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The Question Chest

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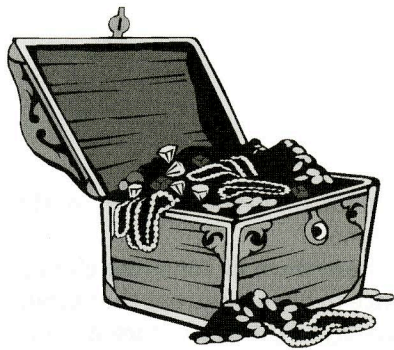
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The Question Chest

The Question Chest is a new department in SAG, and the idea is that you, dear SAG reader, will send in your questions about anything BUT your ancestors to this page. We will try to get good answers to these questions, and will try get them together as fast as possible, but if it is a complicated matter, it might take some time.

Write or e-mail to the SAG editor, Elisabeth Thorsell, Hästskovägen 45, S-177 39 Järfälla, Sweden. E-mail: <sag@etgenealogy.se>

Question #1

One of my ancestors left Sweden from the port of Göteborg on May 21, 1880, aboard the steamship *Argo*, bound for Hull, England. However, the ship *State of Indiana*, aboard which he arrived at the Port of New York on June 9, 1880, departed from Glasgow and Larne, Ireland – both located a good distance north of any of England's ports. Family oral history corroborates that he came by way of Glasgow. It could be presumed, therefore, that the *Argo* may have docked somewhere in Scotland's Firth of Forth on its way to Hull, England, in order to put passengers ashore in Scotland.

What is known about the means by which those emigrants – a group of about 30 individuals, in my ancestor's case – might have traveled from Scotland's eastern coast to the Glasgow seaport on its western coast? Might they have traveled by rail? by canal? Did those who sold passage aboard the *Argo* and other Wilson Line ships include in the ticket a known travel arrangement across Scotland? If so, what else might be known about that portion of the Swedish emigrants' journey?

Answer:

The State-Line Steamship C:o Limited, usually known as *The State Line* started its operations in 1872 with one line going Glasgow – New York, and another one Glasgow – New Orleans. It was unusual for the emigrants to travel to other ports in Great Britain than Hull. In 1880 it is estimated that 94% of the Swedish emigrants traveled to Hull and then to Liverpool by train. It seems to be

a very small proportion that travelled by way of Glasgow, and no references were found concerning the travel from Hull to Glasgow. It seems unlikely that *Argo* would have docked on the British coast to put passengers ashore elsewhere than Hull.

If someone has family traditions about how to travel to Glasgow from Hull, please contact SAG.

Facts: *Studier rörande svensk emigration till Nordamerika 1850–1880*, by Gösta Lext (1977).

Question #2

What were 200 *kronor* worth in American money in 1903? That's the amount my father paid for his passage from Sweden to America at that time.

Answer:

The exchange rate around 1900 was roughly 5 *kronor*, which makes your father's ticket cost \$40. That amount in today's money would be ca \$830, to compare with a return airplane ticket to Salt Lake City from Sweden for \$932.

An industrial worker in Sweden in 1900 worked 61 hours/week and was paid 36 *öre*/hour.

Facts: *Vad kostade det?* by Lars O Lagerqvist & Ernst Nathorst-Böös (1984)

Question #3

Where can I find passenger lists of Swedes traveling from Göteborg to Grimsby and Liverpool, England, from 1900 to 1915?

Answer:

The original Police Chamber lists

for the port of Göteborg are kept in the Provincial Archives (*Landsarkivet*) in Göteborg. They are also available on microfilm through the LDS Family History Centers. The film numbers are FHL Film 1149181 to FHL Film 1149213.

Question #4

Why are there sometimes duplicate parish records (births, etc.) *dupletter* and are they sometimes just for part of the parish or usually for all? The researcher found someone in the regular records but not in the *dupletter* and wondered if, since it's a huge parish (Tuna, Kalmar *län*), if it was possible that the *dupletter* were just from, say, half of the parish.

Answer:

Sometimes the church verger (*kyrkväktaren*) kept a duplicate book for births, etc, as he could be the one to furnish the minister with the notes to be written in the proper book of records. But it is very unusual, and I have no explanation in the case of Tuna. Old Kalmar diocese generally has rather poor books, due to the bishops being little interested in records.

Question #5

A puzzle: On two of my Ahlqvist tombstones on Öland is this: "R.N.O." What does it stand for and what does it mean?

Answer:

R.N.O. stands for *Riddare av NordstjärneOrden* (Knight of the Order of the Polar Star), one of the three Orders of Sweden, the other two are the *VasaOrden* and *SerafimerOrden*.