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SILICON VALLEY COMPUTER GENEALOGY GROUP

PastFinder

Who? Me? Swedish ancestors?

Part 1: Research in the United States

By Richard Rands

Curiously, I don't think of myself as having Swedish ancestors. Norwegian, yes. But not Swedish. Yet when I run a search of my database for anyone with *Sweden* in any of the place name fields, there are 43 individuals.

The closest relative was a great-grand-uncle who married one of my Norwegian ancestors in 1883 in Wisconsin. In 1858, a 2nd-great-grand-uncle, a Norwegian, married a Swedish woman who had gone to Norway seeking work.

With thousands of miles of common borders in Scandinavia, and with the close proximity of Scandinavian immigrant communities in America, it is probably safe to say that at some point most of us with any Scandinavian ancestry will likely encounter an intermarriage with a Swede. Consequently, knowing something about Swedish research will be helpful for many of us.

At the outset, it is usually the case that we are hindered by the language in the records, by the patronymic naming patterns, or by not knowing where in Sweden our ancestors came from. But the fact is that Swedish records are well kept and are becoming more and more accessible. For the purposes of this article, let's consider two different research processes: 1) identifying your Swedish ancestors in

North America, and 2) tracing their forebearers in Sweden, which will be covered in Part 2 of this article, in the next *Past-Finder* issue.

I've been to Scandinavia and marveled at the magnificent mountains and valleys and clean, beautiful cities. Why would anyone want to leave such an idyllic place for the monotonous plains of the American Midwest or, for that matter, the deserts of the West?

History tells us that the nineteenth century in the old country was economically depressed, that jobs were scarce, that the population was exploding, that land was divided into small parcels of worn out soil unable to support a family, and that America offered remedies for all these problems. So they came in droves. Well over a million Swedish immigrants made their way in ships, many in the empty holds of cargo ships heading for the New World to bring back timber and other raw materials.



Library shelves at Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center

If your own family records do not contain the genealogical details of your American Swedish family members, then you will need to search for clues among a variety of U.S. and Canadian collections.

U.S. Census records from 1900 to 1930 indicate the birthplace of each individual's

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Swedish ancestors *(continued)*

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father and mother. Passenger records for every immigration port in the United States and Canada should be searched.

It was common for immigrants to travel in family groups or religious communities and to settle together, creating Swedish townships, congregations, cemeteries, newspapers, fraternities, and businesses. There were Swedish towns within most of the major cities of the United States. Each of these entities has left behind record collections.

When you identify an ancestor in a census record, an immigration record, a church register, or a cemetery, look carefully at all the adjoining individuals for details that might offer clues to where your ancestor came from. Land records often contain a document indicating the intent to declare citizenship. Such documents will specify which country's citizenship the new owners intended to renounce.

Once families had exhausted their opportunities in the U.S. Northeast and Midwest, many of the next generation moved further west to the Pacific Northwest and California. In fact, today, California has the largest number people with Swedish ancestry in the country.

Other clues for identifying Swedish ancestors include naming patterns, both surnames and given names. If you find names such as Anders, Olga,

Helga, or Inga, chances are you are on the right track. The tale tell patronymic surname suffix of *-son* or *-dotter* is another clue. Don't overlook the three extra characters in the Swedish alphabet that may show up in older records.

If by chance you are working on Swedish ancestors who were born in America, and you have yet to discover original documents about them from the sources mentioned above (censuses, land records, military records, etc.), then your next best source will be local Swedish congregation records, newspapers, society journals, and certain libraries.

Because at one point Swede Town in Chicago was the second largest Swedish city in the world (second only to Stockholm), it follows that the Chicago area will contain the most significant collections of Swedish-American records. The Swenson Center in Rock Island, about 170 miles west of Chicago, at Augustana College, has perhaps the most comprehensive collection of Swedish-American records in the country, including church records, lodge records, city directories, newspapers, journals, newsletters, and photographs. Research must be done onsite, but there are provisions for requesting assistance.

It will be useful to spend some time at the Swenson Center web site to get a feeling for the scope of their collections: www.augustana.edu/x13859.xml

If you know your ancestors actually lived in Chicago's Swede Town, there are local Swedish churches that maintain collections in the North Park part of the city.

In the microfilm catalog of the Family History Library (FHL) in Salt Lake City, you might find digital images or films for the local Swedish-American congregations where your ancestors lived. Start with a place search for the town or county, and check the topics for church records. Many names of congregations will include *Swedish* in the title, but pay particular attention to Lutheran, Episcopal, Covenant, and Baptist congregations.

For example, suppose I have reason to believe that some of my ancestors lived in Nashotah, Wisconsin, known for its concentration of Swedish immigrants. The FHL catalog has one entry of church records for Wisconsin, *Waukesha, Nashotah*, the Episcopal Church of the Holy Innocents, covering 1886 to 1938,

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Swedish immigrants, Swede Town, Chicago, 1884.

Swedish ancestors *(continued)*

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on film number 1392601. It would be important to scan this film for ancestors and their descendants.

A quick look at the history of Nashotah indicates that until recently the town was an unincorporated part of Delafield. So I would next look at the film for the Presbyterian church records of Delafield. In addition, Delafield's community web site contains a link to the local public library, which indicates that there is a History Reference Center in the library with a collection of historical documents, biographies, and photos.



Swensoen Center display, Augustana Col-

All of this is just a quick telephone call away. It is very likely that the same research process will be effective for most other communities that had sizeable Swedish neighborhoods.

As you carefully examine all of the American records for your Swedish ancestors, you will want to look for the essential clues to where in Sweden the immigrant ancestor came from. That will be the key to where you will begin searching for ancestors "across The Pond."

I recommend that you download a good map of Sweden showing counties, and have a list of major cities at your fingertips so that you will readily recognize place names in the records you encounter. In addition, there is a good Swedish Genealogical Word List, free at wiki.familysearch.org. Enter a search for *Swedish Genealogical Word List*. An excellent step-by-step handbook about Swedish research is *Your Swedish Roots* by Per Clemensson and Kjell Andersson, published by Ancestry Publishing.

Let me emphasize that a thorough search for as many North American records as you can find about your Swedish ancestors could end up saving you a lot of time when you jump into researching your ancestors in Sweden. We'll begin that in the next issue. (Watch for Part 2, January 2012 *PastFinder*.) 

Changes to FamilySearch indexing procedures

If you have taken a break from indexing recently, you probably are not aware of a change in the way you run the indexing software. This is an important change for the indexers affiliated with the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group indexing team.


Previously, you could use the Indexing link at familysearch.org to start indexing. If you do that now, a message will state: "FamilySearch indexing is no longer started from the Internet browser. You must begin the indexing program from your computer desktop icon." You are instructed to locate and double-click the icon on your desktop.

The problem is, no instructions are provided on how to install the icon (pictured here, at right) if one is not already there. So here are instructions: From the screen with the above message, click Sign In at the top right corner of the screen, and use your FamilySearch ID and password to log in to the index-



ing screen. When the FamilySearch Indexing appears, click Get Started.

The next screen will be a set of five steps to download the latest indexing software and get started. Click on Download Now in the middle of the screen. Run the installer (in Windows 7) or Open the installer (in Windows XP). The software also downloads to Macintosh and Linux. With a broadband connection, the program will download in about one minute. In Windows 7, click Run to finish the installation. At this point a Wizard will take over. Click Next to proceed, and click Finish when it completes.

You will now have the requisite Indexing icon on your home page. In most cases, the program will start after the Wizard finishes, sending you to a new sign-in screen. Rather than proceeding with indexing, you should reboot your computer to set the register entries. Indexing can now be started from your desktop using the FamilySearch Indexing icon. 

How I found it: Using a timeline to track a life

By Richard Rands

One of the highly effective techniques in a genealogist's toolbox is the timeline. The process involves making a list of all of the details you can uncover about the target individual, with the best date possible for each detail. Sometimes the date will be a range; at best it will be a specific date.

As you work, put the entries in chronological order. I prefer to use a spreadsheet product such as Excel because it is easier to sort information and to insert rows in their correct sequence.

I struggled to identify the spouse of an Irish man, Christopher T. Reilly, believed to have been born in Troy, New York, in 1849. I knew he had two daughters, one born in Nebraska, the other in Idaho. The difficulty stemmed from the fact that Christopher joined the U.S. Army almost immediately after he became old enough to serve, and among the few records he left behind were seven enlistment and discharge records (U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798-1914) every five years until he retired in 1900.

The two daughters were in census enumerations, but always living in boarding houses without their mother until they married. All I knew about the spouse was an estimated birth year of 1855 in Ireland. So this essentially became the problem of tracking the family of a career Army man.

I created a spreadsheet with the following column headings:

- **Name Used** shows variations in the name appearing in the records.
- **Event** identifies the type of event entered.
- **Event Date** works only if you avoid using Excel's short-sighted internal date format. Excel generates formatted dates only from 1 January 1900 onward, but you can circumvent this by using your own formatting, such as entering *1832-11-05* for *5 November 1832*.
- **Age** can be determined either with the specific date mentioned in the record or with a calculated date based on the event date.

- **Location** specifies where the event took place.
- **Birth Place** is included when the event's record indicates a birth location.
- **Estimated Birth Date** is computed if the record contains an age, allowing me to compute an estimated birth date and look for discrepancies.

Since most of Christopher's records were from military documents, I added two columns for military-related details and another to list the source:

- **Service Unit** shows how his regiment and company changed over time.
- **Rank/Occupation** documents promotions and demotions, if any.
- **Source** lists the source of the record, for documentation purposes.

I started filling in 22 events, although the first was nothing more than an estimated birth year, and the remaining columns were empty. I then entered the births of the two daughters with estimated dates based on census entries.

Once the timeline contained enough detail, I began a systematic analysis of the flow from one event to another and

focused on finding records that might help me discover information for the time gaps and place changes.

For example, the timeline for Christopher Reilly indicated that his third enlistment occurred in New York in 1882 and was for an additional five years. The enlistment record indicated that he was assigned to the 4th Infantry Regiment, Company G. The next entry showed his first daughter born about 1885 in Nebraska. Following that was the discharge event in 1887 at Fort Sherman, Idaho Territory.

The regimental history for the 4th Regiment mentioned that the unit was posted at Fort Omaha, Nebraska, in 1885. Guessing that Christopher likely would have been in the Omaha area at that time, I searched for Omaha records from about 1885. Ancestry.com contains a Fort Omaha Directory, 1888-1896, listing Christopher T. Reilly for 1893 and 1894 in

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How I found it *(continued)*

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Company F of the 2nd Infantry. The details corresponded to a later enlistment in the 2nd Infantry, but it added nothing to my quest for his wife's name.

Reilly was a fairly common name, and without a given name, I was still facing a challenge. Broadening my search criteria to Nebraska, I found the Nebraska State Census collection, 1860-1885. A search of the 1885 Nebraska state census turned up an entry for Anna Reilly in Saratoga, Douglas County, Nebraska, born about 1855 in Ireland.

The best clue for this record was an eight-month-old daughter named Jane. Christopher's daughter had gone by Jennie as an older woman. Saratoga turned out to be where Fort Omaha was located, and Christopher showed up in the same census, although he was living at the fort. At this point I had a strong indication that Christopher's wife was named Anna.

This was a significant find because I have yet to find Anna Reilly in any U.S. federal census. She is not even listed in the death registrations of her two daughters.


Next I turned to Familysearch.org. There I discovered a collection of Nebraska Marriages, 1855-1995, that contained an index record for Christopher T. Reilly marrying Annie Reilly (no other surname was indexed) in Douglas County, Nebraska, on 13 May 1884. Surprised that I had not discovered this entry in prior searches, I noted that it had been added to

Familysearch.org in May 2010, well after I had begun my original search for Christopher's spouse.

Analyzing other events in the timeline has led to further discoveries that add to my knowledge of Christopher's family history, and more important, have been significant in keeping me from heading off in the wrong direction when I come across records for other Christopher Riellys.

For example, Christopher's seventh and last enlistment was at the Presidio in San Francisco in 1900 after he served in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War. Shortly thereafter, in 1901, his record showed that he retired; I have a death registration for him in Seattle in 1929.

However, while researching in the records for the Presidio in San Francisco I came across an account of a Private Christopher Reilly who had drowned, which could have led me to follow a false lead had I not known that my Christopher had officially retired well after the drowning.

I have since created a similar timeline for Annie/Anna Reilly containing many of the events from Christopher's timeline, particularly the events that imply that she would have been close to the places he was stationed. Her timeline is considerably shorter. However, both timelines reveal the noticeable gap between Christopher's retirement from the military in 1901 and his death in 1929. One value of the timelines is that I have a clear picture of what records to watch for as new collections appear online. 

Name used	Event	Event Date	Age	Location	Birth Place	Est. Birth Date	No. and Length of enlistment	Service Unit	Rank / Occupation	Source
unknown	Birth	~1851-1852								
Christopher Riley		1860 Census	9	New York, Albany	New York	~1851				New York, Albany, Albany Ward 6, Image 6
Christopher Reilly	School	1870 Census	19	New York, Niagra, Lewiston; Seminary of Our Lady of Angels	Troy, New York	~1851				New York, Niagra, Lewiston, Image 8
Christopher T Reilly	Enlistment	15 Apr 1872	21	New York, Albany		~1851	1 / 5yrs	4th Infantry Regiment, Co. G	Courier	NARA, U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798-1914; 1871-1877, P-Z, image 84
Christopher T Reilly	Discharge	15 Apr 1877	26	Fort Bridger, Wyoming Territory		~1851			Pvt., Character - Very good	NARA, U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798-1914; 1871-1877, P-Z, image 84
Christopher T Reilly	Enlistment	15 Apr 1877	26	Fort Bridger, Wyoming Territory	Troy, New York	~1851	2 / 5yrs	4th Infantry Regiment, Co. G	Soldier	NARA, U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798-1914; 1871-1877, P-Z, image 146
Christopher Reilly	Military	1880 Census	28	Fort Fetterman, Wyoming (Dakota) Territory	New York	~1850				Wyoming, Albany, Fort Fetterman, district 23, image 2
Christopher T Reilly	Discharge	14 Apr 1882	31	Fort Fetterman, Wyoming (Dakota) Territory		~1851			1st Sgt., Character Excellent	NARA, U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798-1914; 1871-1877, P-Z, image 146
Christopher T Reilly	Enlistment	21 Jun 1882	31	New York	Troy, New York	~1851	3 / 5yrs	4th Infantry Regiment, Co. G/D	Soldier	NARA, U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798-1914; 1878-1884, P-Z, image 109
Jennie Reilly	Birth	~1885		Nebraska	Nebraska	~1885				1900 Census, Nebraska, Douglas, South Omaha Ward 1, district 105, image 2
Christopher T Reilly	Discharge	20 Jun 1887	36	Fort Sherman, Idaho		~1851			Pvt., Character - Excellent	NARA, U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798-1914; 1878-1884, P-Z, image 109

A portion of the timeline for Christopher T. Reilly

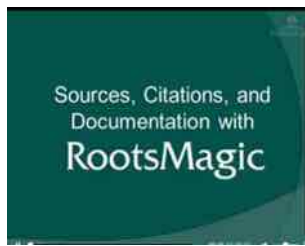


Ask the doctor What software?...the 64-bit question

Q I'm just getting started, and I don't know what genealogy software to use, or whether I really need any at all. I can store my family tree online, so why do I need a database?

Big questions! We'll start with the online family tree. As Allin Kingsbury's recent article "Infected trees" (*Pastfinder*, March 2011, p. 1) indicated, family trees can serve valuable functions, but aren't the total solution. And as Richard Rands's article "Share globally, work locally" (*Pastfinder*, November 2010, p. 1) explained, you can do far more with a database than with a tree. (Read both at www.svcgg.org/bigdeal.pdf)

An online tree gives you a way to share information and maintain a presence that allows others to benefit from your research. However, it has limited flexibility, and is a poor place to keep confidential but important information. We encourage family historians to put energy and effort into an online tree. Most of us already know why—we have benefited from the information in others' online trees.



A RootsMagic webinar

But it's not the only or the best way to organize and compile your own family history. What you share is not necessarily everything you collect. You'll work more efficiently with a database that can serve as a central orga-

nizing place for your images, your documentation, your research notes, and confidential information. Since it isn't housed on the Internet, you can access it anytime and anywhere you have a computer to run it. You can manipulate the data much more readily (such as making global changes), and you can print various reports.

Another feature about the new generation of genealogy software is the seamless interface to online databases, including subscription sites. This can save you lots of time and distraction.

As for what software to use: It's personal. Many people love software that we don't like, and vice versa. Many companies now market excellent programs, and most have free versions you can download and try. If you find it intuitive, you can stay with it. If you don't, try another program. Your data can be exported easily to the new program. If you're a PC person and are

truly undecided, you still can download the free Personal Ancestral File software (PAF) to get started. Again, nearly everything you enter there will export to another program.


Genealogy software packages we support with classes and lectures include Reunion for Macintosh, and these PC programs: PAF, RootsMagic, Ancestral Quest, and Legacy. Family Tree Maker also has many fans. The important thing in selecting a program is to make sure it allows you to import and export GEDCOM files. If it doesn't, don't bother with it. Also, use it enough to learn whether it has features that annoy you. For example, some users love that Family Tree Maker links directly to Ancestry.com, while others dislike it for the same reason.

If you want help in learning to use the software, you can use online tutorials and webinars provided by the various software makers (a screen from a RootsMagic webinar is shown at left). These can get you over the rough spots. Also, make sure your software has a well-organized, well-indexed guide for users. (PAF does not come with one, but does have built-in Help.)

Q I purchased a new Windows 7 PC but can't get the advanced viewer to work in Ancestry.com. I've downloaded it several times, but it doesn't function. What's wrong?

When I first encountered this problem, I called Ancestry's support line, and after they couldn't solve the problem, I was told to just be glad the standard viewer worked, and to live with it!

Knowing that the advanced viewer had worked fine at one point, I searched the Ancestry.com Frequently Asked Questions and pieced together the fact that the advanced viewer is incompatible with the 64-bit version of Microsoft's Internet Explorer (IE). I realized that when I recently switched my browser to the 64-bit version of IE, I shot myself in the foot.

So the problem will only affect users with 64-bit computers who are using the 64-bit version of IE. If you fall into this category, you can do as Ancestry says and live with the standard viewer (but what fun is that?), or you can do as I did. I created a shortcut on my desktop to the 32-bit version in my 32-bit program files at C:\Program Files (x86)\Internet Explorer\iexplore.exe (it can co-exist with the 64-bit version; x86 is a term from earlier days; don't be confused). When I work in Ancestry.com, I use the 32-bit version of IE. 

Spiderwebs: Ireland...Canada's Home Children



Irish Genealogy. Records recently added to Irish Genealogy site include baptisms, marriages, and burials from counties Cork and Dublin. Earlier record introductions include the counties Carlow and Kerry. www.irishgenealogy.ie

Kerry County, Ireland, burials. The Kerry County Council has recently made available 70,000 burial records for 140 cemeteries dating to 1898. Not included are church and private cemeteries. Most entries include name, age, marital status, and cause of death. www.kerrylaburials.ie

Philippines civil registration. A FamilySearch indexing project lists 5 million Philippines civil registration images, 1945 to 1980. www.familysearch.org

Upcoming meetings

The group meets monthly except December, on the second Saturday of the month from 9 to 11 A.M. at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 875 Quince Ave., Santa Clara, California (see map at right).

NOVEMBER 12, 9–11 A.M.

- Scrapbooking (Pam Fujii)
- English/Welsh research (Richard Rands)
- Reunion for the Mac (Pat Burrow)
- Getting started with Reunion (Deb Callan)
- Getting started in genealogy

DECEMBER, no meeting

JANUARY 14, 2012, 9–11 A.M.

See www.svcgg.org 

Home Children. From 1869 to the 1930s, more than 100,000 children—abandoned children, orphans, and paupers—were sent to Canada by Britain. Library and Archives Canada and the Greater Ottawa Genealogical Society have immigration and guardianship records of this Home Children migration online.

www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/home-children/index-e.html

Deceased Online, a Scottish burial record collection with some 100,000 burial records in Angus county has detailed maps to locate burial sites within cemeteries. Some 12,000 burial records for Corby, Northamptonshire, England, also are available; Corby attracted Scots and Irish in the 1930s with steel industry jobs. www.deceasedonline.com

Dorset Manorial Documents Register. U.K. National Archives has gathered records of some 400 Dorset manors. Records include court rolls; surveys; maps; British territorial and military reserves; and information about boundaries, franchises, wastes, customs, and courts. Title deeds are not included. Records are searchable by manor, parish, record type, and date. nationalarchives.gov.uk/mdr/



About the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group

SVCGG is the former Silicon Valley PAF Users Group, a nonprofit group of some 600 genealogy enthusiasts. The group is based in Silicon Valley in the Bay Area of northern California, but members live all over the world. The group is not affiliated with any church.

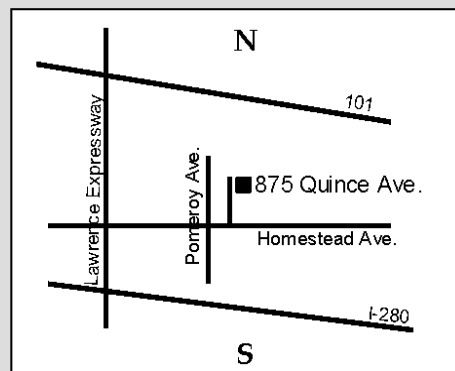
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Meeting site has ample free off-street parking, with an accessible entrance near the front of the building.

except December. *PastFinder* is distributed at meetings to members in attendance and mailed to others after the meetings. Members can access the newsletter by e-mail containing a download link.

Membership dues are US\$15 per household per year in the United States; Canada, US\$20; and other international, US\$25. 