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Swedes in the Naturalization Index - A Sampling

Nils William Olsson

In the deep days of the Depression (the 1930s) the U.S. Government attempted by various administrations to provide employment for various categories of unemployed Americans. Thus the *Historical Records Survey* of the Works Progress Administration was given the project of indexing the naturalizations in all of the various courts, not only the federal courts, but also state, county and even municipal courts. The survey was conducted by unemployed clerical persons who examined each naturalization record and recorded the information on specially printed 3 x 5 index cards. These cards were then alphabetized by a special coded index named Soundex, which attempted to bring together under one coded category all surnames which sound the same, but may be spelled differently, i.e. Smith, Smithe, Smythe, or Olsen, Olson, Olsson, Oleson and Ohlson. Thus each Soundex code consists of a letter, the first letter of the surname plus three numbers from 1 to 6. Since all vowels in addition to the letters W, Y and H are disregarded, the remaining letters are used to construct the code. Johnson becomes J525 and Nicholson becomes N242. The six numbered categories are as follows:

The number	Represents the letters
1	B P F V
2	C S K G J Q X Z
3	D T
4	L
5	M N
6	R

With this ingenious system it is possible to penetrate huge collections of names, as for instance the millions of names to be found in the 1900 and 1910 censuses.

The WPA Index is extremely useful in that it provides guidance as to the presence in the index of persons believed to have been naturalized in a given court. One of the largest of such collections is the one dealing with the greater part of New

England, comprising Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. At first housed in the Central Search Room of the National Archives, this group has now been transferred to the Federal Archives and Records Center in Waltham, MA.

For the Middle West, the good news is that a similar cache of WPA cards is housed in the Federal Archives and Records Center in Chicago. This collection known as Record Group 85 (RG 85) consists of no less than 1,114 boxes (each the size of a shoebox) filled with 3 x 5 cards, containing information concerning the petitioner, which may range from as little as his name, country of nativity, date of naturalization and the court in which the naturalization was conferred, to such expanded information as his place of birth, his residence address, his date and port of arrival in the U.S., and the names of the witnesses and their residence addresses.

The territory covered in these index cards includes northern Illinois, eastern Iowa, southern Wisconsin and western Indiana. They are available to the public during research hours and may be consulted by using the Soundex code. Recently the entire collection has been microfilmed by the Family History Center in Salt Lake City, UT, where the films will be available to the public within the year. Copies will also be available in the National Archives in Washington, as well as the Federal Records Center in Chicago. An indication of the immensity of the material microfilmed is the fact that it took 185 rolls of microfilm to complete the program. The films will also be for sale to the general public for \$23.00 a roll.

It should be noted, however, that these cards are only a secondary source, having been copied from original records, where sometimes the writing has been difficult to decipher. The material should therefore be used with caution, to be checked against the original records, if these are available.

On the other hand the RG 85 Index is a boon to the researcher who does not know where his ancestor petitioner was naturalized. Here he has at his fingertips an index which covers not only the federal courts but also the state and local court administrations.

In order to see for myself how good the index was in ferreting out Swedes, I spent the better part of two days at the Federal Records Center in Chicago examining the contents of the first three boxes out of a total of 1,114. The project was quite rewarding but also awesome as I examined the cards one by one. I found a total of close to 300 petitioners in the three boxes, whose country of nativity was given as Sweden; Sweden/Norway or Norway/Sweden. Since the two countries were joined in a dual monarchy with the Swedish King as the ruler, Norwegians in many cases cited the dual monarchy as his or her place of origin. I would assume that in instances where the petitioner gave Norway/Sweden as his country of origin, the petitioner may have been Norwegian. But this is not certain, since I have seen Norwegians using the Sweden/Norway classifications and Swedes using the Norway/Sweden classification. Therefore all three categories have been taken for

the sample. Only in those cases where the petitioner said his country was Norway was the card not researched.

Of the three first boxes examined, I found box No. 1 to contain only 15 Swedes. Box No. 2 had 98 and box No. 3 no less than 165, doubtless due to the quantity of Abrahamsons who are filed here. I decided to use box two as a sample with its almost 100 names. They are listed here in alphabetical order, not according to the Soundex code. All pertinent information has been included except the addresses given for the petitioner and the witnesses. Also the number of the petition has not been listed, in order not to burden the presentation too much. Both the addresses and the certificate of naturalization number can easily be had by consulting the file card in question.

It is difficult to project the total number of Swedes to be found in this collection, but by extrapolating from the contents of the first three boxes with approximately 300 names, the total should be 111,400 persons with Swedish or Swedish/Norwegian ancestry. The probability is that the figure would be much higher, considering the large movement into the Middle West by Swedes with patronymics like Anderson, Carlson, Johnson, Olson and Peterson. Whatever the figure is, it represents a vast storehouse from which to draw material on the Swedish settlers in this part of the country.

Abbreviations

arr.	= arrived	N/S	= Norway/Sweden
nat.	= naturalized	S/N	= Sweden/Norway
res.	= resided	S	= Sweden
wit.	= witness	Co.	= county
		*	= born

Courts

CC	= County Court	DC	= District Court
CiC	= Circuit Court	SC	= Superior Court
CrC	= Criminal Court	USDC	= U.S. District Court

Abelin, Erik Wilhelm. *S; nat. CC Bureau Co., IL 29 Mar. 1895.

Abelin, Louis. *S 5 Oct. 1877; arr. Pt. Huron, MI 5 Sept. 1898; res. Chicago; nat. CiC, Cook Co., IL 29 May 1906. Wit. - Patrick J. Wall and Jules Huysentruyt.

Abelson, Chris. *S/N; nat. CC Ford Co. IL 21 Oct. 1892. Wit. - John A. Nelson and W.A. Høbjurst.

Abelson, Elias. *S/N; res. Chicago; nat. CC, Cook Co., IL 1 Dec. 1893. Wit. - Peder M. Pederson.

Abelson, Herman. *S/N; res. Ottawa, IL; nat. CiC La Salle Co., IL 30 Oct. 1880. Wit. - William Williams and Francis Bowen.

Aberg, Alf Borge. *S 25 Aug. 1907; res. Winnetka, IL; nat. USDC, Cook Co., IL 7 Oct. 1932.

Aberg, Anders P. *S/N; nat. CiC, Cook Co., IL 28 Jan. 1888. Wit. - Sven Tragordh.¹

Aberg, Arvid. *S 17 Sept. 1891; res. Gwinner, ND; nat. USDC, Cook Co., IL 2 Nov. 1918. Wit. - P.G. Thompson and R.H. Wylie.

Aberg, Arvid Berger. *S 18 Nov. 1888; res. Chicago; arr. U.S. 18 Aug. 1906; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 20 Mar. 1925. Wit. - A.H. Anderson and Thos. Leary.

Aberg, August. *S 29 May 1875; res. Chicago; arr. NY 2 Sept. 1895; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 7 Nov. 1904. Wit. - A. Swartz and Harry A. Hertsberg.

Aberg (Oberg), August Bernard. *S 20 Apr. 1885; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 8 Nov. 1939.

Aberg, Carl Petrus. *S 29 June 1885; arr. U.S. 15 May 1903; res. Chicago; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 12 Dec. 1913. Wit. - Im. Anderson and Rev. Alfred Nelson.

Aberg, Charles. *N/S; nat. CC Grundy Co., IL 14 Apr. 1888. Wit. - Charles Nelson and Charles Shalen.

Aberg, Frank Wilhelm. *S/N; res. Chicago; nat. CrC Cook Co., IL 19 Oct. 1896. Wit. - Charles Hendry.

Aberg, Johan. *S/N; nat. CC Cook Co., IL 12 Mar. 1888. Wit. - Ola Lee.

Aberg, John *N/S; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 28 Oct. 1876. Wit. - Aug. Grenland.

Aberg, John. *S/N; nat. CC La Salle Co., IL 31 Oct. 1892. Wit. - Peter Miller.

Aberg, Nels H. Also Haberg and Hoberg. *N/S; nat. CrC Cook Co., IL 11 Sept. 1896. Wit. - J.A. Thorson.

Aberg, Olaf A. *N/S; nat. CC Will Co., IL 1 Nov. 1886. Wit. - Michael Walter and Solomon Sanders.

Aberg, Olof. *S; nat. DC Clinton Co., IA 24 Feb. 1874.

Aberg, Oscar Torrald. *S 20 Feb. 1881; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 8 Aug. 1918.

Aberg, Peter O. *S/N; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 11 Oct. 1886.

Aberg, Sven Harold. *S 25 Aug. 1907; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 2 Dec. 1941. Wit. - Melvin W. Newman and James Hamilton.

Abersohn, Knut Olof Govert. Soldier. *S 29 July 1894; res. Chicago; naturalization denied in USDC Cook Co., IL 7 Nov. 1940 at request of petitioner. Wit. - Robert J. Lavaty and Emil Kleps.

Aberson, Ivar Frederick. Sailor. *S 28 Feb. 1899; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 7 Dec. 1937.

Abery, Gustaf. *S/N; nat. CC Will Co., IL 18 May 1892. Wit. - Emil Peterson and Charley Peterson.

Abery, Nils. *S/N; 43 years old; arr. U.S. June 1870; nat. CC McHenry Co., IL 2 Nov. 1880. Wit. - Robert Wilson.

Abom, Fritz. *S/N; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 2 Nov. 1891. Wit. - Erick A. Peterson.

Apelbom, Alexander. *S/N; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 3 Nov. 1884.

Apelbom, Carl-Johan, *S/N; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 19 Mar. 1885.

Apelburg, Peter. *N/S; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 19 Mar. 1892.

Apelgren, Lu. *S; nat. CC Knox Co., IL 28 Mar. 1868. Wit. - S.W. Peterson and John Hedlund.

Apelquist, Carl. *S/N; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 16 May 1900. Wit. - Otto Oden.

Apfelbaum, May Anna. *S 19 July 1884; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 8 July 1942. Wit. - Mattie E. MacDonald and Ebba Gottschalk.

Appelberg, Bror August. *S 12 May 1896; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 5 Jan. 1939.

Appelberg, Edward George. *S/N; res. Chicago; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 1 Apr. 1899. Wit. - Fritz Larson.

Appelberg, Johan. *S/N; res. Chicago; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 22 Mar. 1894. Wit. - James L. Merriott.

Appelblad, Harold. *S 2 Nov. 1893; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 9 Apr. 1931.

Appelgren, Agda Victoria. *S 30 Dec. 1901; arr. NY 26 Aug. 1927; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 15 Dec. 1942. Wit. - Helen Johnson and Augusta Johnson.

Appelgren, Algot John. *S 20 Mar. 1904; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 11 Apr. 1939.

Appelgren, Anders. *S 29 July 1878; arr. Detroit, MI 1 Apr. 1900; res. Chicago; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 2 June 1906. Wit. - Peter Anderson and August Anderson.

Appelgren, August. *S/N; res. Chicago; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 14 Oct. 1898. Wit. - C.P. Lindquist.

Appelgren, August L.² *S; nat. CC Winnebago Co., IL 27 Oct. 1896. Wit. - Robert Johnson and Algot Haeggquist.

Appelgren, Bernd Johan. *S 8 Dec. 1855; arr. Boston 23 Aug. 1904; res. Rockford, IL; nat. CiC Winnebago Co., IL 10 Jan. 1911. Wit. - Jan A. Glaus³ and Oscar Kjellstrom.

Appelgren, Frans Otto. *S 30 Dec. 1865; res. Rockford, IL; nat. CiC Winnebago Co., IL 7 Oct. 1941. Wit. - Charles Mahumed and Konrad Johnson.

Appelgren, Nils Gustaf.⁴ *S; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 30 Oct. 1884.

Appelgren, Oscar. *S 21 Oct. 1897; arr. NY 4 Nov. 1926; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Col, IL 4 Mar. 1942. Wit. - Albert Elmin and Gustave T. Ekstrom.

Appelgren, Otto P. *S/N; res. Chicago, IL; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 16 Mar. 1895. Wit. - Nils Anderson.

Appelholm, Claus Appolomus (Appolonius?). *S 10 Mar. 1885; arr. U.S. 25 Mar. 1905; res. Chicago; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 8 Mar. 1918. Wit. - John A. Swanson and Edward Gemler.

Appelholm, Gunnar. *S/N; 24 years old; arr. Laredo, TX 15 Oct. 1891; nat. CrC Cook Co., IL 20 Oct. 1896. Wit. - Pauline Appelholm.

Appellof, Carl A. *S/N; nat. SC Cook Col, IL 27 Sept. 1888.

Appellof, Lars Johan. *S/N; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 27 Sept. 1888.

Appellof, Nils F. *S/N; nat. CrC Cook Co., IL 5 Oct. 1888. Wit. - Lars J. Appellof.

Appelquist, Axel Leonard. *S 6 Dec. 1889; arr. U.S. 21 Nov. 1909; res. Chicago; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 22 Oct. 1925. Wit. - Theodore Sidberg and Henry C. Anderson.

Appelquist, Axel Leonard. *S 2 Apr. 1890; arr. U.S. 1907; res. Chicago; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 17 Apr. 1924. Wit. - Carl B. Anderson and Genie L. Anderson.

Appelquist, Axel Wilhelm. *S 22 Sept. 1892; res. Rockford, IL; nat. CiC Winnebago Co., IL 6 Oct. 1925.

Appelquist, Carl G. *S/N; res. Chicago; nat. CC Cook Co., IL 7 Oct. 1896. Wit. - Victor Palm.

Appelquist, Claus L. *S; nat. CC Rock Island Co., IL 3 Nov. 1876.

Appelquist, Ellen Elvira. *S 10 Jan. 1889; res. Rockford, IL; denied naturalization 18 Apr. 1941 at the request of the petitioner. Wit. - Eugene Pyfer and Nettie Excell.

Appelquist, Ellen Sofia. *S 10 Dec. 1883; arr. U.S. 20 June 1903; res. Chicago; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 17 July 1919. Wit. - Emma Henry and Ella Anderson.

Appelquist, Frederick. *S; nat. CC Rock Island Co., IL 23 June 1884. Wit. - H. Kohler.

Appelquist, Frederick. *S; nat. CC Rock Island Co., IL 29 Oct. 1873.

Appelquist, Hanna Amelia. Also known as Borg; *S 25 May 1885; arr. NY 7 Oct. 1910; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 6 Oct. 1922. Wit. - Carl A. Carlson and Christian Fjeld.

Appelquist, John P. *S; nat. DC Mahaska Co., IA 5 Nov. 1888.

Appelquist, John S. *S 1 Oct. 1875; arr. NY 1 Aug. 1898; res. Chicago; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 10 Oct. 1904. Wit. - Emil Erickson and Chas. H. Dahlberg.

Appelquist, Jonas M. *S/N; res. Chicago; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 22 Oct. 1892. Wit. - Charles Herman.

Appelquist, Robert J. *S/N; nat. CC Cook Co., IL 21 Mar. 1899. Wit. - Algot Astrom.

Appelquist, Sven. *S/N; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 23 June 1891. Wit. - C.P. Rosen.⁵

Appelton, August. *S; nat. CC Marshall Co., IL 26 Oct. 1877. Wit. - A.J. Carlson and L. Palm.

Appleberg, Regner. *S 28 Sept. 1868; arr. NY 1 Aug. 1896; res. Chicago; nat. CiC Cook Co., IL 24 Mar. 1904. Wit. - Gust E. Sundtrom (sic!) and John Pettigren.

Applegreen, Alex E.W. *S; res. Peoria, IL; nat. CC Peoria Co., IL 3 Nov. 1884. Wit. - D.D. McDougal and Chas. I. Duke.

Applegreen, Chas W. *S; res. Peoria Co., IL; nat. CC Peoria Co. 6 Nov. 1882. Wit. -M.C. Dailey and Henry T. Riebel.

Applegreen, John. *S; res. Peoria Co., IL; nat. CC Peoria Co. 12 Oct. 1876. Wit. -Thomas Cratty and Charles W. Applegreen.

Applegren, A. *S/N; nat. SC Cook Co., IL 17 Oct. 1884.

Applegren, C.A. *S; nat. CC Knox Co., IL 25 July 1892. Wit. - O.J. Cotton and Abraham Anderson.

Applegren, Ernest Oscar. *S 12 Aug. 1894; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 9 Apr. 1931.

Applegren, Frank. *S; nat. CC Knox Co., IL 5 April 1898. Wit. - Swan L. Erickson and Carl O. Swanson.

Applegren, G.E. *S; nat. CC Knox Co., IL 6 Apr. 1903. Wit. - A.D. Swanson and C.A. Applegren.

Applegren, Gustof. *S; 43 years old; nat. DC Monroe Co., IA 30 Oct. 1890.

Applegren, John M. *S; nat. CiC Knox Co., IL 2 Nov. 1876. Wit. - P.W. Applegren and George Eckstrand.

Applegren, Karl. *S 5 Jan. 1876; res. Galesburg, IL; nat. CiC Knox Co., IL 11 Nov. 1912.

Applegren, Nils August. *S 29 Nov. 1871; res. Galesburg, IL; nat. CiC Knox Co., IL 10 Feb. 1913.

Applegren, Peter W.⁶ *S; nat. CC Knox Co., IL 13 Feb. 1890. Wit. - M.O. Williamson⁷ and A. Seastedt.

Applegren, Theodore. *S; res. Bloomfield, WI; nat. CiC Walworth Co., WI 20 Feb. 1911.

Applequest, John. *S; nat. DC Wapello Co., IA 4 Oct. 1889.

Applequist, Andrew. *S; nat. CC Henry Co., IL 17 Oct. 1896. Wit. - Oscar F. Carlson and John A. Johnson.

Applequist (sic!), Charles. *S; nat. DC Wapello Co., IA 21 Sept. 1896.

Applequist, Franz Oscar. *S; nat. CC Rock Island Co., IL 31 Oct. 1892. Wit. -Albert Johnson.

Applequist, Gust. *S/N; nat. CC Winnebago Co., IL 21 Apr. 1888. Wit. - John E. Hogberg and Albert Goodin.

Applequist, Gust. *S; nat. DC Wapello Co., IA 3 Nov. 1900.

Applequist, Gustaf M. *S; nat. CC Rock Island Co., IL 3 Apr. 1893. Wit. - Charles Florine.

Applequist, Hans. *N/S nat. CiC Winnebago Co., IL 18 Oct. 1888. Wit. - Martin Swanson and W. Beckstrand.

Applequist, John. *S/N; nat. CC Winnebago Co., IL 22 Oct. 1884. Wit. - Swan W. Brolen and Jonas Erickson.

Applequist, Lennart Emanuel. *S 26 Oct. 1889; arr. Boston 13 May 1909; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 30 Sept. 1924. Wit. - Axel Gylling and Arvid Erickson.

Applequist, Simon Helmer. *S 10 Oct. 1900; arr. NY 30 May 1922; res. Chicago; nat. USDC Cook Co., IL 5 Mar. 1942. Wit. - Mrs. Alma Sorensen and Mrs. Anna Swanson.

Applequist, Victor Daniel. *S 23 Feb. 1876; res. Rockford, IL; nat. CiC, Winnebago Co., IL (no date given).

Applerot, C.J. *S; res. Henry Co., IA; nat. CiC Henry Co., IA 14 Oct. 1878.

Avery, John T. *S/N; nat. CC Winnebago Co., IL 23 Oct. 1888. Wit. - J.H. Potter and Oscar Ackerson.

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Notes

- ¹Sven Mattisson Trägårdh (1812-1893) arr. in Chicago 1857, where he remained the rest of his life. He was very active in the Swedish colony, always giving a helping hand to the Swedish immigrant in need. For a comprehensive story on Trägårdh see Kurt G. Trägårdh, "Sven Mattisson Trägårdh, Swedish Labor Leader and Emigrant" in *Swedish American Genealogist*, Vol. VII, 1987, p. 145-158.
- ²August Appelgren declared his intention of becoming a U.S. citizen in the County Court of Winnebago Co., IL 22 May 1869. - Nils William Olsson, "Declarations of Intention by Swedes in Rockford 1859-1870" in *Swedish American Genealogist*, Vol. I, 1981, p. 13.
- ³Jan A. Glaus is obviously the garbled name of Johan August Gräns, who declared his intention of becoming a U.S. citizen in the County Court of Winnebago Co., IL 7 Oct. 1868. - *Ibid.* p. 12.
- ⁴Nils Gustaf Apelgren, b. in Alfva Parish 28 Feb. 1830, s. Johan Magnus Apelgren, tanner, and Margareta Wikström. He emigr. to the U.S. 1858. His brother, Pehr Wilhelm Apelgren, had settled in Rock Island County, IL 1853 and declared his intention of becoming a U.S. citizen there 1 Oct. 1858. - K.J. Nilson, *Sveriges släktregister för Alfva socken* (Stockholm 1947), p. 707; Nils William Olsson, "Naturalizations of Swedes in Rock Island County, IL 1855-1864" in *Swedish American Genealogist*, Vol. II, 1982, pp. 23, 27.
- ⁵Probably Claes Peter Rosen, b. in Näshult Parish (Jön.) 30 June 1840, who arr. in the U.S. 1875, settling in Chicago, where he operated a meat market on Oak Street. - Eric Johnson and C.F. Peterson, *Svenskarne i Illinois*, edition B (Chicago 1880), p. 412.
- ⁶Pehr Wilhelm Apelgren, b. in Alfva Parish (Gävl.) 30 June 1832, s. of Johan Magnus Apelgren, tanner, and Margareta Wikström. He emigr. to the U.S. 1853 with his wife, Margareta Olsdotter, b. in Alfva 11 Aug. 1818, dau. of Olof Jonsson, a judge of the assizes (*nåmndeman*), and Brita Jonsdotter. - *Sveriges släktregister för Alfva socken* (Stockholm 1947), pp. 656, 659, 707.
- ⁷M.O. Williamson was b. Magnus Olsson, s. Olof Olsson and Margta Olsdotter, who emigr. to the U.S. 1850 aboard the *Maria*. They came from Nybo in Järvsö Parish (Gävl.). Magnus was b. on the high seas and was six weeks old when his parents and siblings arr. in New York. - Nils William Olsson, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in New York 1820-1850* (Stockholm and Chicago 1967) (*SPANY*), pp. 232-233; Johnson and Peterson, *Svenskarne i Illinois*, p. 437.