and her history. In his later years he divided his time between a home in Portland, ME, and a villa by the sea in Karlshamn. He left a legacy of Swedish American descendants who were bicultural and lived in both countries.

Final chapters deal with the more recent history of Swedish migration to the U.S., during and after World War II and in the post-war period. There is also a chapter about re-migration to Sweden, estimated to have totaled about 18 per cent over the entire period. Barton then reviews his research into his own family history in a chapter titled "A Historian as Genealogist." In a concluding chapter, Barton engages in some more relaxed reflections on Swedish America from several perspectives, with his insights into various interesting aspects of the immigration experience. He comments about the experiences and attitudes of second and third generation Swedish Americans, and their search for romantic images of the Sweden that never was.

This is a scholarly work, with abundant footnotes at the end of each chapter documenting all of Barton's sources and facts. Unlike many scholarly works, however, the book is most enjoyable and readable throughout and adds much to the knowledge of all those interested in the Swedish American experience.

*Dennis L. Johnson*





# Book Reviews

## A lucky man

***The Platinum King, Andrew Olsson's Story***, by Jan Olof Lindstrom and Karen L. Olson, 2004, Book Publisher's Network, Bothell, WA, 336 pp., illus., Softcover, Amazon.com, \$17.95 plus shipping.

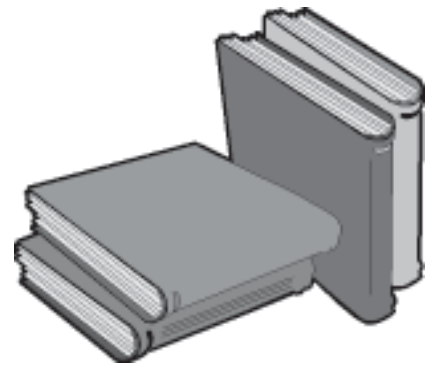
In 1903, a young man, just eighteen years old, packed his "America Trunk" (an old sea chest inherited from an old sailor friend) and left with others from his village to travel to America. He and many of his relatives lived in the little farming village of Krokvåg, in Jämtland, Sweden. He was following in the path of other neighbors and relatives who had already left to immigrate to America in the previous decades, inspired by the "America Fever" raging at the time in Sweden. Nearly half of the people in his village had left already, and still more were to follow.

Anders Olof Olsson was born in 1885, son of Olof Olsson and Karin Edlund. Karin died during his birth and he was raised by his mother's parents, Johannes Edlund and Justina Andersdotter. His father lived close by, and Anders was related to most of the other people in his small village. He had a sister two years older than he, Elin, and his father had remarried and raised seven more children. Anders Olof had done farm work, spent summers in a *fäbod* (shepherd's cottage) in the hills, and much time wandering the forests and rivers near his home. His grandfather died when he was twelve and a few years later he found it heart-breaking to tell his beloved *mormor* that he was going to America. Farming life was not for him. He traveled with his neighbor, Johan Petter Almgren and his family, who were planning to join relatives in Washington State, near Stanwood. They hoped to find a farm there.

Anders Olof had little desire to become a farmer. As a child he had listened to adventure stories from his old sailor friend who had returned to his village. Anders was determined to have a life of adventure, perhaps even search for gold. In Washington, he worked for a while as a farm hand but by 1906 was headed for Alaska to seek his fortune. With a friend he met in Seattle, he took a job with a mine operator named Strandberg at a mine outside of Fairbanks. Anders (now Andrew) loved the remote country and thrived on the hard work of mining, learning all he could as he worked. He would spend the season from April until October in Alaska, then return to Washington for the winter to work for relatives on their farms.

Andrew's plans to mine gold soon suffered a two-year setback, however. While in Seattle, a wagon had run over his leg, as a result of his trying to help hold a stranger's team when the horses bolted. His leg healed slowly and painfully, but by 1911 Andrew again headed for Alaska with his cousin, Daniel. He had done some research while recuperating and decided to try gold panning in Flat, Alaska, a remote place over three week's walk from Fairbanks. While working there, they developed ideas of using machines to speed the search for gold. Andrew's father had by then moved to Washington, and in the fall Andrew joined him to help him build a new house and develop his new farm there. By 1915, he again returned to Alaska with his brother-in-law Will and his half-brother Manne to explore claims he had leased near Flat. They wintered over in Alaska, and developed a method of melting the permafrost with steam to extend the mining season.

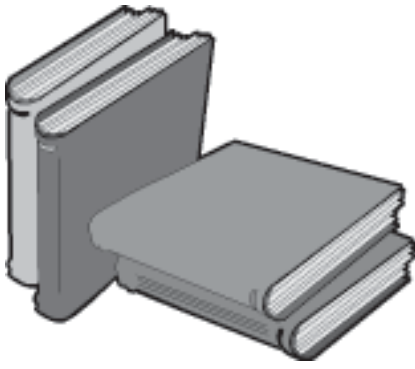
Andrew decided to return to Sweden in 1918 to visit his *mormor* on her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, staying for some time visiting friends and relatives in



the area. He soon returned to Washington to resume his Alaska mining, and then returned again to Sweden in 1922 on the death of his *mormor*. He worked there a year, and then spent a year in Russia to study mining techniques in the Ural Mountains. Returning to Sweden, he proposed to his cousin Karin. She was willing to marry him but refused to leave her home village. Andrew returned to America saddened but alone; he was not willing to give up his dream for marriage.

By 1924, however, Andrew had met and married a woman with two sons who had emigrated from Sweden, Frida Strömberg. Andrew soon became very attached to her two young boys, Bertil and Alf. In 1925 Andrew with Frida returned to Alaska, leaving the boys in the care of relatives to get an education. Frida learned trekking in the wilderness, driving dog teams, and sharing in Andrew's mining work. In 1927, he established his own claim and mining company near the village of Flat, along with two Swedish partners. They continued mining for gold, adding larger and new equipment to save on labor. Frida cooked for the mining crew and helped with operations. Work continued at Flat and the scale of the operation increased year by year as other relatives and partners joined in the venture.

In 1934, Andrew and his partners decided to open operations at a new location at Goodnews Bay on the Bering Sea. Platinum had been discovered there in 1927 and a few miners were engaged in small hand operations panning for this valuable metal, not previously found in North America. Andrew and partners de-



# Book Reviews

cided to lease claims in the area and open larger scale operations with large dredges and other equipment. Beginning on Squirrel Creek, the operations of the new Northland Development Company had extracted over 2,500 ounces of platinum at about \$113.00 an ounce. Through the 1930's, operations continued to expand and by the start of World War II in 1941, platinum had become a strategic material, with miners exempt from the draft and soldiers sent to protect mining operations.

One interesting sidelight to the Andrew Olson story took place in 1933 when, on July 20, an airplane engine was heard over Goodnews bay. The plane circled and made a crash landing on their short, rough airstrip, nose-diving into a ditch. The exhausted pilot turned out to be Wiley Post flying his "Winnie May" around the world solo. He had become lost searching for the city of Nome on a long flight from Khabarovsk, Siberia, to Alaska. While Wiley got some much-needed sleep, Andrew's miners repaired the *Winnie May* with repair parts flown in from Fairbanks. Soon Post was on his way to Fairbanks and then to New York, completing his record flight on July 22.

Andrew continued his pattern of many years, spending long summers in Alaska overseeing mining operations. He would return late in the fall to his farm near Snohomish, WA, and later to the home he and Frida purchased in Seattle, on Queen Anne Hill. Frida and the boys would often accompany Andrew to Alaska in the summer. Platinum is found in minute quantities in the ore, so enormous amounts of ore must be moved and

processed to extract the platinum. Operations expanded through the 1950's with a growing demand for platinum in industry. Even though Andrew became the largest miner of platinum in Alaska, it was said that the total amount his company mined over the years was only about one cubic meter, or a block about the size of a card table. (The price of platinum today is over \$1,200 per ounce).

Andrew's wife Frida became seriously ill in 1941 and, after surgery and tests, succumbed to inoperable cancer in March 1942. Andrew continued his mining work and left their house in Seattle, buying another farm in Silvana County, WA. By April 1945 he remarried, to Dee Dodge, a younger woman with one young son, Jack. To celebrate their marriage, Andrew and Dee undertook a motor trip on the newly completed Alcan Highway through Canada to Alaska, the first private automobile to do so. They then settled on the farm in Silvana and built a new home there. In 1952 Andrew brought his new family back to his home village in Sweden where he entertained relatives and others with films of his mining in Alaska. Andrew finally retired in 1970 at age 85, and died in March 1981 at age 96. He left a legacy of a large and extended family, many honors and awards from the mining industry, and generosity as a donor to many worthy causes including education of youth in his home village.

This fascinating book chronicles the amazing life of a young Swede who built success and fame in his adopted land through hard work, inventiveness, and integrity. The title of the book, *The Platinum King*, is fitting for the man who created the industry for the mining of platinum on a large scale in North America. Andrew Olson, although not as well known as others, joins the ranks of the many Swedes, born in poor circumstances, who achieved success

and fame in America yet never forgot their Swedish heritage of industry, honesty, and faith in God.

The book's co-author, Jan Lindstrom, also born in Krokå, Sweden, in 1934, has had a varied career to eventually become a technical draftsman and head of his own company. He has long been interested in genealogy and has traced many descendants from his parish to the United States. He has traveled to the U.S. to visit relatives and has put on genealogical exhibitions in both countries. These interests led him to undertake this biography of Andrew Olson in cooperation with Karen Olson of Seattle. She is married to Dennis Olson, a distant relative of Andrew Olson. She has researched her own genealogy and works as a writer and editor in Seattle.

This biography places its greatest emphasis on the family history of Andrew Olson, his immediate family, and his descendants including many who worked with him in his mining enterprises. The tone is that of a modest family history, giving credit but not aggrandizement to a person of Andrew's considerable accomplishments. It is made more readable by including many imagined conversations but the basic facts of his life ring true. There is less emphasis on the details of his business career, inventions, and his organizations and partnerships and his financial success. Numerous photographs and sketches are included to illustrate the people, homes, mining locations, and the times described in the biography.

This book is definitely recommended reading for all those interested in the accomplishments of successful Swedes in America, as well as those wishing a vivid picture of the times and places where Andrew lived, both in Sweden and in the U.S.

Dennis L. Johnson

# Interesting Web Sites

(All links have been tried in February 2007 and should work)

*Transcribed old newspapers from Iowa:* <http://www.iowaoldpress.com/>

*Swedish Name Days:* <http://www.m.nu/namn/>

*Natural catastrophies and other events in the old days:* <http://www.gendisasters.com/>

*Danish church records online:* <http://www.arkivalieronline.dk/English/default.aspx>

*Swedish Museum of National Antiquities:* <http://www.historiska.se/home/>

*Scandinavian Studies at Augustana College:*

<http://www.augustana.edu/academics/scandinavian/departments/index.htm>

*About the Empress of Ireland:* <http://www.norwayheritage.com/>

*Anna-Lena Hultman's Research Center in Västergötland:* <http://www.konkordiahuset.se/>

*Swedish Patent and Registration office:* <http://www.prv.se/english/default.html>

*The Society of Swedish Walloon Descendants:* <http://www.vallon.se/index.htm>

*Swedish Estates and Farms* (see SAG 3/06, p. 29): <http://enobdr.myshopify.com/>

*Free databases at Ancestry:* <http://www.freeonancestry.com/>

*Death Certificates in Utah 1905–1954:* <http://historyresearch.utah.gov/indexes/index.html>

*Arkiv Digital (digital photos of church records):* <http://www.arkivdigital.se/>

## New and Noteworthy

(short notes on interesting books and articles)

After reading some very favorable reviews, I sent for *Finding Oprah's Roots – Finding your own*, by Henry Louis Gates, Jr, published in 2007 by Crown Publishers, New York. The book was found on British Amazon, which prevents trouble with customs as Great Britain is also in the European Union. It was interesting reading and I learnt a bit about the difficulties in doing African American research. The first big obstacle seems to be to get behind the 1870 Census, which is the first where former slaves might be listed, and with surnames too. Before they were listed on slave schedules, with no names, but age, gender and skin color listed. Some of the descriptions of their living conditions and being dependent on the company store reminded me of the conditions of the Swedish *statare* (farm laborers), a hard system that was not abolished until 1946.

Another book, of a lighter nature, was *In Sheep's Clothing*, by Rett MacPherson (2004). I enjoy reading criminal mysteries with a genealogy touch, and I found out by reading a posting by Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak on the *24/7 Family History Circle* blog (<http://blogs.ancestry.com/circle/>) that this author had a genealogist as her heroine, Torie O'Shea. In this particular book Torie goes with her husband and stepfather from Missouri to a town in southeast Minnesota to visit an aunt. It turns out that the aunt lives in an old house where a Swedish girl was killed in a fire in 1859, but that her diary has been found. Then some gruesome things happen in the present time, but the mystery is solved by the heroine. The story is OK for entertainment, but the Swedish element is lacking, except for a few names, and how plausible is it that a 17-year old girl, newly immigrated, writes her diary in English?

In the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* 4/06 there is an interesting article about The Swedish-American Newspapers in the Sixties and Seventies, by Edward Burton. Here you can read about how hard it was to try to keep Swedish-language newspapers alive, and how most of them finally had to close down. Another important part of the SAHQ is the yearly *Swedish-American Bibliography*, always in the last issue of the year, where you can find books, pamphlets, articles, dissertations, and academic papers having to do with Swedish-American 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.

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## **Björklund, Youngberg**

What happened to my grandfather's three brothers who emigrated to U.S.A.? The last contact was a letter from Richard to his mother in 1922.

1. *Rickard* Natanael Björklund, b. 2 February 1884 in Ekeby (Östg.). Arrived at Ellis Island 5 September 1903. Destination: His brother Bernhard (Ben) Björklund, 8428 Green Bay Ave. So., Chicago, Ill. Found in U.S. Census 1920; at 3316 E 91<sup>st</sup> St, and 1930 (as Burckland) at 3226 E 93<sup>rd</sup> St., Chicago, Ill. Staying for more than 10 years in the same family with a boy, Robert Johnson, born around 1918, and a girl, Grace Johnson, born around 1923, who could possibly be a link to Richard. In a letter in 1922 he says he is still working in a company manufacturing railway axles and that he has seen his brothers a few days before. They probably lived nearby.
2. *David Bernhard (Ben)* Björklund, b. 28 June 1881 in Ekeby (Östg.). Arrived at Ellis Island 30 January 1903. Destination: Friend Gustav Nordström, 71 State Street, Brooklyn, NY. When he registered for World War I on 17 September 1918 he had the address 3316 E 91<sup>st</sup> St., Chicago. (It is not the person who died in Bristol, Hartford, Connecticut. I checked the death certificate.)
3. *Erik* Elias Björklund, b. 5 June 1887 in Ekeby (Östg.). Arrived at Ellis Island 23 July 1909. Destination: Cousin Philip Youngberg, 207 McRoberts St., Joliet, Ill. I have not found Erik in any database so far. In the U.S. Census 1920 Phillip Youngberg's family is living at Oak Park, Precinct 1, Cook Ill. His wife Martha, 27, and children, Mildred 3, Walter 1 ½ years old. The children might still be alive and perhaps have letters or photos leading to Erik?

I am very interested to know what happened to the three brothers, especially whether they had any descendants.

*Rolf Björklund, Nissbovägen 31, S-771 42 Ludvika, Sweden. E-mail: <rolfjbj@telia.com>*

**1267**

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## **Nilsson, Nilsdotter**

I am seeking information about the Johan Nilsson family who left for America 9 March 1880 from Resta, Stora Mellösa (Närk.), reportedly going to Chicago. The family is related to my GGM Brita Nilsdotter. I believe they left from Örebro, likely they were in Stora Mellösa (Närk.). My GGM was from a family that ran an inn in Resta. The church record indicated the children were not baptized as they apparently joined a new church believed to be Baptist.

All of the family members were born in Stora Mellösa; Johan was born 25 October 1849; his wife Lovisa Nilsdotter was born 1 November 1856, and their sons, Johan Bernhard, born 16 September 1876 and Karl Axel Wilhelm, born 1 January 1879.

Contact:

*Thomas F. Zetterstrom, 21 Addison Way Rexford, NY 12148-1391. E-mail: <tfzett@aol.com>*

**[Editor's note:** This family might be identical with the following family, found in *Emihamn on microfiche*: Joh. Nilsson (age 30), w. Louise (age 23), s. Johan (age 3) and s. Carl Alfred (age 11 mths). With them travelled Bror Gustaf (age 19), and they all came from Norrbyås, and left Göteborg on 12 March 1880 with tickets for Red Wing [MN].

**1268**

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## **Swanson**

I would like to locate descendents of my father's cousin Charles H. Swanson. Born in Sweden 1890-1, married Inez M., two children, Shirley b. 1920, Donald b. 1922. In 1938 lived at 1216 N. 18th St., Superior, Wisconsin, employed by Lindberg Thomson grocery store, 1202 Belknap St. Superior WI.

*Doris Ferguson, 9980 W. Jewell Ave., Unit C, Lakewood, CO 80232-6396. E-mail: <dorisferg@comcast.net>*

**1269**

## Holmberg

My *morfar's* four Holmberg cousins immigrated to the U.S. during the later part of the 1800s, and I hope to get more information on three of them.

Charlotta Holmberg, born 4 November 1855 in Beateberg (Vägö.), immigrated in 1889, settled in Philadelphia, where she worked as a cook. I have found her in the 1920 Census, but have no further information.

Sofia (Sophie) Holmberg, born 17 August 1866 in Beateberg, immigrated 1885 to the U.S., settled in Chicago. Married to Sven Peter Nelson, born February 1859. She had a laundry in her own house at 3323 Irving Avenue in Chicago. She is listed as a widow in the 1920 Census. She had a daughter Martha, born ca. 1905, who in the 1930 Census lives with some Nelson cousins.

Emma Holmberg, born 22 September 1868 in Beateberg, immigrated to the U.S. in 1901, and in 1920 lived with her sister Sofia and worked in her laundry. Nothing more is known about her.

Lars-Gunnar Carlsson, Sandgärdsgatan 18, S-503 34 Borås, Sweden.  
E-mail: <larsgunnarcarlsson@hotmail.com>

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Charlotta Holmberg. Picture taken in Philadelphia.



Emma Holmberg. Picture taken in Göteborg.



Sophie Holmberg, married Nelson, probably. Picture taken in Brooklyn.

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## Eriksson, Ericsson

I am looking for my missing relatives, and would appreciate all help.

Betty Eriksson, born 30 November 1862 in Bosarp (Skån.), left the S:t Petri congregation in Malmö 4 June 1888 with a ticket for Hannibal (no state mentioned).

Olof Eriksson, born 19 May 1869 in Lund (Skån.), left first in 1891, but came back. On 28 March 1895 he is recorded as having left Göteborg with a ticket for New York. The Ellis Island records tells a slightly different story; according to them, he arrived in New York 13 April on the ship *Venetia*, which came from Stettin in Prussia and Helsingborg in Sweden. Olof is said to be 25 years and 11 months old and on his way to Illinois. His profession is given as a smith.

Kerstin Eriksson, born 5 September 1860 in Nosaby (Skån.) is the oldest missing sibling, and is said to have immigrated before 1890, but can not be found in *Emibas* or *Emihamn*. She is also supposed to have married in the U.S. and had a daughter with the second name Ethel. Her married name might have been Dodson.

Susanne Hjalmarsson, Kollegievägen 86, 224 73 Lund. E-mail: <e\_susanne\_h@hotmail.com>

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# The Last Page

## Dear friends,

At first this was a very strange winter, snow and traffic chaos in early November, then warm weather and no snow until the middle of January, but now there has been snow and cold for a couple of weeks. This is good, as the school children have a week of winter holidays at the end of February, and now they can be out skiing and playing in the snow, before spring comes.

It is also the time of the *semmla*, the cardamom bun with marsipan filling and lots of whipped cream on top. You are only supposed to eat those from the first Tuesday in Lent until Tuesday in Easter week, but the bakery shops cheat and start selling them right after Christmas. As a child we had to first eat brown beans and fried

slices of pork, and then we each got a *semmla*. This was often served with hot milk in a deep soup plate. Now I think that this traditional meal was a leftover from the hard-working farming days, when you needed a lot of calories to survive.

Some traditional meals still survive; any self-respecting luncheon place must have peasoup and pancakes on the Thursday menu.

In SAG 3/06, on p. 29, I wrote about the 3-CD set of scanned books on Swedish estates and farms (*Gods och gårdar*), but forgot to give you the web site and the e-mail to the producer. The web site you will find among the web links on p. 29 in this issue, but the e-mail address is <info@obdr.se>.

As you will have read in the article about SVAR, the Swedish church records will fairly soon be available in much better scans, thanks to the cooperation between SVAR and the Genealogical Society of Utah, and that is fine.

But if you have a really favorite parish, where all of your ancestors lived, then you might have a lot of fun if you buy color digital pictures of the records. I just bought the records for Nordmark in Värmland, and am in danger of spending all my time with those, instead of working on SAG.... Take a look at *Arkiv Digital*, you might like what you see. It is a new company and there is yet no information in English. See p.29!

Till next time! *Elisabeth Thorsell*

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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.		

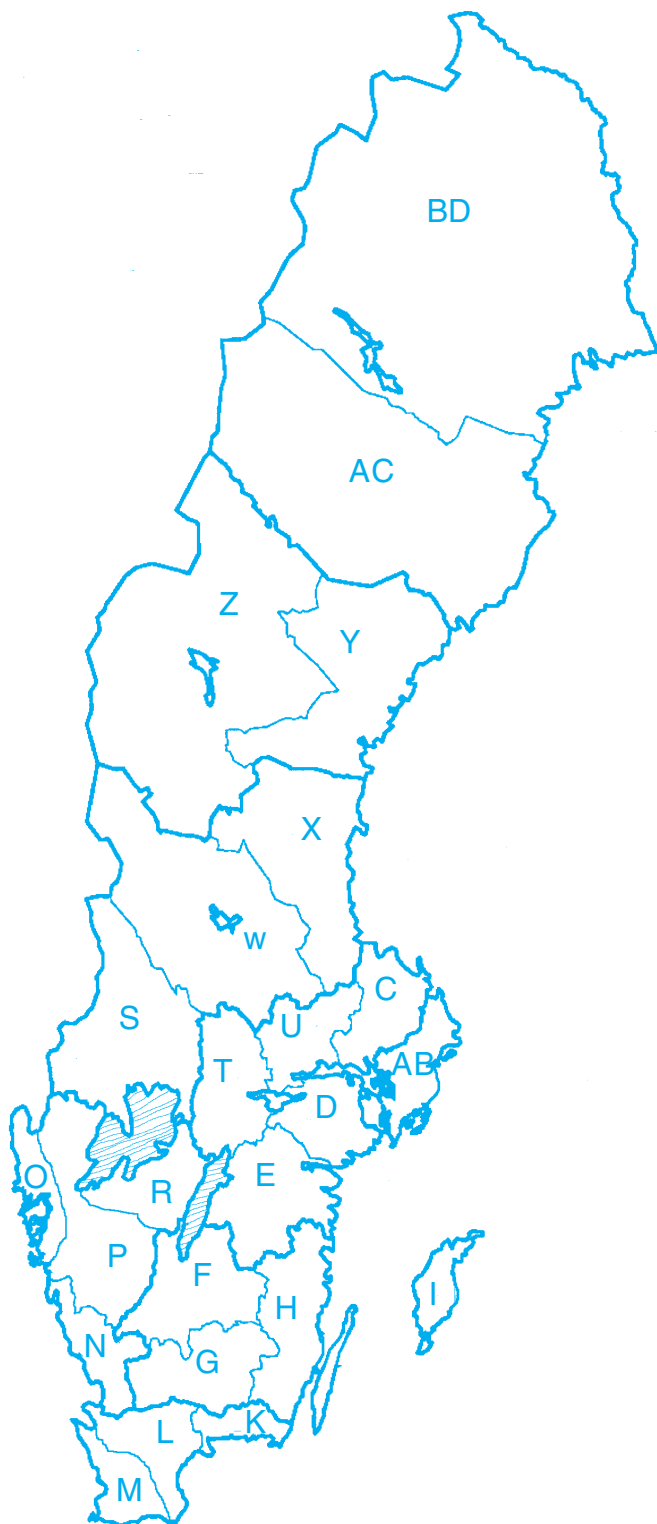
**Table 2.** Abbreviations and codes for Swedish counties (*län*) formerly used by *Swedish American Genealogist* (1981-1999) and currently used by *Statistiska centralbyrån* (SCB) (the Central Bureau of Statistics, Stockholm).

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

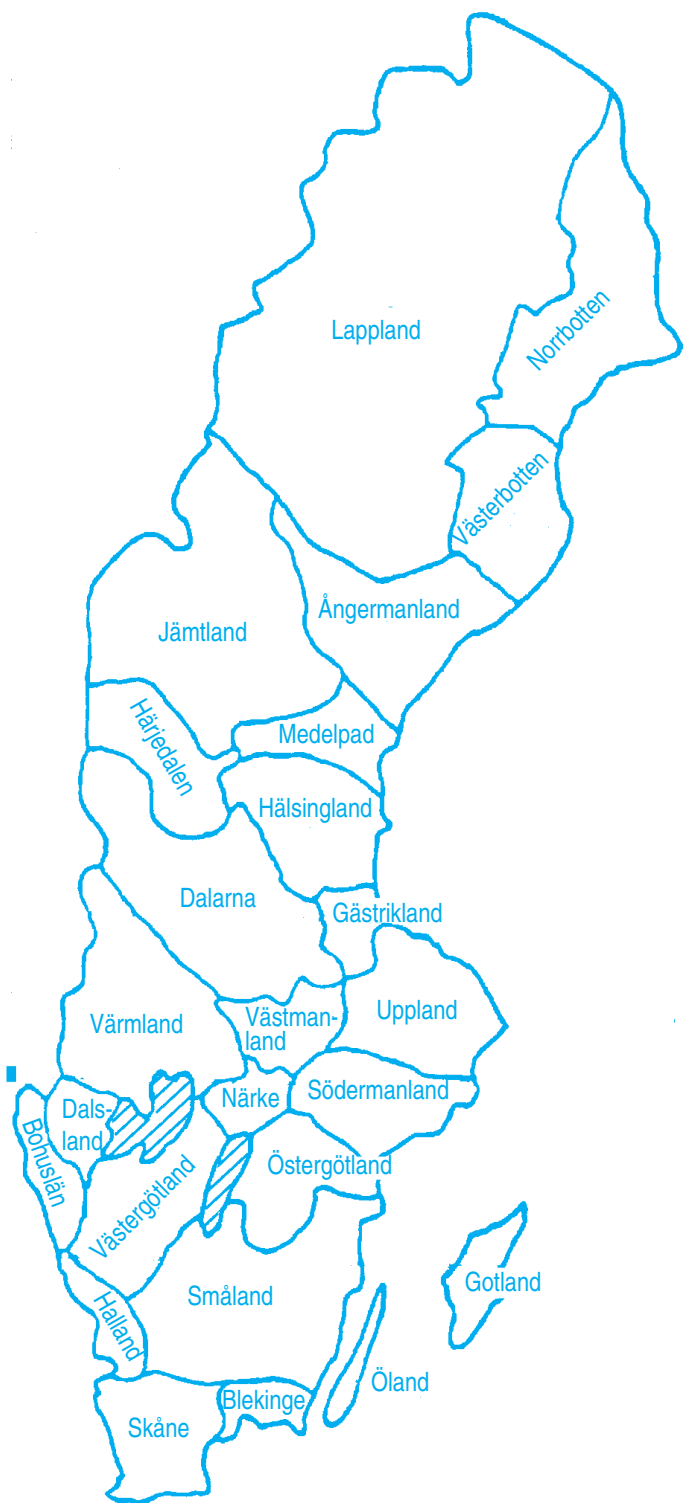
**a** formerly Kopparberg (Kopp.; W) *län*.

**b** includes the former counties (*län*) of Malmöhus (Malm.; M) and Kristianstad (Krist.; L).

**c** includes the former counties (*län*) of Göteborg and Bohus (Göt.; O), Skaraborg (Skar.; R), and Älvsborg (Älvs.; P).



The counties (*län*) as they were before 1991.



The provinces (*landskap*).