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Two Passenger Lists from 1869 and 1889

Merritt C. Olson, Ph.D.*

An inspection of passenger lists of ships carrying immigrants to the United States provides an interesting composite of facts about 19th century Europeans traveling across the Atlantic to establish new homes. Studied were the parts of manifests of ships bringing my father's paternal and maternal grandparents from Sweden in 1869 and 1889 respectively.

My father's paternal grandparents, my grandfather at age 11 and his two siblings, appearing on the manifest as entries 3-7, traveled on the *S.S. Guiding Star* from Copenhagen to New York, arriving on 29 June 1869.

Elisha Howes, master of the Copenhagen-based *Guiding Star*, made entries on the manifest in a clear hand with deference to the Scandinavian spelling of names. Unfortunately 19th century passenger lists, in contrast to those of the 20th, carried a minimum of information about the immigrants. The *S.S. Guiding Star's* manifest called for the name of the passenger, age, sex, occupation, country of nativity and the country of destination.

Only the first page of the manifest of the *S.S. Guiding Star* is reproduced in this article. For a complete roster one is referred to the original list in the National Archives, Washington, DC (M-237, Roll No. 313).

Of the 806 passengers, 667 were Swedes and 120 were Danes. In addition there were twelve Prussians, five Americans on board, as well as one each from Holstein and Hesse. That Swedes made up 83 percent of the passengers is not particularly surprising when one recalls that 1869 was a peak year in the early period of Swedish emigration. In that year a total of 32,000 persons left Sweden for America.¹ Although Småland, Östergötland and Hälsingland had the highest emigration rates during this period,² we do not know how well represented they were, for the manifest does not indicate the home parish, nor the province of the passengers. My great grandparents came from Jämtland, which at that time was experiencing an increasing emigration rate.

The majority of the passengers were listed as farmers and laborers so far as their occupations were concerned. Sailors, joiners, merchants, shoemakers and smiths were also well represented. In addition there were one or more each of teachers, weavers and clerks. Among the Danes there were one or two each of brewers, distillers and cigar makers. My great grandfather was listed as a farmer.

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In Sweden he had also worked at the tailor's trade, an occupation that brought him to the home of Olof Kjellson, who was the father of his future bride.

Passengers ranged from infants to the 80-year-old farmer who was traveling from Sweden with his 65-year-old wife. The only deaths reported were those of three infants—a three-month-old Swedish boy, a two-month-old Danish boy and a nine-month-old Danish girl.

Erik and Karin Ohlsons' destination was Vail, IA, where they joined a Baptist minister and his family whom they had known in Jämtland. Unfortunately the manifest does not identify the specific location to which the immigrants were traveling.

My father's maternal grandparents, who also came from Jämtland, immigrated in 1889 to Dakota Territory, where they joined the Erik and Karin Ohlson family. They were passengers on board the *S.S. Servia*, sailing from Liverpool and Queenstown and arriving in New York 5 Aug. 1889.

The manifest, prepared by the *Servia's* master, Henry Walker of Liverpool, identifies the state to which the passengers were destined. In other respects the form is essentially the same as that of the *S.S. Guiding Star*. Reproduced is the fourth page (the only one given over exclusively to Swedish passengers) of the manifest of the *S.S. Servia*, arriving at the port of New York on 5 August 1889. The original list is on microfilm in the National Archives, Washington, DC (M-237, Roll No. 536).

Erik J. Walton³ and his wife Anna, entries No. 154 and No. 155 on the ship's list, were accompanied by Jämtland friends, Nils P. and Christina Vik and their six children. Nils P. Vik (the name was Anglicized to Wik in this country) was going to the Dakota Territory to serve as a clergyman to the congregation of Swedish immigrants who settled in Orleans in a part of the territory which in a few years was to become the state of South Dakota.

The English steamship carried 667 paying passengers as well as two 19-year-old stowaways. On board were 191 British passengers, 131 Americans, 120 Irishmen, 97 Swedes and 40 Norwegians. In addition there were 35 Russians and a fewer number of Austrians, Germans, Turks and Greeks. Emigration from the eastern and southern parts of Europe was gaining momentum by 1889 and would accelerate into a great wave into the 20th century, a time which saw Swedish emigration tapering off from the culmination of the 1880s.

Occupationally farmers and laborers constituted a majority of the Swedish passengers aboard the *Servia*. There were two shoemakers as well as an engineer, a clerk, a sailor, a tailor, a saloonkeeper, a currier and a painter. Unlike the 1869 passenger list, which was dominated by family groups, the *Servia* in 1889 showed 27 percent of the Swedish passengers were spinsters. This is in keeping with the research findings of Prof. Sten Carlsson⁴ which show that the early Scandinavian emigration to North America was dominated by families, while the emigration late in the 19th century shifted to single persons—men and women aspiring to better-paying jobs. Often these single persons were relatives of earlier immigrants.

The Swedish passengers were relatively young, most of them in their teens, 20s and 30s. Erik and Anna Walton, both age 66, were among the oldest Swedish

emigrants. They were joining their children, one of whom was my grandmother, who had immigrated to Iowa and the Dakota Territory earlier.

The United States destination of the Swedish passengers included 16 states. New York claimed the greatest number with 27 persons. Other popular destinations were Minnesota, Michigan, Dakota, Pennsylvania and Illinois. A more specific location was not indicated except in the case of Minneapolis, which was frequently listed in lieu of a state designation.

Early 20th century passenger lists provide more comprehensive information than those of the 19th century manifests. The last residence of the passenger includes the home parish as well as the province of his native country. The final destination in the United States includes both the city and state. Other information provides the source of the passage payment, the number of dollars brought by each passenger, and whether or not the passenger had been to the United States earlier and if so, when and where. Additionally, if a passenger were to join a relative in the U.S., the identity of that person, the relationship and the address were given.

No attempt has been made to identify persons on either of the passenger lists other than for relatives and the friends who accompanied them from Sweden. It would be interesting to learn from which areas of Sweden each of the passengers on the two ships came and to which of the states each of the 1869 emigrants were destined and why. The author would appreciate hearing from *SAG* readers who might recognize the names of ancestors or other persons on either one of these lists.

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Partial list of the Swedish immigrants who arrived in New York aboard the *S.S. Guiding Star*. (All of the individuals listed below came from Sweden and were destined for the United States.)

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Occupation
1.	Anders Person	35	M	Laborer
2.	John Tohrnberg	23	M	Laborer
3.	Erik Ohlson	37	M	Farmer
4.	Karin Ohlson	32	F	
5.	Oluf Ohlson	11	M	
6.	Martha Ohlson	9	F	
7.	Niels Ohlson	4	M	
8.	Erik Johnson	22	M	Laborer
9.	Hans Anderson	20	M	Laborer
10.	Lars Larsson	45	M	Farmer

11. Karin Larsson	44	F	
12. Lars Larsson	11	M	
13. Hans Larsson	9	M	
14. Niels Nielson	46	M	Farmer
15. Christine Nielson	34	F	
16. Johan Nielson	10	M	
17. Johanna Nielson	11	F	
18. Martha Nielson	2	F	
19. Johanna Palm	72	F	Widow
20. Anders Nielsson	64	M	Farmer
21. Britta Nielsson	21	F	Daughter
22. Juliane Nielsson	55	F	Wife
23. Oluf Jonsson	28	M	Farmer
24. Karin Jonsson	29	F	
25. Britta Jonsson	11 mos.	F	
26. Johanna Petterson	33	F	
27. Julius Petterson	11	M	
28. Niels Nielsson	54	M	Farmer
29. Britta Nielsson	38	F	
30. Per Nielsson	11	M	
31. Oluf Nielsson	9	M	
32. Jonas Nielsson	4	M	
33. Martha Nielsson	11 mos.	F	
34. Anna Nielsson	32	F	
35. Johann Jernberg	31	M	Smith
36. Martha Jernberg	10	F	
37. Jan Olofson	59	M	Farmer

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Partial list of the Swedish immigrants who arrived in New York aboard the *S.S. Servia*. (All of the individuals listed below came from Sweden and were immigrants).

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Occupation	Destination	Baggage
135.	Johan Carlson	31	M	Painter	New York	2
136.	Anna Carlson	20	F	Wife	New York	
137.	Anna B. Axelquist	31	F	Wife	New York	1
138.	Josef Axelquist	7	M	Child	New York	
139.	Anders Axelquist	3	M	Child	New York	
140.	Anna Axelquist	1	F	Child	New York	
141.	Gustaf A. Ostman	45	M	Farmer	Michigan	2
142.	Anna Ostman	42	F	Wife	Michigan	
143.	Welhelmina Ostman	18	F	Spinster	Michigan	
144.	Amanda Ostman	16	F	Spinster	Michigan	

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145. Josefina Ostman	14	F	Spinster	Michigan	
146. Sofia Ostman	11	F	Child	Michigan	
147. Gustaf Ostman	6	M	Child	Michigan	
148. Hilda Ostman	4	F	Child	Michigan	
149. Elizabeth Nilsson	31	F	Wife	Minnesota	2
150. Selma Nilsson	8	F	Child	Minnesota	
151. Martha Nilsson	4	F	Child	Minnesota	
152. Ada Nilsson	3	F	Child	Minnesota	
153. Ida Nilsson	10 mos.	F	Infant	Minnesota	
154. Erik J. Walton	66	M	Farmer	Dakota	2
155. Anna Walton	66	F	Wife	Dakota	
156. Nils P. Vik	39	M	Currier	Dakota	2
157. Christina Vik	31	F	Wife	Dakota	
158. Nicholas Vik	14	M	None	Dakota	
159. Elizabeth Vik	11	F	Child	Dakota	
160. May Vik	9	F	Child	Dakota	
161. Martha Vik	4	F	Child	Dakota	
162. Julius Vik	3	M	Child	Dakota	
163. Christina Vik	10 mos.	F	Infant	Dakota	
164. Ingeborg Newton	23	F	Wife	New York	1
165. Johanna Dalin	30	F	Spinster	Pennsylvania	1
166. Josefina Alberg	26	F	Spinster	New York	1
167. Anna A. Ohan	18	F	Spinster	Michigan	1
168. Anna Johanson	22	F	Spinster	Iowa	1
169. Eva Fredrickstein	23	F	Spinster	Nebraska	1
170. Maria Sjogren	29	F	Spinster	New York	1
171. Amanda Olson	20	F	Spinster	Massachusetts	1
172. Elin M. Sten	17	F	Spinster	New York	1
173. Elin Ekegren	18	F	Spinster	New York	1
174. Elizabeth Kristoferson	26	F	Spinster	New York	1
175. Eulaila Anderson	21	F	Spinster	New Hampshire	1
176. Selma Petersen	37	F	Wife	New York	1
177. Augusta Dahlin	33	F	Spinster	New York	1
178. Eola Ulgrin	16	F	Spinster	Michigan	1
179. Emelia Kristiansen	23	F	Spinster	New York	1
180. Olivia Lundelius	29	F	Spinster	New York	1
181. Sven A. Anderson	32	M	Laborer	Michigan	1
182. Emma Anderson	29	F	Spinster	New York	1

¹Harald Runblom and Hans Norman, *From Sweden to America: A History of the Migration* (Minneapolis and Uppsala 1976), p. 121.

²*Ibid.*, p. 123.

³Walton was the American name assumed by the family at the time they emigrated. Their daughter—my grandmother—entered the United States under the patronymic of Anna Eriksdotter.

⁴Sten Carlsson, "Chronology and Composition of Swedish Emigration to America" in *From Sweden to America: A History of Migration* (Minneapolis and Uppsala 1976), pp. 126-127.