

Notes about Sven August Blomquist born 1840

Here is Hans Forsslund's attempt to track him down through his life by looking in the Swedish church archives. The starting point was at Daretorp parish in Skaraborg County where Sven was born on October 10, 1840.

First I have to explain something about Swedish Church Records. There are several document types kept in handwritten books. There are books on Born + Christening, Marriage and Burial which is nothing unique for Sweden and Finland, but we do have something unique in our records: Husförhörslängderna, or translated into English: Household Examination Rolls. Everybody over the age of 15 (about) had to once a year be examined in the knowledge of their religion. Everybody should be able to read the Catechism, so most Swedes could read in the early 1700s, and some could even write. You had to pass the examination, or else you were not allowed to take part in the Holy Communion, and that made you a social outcast, and you were for instance not allowed to marry. I have enclosed more information about Swedish Church Records at the end of this document.

In this work I have looked in the Swedish Church Records books. I started in the "in och utflyttningslängderna" that I call the **relocation book** where records about people moving in and out of the parish are kept. Having found Sven in such a book I went to the Household Examination Roll (husförhörslängden) where I could find him again (often after reading lots of pages). When people had moved out they were crossed over and a notice were written about where and when. Back to the relocation book I could find more exact information on where he moved by looking at the moving out year, that I found in the Household Examination Roll.

Repeating this procedure going from parish to parish I could follow him. Below is what I found (the pictures are from the actual scanned books):

I started at Daretorp where he was born. His parents were **Lars Erlandsson Modig** and **Maja-Stina**, born Blomquist. They are the common ancestries for large branches in Sweden and America. Eg. Blomberg, Modig, Ledin, Donalson and other names on the women sides.

Lars died at the age of 51, in 1855.

In the Household Examination of 1855-60 (page 63) Maja-Stina is widow with 7 children. Anders (17) and Sven (15) left home in 1856, Anna-Lisa (15) in 1858.

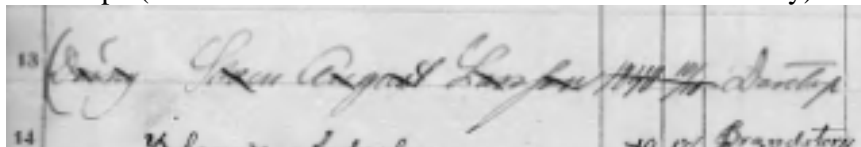
Husförhörslängd		Flyttboken	
Namn	Föd. år	Namn	Föd. år
Carl	1814	Sven August Blomquist	1840
Maja-Stina	1818		
Anders	1839		
Anna-Lisa	1843		
...

Sven first moved to "Åsled" and then to "Nymans intägt" still in Daretorp. He moved from Daretorp parish on November 11, 1863 to the Hackevad parish in Örebro County. (Daretorp Relocation Book)



In the Household Examination Roll of Daretorp page 212 "Nymans Intägt" Sven is recorded as Farmhand Sven August Larsson and as moved to the same place as above.

Below is an enlargement of the above text: "Dräng Sven August Larsson 1840 10/10 Daretorp" (The text is crossed over because he has moved away)



Right side:

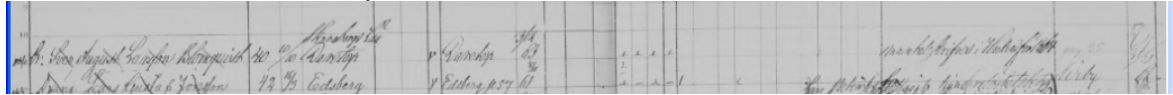


"Hackevad i Örebro Län 63 10/8"

Then I went to the parish Hackevad of and their relocation book 1863:

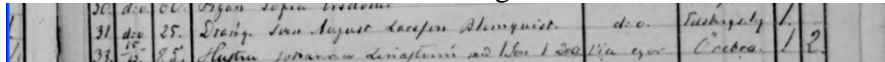
Here we find him as nr 33 Sven August Larsson Blomquist, moved into the place Glippesta.

In Household Examination Roll 1861-1865 on page 14 we find that Sven is crossed over and noted as moved out two year later, in 1865.



Farmhand Sven August Larsson Blomquist

In the relocation book under the heading Moved Out 1865:



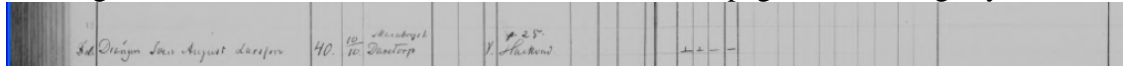
"Moved 1865 24/10 to Edsbergs by"

Then I went to the parish Edsberg, Örebro County. In the Relocation Book in 1865, under the heading moved In:



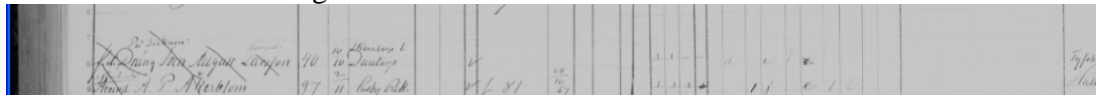
Sven August Larsson moved to the place Edsbergs by (without the name Blomquist)

Edsbergs Parish Household Examination Roll 1860-1865 page 203 Edsbergs by



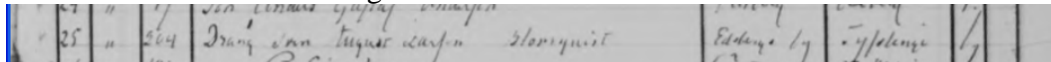
Farmhand Sven August Larsson

In the next book: Edsbergs Parish Household Examination Roll 1866-1870



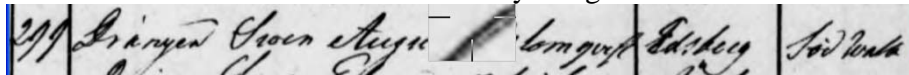
Moved out October 24, 1867 to Tysslinge? (difficult to read)

The Relocation Book Edsberg 1865-1870 under moved out 1867:



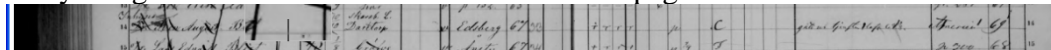
Farmhand Sven August Larson Blomquist moved out to Tysslinge (we can here clarify the parish name)

Then I went to the Relocation Book of Tysslinge 1867:



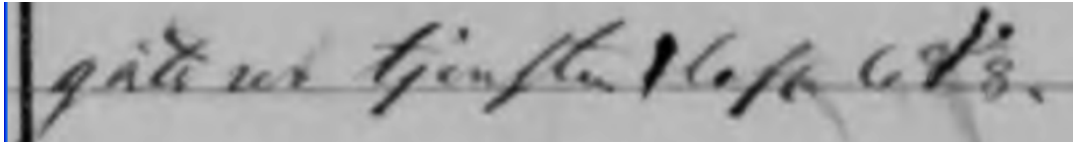
Farmhand Sven August Blomquist moved in to the place Södra Walla

In Tysslinge Parish Household Examination Roll page 299 Södra Walla Hem 1



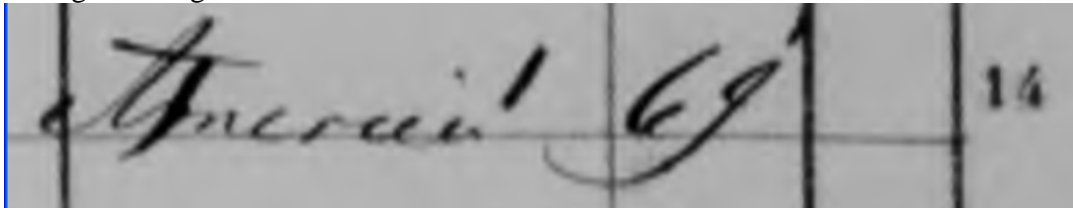
There he is crossed over and we have interning remarks. (crossed over 1869)

See below enlargement



In the column “Modesty and individual notes” it is written: “Gått ur tjänsten
????(?lota?) 69 ?/8” means something like: Left assignment ????? 69 august ?

Enlargement right side



Moved to America 69 but the column for moving certificate is empty (last column to the right).

Together with the above notice one can draw the conclusion that the clergyman has written the text at the next House Hearing event, when he noticed that Sven was missing and he probably asked the other attendants where Sven had gone.

Sven is not found in the relocation book and it is probably due to the fact that he left the assignment before the end of contract time. Farmhands were generally assigned from October to October. They were not allowed to leave before and going to the church maybe have been risky to get a certificate.

It is a bit strange that he - going to America - didn't collect a moving certificate because it was mandatory to have one when you wanted to enter America. I think people were sent back if they couldn't show such a paper. The clergyman's or the attendants' assumption that he went to America may be just an assumption.

According to the Book “The history about Alfred Larsson-Blomberg's life” he died in America about 1869.

He was also unmarried at the last Household Examination (1865) and I have looked in the Marriages Book of Tysslinge 1884-1897 and not found him there. In the Book “*The family of Elswood Leonard Wiklund and Mabel Aurora Sundberg*” by Harry R Art it is said that he was married in Sweden but this doesn't seem likely. There it is also said that he went in 1869 “but no more is known of him”.

In the Household Examination rolls his reading and general ability status were recorded as satisfied on the lower level. He could have gone anywhere, perhaps to Norway that was in union with Sweden.

For the time being I lost the track. I have searched through different passenger lists but not found him yet.

Hans Forsslund, Visby March 24, 2010

Swedish Church Records

By Elisabeth Thorsell

Professional genealogist, lecturer and writer

Sweden, a country in northern Europe, has not had any civil registration of Vital Statistics until 1991. Why? Did Swedes and Finns (until 1809) not have to register Births, Marriages and Deaths?

Indeed, they certainly had to, and omission to do so was punished by law. But it was not the local civilian government agencies that kept track of the important happenings in the lives of the Swedes.

It was the church. In 1527 Sweden became a Lutheran country, and the church became a State church. The king (or queen) was and is the head of the church, and all clergymen were also state officials, and stayed so until 2000, when the state and the church were separated. The State church excluded all other denominations until 1858, and everybody had to accept to be registered by the State church, even if you were Moslem, up to 1991, when the local tax authorities took over this job.

The clergy had to keep track of the christenings, marriages and burials, to make sure the people of their parish paid the required fees for the clerical services, and also the tithes, as they had to. So accounts (kyrkoräkenskaper) are the oldest church records still existing, even some from catholic days in the 1400s.

During the early 1600s many Swedes studied at the German universities and brought home ideas on many things, which were then used in their parishes. Among those ideas was the keeping of Christening, Marriage and Burial records in a special book. This was ordered by at least two early bishops, Johannes Rudbeckius of Västerås and Johannes Botvidi of Linköping, that it should be done in their dioceses. So several parishes in those dioceses have continuous Church records from about 1630 to 1991. As a general rule, however, most Church records start in the 1680s, as a result of the Church Law of 1686.

The keeping of Christening, Marriage and Burial records is nothing unique for Sweden and Finland, but we do have something unique in our records: The Husförhörlängderna, or translated into English: Household Examination Rolls, or shorter: Clerical surveys.

Everybody over the age of 15 (about) had to go to a meeting once a year, when they were examined in the knowledge of their religion. Everybody should be able to read the Catechism, so most Swedes, even the women, could read in the early 1700s, and some could even write. You had to pass the examination, or else you were not allowed to take part in the Holy Communion, and that made you a social outcast, and you were not allowed to marry, for instance.

To keep track of the parishioners' knowledge of religion, the parish priest made lists of all persons in the parish, household by household, with spaces for entering age, place of birth, moves, inoculations, knowledge of different parts of the catechism and many other facts of life. These records were kept continuously, in big books, every volume covering mostly a period of five to ten years. The year they start are very varying in different parts of the country, as the various dioceses had varying regulations about keeping this kind of record. In Västerås diocese there are many cl. surveys from the 1600s, in Linköping diocese they generally start around 1792 and in Lund diocese in the 1810s. The completeness of these records varies a lot, according to the interest of the clergyman to keep records, some were interested, others were not.

From the previous text it may be clear that the basic unit of Swedish and Finnish genealogical research is the parish (socken, församling). But what is a parish? A parish is a geographical area, the smallest administrative unit in Sweden. All people in the same parish went to the same church, were registered in the same books, and were buried in the same churchyard.

There are also bigger units, a number of neighboring parishes formed a rural deanery (prosteri), and a number of those formed a diocese (stift), of which there are now 13 in Sweden, but generally the starting genealogist does not have to look for the records of those units.

When someone moved from his home parish to another one, he had to have an Exit Permit, and that was also the custom, when someone emigrated.

Read more on the Exit Permits [here](#).

The Exit Permit

by Nils William Olsson

One of the most important documents that descendants of Swedish immigrants may find in the old family files is the exit permit, which the immigrant brought with him from his home parish. Various labels: flyttningsbevis, flyttningsbetyg or flyttningsattest, it was the final official document the emigrant procured before beginning his voyage across the Atlantic. If he had a passport, he had probably procured this earlier, as well as his ticket. It was the exit permit, given to him by the pastor of his church during his final days at home, which was the culmination of the preparations for the journey. With the exit permit in hand, he had broken the last official bond with his home land.

While it is true that many Swedes left their home country without bothering to secure such a document, it was somehow inherent in the Swedish nature to follow the regulations of the state and the church, which stipulated that upon leaving his home parish for some other place, whether this was at home or abroad, he was compelled to procure this document, which stated that he was of high moral character, and that he was an honest individual, who would be accepted into any society, wherever he planned to settle.

Before venturing into the mechanics of the exit permit, it might be worthwhile to examine how the state and the community formerly viewed the movement of people. Sweden has been a well organized state for hundreds of years with an excellent corps of civil servants, which in this case also included the clergy, which not only was paid by the state, but also was held responsible for the documentation of the lives of the parishioners. This applied to all facets of their existence: births, marriages, deaths, knowledge of reading, knowledge of the Ten Commandments, attending Holy Communion as well as the physical movements into or out of the parish.

It is not an accident that Sweden possesses some of the most complete church records in the world, going back hundreds of years, a boon to anyone with Swedish antecedents, interested in studying his family tree. It was Bishop Johannes Rudbeckius in Västerås, who as early as in 1622 asked the clergymen in his diocese to begin keeping records of the births, marriages and deaths in their respective parishes. He was followed in 1633 by Bishop Johannes Botvidi in the Diocese of Linköping. As the 16th Century progressed, all other churches followed suit, so that by the end of the century, all parishes had been instructed to maintain the vital statistics of their people.

On the secular side the Statistiska Centralbyrån (Central Bureau of Statistics), founded in the middle of the 18th Century, has been for more than 200 years the watchdog of the Swedish people. Into the Bureau has flowed all sorts of information, taken from the annual censuses (mantalsskrivningar), providing the government with all sorts of statistical material for many a demographic study.

In order to make a success of such an ambitious project, it was of course necessary to know as much as possible about the population in every parish, including movements into and out of that locality. It was the village clergyman who received the instruction to control these movements. His periodic reports to the central authorities were very important in complimenting the material flowing in from the census lists (mantalslängder).

Both civil and ecclesiastical authorities, in attempting to keep a check of the population movements, resorted to two types of control documents - one, the civil form, was the passport (pass) issued by the police authorities in the larger cities as well as the administrative units (län). These passports were necessary for any movement from one locality to another, whether it was across the country, or to the nearest city, even if it was only to visit a relative. The passport, which stated the person's name, his birth date, his birth place and the nature of his errand, was usually made out for a stated period of time, was temporary only and was good only for the journey. It was carried by the traveler, who had to produce the document in question at any time he was challenged by the authorities.

Registers of those who received domestic passports can be found in every län, on deposit in the provincial archives (landsarkiv) to which the län belongs.

Special registers for those who went abroad are also to be found in these archives, but though these foreign passports were also limited in time, they were usually issued for longer stays abroad, sometimes as long as two or three years, particularly if it involved an apprentice or journeyman who went abroad to gather some foreign experience, before returning to Sweden to practice his craft.

The second type of document was the responsibility of the parish, who issued the exit permits, which were usually permanent in nature, as for example, when a person or a family moved from one parish to another, to take over an inherited farm, to manage an industry, or for persons on the lower scale, servants and maids, who moved to another parish, because there was no work opportunity in the home parish. The exit permit, or flyttningsbevis, which literally means movement certificate, was in the beginning often a handwritten document, made out by the clergyman, containing some facts concerning the person, such as his name, his birth date, his birth place, from which abode he was moving and to which parish he was going. Occasionally the shoemaker's apprentice or the tailorjourneyman did not know where he might find employment, in which case the clergyman wrote that the person seeking the permit was going to obeständ ort (destination unknown).

As a result of the smallpox vaccination program, which came to Sweden in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries, fewer people died in infancy. More people lived to maturity and thus economic pressures began building as a result of this population explosion. The family, which normally had eight or nine children, and would have lost half of them through smallpox, now would see all or almost all of their children achieve maturity. Suddenly there were many more mouths to feed. People became restless and began eyeing greener pastures across the parish border. The increased mobility of the parish population brought increased work for the clergyman to record all those who left or came. It was no longer possible to keep up the traffic with handwritten permits and the authorities began issuing printed forms, which could be filled out with a minimum of time.

At the same time the authorities promulgated a law, dated Nov. 23, 1833, which stressed that servants, males as well as females, before leaving a certain parish in order to move to another, had to produce a certificate of good character, a check of the from their former employers. Without this certificate, the clergyman could refuse to issue an exit permit.

On July 20, 1861, another law went into force, which included everybody, not only the servant class, which proclaimed that any person moving into a parish, had to report to the parish clergyman. within two weeks of such move, and no later than Nov. 9 of that year, and to produce an exit permit from the parish from which he was moving. Failure to do this incurred a heavy fine for the laggard. Employers of servants were also cautioned, under threat of a heavy fine, to produce exit permits for the servants recently hired, coming from another parish.

When the emigrant, therefore, left his native parish for the U.S., it was the most natural reaction for him to call on his parish pastor and request the exit permit, which he could

take along on the journey. Neither he, nor the pastor, understood that in the U.S., at that time, no one questioned one's past or demanded any type of documentation.

For those immigrants who sought affiliation with a Swedish Lutheran church in America, it was usually customary to produce the exit permit from his home parish in Sweden, in order to prove such points as date of birth, confirmation and marriage status. Sometimes these permits were retained by the pastor, as was done in Sweden, but more often the documents were returned to the new member. Others never bothered to hand in the document, particularly in the non Lutheran and American churches. Hence, we find that a number of individuals of Swedish descent in the U.S. today still have in their family archives this very useful and important paper.

Those immigrants who preserved their exit permits and who have passed them on to their children and children's children, did not realize how well they provided for their latter-day descendants in finding the clues to their Swedish origin. Encapsulated in the permit is a wealth of pertinent family documentation, properly attested to by the parish clergyman, thus making it not only an official but also a legal document, which could be used to prove a birth or marriage date.

As readers will have learned by this time, the exit permit probably is the most useful document a person can possess, and provides an open gate to more extensive research in Sweden. It is unfortunate that so many immigrants, when arriving in the United States, were content to slough off their memories of a country with many restrictions and much red tape, and promptly destroy the evidence of this bureaucracy, thereby helping to destroy the bridge that might have led latter-day descendants to cross over to the country of their origin.

A word of caution to those lucky enough to have permits in their archival collections. These were printed on brittle paper, which yellowed with the passage of years, and when opened from a folded position easily tear and sometimes disintegrate. The paper should be handled as little as possible. By making a xerox copy of the original, it will be easier to study the document and show it to interested parties. The document itself should be stored in an acid-free folder, or better yet in a plastic folder, which can be purchased in most stationery stores. Thus succeeding generations will have the pleasure of personally examining their heritage.