

6-1-1986

Literature

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Recommended Citation

(1986) "Literature," *Swedish American Genealogist*: Vol. 6 : No. 2 , Article 8.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/swensonsag/vol6/iss2/8>

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Literature

Passenger Arrivals at the Port of Philadelphia 1800-1819: The Philadelphia "Baggage Lists." Edited by Michael E. Tepper and transcribed by Elizabeth P. Bentley. Published by Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1001 N. Calvert St., Baltimore, MD 21202, 1986. xvii + 913 pp., cloth. \$45.00.

The Philadelphia "baggage lists" are, according to the publishers of this volume, "the oldest federal passenger lists in existence." They antedate the passenger manifests, which came into being as a result of an act passed by the U.S. Congress, dated 2 March 1819, which regulated passenger ships and vessels arriving at U.S. ports.

The "baggage lists" came about as a result of a law passed, designed to exempt in-coming passengers from paying duty on their personal belongings. Of all the ports which maintained records of this category, the Philadelphia lists are the most complete.

The lists were brief, usually only containing the name of the passenger and a description of the baggage he was bringing into the port. This could consist of a trunk, a valise, beds and bedding. Occasionally more information can be gleaned, such as the passengers' ages, nationalities, former places of residence, occupations, destinations, and the names and relationships of accompanying family members.

Michael E. Tepper, well-known as editor of the highly useful *Passenger Arrivals at the Port of Baltimore 1820-1834* (reviewed in *SAG*, Vol. II, December 1982, pp. 177-178) has again performed the significant task of analyzing close to 5,000 of these separate ship lists, containing the names of ca. 40,000 passengers who arrived in Philadelphia from January 1800 to December 1819. Most of the arrivals came from Great Britain, particularly Northern Ireland, but there are many from Germany. There are also occasional Scandinavians. Obviously there were also quite a few Americans who had sojourned abroad, and who were now returning to their homeland.

Michael Tepper's superb presentation, buttressed by Elizabeth Bentley's equally careful transcription, has given the genealogist as well as the demographer yet another valuable tool. Of vast importance to the user of this work is the fact that the entries are listed alphabetically, making it a simple task to check a particular name. Additionally there is a complete index of every ship which arrived in Philadelphia, its port of embarkation and the date of its arrival.

As mentioned above there were also a few Scandinavians who arrived in Philadelphia during this time. Although there must be a great many more, a cursory examination of the more than 900 pages brought the following names, which may serve as a sampling of the whole.

Alftan, John, arr. on board the *Amsterdam Packet* from Batavia and Halifax 2 Dec. 1805.

He must be identical with John Alfton, a native of Finland, who became a U.S. citizen in Philadelphia 13 July 1798 and who is listed in the Philadelphia city directories from 1806 to 1811.

Alm, Johan Henrick, possibly Swedish, married with one child, who arr. on board the *Hindustan* from Hamburg 17 April 1804.

Block, ---, Dr. A Danish subject, who arr. on board the *Ossifree* from Christiansted, St. Croix 25 July 1819.

Esprig, Johanna, born in Sweden, citizen of Sweden, who arr. on board the *Dolphin* from Göteborg 26 May 1811. She is identical with Margaretha Johanna Esping, who together with two sisters, Inga Maria and Johanna Goll had the permission of the magistrate in Göteborg to accompany the American master mariner, J.C. Brevour, to go to America for further education.

Freese, John J., age 23, from Bremen, born in Holstein and a Danish citizen and a blacksmith, who arr. on board the *Cato* from Bremen 5 Nov. 1804.

Johannet, Stephen, of Denmark, who arr. on board the *Swift Packet* from Surinam 1 Oct. 1800.

- Lindquist, Casper, possibly a Swede, who arr. on board the *Three Sisters* from Tönningen, Germany 6 Jan. 1808.
- Lindroth, Joh. Jai., who arr. on board the *Traveller* from Amsterdam 22 June 1803.
- Nelson, Magnus, a Swede, an impressed seaman, who arr. on board the *Superior* from Lisbon 31 Aug. 1811.
- Newberg, J., possibly a Swede, who arr. on board the *John* from Liverpool and Dublin 7 Sept. 1818.
- Pieteron, Anthony, a boy, who arr. from Copenhagen aboard the *Maria Elizabeth* 2 Oct. 1802 together with
- Pieteron, Severon, a joiner.
- Soderborn, Matthew, had a Swedish protection and a family residing at Norfolk, an impressed seaman, arr. on board the *Three Sisters* from Guadeloupe 5 June 1807.
- Stroemberg, Ulf, possibly Swedish, arr. on board the *Devotion* from Amsterdam 6 Oct. 1802.
- Sundman, Saloman, captain, possibly Swedish, arr. aboard the *Jane* from Turks Island 25 May 1818.

These are but a few gleanings from the bulk of 40,000 names to be found in this volume and indicate that there is much more, not only for the Scandinavian specialist, but also for anyone whose antecedents passed through Philadelphia during the first two decades of the 19th century. Mr. Tepper is to be congratulated on another monumental undertaking.

—Nils William Olsson

-oOo-

The Family of Samuel and Lena Nilsson (1797-1881) of Alsheda Parish, Jönköpings län, Småland, Sweden, by Frank Alfred Randall, Jr. (Northbrook, IL). Published by the author. 270 pp. \$25.00.

As the interest in genealogical research has grown by leaps and bounds in the last ten years, the phenomenon has spawned an accelerating number of genealogical books and family histories. These vary widely in content, quality and appearance, ranging from simple soft-cover pamphlets, duplicated on a photo-copier, to more ambitious undertakings, done professionally by commercial printers. Mr. Randall's excellent treatment of his family, traced back to Samuel and Lena Nilsson in Alsheda (Alseda in modern Swedish) belongs to the latter category.

The author can be justly proud of his product, printed by the prestigious Anundsen Company of Decorah, IA, for many years the purveyor of genealogical books of high quality. This particular volume is one of the most handsome the reviewer has seen in years.

Mr. Randall has elected to document the descendants of Samuel and Lena Nilsson as extensively as possible, limiting himself to the generations which sprang from the original couple in Alseda. The author's rationale for this procedure is quite logical. Rather than tunneling back into the past, except for background purposes, i.e., beyond Samuel and Lena Nilsson, he has chosen to document as many of the progeny as possible. In fact, of the seventy cousins in the second, third, fourth and fifth generations, there are only six individuals whose fate or destiny is unknown to the author and his fellow researchers.

The story begins with Samuel Nilsson, b. in Höreda Parish (Jön.) 4 March 1799 and his wife Lena Petersdotter, b. in Skede Parish (Jön.) 20 May 1797. The couple moved to Alseda Parish in 1829, where they remained for the rest of their lives. The author's purpose has been to document all of the descendants of this couple, both in the United States and Sweden, in itself a time-consuming and sometimes frustrating chore. That he has succeeded is proof of his doggedness and perseverance. Since the four of Samuel Nilsson's grandchildren, orphaned early, emigrated to Henry County, IL between 1878 and 1882, the main story focuses on Henry County, and the state of Illinois. Since those early times the descendants have spread to all corners of the United States.

One of the aspects of Frank Randall's work and which strikes the reader immediately is the meticulousness with which he presents his material. Maps, charts and plats are crisp and well reproduced. Photographs abound, not only of family places on both sides of the Atlantic, but also of almost everyone listed in the volume.

The author has also attempted to show how the Swedish parish records are kept, both the household examination rolls (which he terms clerical surveys in consonance with Mormon nomenclature) as well as birth records. He has illustrated and translated the system used by the clergy to grade the parishioners' ability to read and understand the Holy Bible, Luther's Catechism, etc. The reviewer would probably translate "*språken*" as Bible verses rather than languages. Other than that, the author has succeeded well in presenting the intricacies of the household examination roll.

The numbering system used by Mr. Randall may seem a bit confusing to the reader, but he presents its rationale well and logically. Any numbering system used for a large family of this size will seem confusing until it has been fully mastered.

Mr. Randall has produced a beautiful book, which could well serve as a model for others to follow. He has seemingly left nothing to chance. Everything is there to aid the researcher.

—Nils William Olsson

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Stadig Genealogy. Compiled by Carl Jacob Larson and Clinton Carroll Stadig. Photocopy. (Privately printed 1984). Soft cover, 8½ x 11 in., 147 pp. \$15.00.

One of the benefits of the military service in Sweden, going back more than 300 years, was the exchange of one's patronymic, i.e., one's "son" name for a short military-sounding name. This system was introduced years ago as a matter of necessity in order to avoid confusion, when hundreds of farm youths, most of them with patronymics such as Andersson, Eriksson, Jonsson, Larsson, Olsson, Petersson and Svensson appeared at the army headquarters in order to be enrolled in the military service. These military names, usually called soldiers' names, were retained by the soldiers as they mustered out of the service; and when they died, their descendants would carry on the use of the name. (For an excellent presentation of Swedish soldiers' names, see Alf Åberg's article "Soldiers' Surnames in Sweden" in *Swedish American Genealogist*, Vol. IV, No. 3, September 1984, pp. 111-117). Stadig is a typical soldier's name meaning "robust" or "sturdy" and even "dependable."

Carl J. Larson and Clinton C. Stadig have collaborated to bring out a genealogy of the Stadig Family, going back to Olof Jonsson Stadig (1669-1712), who lived in Undersåker Parish (Jämt.) more than 300 years ago. The authors have gone back twelve generations and have identified no less than eleven branches of the family in Sweden, Canada and the United States. The first five generations of the book deal with the Stadigs in Sweden. With the sixth generation the long isolation in Jämtland was broken. In 1871, barely a year after the founding of the New Sweden, ME settlement, brought about by the famed William Widgery Thomas, Jr., who twice served as the U.S. minister to Sweden, Lars Stadig, born in Järpen in Undersåker Parish, emigrated to Maine to become one of the earliest pioneers in that settlement. He was one of the early leaders, whose speedy mastery of the English language helped many of the early colonists. From Lars Stadig descend a vast progeny of Stadigs, not only in the 48 contiguous states, but also in Alaska.

The Larson and Stadig narrative reads very well. Both authors have striven to flesh out the bare genealogical bones and have succeeded in making the members of the Stadig clan come alive. Some of the biographies are written with wit, humor and possess an easy, informal style.

The numbering system is a bit unorthodox and it might have been well to have furnished a master chart, thus making it easier to see how all of the Stadigs are interrelated. The reviewer realizes, however, that this feature would have added an additional cost factor to the publishing of the book. The inclusion of an alphabetical index would also have increased the usefulness of the volume. If a new edition is to be printed, this reviewer would strongly recommend the addition of an alphabetical index. Having said that, the final verdict is that the

volume is very well produced, reads well and contains photographs of exceptional quality. There is none of the washed-out appearance that sometimes mars a family chronicle.

The Stadig Genealogy is a must item for anyone having roots in Undersåker in Sweden or New Sweden, ME. It is heartily recommended.

— Nils William Olsson

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The Annual Register of Baptist Denominations in North America. By John Asplund. (n.p. 1791). Reprinted 1979 by *Baptist Banner*, H.C. Vanderpool, editor and Church History Research and Archives of Lafayette, TN. IV + 55 pp., cloth. \$10.00.

The question which probably pops into the mind of the average *SAG* reader is what correlation there is between an annual register of Baptist churches and genealogy. A closer look at the volume being reviewed shows that the Asplund Register contains a wealth of material concerning Baptist congregations in the United States, their ministers and their locations, dating back to 1791. John Asplund, who in the preface calls himself a "Sweed," travelled 7,000 miles, mostly on foot during a period of 18 months, visiting no less than 215 Baptist congregations and fifteen associations, ranging all the way from Barnstable, MA to William's Creek in Georgia. In his Register he has entered such pertinent information as the name of the church, the association to which it belongs, the year of organization, the name of the clergyman serving that church, the number of members in the congregation and the date that the survey was made.

John Asplund, this remarkable itinerant Baptist, was born in Sweden, went to sea, came to England, where he served in the British Navy. He came to America, jumped ship and settled in North Carolina, where he joined the Ballard's Bridge Baptist Church in Chowan Co. He soon went to Southampton Co., where he was ordained into the ministry. He travelled extensively to gather information for his book, published sometime between 1791 and 1794. He subsequently went to Maryland, where he drowned in attempting to cross Fishing Creek, VA in 1807.

It can be safely said that no other Swede living in the 18th century in this country travelled more and interviewed more people than Asplund. His book is still a primary source for those who want to know more of the history of the Baptist congregations in the United States as well as the clergy that served them.

The reprint has been handsomely produced and deserves to be in every genealogical library.

— Nils William Olsson

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Genealogical Queries

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 the question to conform to the general format.

Nyberg, Sandgren

Selim E.H. Nyberg, an engineer in Detroit, MI was m. (1936-1950) to Gertrude Sandgren (1914-1967). They res. in Detroit for many years before