



Time Travel to 1887 at Fredriksberg's Manor House

Facts

Sweden and Oskarshamn at the end of the 19th century

The end of the 19th century was a period of great change and upheaval in Sweden. Many people left the countryside and the life as farmers, for an industrial job in the city.

There were many new technical inventions in the community, such as railways, telephones, electricity etc. Even though most people believed in the future there were still big differences between rich and poor, master and servant.

Many read the news about discoveries, thrilling stories of great explorers and for example life in America, in the local newspaper. Many people emigrated to America (1,2 million Swedes altogether) to build a better future for themselves and their families. They wrote letters back and sent money to their relatives in Sweden. Some even came back after a few years.

Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld was one of the famous explorers of the time. After having sailed the Northeast Passage onboard the ship Vega he returned with his expedition to Stockholm in 1880.

The Steam Frigate, HMS Vanadis from Karlskrona embarked on a round- the- world sail (1883-1885) with the goal of collecting information on ethnography, hydrology and geomagnetism.

In August of 1883 the Frenchman Charles Rabot (a Frenchman!) became the first to climb to the top of Kebnekaise, Sweden's highest mountain.

On the 6th of November 1881 August "Master" Palm held the first public Socialist speeches in Sweden at hotels in Malmö and Stockholm. What do the Social Democrats want?

A Swedish military defence reform was carried out in 1885. The period of military training was increased from 30 to 42 days. In 1885 a conflict over customs tariffs/import taxes arose in the parliament between free merchants and protectionists. In August of 1886 the protectionist used the expression "Sweden for Swedes".

At the same time there was a recession in the country and the Swedish agricultural sector was exposed to stiff competition on the world market. This contributed to the emigration from Sweden to North America culminating in the 1880s.

If we take a look at Oskarshamn in the 1880s we can see that the city celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1881 and from that time onwards the city developed at a rapid pace. The population, which in 1850 consisted of 545 persons, reached a total of 5423 persons in the 1880s which meant that the city was ranked the 29th largest in the country.

The railroad line from Nässjö to Oskarshamn contributed to the boom as well as trade and shipping. The merchant marine fleet had 82 ships. At the mechanical workshop in Oskarshamn there were two ship slipways where steamships were built and other larger work projects were carried out. In the city there was also another shipyard and cordage manufacturing, match factory, steam brewery and steam- mill, technical factory, wool- spinning mill, and tobacco company. The city had a railway station, post office, telegraph station, customs office, three banks, a savings and loan bank, schools, a theatre, several hotels and an inn. Two magazines were published weekly. There was regular steamboat traffic to Stockholm and other places. The recession of the 1880s did however have serious effects on Oskarshamn and areas in its vicinity.

Scenario, Fredriksberg's Manor 1887

Cavalry Captain Carleson has tried everything to make good business out of Fredriksberg Manor, the biggest farm in the region. The agricultural crisis has though a devastating effect. The world is overrun with inexpensive agricultural products from other places. If Sweden grows wheat then before you know it competition from American or Russian growers has overtaken the market. If its pork then in no-time the market is full of Danish pork. The cry for higher import taxes is heard in parliament but few landowners give a thought about poor people and their daily bread!

All the farmhands and servants at Fredriksberg work hard but it seems to have very little effect. They do not earn more money and it happens that they have too little food for themselves and their families. Carleson says he must give his children an upbringing which is in accordance with their standing in society, and that is expensive, and give of course less money to the workers.

Now a rumour has spread that Captain Carleson is doing so poorly that it won't be long before he has to throw in the towel and get bankrupt!

On this day in May 1887 the workers at the manor have been ordered to clean up the surroundings of the manor. And they have to do the laundry and cook as usual. The foreman has said that the Captain himself has an important announce to make today. He will let everyone know whether or not he will be selling the place, and in that case to whom?! Despite all the questions and concerns there is no time to sit still and wonder, no, there is work to be done! So much to do and so little time, everything must look neat and clean. If the Captain find a prospective buyer who has plenty of money, the manor and the surroundings must give a good impression! The Captain has also said that the worker's meals today will be at the manor house, as there will be no time to go home and eat.

As work progresses the conversation is mostly about current events. What to do about the general economic crisis in society? If things continue as they are the whole country will go bankrupt! And it is always the workers who have the most problems. How will I get enough income to feed myself and my family? What to do... look for work in Oskarshamn ...? Move to America? Is it true that everything is better there – can you believe all you hear? Maybe one should make inquiries to an agent about the possibilities to go to America? Or maybe it's best to stay in Sweden – even if it means tough conditions.

Key questions

- What is the way to choose for the future, for me and my family? How do I get a decent job and income?
- Emigration - is my future here in Oskarshamn or somewhere else in the world?

Roles

For teachers and Kalmar läns museum:

Captain of the Cavalry Carl Axel Carleson (teacher)

Emeli Charlotta Anna Hultenheim, Carleson's wife

Klara Maria Jonsson, the Inspector's wife

Driver Karl Johan Källgren

Kristina Maria Johansdotter, Driver's wife (KLM)

Karl Ludvig Johansson, Foreman (KLM)

Farm Labourer Johan Alfred Magnus Lundgren,

Klara Lovisa Ek, Lundgren's wife

Worker Anders Fabian Jonsson,

Johanna Maria Johansdotter, Jonsson's wife

Freight/Cargo Agent Erik Hagström (School: brief appearance about 10 min. from 10.45) see role card

Photographer Hilma Aurora Flodman or Photographer Bernhard Ludvig Berman (School: brief appearance from 13.15)

The students make name- signs based on the list

Your roles

You are seamen working for an English company and travelling with cargo between Oskarshamn in Sweden and Liverpool in England. Some of you are from England; others are from the Cape Colony and have been travelling on a ship from Cape Town to Liverpool.

The last few days you have off-loaded coal and other goods in the harbour in Oskarshamn and on-loaded woodenware like planks, boards and props on the ship. Today you have a day off before the ship sets sail tomorrow morning for Liverpool.

You have heard about the grand manor house Fredriksberg and are curious to have a look at it. You also know that there is a recession in the economy and many people have problems. There is not enough food for everyone and emigration to America is increasing. You have also heard rumours about the economic problems of Fredriksberg's Manor.

You have different duties and professions on board the ship; machine operators, stewards/stewardesses and cooks. One of you is the captain who wants to employ more workers for the ship. Maybe you at the end choose one or two persons that will go with you the next morning to Liverpool.

You have an English name.

Activities

Cooking (fried herring + boiled potatoes or boiled herring and fried potatoes)

Making mustard

Make coffee

Churning butter, make sandwiches

Laundry

Making paint

Painting the fence

Gardening

Saw and chop wood

Time Plan

First day KLM+teacher on location at 07.00 a.m.

Other days KLM+teacher on location at 08.00 a.m.

09.00 Students arrive, introduction

09.10 Read the landscape

09.30 Dress up

10.00 Initiation of the Time Travel

 Activities

10.45 Coffee break, discussions

11.15 Activities continue

12.15 Meal, discussions, finish the tasks

13.15 Arrival of photographer

13.20 Ending ceremony

 Reflection

13.40 Change of clothing

14.00 End, students leave

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Peter Danielsson

Kalmar läns museum