

Swedish American Genealogist

Volume 38 | Number 1

Article 15

3-1-2018

Book Reviews

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/swensonsag>



Part of the [Genealogy Commons](#), and the [Scandinavian Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(2018) "Book Reviews," *Swedish American Genealogist*. Vol. 38: No. 1, Article 15.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/swensonsag/vol38/iss1/15>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center at Augustana Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Swedish American Genealogist by an authorized editor of Augustana Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@augustana.edu.

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 SAG Editor, at <sag@etgenealogy.se> so we know what you are working on.

Swedes in Saint Paul

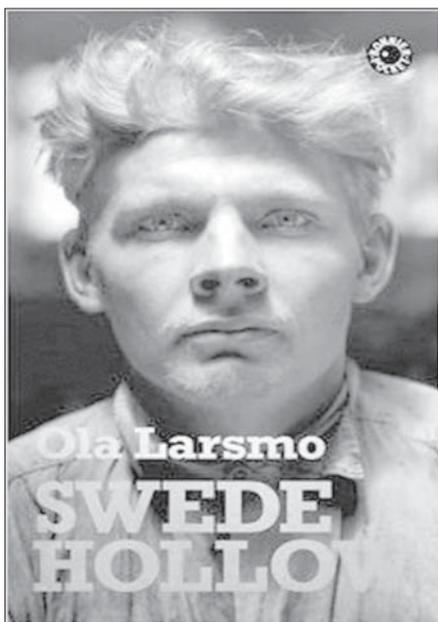
Swede Hollow, by Ola Larsmo, published in Swedish in 2016.

This book, which has been a huge success in Sweden and has even been made into a dramatic play performed at the Dramaten in Stockholm, is not yet available in English.

The book is about a group of poor Swedish immigrants that settled in Swede Hollow in Saint Paul, which is an area of the city where poor and newly arrived immigrants found homes. There were not only Swedes but also other groups of immigrants, and they all lived under harsh conditions.

The rights to the book were sold in April 2017 to the University of Minnesota Press.

SAG will inform you when it is available in English.



A forensic genealogist

Hiding the Past – A Morton Farrier, Forensic Genealogist Story. A Genealogical Crime Mystery, by Nathan Dylan Goodwin. 2013, paperback, 212 pages. ISBN-10: 1492737429. Published by CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

The term *forensic genealogist* intrigued me, as I did not know it. I found an explanation in Dick Eastman's *Newsletter* from 15 June 2014: "The word 'forensic' means 'relating to the use of science or technology in the investigation and establishment of facts or evidence.' In this case, forensic would mean to use science or technology in addition to traditional records. In short, Forensic Genealogy is the use of something OTHER THAN standard records to add to your family history.

"This is not to say that forensic genealogists ignore the records. Quite the contrary. Forensic genealogists always start with the available records. If those records are insufficient to prove a relationship, the forensic genealogist then looks for other clues. In other words, forensic genealogists think differently.

"Actually, forensic genealogy is a term that usually means to research ancestry by the means of standard records AND MORE."

This book *Hiding the Past* is the first in a series about the forensic genealogist Morton Farrier, who seems to be in his early 40s, and lives on the south coast of England, as does the author. Morton has a live-in girlfriend Juliette, and the author tells lots of details of their domestic life.

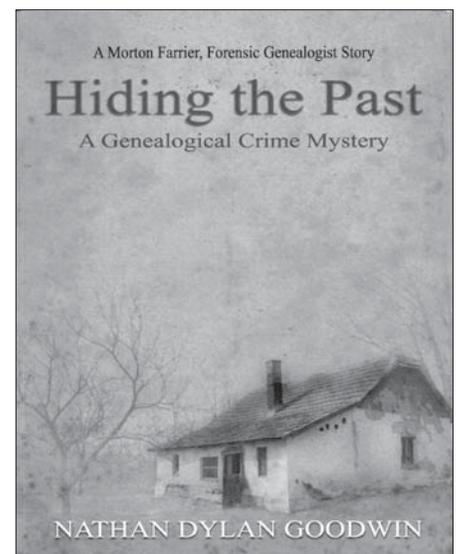
But Morton also works at various genealogical assignments, and his newest is to

find the parents of a new client, Peter Poldrick, who dies soon after he has been visited by Morton. Peter Coldrick had no past; that was the conclusion drawn by years of personal and professional research. With the Coldrick Case, Morton faces his toughest and most dangerous assignment yet, where all of his investigative and genealogical skills are put to the test. However, others are also interested in the Coldrick family, people who will stop at nothing, including murder, to hide the past.

As Morton begins to unearth his client's mysterious past, he is forced to confront his own family's dark history, a history which he knows little about.

I had hoped to learn a little about British archives, and Morton does visit the Brighton District Probate Office to look at some wills, and goes to the East Sussex Archives. He seems to regard the archivists as his foes, not as well-intentioned civil servants, even suspecting them of hiding the documents he wants.

The story goes on and it turns out that Morton is finding information that other people do not want him to have. To hinder





Book Reviews

him from keeping the information, his house is blown up one night, almost killing him and Juliette.

There are very detailed descriptions of everything Morton and Juliette do, what they eat, drink, and how they are dressed, and that is where I lost interest in this book.

There are many episodes where the hero is beaten and shot at, and a large part is about his relationship with his old father, who is poorly, but very little that has to do with genealogy.

This is the first work by this author, who has written six more books about Morton Farrier, and maybe these books are more into genealogy.

Elisabeth Thorsell

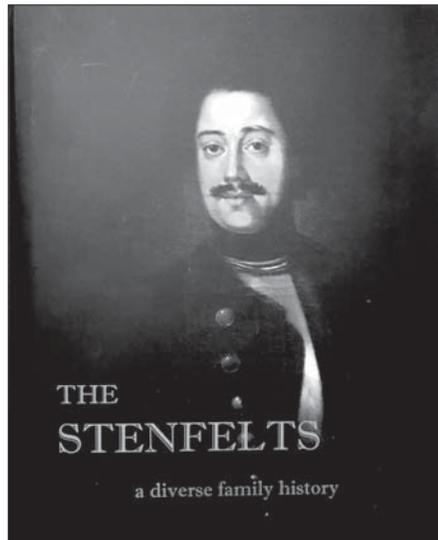
A noble family

Åtten Stenfelt, en mångfasetterad släktkrönika, published by Ulf Stenfelt and *Stenfeltska Släktföreningen*. Hardcover, 551 pages. In **Swedish**.

The Stenfelts - a diverse family history, compiled by Ulf Stenfelt and The Stenfelt Family Association. Hardcover, 548 pages. In *English*. ISBN: 0012854484.

For the **English version**, contact Mr. Ulf Stenfelt at ulf@stenfelt.net
Price \$70 incl. postage.

The Stenfelt story starts with a man named Lorentz Steinfeld, a German confectioner, born around 1647 in Lübeck, who moved to Malmö in Sweden around 1678. In 1683 about 200 Germans in Malmö were allowed to start their own congregation and build their own church, Caroli church, which served as a German Lutheran church until 1879. In 1680 Lorentz married Anna Jöransdotter Rode, a local woman. Anna and Lorentz had four children; Georg (b.



1683), Carl (b. 1685), Bodil (b. 1687), and a stillborn child (b. 1690).

Georg was the one who carried on the family line.

By 1680 Lorentz had become a burgher of Malmö, but had a hard time, as there were many competitors that were not burghers and did not pay taxes, so they could sell their wares at lower prices.

In 1722 Anna, Lorentz's wife, died, and he remarried in 1723 to the widow Otilia Christiansdotter. Lorentz died in 1726.

In the year 1700 the Great Nordic War broke out. Sweden was attacked by Denmark, Poland, and Russia as those countries felt that Sweden was not strong enough, with a king of age 17, to withstand this alliance, which was a miscalculation by the allies. The war continued until the Peace Treaty of Nystad in 1721, when Sweden lost large parts of its territory.

Young Georg Stenfelt enlisted in 1700 in the artillery, and was among the Swedish army that soon afterwards landed in Denmark, where a peace treaty was soon concluded. The next goal for the Swedes was to defend the Swedish provinces in the Baltic.

This is not the place to follow everything that happened during the next 20 years, but Georg Stenfelt managed to survive and even spent some time in Sweden. He got married in 1712 to Elsa Charlotta Stråle af Sjöared, who was only 16 years old. The

couple had ten children, born between 1713 and 1733.

During these years Georg advanced in his military career, and in 1718 was a captain of the Grenadier Battalion. In 1719 he was ennobled with the name Stenfelt, but did not seek introduction to the House of Nobles (*Riddarhuset*) until 1743. This delay might have been caused by lack of money, as the introduction fee was high, and he had a large family.

In 1722 he resigned from the military, and spent the rest of his life as a gentleman farmer at various estates, either rented or owned. In 1727 Georg and the family comes to Stora Möckhult in Fliseryd (Kalm.) where family members will live for generations.

Georg's wife Elsa Catharina died in 1754, and Georg remarried to Andrietta Margareta Ehrenborg (b. 1724) and the sister to a son's wife.

Georg himself died in 1758 at Gälnebo in Fliseryd, leaving a large family with 5 sons and 2 daughters, all married with children.



Coat of arms for the Stenfelt family # 1867 of the Swedish nobility.

The story of Georg is just a small, but important, part of the family history.

One of the stories is how the portrait of Georg, painted in 1717 ended up being sold out of the family and then rescued and sold to the family association in 2005.

There are very many Stenfelt descendants in the United States. The first ones to leave were Adolf Alfrid Stenfelt (b. 1839) and his young wife Emili Nilsson

Book Reviews



(b. 1842) who left Fliseryd in 1863 and headed to New York via Hamburg, and later became settlers in Swede Bend, IA.

The U.S. Civil War did not deter the Stenfelt immigrants. Adolf's older brother Fridolf and his family followed in his footsteps in 1863, but settled in Illinois.

From the Swedish *Emibas* database I could see that at least 61 Stenfel(d)t family members left Sweden for *Norra Amerika* and that figure does not include women who had married into other families and were known under their husband's name.

There is an interesting chapter in the book about those Stenfelts (Stonefelt) and where they settled. This chapter is written

by LaVonne Stonefelt Johnson, who tells about her ancestors that settled in the mining district of Deadwood, South Dakota, an unusual place for Swedes to settle. The "Quad Cities", Rock Island, and Moline in Illinois, on the other hand, was home to many Swedes, including a number of Stenfelts.

There are several chapters with various family stories from different branches. Some of them are very detailed with photos in color and black-and-white of people and family homes. They all give an idea of the conditions of life through the decades.

For instance, Georg's son Carl Johan (b. 1715) fathered at least four out-of-wedlock children. The first one in 1744 but his father Georg denied this in court, even though the child was supposed to be Carl Johan's according to a note in the birth records. The next one, Johan Magnus, was born in 1750 and Carl wanted to marry the mother. Georg sued the young couple, who

were fined and not allowed to marry until 1758, when they had three children.

There are many examples on how individuals go down in social status over a couple of generations, and then something happens, and families rise in social status again. For instance, a farm laborer's grandson might get a better education, and enters a profession, and then the children of this person become doctors and politicians.

In the final 200 pages is a family tree in English of all descendants of Georg and his wife as far as their dates are found.

It starts with Georg as #1 and then come the descendants. Each branch is followed to the end of that line, and then come the next of Georg's children. Each person's informations start with a number, which shows how many generations that person is from Georg. For instance, the notes for grandchildren always start with #3.

A very interesting book!

Elisabeth Thorsell

Add to your family history!

Learn what Sweden and America were like when your ancestors immigrated.

Join the Swedish-American Historical Society

Four issues a year of the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly*, plus dividend books.

The Society's latest book is *Conrad Bergendoff's Faith and Work: A Swedish-American Lutheran, 1895-1997*, by Thomas Tredway.

For more information, write:

Swedish-American Historical Society
3225 W. Foster, Box 48
Chicago, IL 60625

or see www.swedishamericanhist.org

Mention the *Swedish American Genealogist* when you join or order books.



The link to your history

Digital Research Room

More than 171 million digitized pages of Swedish historical documents and over 30 million searchable database records.

- Swedish Church Books
- Census
- Military records
- Estate inventories
- and much more.



Visit <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/svar>

Shop online, DVDs and USBs

- Swedish Census 1880, 1910 and 1990
- Swedish Death Index 1860-2016 (prerelease)

Visit <https://webbutik.riksarkivet.se/en>



Book Reviews



A church in Funk, NE

Jubelalbum. En historik öfver den svenska Ev. Lutherska Fridhemsförsamlingen i Funk, Nebraska, 1879-1919, by B.E. Bengtson. Published in 1919. 166 pages, hard-cover. In *Swedish* and *English*.

This book was published in 1919, at the 40th anniversary of the foundation of The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Fridhem congregation in Funk, Phelps Co., NE.

The founders of the congregation were a diverse group; some came from older settlements in the U.S., while others came directly from Sweden. They all had to suffer from the realities of settling a new community: grasshoppers, prairie fires, tornadoes, hailstorms, heavy rains, and much more, but they were all in need of a church for moral support in their difficulties.

In 1878 a group of inhabitants decided to build their own church in the middle of the county, so that everyone would not have to travel so far to get there. The congregation, called Fridhem (*peaceful home*), started with about 100 members, with Elias Peterson as the first pastor, a layman. They soon started to establish a church, which was built of boards, tar paper, and peat. They could not at first afford benches, but that problem was solvable by allowing the local school to have classes there, so the church people could use their benches. One man built his own bench with a backrest for himself and his family - an unknown luxury. The school also furnished the floor of the church.

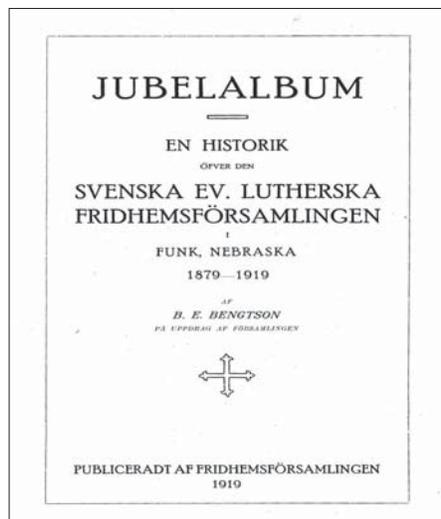
Now they wanted to become members of the Kansas Lutheran Conference, as other churches in the area, but were denied

this as they were regarded as too small a group and too poor to be able to keep their church going. This was a huge disappointment for the Funk group, and they even discussed leaving the Lutheran community.

In 1883 they finally were allowed to join the Synod, and the next year they were able call their own pastor, Carl Henrik Södergren from Gotland, ordained in 1871, who stayed for some years, but left in 1887.

The position was vacant for some years until pastor Anders Kinell accepted his call in 1889. A problem was that there was not yet a house for the pastor, but a nearby member had just built a large house and had space for the pastor and his family. Pastor Kinell was young and vigorous, and understood that the old church, built of peat, would soon be just another heap of dirt. He made grand plans for a new church, which was accepted in 1890. But money was a problem, especially as a hailstorm destroyed the crops before they could be harvested. Still they struggled on, and in 1891 the church was finished and in 1892 the rectory. All this had cost \$5,446, a huge amount then, which in 1919 was seen as almost nothing.

In 1894 came a very bad year for the area. 1893 had been a year of drought, for seven months during the fall and winter there was no rain at all, and then on 26 July 1894 a hot, burning, strong wind burnt all green fields, and the crops were gone. There was no grain to plant, and there also



SAG needs your help!

We regard the reviews as a very important part of SAG, as the readers are spread all over the U.S., Canada, and Sweden and a lone subscriber even in Australia.

For all of them it is very difficult to keep track of the many interesting books (and movies) that are published with a *Swedish* or *Swedish-American* theme.

We need you to keep your eyes open. And we are extremely pleased if you will write a review and send it to the SAG editor.

Family histories, church histories, local group histories, and lodge histories are among the things we would like to present in SAG. And all in English.

A good book review contains the full title of the book, name of author, year of printing, name of publisher, where it can be bought, and the price of the book.

Send all book reviews to the SAG editor!

Elisabeth Thorsell
SAG editor

was no ready money in the bank, so it was not possible to get a loan and send for grain to plant.

Somehow life went on and in the next year the crops were good, and the debt on the church could be paid off. Pastor Kinell moved to Wisconsin and there was again a vacancy, which was filled by students from Augustana College.

In 1897 Magnus Theodor Andrén accepted the call and became the new pastor in Fridhem. During his time an altar painting was commissioned from Olof Grafström of Rock Island, IL.

These few notes show some of the local history that can be found in this types of books, which should not be forgotten when you are trying to learn about the ancestors.

At the end of the book there are several pages with advertisements for local businesses that are also interesting.

Elisabeth Thorsell