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Sven Mattisson Trägårdh, Swedish Labor Leader and Emigrant

Kurt G. Trägårdh*  

Sven Mattisson was born 24 Feb. 1812 in the little village of Hasslestad in the Ronneby Country Parish in Blekinge, the son of Mattis Carlsson, a journeyman shoemaker, and his wife Bengta Persdotter. The village of Hasslestad is located ca. three miles from the present city of Ronneby. In the household examination roll of the Ronneby church, the clergyman has recorded Sven’s birth as having taken place 24 March instead of 24 Feb. This error was to follow Sven throughout his lifetime.

The father seems to have been a rather intelligent and cultivated person if one may judge by his high marks achieved during the clergyman’s annual visits to the village to examine the proficiency of congregation in reading and in understanding of the Catechism and Bible History. At that time in Sweden ordinary workers did not have the money to send their children to schools of higher learning. Instead they had to see to it that the children were trained for some vocation so that they could support themselves as early as possible. Sven Mattison wrote the following when he became an adult: “I was born and raised in the country by parents, who could neither give me, nor understand the need for giving me an intellectual upbringing. Instead I had to get out as soon as possible in order to enter into some vocation, where I might acquire the means by which to sustain myself, no matter how inadequate it might have seemed.”

Sven’s father worked as a journeyman for a shoemaker in Hasslestad, but in 1817 the family moved to Hoby in Bräkne-Hoby Parish (Blek.) about six miles west, halfway between Ronneby and Karlshamn. It was here that Sven Mattisson grew up, certainly under conditions of great poverty. At that time, however, the young lad must have observed that there were people higher up on the social ladder who led entirely different lives. Just a few farms away lay the magnificent estate of Sonekulla, the residence of the local area judge, Sven Emanuel Trägårdh, who belonged to the rather well-known Trägårdh family of Skåne. He had seven children, of which the youngest were named Sven and Rudolf. Since they were of the same general age as Sven Mattisson, (two and four years younger respectively), it is entirely possible that he learned to know them at a discreet distance and that he looked upon them with a certain envy. Sven Trägårdh later became the mayor of the city of Ystad and a member of the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag). His brother Rudolf became County Secretary of the county of Värmland and a member of the Riksdag as well.

*Major Kurt G. Trägårdh resides at Brahegaten 28, 114 37 Stockholm, SWEDEN.
Young Sven Mattisson, like most children living in rural Sweden, early in life began as a farm worker. When he reached 15 years of age he moved to Ronneby where he in Oct. 1827 began as an apprentice to a master tailor. After five years of practice he became a journeyman tailor at the age of 20 and was ready to begin his task as a wandering journeyman. By the end of 1832 he left Ronneby and at the beginning of 1833 he arrived in the village of Modala in Hällaryd Parish (Blek.), which was situated ca. 12 miles to the west. As a recent arrival in the parish he registered as Sven Trägårðh, parish tailor. At this particular time it was not difficult to assume a surname. One only had to go to the parish clergyman and tell him that from then on he had a new name. So far as Sven's change of name is concerned, there is no doubt that he took his new name, patterned after Sven Emanuel Trägårđh of Sonekulla, mentioned earlier. The name change would surely benefit him that he now carried a bourgeois name.

After some time in the farming community of Modala he moved to the residence of the Crown bailiff in the main village of Hällaryd, and asked his younger brother Henrik to join him as an apprentice. The latter also assumed the name of Trägårđh. Somewhat later that year a young female servant by the name of Maria Håkansdotter from Växjö arrived in a neighboring village. She was born in Dadesjö Parish (Kron.) 19 Feb. 1810. Sven fell in love with the young Maria and they were married 22 Sept. 1834.

A year and a half later their first child, Rudolf, was born 13 March 1836. It is interesting to note that here in Blekinge, separated by a distance of only three miles, a judge and a parish tailor, both named Sven Trägårđh, both had sons named Rudolph.

It was during his time as a journeyman tailor in Hällaryd that Sven Trägårđh began his campaign of self-improvement. Sven Trägårđh, the judge, as well as his sons must surely have stood models for him, stimulating his thinking and pointing it into a new direction. Why could not all people have a chance to study, even those on a lower level of society like himself, if one had the mind and the willpower to do so? As an adult he wrote: "I never felt really happy, never satisfied, knowing that something was missing. I did not know what this was—this absence of something is a feeling which many must have experienced as I did—this something—whatever it might be. The soul thirsting for knowledge. This urge to know the whys and the wherefores has followed me throughout life's changes and will follow me to the end of my day. After I became a journeyman I realized that I not only lacked the knowledge, with which to prepare myself for a more satisfying life, but also the means by which to prepare myself for a better life after this. I have seen men of ability, possessing many skills, but who have settled for mediocrity in life, because they have yielded to the temptations to indulge their baser impulses and pursue those types of frivolous living which yield no happiness."
Sven Mattisson Trägårdh, Swedish Emigrant

surroundings. Since he was an energetic youth he began a more or less systematic program of studying, while at the same time pursuing his tailoring as well as raising a family. In the household examination rolls for Hallaryd from 1833 to 1836 we can note a steady improvement in his grades as he was examined by the local clergyman.

As his views widened with the newly acquired knowledge, he also became aware of the paucity of good books in the rural area and it is easy to understand that the farming village became too confined for him. It was now Stockholm that tempted him. But it was no easy task for a journeyman with wife and child to make their way to the nation's capital. The usual manner of travel in those days was either to walk or to catch a ride with a farmer's wagon-load or to accept employment in the village through which one passed. One overnighted in barns in the country or in the journeymen's hostels in the cities, if such existed. But this method of travel could only be done by single males, according to the statutes governing journeymen. It was therefore decided in the summer of 1836 that Maria, the wife, and the son Rudolf would go to Maria's parental home in Växjö, while Sven alone as a wandering journeyman proceeded to Stockholm.

Sven arrived in the capital 29 July 1837, and got lodging at 23 Baggensgatan in Nikolai Parish. Thus he became a resident of the Old Town. The wife and son arrived 14 Sept. the same year. Here Sven lived with his family until 1843.

During this time his brother Henrik and his cousin Jöns lived with them on several occasions.

Sven had a difficult time these years. This can be seen from the annual census lists in Stockholm, which were taken in November of each year. From these lists in Stockholm one can see that during November of every year from 1837 to 1842, except for 1839, Sven was unemployed. That he was able to survive financially was due in large part to monetary support which he received from the tailors' guild. He was also ill much of the time. This can be deduced from an affidavit written and signed by Dr. Johan Ellmin, the city physician for Stockholm. In this report signed 12 Nov. 1845, Ellmin writes the following: "Sven Trägårdh, a journeyman tailor, was ill in Feb. 1841, suffering from chest pains, which for weeks kept him in bed, which may be tuberculosis of the lungs, so much worse since his chest thereby becomes malformed. In addition Trägårdh also suffers from arthritis which often forces him to stay away from his job." During the six years that the family resided at 23 Baggensgatan his wife gave birth to three children—Clara, born 1 April 1839; Julia, born 3 April 1841 and Sven Adolf, born 5 Aug. 1843.

It was during these years that Sven Trägårdh in a very concrete and painful manner experienced and suffered through episodes which provided him with an entirely new perspective on life, different from those one learns in books. This experience did not quite square with the vision of the luxurious life lived by Judge Sven Trägårdh's family in Blekinge.

He now became a temperance man, he learned the meaning of solidarity, he developed further his social consciousness and what it meant to become involved in the burgeoning labor movement of Stockholm. He received new insights into
the problems of society and its injustices. Thanks to the prevalence of books he slowly became a cultured person. But since so many of the books dealing with the social plight of the laboring and the poorer classes, and how these situations could be remedied, were written in German, he bought the books and began studying the German language on his own, mostly during his periods of illness, so that he finally was able to both read and understand the German language.\textsuperscript{18}

In his daily work as well as among other journeymen he found kindred spirits who had the same views as he did. They were adventurous and tough, recent young journeymen like Carl Daniel Forsell, Carl Rudolf Löstedt, Johan Pettersson, Lars Gustaf Stolbin and others. During the difficult years of unemployment and hard times, they had all gone abroad. He also made the acquaintance of the older and more stable tailors, persons of his own age, such as Olof Renhult from Värmland, who in 1845 became the president of the journeymen’s association\textsuperscript{19} He also became better acquainted with Johan Ellmin, the city physician, who also was interested in the social welfare of the city. These years prepared him for the role of becoming Sweden’s first leader of the laboring classes.

During the autumn of 1843 Sven Tragårdh moved from 23 Baggensgatan to 38 Järntorget.\textsuperscript{20} Here he lived until the autumn of 1848 when he moved to 25 Svartmansgatan. Here he resided for three years.\textsuperscript{21} During this interval several more children were born—Ludvig, born 1 Jan. 1846, Charlotta, born 17 July 1848 and Augusta, born 27 May 1850. Charlotta died, however, one year old, on 25 July 1849.

This is also the time that Sven Tragårdh became politically active. His basic platform for this venture was in the beginning the Stockholm Education Circle (Stockholms Bildningscirkel), which he had founded together with Renhult and Ellmin. In the minutes of the Educational Circle’s first meeting in 1845, we find the following:\textsuperscript{22}

“We, the undersigned, have on 15 Oct. 1845 gathered at the home of Dr. J. Ellmin, in order to discuss the best method of bringing about an educational circle or association by men belonging to our social milieu, but also others, imbued by the same will, and led by the same desire as we. We do not aspire to organizing a society or a literary club or an institute, but an association, where one can imbibe useful and for the members of the association necessary information, whether this be in the natural sciences or other branches of science, which by means of easily understood lectures can bring about healthy and beneficial fruits and thus aid in the effort of bringing about a taste for more noble entertainment during periods of leisure. An invitational list will therefore be set up and a new meeting will be held next Sunday 26 October. Signed by O. Renhult and Sven Tragårdh.”

During the meetings held during the autumn of 1845 the Educational Circle met at the residence of Dr. Ellmin. But soon there were so many visitors that there was not room in his residence, and from Feb. 1846 the meetings were transferred to the Red Room in the Stockholm Bourse.\textsuperscript{23} At the meeting held 9 Nov. 1845 Sven Trågårth spoke on the topic: “Concerning the unfortunate conditions that exist in the Society of Journeymen and how this can be improved.” At the same meeting he was elected librarian of the Circle. After the
second meeting discussion of politics was banned. The subjects discussed were “The Story of Culture,” “The Plight of Poverty,” “The History of the Tailors’ Guild in Stockholm” and there were lectures on chemistry, physics, astronomy and music. In March of 1846 a male chorus was organized.

Within the Circle it was Sven Trägårdh who was responsible for the entertainment programs. He received permission from King Oscar I to visit the Stockholm museums on Sunday afternoons, and hundreds of workers flocked to see the impressive collections. During the summers he organized boat excursions to Gripsholm Castle, to Skokloster Castle and to Uppsala where one of the main attractions was a visit to the old Swedish burial mounds in Old Uppsala.

In the Stockholm newspaper Söndagsbladet one could read during the summer of 1846 that there had been a fight at Skinnarvik, one of the many bays in the Stockholm environs, where a journeyman mason had been maltreated. Two weeks later the newspaper related that the attacker was a journeyman tailor by the name of Trägårdh. This caused Sven on the following Sunday to publish an item that the article had impugned him and was without foundation, since he was the only tailor in Stockholm with the name of Trägårdh and he had not been present at the fight. He furthermore wrote that the person in question must have given the police a false name, which “easily could have been checked by looking at his identity papers.” The article was signed 8 Aug. 1846 by Sven Trägårdh, journeyman tailor.

From 1847 we note a very active period in Sven Trägårdh’s life. He was a member and librarian of the Educational Circle and he had also become a member of the newly founded Scandinavian Society. He began to appear more and more as the fearless, outspoken and knowledgeable spokesman above all others. This year he also joined a newly organized Society for the Protection of Released Prisoners. This society was a remarkable organization and became a noted forum for several well-known Swedes, among them the famous editor of Aftonbladet, Lars Johan Hierta. This was a society where there was full freedom of expression, and the members had the right to hold forth on political topics, which was banned in the Educational Society. When the society met 11 Aug. 1847, Sven Trägårdh appeared publicly for the first time in a major role.

His lecture was a well thought out and critical analysis of society and it presented in a radical manner the position of the lower classes. Occasionally his barbs were directed at the assembled “gentlemen.” He continued by pointing out in a concrete and straightforward manner the miserable conditions under which the poor were living and which he felt should be changed. He blamed the legal system which depressed and imprisoned innocent poor people, he criticized the schools, which instead of encouraging children, accomplished the opposite; the medical system, which was not available to the workers but which in fact doubled their misery, since they became unemployed when restored to health. The housing was expensive, below standards and lacked conveniences. There were no savings institutions and the food costs were for the poor higher than for other classes. When it came to the curse of alcohol, Sven claimed that nine-
tenths of the working class would like to eliminate it. He ended his speech by quoting from a talk given at an election banquet in Paris that “everything should be done by the people, not for them.” He then read a poem which praised “Education, liberty and human rights.” After the lecture he received immediate support from Lars Johan Hierta for having “gone to the root of these evils”—voting rights and sobriety were the things the workers needed.31

His talk, however, was too much for the conservative authorities. *Hermoder*, a periodical close to the throne, accused Trägårdh of having spread Communistic propaganda and felt that the chairman should have stopped him.32 Trägårdh’s answer in *Aftonbladet* was even more caustic than his speech.33 He challenged the journal to cite examples of his Communism, and alluded to the duplicity shown by *Hermoder’s* correspondents in the Educational Circle during the spring. He continued by saying that the journal must “be afraid of ghosts during broad daylight,” if it could “find any traces of Communism in his insignificant contribution.”

In 1848 Sven Trägårdh became a member of the Reform Society. On 12 March of the same year a meeting was held concerning the proposed reform of the Swedish Parliament. Here he outlined his views of how a reformed *Riksdag* should be organized. The speech was reviewed in *Aftonbladet* on 15 March. The responsible editor, Lars Johan Hierta, explained, however, that Trägårdh’s speech had been reviewed from memory since no minutes were taken at the meeting.34

Sven Trägårdh continued to work on his suggestion and in *Aftonbladet* for 2 June 1848 one can read about a petition, signed by 168 persons representing free workers, which was forwarded to His Majesty, King Oscar I. The latter received the petition and promised to study it. The petition included among other things voting rights for the working class. The next day it was printed *in extenso* in *Aftonbladet*.35 The Scandinavian Society published the same day in *Aftonbladet* also an appeal together with a somewhat edited version of the reform proposal. Among the nine names who signed the manifesto, Sven Trägårdh’s name led the rest.36

Sven Trägårdh thus became a well-known and respected citizen of the city. At one time the newspaper *Folkladet* spoke of him as being one of the most outstanding spokesmen for the working class. Sven Trägårdh was always ready to speak up for the lower classes.37

On 10 July 1849 Sven Trägårdh became a master tailor and was licensed as such by the authorities in Stockholm.38

In 1851 Trägårdh introduced a motion to the effect that the Educational Circle should spearhead a drive to change some of the statutes governing journeymen and their movements. This was the first time that a discussion was held in the Circle dealing with questions having to do with the working class. Cooperating with the newly established Workers’ Association, the Educational Circle forwarded a petition on this subject to His Majesty, King Oscar I.39

On 27 Sept. 1851 Sven Trägårdh with his family moved from Svartmansgatan in the Old Town to 13 Skeppargatan in the Hedvig Eleonora Parish.
The move took place on 6 Oct. At the same time, on 1 Oct., Maria, his wife, opened a temperance café in the house to which they had moved. Sven had bought the property and somewhat later he stated that the property was worth 15,000 kronor. This is where the family resided for the remainder of their time in Sweden.

The year of 1852 was a sad year for the Tragårdh family. On 1 Feb. the youngest daughter, Augusta, died at the age of one year and seven months. On 22 Sept. the son Sven Adolf died, his age being nine years and one month. There was some happiness though, inasmuch as the eighth child was born 1 Dec. and was given the name of Augusta, the name of the recently deceased daughter.

In 1853 Sven Tragårdh introduced a motion in the Educational Circle that it invite all workers in Sweden to join the Circle in a petition to the King, pointing to the disastrous effect the copious use of alcohol had on the working population. The petition became a reality and bore the signatures of no less than 1,500 persons in the capital, most of them laborers and craftsmen.

Additional proof of Sven Tragårdh's versatility and his interest in all types of discussions was the fact that he forwarded to King Oscar I a new and revolutionary plan for reforming and reorganizing the Swedish armed forces. Although it was accepted graciously by the King, nothing ever came of it.

According to a letter written by Sven Tragårdh's grandson, Rudolf, the entire family learned how to speak and write English before emigrating to the U.S. The two oldest children—Rudolf and Clara emigrated to the U.S. in the autumn of 1855. On 4 Aug 1857 Sven Tragårdh and his family departed from Skeppargatan for Chicago. Two days later his family received passports from the police authorities in the capital. The passport included Tragårdh, his wife Maria, and the children—Julia, 16 years old, Ludvig, 11 years old and Augusta, four years old. Also on the passport is a foster son, Niklas Carlson, 14 years old. Who he was has not been possible to ascertain inasmuch as he is not included in the most recent census information which Sven signed, nor is he listed in the parish household examination roll. The passport states that Sven Tragårdh was 45 years old; that he was five feet tall and had brown hair. He was also listed as being perfectly healthy. His ocean ticket has been preserved, and that is dated also 6 Aug. 1857. The family crossed the ocean on a ship named Mountaineer, Y. Wilson, the master, the destination being Boston.

When Sven Tragårdh arrived in the U.S. he settled first outside of Chicago. For the first ten years he farmed in nearby Jefferson in Cook Co., IL. In 1867 he accepted employment from the Svea Society as an immigration agent. As such he was to take care of arriving Swedes and other Scandinavians and to provide them with free advice and information. The Svea Society had that year rented a cooper's shop, located at the corner of Ohio and Franklin Streets. Here a center and hostel was opened for newly arrived Swedes. But since this was only a temporary solution, the Svea group bought a lot at 120 Illinois Street for $4,000.00 upon which they spent another $4,000.00 building an immigrant house. Sven Tragårdh was placed in charge of this facility. During the first few weeks in August of 1867 a total of 400 Swedes
lodged there. During one single night no less than 300 immigrants lived there, and in 31 Aug. 150 immigrants lived there. A widow with three children had permission to stay there for six weeks.55

Poverty and distress were all too common among the immigrants, and during the summer of 1867 a total of 87 were sent to the Chicago poor house while seven died and had to be buried. During 1869 the center took care of more than 2,000 immigrants. A Swedish ladies' aid society was organized to assist Sven Trädårdh financially in his endeavors. There were so many intrigues and so much bickering among the members of the Svea Society, however, that it was decided to cease the immigrant activity, and the center was closed and auctioned off for $6,000.00 in 1871.56

During the Great Fire in Chicago in 1871 Sven Trädårdh lost all of his worldly goods. His good friends in Stockholm remembered him and took up a collection and sponsored a social event in the Svea Hall in Stockholm for the purpose of helping the financially troubled Trädårdh.

His main purpose in America, therefore, came to be his caring for and aiding Scandinavian immigrants and to protect them from the runners who were on the prowl trying to fleece the unsuspecting newcomers. After leaving his task at the Svea Society he worked for awhile at the Allan Steamship Line in Chicago. From 1872 to 1893 he was employed as an immigration agent by the office of the Inman Line, also located in Chicago.

Trädårdh spent much of his time working for the education and improvement of the social aspects of the Swedish American immigrant. He was looked upon as "the grand old man" of Swedish America and according to a letter from his grandson was probably the best known Swede west of New York.57 He remained a liberal and a Republican for the remainder of his life. He died peacefully in his home on 55 Gault Street in Chicago 21 March 1893, having reached an age of more than 81 years.58 His wife Maria survived him and died in Chicago 16 Nov. 1898 at the advanced age of almost 88 years.

Woodcut of Sven Trädårdh which appeared in the Chicago newspaper Svenska Tribunen 29 March 1893.

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Carl Hansson lived in the village of Hasslestad in Ronneby Country Parish (Blek.) 1788-1817. The latter year he moved to Bräkne-Hoby Parish (Blek.) but his later years have not been researched. In the household examination roll for Ronneby 1810-1814 he is said to have been b. 2 Oct. 1764, but he is not in the Ronneby birth register. Carl Hansson served as a sailor in the First Blekinge Marine Co., from 1788 to 1792 when his name was Carl Törnqvist, in 1796 when he was called Carl Sillberg and 1798 when he was called Carl Hansson, a crofter. In 1800 he had the name Carl Hansson Trätts. He must have left the navy before 1813 when he is named as discharged sailor in the household examination roll.

He m. Kerstin Börjesdotter, b. in Ronneby 31 Dec. 1759, the dau. of Börje Jonsson in Hasslestad. The mother’s name is not given in the birth register. They had the following children:

1. Mattis Carlsson, b. 7 May 1788. See Tab. 2.

Tab. 2

Mattis Carlsson, s. Carl Hansson (Tab. 1), b. Ronneby 7 May 1788. He was probably a sailor before 1813, since he is listed in the household examination roll that year as discharged. In the birth register for 1812 when Sven is born he is listed as a shoemaker. In 1817 he moved to Bräkne-Hoby, where he lived at farm No. 4. He has not been researched.

He m. Bengta Pärsdotter, b. Ronneby 10 Dec. 1788, the dau. of Pär Carlsson, a farmer in Södra Möljerud in Ronneby Country Parish and Inga Håkansdotter. They had the following children:

1. Sven Mattisson Trågårds, b. 1812, d. 1893, master tailor in Stockholm, later immigration agent in Chicago, IL, see Tab. 3.
2. Elin Mattisdotter, b. Ronneby 19 June 1815. Her grandparents Carl Hansson and Kerstin Börjesdotter were witnesses at her baptism 1815. Not researched.
3. Henrik Mattisson Trågårds, b. Bräkne-Hoby 1 Jan. 1819, journeyman tailor. He began as a tailor’s apprentice with his brother Sven in Hällaryd in 1833 and then assumed the name of Trågårds. He was a journeyman tailor with his brother Sven in Stockholm 1839-1841, res. in Nikolai Parish. He went to Västerås but returned to the Nikolai Parish 29 April 1845, when he again res. with his brother. On 3 Nov. 1845 he went to Ronneby. Not researched.
Sven Mattisson Trågårdh, son Mattis Carlsson (Tab. 2), b. in Ronneby 24 Feb. 1812; d. in Chicago, IL 21 March 1893; 69 master tailor in Stockholm, from 1872 immigration agent in Chicago. He took the name of Trågårdh after Sven Emanuel Trågårdh, a judge, who belonged to the Trågårdh family of Skåne. 70

M. in Ronneby 28 Sept. 1834 Maria Håkansdotter, b. in Dadesjö Parish (Kron.) 19 Feb. 1810; d. in Chicago 16 Nov. 1898. They had the following children: 71

1. Rudolf Trågårdh, b. 1836, d. in Chicago 1887, see Tab. 4.

2. Clara Trågårdh, b. in Nikolai Parish, Stockholm 4 Jan. 1839; d. in Chicago 21 June 1915. 72 During her youth she lived with her parents in Stockholm. She received a passport at the police authorities in Stockholm 4 Sept. 1855, the same day she received an exit permit from Hedvig Eleonora Parish in Stockholm. 74 She emigrated with her older brother Rudolf to the U.S. According to information from her nephew, Rudolph Tragard (see Tab. 5), she m. a Swede by the name of Harry O. Forsberg. 75 She had at least three children—Henry Oscar Forsberg, b. 20 March 1871; Grace Dorothy Forsberg, b. 29 May 1873, who m. Gustave Nelson and Olive Forsberg, b. 7 Oct. 1875. 76

3. Julia Trågårdh, b. in Nikolai Parish 3 April 1841; d. Chicago 28 July 1916. 77 She lived with her parents in Stockholm and emigrated with them to the U.S. in 1857. 78 According to information from her nephew, Rudolph Tragard (see Tab. 5), she was m. to a Swede named Frank Oscar Beryson. 79 She had at least two children—Grace D. Beryson, b. 27 Oct. 1861 and Lilly Louise Beryson, b. 2 July 1868. 80

4. Sven Adolf Trågårdh, b. in Nikolai Parish 5 Aug. 1843, d. in Hedvig Eleonora Parish, Stockholm 22 Sept. 1852.

5. Ludvig (in the U.S) Lewis Trågårdh, b. in Nikolai Parish 1 Jan. 1846; d. in the St. Ansgarius Swedish Episcopal Parish in Chicago 26 May 1868. He also lived with his parents during his youth and emigrated with them in 1857. On 30 March 1864 he volunteered as a private in Co. H of the First Regiment of Illinois Light Artillery (Captain Axel Silfversparre's Battery) and participated in the Civil War. 81 He was discharged 3 July 1865 but died three years later from the injuries sustained in the war. He is buried in the Rose Hill Cemetery in Chicago.

6. Charlotta Trågårdh, b. in Nikolai Parish 17 July 1848; d. in the same parish 25 July 1849.

7. Augusta Trågårdh, b. in Nikolai Parish 27 May 1850; d. in Hedvig Eleonora Parish 2 Jan. 1852.

8. Augusta Trågårdh, b. in Hedvig Eleonora Parish 1 Dec. 1852; d., probably in Chicago, 1 March 1917. 82 She emigrated together with her parents in 1857. According to information from her nephew, Rudolph Tragard, she was m. to a Dane by the name of Rhode. 83 She had at least two children—Sven Arnold Rhode, b. 1 Aug. 1882, who m. Zelda Rehling and Eda Marie Rhode, b. 9 May 1880. She m. Harry S. Doose, a Chicago photographer. 84
Rudolf Trågårdh, s. of Sven Mattisson Trågårdh (see Tab. 3), b. in Hättaryd Parish (Blek.) 13 March 1836; d. in Chicago 21 March 1887 and was bur. in the Graceland Cemetery of that city 23 March 1887.

According to the census lists and the household examination rolls in Stockholm for 1836-1855 he res. with his parents the entire time, except for one episode. On 15 Jan. 1846 he moved to Skeppsholm Parish in Stockholm and was admitted 18 Sept. that year to the Swedish Navy's School Training Facility. He is listed as the fosterson of a non-commissioned officer named Carl Magnus Edberg, b. in Rasbo Parish (Upps.) 9 Aug. 1818 and his wife Sara Maria Magnusson, b. in Kristinehamn 22 Dec. 1811. In Nov. 1848, he is again registered with his parents in their home. On 3 Sept. 1855 he received a passport from the police authorities in Stockholm for travel to North America. The same day he also received an exit permit from Hedvig Eleonora Parish. He emigr. together with his sister Clara. He m. in Chicago Emma Carolina Brandt, b. in Sjonäs, Hycklinge Parish (Ög.) 21 Nov. 1845, the dau. of Anders Brandt and Johanna Bergwall, who emigr. to Chicago in 1849. His wife d. in Chicago 28 March 1896 and was also bur. in the Graceland Cemetery. They had one son:

Rudolph Tragard, b. 1865, d. 1955, artist and farmer. See Tab. 5.

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Rudolph Tragard, s. Rudolf Trågårdh (Tab. 4), called himself Tragard. He was b. in Chicago 17 June 1865 and d. in Woodbine, Howard Co., MD 5 Feb. 1955 and was bur. in the Graceland Cemetery in Chicago 13 May 1955. He early demonstrated a talent for art and studied for a time at the Chicago Art Institute. He carried on his art work in New York City, Milwaukee, WI and Niles, MI. In 1920 he moved from Wauwatosa, WI to Howard Co., MD, where he bought a farm, which he named Wauwatosa Farm. According to a letter written in 1925 he claimed never to have heard Swedish spoken in his parental home and hence had not learned the language.

He m. twice—the first time to Helen Grace ----, b. ca. 1867, who d. 1 March 1902 and is bur. in the Graceland Cemetery in Chicago. He m. the second time Cora Morton in Milwaukee, WI, who d. in Woodbine, MD 3 Sept. 1923 and is bur. in the Forest Home Cemetery in Milwaukee. There were two children in his first marriage:

1. **Loraine Armin Tragard**, b. in Wauwatosa, WI 23 Jan. 1896 and who d. in Woodbine, MD 7 April 1969 and is bur. in the Oak Grove Cemetery, Glenwood, MD. She was a graduate of the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music in Milwaukee in 1916, majoring in speech and oratory. On 25 March 1933 she m. Richard Ridgely Pue, a farmer in Woodbine, who was b. in Howard Co., MD 20 Aug. 1889 and d. in Woodbine 19 Oct. 1984. He also is bur. in the Oak Grove Cemetery. Before her marriage Loraine Tragard had a son, John Cromwell, b. in Prince Frederick, Calvert Co., MD 30 Jan. 1930, who now resides in Aurora, CO.

2. **Kenneth Hathaway Tragard**, b. in Wauwatosa 30 May 1898. He served in the U.S. Navy in World War I and d. in Woodbine, MD 9 April 1924. He is bur. in the Graceland Cemetery in Chicago.
(Unless otherwise stated, the year and date are taken from the respective parish’s birth, marriage and death register.)

1 Ronneby Birth Register, Lunds Landsarkiv (The District Archives of Lund), (LLA).
2 Ronneby Household Examination Roll 1810-1814; 1813-1817, (LLA).
3 Appendix 2 to the Minutes of the Educational Circle (Bildningscirkeln), 26 Oct. 1845 (Forum. Stockholms Arbetsforening).
5 Brakne-Hoby Household Examination Roll 1825-1830, Exit Lists 1821-1861, (LLA).
6 Ronneby Exit List 1832, (LLA).
7 Hållaryd Entry Lists 1817-1844; Hållaryd Household Examination Roll 1831-1834, (LLA).
8 Släkten Tragardh.
9 Hållaryd Household Examination Roll 1831-1834, (LLA).
10 Hållaryd Marriage Register 1834 (LLA). Ragnerstam in his book Arbeteare i rörelse, p. 40 says, “on 7 Sept. 1834 the banns were published for the first time and two weeks later on 22 Sept. they were married. It was rushed since not quite six months later on 13 March 1836 the wife produced a son.” There was no need to hurry inasmuch that the son was not born until 1½ years after the marriage according to the dates Ragnerstam has given.
11 Hållaryd Birth Register 1836, (LLA).
12 Appendix 2 to the Minutes of the Educational Circle.
13 Hållaryd Exit List 1836 and Household Examination Roll 1835-1838, (LLA).
14 Nikolai Entry Lists 1837-1841, p. 19, Stockholms Stadsarkiv (The Stockholm City Archives) (SSA).
15 Ibid., p. 27.
16 Mantalsuppgift (Census information) for Staden inre (The Inner City) 1838, No. 982; 1839, No. 1,027; 1840, No. 1,024; 1841, No. 997; 1842, No. 985; 1843, No. 996; Nikolai Household Examination Roll 1837-1843, A1:37-42, (SSA).
17 Mantalsuppgift, Staden södra (South City), 1846, No. 236. The affidavit which is appended to the census information is to be found also in the Census information for Staden södra, 1848, No. 216, where Ellmin has added that his physical condition remains the same on 11 Sept. 1847, (SSA).
19 Ragnerstam, Arbeteare i rörelse, p. 43.
22 Appendix 2 to the Minutes of the Educational Circle.
23 Ragnerstam, Arbeteare i rörelse, pp. 58-68. The meetings at Ellmin’s had gathered 12 persons 26 Oct. 1845; 24 persons 9 Nov. 1845; 34 persons 22 Nov. 1845 and 38 persons 7 Dec. 1845. At the latter meeting Tragårds had taken along his nine year-old son Rudolf.
24 Ibid.
26 Söndagshållande, No. 31, 19 July 1846. Royal Library.
27 Söndagshållande, No. 33, 2 Aug. 1846. In the story of the fight at Skinnaviken the statement is made that the story had been printed in No. 30 of the paper. This is an error. It ran in No. 31.
28 Söndagshållande, No. 34, 9 Aug. 1846.
29 Without detracting from the herculean tasks which Sven Tragårds accomplished in Stockholm, working constantly for equal opportunities for the working classes, better education and social uplift, it should be borne in mind that he was active at a time when most of Europe was in the throes of economic and social upheaval. Sven Tragårds’ acute awareness of these new social movements aided him in his endeavors to provide new opportunities for the Stockholm working man.
Sven Mattisson Trägårdh, Swedish Emigrant

29Ragnerstam, Arbetare i rörelse, p. 116.
30Ibid., p. 117.
31Afstonbladet, 14 Aug. 1847, Royal Library. Trägårdh’s speech was published by the editor of the newspaper, Lars Johan Hierta direct from Trägårdh’s manuscript, somewhat shortened. Nevertheless, the article fills 2½ columns in the newspaper.
32Hermoder, No. 32, 14 Aug. 1847. Hermoder was a weekly devoted to politics and literature. (Royal Library).
33Afstonbladet, 25 Aug. 1847. The article begins with the statement that Trägårdh, the journeyman had asked for the opportunity to answer Hermoder. Then follows the bitter reply. It was dated 23 Aug. 1847 and signed by Sv. Trägårdh. Upon reading his biting remarks one realizes that the man knew no fear and that he was ready to stand up for his point of view.
34Afstonbladet, 15 March 1848. 
35Ibid., 2 June 1848. 
36Ibid., 3 June 1848. 
37Folkbladet, 27 May 1849, Royal Library.
38Handels- och ekonomikollegets arkiv (The Archives of the Board of Trade and Economics of the City of Stockholm). Borgare som vunnit burskap i Stockholm 1847-1858 (List of citizens who were licensed by the Board in Stockholm 1847-1858, D Ia 1:1, p. 17, (SSA).)
39Landelius, ”Skräddarvänernas Sven Trägårdh,” p. 232.
40Nikolai Exit List 1851, B Ila:9, p. T, (SSA).
41Hedvig Eleonora Entry Lists 1850-1852, B Ila:10, p. T, (SSA).
42Mantalsuppgift, Ladugårdslandet, 1852, No. 1,098, (SSA).
43Ibid., 1856, p. 1.267.
44Ibid., 1852, No. 1,098; 1853, No. 1,189; 1854, No. 1,195; 1855, No. 1,270; 1856, No. 1,267; 1857, No. 1,298; Hedvig Eleonora Household Examination Roll 1851-1853, Ala:52, 1854-1856, Ala:53, (SSA).
45Landet, ”Skräddarvänernas Sven Trägårdh,” p. 233; Folkets röst, 10 Dec. 1853.
46The Kugelberg Collection.
47Letter dated 21 July 1925 from Rudolph Tragard, Wauwatosa Farm, Woodbine, MD to Emil P. Tragar dh of New York City. Emil P. Tragar dh was a member of the Tragardh family in Skåne, see my work Slikten Tragardh från Skåne, pp. 82-83. A copy of this letter is in the possession of the author.
48Hedvig Eleonora Exit Lists 1855-1859, B Ila:10, (SSA).
50Personal papers of Rudolph Tragar dh. I am indebted to Mary Beirne Pue Zepp of Woodbine, MD for giving me access to this valuable material.
53Mauritz Rubensson, Skildringar från Amerika och England i bref under hösten 1867 (Stockholm 1868), p. 47.
56Svenskarne i Illinois, p. 412.
57Letter from Rudolph Tragar dh to Emil P. Tragar dh.
58Svenska Tribunen (Chicago), 29 March 1893.
59Ronneby Birth Register 1788-1902; Household Examination Roll, 1810-1814; 1813-1817, Hasslestad, 64, (LLA).
60Ronneby Birth Register 7 May 1788; 11 Sept. 1790; 22 Dec. 1791, (LLA).
61Ibid., 26 Sept. 1796.
62Ibid., 20 Dec. 1798.
63Rullor (Flottan) (Swedish Muster Rolls of the Navy) , Series IV, Blekinge 1783-1808, Krigsarkiver (Royal War Archives), Stockholm.
64Ronneby Household Examination Roll 1813-1817, Hasslestad 64, (LLA).
65Ragnarstam, Arbetare i rörelse, p. 40.
66Mantalsuppgift, Staden inre, 1840, No. 1.024; 1841, No. 997; Nikolai Household Examatin Roll 1839-1840 At:39, 1840-41, Al:40, (SSA).
67Nikolai Exit List 29 April 1845, Bla:11, p. 272, (SSA).
68Nikolai Exit Lists 1844-1850, Bla:73, (SSA).
69Svenska Tribunen (Chicago), 29 March 1893.
70Slikten Trägårdh, p. 61.
71Svenskarne i Illinois, p. 412. The authors mention nine children, only eight have been identified.
72Personal papers of Rudolph Tragar dh; Rosehill Cemetery (Chicago, IL) records.
73Poli sekreteraren C XV:a 1855, (SSA).

157
Hedvig Eleonora Exit Lists 1855-1859, Biil a:10, (SSA).

Letter from Rudolph Tragard to Emil P. Tragardh; Lakeside Guide to Chicago, 1913.

Personal papers of Rudolph Tragard.

Polissekreteraren C XV a:1857, (SSA).

Letter from Rudolph Tragard to Emil P. Tragardh; Lakeside Guide to Chicago, 1913.

Personal papers of Rudolph Tragard.

Ernst W. Olson, et al., History of the Swedes of Illinois, 1-ll (Chicago 1908), I, p. 696; Rosehill Cemetery records.

Personal papers of Rudolph Tragard.

Letter from Rudolph Tragard to Emil P. Tragardh.

Personal papers of Rudolph Tragard.

Grace land Cemetery Association Records, Chicago, IL.

Skeppsholmen Household Examination Roll All:8, p. 173; All:9, p. 72, (SSA).

Polissekreteraren C XV a:1855. The passport states that Rudolf Trägård had to provide his own food for the journey. He was between five and six feet tall, had dark hair, blue gray eyes and appeared to be in good health. (SSA).


Graceland Cemetery Records.

Personal papers of Rudolph Tragard.

Ibid.

Information supplied by the Waltz Funeral Home of Winfield, MD.

Graceland Cemetery Records.

Personal papers of Rudolph Tragard.

Letter from Rudolph Tragard to Emil P. Tragardh.

Graceland Cemetery Records.

Personal papers of Rudolph Tragard.

Personal papers of Rudolph Tragard; information furnished by the Forest Home Cemetery of Milwaukee, WI.

Information furnished by courtesy of Mary Beirne Pue Zepp.

Ibid.

Graceland Cemetery Records.

Sven Trägårdh's ocean ticket for himself and his family, dated 6 Aug. 1857 for passage on the vessel Mountaineer. The ticket states that Trägårdh had to provide his own food for the journey.