

## Swedish Genealogical Records

Swedish genealogical records are among the best in the world. The most important records have been put on the Internet by three Swedish companies. These companies charge a subscription fee, but two of these sites are available free at local family history centers. The Family History Library in Salt Lake City also has a good collection of Swedish records on microfilm. Research helps and procedures, with links to these and other records can be found at the Family Search website: <https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Sweden>. Also go to the Family Search main page [familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org) and use the search feature to see whether your ancestor's parish has been extracted.

### Emigration Records:

In order to search for your ancestors in Sweden, you must know which parish they lived in and an approximate date. Before you search the Swedish records, get as much information as you can from family and US records. There are also two databases with records of people leaving Sweden. Both of these are available for purchase on CD, and one is available on [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com) which is free at family history centers. The census records from SVAR may also be helpful in finding your ancestor. (See the description below.) If you have LDS Swedish emigrants, see *The Journey Is the Reward*, an on-line book that can be downloaded free from this website: <http://www.xmission.com/~nelsonb/scand.htm>. Even if you know where your emigrant ancestor came from, this book is worth searching for the historical information it contains.

### Parish Records:

All vital records were kept by the Lutheran Church which was the state church. Therefore all birth, death, and marriage records are found in the church parish records, including records of people who were not members of the Lutheran Church. Generally parish clerks kept good records. The earliest records are christenings or baptisms, marriages, and burials. In 1688 the Swedish government passed a law that required these records to be kept, but not all these records have been preserved. Earlier records can be found in some areas of Sweden. In later years the clerks also kept records of people who moved in and out of the parish.

### Husförhörslängder:

*Husförhörslängder*, called "House Examination Records" or "Clerical Survey Records" in English, are unique to Sweden and Finland. The parish clerks surveyed everyone in the parish once a year and recorded when people took holy communion, whether they could read and write, and other information. Some of the earliest records contain only the names of people in the household and their relationship to the head of the household. Later records give much more information including birth, death, and marriage information and when and where people moved to or from an area. The information was updated every year, and recopied into a new book about every five years. These records are key to Swedish genealogical research. However, the birth, marriage, and death information recorded in the *husförhörslängder* should be checked against the original parish records, as these are secondary sources.

### Other Records:

Because the parish records and the *husförhörslängder* are such good records, many Swedish researchers never go beyond these. However, these records are only 6% of all the Swedish records with genealogical content. Other records are more difficult to use, but they make it possible for research to be done in earlier time periods and in areas where the *husförhörslängder* or parish records are missing. Some of these are listed below. For more information about these and other Swedish records, see the articles at [familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Sweden](https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Sweden).

**Bouppteckningar:** These records, often called probate records, list the possessions of a deceased person. Generally the deceased person's spouse and children are listed, and there may be clues to finding other relatives. The probate records and some indexes are available on microfilm from the Family History Library and some can be found online.

**Tax Records:** The *mantalslängder* are the most important tax records for genealogical purposes. They were kept every year beginning in 1642, although not all records were preserved. These records have names of the heads of households, and usually a checkmark in a column for wife, son, daughter, male and female servants, and sometimes sons- and daughters-in-law. Only people between the ages of about 14-63 were taxed, so other people, including young children, were not listed. Because these records were kept every year, they can be helpful for parishes where *husförhörslängder* are missing. Three copies of *mantalslängder* were made. The Family History Library has microfilm copies of the *mantalslängder* that were recorded at the national level, and these are also available online. Records from the district level are being digitized and placed online.

**Military Records:** If you do not know a soldier's patronymic name, these records can be helpful. A soldiers' index, which gives information about soldiers in some localities, is available free at the Central Soldiers Register <http://soldat.dis.se/>. It also contains information needed to access other military records. Most military records are available on microfilm from the Family History Library, and many can be found online.

**Court Records:** These are transcripts of the proceedings of the city and district courts, including civil and criminal cases. They are difficult to search, but can provide much useful information. If the name of the father of an illegitimate child is not found in the parish records, sometimes it can be found in the court records. These are available on microfilm from the Family History Library and some can be found online.

## Internet Sites

**Arkiv Digital, SVAR, Genline:** The three main Internet sites for original Swedish records are SVAR [svar.ra.se](http://svar.ra.se), Arkiv Digital [arkivdigital.se](http://arkivdigital.se), and Genline [genline.com](http://genline.com), which is now part of [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com). All three are subscription sites. Arkiv Digital and Ancestry/Genline are available free at local family history centers. SVAR is available free at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. All of these sites have digitized copies of parish records and *husförhörslängder*. SVAR and Genline have taken their copies from the microfilm copies made by the LDS Church. Arkiv Digital has refilmed the original books. All three companies are working hard to digitize other genealogical records. SVAR has complete copies of the *mantalslängder* that were filmed by the Church from the Sweden state arkives. Arkiv Digital is beginning to film the original *mantalslängder* that were kept on the district level. SVAR has some *bouppteckning* indexes and records; Arkiv Digital is currently filming original *bouppteckningar*. SVAR has a complete collection of the military muster rolls filmed by the Church. SVAR has Swedish census records for all Swedish counties for 1880, 1890, 1900, and is working on records for 1860, 1870, and 1910. These are not actual census records, as Sweden did not have a national census, but are

listings of people found in the *husförhörslängder* organized according to county. Arkiv Digital is beginning to film court records. Genline has an index to Swedish birth records taken from the Death Record CD 1901-1960, and an index to some emigration records. See the home pages of SVAR, Arkiv Digital, and Genline for other records that are available or currently being filmed. All three sites have English instruction pages.

**Demografisk Database for Southern Sweden:** [dds.nu/](http://dds.nu/) This is an excellent free site for Skåne, Halland, and Blekinge with indexes for some parish vital records.

**The Central Soldiers Register** [soldat.dis.se/](http://soldat.dis.se/) This is an excellent free index to Swedish soldiers. It generally lists the parish and small village that the soldiers served from, when they joined and left the military, and often includes their patronymic names, birth year (not always reliable) and names of spouses. Not all soldiers can be found on this index, but names are continually being added.

**DIS Swedish Computer Genealogical Society:** [dis.se/denindex.htm](http://dis.se/denindex.htm) This will help you find other people, mainly in Sweden, who are researching your line. Search as a guest, or pay about \$18 annually to join.

**Rötter:** Sveriges Släktforskarförbund (Federation of Sweden's Genealogical Societies) [www.genealogi.se/roots/](http://www.genealogi.se/roots/) (in English) [www.genealogi.se](http://www.genealogi.se) (in Swedish). This is the site for the national Swedish genealogical society. It has much information about Swedish research with links to local genealogical sites. The forum that it sponsors: [aforum.genealogi.se](http://aforum.genealogi.se) is especially helpful because there are discussions on the local parish level. Although most discussions are in Swedish, you can write in English and people will answer in English.