

Does your family ancestor have a Swedish "soldier name"?

For more than 200 years groups of soldiers and their families made a noticeable contribution, by populating the Swedish country side, only to name one thing. The old soldier torp (farm) with its characteristic rustic appearance, became a concept for the buildup and colonization of thinly settled areas. Many "strong and forceful" soldier names from that period of time, have lingered into our present day; as a result of their unique naming tradition.

There were simply too many Anderssons, Svenssons, Petterssons and Johanssons in the lists, so military commanders had to add characteristic names to the men who had "son names", just to be able to distinguish one man from another. Family surnames first appeared among peastanty in the 19th Century - using "Son" names.

SOLDIER NAMES WERE GIVEN TO SOLDIERS BY ORDER of their commander.

Names were often taken from military objects, as Spjut (=spear), Svärd (=sword), or personal characteristics, like **Stark** (=strong), **Flink** (=deft), **Modig** (=brave). In some cases they got names coming from **natural events**: **Ström** (=stream/ current), **Blixt** (=flash), or from natural objects, as **Quist** (=twig), **Lindqvist** (=linden branch), **Falk** (=falcon), **Berg** (=mountain). **Only the imagination** of the company commander **set limits** to what the men were called, and it was **completely up to him to decide what to name his own soldiers**. As a matter of fact, **officers** sometimes used their **power to nickname soldiers they disliked** - but, there were also the **opposite cases**.

In the province of Dalarna there was a tradition to keep the names within the holdings that were provided to the soldiers as a payment. So, if a **soldier got killed** in action, or, was too weak to retain his place, the successor **inherited the name**, and all other benefits. **Drafting** in Sweden had very little in common with drafting in the US or in other countries, as **each selected group of farmers was obligated to recruit, to feed and to arm a soldier as a kind of taxation to the Royal Crown**.

In time "son names" got out of fashion, so, it became very common among soldiers to **keep their name after their military service, and adapt it as his real surname**. That's the reason there are **so many**