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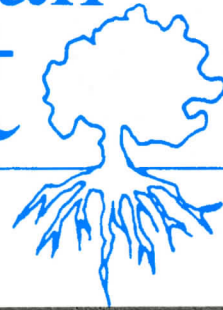
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Cover picture:

The Axel Björkman family. From left Martha, Axel, Birgitta Frida (standing in back), Edythe, Anna (sitting in front) and Frederick. (Photo from Julianna Janssen's collection) See article on page 1.

Dear little Auntie and the cousins!

An 1948 letter from Sweden tells about daily life there

SUBMITTED BY JULIANNA JANSSEN

*Rosinge, Sweden¹
7 April, 1948*

First I want to tell you that my conscience is bothering me that I have not written before, but now I wish to thank you so heartfelt for everything that was in that welcome box you sent me for Christmas. It arrived on the last day of January, so sometimes it takes a long time (to get here). I hope you are all well. We are in health, as well as is Father. Well, I feel sick sometimes, but that is just my migraine, it passes in one or two days.

Oh how good that coffee tasted, it arrived just in time, I have celebrated my 40th birthday with relatives and friends, and I served them food and coffee from America; I saved the lump sugar for this occasion. My husband gave me a nice wristwatch, my sister in Torshälla and her children gave me a dozen toilet towels, and other relatives and friends gave me money and flowers. I don't need to tell you my wish that you could all have come. It is very strange to have just one aunt and she is so far away that it is too expensive to see each other. Don't you have a photo of yourself, Auntie, taken in a close-up? I wish to see your eyes and your features.

Today we have very bleak weather, there is both snow and rain, but during the last days of March we almost had summer, one could sit outside and soak up the sunshine. But the weather in April can be very capricious. Soon it is time to sow and plant; I have just re-planted my friends the (potted) plants in fresh dirt. I have an amaryllis that was in bloom right about on Easter, with giant red flower-cups. Just now I have

a passion flower (*Hoya carnosa* is its Latin name) that has buds, I have counted up to 21 bunches. You probably also have nice flowers, Auntie. What was the name of the flowers that you sent me seeds from?

Yesterday I had a letter from Frida, a very sweet and interesting letter. I only have some trouble sometimes in understanding the letters, probably depending on my not knowing the language, she probably knows a lot of Swedish from the club where she is a member. I have read that much is done in the U.S.A. to keep up the Swedishness, so if one of my cousins will become rich in the future and come over here they will probably do well with the language. But they might become disappointed with Sweden, there might be too many beautiful stories told about our old country. But how exciting it would be to see the famous rush that only exists in the U.S.A. Rush hour I think exists everywhere, lots of time is lost in standing in line for groceries. If a farmer comes to market with fresh eggs and good potatoes, then a lot of people gather; well it is not fun to be a housewife many times.

Right now I am craving a nice cup of coffee, but I don't have a bean in my can, will not get any more until April 12th; I had the last drop the day before yesterday². But I do have an empty can from the U.S.A., soon I will sniff in that. You may now be able to smile a little smile [when you read this]. My sister Anna's coffee lasts well, but she has six [ration] cards to buy with.

But I should not complain, it can



"Auntie Anna" Anna Elida Charlotta Sundberg (b. 1870 in Stockholm), married to Axel Björkman.

get worse, it doesn't look too good when reading the news. The smoke from one war doesn't disperse before they talk about another one. Marta once wrote about the Russians, and they have not become better; Stalin and Hitler might be related or were so. If all people were like brothers and sisters, I might add good ones.

Well, time is passing and we will soon be into May, and you will have your birthday again, Auntie, and I am sending my heartfelt congratulations, and I hope you will be keeping well, Auntie, for many years still, and

be able to write your letters to me.

[Upside down: Greet Frida when she comes home now, that the book has arrived, and it is just us that have not written.]

Anna seems to have some photo of herself and her family that she would give you, Auntie. Perhaps she has already sent it, I do not know. The pictures I am sending today were taken last summer when we had picked some lilies-of-the-valley. My sister and brother-in-law in Torshälla have a summer cottage, a ½ hour sea voyage by motor boat away. There on the little islands there are many lilies-of-the-valley; we often stay with them during the summer and spend our weekends there.

Right now Anita comes home; she is out in all kinds of weather, she wants to be outside at all times. I have to tell you that she has just learnt to ride a bike, she reads and writes and counts, and she is best at mental arithmetic. She is always active, she will be 7 years on 25th April, a little lass with spirit. On Sundays they go to Sunday School in Brotsta, but there are not many children there, sadly. The teacher is very sweet. They get little pictures of Jesus to paste in a book. I am writing on childish paper today, but

had nothing else at home, and it is best to write when one feels like doing it. I end with the dearest greetings from all of us to you.

Elsa

Endnotes:

- 1) Rosinge is probably the house where Elsa and her family lived, in the Eskilstuna area in Södermanland province. The envelope of this letter is missing and the date is based on Elsa's story about her 40th birthday.
- 2) Coffee was rationed in Sweden during World War II, and evidently still in 1948.

Who were these people?

This story starts with the dyer (*färgare*) Ludvig Fredrik Sundberg, born 1839 May 1 in Kalmar city, and who moved to Stockholm in the 1860s, where he worked in his craft. He married 1866 Oct. 9 in Riala, north of Stockholm, to the servant woman (*tjänarinna*) Maria Charlotta Lindgren, born 1833 Nov. 23 in Filipstad, and now working at Ekeby in Riala. The Sundberg family lived for some years in the Hedvig Eleonora parish in Stockholm, and then moved in 1877 to Katarina parish, also in

Stockholm, where his wife died in 1880 Aug. 3 of pneumonia.

Their children were:

d. *Emma* Hedvig Lovisa, b. 1867 Jul 23 in Hedvig Eleonora, Stockholm.

d. *Anna* Elida Charlotta, b. 1870 May 11 in the same parish.

s. *Herman Fredrik*, b. 1878 Jan. 9 in Katarina, Stockholm, died there 1878 Jul. 27 of some stomach illness.

After the death of his wife Ludvig Fredrik moved to Brännkyrka parish, just south of Stockholm, where he died on 1909 Jan. 1.

Emma's life

Daughter *Emma* became a foster child in the Herman Gustaf Björkman family, where the father was born 1855 Jul. 30 in Filipstad, possibly a relative of Emma's mother. In 1883, at age 16, she started to work as a *piga* in Stockholm. In 1885 she moved to Kjula parish in Södermanland, where she lived for many years. She died 1947 Feb. 13 in Kloster, Eskilstuna.

During her time in Kjula she gave birth to two children out of wedlock with no known father. Then in 1896 she became the housekeeper to the



This picture is from the Ersta orphanage, probably in the late 1800s. The deaconesses are teaching sewing to the girls.

The orphanage was founded in the 1860s and by 1884 they had about 30 children, which they regarded as too many. They thought about 20 would be enough to give the children a family feeling.

The orphanage closed in 1950.

farm overseer (*rättare*) Axel Karlsson, born 1872 Sep. 14 in Kjöla, who had lost his wife in 1896. Axel died 1951 Feb. 12 in Kloster, Eskilstuna. Emma and Axel started a relation quite soon, but never married. They had six children, and one of them was the letter-writer, *Elsa*, who was born 1908 Feb. 13 in Kjöla, and died 1991 May 29 in Eskilstuna.

Elsa was married in 1933 Oct. 22 to Sven Gustafsson, born 1911 Feb. 15 in Ärla (Sörm.), he died 1982 Oct. 24 in Husby-Rekarne (Sörm.). Elsa and Sven had two children, Anita, born 1941, and Håkan, born 1949.

Anna's life

Daughter *Anna* had a different fate. After the death of her mother she was placed in an orphanage, run by the deaconesses of the Ersta deaconess school in Katarina parish.

She stayed at the orphanage until 1889, when she moved to Jakob parish, also in Stockholm, where she worked as a domestic. In 1890 she moved to Nacka, a town just southeast of Stockholm. From then on she worked at many different places around Stockholm.

In 1902 Sep. 22 she married *Axel* Fredrik Björkman, born 1871 Jan. 23 in Nicolai parish in Stockholm. Axel's mother was Anna Viktoria Björkman, born 1844 in Filipstad, an older sis-



Axel and Anna Björkman in Merrill, Wisconsin.

ter to Herman Gustaf Björkman, who was Emma's foster father for a few years. The couple were married in the chapel of the Ersta institution, which probably indicates that Anna had been well treated in the orphanage.

Axel was a tanner and lived in Linköping (Östg.), so Anna moved there shortly. In 1903 Oct. 7 their daughter Birgitta *Frida* Maria was born there.

In 1904 Mar. 10 the little family left

Linköping to go to Merrill in Wisconsin, where they settled. In Merrill more children were born: Edythe (mother of Julianna, who has the letter), Anna, and Frederick.

Addendum by Elisabeth Thorsell

The submitter of the letter is Julianna Janssen, of Merrill, WI
E-mail: <jjpack4@yahoo.com>



A picture from October 1941 of the Emmanuel Covenant Church in Merrill, Wisconsin, where the Björkman family were members. The church is now a non-denominational church.

The older records for this church, which was founded in 1894, are now kept at the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center in Rock Island, Illinois. The archive contains minutes (in Swedish) from 1922-1931, 70 pages. Also church member records and records of ministerial acts (such as baptism, confirmation, weddings, funerals, etc.) from 1892-1928, 105 pages.

How to spot and avoid 9 common genealogy mistakes & errors

BY MARY HARRELL-SESNAK

Family history researchers are often frustrated by the mistakes of others—particularly when there is an obvious error in identity, such as the mistake explained in a 1914 Virginia newspaper article. It points out that a member of the Gwathmey family was incorrectly identified as having been a maid of honor to Queen Elizabeth. This maid was named Hannah Moore, married to Sir John Temple. Their daughter was Hannah Temple, who married Owen Gwathmey, and their son was also named Owen Gwathmey, and was born 1752 Nov. 25. It is not possible that a man born in 1752 could have a grandmother who had been a maid to Queen Elizabeth, who died in 1603.

This sounds like an obvious mistake, and one that could have been corrected with simple subtraction. Unfortunately, once a mistake is written in a book or newspaper article, the mistake is often carried into other research—forever frustrating the more serious genealogists.

Genealogical mistakes are not often easy to sort out, so let's discuss some strategies.

1. Abbreviations are not always what they seem

Two of my favorites are “NA” and “NMI.”

In the case of the first abbreviation, “NA” might indicate *non applicable*, *naturalized*, *Native American*, or even *Navy*, demonstrating the importance of finding the “key” explaining what an abbreviation actually means.

Another abbreviation that sometimes causes confusion is the use of “NMI” in place of a middle name. It is not an actual moniker, but rather

used to indicate that a person has *no middle initial—no middle name*.

2. Age-related mistakes

* *Women who are too old to be mothers.*

Although Mrs. Steve Pace, of Rose Hill, Virginia, reportedly gave birth to her 17th child in 1939 at the age of 73 (see the Wikipedia article “*Pregnancy Over Age 50*”), it is rare for women to give birth after the age of 50.

If a woman continued to give birth through her 40s, then it is possible that a report of her having a child as an older woman may be correct.

However, whenever you see such an older mother-child relationship claim, examine the possibility that the family may have been raising an orphan or a grandchild.

* *Persons who were born too young or old to have served during a military event.*

If you are researching an ancestor for a lineage society, such as the Sons or Daughters of the American Revolution, start by figuring out the beginning and ending dates of the event.

For example, the American Civil War occurred between 1861 and 1865.

Although there are examples of very young veterans, most of the younger set did not serve in a military capacity – unless they were older. One exception was Civil War Missouri veteran George Huffman, who enrolled as a volunteer in the 13th Missouri Infantry on 4 November 1861 at the age of 14. He re-enlisted on 8 February 1864, and was considered to have been the youngest veteran to have re-enlisted that

year – as explained in an 1864 Massachusetts newspaper article.

For the most part, however, it is safe to assume that someone – other than a drummer or bugler – must have been at least 15 when he enlisted for combat service. Therefore, it is unlikely that a combat veteran actually served in the Civil War if he was born after the year 1850.

Now, if a child served in a non-military capacity, then you might find evidence of children as young as seven involved in a war – such as Nathan Futrell from Northampton County, a young boy who served in the American Revolutionary War.

You can also apply an age factor to determine the likelihood of an older person serving in the military.

3. All applicable genealogy records have not been found

Just because you can't find a genealogical proof doesn't mean that one doesn't exist. For example, many military records were burned, so look to other types of records for evidence.

In other words, if an original record is missing you might be able to find alternate records. In the case of a missing military record, look for a petition for a pension, or a list of enlistments, reprinted in an old newspaper article. Other possible genealogical sources: a family diary or letter, or church bulletin, that references military service.

4. Children listed without parents may not be orphans

Just because a child is not recorded

with a parent on a census record doesn't necessarily indicate that both parents are deceased.

On one of the 1850 U.S. Federal Census records, I noted that the children of my ancestor Permelia Ann (Davis) Drake were living in different households.

Not finding their mother, I at first assumed that she had died. It turned out that she was very much alive, and recorded in the census with her second husband, Samuel Bassett. It's not clear why the children were with the neighbors in 1850, but perhaps they were mother's helpers or farm helpers working to support the family.

5. Informants are not always correct

A primary record is one that was recorded at the time of the event. A secondary record is one that is recorded later, generally from an informant. In the case of a death certificate, the date and place of death is primary evidence, but the birth date of the decedent, along with the stated parents, is not necessarily correct.

In my family, my great-grandfather's parents were recorded on his death certificate as his natural parents, when in fact court records and other records establish that he had been adopted.

6. Just because two people with the same name reside in the same area does not necessarily mean they are related

In the case of my ancestor William Harrell of Virginia (and Indiana) of the late 1700s and early 1800s, it turns out there are three men by the same name. Now that descendants have submitted results from DNA studies, it is clear that they were not closely related.

7. Spelling errors

Alternate spellings are the norm, rather than the exception.

For example, my Ebling ancestors can be found with the surname spelling Ebeling, Hebling, and even Heblinger. As a result, I always browse a book's index to see if there are similar spellings. When searching online or in a search box, such as at GenealogyBank, I frequently use a wildcard such as a question mark (?) or asterisk (*) when searching for ancestor names.

- * The ? is used to take the place of one letter.
- * The * is used to take the place of several letters.

For example:

- * Eb*ing* would find Ebling, Ebeling and Eblinger.
- * ?Eb*ing* would find all of the above, and include Hebling or Heblinger.
- * Cath?rine would find both Catherine and Catharine.

8. Transpositions (reversing or mixing up letters and numbers)

Many people, including myself, are prone to transpositions. The year 1787, for example, might be unintentionally entered as 1778, or even 1877.

To overcome this tendency, be sure to closely examine recorded figures, such as the reported age at death. Several genealogy programs calculate this figure, and may even note it during an error check.

9. Widows and widowers may not necessarily be widowed

In the event of a divorce, separation, or bigamy, a spouse might be recorded as widowed on an official record. This may be to handle a delicate issue, or simply to accommodate a census form that didn't have other options.

These are just a few common genealogical errors. If you have some that you have observed, please share

them with the Swedish American Genealogist editor!

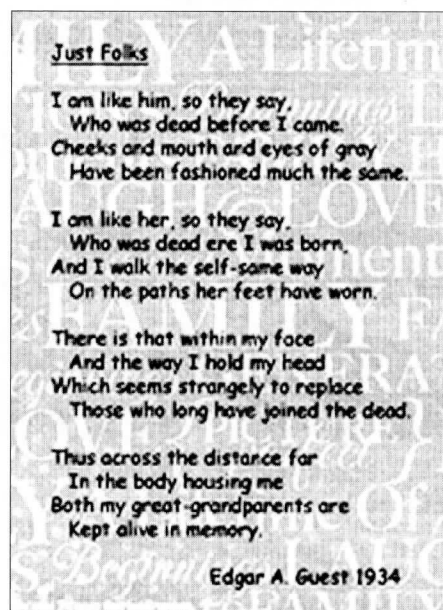
SAG Editor's note:

In Swedish church records divorced people are often listed as widows or widowers. Divorces were quite unusual in the old days, but they did happen.

In the forms that the pastors had to fill out every year and send in to the Central Bureau of Statistics there was no column for divorced people, so they ended up in the column for deaths.

This article was first published 2013 Aug. 7 on the GenealogyBank blog (see link on p. 30), and is re-published in SAG by permission from the author and GenealogyBank.

Mary Harrell-Sesniak is a genealogist, author, and editor with a strong technology background. In this guest blog post, Mary discusses 9 common mistakes made when doing family history research, and suggests ways to avoid them.



From Twisted Twigs and Gnarled Branches on Facebook.

Your link to your history!



NEW!

The Swedish Census database (*Folk-räkning*) for 1910 has now 2 million individuals. 105 110 posts were just added.



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One of the released prisoners in the SVAR prison records.

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See article
on page 20.

News from the Swenson Center

The 2013 Dagmar and Nils William Olsson Scholar

The 2013 Nils William Olsson Scholar has now been elected, and his name is *Juri Rebkowetz*, of Patersdorf, Germany.

Juri presents his project like this:

“In October 2012 I started working on a PhD thesis with the title “German and Scandinavian Immigration to Minnesota and Wisconsin during the Second Half of the 19th Century – Contacts, Conflicts, and Cooperation.” This study aims at giving a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between the two largest foreign groups in the Midwest during the time of mass immigration.

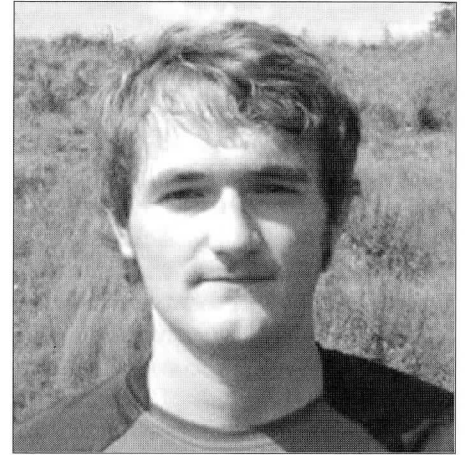
“In order to get detailed first-hand descriptions of their views on each other and on their reactions to certain political, cultural, religious and social developments, it is necessary to examine diverse primary sources like newspapers, letters, diaries, travel reports, and immigrant guidebooks.

“Considering the chosen geo-

graphical and temporal frame, mainly those documents written in Minnesota and Wisconsin or by people who had spent a substantial amount of time there between approximately 1840 and 1910 are of primary interest.

“The Swenson Center has a vast collection of such potentially useful material that includes a great variety of Swedish-American newspapers and numerous personal papers such as the following ones: *Axel Lundeberg Papers*, *Bengtson and Bohman Family Papers*, *Christian Oberg Papers*, *Charles Lindman Papers*, *Emma Johnson Papers*, *Erik Norelius Papers*, *Erik Jönsson Papers*, *Milton T. Anderson Family Letters*, *Alexander Malcolm Papers*, *Peter Anderson Cederstam Papers*, *Samuel Magnus Hill Papers*, or the *Sven August Johnson Papers*.

“To be given the opportunity to spend around five weeks at the Swenson Center and to use its rich



resources would be an incredible opportunity for me.”

According to his CV Juri was born in 1987 in Kazakhstan, is now a German citizen. He grew up in Germany and has also spent a year in Umeå, Sweden, as an Erasmus Exchange student, and is now working on his PhD thesis at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich, Germany.

What is this? Mystery item at Swenson Center



This mystery item was found among the papers of G. N. Swan in the Swenson Center archives. It is described as a wooden stick with a metal hook on one end, possibly for hanging, and a bulbous shape on the other end. The bottom is flat.



The script reads: “*Inköpt hos Anti-quit. handl. Hagander i Stockholm 18 27/3 93. [March 27 1893] E.E.*”

Explanation to be found on p. 31

My family history & the Swedish Baptist General Conference of America

(Svenska baptisternas i Amerika allmänna konferens)

BY RON FLODINE

It has become apparent through my genealogical research that a strong relationship existed between the Swedish Baptist General Conference of America and my family for many decades starting in the 1880s. In fact, the eventual coming together of both sides of my family is directly tied to associations with the Swedish Baptist General Conference.

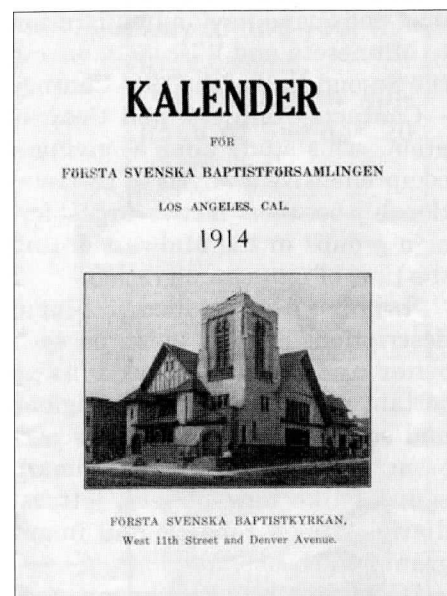
My four grandparents emigrated from Sweden in the 1880s and 1890s for various reasons. I do not have enough knowledge of their lives in Sweden to be able to accurately recount all of those motives, but it seems apparent that each had a strong faith grounded in the Baptist tradition. This was unusual for the time given the fact that the Lutheran Church was the state church as sanctioned by the Swedish government. In fact, since the late 17th century, all Lutheran parish clergymen were in effect continuous census takers required by law to record all births, deaths, and marriages in their respective parishes (*församlingar*). I surmise that they were aware of a strong Swedish Baptist presence in America under the auspices of the Swedish Baptist General Conference.

The two sides of my family had connections long before either my father or mother knew each other. It is reasonable to assume that they would not have met until 1943, when my mother, Hanna A. Omark, moved to Los Angeles and started to attend the Eleventh Street Baptist Church. In large part, her attendance at that church was due to that fact that her brother, Reverend Edwin J. Omark,

was the pastor. My father, along with his mother and sister, started attending the church in 1910, and he became a member in 1917 when he reached the age of 16. At that time, the church was called *Första Svenska Baptistförsamlingen i Los Angeles* (The First Swedish Baptist Church of Los Angeles) and had been founded in 1889.

The first link

But going back decades before, the first intertwining of family histories started to unfold. That first link would not have been apparent to the persons involved since it took years for the connection to occur. A little background here is required: My paternal grandfather, Lars Erik Carlsson, came to the United States in 1882, changed his name to Lawrence Eric Flodine, and settled in Warren, Pennsylvania. When Lars left his parish, Floda församling in Södermanland län (county), he was given a *flyttningsbevis*, literally “proof of removal,” which stated that he was leaving the parish and going to “Norra Amerika.” This document is dated 1882 Mar. 7, one day after his 18th birthday. The record is not clear as to how long Lars, now Lawrence, stayed in Warren, Pennsylvania, but a “certificate of naturalization” was executed 1887 May 4 in Warren. The First Swedish Baptist Church of Warren was incorporated in 1890 (name changed to Calvary Baptist Church in 1932). Was he involved with its fledgling congregation before moving on?



From family documents, it is known that by 1890 Lawrence was living in Chicago. On 1892 Aug. 27 Lawrence married Hilma C. Carlson in Englewood (Chicago). He was 27 years of age and she was 22. The officiating minister was Carl G. Lagergren, who was dean of the Swedish Baptist Seminary which became Bethel Theological Seminary (it has been in various locations over the years) from 1889 to 1922. Since my mother's brother Edwin J. Omark was dean of Bethel Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, from 1948 to 1964, this eventual link between the two families began at this time.

Another link

In 1894, Lawrence and Hilma had a daughter, Clara, who tragically died 1904 Apr. 10 of septic meningitis. Hilma died 1896 Aug. 22 at 25 years of

age of “septic orbital cellulitis” (a dangerous infection in the eye socket).

Lawrence was married again on November 24, 1897, to Ida Elisabeth Göransson; the officiating minister was Eric Rosén, pastor of the *Första Svenska Baptistförsamlingen i Englewood* (Chicago). He was also one of the founders of the Oak Hill Cemetery in Chicago which became the final resting place for Lawrence Flodine in February 1904 and of his daughter just 1½ months later. In addition, Reverend Rosén founded Fridhem, Home of Rest, 11400 Crescent Avenue, Morgan Park (Chicago) in 1905. Here, the second linkage occurs – my mother’s sister, Ellen Omark Ward Ericson, was matron of Fridhem for many years.



Lawrence Flodine and Ida Göransson married 1897 Nov. 24 in Chicago.

To California

After the death of my grandfather, Lawrence E. Flodine, my grandmother, Ida Elisabeth Göransson Flodine stayed in Chicago for a few years before moving to Los Angeles in 1910 with her two children, Ethel Louise (b. 1898) and Lawrence Eric (b. 1900) along with her mother, stepfather, and half-sister. According to church records, all of them started attending the First Swedish Baptist

Church of Los Angeles. This church would play an important part in the lives of members of my family from then on for decades. As previously stated, my father, Lawrence Flodine (Junior, although he never used that designation since his father had died when he was young), became a member of the church in 1917.

In 1930, Reverend Edwin J. Omark, my mother’s brother, accepted the call to be the pastor of the First Swedish Baptist Church of Los Angeles. He remained in that capacity until November 1943. In 1940, the name of the church was changed to the Eleventh Street Baptist Church of Los Angeles. So Reverend Omark was the minister to my father, his mother, and his sister from 1930 until 1943. (I have a picture of my grandmother, Ida E. Göransson Flodine, standing next to my uncle Edwin and his wife, Marie, in front of their home in Los Angeles in 1932. My grandmother would have had no idea that fourteen years later, her son would marry Reverend Omark’s sister).

My mother, Hanna A. Omark, was born in Kewanee, Illinois, in 1909, the youngest of six children. She was brought up in the Swedish Baptist Church of Kewanee (name changed to Calvary Baptist Church in 1931). Her parents, Peter John Omark and Hanna Christina Englund, were two of the founders of the church in 1901. She lived in Kewanee until 1943, when she made her way to Los Angeles, influenced in part by the fact that her brother was minister of the local Baptist church there. She lived away from Kewanee for a year starting in August 1936 when she attended Bethel Institute in St. Paul, Minnesota, and received a certificate in Bible and religious education in the Junior College Department 1937 June 11.

In 1943, she moved to Los Angeles and started attending the Eleventh Street Baptist Church where she met Lawrence Flodine. This link brought the two families together in a permanent way since they married 1946 Aug. 20 at the Calvary Baptist Church in Kewanee with her brother

Edwin as officiating minister.

He had left Los Angeles in the latter part of 1943 and was professor of practical theology at Bethel Theological Seminary in St. Paul at the time; and, as previously mentioned, subsequently became dean of the seminary in 1948.

The importance of the Baptist connection

As I stated at the beginning of this article, the Swedish Baptist General Conference of America, which became the Baptist General Conference of America in 1945, was central to my family’s history. The Swedish Baptist churches gave a sense of belonging and inclusion in an immigrant community so far from the “Old Country.” The strong faith in God and communion with those of the same religious beliefs provided strength and hope, and gave the impetus for starting a new life in the United States.

My Swedish background

A brief biography of the members of my family who comprise the focus of this narrative follows:

Farfar

Lars Erik Carlsson was born on 1864 Mar. 6 at Haga, village of Bie, Floda församling, (Södm). His father, Carl Johan Andersson was born in the same place on 1825 Nov. 25 and his mother Stina Cajsa Larsdotter was born 1826 Sep. 12 in the parish of Stora Malm, (Södm). He followed his brother, Anders August, to the United States in 1882, changed his name to Lawrence Eric Flodine, and initially settled in Warren, Pennsylvania.

Farmor

Ida Elisabeth Göransson was born on 1876 Mar. 29, in the village of Gammelstilla, Torsåker, (Gäst.). Her father was Karl August Göransson, born 1845 Jul. 3 in the parish of Hedemora, (Dala.). He died when Ida was only five years old 1881 June 7. Ida’s mother was Anna Louisa Hägg, born 1852 June 19, in the village of Gysinge, Österfärnebo (Gäst.). Ida

came to the United States in June 1892 with her mother, stepfather, and two siblings, a voyage she writes about in a diary she wrote during those years as a young teenager.

Morfar

Per Johan Åmark was born on 1867 Oct. 1 in the village of Sunnanå, Söderåla (Häls.). His mother, Brita Jonsdotter, was born in the same location 1829 Sep. 29 and his father, Anders Andersson Åmark, was born on 1827 Aug. 16 in Åmot (Gäst.). Per Johan Åmark changed his name to Peter John Omark when he arrived in the United States in 1887 and settled in Galva, Illinois. Subsequently, he went back to Sweden in 1895 and returned to live in Galesburg, Illinois, before moving with his wife and infant son, Edwin, to Kewanee, Illinois, in 1900.

Mormor

Johanna Kathrina Englund was born 1874 Sep. 23 in the village of Kallbäck, Skog (Häls.). Her father, Olof

Persson Englund, was born 1840 Jan. 25 in the village of Lingbo, Skog, and her mother, Kirstin Olsdotter, was born in the same village on 1839 July 30.

Johanna Kathrina came to the United States in June 1895. She met her future husband on board ship and they were married 1897 May 15 in Galesburg, Illinois. She signed her name on her wedding license as Hanna Englund and named her youngest daughter, Hanna (my mother). My granddaughter is also named Hanna.

Far

Lawrence Eric Flodine was born 1900 Dec. 1900 in Chicago (Cook County), Illinois. He was the second child of Lawrence Eric Flodine and Ida Elisabeth Göransson. Lawrence's sibling was Ethel Louise, born 1898 Aug. 21.

He spent his working career in the railroad industry and retired in 1966 as head accountant of the Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal (Union Station). Lawrence Eric Flodine

passed away 1975 Oct. 13 in Los Angeles.

Mor

Hanna Alvera Omark was born on August 16, 1909, in Kewanee (Henry County), Illinois. She was the sixth child of Peter John Omark and Hanna Christina Englund. She married Lawrence Eric Flodine on 1946 Aug. 20 in Kewanee, Illinois.

Hanna Flodine passed away 1988 Feb. 20 in Temple City, Los Angeles Co., CA. They had one son, Ronald Lawrence Flodine, born 1947 Oct. 20.

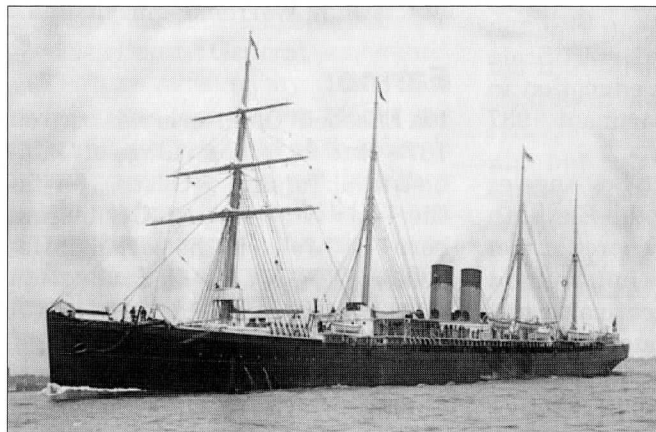


Lawrence Eric Flodine and Hanna Alvera Omark were married 1946 Aug. 20 in Kewanee, IL.

The author is
Ron Flodine, Carlsbad, CA
<flodine@sebastiancorp.net>

4	P. Åmark	24							
5	C.O. Loberlund	38	Sw			Sweden	Jackson Ill.		
6	Selma	40	Sw	wife			Princeton Ill.		
7	Erida	10	Sw	child					
8	Arvid	7	Sw						
9	Lijne	4	Sw						
10	Ragnar	11	Sw	infant					
1	Olaf Olsen	26		laborer			Wagner, Kansas		
2	Martha	28	Sw	wife					
3	Hilda Dohlgren	23	Sw	servant					
4	Johanna Englund	21	Sw				New York		
5	Hanna		Sw				Jackson Ill.		

The passenger list from the RMS Britannic, from Liverpool, arriving in New York on 1895 June 8. (Picture from Ellis Island [www.ellisland.org]).



RMS Britannic
1890-1903.

SALE!
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By Nils William Olsson and Erik Wikén (1995). 628 pages of Swedes, comments, and indexes.
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Gene Amdahl – a Swedish-Norwegian computer pioneer

Computers are now a common daily tool, but they also have their history

By CARL-JOHAN IVARSSON

Translation by Elisabeth Thorsell and Christopher Olsson.

In the 3rd edition of the Swedish encyclopedia *Bra Böcker's Lexikon*, volume 5 (Coe-Dick) from 1984, we find the word “*Dator*” (computer). It says *dator* or *datamaskin* is “a machine that without human interference can perform large computations of a great number of arithmetic and logical operations.”

On about six pages, a close description of all can be found. The pictures show integrated circuits, disc memories, and a computer hall. But to give a picture of a newer era, a young woman sitting by the Swedish computer ABC800 is shown. We can easily see that much has happened during these 29 years.

The historical part of the article starts with Charles Babbage, the man who built a mechanical “stone age” computer in 1822, and some

other early pioneers are mentioned as well as some known early computers in Sweden with names like BARK, BESK, and SMIL. Apple is mentioned, but not Microsoft. We do not find the business superstars of our time, people like Steve Jobs and Bill Gates. But one name is mentioned when it states: “during the 1970s several manufacturers started to build totally IBM-compatible central units that can directly run programs and operation systems from IBM. The best-known manufacturer of these (...) was Amdahl, founded by Gene Amdahl, formerly a head of construction at IBM.”

Who is this Gene Amdahl, and why is he considered worthy of being mentioned in such an article? And what was his connection to Värmland?

South Dakota

Gene Myron Amdahl was born 1922 Nov. 16 close to Flandreau, Moody Co., South Dakota. The name sounds Norwegian, and three of his grandparents came from Norway.

His paternal grandfather Ole Olsen Amdahl was born in 1855 in Ytre Amdal, Nedstrand parish, near Haugegesund on the Norwegian *Vestlandet*. Ole immigrated with parents and siblings as a tiny boy. In 1879 he came to Moody County, and obtained land via the Homestead Act, where settlers could get land for free.

There he married Sofia Eriksdotter (AKA Sophia Ericson), born in 1857 in Ölserud in Kila parish, (Vrml.). Sofia came to Moody Co. in 1881 and had six siblings that all came to America, most of them to Moody Co. in the eastern part of South Dakota, then still a territory (it became a state in 1889).

Flandreau is one of four little towns in Moody Co., which is an agricultural county. In the 1920 U.S. Census some 9,742 individuals lived in the county; in 2010 there lived only 6,486 individuals. The population decrease is primarily due to the diminishing need for agricultural laborers.

The strange thing is that more families from Kila parish ended up in this special area on the prairie. They grew to be so many that there was a post office named Kila, South Dakota, for a few years around 1900. There was also a cemetery called “Kila Swedish Cemetery.” So one can say that Gene Amdahl had his origins in both places called Kila.

Gene Amdahl's father was named



The office computer ABC 800, built in 1981 by the Swedish company Luxor, which also had a home computer, ABC 80, which became very popular and was the most in use then. It was the start of the Swedish Computer Genealogy Society (DIS) in 1980.

Anton Edwin Amdahl. His mother was Ingeborg Brendsel who had her roots in Byneset, close to Trondheim. Anton Amdahl farmed corn, barley, oats, and alfalfa and raised cattle. In an interview Gene talks about life on the farm, about when the first tractors came, and how his father made paint by mixing skim milk, concrete, and red ochre.

Education

Gene Amdahl went to an ordinary rural school in Moody County with about 15-20 pupils, and passed through eight grades there. The last two years in high school he studied at the Augustana Academy boarding school in Canton, South Dakota. In spite of meagre conditions, education was important in his family, especially for his mother who was a trained teacher. He was accepted in the fall of 1941 at the South Dakota State College (later University) in Brookings. He applied to this school mostly because of the wishes of his parents, and he did not want to become a farmer but to escape the need to depend on the changeable weather in South Dakota.

The United States became in December 1941 involved in World War II, and everyone had to take part in the war effort. After a year as a teacher of physics, Gene Amdahl served for two years in the Navy as a teacher of electronics. His three brothers all enlisted in the Army and sailed overseas, while Gene Amdahl only served on a ship in dry dock. In April 1945, just three weeks before the end of the war, Gene Amdahl lost his brother Orin, who was leading his army group across the Rhine when he was shot by a sniper.

End of war and marriage

In the fall of 1946 Gene could return to South Dakota State, where he received his BSc degree in technical physics in 1948. By then he had also married Marian Delaine Quissell, whose origins were from the same area in Moody Co.

Marian also had strong roots in Kila, where her grandmother Hulda

Maria Andersdotter was born in 1874 in Grunnerud, and in 1894 had immigrated to the area of Flandreau, where her maternal uncles had come during the 1880s. These uncles were married to the sisters of Gene Amdahl's paternal grandmother's mother, so there was another connection to Kila.

In the 1920s a new generation of immigrants came to Moody County when Hulda's brother's son John Takman tried his luck in America. He returned to Sweden after his time in the U.S. and became a communist, a social doctor, and finally a member of parliament for the then *Vänsterpartiet Kommunisterna* (Swedish Communist Party). He kept up the contacts with his cousin Marian, and invited the Amdahls to visit him at Stora Backa in Kila in 1984.

Research student

Gene Amdahl was accepted as a research student in theoretical physics at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, WI, in 1948. There he was given the task, with two other students, of calculating the nuclear power of the stable isotope of "the tritium nucleus."

After calculating for thirty days with the help of a mechanical calculator, they decided it was impossible to make as exact a calculation as they wished. Gene Amdahl then decided to build a computer, later known as WISC (Wisconsin Integrally Synchronized Computer). For Gene Amdahl the construction of the computer became the start of his later career. He wrote his doctoral thesis (*The Logical Design of an Intermediate Speed Digital Computer*) about the computer and it was approved in February 1952. Gene Amdahl told that at that time there was not a single book about computers in the university library of University of Wisconsin, so his thesis was a pioneering effort. WISC is now at the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, CA.

Thanks to his work with WISC, he was recruited by IBM in Poughkeepsie, New York, at that time the

giant in the computer industry. Computers were then what are now called mainframes, and it is in this part of the industry that Gene Amdahl made his mark. IBM worked at this time with Model 701, and Amdahl worked on Model 704, the first machine with a programming language.

Mainframes

Mainframes have a much longer history than personal computers (PCs), and are still an important part of the infrastructure in, for instance, banks, authorities, and processing industries. Even if the development of the PC had gone faster, mainframes are regarded as a more secure and reliable alternative when huge amounts of data are to be handled.

Gene Amdahl resigned from IBM in 1955, and then worked for two smaller electronics companies in California, but returned to IBM in New York State in September 1960 to lead the development of the System 360, one of IBM's most successful mainframe systems. Gene Amdahl wanted to go back to California, and was given this choice in February 1965, when he was elected an IBM Fellow, with the opportunity to work for five years on anything in the many departments of this enormous company that he wanted. He chose an attachment to IBM's new Advanced Computing Systems Laboratory in Menlo Park, CA. In the fall of 1969 he left IBM for the second time as he was an advocate for IBM building larger and more powerful computers, combined with a frustration of the bureaucratic company culture of IBM.

Success

Gene Amdahl decided to start his own company. IBM is called "Big Blue" as it has a blue company logotype. Thus this new company, Amdahl Corporation, founded in the fall of 1970, became red! The business idea was to build mainframes that would be compatible with the IBM machines but more powerful. The trend was to make the electronics smaller, but Gene Amdahl

thought differently. Why not produce chips with more space for the electronics and thus be able to increase the power greatly, as well as increase their reliability?

The antitrust laws also made it possible for Gene Amdahl to use IBM's software. Amdahl Corporation invested more than 40 million dollars before they could deliver their first System 470 V/6 computer. It was three times as powerful as IBM's similar model. Amdahl became a serious competitor of "Big Blue" and succeeded in capturing as much as 22% of the market, when several big customers such as AT&T, General Motors, and NASA bought Amdahl mainframes.

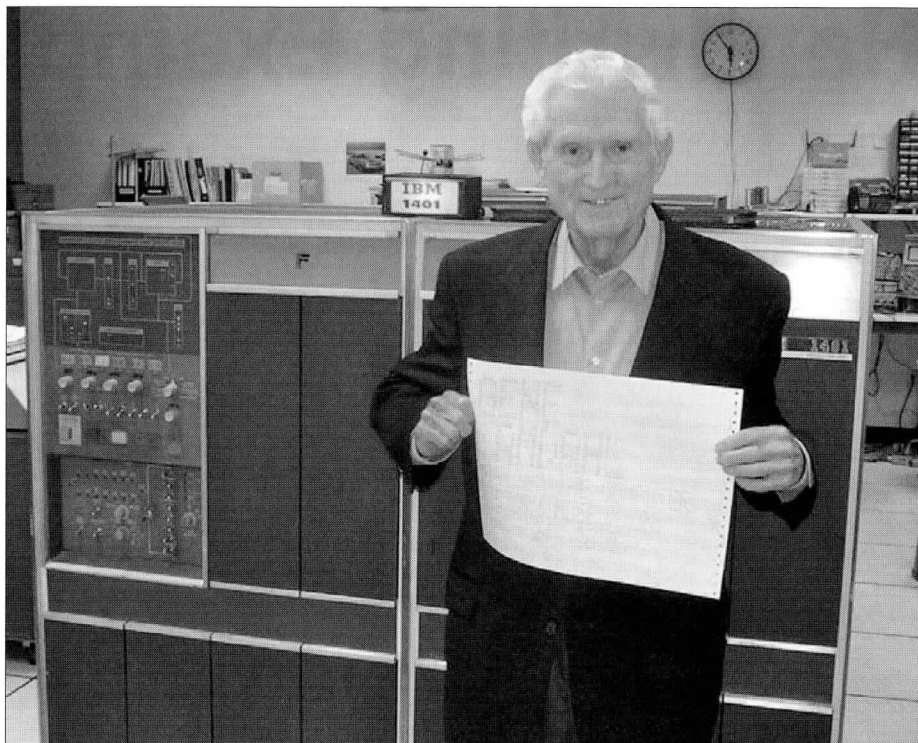
Gene Amdahl has always been both an inventor and an entrepreneur, and in September 1979 he found the time ripe to conclude his work for the company that bore his name; in August 1980 he totally severed all ties with Amdahl Corporation. This company continues, now wholly owned by Japanese Fujitsu, which they were already working with.

The next step was to challenge the IBM monopoly in the field of the most powerful mainframes. The new company was named Trilogy Systems, and based on the good reputation of Amdahl many were interested in investing in the company. Gene Amdahl himself hoped to be able to sell for a billion dollars after two years on the market.

Trilogy Systems business was built on Gene Amdahl's technical knowledge, and the goal was to be able to use 20 silicon wafers instead of 2000 electronic chips. This would increase the performances considerably.

... is followed by adversity

The Trilogy Systems adventure in the end turned into a big disaster. The goal was to present a finished product in 1984, but various delays and technical problems resulted in the end of development. The 70 million dollars that was left of the in-



Gene Amdahl in 2010. (Picture from <http://ibm-1401.info/>)

vestors' money was used to buy a competing company that had a product to sell, Elxsi.

Gene Amdahl has continued working with mainframes. In 1994 he founded a new company, Commercial Data Servers, that was liquidated a couple of years later. Today he is mostly known for Amdahl's Law which he presented in 1967, a formula that shows the possibilities of improving computers by using parallel processors. He has been a visiting professor at Stanford University, and has received honorary doctorates from both his alma maters, South Dakota State University and the University of Wisconsin, as well as from Luther College in Decorah, IA. He has also been honored by other associations such as IEEE Computer Society, the Association for Computing Machinery, the British Computer Society, and the National Academy of Engineering. Gene and Marianne Amdahl live in Palo Alto, CA.

To rank his celebrity one can find that he receives about 125,000 hits on Google. Steve Jobs who was not worth mentioning in the encyclopedia in 1984 now gets 830 million hits...

Sources:

- Slater, Robert: *Portraits in Silicon*, MIT Press 1987.
- Oral history – interview from the University of Minnesota (1986 and 1989).
- Oral history – interview from the Computer History Museum (2000). *Link on p. 30!*
- Letter from Gene Amdahl to the author 1997.
- English Wikipedia – articles on Gene Amdahl, the Amdahl Corporation, and IBM.
- Gene Amdahl's thesis from 1952 can be read on the internet: *see link on page 30!*

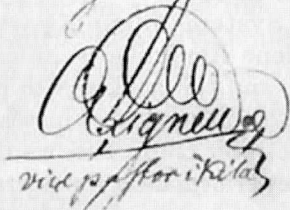
Note:

Sophia Erickson, paternal grandmother to Gene Amdahl, was the sister of Johan August Erickson, father of Eric Elmer Erickson, see SAG 2013:1, p. 12.

The author Carl-Johan Ivarsson works as a high school teacher in Söderköping, Sweden. His e-mail is: <cj.ivarsson@telia.com>

Handwriting Example 36

År 1819 den 13^{de} Juni, på eftermiddagen, timade den olycksständens, att f.d. Studenten Engdahl, cirka 50 år, mellan Kråkebrätan och Torp, ifrån det förra på högra sidan om vägen på kullen, afklädde sig, och med en raketknif afskärade ådror och senor på båda armarne, medelst ett skärande strakt medom armurket ända intill benet och det andra vid handleden. Sedan blodet afrennit hade han flåpåt sig ner till vägen der han ämnade lif farns quarliggande. Lördes på kunnra fram till Torp, der v. pastor i Kila besökte honom och förpassade Engdahl genom Tjårdings karln till Kronofogden. Bloden tycktes helt och hållet vara honom afrennen, emedan feren wore innele. Quedes hvita, men han ägde likafullt krafter nog att själv sätta sig upp i fången och åter lägga sig. Kronofogden lät föra Engdahl till Carlstad, der han fick tillfälle undslippa fängslararn. Engdahl passerade 3 a 4 dagar i Carlstad, hvarefter han dränktes sig i Rudskärnet icke långt ifrån Gladen.

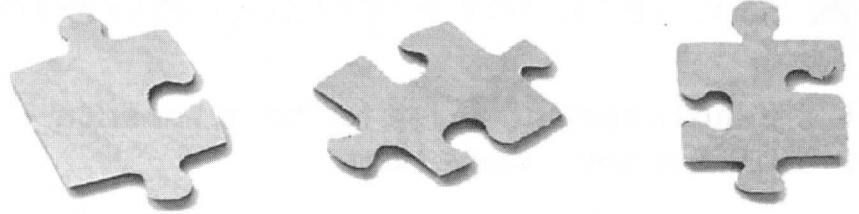
Kila Prestgård den 30^{de} Juni 1819. 
v. pastor i Kila

This is a sad story from Kila in Värmland (Kila CI:8 [1800-1826] Bild 111 / sid 232, picture from Arkiv Digital).

Thanks to Mats Lundel for the tip about this story!

Transcription and translation on p. 22.

Bits & Pieces



House of Genealogy in Leksand, Sweden, is closing

The sad news came out this summer that the House of Genealogy in Leksand, Sweden, will close at the end of this year. The House has been an important part of the Swedish genealogical community for 21 years, but now has to close because of the sharp decline in the number of visitors. People prefer to sit at home and do their research on the internet, instead of travelling to Leksand and reading microfiche. Also their economy was damaged when Genline/Ancestry moved a big scanning job to Ireland. The present owner, Grig-gus Per Norberg, will carry on some of their services from his home base in Stora Skedvi (Dala.).

President Obama visited Sweden

During September 4–5 President Barack Obama visited Sweden for a meeting with the Swedish government. He also had lunch with the King and Queen, and visited the Stockholm synagogue in memory of Raoul Wallenberg. After the visit the President continued to Russia.



President Obama and Fredrik Reinfeldt, prime minister of Sweden.

The Carl Sandburg medal to Glen Brolander

The Carl Sandburg Medal is given by the Swedish-American Historical Society to those in the Swedish American community that have benefited the community through their work. Previous recipients of the Sandburg Medal include former University of Minnesota President Nils Hasselmo and the late Conrad Bergendoff, former president of Augustana College.

Glen Brolander, who is 100 percent Swedish, developed his interest in his Swedish heritage when he joined the staff of Augustana College in Rock Island, Ill. It is the oldest of all Swedish-American colleges and he worked there for 40 years as the school's vice president for financial affairs. Since then, he and his wife, Elaine, have connected with relatives and family in Sweden.

(*Stillwater Gazette* 2013 Sep. 19)



From left: Eric R. Lund (officer at large of the SAHS), Glen Brolander, and Philip J. Anderson (president of the SAHS).



New Swedish ambassador to the U.S.



The new Swedish ambassador to the U.S., Mr. Björn Lyrvall, presented his credentials to President Obama in September.

Mr. Lyrvall is 52 years old, born in Hofors (Gäst.), but grew up in Borlänge (Dala.). He is married with three children. As a young man he went to university in Pennsylvania and has since worked for the Swedish foreign office for 27 years.

Ancestry.com has acquired Find A Grave

Well-known web site Find A Grave has been bought by Ancestry.com, which has raised questions about if the site will remain free to the users.

Here is an answer from Jim Tipton, founder of the site:

What will change at Find A Grave?

•The short answer is: nothing. The site will remain free and continue to operate as it has for the last eighteen years. I will continue to run the website but will have the support of a full, dedicated Find A Grave team at Ancestry.com – so the pace of updates / improvements / new features should accelerate.

(<http://www.findagrave.com/ancestryFAQs.html> [accessed 2013 Oct.8]).

A sad fate for a young Swedish immigrant

My grandfather's uncle left for North America in 1910, but never came home

BY ANTON ROSENDAHL

My great-great-grandfather was Karl Oskar Lundström, (b. 1857 Jul. 13 in Burträsk [Väbo.]), who was first married to Viktoria Johanna Nordström, (b. 1861 in Lycksele, [Väbo.]). She died in 1895, having given birth to five children. The family lived at Villvattnet in Burträsk.

Among these children were Hildur Katarina (b. 1886 May 27), who in 1904 Feb. 4 married Per Johan Lindberg (b. 1878 Aug. 14 in Skellefteå), a blacksmith, and lived with him and their children also in Villvattnet.

Another child in Oskar's family was son Karl Gustaf (b. 1891 Dec. 20), who was known as *Kalle*, the usual nickname for boys named Karl.

On 1910 Jun. 22 Kalle and his brother-in-law J.P. Lindberg left the port of Göteborg for England, travelled to Liverpool, and continued on the S/S *Saxonia* to Boston, where they arrived 1910 Jul. 14. They had tickets for Medicine Hat in Alberta, Canada, and presumably took the train there.

Kalle and J.P. Lindberg soon afterwards moved to Fernie in British Columbia. There they both worked as lumbermen.

Unfortunately Kalle became ill during the fall and went to a doctor, but could go back to work after a week. Then he caught typhoid fever and was admitted to the local hospital, where he became sicker, and finally died on Nov. 19 at 2 o'clock p.m.

His brother-in-law J.P. Lindberg wrote the next day to Kalle's older brother Herbert (b. 1887 Oct. 27), and told him what had happened, in a letter that is still preserved.

J.P. writes

"Fernie Nov.20, 1910,

Good day Herbert!

Now I will take up the pen and first answer the letter you had written to Kalle.

I must first tell you that I live as usual

and my health is good, but it is no fun to write this time. Perhaps you already have an inkling of what I will write now, a rather hard message for all of you at home, and not least for me. I have had such sad times now for three weeks. You must tell all the others, but be careful and start by talking of minor things, so you don't tell them directly.

"You are not to suppose that I have not done my best, but it is another man that governs what happens to us. It has been like he [Kalle] would not have any luck here...

"I visited him daily at the hospital and comforted him. He believed himself when he was lying in the ward that death would come to him, and I also sensed this, so I have been praying to the Lord that he should have mercy on his poor soul. He said himself that this would be the only thing that could help him in life and death, and that it would be the only way out for him, to leave everything to the Lord, then it may be as it will.

"He was so calm and content, but wanted us that are left, not to think so much about other things, but consider our departure from this life...

"He is gone home to the Lord, and that is why we shall not be overcome with grief, but ask the Lord for help in this difficult time of sorrow...

"I have nobody to comfort me, but I have to leave everything to the Lord, and be content with that...

"Today we are going to bury him, which is a sad day. We are to meet at 2 p.m. and there are many Scandinavians that will take part in the funeral. I must also tell you that we have made a collection for a nice casket for him, \$25. His funeral will cost \$45, but we have donated \$25, that is nearly 100 kronor. We wanted him to have a decent funeral.

"I will take care of his clothes and everything else he has.

"Now I will have to stop for this time, as my thoughts are so beset with grief, which you can not wonder at. So if you have some words of comfort to send me it will be well.



Karl Gustaf (Kalle) Lundström.

"I think that if I can have my health I will go back home in the spring...

"Signed by me

P J Lindberg

Fernie B C

Canada"

At home in Sweden

Kalle had been engaged before he left for America to Ester Josefina Westman, (b. 1889 Mar. 28), who 1917 Sep. 30 married Kalle's brother Herbert, and had three children with him, before he died of pneumonia after an accident in the forest 1927 Mar. 6. The youngest was my grandfather, John Oskar Lundström (b. 1922 Mar. 18 in Kalvträsk). Ester Lundström died 1974 Aug. 21 in Kalvträsk, 64 years after her first fiancé.

The brother-in-law, J. P. Lindberg, returned to his wife Hildur Katarina and their two children in Villvattnet.

Anton Rosendahl lives in Skellefteå, Sweden.

His e-mail:

<anton.rosendahl@telia.com>

The Sweden America Center changes its name

An old institution expands its operations

The Sweden America Center in Karlstad, Sweden, recently decided to change its name to *The Swedish Migration Center* which better tells about the Center's present direction.

One of the goals for the Center is to study both migration from and to Sweden. The institution has been studying the "Great emigration" of the period of 1845–1930, a work of utmost importance to understand why, how, and when this happened.

The results have been very helpful to individuals that have wanted to find out about their own family members. This work will continue on many levels.

But Sweden is these days also an immigration country, and the history of these "new Swedes" must also be preserved. This is one of the new ambitions of the Swedish Migration

Center, so there will be documentation of the origins for people from all parts of the world. This will be available when their descendants become interested in their own history. It is necessary with a special institution of this kind, so people will know where they should ask their questions.

The Center has the last years used parallels from the historical migration while working on school projects, which has been a fruitful way of showing that migration is something that is always going on, that impacts people all over the world.

That it is important to increase the knowledge about migration is clearly seen in society today. There is an ongoing debate about questions on migration and integration. These are often complicated questions that need



a stable basis for decision-making. Through documentation of the experiences of immigrants we will create such material. We always carry our background – the knowledge gathered by the Swedes that emigrated to get a better life.

(Press release 2013 Sep. 13)

The Swedish Migration Center
Box 331
S-651 08 Karlstad
Sweden

Visit:
Residenstorget 1, Karlstad

E-mail:
info@swedenamerica.se

Web address:
<http://www.migrationcenter.se/>



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1045 SEK is approximately \$158 based on currency exchange rate as of 9/9/2013



Marriage certificate, found at the Swedish Consulate in Chicago - a follow-up

In SAG 2013/2 on p. 4 there was a picture of a marriage certificate for Otto Persson and his bride Emma Johnson of Rockford, Illinois.

Now SAG reader Ted Rosvall has found obituaries for both Otto and Emma on GenealogyBank.com.

In the obituary for Otto it is mentioned that he died 1942 July 13 at the Billings Memorial Hospital in Chicago, after having been hospitalized for almost a month.

Otto was born in 1877 Apr. 9 in Visby, Sweden, according to his obituary, which is wrong. It turns out that the date was correct, but he was not born on Gotland.

He was actually born at Fiskars bruk in Finland, where his family lived for a couple of years before moving to Stenkyrka parish on the island of Gotland. Otto's father was the farmer Per Andersson (b. 1846 Sep.1 in Svedala (Skån.). Otto's mother was Anna Johanna Olivia Funk (b. 1850 Apr. 30 in Stenkyrka).

Son Otto Johan Theodor left his home in 1896 Sep. 18 for North America.

In 1901 Apr. 9 Otto came back to his father's home with his own family: his wife and the oldest daughter Florence Loretta. There is a long note in the *Församlingsbok*, that Otto and Emma had been married by Pastor Leafgren in the Swedish Free Church in Rockford, which is what it says on their marriage certificate.

They only stayed for a year, and went back to America on 1902 Mar. 21, with tickets for Chicago. By then daughter #2, Bertha Otilia Johanna, had been born on 1902 Jan. 6 in Stenkyrka.

From now on they stayed in Rockford for the rest of their lives. Otto used the surname Pearson, as his father's first name was Per. His younger brother Oscar kept the Anderson name. Oscar left Visby on 1909 Oct. 13 with a ticket for Rockford.

Death Claims
Otto Pearson

**Rockford Resident for
45 Years Succumbs
At Chicago Hospital**

Otto Pearson, 65, rural route 7, died at 6:25 o'clock last night at Billings Memorial hospital in Chicago where he had been a patient since June 18. Death ended a long illness.

A resident of Rockford for 45 years, Mr. Pearson was born in Visby, Sweden, April 9, 1877, and came directly to Rockford when he arrived in America. He was a retired furniture worker and was a member of the Royal league.

Mr. Pearson is survived by his wife, Mrs. Emma Pearson; a son, Robert Pearson of Rockford; four daughters, Mrs. Alice Bjorklund, Mrs. Mildred Pratt, both of Rockford, Mrs. Florence Hunter of Mount Rainier, Md., and Mrs. Bertha Morris of Chicago; a brother, Oscar Anderson of Kansas City, Mo.; seven grandchildren and a sister and a brother in Sweden.

The Rockford Register-Republic 1942 July 14

Mrs. Emma Pearson

Mrs. Emma M. Pearson, 89, the mother of Mrs. Mildred Pratt, a deputy sheriff - matron for Winnebago County, died at 4:55 a.m. today in Beloit (Wis.) Memorial Hospital. Mrs. Pearson, who formerly resided at 1413 6th Ave., had lived at Caravilla Nursing Home, Beloit, for 3½ years.

Survivors besides Mrs. Pratt include two other daughters, Mrs. Bertha Morris, Chicago, and Mrs. Florence Hunter, Enka, N.C.; one son, Robert, Rockford; and one brother, Axel W. Johnson, Rockford.

Services will be at 2:30 p.m. Thursday in the Sundberg Funeral Home, 215 N. 6th St., with burial in Willwood Burial Park.

The Rockford Register-Republic 1967 May 1. (GenealogyBank)

8	8/9	Sweden	1877	10	1898	8
9	10/10	Finland	1877	10	1901	9
10	11/25	Sweden	1877	10	1901	10
11	12/6	Stenkyrka	1877	10	1901	11

The left-hand side of Stenkyrk AIIa:1:8, which shows Otto and his family and the various places they were born.

8	b. n.	1877	10	1898	8
9	c. n.	1877	10	1901	9
10		1877	10	1901	10
11		1877	10	1901	11

The right-hand side of the same page, which shows the note of the marriage of Otto and Emma, and when they left for America again.

Emma Mathilda's family

As seen on the picture above, Emma was born 1877 May 10 in Ludvika, at a place called Finnäset. Her father was the laborer Joel Johansson, (b. 1847 Apr. 29 in Hällestad [Östg.]). Her mother was Johanna Sofia Risberg (b. 1853 Dec. 1 in Ludvika). Joel and Johanna also had a daughter

Alma Sofia, (b. 1878 Dec.24, died 1879 Jan. 21.). Next they had another Alma Sofia (b. 1880 Sep.16).

On 1881 May 13 they left their home and went to Göteborg. They left the port on May 20 with tickets for New York.

Was it Batten disease?

By JANICE ASP

1866 års Död- och Begravnings-Bok					för Lommaryd-Neder-Församling.								
Is.	Begravnings-		Kön.	De aflidnes					Dödsorsak.	Enligt betyg M. S.	Döde i valgförenhets-, sjukvårds-, straff- anstalt, annerstades (allt utom församlingen), utomlands.	Förelidit Huru Försämringen	Serskilda Anteckningar.
	dag.	Månad.		dag.	M.	O.	År.	Månad.					
24	24	Sept.	2	1	1866	21	1	11	Ogilt.	Fallandesot.		196	Hett fallande dot och varit blind sedan hon var 8 år gammal.

Lommaryd C:6 (1861-1882) Bild 236, (picture from Arkiv Digital). The text to the right says that Emilia had had epilepsy and been blind since she was 8 years old.

George Swanson was the maternal grandfather of my mother-in-law, Eleanor Carlson Asp. His birth was February 24, 1848, in Sweden. The place was Södra Ralingsås Norrgård in the parish of Lommaryd in the county of Jönköping. Named Göran Peter, he was the youngest of 10 children born to Swen Persson and Anna Gustava Ingesdotter.

It was easy to trace this family in the clerical surveys, since all the children were born in the same place beginning in 1824. It was noted that child 2, Johanna Gustava born 1826, and child 3, Christina Charlotta born 1828, were listed as blind in their teen years. Child 9, Emilia Eva Sophia born 1845, was also listed as blind. All three girls died as young adults: Johanna in 1850, Christina in 1845, and Emilia in 1866.

When I showed the information to my mother-in-law, we wondered, what could have caused this? She sent a copy of the extensive death record for Johanna to her cousin in Ödeshög, Sweden.

The following is Paul Karlsson's 1980 translation: "As a child she had a healthy body and a sensitive soul, but when she was five and going to begin to read she had weak eyes, (which is) why she never was able to learn the ABC book and the little catechism. In her twelfth year she came down with epilepsy, which

caused damage to her memory and nervous system. The power of comprehension diminished gradually, but the sensitivity increased sometimes. She mourned very much a dead younger sister. A lot of crying weakened her eyes even more. Eight years ago it became increasingly darker for her and she became completely blind. Help was impossible. Once a month the convulsions pained her and laid her in bed for ten days. At the end she lost consciousness." Epilepsy (*fallandesot*) was listed as the cause of death.

The explanation of the medical problem

Eleanor was working in the medical field and was very concerned. She could not find anything in the medical books. There was nothing here in the family medical history.

I volunteer at a Family History Center on Saturdays. I mentioned it to my co-worker, Kathy Wright. She told me to look up *Batten disease* on the internet. I did. I printed off many pages. When I read them it reminded me of the death record translation. Beginning at age 5 to 10, vision problems and seizures show up in a normal child. Overtime, children suffer mental impairment, worsening seizures, and progressive loss of sight and motor skills. Eventually

they became blind, bedridden, and demented. It is fatal. Death occurs in the late teens or early twenties. Johanna was 24, Stina was 17, and Emilia was 21.

What is this disease?

Batten disease is a disorder of the nervous system. It occurs only when a child inherits two copies of the defective gene, one from each parent. It is uncommon in the United States but more common in Sweden. Kathy knew about it because she helps a family with three children who have the disease.

I do think that George Swanson's three sisters may have had Batten disease. Sometimes the mysteries of genealogy are resolved by talking with others who just might have a suggestion for you.

The author is
Jan Sokody Asp
441 Adams St Elgin, IL 60123
E-mail: Jasp441@gmail.com

Editor's note: According to the Swedish Board for Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), 2-3 children are diagnosed every year. There are 5 persons with this illness per each million in the population. There are some 40 people with this illness in the country now.

Big changes at SVAR

The Swedish National Archives (*Riksarkivet*) have recently made a lot of changes to SVAR. The most important to notice is that there is a new name for the site, and also a new address. This is to make SVAR a more integrated part of their web site.

The new name is *Digitala Forskar-salen* (The Digital Research Room [DRR]).

The new address is found on page 30.

This version of the site was launched in late September, and there are still many things to fix, so all help texts are not yet in English, but they are working on it.

It is still possible to use the old DRR, if you have an account from before.

The National Archives Database, also called NAD, is the joint database of most archival documents in the Swedish system, whether they are microfilmed or not. If they are microfilmed there is a little blue arrow or just a picture of a computer screen. But most often you want for instance church records.

The NAD is free to search at the first level, but if you click on anything digitized you are asked to log in.

Church records

To find the church records you can either use the "Search all collections" and then enter the name of the parish in the search window, or go to the DRR. The example to the right is from "Search all collections".

Now the example on top of the next page shows the "Extended search" from the DRR's first page. There are many more series of documents to choose from further down the page. This is where you can find the Military rolls, for instance. The extracts from the church records (SCB) are found further down in the left column.

Search the collections

The national archival database

Other languages

The screenshot shows the Riksarkivet website with the 'Digital Research Room' tab selected. The search interface includes a search bar with the text 'Search the National Archives' collections of digitised records and indexes. Below the search bar is a 'Free text' input field and a 'Digitised material only' checkbox. There are also fields for 'Name', 'Place', and 'Date'. A 'Search' button is visible. To the right, there is an 'Image ID' field and another 'Search' button. Below the search area, there is a promotional banner for subscriptions: 'Now! Subscriptions 1 month 100 SEK'. To the right of the banner, there is a 'Shop online' section with links for 'Order subscription', 'Order CDs, DVDs and books', and 'Download fact sheet'. Below that, there is a 'Links' section with various links like 'Beställ utdragn och kopior', 'Du som indexerar', 'Start your genealogical research', 'News', 'Newsletter', and 'Register licence key'.

The screenshot shows the Riksarkivet website with the 'Search the collections' tab selected. The search interface includes a search bar with the text 'Search the National Archives Database and the Digital Research Room's online collections.' Below the search bar is an input field containing 'nordmark' and a 'Search' button. There is also a 'More options' link and a 'Digitised material only' checkbox. Below the search area, there are three columns of content: 'National Archives Database' with a link to 'Search archives', 'Digital Research Room' with a link to 'Discover our collections of digitised records and indexes', and 'Shop online' with links for 'Order subscription', 'Order CDs, DVDs and books', and 'Download fact sheet'.

Digital Research Room - Riksarkivet - ... x

sol.riksarkivet.se/digitala-forskarstalen/infosida:register

National Archives Shop online

Logged in as: Elisabeth Thorsell My pages Sign out Other languages

Start National Archives Database Digital Research Room About the search service

Digital Research Room Extended search Subject

Search online collections and databases

Here is a collection of links and several specialized search tools to the National Archives' databases and records that are available online. You are also welcome to immerse yourself in the databases on a visit to our Reading rooms facilities. At our facilities you have access to more material than on Internet.

Digitised collections	Databases	Other searches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Army rolls Church archives County administration records Court archives The Ericshorn collection (autograph collection) General Muster Rolls Land certificates 1875-1933 Land register about 1630-1750 Local surveys (agriculture) The Military Archives map collections Navy archive The Novgorod Occupation Archive Parish extracts 1860-1930 Population reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birth records Cabinet meeting errands 1840-1920 Census Companies and associations in Grums L² Court records, Gällberga and Näs Crofter's Defence Västernorrlands och Jämtlands län DDSS (Demographical Database for Southern Sweden) L² Death records Donner's business archives L² Estonia collection L² Fire insurances Fire insurances - maps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently scanned volumes Image ID

The middle picture on this page shows a successful research for the church records of Nordmark parish in Värmland. To see the scanned pages, just click on the button "image" in the bottom righthand corner.

Some of the databases you will find in the "column" *databases* on the "Extended search" are from other web sites, and are marked with a small square with a little arrow, like for instance the Skåne database. Or the database of people sent back from Norway by the Norwegian police.

This is also where you find the "released prisoners" (*frigivna straffarbetsfångar*).

Church archives Search tips

County **0** Archive/parish Type of document

Värmlands län Nordmarks kyrkoarkiv Alla

Search Q Clear ✖ More options v

Read more List archive/parish List volumes

Showing record 1-20 of 117 20 Hits per page

Show history for Nordmarks kyrkoarkiv v

Archive: Nordmarks kyrkoarkiv (SE/VA/13390 L²)

1 2 3 4 5 6 ...

Type of document	Volume	Date	Note	Image
Husförhörslängder	SE/VA/13390/A I/1	1733 - 1744		Image



Johan Fredrik Vilhelm Kristian Svensson Jensen, b 1895 July 3 in Glästrup, Denmark. He was in 1920 sentenced to 1 year of hard labor for stealing for the 3rd time, and was released in 1921 from Härlanda prison in Göteborg.

Under the heading "Subject" you will find readymade links to several categories:

- Crime and punishment
- Emigration
- Genealogy
- General and mixed
- Military
- Properties
- Taxes

This will help you find what you are looking for. This new costume for the old SVAR site will probably turn out to be easier to work with when you have used it and tried it.

Elisabeth Thorsell

Digital Research Room - Riksarkivet - ... x

sol.riksarkivet.se/digitala-forskarstalen/infosida:amnesomrade-emigration

National Archives Shop online

Logged in as: Elisabeth Thorsell My pages Sign out Other languages

Start National Archives Database Digital Research Room About the search service

Digital Research Room Extended search Subject

Emigration

Links to digitised archives

- Göteborgs poliskammarens arkiv före 1900
 - Inkomna uppgifter om utvandrade personer
 - Övriga handlingar rörande utvandrare
- Norska poliskammaren, register
- Poliskammaren i Malmö, utvandrarelistor
- Summariska folkmängdsredogörelser
- Aldre poliskammaren, utvandrarrulla

Databases

- Brevskrivaregister Abonnementstfr

To find the Passenger lists from Göteborg, for instance, you can use the "Subject" search in the DRR. Click on the "Inkomna uppgifter om utvandrade personer" to find the right lists that are scanned.

The solution to the Handwriting Example 36

Transcription

År 1812 den 13 de Juni, på eftermiddagen, timade den olyckshän-/
delsen, att f.d. Studenten Engdahl, circa 50 år, millan Kråke-/
bråten och Torp, ifrån det förra på högra sidan om vägen/
på Kullen, afklädde sig, och med en rakeknif afskar alla/
ådror och senar på båda armarne, medelst ett skärande/
straxt nedom armvicket ända intill benet och det andra/
vid handleden. Sedan bloden afrunnit hade han släp-
it sig ner till vägen der han ännu vid lif fanns quarlig-/
gande. Fördes på kärra fram till Torp, der v. pastor/
i Kila besökte honom och förpassade Engdahl genom/
Fjärdingskarln till Kronofogden. Bloden tycktes helt/
och hållit wara honom afrunnen, emedan såren woro/
inuti Alldeles hvita, men han ägde likafullt Krafter/
nog att sjelf sätta sig upp i sängen och åter lägga sig./
Kronofogden lät föra Engdahl till Carlstad, der han fick/
tillfälle undslippa fångförarn. Engdahl passerade 3 a 4/
dagar i Carlstad, hvarefter han dränkte sig i Ruda-kärret/
icke långt ifrån Staden.

Kila Prestegård den 30 Juni 1812.

A. Lignell
v. pastor i Kila

Translation

In the Year 1812 on June 13th, in the afternoon, an accident happened to the former student Engdahl, about 50 years old, between Kråkebråten and Torp, the former on the right side of the road, on the hill, took off his clothes, and with a razor cut all his veins and tendons on both his arms, by a cutting just below the inside of the elbow straight through to the bone and of the other to his wrist. After the blood had run out he had managed to drag himself down to the road where he was found lying still alive. He was taken on a cart to Torp, where the assistant pastor of Kila visited with him and sent Engdahl, with the help of the parish constable, away to the county police commissioner. The blood seemed to have emptied totally, as his wounds were quite white inside, but he still had enough strength to raise himself in bed and then lie down again. The county police commissioner had Engdahl conveyed to Karlstad, where he got an opportunity to escape from the prison guard. Engdahl spent 3 or 4 days in Karlstad, after which he drowned himself in the Ruda-kärret not far from the city.

Kila Pastor's house 1812, June 30.

[Signed:] A. Lignell

Assisstant pastor of Kila

According to the *History of the diocese of Karlstad (Karlstads stifts herdaminne)*, volume 3, page 330, by Anders Edestam (1968), the poor man's name was Nils Magnus Engdahl. He was born 1757 Sep. 8, and drowned in the Sundstatjärn 1812 June 28. This differs a little from the story above, but according to the death records for Karlstad (Karlstad stadsförsamling FI:2 (1798-1860) *Bild* 38 / *sid* 67) June 28 is the right date.

The history says that he had been

a student, but never graduated, and then became a gentleman farmer (*lantman*) and a teacher to small children (*barnalärare*). He married 1783 April 20 in Blomskog parish to Christina Margareta Svanell, born 1764 Oct. 29 in Gunnarskog parish, daughter to the curate (*komminister*) Olavus Olavi Svanell and his wife Catharina Christina Pertsche.

He and his wife had two children, d. Anna Cajsa (b. 1783 May 3 in Blomskog, died infant) and son Jean Olof

(b. 1784 Oct. 25 in Silbodal). Already in the Silbodal cl. survey (AI:6 [1783-1791) his wife is listed as living with her mother at Gerud, and her husband is not mentioned...

It is not known where he went or why he left his family.

Carla Markell, 1st lady of Delaware, has Swedish roots

A Facebook clip gave the clues

BY ELISABETH THORSELL

During the preparations for the celebrations for the New Sweden 375th Jubilee, I happened to see an interview with Mrs. Carla Markell on Facebook. She is married to Mr. Jack Markell, governor of Delaware since 2009.

In the interview Mrs. Markell mentioned that she had Swedish ancestors who came to the U.S. in 1912. She told a story about how that family had wanted to go on the *Titanic*, but had to wait for a later boat and thus avoided the shipwreck.

Ancestors of Carla Smathers Markell

1 *Carla Smathers*, b 1960 Dec. 26 in Newark, DE.
(Father 2, Mother 3)

Married about 1991 to Jack Markell, governor, b 1960 Nov. 26 in Newark, DE.

— Generation I —

2 ff *Donald Lee Smathers*, b 1927 Dec. 5 in San Diego, San Diego, CA, d 2009 Jul. 21 in Wilmington, DE.

In the 1940 U.S. Census he lives with his grandmother Marie Olson and his mother at 1143 15th Street in San Diego.

(Child 1, Father 4, Mother 5)

Married 1st 1952 Apr. 5 in Los Angeles, CA, USA to the following ancestor. Divorced about 1962.

Married 2nd 1975 to Rita McWorther.

3 m *Joan Ison Mills*, b about 1930.
(Child 1, Father 6, Mother 7)

— Generation II —

4 ff *William Long Smathers*, b 1901 Jul. 14 in Texas, d 1957 Dec. 18 in Sacramento, CA.

In the U.S. Census for 1930 he and his family lived in San Diego, CA.
(Child 2, Father 8, Mother 9)

Married about 1924 to the following

ancestor. Divorced about 1935.

5 fm *Adela Ingegerd Olson*, b 1905 Jun. 6 in Linghed, Svärdsjö, (Dala.), Sweden, d 1998 Jul. 20 in San Diego, CA.

In the 1940 U.S. Census she is living with her mother and son at 1143 15th Street in San Diego. She is divorced, but had the surname Horn, which indicates a short 2nd marriage. She works as a shop assistant in a department store.
(Child 2, Father 10, Mother 11)

6 mf *George R. Mills*
(Child 3)

Married to the following ancestor

7 mm *Beatrice Keziah*
(Child 3)

— Generation III —

8 ff f *James M Smathers*, b ca 1872 in Kentucky. He lived in 1910 with his family in Santa Anna, Coleman Co, TX.

9 ff m *Mary M Cee*, b ca 1869 in Kentucky. (Her maiden name from "California Death index" when son William died).

In 1930 she lived with her son William and his family in San Diego, CA.
(Child 4)

10 fm f *Daniel Gustaf Olsson*, b 1873 Oct. 24 in Vallbyn, Enviken, (Dala.), d 1913 in the U.S. He was a stonemason.

He lived with his family at Linghed, Svärdsjö, before their emigration. Before they left their home there was a big farewell party, and much talk in the area on how they had missed travelling on the *Titanic*, according to local historian Björn Engström.

Moved with his whole family 26 Mar 1912 from Linghed, Svärdsjö, to North America. Moved with his



Governor Jack Markell and his wife Carla. (Photo from Sweden & America.)

whole family 19 Apr 1912 from Göteborg to New York, NY, USA. Moved on the S/S Lusitania 3 May 1912 from Liverpool, England, to New York, NY, USA. They travelled to San Diego as Daniel had a sister Minnie (Wilhelmina) there who had immigrated a few years earlier. They settled in San Diego, where Daniel seems to have died shortly afterwards.
(Child 5)

Married 1900 Apr. 16 in Svärdsjö to the following ancestor.

11 fm m *Maria (Marie) Andersdotter*, b 1 Aug 1877 in Linghed, Svärdsjö, d 24 Aug 1961 in San Diego, CA.

In the 1920 U.S. Census she lived with her children at 16th Street in San Diego, and was then a widow. The family is recorded as "Oleson." She owned her house and had four boarders.

In the 1930 U.S. Census she lives at 2503 Lincoln Avenue in San Diego with sons Enar and Birger.

In the 1940 U.S. Census she lives at 1143 15th Street in San Diego with her daughter Adela and her grandson Donald.

(Child 5)

f is far (father in Swedish).

m is mor (mother in Swedish).

fm is farmor (father's mother).

(Dala.) is province of Dalarna.

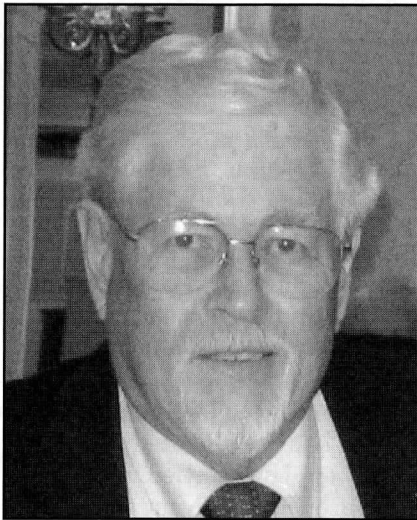
Book Reviews



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.

SAG Book Review editor retires



Dennis L. Johnson, 2009. (Photo by E. Thorsell).

SAG Book Review editor *Dennis L. Johnson* of Pottstown, PA, has since 2004 written 90 lengthy, detailed, and interesting book reviews of books on Swedish or Swedish-American themes.

For this big effort we are all very grateful.

Now Dennis has resigned from being the regular Book Review editor, but will still write occasional reviews when he feels like it. And I hope he will feel like it often.

I must also mention that Dennis is my 5th half-cousin, we share a *klockare*, Anders Persson (1762–1834) in Gestad (Dals.), who was married twice. *Elisabeth Thorsell*

for Stockholm where he found work as a ship painter, then sailed to France and then to England seeking work. He found a little work as a scene painter in theaters and in 1901 he earned his passage to the U.S. by decorating a Norwegian sea captain's cabin. He worked on the East Coast as an itinerant artist for two years, then signed on a ship as seaman to get to California. There he found work decorating buildings and doing other odd jobs. He began associating with other artists in Los Angeles and started exhibiting his own easel paintings by 1905.

Through his circle of artists, Borg became acquainted with Charles Lummis, founder of the Southwest Museum, and leader of a group of Southern California art patrons and enthusiasts. They took Borg under their wing and helped him sell his paintings and sponsored trips to Europe and North Africa, later South America, to sketch and to observe. By 1917 he began traveling to the desert southwest to document the vanishing life of the Southwest Indians. As he became better known, he became more in demand and was able to maintain a more steady income. By 1918, he married a much younger woman, Madeline Carriel, and built a home and studio in Santa Barbara. His paintings became celebrated nationally and he maintained contact with his friends and patrons in Los Angeles. He had become famous but had little money. His wife was unhappy in Santa Barbara and they finally moved back to Los Angeles in 1924 where he had more opportunities to earn money by selling paintings and teaching.

Borg and his wife settled in Holly-

A famous Swedish artist

Carl Oscar Borg and the Magic Region, by Helen Laird, 1986, Gibbs B. Smith, Inc. Peregrine Smith Books, Layton, Utah, 248 pages, Hardcover, Illustrated, Amazon.com, \$41.33 plus shipping.

Swedish American artist Carl Oscar Borg was born into poverty in Sweden in 1879 and rose to become one of the best-known artists of the American Southwest. His life has been recorded in this biography written by Helen Laird and published in 1986. The author was asked to write this book by Borg's widow, Lily Borg Elmberg, before she died.

Lily Elmberg gave Ms. Laird the autobiography in Swedish written by Borg covering the years 1879-1908, as well as her own summary of the years 1908-1947. She was also given Borg's poems, letters, notebooks, and essays, which she used heavily as a nucleus for her own further research.

Born in a soldier's hut named Östebyn östre in the parish of Grinstad, (Dals.), Borg was the oldest of six children born to his father, Gustaf Eriksson Borg, and his mother, Kristina Olsdotter. His father had irregular work and pay, and the family had little means. Carl Oscar began sketching at an early age but as in most poor households was soon hired out to work for other neighbors. When he was fifteen he was apprenticed to a painter who did decorative painting found in traditional Swedish houses. He left home at twenty

Book Reviews



wood, where old friends were abundant and galleries were close at hand to show his paintings. His life took an unexpected turn when one of his students introduced him to Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., who was looking for an art director for his next film, *The Black Pirate*. This led to intensive work making sketches and blocking out scenes for this film, America's first full-length film in color and released in 1926. Borg helped this silent film make history, made in the days when most scenes were filmed in indoor studios with painted backdrops and scenery. Borg shared in the

acclaim for *The Black Pirate*, and went on to design sets for over a half dozen more films, as art director supervising the work of many others. By 1930, however, times had changed and new technologies had made the role of art director obsolete. Silent films had seen their day, and filming had moved to outdoor locations where painted backdrops and scenes were no longer needed.

In the realm of painting, times had also changed. Modern art was displacing the role of landscape painters and old masters in the galleries and in the public taste. In 1934, Borg and a dozen other Los Angeles artists formed an organization intended to "stem the tide of modernism." This was to be called the Academy for Western Art and had as members some of America's foremost western artists. The "Old Masters" were fighting a losing battle, and Borg

joined his friends to enter what he referred to as his dark years. In 1930 Borg lost most of his savings in the collapse of a savings bank, then lost his wife who met a younger man. He continued living and working in his studio and produced some of his finest etchings, monotypes, and paintings, one of which ("Summer Storm") won him admission to the American National Academy. But by 1934, he had decided to return to Sweden. He was deeply depressed and began disposing of many possessions, books, collections of Amer-

icana, and even paintings.

Despite being hailed in the Swedish press on his return as "The Great Indian Painter," Borg remained restless. He revisited old haunts, painted his father, now old and frail, sketched his home and childhood scenes, visited bookshops and museums, and wrote private poems expressing his moods of nostalgia and despair. By December 1934 he returned to Los Angeles for an exhibition of western artists, and resumed his work. He rented his old studio and house in Santa Barbara, sought a divorce from his wife Madeline, and immersed himself in his work. But by early 1936, Borg ended his western painting era with the publication of a folio of his etchings of the Southwest. He moved to New York for an exhibition of his oils which met mixed reviews and, again disillusioned, he returned to Sweden. Despite acclaim, he remained depressed until he met a woman who helped him believe in himself again, a Miss Lily Lindstrand.

This new romance was interrupted by the need for Borg to return to America again to finish winding up his affairs there. This return was extended to over a year due to several new commissions and a period working on a film with Cecil B. de Mille. He continued disposing of his collections, including gifts of paintings and other materials to the newly completed American Swedish Historical Museum in Philadelphia. (Paintings on permanent display at the museum include "On The Island of Santa Cruz" [c. 1920] and "The Hopi Corral" [c. 1915]). He again headed east on the train for New York, spent time with old friends, and finally returned in June to Sweden to see his dying father again. He and Lily Lindstrand were married in the Swedish Church in Copenhagen, Denmark, on October 3, 1938, and settled in Göteborg where they invested in an apartment house. Borg became a Swedish paint-



Grand Canyon, by Carl Oscar Borg.



Book Reviews

er, painting old churches, Viking graves, old barns, boats, and houses in his native Dalsland, but “with a disinterest in the modern approach.”

This period of financial security, his new marriage, popularity in his native country, and a comfortable life did not calm Borg’s restless soul, however, and he began longing to return to California. World War II intervened, and he and Lily were trapped in Sweden until 1945. He was presented with the Linné medal by the Royal Swedish Academy of Science for his many generous gifts of Indian artifacts to the National Ethnological Museum in Stockholm and other gifts to museums and institutions in Sweden. Yet he still longed for California, and in September of 1945 he and Lily sailed for America. In an interview, his only plans were to return to Santa Barbara and go back to his Indian paintings. On the state of Art today, he reflected that “the time of the old masters is finished.”

The Borgs bought a house in Santa Barbara, where Carl Oscar’s studio was on the second floor. He did not need to paint, but did so for his own ease and pleasure working from old

sketches and memories. He enjoyed talking to old friends and neighbors, and occasional meetings with those of his former associates who still lived. Borg’s health had declined, his heart was weak, and he was subject to colds and pleurisy, but these were productive years for his painting. In 1947 old friends invited them to go to San Francisco but Borg declined, Lily reluctantly agreed to go without him. Borg spent the next day painting in his studio, then walked to a favorite restaurant for Spanish food. In the restaurant he was stricken with a massive heart attack, and died in the ambulance on the way to a hospital. He was 68 years of age. In accordance with his wishes, his ashes were cast to the winds in the Grand Canyon.

This account of the life of Carl Oscar Borg is a success story and yet a tragedy. The life of an artist with a gift for seeing what others cannot and who with great struggle rose from humble beginnings to achieve acclaim and fortune in both America and in Sweden; yet the sensitivity to know that having arrived at this goal, it was for him an empty achievement. He felt the art world had passed him by, and in his own eyes his life was a failure. Without the inclusion of many of his own poems in this biography, the reader would not understand the turmoil that haunted Borg’s soul. Yet the many reproductions of his works included in the illustrations in the book vividly convey the valuable contributions made by Borg in recording the history of the American southwest and its Native Americans before the modern world changed them forever, not in the way that a camera records these images, but through the special insights and sensitivities of the true artist.

This biography, which took author Helen Laird seven years in the writing, is extremely well organized and thoughtfully written in a way that

helps the reader see not only the accomplishments of this Swedish American artist, but the emotional struggles of Borg with his own life and his exceptional abilities. Eighteen chapters organize the book into the successive chapters in his life and are interwoven with examples of his watercolors, etchings, oils, poems, and sketches to help tell the story of his versatility and his evolution as an artist. Thirty-four color plates bound in after the text illustrate many of his significant oil paintings in which his interpretations of scenes from his “Magic Kingdom” made Carl Oscar Borg the “Painter of the American West.”

Dennis L. Johnson

An outside view of Sweden

Xenophobe’s Guide to the Swedes, by Peter Berlin, Xenophobe’s Guides, London, UK, 2013, Soft-cover, 90 pages, Illustrated, Amazon.com \$7.16 plus shipping, Kindle \$4.99.

Xenophobe – a morbid fear of strangers (Webster).

This small pocket book is one of a series of guides to visiting or living in a number of countries. There are now 29 books in the series, about people from Americans to Welsh. This volume was first printed in 1994 and has been updated and republished annually up to this current 2013 version. It is compact in size and short enough to easily be read on the plane on your way to Sweden, if you wish.

This *Guide to the Swedes* was written by Peter Berlin, who was born in Sweden but left the day after he graduated from university. He says you have to go abroad to view your country in perspective, for “how can you size up a whale from within?” He has a Canadian wife and four children who, he says “help provide

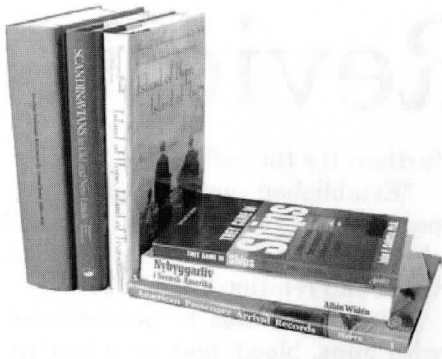
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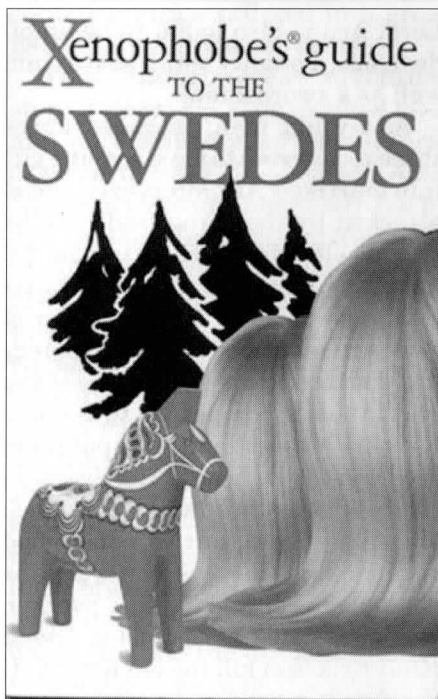
Contact Jill Seaholm at
<jillseaholm@augustana.edu>



Book Reviews

Swedish insight and Canadian perspective." Berlin spent 25 years in the satellite and rocket business and then retired to become a full-time writer. He also gives seminars in cross-cultural awareness. He is possessed of a marvelous sense of humor, a trait that he probably did not acquire in Sweden.

This is not so much a travel guide as it is an insider's view of the Swedes intended to help a visitor know them better and understand better how they think and behave. He touches on their qualities in a series of a dozen and a half short chapters on such attributes as their character, their behavior, manners, dining, leisure, traditions, beliefs, and values, and, yes, their sense of humor. A few chapters deal with their habits in business, in government, and in the Swedish language. All is presented in a humorous, tongue-in-cheek vein



which makes the book especially enjoyable to read.

I do not think many Swedes would find themselves offended by the way in which their attributes are described, possibly excepting those Swedes with no sense of humor at all. The author's comments generally fit with my own experience visiting Sweden six times over about a 25-year period. As a third-generation Swedish American, I find many of these Swedish habits lingering in my own personality despite the powerful influence of a lifetime of dwelling in the mosaic of blended cultures found

in the United States.

Special attention in this guide is the section on eating and drinking, devoted to the manners and customs of the dinner party. This is seldom spontaneous or casual, the hosts spend the entire day preparing, cleaning, cooking, and otherwise fussing until the appointed hour. The doorbell rings at exactly that time, the host answering the bell to find five or six guests lined up on the doorstep, each with flowers in one hand and a pair of slippers in the other. Several have driven around the block several times in order not to be early,

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Book Reviews

and others have arrived by taxi in order to be able to have a drink or two. The rituals of greeting are described, as are the protocols for seating of guests, the obligatory making of speeches by the host and the *hedersgäst* (guest of honor), and the proper manners for *att skåla* (propose a toast). The tongue-in-cheek rendition of this section alone is worth the price of the book.

Other aspects of Swedish life and culture are dealt with in an equally informative but humorous fashion, including conversation and gestures, habits of leisure and pleasure, customs and traditions, business, their government, systems, and crime. The

author puts special emphasis on the Swedish penchant for literalness in almost everything, in which you are taken at your word as much as they expect you to take them at theirs. My own example is in my elderly Volvo. The fuel gauge is as literal as a clock, showing exactly how much fuel is present. As soon as the tank is filled, the gauge begins to drop and does so in linear fashion until empty. Most American cars and those from other countries have adopted the American system, in which the gauge remains on full for at least 100 miles, then falls like a stone for the last half of the tank, presumably to persuade you that you are getting exceptionally high mileage. (Possibly this has changed in recent models, since Volvo is no longer owned by Swedes.)

A few examples of the author's comments, taken from this guide:

"Anyone wondering what really makes Swedes tick need look no

further: It's the coffee."

"Established novelists cater to a peculiarly Swedish taste for flawed characters engaged in bizarre activities and relationships."

"Neutrality has to be defended with guns, blood, and, as a last resort, fermented herring."

All in all, this little book is highly informative while providing a great deal of enjoyment, perhaps for all readers except the Swedes themselves, who may not see it as nearly as humorous as the foreign reader will.

It will not replace a good guidebook on what to do and what to see while in Sweden, but will certainly give you many chuckles and a good belly laugh or two as you read it.

Dennis L. Johnson

**This is Book Review
#90!**

A film review

Arn – *The Knight Templar* (Arn – Tempelriddaren), 2007, Swedish with English subtitles, Amazon.com, \$19.60 plus shipping.

This film, as yet little known in the U.S., is an epic film that takes place in the middle of the twelfth century in what is now Västergötland, Sweden. The period is only a little more than a century (4-5 generations) after the area has become Christian after some three centuries of Viking, and its preceding pagan, culture. Sweden is not yet unified as a country, and this area is one in which competing clans vie for ruling power. Arn Magnusson is a son of a powerful leader of the Folkung dynasty that is in competition with the clan of the Sverkers.

The film may be purchased at

Amazon.com and other outlets and is available on Netflix and possibly some other subscription film outlets which provide movies by streaming through your home computer. It may also appear from time to time on one or another cable channel.

Arn at the age of about eight is badly injured in a fall, and his devout but ill mother prays he will be given into God's service if he survives. Arn does recover, and before his mother succumbs to her illness, she turns him over to a nearby Cistercian monastery to be raised by them as a monk. As Arn grows up in the monastery, he is trained in archery, horsemanship, and swordsmanship by brother Guilbert, a former Knight Templar. The Knights Templar are warrior monks of the Cistercian order who fight in the service of the

Lord. Arn is also found to be ambidextrous, a quality which serves him well as a swordsman.

As a young man, he comes across three men trying to force a young girl into marriage. Arn intervenes and is attacked by the three, and he kills two in self-defense. He is told he did no wrong, but that his skills cause him to be destined to be a soldier of God. Arn soon leaves the monastery and returns to his family, one of the two families competing to become King of Västergötland. A dispute over land causes the head of the Sverkers to challenge Arn's father to a duel. He must agree, but is not a good swordsman. Arn steps forward as his champion, and defeats King Sverker. He later helps his boyhood friend Knut Eriksson kill the old King Karl Sverkersson, leading to war between

Book Reviews



the two factions.

Meanwhile, Arn becomes romantically involved with a girl, Cecilia Algotsson of a family in support of the Sverkers. They are found guilty of premarital relations, excommunicated, and each forced to serve twenty years of penance. Cecilia goes to a convent and Arn is sent to the Holy Land as a Knight Templar to fight against the Saracens in the third Crusade. Cecilia, with child, scrubs floors in silence in the convent, and Arn serves heroically in the third Crusade and is instrumental in the defeat of Saladin, leader of the Saracens. After many years Arn is released from his service and the couple and their now teen-age son are finally reconciled when he returns to his homeland. Their reunion is destined to be short-lived, however, when Arn again joins the struggles with the Sverkers, and succumbs to serious injuries suffered in a great battle between the two clans.

This film is a great adventure story, a story of long unrequited love, and an extremely well-made production overall. It is based on a trilogy of the same name, written by Jan Guillou. For those interested in Swedish history, it provides a very plausible and convincing portrayal of this time in the history of Sweden. Numerous films about Vikings have been made, but few focus on this period in early medieval history after the time of the Vikings. This period was centuries before the Reformation, and the role of the Catholic church of the time in medieval society in all of its various elements is well presented. Competition for rule was under way and the future Scandinavian nations were in the process of

determining their boundaries and governments. The scourge of the "black death" (bubonic plague) was still a century in the future for Scandinavia, in which many areas lost over a third of their population. For Swedes and Swedish-Americans, this production provides a glimpse into the life and time of some of our possible ancestors of some 30 to 35 generations ago.

The title role in the film was played by Joakim Nätterqvist as the adult Arn, several child actors played him at earlier ages. Several other familiar actors are to be seen, including Michael Nyqvist as Arn's father, Stellan Skarsgård as Arn's uncle, the lovely Sofia Helin as Arn's Cecilia, Gustaf Skarsgård as King Knut Eriksson of Sweden, and Bibi Andersson as Rikissa, the unkind Mother Superior of the Convent. Many others made up an excellent supporting cast. Dialogue is mostly Swedish, but in the Holy Land English and Arabic is used. English subtitles are used wherever needed. The photography is magnificent with the Swedish scenes all made in Västergötland. The Crusade scenes were made in Morocco. All the music for the film

was composed by Tuomas Kantelinen. The film has considerable violence and some moderate nudity as part of the story, but should be suitable for all from teenagers on up.

This film was produced by five nations, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Germany with production headed by Svensk Filmindustri. The total budget to make the film was US \$30,000,000, the most expensive production in Swedish film history. It was originally to be two films in a series, but was later edited down to serve as a single film, and then for a six-part series for television. Viewers will be most satisfied with the single film version, 133 minutes, I believe. In the genre of historical fiction, this film is a fine production in the tradition of great Swedish films.

Dennis L. Johnson

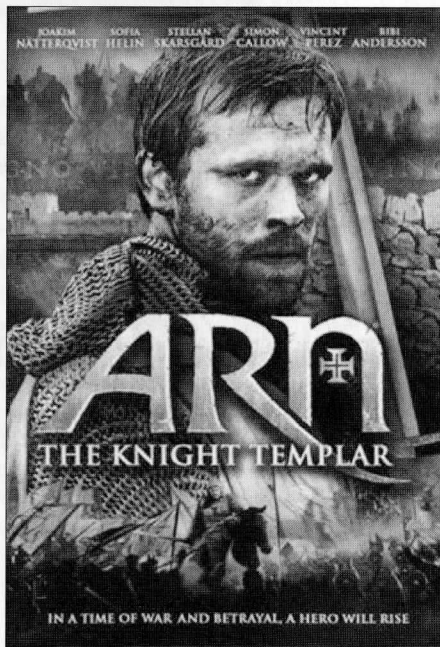
SAG needs Your help!

As you have seen by now, our very competent Book Review editor is retiring from his position after having written 90 book reviews and one film review.

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 write a review and send it to the SAG editor. Family histories, church histories, local group histories, lodge histories are among the things we would like to present in SAG. And all in English.

Elisabeth Thorsell
SAG editor



Interesting Web Sites

All links tested in
October 2013
and should work

The people's dictionary: <http://folkets-lexikon.csc.kth.se/folkets/folkets.en.html>

Several useful newsletters: <http://www.bridgetosweden.com/index.htm>

National Museum of the United States Army: <https://armyhistory.org/>

Global Database Search in Illinois State Archives: <http://www.ilsos.gov/isa/globalsrch.jsp>

A brief introduction to Swedish: <http://www2.hhs.se/isa/swedish/default.htm>

American Swedish Historical Museum: <http://www.americanswedish.org>

Interesting comments on records in FamilySearch:

<http://ancestryinsider.blogspot.se/search?q=Darnedest>

The XXXI International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences 2014:

<https://www.congress2014.no/?!language=en>

How to use the free Internet Archive:

http://genealogy.about.com/od/history_research/a/internet-archive.htm

A funny but also helpful blog: <http://www.cluewagon.com/>

Useful maps for Canada 1921 Census: <http://mercator.geog.utoronto.ca/ccri/referencemaps.htm>

Hans Högman's list of Swedish genealogy words with English explanations:

http://www.hhogman.se/dictionary_genealogy.htm

Interesting blog with old translated letters: <http://letterstospakarp.blogspot.se/>

The Augustana Ministerium, by Conrad Bergendoff (very large pdf [25 MB]):

<http://augustanaheritage.org/resources.php>

Whatcom Co., WA, church records: <http://wagenweb.org/whatcom/churchrecords.htm>

Gene Amdahls 1952 thesis: http://pages.cs.wisc.edu/~bezenek/Stuff/amdahl_thesis.pdf

Computer History Museum: <http://www.computerhistory.org/>

Swedish National Archives: Digital Research Room:

<http://sok.riksarkivet.se/digitala-forskarsalen>

Släktforskardagarna i Karlstad (Genealogy Days): <http://www.sfd2014.se/>

GenealogyBank blog: <http://blog.genealogybank.com/>

**Genealogy without documentation
is just mythology!**

Genealogical Queries

Genealogical 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 these queries to conform to a general format. The inquirer is responsible for the contents of the query.

We would like to hear about your success if you receive useful information as a result of placing a query in this publication. Please send us your feedback, and we will endeavor to report your new discoveries in this section of the journal.

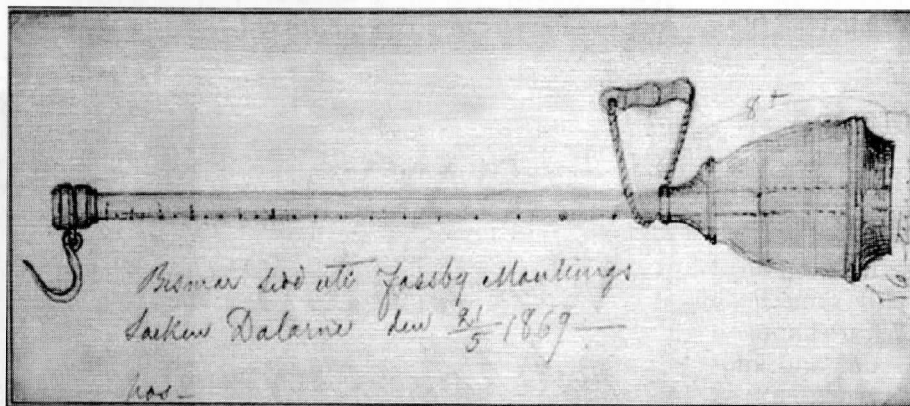
John Bengtsson

I am searching for any information on John Birger Anselm Bengtsson, born 1885 June 5 in Vara parish (Vägö), son of the grain merchant Johan Bengtsson and his wife Sofia Abrahamsdotter Berg. John is said to have left for the U.S. in 1906 or somewhat later. He may have had a connection to Goldendale in the state of Washington.

Bengt Fåglefelt, Tråvadsgården 3, S-534 95 Vara, Sweden
E-mail: bengt.faglefelt@gmail.com

1315

The mystery item from page 7



Lisa Huntsha, archivist/librarian of the Swenson Center contacted the Nordiska Museet in Stockholm, and got an answer from Annika Tyrfeldt of the Museum. She informed Lisa that in Swedish this item is a *besman* or a handheld balance weight. In English that translates to a steelyard balance.

The text on the bottom of the weight reads "bought from antique dealer Hagander in Stockholm, March 27, 1893." Anders Gustaf Hagander (1858-1919) was a well-known antique dealer in Stockholm. Apparently, Nordiska museet also has items from Hagander. Additionally, from 1863 it was forbidden to use wooden balance weights as the weight was easy to fake, by adding or subtracting lead from the end.

Editor's note: The *besman* at the Swenson Center lacks the sliding part with the handle. According to a story from my father Sven, born in 1908, his maternal grandfather Johan Svensson of Dalen in Nordmark (Värml.) born in 1821, supposedly killed the last wolf in the area on his porch with a heavy *besman*. If the story is true is not certain, but there are records of killed wild animals in the archives of the local county government (*Värmlands länsstyrelse*) kept in the *Värmlandsarkiv* in Karlstad, so that is a further case to research some day. If you showed the ears of the killed animal, you got a small amount of money for each animal.

A picture of another *besman*, made of steel, is found at Norm Sandin's dictionary of words from the *bouppteckningar* (probates) at <http://www.sandinfamily.com/genealogy-resources/dictionary/pdfs/besman.pdf>

The Last Page

Dear friends,

Here we are again, in the fall. We have had a number of glorious, sunny days, with all the deciduous trees turning mostly golden and glittering in the sun.

The Genealogy Days in Köping are now history, and we are looking forward to next year in Karlstad at the end of August. You are all cordially invited to join us. One of the sponsors is the Swedish Migration Institute, so there will be an extra emphasis on the 100,000 *värmlänningar* that left for North America.

Otherwise the big news now is the re-make of the SVAR site, which has been integrated with the National Archives Databases (NAD) of the Swedish National Archives (*Riksarkivet*). The new site is called the *Digi-*

tal Research Room (DRR). There is an article in this issue, which may be of some help.

Some sad news: Swedish genealogist *Helena Stark* passed away Oct. 12 at age 39 after a battle with aggressive cancer. She worked with "Allt för Sverige" and wrote an article about this work in SAG 2013/2.

In the middle of September I went to Trondheim in Norway for a "Border meeting" with Norwegian genealogists. There were lectures about local history, and we also visited the local archive, and an old fortress, Kristiansten, and had a good time together. Having not been in Trondheim since 1967, I also walked around the city, and saw a number of nice old houses, and visited the old,

impressive cathedral from the 1100s, where the king, Saint Olav, is buried.



Till next time!
Elisabeth Thorsell

Help us promote the SAG journal!

Do you belong to a Swedish genealogy or other Swedish interest group? Even a group that only sometimes focuses on Sweden? We are happy to supply SAG back issues and subscription brochures for you to use as handouts. If you will have a raffle or drawing, we can even provide a certificate for a 1-year subscription to SAG for you to give away. Contact Jill Seaholm at

<jillseaholm@augustana.edu>, or 309.794.7204. Thank you!



SAG Workshop Salt Lake City 2 – 9 Nov. 2014!



We look forward to seeing old and new friends in our happy group of researchers !

The SAG Workshop is the highlight of the year – a fun learning experience and a chance to do your Swedish genealogy with hands-on help from experienced Swedish and American genealogists.

The social side includes both welcome and farewell receptions, a buffet dinner & entertainment.

Contact *Jill Seaholm* at 309-794-7204, or e-mail: <sag@augustana.edu>.

Abbreviations

Table 1. Abbreviations for Swedish provinces (*landskap*) used by *Swedish American Genealogist* (as of March 2000) and *Sveriges Släktforskarförbund* (the Federation of Swedish Genealogical Societies, Stockholm [SSF]).

Landskap (Province)	SAG & SSF Abbr.	Landskap (Province)	SAG & SSF Abbr.
Blekinge	Blek.	Närke	Närk.
Bohuslän	Bohu.	Skåne	Skån.
Dalarna	Dala.	Småland	Smål.
Dalsland	Dals.	Södermanland	Södm.
Gotland	Gotl.	Uppland	Uppl.
Gästrikland	Gäst.	Värmland	Värm.
Halland	Hall.	Västerbotten	Väbo.
Hälsingland	Häls.	Västergötland	Vägö.
Härjedalen	Härj.	Västmanland	Väsm.
Jämtland	Jämt.	Ångermanland	Ånge.
Lappland	Lapp.	Öland	Öland
Medelpad	Mede.	Östergötland	Östg.
Norrbottn	Nobo.		

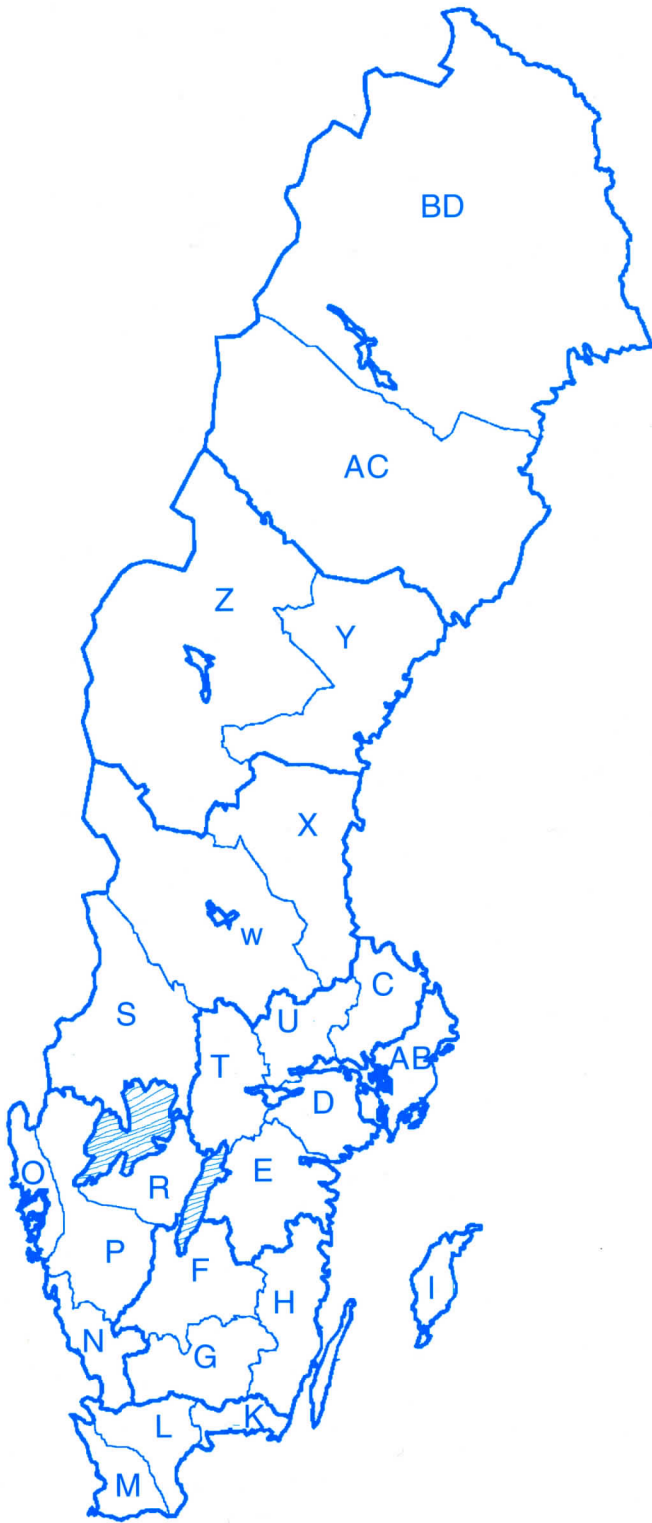
Table 2. Abbreviations and codes for Swedish counties (*län*) formerly used by *Swedish American Genealogist* (1981-1999) and currently used by *Statistiska centralbyrån* (SCB) (the Central Bureau of Statistics, Stockholm).

Län (County)	SAG Abbr.	SCB Abbr.	SCB Code	Län (County)	SAG Abbr.	SCB Abbr.	SCB Code
Blekinge	Blek.	Blek.	K	Stockholm	Stock.	Sthm.	AB
Dalarna ^a		Dlrn.	W	Södermanland	Söd.	Södm.	D
Gotland	Gotl.	Gotl.	I	Uppsala	Upps.	Upps.	C
Gävleborg	Gävl.	Gävl.	X	Värmland	Värm.	Vrml.	S
Halland	Hall.	Hall.	N	Västerbotten	Vbn.	Vbtn.	AC
Jämtland	Jämt.	Jmtl.	Z	Västernorrland	Vn.	Vnrl.	Y
Jönköping	Jön.	Jkpg.	F	Västmanland	Väst.	Vstm.	U
Kalmar	Kalm.	Kalm.	H	Västra Götaland ^c		Vgöt.	O
Kronoberg	Kron.	Kron.	G	Örebro	Öre.	Öreb.	T
Norrbottn	Norr.	Nbtn.	BD	Östergötland	Ög.	Östg.	E
Skåne ^b		Skån.	M				

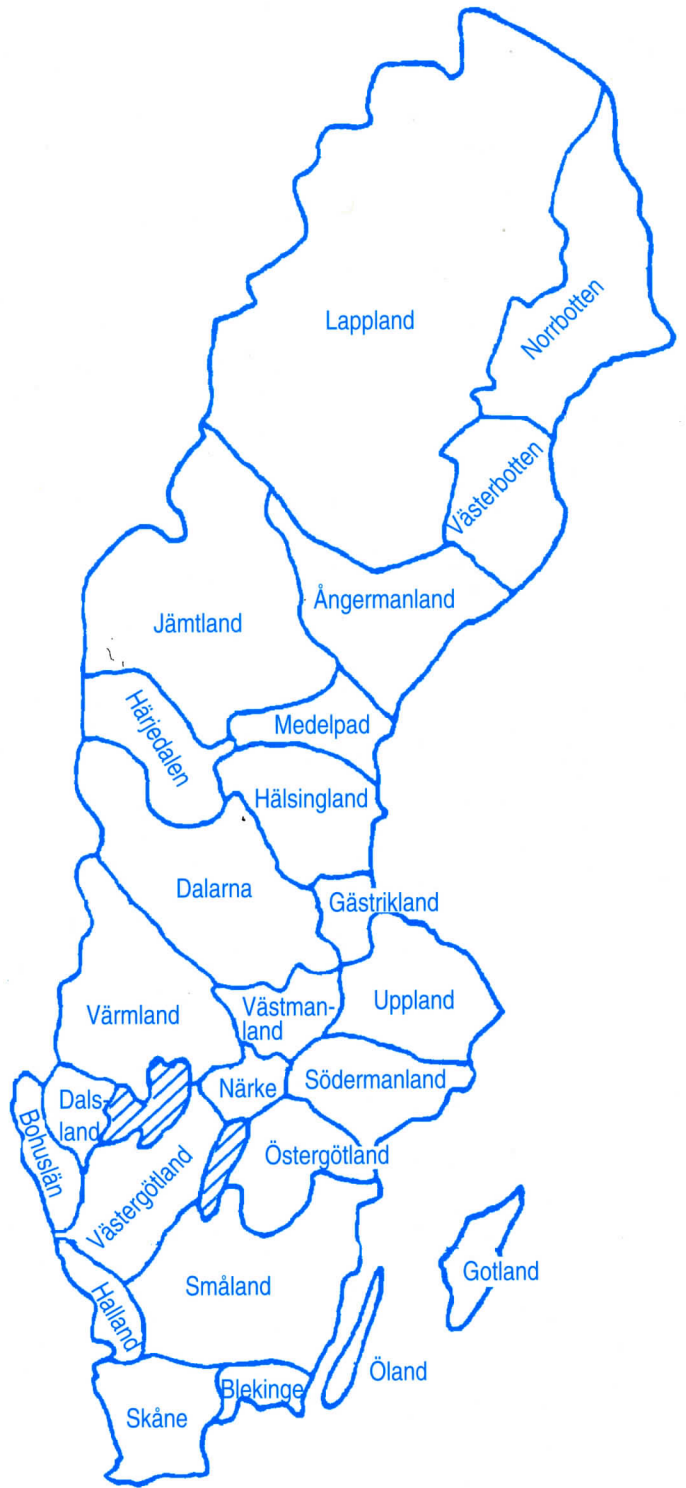
a formerly Kopparberg (Kopp.; W) *län*.

b includes the former counties (*län*) of Malmöhus (Malm.; M) and Kristianstad (Krist.; L).

c includes the former counties (*län*) of Göteborg and Bohus (Göt.; O), Skaraborg (Skar.; R), and Älvsborg (Älvs.; P).



The counties (*län*) as they were before 1991.



The provinces (*landskap*).