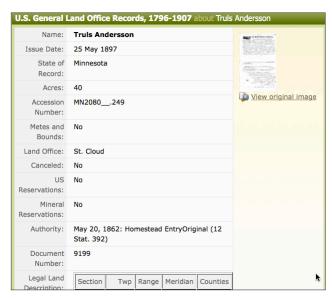


Between 1867 and 1929, some 1.2 million Swedes immigrated to the United States. All told, one out of every five Swedes departed for America during the 19th and 20th centuries, a percentage exceeded only by Irish and Norwegian immigrants.

## Waves of Immigration

Swedish immigration to America peaked between 1881 and 1890. But why? Crop failure and rising unemployment were primary motivators – as was the availability of land in the young country. Emigration out of Sweden became so great that the country set up a special commission tasked with finding ways to curb it. While Swedes continued to emigrate after 1890, mass Swedish immigration to the United States ended when the stock market collapsed in 1929.



**Tip:** Homesteading and free, available land were big lures for Swedish and other Scandinavian immigrants coming to the United States. Search for records in the Tax, Criminal, Land and Wills category at Ancestry.com to learn if members of your family got their hands on any.

## Life in America

Most Swedish immigrants arrived through New York, either at Ellis Island or earlier though Castle Garden. Those who didn't land in New York may have arrived in Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia or New Orleans. Some immigrants also

landed first in Canada and then crossed the border into the United States.

Factors including available farmland and higher working wages in the region drew Swedes to the Upper-Midwest states of Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois. So many

Homesteading was a big lure for Swedish immigrants — check land records at Ancestry.com to see if it was for your family, too.

Swedes settled there that at one point, Chicago had a larger Swedish population than any other city in the world except Stockholm, Sweden's own capital.

**Tip:** Check the neighborhood. Swedes and other immigrants often appear in American records near relatives who also immigrated from the old country. Always look forward and backward a few pages in census records and passenger lists and check the names of witnesses and informants on vital records and legal documents — you may discover other family hiding in any of these locations.



# Steps to Discovering Your Swedish Family

### STEP 1: BEGIN WITH RECORDS CREATED BY THE FAMILY IN THE U.S.

Start with the most recent records, including the 1930 and 1920 censuses, military draft registration cards, yearbooks, obituaries and other records at Ancestry.com.

HOW: Click on the Search tab at Ancestry.com to get started. Input the name of an ancestor who would have been living during the 20th century. Include other details — birth year, residence, birthplace and the names of other relatives — if available.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR: Click on the results returned and inspect the details. Family names, ages and relationships, birthplaces, occupations and addresses (scan horizontally across the page to see all of the information) can help you determine if you've found the correct family.

WHERE NEXT: Use the information you discover to create more searches for the same family moving backwards in

Save the records you find to your Ancestry.com family tree – Ancestry.com can use the details to help you discover even more.

time. Census records are full of details — and 20th-century records include information about immigration and/or naturalization — so try to discover each one your family appears in. And be sure to pay attention to birthplaces on all documents. A birthplace of "Sweden" will signify the family's immigrant. Then you'll need to do a little more research to determine if he or she came to America alone or with family.

**Tip:** Check census records for occupations – they're listed on each census from 1850 forward. If your ancestor was a farmer, which Swedes often were, agricultural census schedules and small town newspapers may help you learn more about his life and occupation. Both are available at Ancestry.com.

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## STEP 2: FIND THE IMMIGRANT IN THE **IMMIGRATION AND TRAVEL COLLECTION** AT ANCESTRY.COM

Once you know who the immigrant was — and have his or her name, approximate birth year and other identifying details from census and other records — search for records directly related to his or her immigration.

Special Collections Card Catalo Historical Records Birth, Marriage & Death Immigration & Travel Birth, Baptism & Christening Marriage & Divorce Death, Burial, Cemetery & Obituarie Citizenship & Naturalization Records Census & Voter Lists U.S. Federal Census Collection Border Crossings & Passports **UK Census Collection** Canadian Census Collection More... Immigration & Travel
Passenger Lists Citizenship & Naturalization Records

**HOW: Click on the Search tab at Ancestry.com.** From the Special Collections list on the right side of the page, select Immigration and Travel to limit your search to records from this collection. Fill in the search form with details you've discovered about your family's immigrant — name, birth year, year of arrival — and search. Note that the form contains fields for names of other family members, locations in which your ancestor may have lived, where he or she arrived in America, and more. You can fill these in later if you've received too many results, but be careful: immigration details reported years later on a census may not be entirely accurate.

> Tip: Discrepancies exist. Details in immigration records may not mirror what you've found elsewhere. Census immigration dates may be off by a few years and even first and last names may differ slightly (immigrants often Americanized their names AFTER arriving in America). Carefully analyze your finds and assess them against known facts to be sure you have the right person.



# Steps to Discovering Your Swedish Family

#### **STEP 2 CONTINUED**

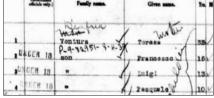
WHAT TO LOOK FOR: The Immigration and Travel collection includes passenger arrival lists, naturalization (citizenship) documents, passport applications and other records that link to a person's international travel.

Compare dates, family members and other details you find on an Immigration and Travel record to the information you've already collected about your ancestor to see if you've found a match.

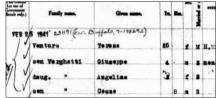
WHERE NEXT: Your goal is to find the location of the home in Sweden so you can dive into records created there. Some passenger lists and naturalization documents include this information — but not all do. Search for details on death certificates, church records, military documents and wills and resources in your own attic (place names may be listed on the back of old photos and letters that could point to family members who remained behind in Sweden). Also look at immigration and travel records created by other immigrating family members, which may include the details you're seeking even if your own ancestor's records don't.

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| - There at    | Mother  | 1   | W  | 38   |
| Charles       | Brother | Dn  | W  | 16   |
| d             |         | -   |    | _    |





Passenger list with the right Teresa shows the same family members and age ranges, but with ethnic-equivalent given names.



Passenger list for a different Teresa Ventura can be ruled out since children's names and ages don't match the later U.S. census record.

# STEP 3: USE NAME, BIRTH DETAILS AND PLACE INFORMATION TO LOCATE YOUR ANCESTOR IN SWEDISH RECORDS

Just like in the U.S., many records were created locally in Sweden. Knowing where your ancestor lived plus details about his or her family can help you pinpoint the right person when searching through Swedish records.

HOW: Click on the Search tab at Ancestry.com and choose "Show Advanced." Then fill in the search form with details

you've learned about your ancestor. At the bottom of the form is a "Collection Priority" option. Select "Swedish" as the priority and then choose "Show only records from this location" to focus your search on Swedish records. Be sure, however, to undo these settings before searching again for non-Swedish records.



**Tip:** : Records of all sorts in Sweden were kept by the Lutheran church. Check these carefully – you'll find more than just births, deaths and baptisms; you'll also find household examinations, which list everyone who lived at a residence, and more.

WHERE NEXT: Your ancestors likely left a long trail through Swedish records but you may need assistance locating those records. Use resources at Ancestry.com

including message boards to find other researchers who can help. You can also hire a professional to assist with some — or all — of the research. You'll find details about professional research services at the "Hire an Expert" button.



Not sure a record you found is linked to your family? Save it to your Ancestry.com Shoebox so you can review it later after you've had time to learn more about the family.



## Key Resources at Ancestry.com for Swedish research



#### **U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS**

**COLLECTION** — to help you discover more about your family's life in the U.S. and to give you the clues you'll need to find the all-important Swedish home in other documents created in America.



#### **IMMIGRATION AND TRAVEL**

**COLLECTION** — to discover the moment your ancestor arrived as well as details reported to obtain citizenship; note that women and children may not have naturalization records and may have been naturalized through a parent or spouse, depending on laws at the time.



#### **GOTHENBURG PASSENGER LISTS -**

to find records from Sweden; Gothenberg was the top port of departure for Swedes immigrating to America.



#### SWEDISH CHURCH RECORDS,

**1500-1937** — to learn details about your ancestor's life and his or her family in Sweden; included are birth, marriage, death and baptism records as well as household examinations, parish books and more.



#### **SWEDISH RESOURCE CENTER AT**

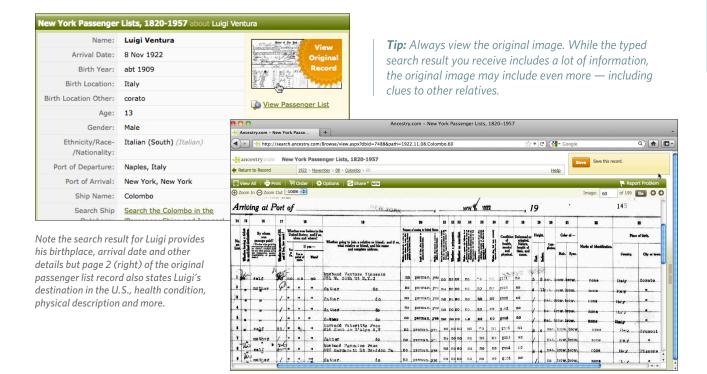
ANCESTRY.COM— to get tips for researching your Swedish ancestors and other information including Swedish terms that will help you with your research



**MESSAGE BOARDS** — to connect with other researchers who have experience researching Swedish records.



**FAMILY TREES** — to link to other family members, possibly even distant cousins, who are also researching the same family lines; one of them may have the details you're searching for.



## Helpful information

#### **SWEDISH NAMES**

Swedes followed complex naming systems, but knowing a little more about how names were given can help you understand more about your ancestor — and make locating the family a little simpler:

- The patronymic naming system, which is based on the father's name, was common in Sweden through the end of the 19th century, with between 90 and 95 percent of the population using it. If the father's name was Sven Johansson, for example, his son's name might be Magnus Svensson (Magnus the son of Sven). Similarly, a daughter might be named Kerstin Svensdotter (Kerstin the daughter of Sven). When a woman married, she did not adopt her husband's name; she kept her own patronymic.
- Clergy often adopted names with Greek or Latin endings such as -ander (meaning "man" or "man from") or -ius ("coming from" or "of"). Examples of names used by the clergy are Fallander and Morelius.
- Townspeople sometimes took "nature names" consisting usually of two parts, for example, in the name Dalberg, Dal means "valley" and berg means "mountain."
- Soldiers were given names while in the military when patronymics failed to provide sufficient differentiation among troops. Military names sometimes reflected a personal quality like Rapp ("quick"), a military term, a regimental preference, or could be associated with the place where the person served. When they left the service, some soldiers retained their military name.

#### OTHER HOMETOWN RESOURCES

If your Swedish ancestors joined a Swedish-American church congregation in the America, records from that congregation may include details about your ancestors' birthplaces. Search the Internet for the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center, which has tools to help you learn where the records can be found today. Also check for birthplaces in marriage and death records and birth records of children and in obituaries for all of the family's immigrants.

