

# Swedish American Genealogist

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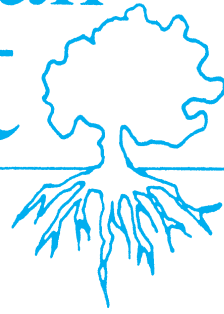
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# Swedish American Genealogist



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



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*Swedish American Genealogist*

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## CONTENTS

<b>Long Ago and Far Away. Part II</b> .....	1
<i>by Harold L. Bern</i>	
<b>The Swedish “Wil(l)sons”</b> .....	5
<i>by John E. Norton</i>	
<b>“Now We Are Arrived”</b> .....	7
<i>by Erica Olsen</i>	
<b>A Swede Who Had an Unusual Career</b> .....	11
<i>by Leif and Kenth Rosmark</i>	
<b>Children of Two Countries</b> .....	13
<i>by Agnieszka Stasiewicz</i>	
<b>A Handwriting Example, IX</b> .....	14
<b>The Old Picture</b> .....	15
<b>Bits &amp; Pieces</b> .....	16
<b>Going Home</b> .....	17
<i>by Lennart Pearson</i>	
<b>The Bridge Conference</b> .....	22
<b>I Found the Needle! Part II</b> .....	23
<i>by Jan Sokody Asp</i>	
<b>Solution to the Handwriting Example, IX</b> .....	26
<b>Book Reviews</b> .....	27
<b>Genealogical Queries</b> .....	30
<b>Interesting Web Sites</b> .....	31
<b>The Last Page</b> .....	32

## *Cover picture:*

Emil/Edward Helge Bohlin, cowboy in Wyoming in 1915. Picture from the Rosmark Family Collection. See story on p. 11.

# Long Ago and Far Away: Part II

## Another part of the Swedish roots also came from Västergötland

BY HAROLD L. BERN

The earliest known ancestors of what later became the Winberg family lived at Hvitatorpet. Hvitatorpet means “the white farm house” and is the name of a ruin in Öxabäck parish today. The parish is about 40 miles south and slightly west of the city of Borås, Sweden, in what used to be Älvsborgs län in Västergötland.

Anna Jönsdotter was born there 1 September 1728. Her mother is not identified and we can only discover that her father was a farmer named Jöns. She married Nils Jönsson 29 December 1755 in Öxabäck. Nils was from the neighboring parish of Örby and was born in 1699. They had only two children, Jöns and his sister Britta. Nils died in 1770 and his widow married the *Häradsprofoss*, Gunnar Kindström. Jöns was raised by his stepfather and grew up in time to follow in Gunnar’s occupation.

Jöns Nilsson was born 13 May 1757 at Hvitatorpet in Öxabäck parish. Jöns became the *Häradsprofoss* for the area upon the death of his stepfather, Gunnar Kindström. Literally, the word means he was the District Flogmaster and is difficult to translate<sup>1</sup>.

The main road between Stockholm and Göteborg ran right in front of Hvitatorpet during the 1750–1800 timeframe. Whereas today Hvitatorpet appears to be out in the middle of nowhere, in that earlier era it was located along a main artery in the important business of administering the district for the King of Sweden.

Jöns Nilsson married Malin Jönsdotter who was born 29 September 1745 at a neighboring farm called Bredhult. Of this union five children were born. The first Nils was born in 1781 and died a year and a half later in 1783. The couple then had Johannes in 1784 and Christina in 1786. Their fourth child was again named Nils who was born in 1790 and a sister, Edla, was born in 1792. This second child called Nils was raised at the farm called Ramnås and became the progenitor of the Winberg family. Nils’s birth name was of course patronymic, and when he first appears in the Öxabäck parish records, his name is Jönsson.

Nils first appears in the Öxabäck records using the Winberg surname between 1814 and 1818. There are missing years in the records so no definitive date can be identified when he first started using this fixed surname.

Nils was born 21 April 1790 at a *torp* called Ramnås in Öxabäck parish. It took nearly two years of searching microfilms and finally a trip to Sweden to locate his place of birth and parents.

The difficulty began when I attempted to trace backward to the next generation. I was able to go back to 1823 to a parish called Torestorp. The *Utflyttning* records for that year indicated his correct date of birth and stated that he went to Holsljunga where I had originally found him. The record said he was from Ram-

nås. The problem was that there are six different locations in Sweden called Ramnås. Some are farms; some are villages; and some are parishes. I had looked patiently but unsuccessfully through thirteen rolls of microfilm in efforts to locate the birth of Nils Winberg. At one point I had convinced myself that Ramnås was a farm in Holsljunga which no longer existed. Since the birth records for Holsljunga are missing for the year 1790, I was resigned to the conclusion that Nils’s parents would never be found.

On a trip to Sweden in 1994 we arrived in the village of Kinna in mid-afternoon on a Saturday. It was my intention to attend the Sunday service in Holsljunga at the church where my ancestors were baptized. We found a place to stay and decided that we should drive over and check out the church schedule for Sunday.

### A case of serendipity

On our return trip toward Kinna, we passed through another small village called Öxabäck where we had noticed an antique store which was open earlier. Since we had plenty of time and no further plans, we stopped to browse. My wife looked at furniture and dishes and other old household artifacts. I went hunting for books. We had only been there a few minutes when I picked up a relatively new book called *Öxabäck Socken – historia gårdar folk*. I knew that this translated roughly to *Öxabäck parish*

– the history of the farm people. In thumbing through the index I found a farm called Ramnås and on page 181 found the notation, “Nils 1790 (kallade sig Vinberg).” My heart nearly jumped out of my chest as I asked the storeowner to confirm my translation of the Swedish parenthetical phase - (called himself Vinberg). We bought two copies of the book.

Swedish church records contain the name of the father when it was known or suspected, and the child then usually carried the father’s patronymic surname. In other cases when no father was named, the surname might be the same as the mother’s or in rare instances, the child might have a female patronymic [metronymic] such as Annasdotter.



Holsljunga church.

ments or letters for those who were unable to do so for themselves. At any rate it is an indication that he had been educated above the level of most of his contemporaries. His education and later occupation was in all likelihood linked to the reason he assumed the surname Winberg.

The custom of taking a fixed surname was usually associated with acquiring a respectable position in the community or accumulation of wealth. The nobility in Sweden were the first to start using fixed surnames, followed by merchants, craftsmen, and large land holders.

It should also be noted that there is really no ‘W’ in the Swedish alphabet. A ‘W’ is only found as the first letter of surnames or place names. The pronunciation equates to what the Swedes call a double ‘V’.

Nils’s wife, Sara, age 44, died on 1 April 1834 in childbed and the child died with her. A second marriage in 1836 to Edda Catherina Bengtsdotter, who was twenty years younger than Nils, produced five more children. Some of the descendants of this second marriage reside today in Kinna, Sweden.

Johan Justus was probably a farmer as he is not otherwise identified. In 1858 he married Augusta Eleonora Andersdotter, born 3 October 1830 in Holsljunga. The family lived on a lake in the *Backstuga* of a place called Sjöganäs. We visited this area in 1994 and saw the main house still called Sjöganäs today. It is used as a modern day vacation home. There are several out-buildings which could have been the *Backstuga* in the time the Winberg family lived there. There were five children born to this marriage – Alfrid 1859, Johan Nicolaus 1862 (died as an infant in 1863),

### Backa torp – Ramnås 1:14

Detta torp omnämns i mantalslängder redan 1724. Då finns här Nils Nilsson, fattig. Året efter finns också samma notering samt att han är gammal och varit soldat. Efter honom kommer Arfwid Trending. Han tigger är en senare notis om honom. Från 1729 och fram till mitten av 1750 omnämns backstugan som obesutten och även som öde.

Vid 1800-talets början finns här profoss Jöns Nilsson född 1756 på Vitatorpet samt hustrun Malin Jönsdottr född 1745, vigda 1781. Deras barn: Johannes 1784 (senare Bredhult), Christina 1786 (gift med knekten Sjö), Nils 1790 (kallade sig Vinberg), Edla 1792 (flyttade till Roasjö). Jöns noteras som beträcklig 1818–20.

Nils Jönsson Winberg married Sara Andersdotter 22 September 1827 in Holsljunga parish. Sara brought to the family an illegitimate daughter, Anna Greta, who was born in 1818. Two more children were born to this marriage before Sara died in 1834. Johan Justus was born 26 November 1824 in Hökabergh in Holsljunga and his brother, Anders Magnus, was born 26 May 1828. It should be noted that illegitimacy was not uncommon among the families of Sweden at this time. Sometimes the parents married later as in the case of Johan Justus, but in other cases no wedding bells followed.

### Hökabergh

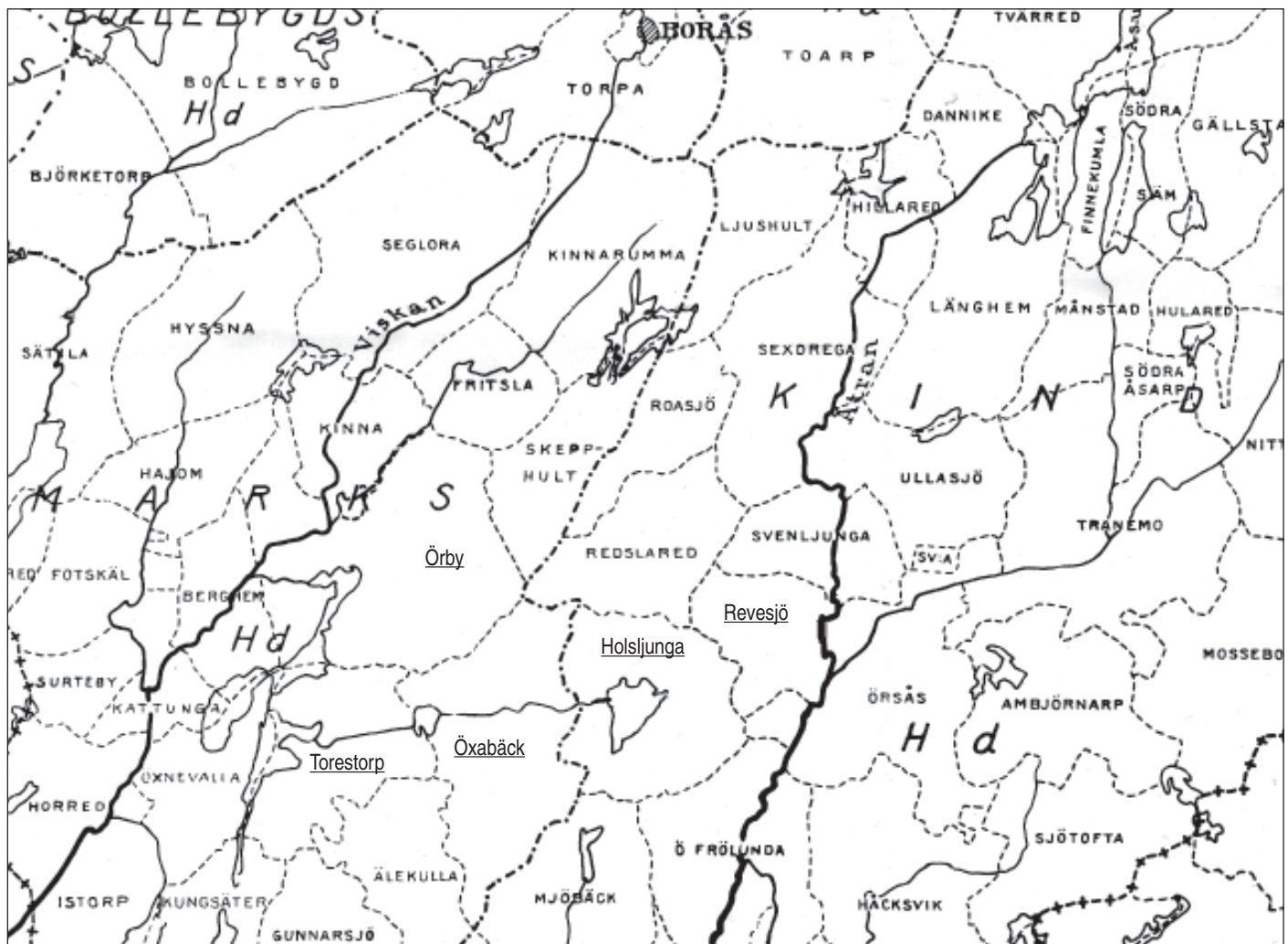
I am not certain if we actually located Hökaberghs *led* on our 1994 trip. We did positively identify the main farm called Hökabergh. The word *led* in Swedish is a synonym for *väg* which means road or way. On the road toward the main farm there was a small *torp*, with a man out near the road. I asked him if this was Hökaberghs *led*. He pointed toward the bigger farm house down the road and said that was Hökabergh. It may well have been the small *torp* where we stopped.

The Holsljunga Parish book says that the farm Hökabergh has been listed as a taxable property since 1567 and took its name from a farmer who lived there in that era. He was simply called Höke. At various times the farm has been called Hökebeck, Hakabergh, and Höckabärg.

At the time of his marriage, Nils’s occupation was identified as that of a *Skrifvare* which is defined as a writer. In that era the word had a different meaning than the present day. The occupation was in the context of someone who wrote docu-

Personernas namn, stånd, embete, yrke och näringsföreläggning (bäckstuga- inhyses- och fattighjon), nationalitet (om främmande), lyten (svaganta, blinda, döfotumma)	Födelse-			Äktenskap-		Flyttat		Död.
	År.	Mån. och dag.	Ort (socken i År, stad).	Gifn.	Bekl. eller Hoka.	Södn (socken i År, stad, eller pagus i månad Husförhörsboken), och dag.	År.	
Backstuga Sjöganäs								
Nils Johan Jönsson Winberg	1790	26	11. Förs.	27	11	11. Aug. 227	57	2/22
Augusta Eleonora Andersdotter	1830	3	10. Öst.	28	11	11. Aug. 233	68	
Alfrid	1859	27	10. Öst.					
Johan Nicolaus	1862	25	11. Förs.					2/26
Edla	1792	27	11. Förs.					
Sara Andersdotter	1827	22	11. Förs.					

Nils Johan Winberg and family at cottage Sjöganäs on Danskabo lands in Holsljunga parish [Holsljunga AI:4, p.186]



Edvard 1865, and the twin sons Peter and Severin in 1870.

Several interesting notes appear in the Holsljunga *Husförhörslängd*. One indicates that Johan Justus was “punished for theft in 1848 and had (an) illegitimate daughter in 1851.” I have only partially researched these notations, but have learned that the 1848 incident involved breaking into a house. Johan’s *oäkta* (illegitimate) daughter was named Anna Christina, and she was born 29 September 1851. Her mother was Ingrid Sara Petersdotter who was from Burseryd Parish in neighboring Jönköpings län. The record of Anna’s birth indicates that Johan Justus acknowledged that he was the child’s father but did not marry the mother.

In 1883 the record says that Peter and Severin have received help “from the Royal Order of Seraphim’s Guild and even the bootbox.” Swedish nationals have told me that these

notations refer to charitable contributions to the two boys. From the above it would certainly appear that their home life during this period of time may have been hectic.

Although family tradition says the twins were from Kinna, all of their family data is found in the parish records of Holsljunga. Kinna is the largest city in the area and perhaps they worked there or considered themselves a part of that city.

### Going to America

The records in Sweden indicate that 37,276 of her citizens left the country in 1891. The vast majority of these immigrants came to the United States. Peter and Severin Winberg were among these Swedes who left their homeland forever that year. When we visited the *Emigrant-institutet* in Växjö we saw copies of the three part tickets which were

issued to our ancestors.

The twin brothers were passengers on a ship called *Romeo* which departed Göteborg, Sweden, on April 24, 1891. The first part of their journey took them to Hull, England, where they left the ship and boarded a train for Liverpool. The third and final part of the ticket was for the voyage across the Atlantic where they arrived at the port of New York. I have not researched the name of the ship which carried them on to New York which was their stated destination upon leaving Sweden. I have a copy of the *Romeo* passenger list, and it is interesting to note that although they were twins traveling together, Peter’s surname is spelled ‘Winberg’ and Severin’s is listed as ‘Vinberg.’

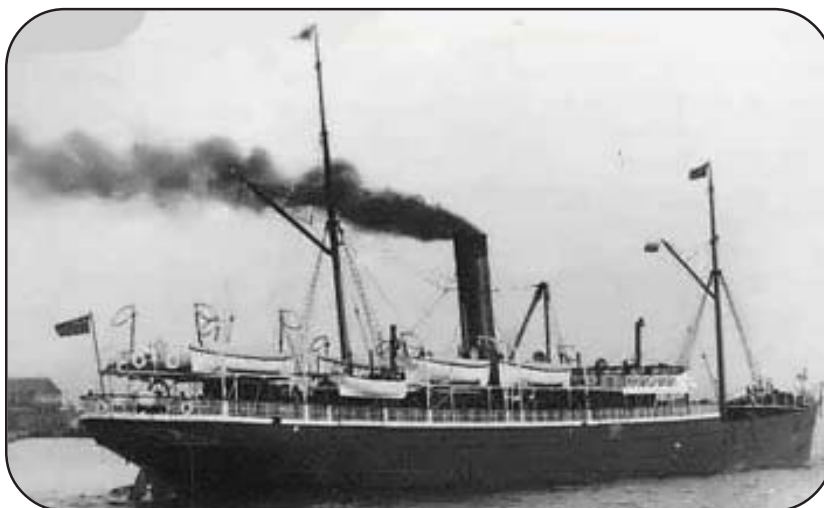
Interestingly, Peter and Severin do not show up on the Galesburg City directory records until 1895. So did they spend some time in other parts

of the United States after they arrived in New York? No one seems to have any information, and oddly enough there are no family stories. Peter's obituary says they came directly to Galesburg, but it also says they immigrated in 1892 which is incorrect. In the 1895 city directory their name is spelled Wineberg and both list their occupation as brick mason. By 1897 the directory lists their name as Weinberg which is the way most family members spell the name today.

So why did Severin and Peter choose Galesburg, Illinois, as their destination of all the places in the United States? It was a mystery to me until a couple of years ago when I received a letter from a descendant of Peter Winberg, the twin brother of my ancestor.

Nancy Winberg Sutton had some old papers from Peter, her grandfather, which indicated that the twins had relatives living in Galesburg at the time they immigrated. This was the first indication of earlier relatives who had chosen Galesburg as a home in the United States. The papers indicated that this relative's name was Eric Anderson; he was a brick mason, and Peter and Severin worked for him when they first arrived in the United States. He was born in Holsljunga Parish 30 September 1832, and turned out to be the next younger brother of Augusta Eleonora Andersdotter, the twin's mother. I have copies of several books compiled by the Knox County Genealogical Society and I wanted to know who this Eric Anderson was. I checked several of these books to see if there was an Eric Anderson listed.

I immediately found Erick Anderson listed in the 1880 Census Index for Galesburg. His occupation is



The S/S Romeo.

listed as brick mason. This same individual appears again with his family in the 1900 Census Index. Last I checked for an obituary and found the conclusive evidence that this Erick Anderson was indeed the maternal uncle of Severin and Peter and immigrated to the U.S. in 1866. The date of birth listed in the obituary matches that of the brother of Augusta Eleonora Andersdotter in Sweden.

Additionally, the obituary of Erick Magnus Anderson, who died in 1904, mentions another brother named Gustavus Anderson. More research in the Galesburg books disclosed that John A. Anderson born 28 September 1849 in Revesjö Parish was one and the same as Johan August Andersson, another brother of Augusta Eleonora Andersdotter. In Galesburg he sometimes used his middle name and was known as Gus. He died in Galesburg in 1910. Both of these Anderson uncles had families in Galesburg. A side note may be of interest. I have a 1934 Galesburg city directory. Erick Anderson's oldest son, Andrew Victor, is listed as a

building contractor in the 1934 city directory.

Severin married Anna Sofia (Jonsdotter) Johnson on 6 July 1897 in Monmouth, Illinois. Anna was born 27 February 1876 in Ryssby Parish in Kalmar län. The following year the first of their six children was born: Selma Eleanore - 1898, then came Rangnee Marie - 1900, Hjalmar Naphtalia - 1902, Karl Theodore - 1905, Reuben Leonard - 1907, and finally William Gustav - 1911. Tragically, Anna died in 1918 of typhoid fever and Severin was killed in an industrial accident in 1920 leaving the six young children without parents.

Hjalmar, the third child of Severin and Anna, was a first generation American Swede and my maternal grandfather.

**Note:**

1) *Profoss* was originally a military official, who had to execute corporal punishment, like flogging. This was later also a function in the civil society, and each town or legal district (*härad*) could have their own *profoss*, who carried out the sentences of corporal punishment passed by the court. (*Nordisk Familjebok*)

**Contact information**

Harold L. (Hal) Bern, former SAG editor, lives in Longview, Washington. He can be reached at <Halby5443@aol.com>

Anderson-Erick M. one of the old residents of this city died at his home 258 Monroe Saturday evening of complication of diseases Having lived so many years and being employed as brick mason he was well known. Born Sept-31-1832 in Holngienga, Socken Westergolland, Sweden. Came to this country 1866 direct to Galesburg Married 1871 Christina Anderson. They had seven children, Victor Annie, Earnest, Levi, Herman, Jessie, Reuben. A brother, Gustavus Anderson in this city, four sisters living in Sweden. The funeral will be held Tuesday morning.  
Dec-12-1904 186

# The Swedish “Wil(l)sons” at Bishop Hill and St. Louis

## A couple of mysterious early immigrants found!

BY JOHN E. NORTON

In the fall of 1854, Blomdahls Printing House of Sundsvall, Sweden, published a small pamphlet titled *Några upplysande underrättelser rörande Erik Jansenska kolonin i Norra Amerika, Samt en särskild resebeskrifning* (Some Enlightening Information Concerning the Erik Janssonist Colony in North America, And a Special Travel Description) written in part by one Charles Wilson from St. Louis, Missouri, on 9 September 1854. No further information about its author was given.

From its context, it was clearly authored by a Swede who had immigrated around 1840, and who had retained frequent contact with his homeland. But there were no additional clues about this mysterious “Wilson,” nor how he had come to visit Bishop Hill. It gave, however, a very positive and detailed account of economic and social conditions at that Swedish “prairie Utopia” in western Illinois, founded by dissident Swedish perfectionists under the leadership of Eric Jansson in 1846. It was clearly written by someone who had spent considerable time in the colony, even meeting there an old friend, Erik Ulrik Norberg, born 23 June 1813 at Ullälffa, Västergötland, and arriving New York aboard the *Clarissa* of Göteborg on 15 August 1842.

In 2001, the Wilson article was translated and published by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency in its *Journal of Illinois History*, vol. 4 nr 1, Spring 2001, but no further clues about his identity were found.

Its author Charles Wilson remained a complete mystery.

Four years later, I was visiting the Bishop Hill Colony cemetery on another research project, and came upon a tombstone inscribed “Anton Frederick Willson, born 6 June 1814 in Sweden, died 6 January 1857,” and “Elizabeth, wife of Fredrick Wilson, born 14 December 1814, Unnaryd, Jönköping, died 26 March 1898.”

The similarity of family names appeared to be more than coincidental. A meeting with Bishop Hill State Memorial archivist Cheryl Wexell Dowell quickly uncovered a Willson family history, written by a daughter and deposited by a descendant in 1996.

It described Anton Frederick Willson as having been born 14 June 1814(?), married in late 1841(?) at Unnaryd to Elizabeth Hansson, and departing Sweden with their family of four children on 14 January 1853 aboard the *Preciosa*, arriving New York on 2 May 1853, then heading for St. Louis, “...where father had two brothers, John and Charles, who were in the mercantile business...” Charles had been discovered!

But who were the Wilsons? The family history incorrectly described Anton Frederick Willson as having been born in “Härna församling, Linköpings län, Östergötland,” a clearly erroneous location. But birth-year, marriage location, immigration information, and the presence of two named brothers in St. Louis, John and Charles, gave enough information to begin an *Emibas* and *Genline*

search of Swedish records, with good help from Elisabeth Thorsell, editor of the *Swedish American Genealogist* and Helene Leaf, researcher at the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center at Augustana College in Rock Island. They quickly found Anton Frederick was born Anders Fredrik Andersson, at Norra Härene socken, Skaraborgs län, on 27 May 1814, and married Lisa Hansdotter on 11 April 1842 in Norra Unnaryd, Jönköpings län. The Wilsons were actually Anderssons!

The family history reports that upon arriving in New York, Anton’s (Anders’s) family began their westward journey to St. Louis to meet his brothers Carl and Johan Otto Andersson (Charles and John Wilson). They stayed in St. Louis until 18 July 1854, when they set out by steamboat for Peoria, Illinois, with the goal of Andover, settled since the mid-1840s by Swedish immigrants, initially from Östergötland and later, Gästrikland. In Peoria, they hired a driver and a “prairie schooner” for what they hoped would be a short trip to Andover, just 75 miles away, across largely unbroken prairies.

Carl (Charles Wilson) evidently accompanied them as interpreter, and out of curiosity about Bishop Hill, which had substantial trading contacts in St. Louis, and about which he had been asked on previous return trips to Sweden.

Seven days later, they finally arrived at nearby Bishop Hill, only about 15 miles, or one day, south of their goal. They found the prospect



of an overnight at the relatively new (1852) Björklund Hotel in Bishop Hill too inviting to pass up, after seven nights in a prairie schooner. Hotel manager Sven Björklund also discovered that Anders (Anton) had skills too inviting to pass up...he was a tanner, a trade badly needed at Bishop Hill, which had large numbers of cattle, for use as draft animals, while providing meat and hides, for both local use and export. Anders, though suspicious of their communal lifestyle, was intrigued by their offer of one year's employment as foreman of the tannery, after which he could leave with a full year's pay, if dissatisfied with conditions there. He stayed until his death on 6 June 1857. His family remained, and was well cared for. Upon dissolution of the colony in 1860-61, his widow Lisa (Elizabeth) received an allotment of land in Galva Township, ten miles west of Galva, upon which she built a home, and raised her family. She lived there

until her death on 26 March 1898.

Armed with the correct patronymic of "Andersson" and birthdate of Carl as 30 January 1816 and Johan as 23 July 1819, it was now simple to learn more about their immigration. Carl arrived New York City on 30 March 1840 aboard the *Edla*<sup>1</sup>, and Johan at Boston, aboard the *Gotha*<sup>2</sup> on 20 June 1845. The St. Louis City Directory of 1854-55 shows John Wilson clerking at C. Wilson's, and John's residence at 15<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut. As yet, not much more is known about their activities in St. Louis, beyond Carl's several return trips to Sweden, evidently on business.

Carl Anderson (Charles Wilson) was clearly impressed by what he experienced in the Bishop Hill Colony, and wrote his lengthy and very positive description of conditions in Bishop Hill, after his return to St. Louis that fall, dating it 9 September 1854. To his report, the printer also appended an anon-

ymous, and far less favorable travel report, dated Moline, 1 September 1853, about immigrant conditions in that expanding farm industry city, already a magnet for early industrial immigrants from Sweden.

## Notes:

1) *In Swedish Passenger Arrivals in the United States 1820-1850* [SPAUS], by Nils William Olsson and Erik Wikén, Carl is listed as #558, and called merchant of Norrköping. He received passport in Stockholm 25 Nov. 1839.

2) In SPAUS Johan is listed as #923, a servant who received passport for Boston on 10 April 1845. He was born in Norra Härene 23 July 1819.

## Contact information

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View from the Tower Building towards The Colonial Store, Bishop Hill, Illinois.

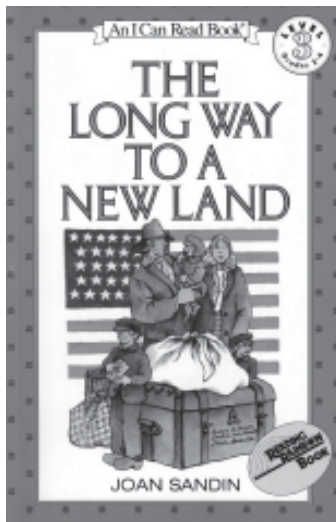
# “Now We Are Arrived”: Stories of Swedish Immigration for Young Readers

BY ERICA OLSEN

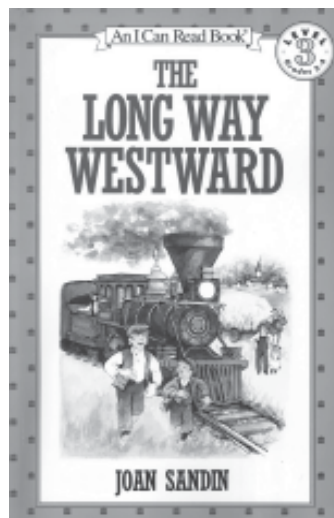
“Now we are arrived,” says Carl Erik, the immigrant boy in Joan Sandin’s *The Long Way to a New Land*, when he finally reaches America. It is an English phrase that he learned on shipboard. Children’s books by Sandin and other authors about the Swedish immigration experience can be a great way to get kids interested in their Swedish-American heritage. Here’s a look at the small but substantial shelf of picture books and novels for young adults that bring this history to life.

## Picture Books

At the beginning of *The Long Way to a New Land*, drought and famine are



making life hard for young Carl Erik and his family on their farm in Sweden. When a letter arrives from the boy’s uncle in America, the family decides to emigrate. Joan Sandin’s lucid prose has the strength of poetry. The simplicity will be clear to children and eloquent to adults: “They scraped the inner bark from pine trees. Mamma mixed it with flour to bake their bread – a hard and bitter bread.” Sandin’s highly detailed illustrations, in somber blacks and grays, reflect the hardships the family is enduring.



The color scheme brightens in Sandin’s sequel, *The Long Way Westward*, which takes the family

west to Minnesota. The illustrations convey their hopes and excitement at being in America. Both books are for very young readers, with just a few lines per page. A third book in the series, *At Home in the New Land*, will be published in 2007.

*Klara’s New World* has a similar story line to the *Long Way* books but is told from the point of view of a seven-year-old girl. Jeanette Winter’s full-page illustrations allow the strong characters and emotions to come through. In the family’s house in Sweden, we see the wooden kitchen utensils hanging from the wall and the colorful textiles made by Mamma (who is shown weaving at her loom). In another illustration, an “America letter” is readable in Swedish. The writing is at a higher reading level than Sandin’s books, and the voice sometimes seems older than a child’s.

These books do not sugarcoat the realities of the immigrant’s journey, taking on serious subjects such as death on shipboard. Author Joan Sandin explains, “I felt I couldn’t do an accurate story about immigration without including the reality of starvation, desperation, sadness, humiliation, even death. However, these unpleasant events and emotions are balanced with the optimism and excitement also experienced by

the family.” In their text and illustrations, Sandin and Winter demonstrate solid research. All three books include historical notes.

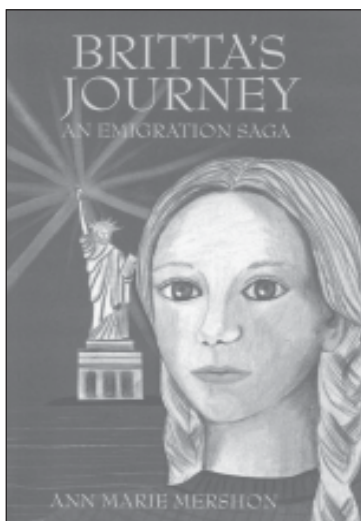
## Young Adult Novels

*Meet Kirsten*, about a nine-year-old Swedish girl who immigrates in 1854, is the first in a series of six books published by American Girl, the company best known for its dolls. This series accompanies the “Kirsten” doll, but the books can stand on their own. Once again, there is little sugarcoating of the immigrant’s experience – Kirsten’s best friend dies during the journey. While this book cannot compare to a pioneer classic like *Little House on the Prairie*, the story is appealing, and the illustrations are charming. The



historical afterword asks: “If your family decided to move to another country, could you do that? How would you know what to bring with you? What would you leave behind? One of your relatives probably had to make decisions like these, because there is a story like Kirsten’s in nearly every American family.” A book that stimulates young readers to think about these questions is certainly doing something worthwhile.

The family in *Britta’s Journey* embodies a story that many families experienced: the father has preceded the family to America, and mother and children are making the long



journey alone. Much of this novel takes place in England, where 12-year-old Britta’s family is stranded when a misunderstanding and then an illness prevent them from continuing their journey. The story’s strength is in the details of immigrants’ travel arrangements – hotels, meals, and medical services. Britta is a likeable, independent heroine, although at times the banter between her and her know-it-all brother feels too contemporary for the 1904 setting. Also noteworthy is Britta’s background – the family comes from Swedish-speaking Finland. The epilogue reminds us: “Every family has a story ... Take the time to talk to your older relations about their memories, their childhoods, their parents and their grandparents.”

Set in 1902, *Land of Dreams* is the third book in Joan Lowery Nixon’s Ellis Island series about three teenage girls who meet on shipboard (the others are from Russia and Ireland). *Land of Dreams* focuses on 16-year-old Kristin, who expects more freedom from America than her family and her conservative “Little Sweden” community in rural Minnesota are willing to allow her. “Why can’t women do the same things as men? she thought with disappointment. Wasn’t life supposed to be different in the United States?” Kristin’s impatience with the Swedishness of her new American life is conveyed with more spirit than the

theme about women’s rights. Swedish dialogue interspersed throughout could inspire readers to learn the language.

## Other Scandinavian-American Young Adult Novels

Two other books of interest are *Dancing in the Streets of Brooklyn* by April Lurie (Delacorte Press, 2002) and *The Journal of Otto Peltonen: A Finnish Immigrant* by William Durbin (Scholastic, 2000). Lurie’s novel tells of a 13-year-old girl growing up in the Norwegian-American neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York, in the 1940s.

Since most children’s books about immigration focus on earlier time periods and settlement in the Midwest, Lurie’s setting stands out. In Durbin’s book, written in diary form, a teenage boy from Finland immigrates with his family to the iron mining country of Minnesota in 1905. Part of Scholastic’s “My Name Is America” series, the book includes a historical note and an excellent selection of archival photos. Although their subject matter is not Swedish, both books are worth mentioning, as many Scandinavian Americans (like myself) claim ancestry from more than one country.

While children are the intended audience for the books reviewed here, adults can certainly enjoy and learn from them. Picture books, in particular, provide a vivid introduction to the immigration experience. Through the eyes of a child, these books remind us that for a family starting over in a new land, the adults might be as vulnerable as children, and as open to new experiences.

*Once upon a time, there was a family in Sweden ...* These books also remind us that as we search for facts about our ancestors, what we are really doing is writing this story for ourselves.

## Note:

Books in print are available by special order from your bookstore or through online booksellers. The website [abebooks.com](http://abebooks.com) is a great resource for secondhand and out-of-print books. Last but not least, visit your public library (which, if it doesn't have a particular book, can obtain it through interlibrary loan).

## Books discussed:

### *The Long Way to a New Land*

by Joan Sandin

HarperTrophy (an I Can Read Book), 1981

Paperback, 64 pages, ISBN 0-06-444100-8, \$3.99

### *The Long Way Westward*

by Joan Sandin

HarperTrophy (an I Can Read Book), 1989

Paperback, 64 pages, ISBN 0-06-444198-9, \$3.99

### *Klara's New World*

by Jeanette Winter

Knopf Books, 1992

Hardcover, 41 pages, ISBN 0-679-80626-1, out of print

### *Meet Kirsten: An American Girl*

by Janet Shaw

Pleasant Company, 1986

Paperback, 61 pages, ISBN 0-937295-01-9, \$6.95

### *Britta's Journey: An Emigration Saga*

by Ann Marie Mershon

Singing River Publications, 2004

Paperback, 205 pages, ISBN 0-9709575-6-4, \$12.00

### *Land of Dreams*

by Joan Lowery Nixon

Delacorte Press, 1994

Hardcover, 152 pages, ISBN 0-385-31170-2, \$14.95

## Two Authors Retrace the Immigrant Journey

Joan Sandin's grandfather was born in Falun, Sweden, and immigrated to Wisconsin with his parents in 1882 when he was just two years old. Sandin herself had firsthand knowledge of immigration, but in reverse – she lived in Sweden for a time. She included details about learning English in Carl Erik's story because, she says, "My own personal experience of being an immigrant in Sweden made me particularly aware of how important language (or lack of it!) is to our sense of who we are."

To create her story and illustrations, Sandin did extensive research. "I looked at anything of interest," she says. "Letters, journals, self-published family histories, Swedish newspapers, maps, train and steamship schedules, official reports on immigrant conditions. I also did drawings of old houses, tools, household objects and clothes, at museums in Växjö, Stockholm, and Minneapolis. When I was unable to find a picture of the mail boat Carl Erik's family would have taken from Gothenburg to Hull, I used a technical description in the Maritime Museum in Stockholm and worked up the picture from that."

Ann Marie Mershon's *Britta's Journey* was inspired by the author's elderly neighbor in Minnesota, Eleanor Jacobson Stone. In the story Mershon heard, the family was stranded in London during their journey. When Mershon researched the story, she discovered that "the language barrier was so great that the family thought they were in London when they were really in Liverpool all summer." Mershon's own family history turned out to have an unexpected parallel to the story she told in fiction. Her grandfather, whom the family thought had come from Sweden, turned out to be a Swede-Finn like Britta. Mershon discovered his origins while researching her fictional character's journey. "It is pretty amazing," she says, "to realize that my grandfather had a crossing very similar to the one I researched for the Jacobsons."

## More ideas for reading

Do these stories make you want to learn more? Here are three non-fiction books that present immigration history for young adults – and the whole family.

### *The Scandinavian Family Album*

by Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler

Oxford University Press, 1998

Paperback, 128 pages, ISBN 0-19-512424-3, \$16.95

A survey of Scandinavian-American life from the colonial era to the present, through first-person accounts. Extensively illustrated.

### *The Swedish Americans*

by Allyson McGill

Chelsea House Publishers, 1997

Paperback, 110 pages, ISBN 0-7910-4552-8, \$9.95

Part of the series "The Immigrant Experience," chronicling the contributions of various ethnic groups to American culture.

### *Welcome to Kirsten's World, 1854: Growing Up in Pioneer America*

by Susan Sinnott

Pleasant Company, 1999

Hardcover, 58 pages, ISBN 1-56247-770-6, \$16.95

A pictorial history and companion to the books in the *Kirsten* series.

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# SVAR

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## Swedish Church Records 1860 – 1905

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

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

## Swedish Censuses

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

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

### Released prisoners

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



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

The Tax records are now online at [www.svar.ra.se](http://www.svar.ra.se). They list all able-bodied people from age 15 to age 62, household by household.

### Other databases

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

### How do I get access to all these resources?

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

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

# A Swede Who Had an Unusual Career in the U.S.



**Old letters showed that Uncle was a cowboy**

BY LEIF AND KENTH ROSMARK

When we went through the papers our deceased mother had left us, we found some letters that awakened our curiosity. As children we had heard that she had an Uncle Helge, who had immigrated to America and who had performed with Buffalo Bill's circus; as children we found that fascinating. As we grew up there was no more talk about that. When we found the letters and became interested in knowing more, all who knew anything were dead.

When we started to do more research on this uncle, we found a story that we want to share with SAG readers. Maybe someone recognizes this story and can tell us more about our Uncle Helge?

Our story starts in Vintrosa, just outside Örebro in the middle of Sweden, on 12 May 1895, when Emil Helge Bohlin was born. In the U.S. he will call himself Edward H. Bohlin. His parents were Gustaf Bolin, born 7 June 1851 in Kräklinge (Närk.), died 21 April 1928, and his wife Augusta Karlsson, born 24 March 1855 in Hidinge (Närk.). He is the twelfth in a family of thirteen children, and all of them have first names starting with 'H'.

Already as a child Helge/Edward was different from other children his age. He had many interests, but his main interest was to take apart and then reassemble things that did not have to be taken apart, to his mother's great annoyance.

He must have been quite adven-

turous; at about 12 years of age he gets a job on a boat. The following year, after sailing the open seas, he arrives in Copenhagen and sees Buffalo Bill and his cowboys. With wide-open eyes he sees their performance. Buffalo Bill and his circus are in Copenhagen during a European tour.

Helge/Edward approaches the greying Buffalo Bill and asks, "If I come to the U.S., can I become a cowboy?"

"Of course," answered Buffalo Bill, and patted Edward on his head. You just come over and I will get you a job on my ranch."

Four years later Ed comes to Buffalo Bill's ranch in northern Wyoming. It is not yet known how he got to the U.S. as he has not been found on any passenger lists, but he might well have worked for his passage, as he was a sailor.

"And who are you?" asked the old colonel abruptly.

"I am the boy you promised a job four years ago in Copenhagen," said the young Ed.

"Well, well, not that I recall such a promise, but if you say so it is probably true. And as you are here, you can put your blankets in the bunkhouse and start working."

## **Cowboy life**

Bohlin worked as cowboy for several years. He learned to ride as cowboys do and to master the art of the lasso and the six-shooter. It was also

during this period that he met with Indians and studied their clothing, the combination of colors, and their cuts, something that he put to use later on. He also learned to speak two different Indian languages.

In his spare time he started to make copper belt buckles for his belt, and they aroused envy and admiration from the other cowboys. He also learned to repair and decorate saddles and harnesses.

In 1921 he got a job in vaudeville, where he showed lasso tricks among other things.

One day when he had the day off and nothing special to do, he amused himself by cutting intricate figures in leather. The then famous actor Tom Mix saw him and said, "Ed, your leather work is among the finest I have seen. My advice is that you should move to Hollywood. It will not take long before you are a wealthy man."

In 1922 he moved to Hollywood and played small parts in Indian movies. He also continued with his leather work, but business was slow.

One day during the production of an Ed 'Hoot' Gibson movie there were some problems with the costumes. Bohlin brought forth one of his sketches for a pair of breeches and showed it to the director.

"How much will it cost to have these clothes made?" asked the director.

"\$22 for the pants and just as

much for the jacket,” said Bohlin. An hour later Bohlin was summoned by the director, and told sign a contract. Ed looked at the paper and said,

“I said \$22 for each piece of clothing and here it says \$22,000!” The contract was signed, and for \$22,000 Bohlin produced 300 pairs of pants and 300 jackets according to the sketches he had made.

## Success in Hollywood

This was the beginning of Bohlin’s Hollywood career. He continued in movies, but also started to fulfil his dream of making beautiful, artistic saddles, heavily decorated with silver fittings in old Indian designs. His first business was housed in small and insignificant premises on Ca-huenga Boulevard.

The film companies now gave him some assignments; for instance, for *The Ten Commandments*, where he made the harnesses for the wagons, and he also made the harnesses for *Ben Hur*. He made bridles, stirrups, spurs, reins – just about everything a rider and his horse needs. His knowledge about Indian attire now comes in useful as he makes costumes for Indian movies. He also makes belts, gun holsters, belt buckles, and filagree work of many kinds, and silver fittings with valuable stones.

Saddles are his speciality, and that is what makes him famous. The chewing-gum magnate P.K. Wrigley ordered a saddle worth \$5,250, and then he makes another saddle for the actor Tim McCody, worth \$4,350. Now every aspiring star in cowboy cinema wants a Bohlin saddle, as well as very wealthy Californians with luxury ranches, who want to play at being cowboys and get Bohlin saddles. The rumors about the Swedish saddler’s craftsmanship spread outside the boundaries of America. Orders come from Indian Maharajas. The Sultan of Johor, north of Singapore, also wants a Bohlin saddle.

Bohlin now branched out and made other leather items. He has for instance made a telephone for Mae

West, the actress, in which the leather work cost \$475 and the diamonds, inlaid in the leather, another \$3,500. He made similar telephones for P. K. Wrigley, but without the diamonds. On special order his company now produced candlesticks, wall lamps, night lamps, coffee sets, and much more.

As the business took off, he moved to larger and better premises at 6309 Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood. He employed 18 artists, all working under his supervision. In 1937 he published an illustrated catalog with 232 pages of all his products.

In 1947 he comes back to Sweden for the first time in 35 years. He brought his products to an exhibit at the NK in Stockholm, which hosted a California exhibition. He brought a saddle, estimated at \$50,000, ornamented with pictures of birds and animals in the Old Wild West. He also brought six trunks full of Indian curios, cowboy clothes, and photos from the old days. He also showed his riding art at the outdoor museum Skansen.

During his visit to Sweden he also visited his family in Örebro. He visited our *morfar*, his brother, in Örebro on a Monday evening in May 1947. He was supposed to come at lunch time, but was delayed and the family had waited impatiently all day. At last he came and was cordially met by all.

After 1947 we know nothing about his life. We do know from those letters, written to our *morfar*, that he had a daughter, born in 1916, and that she was living in Seattle, Washington, in 1937. We know nothing about his wife or any grandchildren, and welcome all help in finding out more about him.

The above information has been gathered from those letters, newspaper clippings, and family tradition.

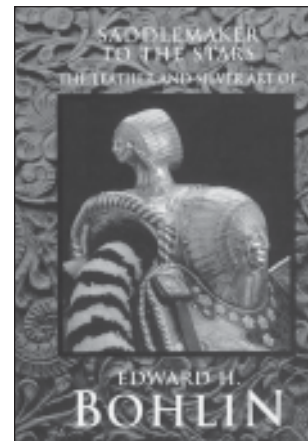
### Contact information

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berith.rosmark@spray.se

## Addendum

The SAG editor could not resist the challenge to find out more about Ed Bohlin’s life.

By surfing on the net it was found that there is a book about this remarkable man, *Saddlemaker to the Stars: The Leather and Silver Art of Edward H. Bohlin*, by James Nottage (1997).



With the help of Judy Olson Baouab of Orland Park, IL, a SAG Workshop member, it was also found that Ed had married in 1916 to *Leanna Marie Freeberg*, born 25 Feb. 1898 in Pompeys Pillar, Yellowstone Co. Montana, and died 13 Dec. 1918 in Cody, Park Co., Wyoming. Her parents were Sven Larsson Fröberg from Torsås, Kalmar *län*, and Hilda Sophia Karlsdotter of Vissefjärda, also Kalmar *län*.

Ed and Leanna had one daughter, *Lillian H. Bohlin*, born 9 May 1917 in Wyoming. She married Volney Pinkerton and died 30 Oct. 2000 in Seattle, Washington. It is not yet known if the Pinkertons had children.

After Leanna’s death Bohlin remarried in 24 November 1920 to Harriett Sweem, but this marriage did not last.

On 24 April 1937 Bohlin married again, this time to Lillian S. Holm, born 6 Oct. 1892 in California. She died 22 Oct. 1985 in Los Angeles. Lillian’s parents were both Swedish.

Edward Hugo Bohlin died in May 1980 in Los Angeles.

# News from the Swenson Center

## Children of two countries:

### Ethnic identity in youth literary culture in Swedish America

BY AGNIESZKA STASIEWICZ

Within the large Swedish community in the U.S. there were many who came to America at a very early age with few memories of their homeland. Some, being second or third generation immigrants, had never been to Sweden at all and were more fluent in English than in Swedish. Therefore, many Swedish-American institutions set the ethnic education of children and young people as one of their most important goals. As the literacy rate was very high among Swedish immigrants, literature and newspapers flourished and the written word seemed to be the perfect way to get through to the youth. Between 1840 and 1960 more than 200 denominational Swedish-American periodicals for children were published.

What was the content of these literary publications and how did they refer to Sweden, the U.S., and Swedish-America? Who contributed to the books and periodicals? How wide was their circulation? What values did they promote? What was their influence on children and youth? What was their role in the preservation of the cultural heritage of immigrants? And most importantly, which publications shall I choose for my research? I am examining these and many other questions in my research for a doctoral dissertation about the process of creating youth and children's ethnic identity through literary culture.

When I came to the Swenson Center in Rock Island, I realized that the overwhelming amount of materials gathered there would enable me to narrow my project down significantly. Therefore I decided to focus on the role of the Augustana Book Concern (ABC) in the process. In its day, the Augustana Book Concern was the

most influential Swedish-American publishing house. Although its publishing profile was deeply religious, there were also many works connected with the topic of ethnic identity in a more direct way.

In my dissertation I will examine ABC periodicals and books for children and youth, searching for the elements which helped maintain a "Swedish spirit" in young generations, but also which recognized their "American side." Among the wealth of the Swenson Center's holdings of publications of the Swedish-American press I was forced to choose only a few. Therefore, my focus will be mainly on Swedish-language publications, mostly because of their important role in maintaining Swedish speaking skills among youth and children and because, in general, their content is more diversified.

I will put a special emphasis on these publications which highlight the dual heritage of the children of Swedish immigrants. My focus will be the periodical *Ungdomsvännan*. I have found *Ungdomsvännan* to be one of the most interesting magazines for youth because of its literary sophistication and its concentration on ethnicity. I was very happy to find the whole collection of *Ungdomsvännan* among Swenson Center's duplicates which will enable me to study them in-depth at home. Among the Center's extensive holdings of Swedish-American press I have also found an interesting periodical for younger children called *Barnens Tidning*. Although it was mainly devoted to religious education, it also contains many features that deal with ethnic issues. Moreover, in *Augustana Synodens Protokoll*, I found plenty of information about the number of subscribers, prices, and

other useful data about the periodicals in question as well as others.

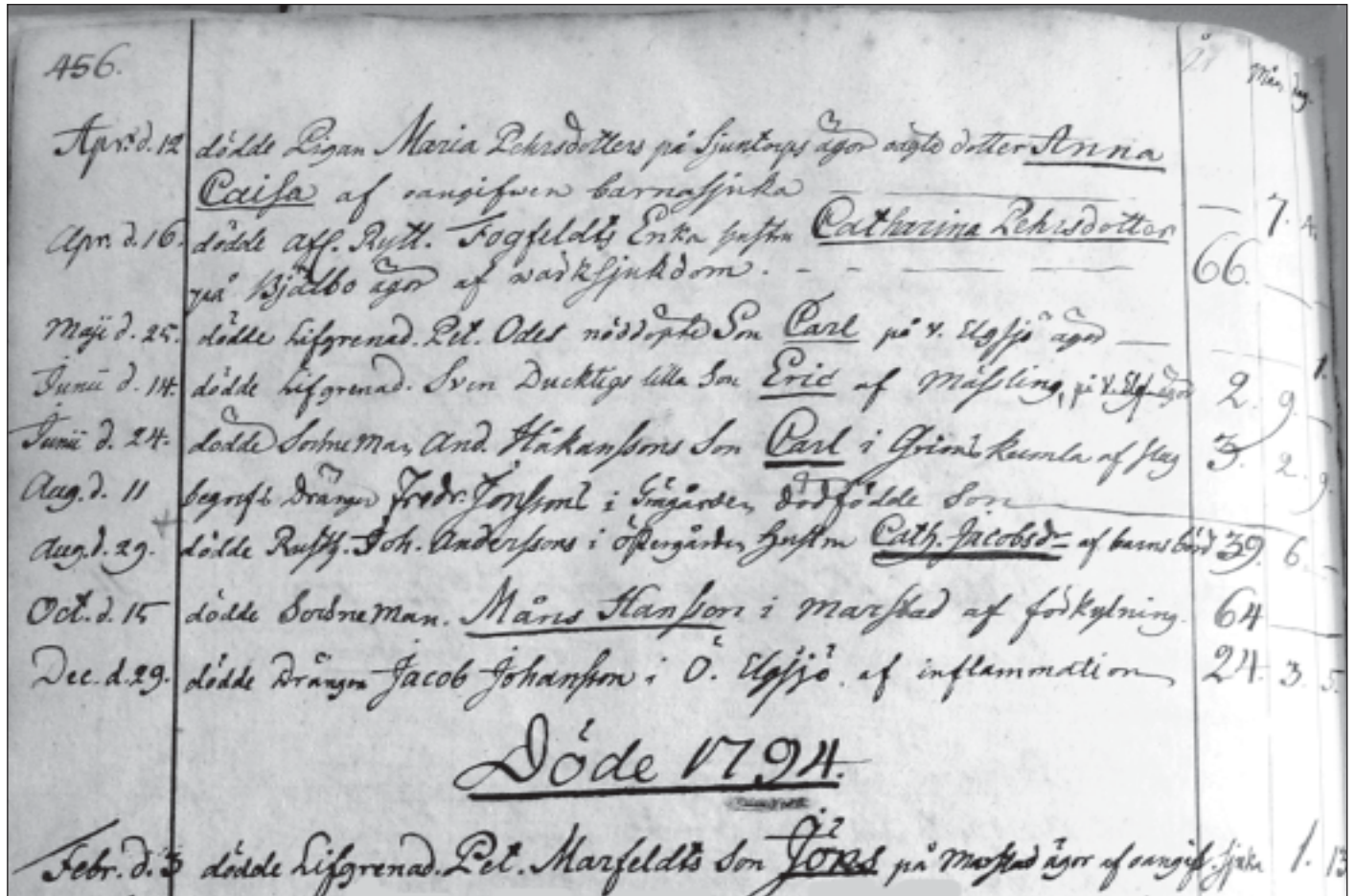
The second important factor in children's literary culture is books. On the Swenson Center's library shelves I found not only sources referring to this topic in general, but also a significant amount of stories for children themselves. Most of them, surprisingly, were translated from German or imported from Sweden. Very few were written by Swedish-American authors. One of the latter was Anna Olsson; therefore I decided to put a special emphasis on her works.

Many people have asked why a Polish Ph.D. candidate is doing research on Swedish immigration. My answer is always: "Because it is fascinating!" For a long time I have been interested in Scandinavian and American culture and I wanted to combine these two topics in my dissertation. After spending half a year in Sweden I became certain that the immigration phenomenon and Swedish-America were the very right choices for me.

That is why I am very happy that I was selected for the 2005 Dagmar and Nils William Olsson Fellowship. Thanks to it I was able to spend a month at the Swenson Center studying the impressive holdings of Swedish-American periodicals and literature for youth and children. Moreover, it gave me a unique opportunity to explore both Swedish-American traces in the Quad Cities and American life and culture in general. I have brought home not only an impressive collection of materials for my doctoral dissertation but also warm memories of a beautiful country, people's kindness and friendship, my first baseball game, and chocolate chip cookies.



# A Handwriting Example IX



Here is an example of the handwriting of the later 1700s. The gothic style of writing is no longer in use, except for some letters. The writer

here uses the more modern Latin style, but still also uses the long “s” in words with double “s” like Hansson. This example is taken from the

church records of Bjälbo parish in Östergötland.

The transcription will be found on page 26.

## Digital photos – a revolution!

In the last few years two companies have started in Sweden that offer genealogists a choice for the first time between the black and white microfilms/fiches and very neat color pictures of the records.

The first company, *HH Digiarkiv AB*, offers high quality photos of church records, probates, and much more for the area of Skåne, Halland, and Blekinge. The pictures are digi-

tal photos, not scans, and you get them on a CD and can then work with them in your picture program.

The other company, *Arkiv Digital*, offers much the same type of documents from the area of Västergötland, Bohuslän, Dalsland, and Värmland. Later this year they will start on Småland and Östergötland. Military records might be in future plans.

I have used their photos for the oldest records for Filipstad from the 1650s, and am amazed at how much easier they are to read than the old microfiche. The possibility of enlarging the photos is a big help, and I can also change the contrasts as I want to. Check out their web sites! The addresses are on page 31.

*Elisabeth Thorsell*

# The Old Picture

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



This picture shows the *folkskolärare* Karl Johan Lindvall and his pupils at Forsvik school in Udenäs parish in Västergötland, close to Karlsborg Fortress. The picture was taken in 1898.

The picture was sent in by Tom Lundeen, 299 N. Linden Avenue, Palatine, IL 60074-5468 <tom@lundeen.org>.

Among the children shown in this photo, Tom's wife Judy's grandmother *Ida Karlsson*, born in 1890, and her sisters *Gerda* and *Anna*, are numbers 5-7 in the second row.

Ida left Forsvik (but is listed as

leaving from Udenäs, a slightly larger nearby town) 17 September, 1906. She went to Göteborg, where she probably boarded a ship to England, most likely to either Newcastle upon Tyne or Hull -- both common ports. She travelled across northern England, probably by train, to Liverpool, where she boarded the steamer S.S. *Cedric*. It left Liverpool on October 5th, 1906, and arrived at New York's Ellis Island October 15th, 1906.

The ship's manifest shows her as 16 years old, female, single, a servant, able to read and write, Swed-

ish, Scandinavian race, from Udenäs, to Bridgeport, without a ticket to Bridgeport, paid for her own passage, carrying \$14 in cash, never before in the U.S.A., to join her sister, Mrs. Hedvig Forsman, 308 Olive St. Bridgeport, Conn. (full address), never in prison, not a polygamist, not an anarchist, traveling on her own volition, in good health, not deformed or crippled, five feet four inches tall, fair complexion, black hair, blue eyes, no identifying marks, born in Udenäs, the parish where Forsvik is situated.

# Bits & Pieces



## President Bush has Swedish ancestors

In early April (but no joke) there were many articles in the Swedish newspapers about how it had become known through a press message from the Swedish Colonial Society that President George W. Bush is descended from a Swede, *Måns Andersson*, a member of the Delaware New Sweden colony. Måns Andersson was one of the earlier colonists and is said to have arrived on the *Kalmar Nyckel* on its second voyage, landing in 1640. Måns travelled with his wife and a small daughter, Brita. His wife died some years later and he remarried. He and his new wife established a farm "Silleryd" in Delaware County, where they lived for a few years. As a member of the opposition against Governor Printz, Måns found it best to leave the area and finally settled in Maryland, where he still lived in 1679.

That he gave the name "Silleryd" to his farm has been taken as an indication that he came from the parish of Sillerud in western Värmland. The local grocer was on national TV and the village was filled with journalists who wanted to know all about Måns – a task that no one has been able to accomplish so far. To find a man named Måns Andersson in the tax records in the 1630s is no easy matter, especially as he might not be from Sillerud. The church records do not start that early, and the tax records most often give just the first name and no patronymic.

Anyway, Måns had a son Christopher Mounts (=Månsson), who in his turn had a daughter Ann, married to Robert Mercer, an 8th grandfather of the President.

On p. 31 there is a link to an article about this by Dr Peter Stebbins Craig.

## The Swedish War Archives (*Krigsarkivet*) will be closing

The War Archives (*Krigsarkivet*) in Stockholm will be closed for rebuilding and renovation of the offices and the research room. The archive closes on **14 August** and they hope to be able to open the new premises on **23 October 2006**.

During the time the research room is closed it will be possible to use microfiche copies of muster rolls and much more at the research room at Arninge. It will also be possible to order volumes and search them at the National Archives (*Riksarkivet*) in Marieberg.

([www.ra.se/KRA/index.html](http://www.ra.se/KRA/index.html))

## From Bjurtjärn to Stockholm, WI

The founder of Stockholm, Wisconsin, returns to the American Swedish Institute with some 80 of his relatives and friends at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, **July 5, 2006**. The Bjurtjärn Theatre Group from Värmland, Sweden, brings to life Erik Peterson, who founded Stockholm in 1854. The troupe will perform a concert version of the play *They Sold Their Homesteads*. There is no charge for the concert, but freewill donations will be accepted. Space is limited; reservations are advised. For reservations or information, call (612) 871-4907 or e-mail:

<[info@americanswedishinst.org](mailto:info@americanswedishinst.org)>

## House of Genealogy web address

The correct web address for the *House of Genealogy* (Släktforskarnas Hus) in Leksand is [www.genhouse-sweden.com/](http://www.genhouse-sweden.com/)

## The Order of the Polar Star

In early April it was announced that *Ronald A. Hendrickson* and *Sandra Springer Pfaff* had been awarded the Order of the Polar Star (*Nordstjärneorden*), along with some other distinguished Americans.

Ronald A. Hendrickson has been Governor of the Swedish Colonial Society, which maintains the memory and genealogy of the Swedish colony New Sweden in Delaware which was founded in 1638.

Sandra Springer Pfaff is chairperson of the Board of Directors of the American Swedish Historical Museum in Philadelphia.

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

## Famous photographer Lennart Nilsson in Minneapolis

Well-known Swedish photographer Lennart Nilsson will exhibit his extraordinary photos of the beginning of life at the American Swedish Institute during the period of **31 May to 8 October**. The exhibition is called "Lennart Nilsson: Life," an exhibition of the Hasselblad Center, Göteborg, Sweden. It includes images from his early photo essays, portraits of celebrities and statesmen, Sweden's royalty, images of human development from "A Child is Born" and science pictures.

## History of the clergy of Lund diocese is complete!

The work on a complete history of all the clergy (*Herdaminne*) of Lund diocese has been going on since 1948, and was recently completed when two volumes on the clergy of Blekinge were published.

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

# Going Home

## A young boy's experiences onboard an Atlantic liner

BY LENNART PEARSON



In the late fall of 1946, when I was in the eighth grade, my mother decided to take me with her to Sweden to visit her aging father. The war was over and the Swedish-American Line was once again carrying passengers across the Atlantic, so she put her name on a long waiting list for tickets. After some months, she was told that space would be available on the S.S. *Gripsholm*, sailing Friday, December 6th, and arriving in Göteborg (Gothenburg) ten days later – just in time for Christmas.

My recollections of packing are hazy. I recall my mother putting things rather ingeniously into a wardrobe trunk of the type that would have been standard equipment for transatlantic travelers a decade earlier. We also had a steamer trunk, a couple of suitcases, and a 16mm movie camera that my father had bought in 1941.

### Leaving New York

The S.S. *Gripsholm*, which to my eyes was simply enormous, was docked at Pier 97, at the west end of 57th Street on the Hudson River. The pier itself was a long drafty shed in which several thousand people were all trying to figure out what to do next. There was baggage everywhere. Movable picket fences separated passengers according to whether they were traveling First Class (blue tags), Cabin Class (green tags), or Tourist Class (red tags). Trunks and suitcases were to be checked in by last name, under large letters strung on overhead cables the length

of the entire pier – twenty-six letters repeated in blue, green, and red. It was a scene of noisy confusion. Outside, taxicab drivers were blowing their horns, porters with hand trucks were hustling those who had just arrived, and hot dog vendors were hawking their indigestibles. Inside the shed, policemen helped newcomers make sense of the signs as people shouted across barricades in various languages. Parents were tugging at cranky children, teenagers were eyeing other teenagers, officials were stamping anything handed them, travel agents were selling tickets, and wispy old ladies in hats and gloves were protecting their handbags from purse snatchers and pickpockets. Just beyond the commotion, through the open walls of the shed, I could see the portholes of the gleaming white ocean liner and gangplanks leading into the ship.

A number of people from church had come down to the dock to see us off, including the pastor who considered it his Christian duty to say farewell to members of his flock but who also enjoyed the excitement of such departures. We were all properly dressed for the occasion. I even had a hat with a brim which I wore under protest since I always hated hats (and still do). We were not the only passengers from church. There was Nanny Paulson, a redoubtable woman in her sixties, and a good friend of my mother. Although she had never married, she had a surprisingly good instinct for things that were of interest to a boy just about to turn

twelve. Nanny was a professional cook. She had provided Scandinavian cuisine for some of the finest families in New York such as the Vanderbilts and Hattie Carnegie, the fashion queen. Coming to the United States for the first time in 1910, Nanny had returned almost every summer to Sweden to see her relatives. This was to be her twenty-eighth trip; she would cross the Atlantic thirty-four times in all before she retired. She had an imperious way about her, and perhaps her instincts about human nature had been too much shaped by the hard hand of experience. She knew well, for instance, that much could be accomplished by a well placed “tip.” Not everyone appreciated Nanny as much as I did, but certainly, everyone who knew her also respected her.

Two other passengers that turned up on deck were religious celebrities, Gustaf Landmer and Einar Ekberg. Landmer was an evangelist and Ekberg was a gospel singer. Whether they traveled together regularly as a Swedish version of Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey, the nineteenth-century American evangelists, or whether they found themselves together on this particular sailing purely by coincidence, I do not know. On board ship, however, they did team up to hold religious services in Swedish on several evenings in one of the lounges. Ekberg sang and Landmer preached to a generally receptive audience.

Once on board, we all posed for pictures on the upper deck and

engaged in the customary bon voyage rites of hugs and goodbyes.

## The ship sails

At 12:30 p.m., thirty minutes before the ship was due to sail, the ship's horn signaled visitors to disembark. It was an unforgettable sound, ear-shatteringly magnificent as it echoed back across the Hudson River from the New Jersey shore. With a pang of sadness I said good-bye to my father, not realizing that the moment was far harder for him than it was for me. A few moments later, I could see him and the pastor emerge on the observation platform at the end of the pier, waving. In those days it was customary to throw rolls of narrow streamers from the ship to those on shore, the thin strip of paper being the last link broken as the ship was slowly nudged from the dock by the attending tugs. The ship began to move very, very slowly backing out into the Hudson River. The figures on the pier grew smaller and smaller until they were no longer identifiable. As the tugs withdrew and the ship's own screws began to turn, a faint vibration indicated that the ship was moving under its own power. Then the pier slipped behind us, and the bow of the ship pointed east out toward the Atlantic.

I was fascinated! The harbor was alive with barges, ferries, garbage scows, tugboats, oil tankers, freighters, and everywhere, sea gulls. The sun was bright and the air chilly, and I was reluctant to leave the upper deck. Fortunately, all meals on board were served in two sittings, and we had been assigned to the second sitting. That meant I could remain on the upper deck until almost 2:30, by which time the *Gripsholm* had already passed the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island and was well out beyond the Narrows into Lower New York Harbor. I had heard a great deal about seasickness from my mother who knew herself to be a poor sailor so I expected the ship to begin tossing just as soon as it left port. When we sat down to eat lunch, however, the only thing I felt was the faint pul-

sation of the ship's engines. The water was calm and beautiful, and through the windows of the dining room, we could see the shoreline of Long Island perhaps four or five miles off the port side.

## Delicious food!

The table steward began to bring out the various luncheon courses, including Scandinavian delicacies that were familiar to me from home: an assortment of cheeses, pickled herring, and lingonberries. Scandinavian cuisine – Swedish, Norwegian, Danish cooking – is unique, in the same way that there is something special about Chinese, French, and Greek cuisine. Not everyone is fond of smoked eel, cheese made from goat's milk, head cheese, or *lutfisk* (boiled stockfish previously soaked in lye), but almost everyone can find something to savor at a *smörgåsbord* table, especially when it is followed by coffee and Danish cookies or a slice of raspberry *tårta* (cake) covered with real whipped cream.

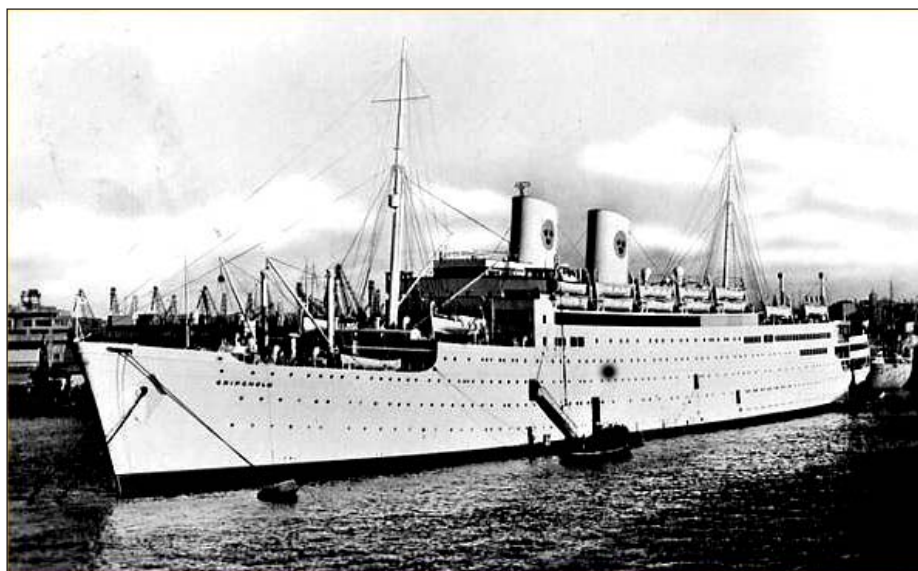
Nothing that was served up during the ten days of this crossing was too exotic to be sampled, and the greater the variety, the better I liked it. Some portly German people seated at a nearby table commented very favorably on the food, and one grandmotherly traveler pointed out to me that the words for “herring tidbits”

in Swedish (*gaffelbitar*) and in German (*gaffelbissen*), were really quite similar. My mother confirmed that the Swedish language was closely related to German, but was not able to come up with a Swedish cognate for *rollmops*. Clearly, there was more to be learned about Germany than I had picked up during the war years, when all Germans without exception had been regarded as “the Enemy.”

Later in the afternoon there was a lifeboat drill. We were each assigned to a particular lifeboat, which meant that when the alarm sounded, everyone gathered at designated points on one of the upper decks. In our group there were perhaps twenty people. I was puzzled by the fact that I could see no lifeboat from where we were standing. It was explained that the lifeboat was immediately above us, and that in an emergency it would be lowered by the crew for access through an open window. This was not reassuring. I had read all about the *Titanic*, and I could almost hear a ghostly band playing in the background, “Nearer My God To Thee.”

## Our temporary home

Our particular cabin was on D-deck, which was about at the waterline since I could hear water sloshing on the other side of a porthole that had been tightly closed with an inner metal cover. There were two decks



*M/S Gripsholm in 1952.*

even lower, E- and F-decks, and while I suppose it was an advantage not to be quite that far down, the stairways and corridors were equally narrow all though this part of the ship. The cabin was tiny, with barely enough room to turn around. It made me want to spend as many waking hours as possible elsewhere, which is precisely what I did. Since it was easy to slip under or past various ropes and barriers without being noticed, I soon discovered that the more desirable parts of the ship were for Cabin Class and First Class passengers. Still, even in 1946, the essentially egalitarian spirit of the Swedes was such that markers of class seemed to be only halfheartedly observed. At any rate, my own conscience was no more than minimally troubled as I roamed about the ship quite freely on my own.

## Shipboard events

On the second day out, as the ship was approaching Newfoundland, I noticed an unusual number of fishing trawlers in the area. The sea was very calm, and by afternoon, as fog closed in, the ship began to sound its foghorn at one minute intervals. It was a bit spooky, and I could only hope that those on the bridge knew what they were doing and that the ship's radar was in good working order.

In one of the hallways, a map was posted showing the progress of the trip, and each morning we could see how much of the distance had been covered in the previous twenty-four hours, usually somewhere between 250 and 350 miles. Beside the map was a posting of world news as it had been received in the ship's radio room during the night, along with a listing of shipboard events scheduled for the day.

On Sunday morning, for example, anyone who wished to attend Divine Service in the first class lounge was welcome to do so. The service of worship was conducted by the ship's captain, who read the "Order for Morning Prayer" of the Church of Sweden, the hymns being accompa-

nied on a portable organ. Sunday dinner was especially nice. It was a buffet table with all kinds of delicacies, followed by Baked Alaska for dessert, which was for me another first. On the menu, there was a daily instruction about the six-hour time adjustment that we needed to make as the ship traveled east. Each day, we were to advance our clocks a modest twenty or thirty minutes so that we would arrive on local time.

Once out on the high Atlantic, the days settled into a routine of sorts. Many of the passengers would rent a deck chair and a blanket after breakfast and spend the morning taking in the sea air and snoozing in the sunshine up on deck. Those who felt more energetic played shuffleboard or, in one of the enclosed areas of the deck, ping-pong. I recall playing games with some of the children on board, but nothing more particular than that. Below deck, in a caged hold not being used for baggage or freight, the crew had laid out some tarpaulins to provide an indoor area where children could tumble about – a kind of playpen about thirty feet square. The space was dirty and unappealing, and the tarps smelled of mildew. Since the ship was nearly two city blocks long, it was a bit of a walk from the cabin to the rear deck. One had to go through a long, narrow corridor past some doors to the engine room that also happened to be near some ventilators from the kitchen. It was very noisy, and the odor for about a hundred feet seemed to be a mixture of machine grease and tomato soup. I found that the best way to avoid being nauseated was to hold my breath while passing through that immediate area.

## Seasickness

Some passengers, including my mother, suffered from seasickness, a malady that originates in a discrepancy between what one senses and what the eye can see. The brain has to interpret two types of motion: *side-to-side* (rolling) and *up-and-down* (pitching). The *rolling* of the ship

makes it hard to keep one's balance, and in heavy seas, it is possible to be thrown from wall to wall in a corridor, or even clear across a room. The *pitching* of the ship as it plows forward through the waves creates a feeling of compression as the floor pushes up against the soles of one's feet followed by decompression as it suddenly drops away, producing a sense of light-headedness and a loss of gravity, especially disconcerting when going up or down stairs. Since the eye perceives an enclosed space as stable, these discrepancies can produce dizziness and nausea, a discomfort further aggravated by the incessant creaking of the walls and floors. In daylight, I found it helpful to be up on deck or to stay near a window or porthole where I could see the bow or the stern of the ship dipping up and down against the horizon.

By the middle of the week, the sea was rougher, and certain deck areas had to be roped off. For several days, my mother stayed pretty much in the cabin while I was personally more comfortable upstairs. Food was less appealing than it had been, but I missed no meals and felt rather independent having the table to myself. When the dishes on the table began to slide around because of the rolling and pitching of the ship, the table steward would pour some water on the tablecloth to hold the dishes in place. If it got really bad, the edges of the table could be pulled up about an inch so as to keep things from falling off entirely. When that became necessary, not many passengers showed up to eat.

## Boring evenings

Evenings were rather boring, except perhaps for the lounge lizards, who took advantage of the tax-free opportunities of the mid-Atlantic to drink like Vikings. On several evenings, music was provided by a rather sorry band. When the band was occupied elsewhere, presumably playing in the upper class lounges, a noisy barker presided over a kind of horse-racing game, in which small model horses

advanced across the floor of the lounge according to the roll of the dice. This provided players with opportunities to bet on their favorite horse. One is continually amazed at the ingenuity of human beings when it comes to indulging their vices.

The fixtures on board were rather old-fashioned. Bathroom doors had little turn locks with red or green indicators on the outside that said, *Ledig* ("Available") or *Upptaget* ("Occupied"). The device is common in Scandinavia, and one wonders why something so simple and so helpful has never been widely marketed in this country. Instead of a shower, it was possible to arrange with the bath steward for a hot tub-bath if one didn't mind sitting in seawater and feeling sticky afterwards, though presumably clean.

## Tour of the ship

Nanny Paulson never suffered from seasickness, and she was a good companion while my mother was being miserable down below. Nanny had arranged a ship's tour for several of her friends and she invited me to go along. It was fascinating. We saw the whole ship, including the bridge with all the controls, and I even got to meet the ship's captain and first mate. Our guide took us up to the radio room where the wireless was crackling and the teletype machines were clattering away.

Outside, on top of the radio room, cages had been specially built for some rare silver-blue foxes and for some thoroughbred mink that were also on the way to Sweden. They were fed canned chicken and cereal during the voyage and apparently did not suffer much from seasickness.

We went through some of the crew's quarters that seemed incredibly cramped and uncomfortable even by comparison with our tiny cabin. We climbed down metal ladders until we were in the engine room where the heat and the noise were very intense. It was hard to imagine anyone working under such conditions, but of course someone had to attend to the machinery. I was

awed by the size of the propeller shafts, and by the sense of power in the ship's engines, but I was also glad to get out of there.

All through the voyage, a few seagulls had accompanied the ship, swooping and diving whenever the ship's waste, which included a considerable amount of food, was dumped overboard. Toward the end of the week, I noticed that the number of seagulls had greatly increased, and then on Friday morning the word went out that land was in sight.

## Land in sight!

Sure enough, on the starboard side of the ship, I could see the rocky coast of northern Scotland. Seasickness supposedly ceases as soon as one can see land, so my mother was temporarily back among the living, but only temporarily because the North Sea in December is known for its roughness. By Sunday, however, land was again visible. This time it was on the port side of the ship and it was the coast of Norway. That night we attended the traditional "Captain's Dinner." It was the last evening meal on board ship, complete with whistles and funny hats. Since it was nearly Christmas, the table was spread with an incredibly lavish *smörgåsbord*. The centerpiece was a roast suckling pig complete with a red apple in its mouth. One could go back repeatedly, as indeed I did, and

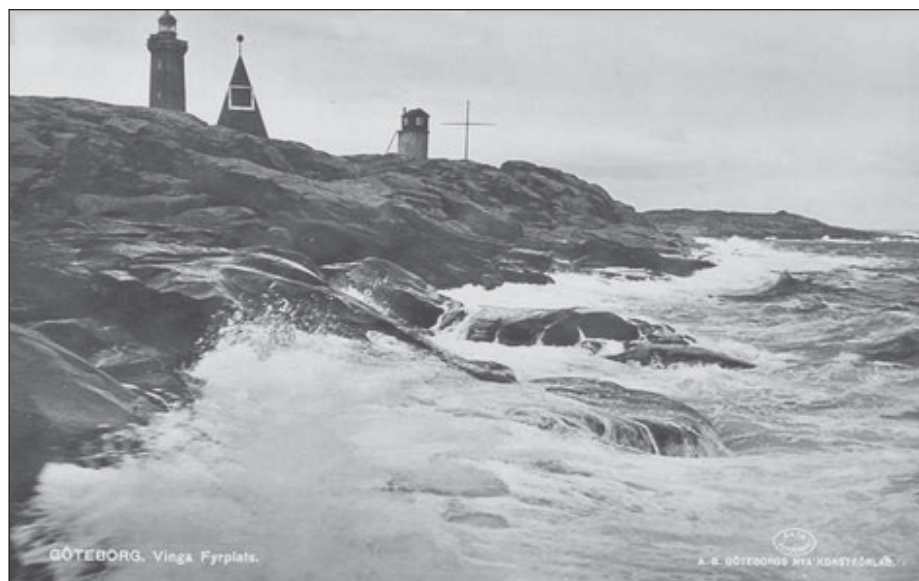
when everyone had eaten their fill, the table could have fed as many all over again. Even now, all these years later, I cannot remember a more impressive meal.

## The Swedish archipelago

On Monday morning, I was up early. The Swedish equivalent of New York's Ambrose lightship was *Vinga fyr*, a very old lighthouse that marks the entrance to the archipelago of Göteborg. Once past *Vinga fyr*, the ship took on its harbor pilot and continued to sail slowly up the well-marked channel toward the city. There were many small, rocky islands with little red cottages, and here and there we could see people waving at the ship. At midmorning, we entered the river (*Göta älv*) on which Göteborg is situated. On the left were the shipyards of a thriving shipbuilding industry (*Götaverken*). I could see huge cranes and gantries, vessels in dry-dock for repair, ships at various stages of construction, as well as the usual tug and barge traffic found in a major seaport. The signs and advertising billboards, however, were all in Swedish.

## Göteborg harbor

Presently I spotted the pier up ahead where the *Gripsholm* would dock. It was festively decorated with bunting



*Vinga lighthouse outside Göteborg.*

and banners, and on top of the pier, at about fifty foot intervals, were Swedish flags – a yellow cross on a blue field – waving in a brisk wind. Below were hundreds and hundreds of people waving and waiting for all 1,350 of us to disembark.

While the ship was secured by noon, it would be another several hours before we could get off because First Class and Cabin Class passengers were the first to disembark. From the upper deck I watched the booms hoisting the baggage and mailsacks out of the holds of the ship. Somewhere in the giant nets swinging through the air from the ship to the shed were our trunks. A cabin steward helped us get our small suitcases upstairs to a hallway where a wide door would fold back to allow the gangplank to be emplaced. After a detour through one of the lounges where various officials checked our papers and our passports, the moment finally arrived. We passed down the gangplank and I was in Sweden!

Unlike New York, where the pier was perpendicular to traffic, the Swedish-American Line pier in Göteborg was parallel to the street. In other respects, the interior of the shed seemed much the same though better organized. To find our baggage, we looked in the proper area under a large “P,” and there it was. When we had assembled everything, we collared a customs inspector who asked a few questions and then slapped an official looking stamp on each piece.

Nanny Paulson was also in our area, and I distinctly remember that when she found a customs inspector to check her bags, he took a long, squinting look at her, and then said, “Oh my, are *you* back again?” To exit the shed, we found a porter who wheeled our things past a checkpoint where another inspector applied a crayon to the sticker affixed earlier. Nanny was carrying an extra suitcase, as it turned out, on behalf of the crew member who had taken us on the grand tour of the ship. The bag had a sticker just like all the others but was full of American cigarettes

being smuggled into Sweden. As soon as she was clear of the checkpoint, the seaman relieved her of the bag. With an exchange of winks, he thanked her and disappeared into the crowd. It was the payoff for the tour!

## Friends meet us

To my surprise, two friends of my mother met us on the other side of the barricade, Martha Johansson and Signe Johnson, who had returned to Sweden several months earlier. Martha was an attractive redhead, probably in her forties, who wore her hair in braids pulled up on her head somewhat like a garland. Signe was short and plumpish, probably in her sixties. Both had worked in the United States for wealthy families, and they now shared an apartment in Göteborg. Since it was mid-afternoon, they invited us to have supper with them and to stay the night. Out on the broad cobblestoned street, it surprised me to find that the blue streetcars of Göteborg consisted of two connected coaches, powered by pantograph, and that they could turn corners just as easily as the single streetcars did back in New York. It was very cold and starting to snow. The daylight was turning to darkness, and a warm apartment was welcome. The apartment house, in an older part of town, had a certain faded elegance, and looked much the way I imagined older houses might look in Paris or in Prague. The apartment itself had high-ceilinged rooms with ornate moldings, and was nicely furnished. One unusual feature was a quarter-round tile fixture in one corner of the living room that went from the floor to the ceiling and extended about two feet out into the room. It was a kind of central heating unit – called a *kakelugn* – for the various apartments that provided radiant and continuous heat. It was not something familiar from my previous experience, but it worked very well. I was to make many such discoveries during the next few months.

In the morning, we had a few things to do before we could head for the train station like changing money. I went with my mother to a Swedish bank, where she changed some dollars into crowns. I was much impressed by the number of times a rubber stamp had to be applied to a piece of paper before the transaction was considered complete.

## On the train home

Eventually, we got to the central railroad station where a whole new world invited scrutiny. Freight cars were unusually short and stubby. Passenger trains had signs on each individual coach indicating its eventual destination. There were no steam locomotives; everything was electrified. Our first destination was the town of Markaryd, and then, the tiny community of Hannabad, where my mother had grown up and where her family still lived. The passenger coaches had compartments that opened on a narrow corridor along which the conductor could come by to collect the tickets. We had the compartment to ourselves, with seats facing opposite each other and a folding table in between. My mother wrote some postcards for mailing back to the States while I rode backwards observing the changing landscape and noting the names of stations where the train stopped: Kungsbacka, Varberg, Falkenberg, and then, Halmstad, where we had to change trains.

## I speak Swedish!

I have two vivid recollections of the layover at Halmstad. First, I remember buying a bar of chocolate at the kiosk and thinking to myself that it seemed grainy compared to American chocolate. Second, I remember, at my mother's urging, going up to a railroad official who was changing signs on the platform and asking him in *Swedish* when the next train would be leaving for Markaryd. I do not know whether I was more surprised to hear myself actually saying something in Swedish or getting an answer that confirmed I had really



been understood. The part of Sweden that is south of Göteborg at one time belonged to Denmark, which accounts for the fact that southern Swedish is marked by a distinctly "Southern drawl." So, in the broad accent of the province, the man looked straight at me and said, "Ahrr-ton och fyrtio-fyra (18.44)," or, 6:44 p.m. My mother was much amused by the exchange. By lavish praise, she convinced me to think it really was worth the effort to try to speak Swedish after all, I was going to be there nearly a year. She was not wrong.

When the train arrived in Markaryd, we were met at the station by my Uncle Andrew and my cousin, Allan, who was about my age. The four-mile ride by taxi out to Hannabad was memorable. It was totally dark, and there was about a foot of snow on the ground. Once the village of Markaryd was behind us, I could only see what was illuminated by the headlights of the car. The unpaved, snow-covered road was barely visible, though the driver seemed to know exactly where every turn was supposed to be. We rode uphill and downhill, over little bridges, and through a deep, deep forest with enormous evergreen trees whose



snow-laden branches seemed to sweep the ground in greeting. It was incredibly beautiful and I knew that somewhere at the end of the forest, a welcome was awaiting us.

I was not disappointed. The woods eventually opened out into the hamlet of Hannabad where I could now see a few lights here and there, and then the car stopped. We were at my Uncle Andrew's house. Aunt Gerda, a slightly younger version of my mother, welcomed us and introduced us to her two little girls, my cousins, and to *Morfar* (= "mother's

father"), my grandfather. Reunion was heady stuff. The tears flowed freely, and everyone was talking at the same time.

I could tell my mother was very, very happy.

### Contact information

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## The Bridge Conference in Karlstad in September 2006

In late September, Wednesday 27th to Sunday October 1st there will be an interesting conference being held in Karlstad, Sweden, the capital of the County and Province of Värmland. The conference is organized by the Kinship Center in cooperation with the Swedish Council of America, who wants to broaden its contacts with modern Sweden.

The conference language will be English.

There will be several social events but also a number of workshops, 24 in all are planned. Their topics range from genealogy through folk costumes and wood carving to Swedish food, and life in modern Sweden.

On Friday there will be a number of excursions, ten in all. Their des-

tinations vary from the Nobel Museum in Karlskoga to Mårbacka, home of famous author Selma Lagerlöf to the Viking Ship *Glad of Gillberga* to the gourmet inn at Grythyttan. Two excursions also go to Dalsland, to The House of Straw, the Aqueduct at Håverud and many other interesting places.

The conference is open to anyone, who is interested in meeting with Swedes, active in preserving and showing local history, as many of the participants will be active in local historical societies (*hembygdsföreningar*).

The conference fee is \$400. The costs include the conference, all meals from Wednesday dinner through Saturday banquet, enter-

tainments and transportation during the conference. Lodging is extra and available in various price ranges. On the web site it says that the conference fee should be paid by 1 June, but it will still be possible to register during the summer be.

Documentation of the conference will be sent to the participants within one month after the conference.

You can find more details at [www.swedishcouncil.org/conference.htm](http://www.swedishcouncil.org/conference.htm)

or at [www.emigrantregistret.s.se/conf-en.htm](http://www.emigrantregistret.s.se/conf-en.htm)

Välkomna! You will see your SAG editor there!

# I Found the Needle!

## My search for the immigrant Asp Family in America and Sweden. Part II

BY JAN SOKODY ASP



In order to begin my research in Sweden, I studied about the resources available by reading "Tracing Your Swedish Ancestry" by Nils William Olsson and purchasing "Cradled in Sweden", by Carl-Erik Johansson. I learned about vital records, clerical surveys (household examination rolls), moving records, probate records, county and province differences, and emigration films.

My mother-in-law, Eleanor Carlson Asp, is entirely Swedish so my first Swedish genealogy experience was tracing and documenting her parents' lines. Her father was Charles August Carlson (Karl August Karlsson) b. 1874 in Grimshult, Ödeshög (Östg). Her mother's parents were the immigrants. Lila Swanson Carlson's father was George Swanson (Göran Peter Svensson) b. 1848, Södra Ralingsås Norrgård, Lommaryd, Jön. Her mother was Maria Charlotta Johansdotter, b. 1845 in Spånshult, Bredestad, (Smål.). They all had lived in Moline, Illinois. I did not have the name of the last parish but an obituary gave the name as "Bresto." I showed it to an experienced Swedish genealogist at the Wilmette FHC along with a list of all parishes beginning with "B" and she chose "Bredestad." If you have a problem locating a place in Sweden, ask a person who can read Swedish to look at the English spelling.

In my possession, I have topographical maps. They are wonderful for locating the outlying places

within the parish boundaries. All the ancestors I have traced have not come from the town with the parish name. I find it very satisfying to be able to pinpoint the exact location of the birthplace, as an example, Grimshult in the parish of Ödeshög, on a map and to follow a family as they move from one farm to another.

My estimated time for immigration was 1851 to 1854. On 10 March 1979, I ordered a Stockholm passenger list film at a LDS branch library, next, six passenger journal films from four Swedish counties. I ordered fifteen Stockholm City parish films covering births for the years 1844-1850 and four films covering other county parishes. The Asp name was not found in any of these films.

In the summer of 1982, Ingrid Klering of Stockholm, the daughter of Eleanor's cousin, Agne, visited in Elgin for six weeks. When she returned to Sweden, she took the Asp family data. Her mother sent it to the Emigrant Institute in Växjö. A letter arrived from Växjö with information from the SCB (Swedish Central Bureau of Statistics) archive about an ASP family emigrating from Sweden in 1851, stating that they came from Luleå in the northern part of Sweden. The names were not 100% correct. They were:

Anne C. 7, Caroline 30, Christine M. 10, I Fred 35, John A. 4

Only the first and last seemed to be a possibility with three years difference in age and correct names. Thirty-five from fifty-one would be

year 1816 so that could be the father but not the name. I had been looking for four family members, not five. I had been looking for Christine, not Caroline.

I was doubtful about this list but I was grasping at straws. After locating Luleå on a map in Norrbotten County, I decided to search northern Sweden. From October of 1982 to May of 1984 I ordered clerical surveys covering seventeen parishes in Norrbotten, three in Västerbotten, and four in Västernorrland. A letter written October 10, 1983, arrived from the Landsarkivet in Härnösand. They were unable to find the Asp family in their Norrbotten records. On page 73 in "Cradled in Sweden" a chart shows the number of emigrants from each county for ten-year periods between 1851 and 1925. Only two left from Norrbotten and none from Vasterbotten between 1851-1860. That was a wild goose chase and I was back to square one! I only had Sweden: no parish, no county, and no province. Should I give up the search?

### New information

In the fall of 1983, a positive change began to take place when I reread a typed note from Aunt Katy. Information she had found at the Louisa County Courthouse stated that John Henry Asp had two boys and TWO girls: Charlotte Ann and Christine. Maybe that list from Växjö was the Asp family?

Next, my in-laws moved from Elgin, Illinois, to Geneseo, east of Moline, Illinois. The day after Thanksgiving, I drove to the Mercer County Courthouse in Aledo to look at land records for the purchase of the blacksmith shop in New Boston. The indenture made on August 15, 1854, shows that John Asp and Caroline Asp purchased a lot in New Boston. Both names are on the record when the lot was sold on April 24, 1856. Across the hall was the Registrar's Office. Even though I have the original marriage certificate for John August and was in a hurry to leave to drive to New Boston and Toolesboro, I spontaneously decided to check the marriage application, as well as a marriage index, looking for the daughter, Christine. I did not find Christine (she is still a mystery), but I found that the parents of John August were John Asp and Caroline. The 1851 ship list now seemed more an actuality.

A trip to the Federal Archive Branch in Chicago enabled me to see the passenger manifest for the ship arriving at the port of New York on September 17, 1851. The Swedish Brig was named *Luleå*. The family was at the top of the list and the father's name looked like it began with a "J" not an "I". I thought, yes indeed, this is the family I have been seeking. I copied all 86 names on the passenger list. It turned out to be very important in my later research.

Plans were being made to open a LDS branch library in Schaumburg, Illinois, which meant a drive of twenty minutes instead of an hour. I was asked to consider being a volunteer, if they were able to get permission for a non-member to serve. My in-laws were also talking about a second trip to Sweden and I desperately wanted to find the place of origin of my father-in-law's family.

## Intensifying my research

I made lists:

1. Film numbers for 1851 Clerical Surveys for each parish in each county.

2. Extraction of Nils Wm. Olsson's books regarding passenger arrivals: where they came from and where they went
3. References to the name Asp on the International Genealogical Index
4. Swedish places beginning with ASP: extracted from "Svensk Ortforteckning" (Agne had given me the book)
5. Swedish places similar to "Nevada"
6. Extraction of County Histories for Mercer, Knox, Henry, and Rock Island recording places of origin of Swedes
7. References for the name given to me by genealogy contacts

Next, I made a copy of each county map and marked the above references by parish. Three areas of concentrated marks were obvious: Kalmar, Östergötland, and Jönköping; Uppsala and Gävleborg; and Södermanland. After analysis of all the above data, I was ready to begin ordering clerical surveys films for 1851 when the Schaumburg FHC opened October, 1984.

## Choosing more straws

I volunteered at the branch library on Wednesdays from 9:00 to 4:00 and ordered four films each week.

A clerical survey also called a household examination roll, known in Sweden as the *husförhörslängd*, is a fantastic and unique record. It should be used by the researcher along with the birth, marriage, and death records. Each year a member of the state church would question all members of the household in order to record what they knew about the catechism. One record might cover five or ten years. The survey lists the place within the parish boundaries where the family lives, the names of the family members, their relationship, occupation, birth dates, birth parish, marriage year, death dates, moving in year and place where they came from and the column I was most interested in, moving out, showing where they moved and the year.

The first clerical survey film I chose to order on October 24, 1984, was *Locknevi*, Kalmar County. My reference came from Olsson's work SPAUS. There was no Asp in his index. However, a word-by-word search of his book revealed on page 355: "Anna Marie Asp Bäckstrom was still listed as a member of the St. Ans-garius Church in Chicago in 1853 together with her s. Anders Peter and dau. Christina Maria." Further information in the same note, #3139, shows Peter Larsson m. to Anna Maria Bäckström b. in Åninge, Locknevi Parish May 27, 1806, dau. Peter Bäckström and Stina Jonsdotter. They had children and the entire family emigrated from Locknevi in 1849.

When I looked at the clerical survey, I found a family leaving for "Norra Amerika 1851", and the names were Petter Beckstrom b. 1815, wife Anna Marie Asp b. 1821, son Johan August b. 1848, and daughter Christina Maria b. 1850 living in Fogelåsa. Three lines below: "Enk. Smed. Peter Asp b.1785, Feb.26, Hjorted." Was he the father of Anna Maria?

I next looked at the *Luleå* passenger list and found written on lines 66-69: P. Beckstrom 36, Anna 30, Joh. 3, Christine 9 mos. The ages and birth dates matched. Why is this family on same boat with the Asp family? Is Anna related to John Henry? Should I concentrate my search in the Kalmar area?

Then I ordered the clerical survey for Södra Vi, (Smål.). A couple leaving for America in 1853 caught my eye because the wife's father's name was *Achilles*. I recognized that name. It was on the boat list. (I had looked at the couple because I was extracting all names of people leaving in the years 1851 to 1859). Ulrica Charlotta Jacobsdotter was born 7 August 1830 in Nykil, (Östg.). Her parents were Jacob Achilles and Anna Greta Andersdotter Gottsell. On the passenger list, following the Asp family was: J. Achilles, 59; Anna, 60; Maria, 24; and Caroline, 11. Next I ordered the Nykil film and eventually

found Jacob Achilles and his family leaving in September of 1851.

## The needle at last!

On May 1, I arrived at the Family History Center wondering which films had come in and how many patrons would arrive. The only patron was Margaret Nelson, a retired school librarian and bridge player friend. For six years, we had been traveling together to and from the Wilmette FHC. I had convinced Margaret to research her Swedish genealogy. She could read and speak the language. When the Schaumburg FHC opened, our indefinite loan films were transferred from Wilmette so Margaret's Swedish films were in the cabinet.

Two films, ordered on March 3, had arrived. Both were from Vimmerby, (Smål.). I decided to look at the *Stadsförsamlingen* (city) first. I looked at the far right *Bortflyttat* (moving out) column on p. 205 and read: *till* (to) **Amerika**, *år* (year) **51**. I quickly looked to the right side and read:

### Grönlid:

Smeden *Johan Henrik Asp*, Locknevi 8 Jan. 1816.

H [=hustru] *Carolina Göransdotter*, Hjorted 3 Aug. 1819.

D [=daughter] *Christina Maria Törnfalla* 22 Oct. 1841 Oct.

D *Anna Charlotta Vimmerby* 20 Nov. 1844.

S *Johan August Vimmerby* 1 Dec. 1847.

I kept looking at the familiar names, the birth years: 1816, 1844, and 1847, the three-year birth difference for Anna and Johan and finally said, "Margaret, Margaret, I think I found them! What does Smeden mean?" Her reply was "blacksmith". She studied the screen and said, "I have the 1816 Locknevi clerical survey film here." I quickly pulled that film out of the cabinet and placed it on the reader. I rolled the film to page 151 and read:

N a m n	Född				Hittat
	ut	år	d	mån	
<i>Peter Henriksson Asp</i>					
<i>Stina Bengtsdotter</i>					
<i>Johan Henric Locknevi</i>					
<i>Johan August</i>					

Vimmerby Stadsförsamling AI:10, p. 205

### Fogelså:

*Peter Henriksson Asp* Hjorted Feb 26, 1785.

H *Stina Bengtsdotter* Frödinge Apr 29, 1778.

Son *Johan Henric* Locknevi Jan 8, 1816.

I ordered the next Locknevi clerical survey and verified that Johan Henric and Anna Marie were indeed siblings.

Hjorted, (Smål.), was also Margaret's parish. All the films were in the cabinet. I was able to add two more generations that very day and also found the marriage record, December 18, 1840, for Johan and Carolina. Margaret's reply was, "I came across the name *Asp* but I never thought anything about it!" I had been that close to the films for six years.

Later that evening, I wondered if there could be another family with the same names? Did they come from a parish where the records had burned? No! I am claiming the *Asp* family I found today. It was time to celebrate. I could not tell my in-laws for they were on a bus returning home from Indiana.

From October 24, 1984, to April 24, 1985, I had ordered fifty-one films. I found the family on the thirty-second. It was difficult to believe that I had found them in six months and one week. I had been hoping it would only take one year and not more than

ten. Success in genealogy requires determination, perseverance, creative thinking, spontaneous genealogical activity resulting in unexpected finds or serendipity moments, and an extensive amount of just plain **luck**. I had them all!

My in-laws did return to Sweden. Agne drove them to Vimmerby, Hjorted, and the house in Simmerum where Carolina Göransdotter was born and lived until she married. Her father was Göran Hansson Hall Wipa,

a *kronobåtsman* (naval soldier/ailor). The last name was given to the man that lived in the Simmerum house provided for the *båtsman*. (Margaret Nelson had a collateral relative who lived there in the later 1800's and had the name of Wipa.) They did not go to Falsterbo In Hjorted, where Peter Asp was born. His father, Henric Nilsson Asp, b. 1749 Risinge, (Östg.), was a master blacksmith and the first ancestor I have found to have the *Asp* name.

Later in my research, I ordered the probate records for Peter Asp and Göran Wipa. The translation of their household belongings was interesting and a challenge. How difficult and sad it must have been for these two fathers to have their only children leave Sweden, never to see them again. Both records named their children living in "Amerika."

## Thank you to:

Nils William Olsson for writing his book, providing the most important straw, Locknevi.

Al Mink, a member of Elgin Genealogy Society, for giving me the book.

Agne Klering for bringing me maps and the place book.

The blond-haired, blue-eyed fellow for providing money to order the films.

My children who did not verbally protest my time spent on this wonderful hobby called *Genealogy*.

# The Solution to the Handwriting Example IX

## Transcription

		År	Mån	Dag
Apr. d. 12	dödde Pigan Maria Petersdotter på Sjuntorps ägor oägta dotter <u>Anna Caisa</u> af oangifwen barnasjuka	–	7	4
Apr. d 16	dödde afl. Rytt. Fogelfeldts Enka hustru <u>Catharina Pehrsdotter</u> på Bjälbo ägor af värksjukdom	66	–	–
Maji d. 25	dödde Lifgrenad. Pet Odes nöddöpte Son <u>Carl</u> på V. Elgsjö egor			1
Junii d.14	dödde Lifgrenad. Sven Ducktigs lilla Son <u>Eric</u> af Mässling, på V. Elgsjö ägor	–	2	9
Junii d. 24	dödde SochneMan And. Håkanssons Son <u>Carl</u> i Grimskumla af slag	3	2	9
Aug. d. 11	begrofs Drängen Fredr. Jonssons i Trägården dödfödde Son	–	–	–
Aug. d 29	dödde Rusth. Joh. Anderssons i Östergården hustru <u>Cath. Jacobsdotter</u> af barnsbörd	39	6	–
Oct. d. 15	dödde SochneMan <u>Måns Hansson</u> i Marstad af förkylning	64	–	–
Dec. d. 29	dödde Drängen Jacob Johansson i Ö. Elgsjö af inflammation	24	3	5
<u>Döde 1794</u>				
Feb. d. 3	dödde Lifgrenad. Pet. Marfeldts Son <u>Jöns</u> på Marstad ägor af oangifven sjuka	–	1	13

## Translation

		Year	Months	Days
Apr. 12	died the maid Maria Petersdotter at Sjuntorp lands illeg. daughter <u>Anna Caijsa</u> of unrecorded children's illness	–	4	7
Apr. 16	died the deceased Cavalry soldier Fogelfeldts widow wife <u>Catharina Pehrsdotter</u> on Bjälbo lands from an aching disease	66	–	–
May 25	died the Life Grenadier Peter Ode's emergency baptised son <u>Carl</u> on Västra Elgsjö lands	–	–	1
June 14	died Life Grenadier Sven Ducktig's little son <u>Eric</u> of the measles on Västra Elgsjö lands	2	9	–
Jun 24	died parishioner Anders Håkanssons son <u>Carl</u> in Grimskumla of stroke	3	2	9
Aug.11	was buried farmhand Fredrik Jonsson's of Trägården stillborn son	–	–	–
Aug.29	died the <i>rusthållare</i> Johan Andersson's of Östergården wife <u>Cath. Jacobsdotter</u> in childbed	39	6	–
Oct. 15	died parishioner <u>Måns Hansson</u> of Marstad of a cold	64	–	–
Dec. 29	died the farmhand <u>Jacob Johansson</u> of Östra Elgsjö of inflammation	24	3	5
Feb. 3	died the Life Grenadier Peter Marfeldts son <u>Jöns</u> at Marstad lands of unrecorded illness		1	13

A *rusthållare* was a man who owned a farm that was yielding enough in crops and other things so he could enter a contract with the government

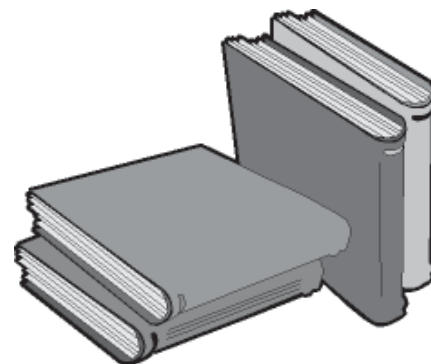
to keep a cavalry soldier and his equipment and the horse. A farm like that was called a *rusthåll*.

A Life Grenadier (*livgrenadjär*)

was an ordinary foot soldier, who had some training in throwing grenades.

# 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 <djohnson@2vikings.com> or 2407 Hunsberger Drive, Limerick, PA 19468, so he knows what you are working on.



## Frontier Tales

**Old Rail Fence Corners, Frontier Tales Told By Minnesota Pioneers**, Lucy Leavenworth Wilder Morris, Ed., softcover, 344 pages, Minnesota Historical Society Press, St. Paul, 1976, (Amazon.com, \$11.53).

What was it really like to be one of the first pioneers in the Minnesota Territory in the 1840's and 1850's, when you filed your claim with an axe mark or a boulder as markers and set about to build a farm and a life on the prairie? This is difficult for descendants to imagine four and five generations later, aside from images created by Vilhelm Moberg in his *The Emigrants* series of books, *The Little House on the Prairie*, by Laura Ingalls Wilder, or Ole Rølvaag's *Giants in the Earth*.

**Old Rail Fence Corners**, discovered while I was browsing the back shelves of a small town book store in northern Minnesota, was first printed in 1914 and 1915 by a subcommittee of the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.). It was reprinted in 1976 by the Minnesota State Historical Society, and copies remain available at some on-line booksellers and elsewhere.

The book contains personal stories told by some 154 of the earliest settlers in the Minnesota Territory. This collection of stories was edited by Lucy Morris, about half of them told directly to Mrs. Morris and the others

to members of other chapters of the D.A.R. in other locations in Minnesota. These are all first person stories as told to the interviewer with little editing, not hand-me-down tales from descendants who may or may not have altered these recollections. Together, these stories form a magnificent human record of these pioneer decades and the frontier experience.

Lucy Wilder came to Minnesota from Illinois in 1878 at the age of 16, living in Houston County and teaching in country schools. By 1890, after some time in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, to further her education, she returned to Minnesota and married James T. Morris, who was in the lumber business and later a lender. After some European travel, she did some writing: travel guides, children's books, and articles for magazines. She had a great-grandfather in the American Revolution and joined the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.) in 1894. She rose to prominence in the D.A.R. organization, holding national office and receiving an honorary award in 1933. She died in 1935.

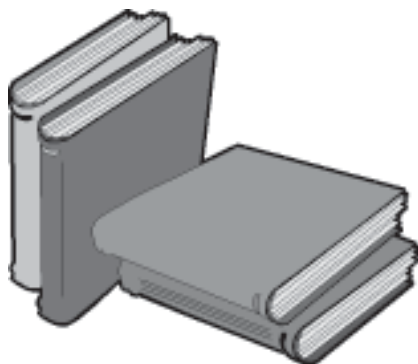
By the early 1900's, Mrs. Wilder recognized that the exceptional personal stories of the first settlers were rapidly being lost as these pioneers were dying off. By 1911, she conceived the idea for her book, and began to interview as many of these pioneers as she could, many then in their 80's and 90's. The task became overwhelming, and she organized a Book Committee to assist her with the interviews, consisting of members of 16 chapters of the D.A.R. in

Minnesota. These women collected and recorded the memories of 62 men and 92 women in all. Mrs. Morris assembled and edited this collection into the first edition, titled *Old Rail Fence Corners: The A.B.C.'s of Minnesota History*, published in late 1914.

This first edition sold out quickly and a second edition, almost identical to the first, was published in 1915. The book was widely acclaimed and read at the time, but sixty years later it was long out of print, rare, and little known.

In 1976, the Minnesota Historical Society reprinted *Old Rail Fence Corners* under its present title. The book is almost identical to the 1915 version and the original pioneer map is reproduced and included. A splendid introduction by Marjorie Kreidberg provided an up-to-date background for the book, and a new contents page and comprehensive index were added to assist readers. The main title was kept despite its somewhat puzzling nature.

These accounts of pioneer life make fascinating reading today, both for those with roots in the Minnesota Territory and for others with an interest in the settlement of the prairies of the American Midwest. These are not stories of important historic figures and events, but of everyday life for those who undertook this great adventure, in their own words. Stories of happy times, tragedy, encounters with native Americans, wolves, the sound of Red River ox carts, ferocious winters, drought, hunger, hot summers, fears, and dreams. Unlike many other pioneer adventures, nearly two-thirds of



# Book Reviews

these stories are told by women, portraying the rigors of their lives as vividly as those of the men they accompanied to the frontier.

Although Minnesota Territory had been explored and traveled for two centuries before by Voyageurs, explorers, trappers, French-Canadian traders, and others, settlement did not begin until the 1840's, initially by people from the Eastern U.S. seeking land for farming. The population grew quickly, from about 6,000 people in 1840 to about 40,000 by 1855 and over 170,000 by 1860. Minnesota became a state in 1858. Many settlers came from nearby Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois, others from further East, and a few directly from Europe. Most came with little money and only a few possessions, sometimes cattle or horses. Families came in small groups or singly; sometimes men came alone the first year to build a shelter and stake a claim, returning the next year with their families. A few Swedes were scattered among these early settlers, but the vast majority came with other Europeans after Congress passed the Homestead Act of 1862.

The first settlers were mainly English and Scots-Irish, descendants of earlier settlers in the Eastern states. Nearly all of the interviews recorded in *Old Rail Fence Corners* are of these people; almost no Swedes were represented in the book. These settlers founded the first towns and claimed land along the rivers, at first the only means of access to the area. By the time the Swedes arrived, most areas had been surveyed and each took his quarter section, or 140 U.S. acres under the Homestead Act. But by the 1890's, Swedes made up a

higher proportion of the population of Minnesota than in any other state. The conditions encountered by these early Swedes were little different from those for the first pioneers twenty years earlier, however.

One recorded interview caught my eye, that of Mrs. C.A. Smith who arrived with her parents in 1858. (She was Swedish born, but later married an English man). Her family arrived in St. Paul, and then traveled by boat to Chaska on the Minnesota River. The family walked to Watertown, MN, (27 miles from Minneapolis) where they purchased two quarter sections of land and began to farm. "We lived just as we had in Sweden," she said, "as we were in a Swedish settlement. We were Lutherans, so there were no parties. Going to church was our only amusement." She went on to describe the prairie, wildlife, and how they celebrated Christmas in Swedish fashion that first year.

Relations were described as quite good with the Native Americans, although sometimes unnerving. They would enter a pioneer house without knocking or stare in the windows and often help themselves to food and other objects. They were usually peaceable, more interested in scalps from other tribes than from settlers. (Prairie Indians were Sioux, and woodland Indians were Chippewa, Ojibwe, or Winnebago). After they were forced onto reservations by treaty, often broken, relations turned violent, leading to the major uprising of 1862. About 500 settlers lost their lives in Minnesota, and Army detachments forced the Indians further west, capturing and hanging some thirty or more in Mankato.

These frontier tales offer fascinating reading, hearing directly in the words of those who lived the pioneer life what conditions were like. Thanks to Lucy Morris, we can relive these times and draw upon the memories of these pioneers. Stories

that were lost in our own families through the generations because they were not written down or the chain of memory was broken by circumstances. In my case, I might have learned some of this from my father, who knew his pioneer grandfather and even worked on his farm for a time. But he died when I was only 14, too young to have an interest in these events. The times described in *Old Rail Fence Corners* will not occur again.

Dennis L. Johnson

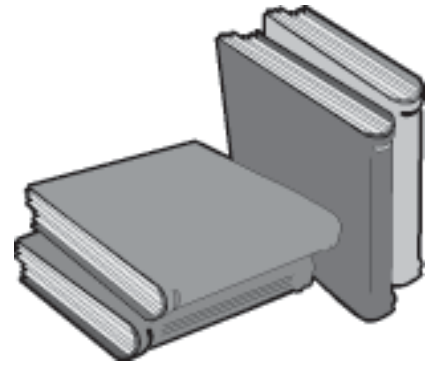
## A dream in pictures

*Images of Swedish America*, Ulf Beijbom, hardcover, 120 pages, Emigrant Institute Friendship Society, Kristianstads Boktryckeri AB, 2003, American Swedish Institute, Minneapolis, \$27.95 or Adlibris.com 151 kr. (about \$20.00 U.S., plus postage)

There have been many books of photographs about the history of the populating of the United States, and other books about the Swedish immigrant experience which include a few photographs of early times. None, however, have been as rich in images or as focused on the experiences of Swedish immigrants in America as this little book printed in Sweden.

Ulf Beijbom, professor and former director of The Swedish Emigrant Institute in Växjö, Sweden, is the editor and has provided the text for this book, assisted by Stig Marz, photo editor, and with an English translation by John Norton. The photographs span between about the 1870's to the 1930's and range from New York to the Yukon. The photos are largely based on items in the Emigrant Institute collection, supplemented by a few from private col-

# Book Reviews



lections. These images are treasures from the collection at the Institute and many were a part of their exhibition, "The Dream of America." Most of these photos were taken by Swedes in the U.S. and they then either returned to Sweden with them, or sent them to relatives in Sweden.

The book is well organized beginning with "The Dream" of those wishing to go, then the emotional departure from friends and family, the voyage by ship and the usual stopover in Liverpool, U.K. Arrival images feature the Statue of Liberty and the Castle Garden immigrant reception center. The new land, called the "Land of Goshen" by Beijbom, has numerous photos and text showing farms, families, forests, prairie life, and other images of the frontier settlements. Swedish Chicago is well represented, as are photos from Rockford, IL; the Twin Cities; Jamestown; New York; Texas;

and other locations. Canada scenes include Winnipeg, Manitoba; Alberta, British Columbia; and the gold rush in the Yukon and in Alaska.

Occupations of immigrant Swedes are represented in many photos of railroad workers, miners, woodsmen, merchants, and maids as well as farmers and settlers. Most of the photos are of common people, but a number of Swedes who distinguished themselves in America are also included. Among them are the singer-entertainer Olle i Skratthult, Swan Turnblad the newspaper king, Curtis Carlson, Eric Wickman of "Greyhound Bus Lines", nurse leader Constance Magnusson, John J. Nordstrom, department store founder, and others. Swedes in the U.S. Civil War and in World War I are honored, and illustrations of the participation of Swedes in Swedish-American organizations are also featured.

This collection of images and the accompanying text provide a mar-

velous view of Swedish America as seen through Swedish eyes, a somewhat unique perspective as compared to similar immigrant collections published in the U.S. The book is not intended to provide a background or a detailed history of the great migration, but simply to focus on the destination of America in images of those who were part of that migration. It is a most worthy addition to your collection of books about Swedish America, and you may even find an ancestor or relative among the photographs included.

Dennis L. Johnson

## New and Noteworthy

(short notes on interesting books and articles)

For those who want to read about rural life in the northern U.S. we can recommend that you try *Echoes*. It is a magazine that focuses on positive values rooted in the past that have relevance for the present and the future, to cite its mission statement. *Echoes* is a quarterly, published in northern Maine, and often has articles and stories on New Sweden. Subscription is \$17.50 for one year. Address: *Echoes Press, Inc., P. O. Box 626, Caribou, ME 04736-0626. Phone: 207-498-8564.*

Professor *Ulf Beijbom* recently published a thick volume in Swedish, with the title *Utvandrarkvinnor. Svenska kvinnoöden i Amerika* (Immigrant women. The fate of Swedish women in America), published by Norstedts, ISBN 10:91-1-301493-5. 450 pages, illustrated, name index and good source citations. It is not now known if it will be published in English. Price in Sweden varies between 187 SEK up to 260 SEK.

A fun book was compiled by *Lars Hübnette* and *Bengt Odenstedt* in 1988, published by Studentlitteratur. ISBN 91-44-28871-9. The title is *Ord och inga visor. 2000 svenska idiom i engelsk översättning*. (Words and no songs. 2000 Swedish idioms translated into English). This book, for instance, explains that "att ha myror i byxorna" means being uneasy, restless, and furnishes the English variant as "having ants in one's pants." "Inte född i farstun," which means that somebody is not stupid, is translated as "not being born yesterday," "Nära skjuter ingen hare" which translates as a shot that almost gets the hare, is given the English version "a miss is as good as a mile."





# 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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## Mary Parker from Las Vegas – where are you?

In 2002, members of the Swedish Genealogical Society toured the U.S. and participated in many workshops, assisting Americans seeking their Swedish roots. One such stop was in Kingsburg, CA, and the stop there was later covered by an article in the Swedish magazine *Släkthistoriskt Forum*. The article relates how a woman named Mary Parker had travelled to Kingsburg from her home in Las Vegas to get help to trace her ancestor Peter Olaus Olausson. Per Olaus Olausson had emigrated to the U.S. in the 1870's and was born in Figgemålen, Kristvalla (Smål.) on 22 March 1848, the son of farmer Olaus Petersson and his wife Valborg Charlotta Johansdotter.

Mary – your Swedish distant cousins would very much like to get in touch with you! Monica Björklund is the great grand daughter of Lorentz Petersson, who was the younger brother of Peter Olaus' father Olaus. Susanne's husband Rune's is also related to you by way of another line of the family. Unfortunately, the man helping Mary out did not record her address or phone number. We have tried calling the Mary Parkers listed in the U.S. phone book for Las Vegas without success. So, if Mary, or someone knowing her, is reading this - please get in touch with us! We have family history researched down into the early 1700's and can share many photos of family and places of family interest. Monica and her family still live in Kristvalla parish and Susanne and her family live in the adjoining parish of Åby.

*Susanne Åkerfeldt, Åbygatan 110, SE-380 31 Läckeby, Sweden, e-mail: <susanne.akerfeldt@kalmar.mail.telia.com>; phone +46 480 603 76.*

*Monica Björklund, Brunnsvägen 19, SE-382 91 Nybro, Sweden, e-mail: <monica.bjorklund@gmail.com>; phone +46 480 530 41.*

1260

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## Salomonsson

My grandmother Charlotta Salomonsdotter was born 25 March 1858 to the sharecropper Salomon Johansson/Jansson, born 7 April 1814 in Askeby (Östg.) and his wife Eva Lisa Carlsdotter, born 19 March 1819, also in Askeby, living at cottage Carlslund on the lands of Askeby Storgård in Askeby.

Their son Carl Axel Salomonsson, born 14 July 1855 in Askeby, emigrated on 24 October 1882 from Tuttorp in Svinstad (now Bankekind) in Östergötland. He left the port of Göteborg on 3 November 1882 and his destination is given just as Princeton, no state mentioned.

I am 88 years old and would really be happy if anyone can help me find my great-uncle.

*Kurt Tunros, Törnbacken 6, 5 tr, S-170 67 Solna, Sweden. Phone: +46 8 655 41 71*

1261

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## Pettersson, Peterson

The girl in the picture is Jenny Olivia Peterson, born in 1912 in the U.S., a daughter of Anna and Olof Peterson.

Anna Johansson was born 26 February 1886 in Myckleby (Bohu.). Olof might have been of Norwegian origins. They also had daughters Lena, born in 1911, Ruth Josephine, born in 1915, and son John Oscar, born in 1908. Anna was a sister of my grandmother, Justina, and immigrated in 1904 to the U.S., where she already had brothers Carl and Olof. Anna is said to have died in 1920.

The Petersons are said to have lived at Strawberry Hill Road in Concord, MA, but may have moved to New Jersey.

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# Interesting Web Sites

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

*Emigrants from the Falbygden (Vägö) area:* <http://www.emigrant.se/eng/english.htm>

*Minnesota Veterans Grave Registration Index:* <http://people.mnhs.org/vgri/>

*Historical Minnesota Maps:* <http://www.mnhs.org/collections/digitalmaps/index.htm>

*What did eggs and more cost in 1924?*

<http://historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?op=viewarticle&artid=418>

*Swedish map search and place names:* [http://www2.lantmateriet.se/ksos\\_eng/index.html](http://www2.lantmateriet.se/ksos_eng/index.html)

*History of Swedish Evangelical Friends Home Congregation, Savonburg, Allen County, KS:*

<http://www.orwells.com/savhist1.htm>

*City Directories for Montreal 1842–1950:* <http://bibnum2.bnquebec.ca/bna/lovell/index.html>

*Missouri Death Index Database 1910-1955:*

<http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/deathcertificates/>

*The best site for Genealogy in Finland:* <http://www.genealogia.fi/indexe.htm>

*Sheriff's Passport List 1863-1916 for Åland:* <http://www.genealogia.fi/emi/krono/krono0e.htm>

*A good web site for Danish archives:* <http://www.sa.dk/sa/omarkiverne/english/default.htm>

*HH DigiArkiv AB:* <http://www.digiarkiv.se/>

*Arkiv Digital AB:* <http://www.arkivdigital.se/>

*About Måns Andersson of New Sweden:*

<http://www.colonialswedes.org/Forefathers/Andersson.html>



## Latest news!

Dr *Per Nordahl*, director of the Swedish Emigrant Institute (*Svenska Emigrantinstitutet*) in Växjö, has had to resign from his post after a long conflict with the staff. He has been replaced with *Björn Johansson*, a former local government employee, who is a temporary director until the board has found a new ordinary one.

It is only a few years since *Per Nordahl* succeeded long-time director *Ulf Beijbom* at the institute.

*Here is Agnieszka Stasiewicz, a Polish researcher, who received the 2005 Nils William and Dagmar Olsson scholarship.*

*Read more on Agnieszka's research in her article on page 13 in this issue.*

## Addition to the SAG Article Index in SAG 4/05

*Scott, Lars E., Johan Fredrik Roos,*  
1984:3

# The Last Page

## Dear Friends,

Time passes quickly and it is already time for another issue of SAG.

This time I wish to say "Tack!" to all of you that have congratulated me on being awarded the *Victor Örnberg Memorial Prize* (Victor Örnbergs *Hederspris*) by the Swedish Federation of Genealogical Societies.

The Örnberg Prize is the finest honor a Swedish genealogist can get, and I am deeply grateful to all of you for your support.

The prize is named for Victor Örnberg (1839–1908), a professional archivist but also a dedicated genealogist, who published among other things 14 volumes of his *Ättartal* with hundreds of genealogies about ordinary Swedish families. During

the work with compiling these books he realized that the church records were not well protected; instead they were in danger of being destroyed by damp, fire, or eaten by mice. He started a campaign to have the National archives (*Riksarkivet*) take over the responsibility for these historical documents and make them available to the public through a system of provincial archives. He was successful and the first provincial archive opened in Vadstena in 1899, and he was the first head archivist.

The prize will be awarded at the banquet at the yearly *Släktforskar-dagarna* (Genealogy Days) in Nacka, just outside Stockholm, on 12 August, when the 20th anniversary of the Federation will also be cele-

brated. These days are open to everyone, and there is a lecture program and lots of exhibitions. For the first time there is an entrance fee of 40 SEK. More information can be found at [www.stockholm2006.se/](http://www.stockholm2006.se/)

It might also be mentioned that the Örnberg Prize was awarded to Nils William Olsson, SAG Founder, in 1994.

Otherwise Sweden has come out from the snow, the winter was unusually long this year, it seems, and now is the time to go and look for the remains of gg-grandfather's cottage, and the church where grandma's aunt sat every Sunday.

See you there!

*Elisabeth Thorsell*

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## SAG Workshop

Salt Lake City

15 – 22 Oct. 2006

Welcome to join our happy group of  
researchers at the Family History Library in  
Salt Lake City!

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

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

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

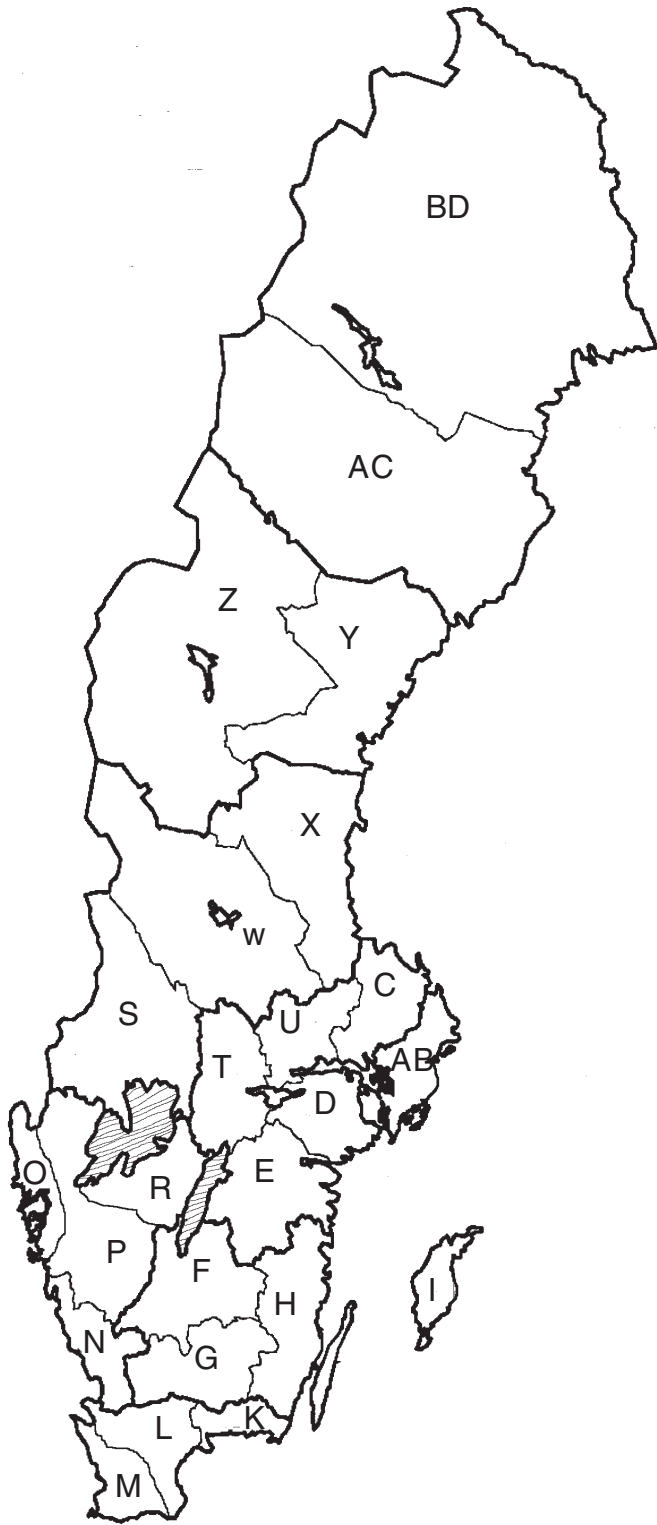
**Table 2.** Abbreviations and codes for Swedish counties (*län*) formerly used by *Swedish American Genealogist* (1981-1999) and currently used by *Statistiska centralbyrån* (SCB) (the Central Bureau of Statistics, Stockholm).

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				

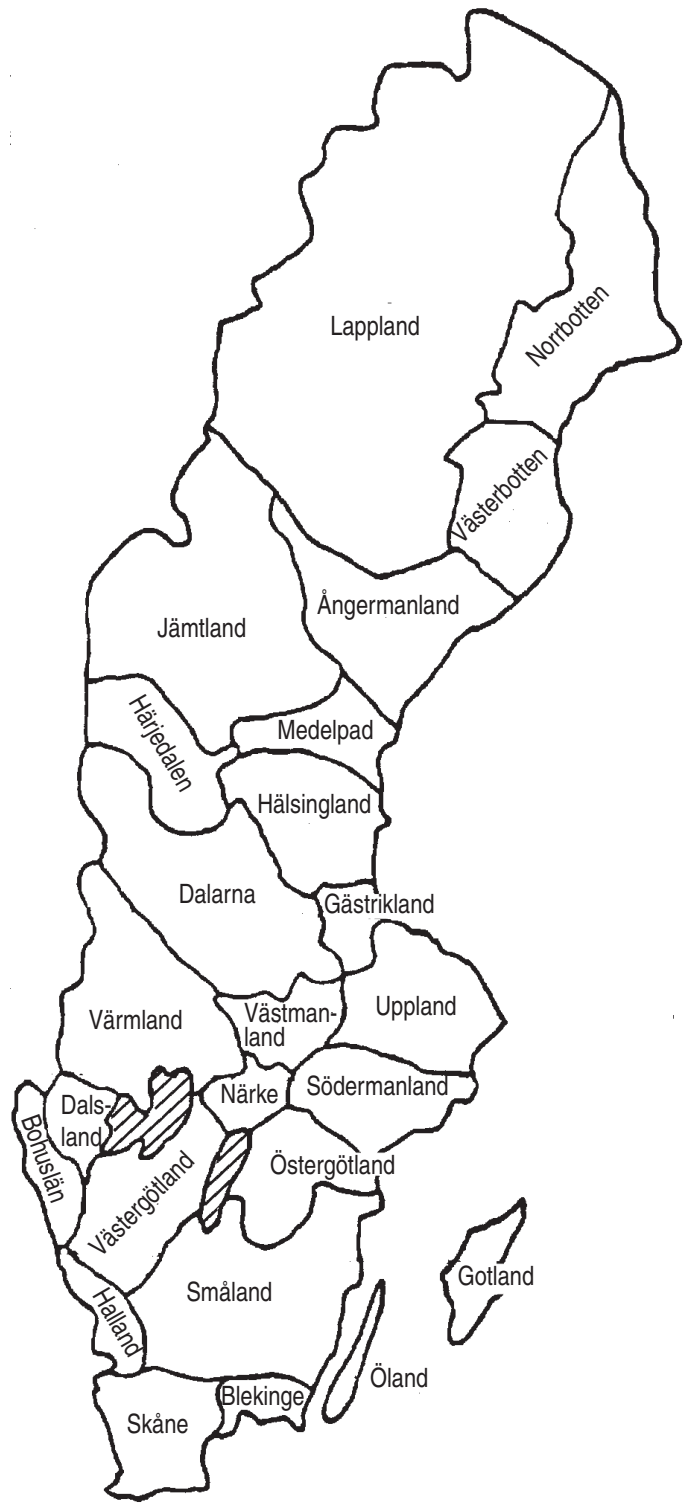
**a** formerly Kopparberg (Kopp.; W) *län*.

**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*)