

For those who are interested in Swedish military history, a wealth of documents has been preserved documenting the Swedish military as well as those who served in the military. Most of these documents are housed at the Military Archives in Stockholm. Today, many military documents have been digitalized and are available online.

The method of military conscription in Sweden from the 16th century to today can be broken down into the following categories:

1. Older allotment system (*utskrivning*) prior to 1682
2. Allotment (*indelningsverket*) 1682-1901
3. Conscription (*beväringen*) introduced in 1812 – supplement to allotment
4. Universal military service 1901 – 2010
5. All-volunteer military 2010 to 2017
6. Universal military service 2017

OLDER ALLOTMENT SYSTEM (*UTSKRIVNING*)

Before 1682, the usual method of recruiting soldiers was by a system called *utskrivning* or involuntary conscription. Every fit man in villages and farms were grouped together in a ward or a rote. One man per rote was involuntarily recruited. Both the foot soldier (infantry soldier) and the batsman (Navy) were recruited by involuntary conscription. There were a large number of deserters.

The cavalrymen were recruited voluntarily by a system called (*rusttjänst*) where farmers would provide a cavalryman with a horse to cavalry of the province.

ALLOTMENT (*INDELNINGSVÄRKET*)

In 1682 the Swedish Armed Forces was reorganized and the *indelningsverket* or allotment system, a system of organizing and financing the Swedish armed forces, was introduced. The three major forces were the infantry, cavalry and the Navy. This system lasted until 1901.

CONSCRIPT SYSTEM (*BEVÄRINGEN*)

A new system called (*beväringen*) or conscript was introduced in 1812. This was a forerunner of universal military service. At this time, the military officials felt that the allotment system was not sufficient to provide the total demand for soldiers. This system was introduced as a supplement to the allotment system. All men between the ages of 21 and 25 were required to register.

UNIVERSAL MILITARY SERVICE (*ALLMÄN VÄRNPLIKT*)

Universal military service was adopted in 1901 and lasted until 2010.

ALL-VOLUNTEER MILITARY

Between 2010 and 2017, universal military service was abandoned and was replaced by an all-volunteer Armed Forces.

UNIVERSAL CONSCRIPTION

Beginning in 2017, universal military conscription was reintroduced for both men and women.

INDELNINGSVERKET – ALLOTMENT SYSTEM (1682-1901)

SOLDIERS, CAVALRYMEN, AND BÅTSMÄN

The soldiers in the allotment infantry regiments were organized by a system called *rotering*. A number of farms made up a rote and these farmers were contractually responsible for recruiting the soldier and supporting him. The soldier was given housing (*soldattorp*), some land, food and allowance. The soldier was required to go to war when summoned. If the soldier died or was discharged, his wife and children were required to move to make place for the new soldier. A soldier was called a *soldat* or *knekt*.

The cavalry was recruited differently from the infantry. Instead of rotes, a *rusthåll* was used. A *rusthåll* was usually a large farm or an estate. A *rusthållare* was similar to a rote farmer in the infantry but a *rusthållare* had a personal contract with the Crown whereby he was contracted to provide a cavalryman along with providing a horse, housing (*ryttartorp*), uniform and land for the cavalryman. A cavalryman was called a *ryttare*.

The Navy personnel or *båtsmän* were recruited in a similar manner to the infantry. A number of farmers along the coastal areas formed a rote and were required to recruit a batsman and provide him with housing (*båtsmantorp*) and a uniform.

VÄRVARDE – ENLISTED

Only a few regiments were enlisted. These were primarily guards, artillery and garrison. These men were paid cash salaries. These regiments were primarily located in the cities and forts. Some of the enlisted regiments had their own parishes.

MILITARY ORGANIZATION

The basic unit of the Swedish army before 1900 was the regiment. A regiment generally comprised between 1000 and 1500 men, including both officers and “rank and file” soldiers. Each regiment was divided into smaller units called companies. Most army regiments had eight companies of roughly equal numbers of men. The basic military unit of the Swedish navy was the “*båtsman* company.” A *båtsman* company had roughly the same number of men as an army company, typically between 100 and 200 but in a couple instances there were nearly 300 men.

MILITARY NAMES

When a man joined the military, he was given a unique soldier name. The reason being is that there could not be multiple “Johan Andersson’s”. The soldier name could be based on a personal character such as Stark (strong), Rapp (quick) or a military term. Often it was based on the place where the soldier served. Often each person who served at the same place was given the same military name. When a person was discharged from the military some reverted to using their patronymic name and others retained the military name. This was purely the individual’s choice.

GENERAL MUSTER ROLLS (*GENERALMÖNSTERRULLORNA*)

The general muster rolls (*generalmönsterrullorna*) are the primary records one uses to research Swedish soldiers who served in the military between the 1680’s and 1880’s. The muster rolls were

kept by the respective regiments between every three to five years. In these rolls, you will find information about all soldiers and officers, regiment by regiment, company by company.

In the general muster roll, one can follow soldiers and officers from the time they entered the service until their discharge. Types of information you will find in the muster rolls include: soldier's name, both their soldier name and earlier name, birth date or age, number of years in the service, height and marital status. One learns if the soldier was promoted and sometimes one learns about commendations. At the end of the soldier's career, the reason for his discharge is often stated.

NAVY DOCUMENTS (*FLOTTAN*)

To research a person who served in the Navy (*flottan*), one begins by looking at what is available in the archive, ***Rullor flottan 1635-1915***. The seamen (*båtsmännen*) have their own series of records, ***Rullor båtsmanskompanier (volumes IV: 1-79)***. In this series, you will find different types of records regarding the seamen including the general muster rolls. The seamen muster rolls are organized in the same manner as the muster rolls for soldiers.

In the archive, *Rullor flottan 1635-1915*, there are many other types of records. The archive is divided into a number of diverse record series such as: rolls for companies in Karlskrona, Stockholm and Göteborg (*Rullor Karlskrona, Stockholm och Göteborg*), rolls for non-commissioned officers (*Underofficersrullor*), rolls for the company of young sailor boys (*Rullor skeppsgossekompanier*), rolls of seaman companies (*Rullor matroskompanier*), rolls of the companies in Finland (*Finska rullor*), rolls for navigators and civil workers in the pilot service (*Lotsrullor*) as well as a large number of various rolls for officers and crew at the Stockholm station.

CASE STUDY — SEARCHING IN THE GENERAL MUSTER ROLLS

One usually learns that one's ancestor was in the military in the household record. Titles such as *soldat* (sold.), *knekt*, *grenadjär* (*Gren.*) identify the person as belonging to the infantry. Cavalry titles include *ryttare*, *hussar* and *dragon* and the title, *batsman*, indicates one's ancestor was in the Navy. In order to find your ancestor in the Swedish military records, one must locate the regiment and company he served with. The publication, *Statistical Digest of the Swedish Army System*, is helpful to identify the regiment and company for men in the infantry and cavalry and company and station for those in the Navy.

To illustrate this, we will search for the military records for Anders Johan Nilsson Alm who is from Hällaryd in Stockaryd parish in Jönköping county. The steps for locating a general muster roll for a soldier are:

1. Begin with the household record. The household record gives you the parish and place in the parish such as name of torp or farm. Sometimes, you will find a soldier number or even the regiment and company name. In the household record for Anders Johan we see that he is residing at Soldat Torp #44 Södra Torp.
2. To identify the regiment, go to the publication "Statistical Digest of the Swedish Army System" by Claes Lorentz Grill (1817-1907 or the Grill).
3. To find the Grill in ArkivDigital:

- a. Select archive type and select the printed literature archive.
 - b. Search in the parish register: Tryckt litteratur GrillReg:1 volume.
 - c. Search for Stockaryd and you will see "I 181 and II 168" which directs us to page 181 in the volume Grill: 1 and page 168 in the volume Grill II.
 - d. Go to Volume 2 since that is the volume for the infantry regiments and to page 168 in that volume.
 - e. Soldat torp #44 belongs to the Kalmar regiment.
 - f. To find the company within the regiment, look at the columns on the right to Stockaryd and you will notice the #18 in the 7th column. The 7th column represents the company.
 - g. Go back to the first page for the regiment where you will find column heading (page 163) and the 7th column is for Västra Härad Company.
4. Search in the general muster rolls
 - a. Go to the military archives
 - b. Search for the general muster rolls for the Kalmar regiment (Generalmönsterrullor - Kalmar regemente)
 - c. Since the household record we found was for the year 1861, look for a muster roll near that year. In this case, we will look at the general muster roll for 1863.
 - d. Open the book and then search for the company.
 5. The first page for Västra Härad Company is at the following reference:
Generalmönsterrullor - Kalmar regemente (F, H, G) 430 (1863-1866) Image 3270
 - a. Search for Number 44. You will find the record at the following reference:
Generalmönsterrullor - Kalmar regemente (F, H, G) 430 (1863-1866) Image 3400
(AID: v60242a.b3400, NAD: SE/KrA/0023)

CASE STUDY — SEARCH FOR NAVY SEAMAN (BÅTSMAN) IN THE BÅTSMANSRULLOR

For those who are interested in researching Navy seamen (*båtsmän*) in the late 1800's, the boatman rolls (*båtsmansrullorna*) are a real goldmine. In the late 1800's, a little book was created for each sailor and these books contain much more detailed information than the general muster rolls thus allowing one to easily follow the sailor's military career.

One usually finds out that one's ancestor was a Navy seaman from the household records in the church books. We will search for the boatman roll for the Navy seaman Eric Eliasson Borgström who is living at Kärrabol in Jämshög parish in Blekinge county. and we also see Båtsman #243 next to his name in the record.

1. To identify the batsman company, go to the publication "Statistical Digest of the Swedish Army System" by Claes Lorentz Grill (1817-1907 or the Grill.
2. To find the Grill in ArkivDigital:
 - a. Select archive type and select the printed literature archive.
 - b. Search in the parish register: Tryckt litteratur GrillReg:1 volume.
 - c. Search for Jämshög and you will see "III 14 which directs us to page 14 in the volume Grill: III.
 - d. Go to Volume 3 and page 14.

- e. The batsman company is shown at the top of the page: No 6 Sjette Blekings Indelta Båtmans-Compani.
- f. Go to the archive for Karlskrona station: Blekinge 6. Båtsmanskompani.
- g. Look for volume that contains records for #243 Boatman rolls E9:7.
- h. Search for the service book for #243. You will find the cover page of the book at the following reference: Karlskrona station: Blekinge 6. båtsmanskompani (K) E9:7 Image 1250 (AID: v741210.b1250, NAD: SE/KrA/0510075Ö)

20TH CENTURY MILITARY RECORDS SEARCHING FOR A *STAMKORT* OR DRAFT CARD IN ARKIVDIGITAL

A compulsory draft system was implemented in Sweden in 1901. During the 1900's a large number of the male population served in the military service. Archive Digital is currently adding the conscription cards or service cards (*stamkort*) for all who were enrolled in the military service between 1902 and 1941. This project is not yet complete but new records are being added regularly. The *stamkort* includes personal information such as name, birth date, enrollment date as well as information about his military service.

SEARCH FOR THE MILITARY ENROLLMENT NUMBER OR DRAFT NUMBER IN THE HOUSEHOLD/CONGREGATION RECORD

You will find a person's military enrollment number or service draft number in the household record in the *värnpligtsförhållanden* column. The conscription number is a three-part number in the format SSS RR/YYYY. SSS is the draftee's personal number, RR is the roll keeping area or (*rullföringsområde*) in the enrollment area and YYYY is the year of enrollment. The enrollment year may be two or four digits.

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

Search for the service card for Ture Ansgarius Norden born on April 10, 1892 in Byarum parish in Jönköping county. His military enrollment number that is shown in the household records is 283 19/1911. His personal number is 283 and his year of enrollment is 1911. To find his *stamkort*, we need to identify what roll keeping area "19" represents.

SEARCH METHOD

1. Go to Hans Högman's website http://www.hhogman.se/enrollment_areas_sweden.htm
2. Search his cross-reference table to determine the roll keeping area and enrollment area in this case #19. Norra Smålands Inskrivningsområde
3. Go to ArkivDigital archive search
4. Select military archive and search for Norra Smålands Inskrivningsområde
5. Look for archive that includes Värnamo rullföringsområde (Ro 19)
6. Open archive
7. The volumes are organized chronologically by birth date. Open the volume that includes the birth year 1892. Then search for birth date 10 April 1892.
8. We find his record at the following reference Norra Smålands inskrivningsområde (Io 12), Värnamo rullföringsområde (Ro 19) (F) D2:2 (1891-1897) Image 8670 (AID: v806527.b8670, NAD: SE/KrA/0473/B12003Ö)

ARKIVDIGITAL BLOGS

- **Military Rolls (1620-1723)**
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/military-rolls-rullor-1620-1723/>
- **Researching in the General Muster Rolls**
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/research-soldiers-in-the-general-muster-rolls-example-jan-fras/>
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/statistical-digest-of-the-swedish-army-system-grill/>
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/general-muster-rolls/>
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/general-muster-roll-column-headings/>
- **Naval (*Flottan*)**
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/navy-flottan-documents-an-overview/>
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/boatman-rolls-batsmansrullor-a-unique-source/>
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/naval-ship-muster-rolls-skeppsmonsterrullor/>
- **Military Pension Records**
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/soldier-pension-documents-pensioner-olof-ceder/>
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/more-military-pension-documents-in-arkivdigital/>
- **Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers' Service Records**
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/armys-pension-funds-list-of-qualifications-armens-pensionskassas-meritband/>
- **Great Northern War Documents**
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/swedish-soldiers-captured-at-poltava-what-can-one-discover-about-them/>
- **Summary of Swedish Military Blogs on ArkivDigital**
<http://blog.arkivdigital.net/swedish-military-blogs-2/>

ADDITIONAL SWEDISH MILITARY RESEARCH WEBSITES

- **National Swedish Archives Site – Subscription Site**
<https://sok.riksarkivet.se/>
- **Central Soldiers Database**
<http://www.ep.liu.se/databases/soldatregister/default.en.aspx>
- **Hans Högman's Swedish and Genealogy Site – Excellent Military Research!**
<http://www.hhogman.se/military.htm>
- **Boatsmen Book Overview PDF in English**
<http://www.blekingesf.se/uploads/dokument/Boatsmen.pdf>
- **FamilySearch Sweden Wiki – Swedish Military Research Articles**
[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Swedish Army Records for Family History Research](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Swedish_Army_Records_for_Family_History_Research)
[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Swedish Military Jurisdictions for Family History Research](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Swedish_Military_Jurisdictions_for_Family_History_Research)
[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Swedish Naval Records for Family History Research](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Swedish_Naval_Records_for_Family_History_Research)
[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Swedish Military Records after 1885 for Family History Research](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Swedish_Military_Records_after_1885_for_Family_History_Research)