

Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center

Justina Lofgren family papers and travel writing

MSS P:335

1.25 linear feet (3 boxes)

Creator(s):	Lofgren, Justina Karlsson Lofgren, Bengt
Dates of collection:	1882-1963 (bulk 1920s, 1930s, 1950s)
Language:	Swedish (bulk), English
Access:	The collection is open for research. A limited amount of photocopies may be requested via mail.
Subject headings:	Travel writing Travel photography--Scandinavia Swedish American Line Svenska Amerika linien, ab
Processed by:	Lisa Huntsha, 2015
Related collections:	Augustana Home for the aged (Brooklyn, N.Y.) records (I/O:48)
Repository:	Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center Augustana College 639 38 th Street Rock Island, IL 61201 309-794-7204 sag@augustana.edu

Custodial History/Provenance

Donated to the Swenson Center by Nancy Lofgren in 2013. Bengt Lofgren was Nancy Lofgren's Great Uncle. The materials were kept in the home of Astrid and Irving Norgren until their death.

Biographical Sketch

Justina Karlsson was born on June 1, 1878 in Dalsland. Her father was Karl Johan Jacobson (b. 1823-10-04 d. 1910-07-09) of Synneröd, Hede socken i Bohuslän. Her mother was Märta Lisa Johansdotter (b. 1838-08-18 d. 1882-04-24). Justina married Bengt Löfgren on March 12, 1902.

Bengt Jönson Löfgren (in America, he sometimes went by Benjamin) was born February 16, 1873 to Jöns Lövgren and Pernilla Svensson-Lövgren in Lörby, Lister-Mjällby, Sweden (near Sölvesborg in the province of Blekinge). In 1892, at the age of 19, he took his first trip to the U.S. where he stayed for 5

years before heading back to Sweden. In Sweden, he met Justina, who had also been to the U.S. In 1902, they were married and back in the United States living in New York City and the Dunellen, New Jersey area.

Justina and Bengt had 6 children, but only 2 survived until adulthood. Oscar (b. 1904-01-16 d. 1913-07-07) died after being bitten by a rabid dog outside the family home. He was the first child to receive the new rabies vaccine and it appeared to work for a time, but he died about a month after receiving the vaccine. Hjalmar (b. 1906-04-07 d. 1969-04-12) married Inez Johansson from Stockholm on 1937-10-07 in the Gustav Adolf church in New York City. They had no children. Thor (b. 1907-10-19 d. 1910-12-31) was the Lofgren's third child. Astrid (b. 1909-10-28 d. 1981-05-29) married Irving Norgren of Brooklyn on 1946-09-14 in Gustav Adolf church in New York City. They had no children. Ragnar (b. 1911-10-21 d. 1919-10-11) died as a child of "brain fever." Vivian (b. 1914-05-24 d. 1914-05-26) only survived two days.

Hjalmar worked in a bank. Astrid graduated from Hunter College and worked for the Swedish American Line with Hjalmar's wife, Inez. The Lofgren family maintained close contact with their family back in Sweden. They returned to Sweden to visit several times (via the Swedish American Line). Justina kept journals of these trips and took many photographs.

Bengt Lofgren died Aug. 12, 1956 at the age of 83 after becoming ill with heart problems. Justina died September 26, 1967 at 89. In her final years, she had been a resident at the Augustana Home for the Aged in Brooklyn, New York after suffering a broken hip while on a cruise with Hjalmar and Inez.

Content/Description

This collection documents the history of an immigrant family's life in New York City from 1902 to the 1960s. Of particular note are the diaries and description of the first years in the United States from 1891-1898 and the families' return trips to Sweden in the 1950s, mostly written by Justina Lofgren.

Arrangement

Collection had no original order. Materials are arranged in the following series:

- Series I - Family Documents
- Series II - Letters
- Series III - Writing
 - Subseries I - Poetry
 - Subseries II - Travel Writing
 - Subseries III - Other Writing
- Series IV - Photographs

Inventory list

Box 1

Series I - Family Documents

1. Family history notes
2. Justina Karlsson's confirmation [n.d.]
3. Justina Karlsdotter's [Karlsson] leaving certificate, 1893
4. John Carlson's [Karlsson] citizenship paper, 1896 (Justina's brother)

5. Certificate of Citizenship for Bengt Lofgren, July 9, 1904
6. Astrid Lofgren's birth certificate (copy), 1909
7. Death notices and Condolences for children Oscar (rabies) 1913, and Ragnar (brain fever) 1919
8. Astrid Lofgren's school records, 1923
9. Army Air Force certificates, Benjamin [Bengt] Lofgren, 1943, 1944
10. Astrid [Lofgren] Norgren marriage, 1946
11. Bengt and Justina Lofgren death notices, 1956 and 1967

Series II - Letters

12. Letter of Recommendation for Benjamin [Bengt] Lofgren, 1902
13. Letters to Justina Lofgren, 1919-1936, 1963
14. Other letters, 1882-1939, 1946

Series III - Writing

Subseries I - Poetry

15. Poetry (some that Justina Lofgren wrote)

Subseries II - Travel Writing

16. Description of Bengt Lofgren's trip to America, 1892 (Swedish, English translations)
17. Description of trip to Sweden, 1929 (English)
18. Ticket to Sweden, 1929, Swedish American Line
19. Description of trip on Lutheran Cruise to Bermuda, 1932 (English)
20. Description of Astrid's trip to visit Inez (future sister-in-law), 1935 (Swedish)
21. Description of trip to Sweden, 1950 (Swedish)
22. Description of trip to Sweden, 1955 (Lofgren's 7th trip back to Sweden) (Swedish)
23. Writing on Blekinge [n.d.] (Swedish)
24. Justina Lofgren's diary/journal, 1944-1949
25. Justina Lofgren's diary/journal, travel to Bermuda in 1932, Florida in 1949, Sweden in 1950, Florida in 1954

Box 2

26. Justina Lofgren's diary/journal, travel to Sweden in 1955, West India in 1958
27. Justina Lofgren's diary/journal, 1955-1963

Subseries III - Other Writing

28. Notes on Lucia Celebrations 1935, 1952, 1955
29. "Bland Dalbor i Amerika" av Emanuel Bergman, 1934. Lofgren family featured (Swedish)
30. Various writings as delegates to church meetings and conferences (Swedish)

Series IV - Photographs

31. Justina [Karlsson] Lofgren photographs
32. Bengt Lofgren and Pernilla Svensson Lofgren photographs
33. Justina Lofgren's family photographs
34. Justina Lofgren's siblings photographs
35. Lofgren family photographs
36. Justina and Bengt Lofgren photographs
37. Oscar Lofgren photograph
38. Hjalmar Lofgren photographs
39. Thor Lofgren photographs
40. Astrid [Lofgren] Norgren photographs
41. Ragnar Lofgren photographs

Box 3

42. St. Lucia photographs, 1938
43. Photographs of Old Priests
44. Photographs of Royal Family
45. Unknown photographs

Envelopes 1-14

Ph 1-Ph 286

Photographs removed from scrapbook 1 (travel photos to Sweden, *SS Gripsholm*, New York City, Coney Island, travel to Bermuda 1932, Niagara Falls, Wilmington, Delaware)

Envelopes 15-22

Ph 287-Ph 484

Photographs removed from scrapbook 2 (travel photos to Sweden, 1950, *SS Gripsholm*, *SS Stockholm*, travel to Florida, travel to Cuba, *SS Kungsholm*, travel to Sweden, 1955)

Publication Note

When citing this collection, use the following credit line: Justina Lofgren family papers and travel writing (MSS P:335), Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center, Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois