

**Electronic Emigrant MUSEum, EMUS**, a living museum of the emigration from Torne River Valley, by Herbert Wirlöf the creator.

For me, a Tornedalian, the emigrants were and their descendants are Tornedalians.

I have worked in Erik Wahlberg's spirit, the great Tornedalian family- and rural researcher but with completely different tools and sources of knowledge than he had. I had the opportunity to talk to him telephonically a couple of times and was impressed by his knowledge of Tornedalian families and it inspired me to try to apply modern database technology in support of something that eventually became EMUS. Together with the rural researcher Sture Torikka, I started the Tornedalian network. It did not work but now, a virtual Tornedalian "pörte" is blossoming in Facebook thanks to Vivian White who started it and she is a descendant of a Tornedalian emigrant from Ruskola village in the Swedish Tornedalen.

My basic ambitions in creating EMUS were not reinventing the wheel but creating uniformity in the documentation. Since the most interesting documents were already in the Ancestry system, the basic idea was to easily link to the source material as this was now possible. Without the access to the Ancestry system, this project had not been possible. You have to be a member of Ancestry to get acquainted with sources such as church books, public records and passenger lists is a good investment in knowledge. Members can build their own family tree with the support of others by copying in the remaining parts of relative's trees

So far, you don't have to go to produce emigrant profiles just to link to the current family tree that often shows the emigrant's descendants (not now alive) and the emigrant's descents and family. This allows descendants to search their roots and relatives of the emigrant to search for the descendants. You can of course copy the information in the tree to the emigrant's profile, but it may not be considered a good ethic. So, emigrant profiles may in some cases consist only of links to the Ancestry source script. One should be aware that the family tree's dissatisfaction varies depending on whether it is a professional or amateur who created them. But it provides a good start for further investigations. What would be the option of not using already researched documentation? Nothing at all, it would simply not be possible to create this kind of databases.

The interesting thing about EMUS is the hilarious thought I get when I think of how many descendants of the 40,000 emigrants from the Swedish and Finnish Tornedalen that can be found in the United States and that they can beam together with now living persons in a Facebook group (a virtual home). To be reborn is too much said, but getting more knowledge about their roots is not to despise. I would say that it could be 250 000, now living, descendants of Tornedalian emigrants in United States.

The base of the local database is the emigrant table, and partly from a list that Rolf Åström produced for the county of Norrbotten from SCB's emigration statistics and some supplementary data comes from Sture Torikka's research on the early emigrants from Tornedalen and of course they are familiar with and have approved that the material is now in the database. I have created programs in VBA code in the Microsoft Access database program to first select emigrants from the Tornedalen parishes from the Norrbotten county and then processes the material and to provide help programs to facilitate investigation and documentation and withdrawal of reports for internet users. I have tried to gather the emigrants whose language was the Tornedalsfinskan or, as it is now called Meänkieli. It's

quite difficult because many people emigrated from places outside this language line, but it was not so common in the late 1800's. It has been important for me to make this selection to give the emigrants an identity that was strong at the time mainly the linguistic. I can mention that as late as the 1880 census, you were asked if you could speak Finnish and if so, you were classified as "finn". This was followed by passenger lists where the country of origin of Tornedalen became Finland. A Finnish-speaking person, which country comes from this, Finland clearly made a resonance on the establishment of passenger lists that became mandatory at the end of the 18th century.

It's important to remember that emigrants from the following places (municipal boundaries and community boundaries have changed over time) have been included:

Swedish Tornedalen: Haparanda city, Nedertorneå, Övertorneå, Korpilombolo, Pajala, Gällivare and Överkalix

Finnish Tornedalen: Alatornio, Karunki, Ylitornio, Kolari, Muonio.

The emigrant documents mention both village and parish and it facilitates for those who want to know more.

There are many emigrant databases in the market, but EMUS is by far the first to try to create profiles of these emigrants and systematize the information about and place the information into an emigrant library. In my view, EMUS is the only now existing database of a region which is also minority-class in Europe. And of course, the emigrant's profile is adorned with the minority flag Meänflaku, which I designed and which is suited to use in context like this

There are many errors left and my hope is that they will be discovered when making emigrant profiles. Many went without moving ratings and were therefore not registered on SCB and are therefore missing. I have added many of them. The number of family pages across emigrants has probably increased due to increased interest from descendants in the United States. Often married females are registered with their virgin surname. But often it says ex. Agda Kallio b. Juntti or something like that. I have changed changed to Agda Juntti m.Kallio.

As the name suggests, the museum is not a museum in common sense and should not be considered as complete, new emigrants are added, stories, pictures and other material are collected or linked to and cataloged in tables that are eventually related to each other.

Working with EMUS can be compared to producing a book and referring to source papers. The purpose of the book is to discover something new and to make new findings and to draw new interesting conclusions. You cannot do that until the book is complete and you have a complete picture. The result will be an important basis when Tornedalen's emigrant story is to be written, which will provide knowledge and learning of what the reign of people really meant for the border region, its positive and negative consequences.

The major shortcoming is that, for the time being, only a small number of emigrants from the Finnish Tornedalen have been registered. One tries to verify the data by searching in Ancestry and data in different genealogies and birthbooks. I have my DNA in Ancestry and have managed to find a number because they are distant relatives with me when I am born Tornedalian. The goal can be set to find at least one descendant of each emigrant or to verify that there are no descendants.

My hope is that material contained in the database will cover both the Swedish and Finnish Tornedal municipalities.

In the local database, available only to me, the Birth Book of Hietaniemi, 1721-1925, is used from the material made by Stig Inge Gustavsson from the church books which I have made into a searchable table in EMUS. I have corrected some names, and the families have been numbered. The inspired Church books in Ancestry make a good compliment and verifies Stig Inge's data laying of the birthbook. It is also in the form of a text file on the Rooters website and is maintained by Stig Inge himself.

The two tables will be developed separately. When preparing the emigrant profile's main document, the emigrant's family is copied if it was born in the Hietaniemi parish. Emigrants born in other parishes get a reference to an appropriate Householdexamination document in Ancestry, where hopefully most family members are present.

The birthbook for Övertorneå is available in unfit version, covering the years 1718-1800 + 1889-1921. >It is possible to continue working with Övertorneå Birthbook 1801-1888, basic data of Pehr Norberg, based on Ancestry material.

Death Book Övertorneå 1901-1932 and Death Book Svanstein 1926-1947, Matarengi Research Association has contributed with which I have converted to a table in the database.

Emigrant research is greatly facilitated by the fact that the church books are now available in Ancestry

Descendants of emigrants have contributed stories and pictures of how it went, and many have shown joy to be able to hand over their contributions as they become important parts of the Tornedal emigrant history and can be saved for the aftermath. These have been filed in the emigrant's library and are called from the emigrant's list of links. The stories that cannot be related to any emigrant or family or family documents can still be accessed in the library system.

Study my story about grandfather Petter Arvid Patron, emigrant to the United States and my grandmother Hjalmar Linna's fate in Soviet Karelia, Russia. The first mentioned, I have put in the family document with grandfather's name johan\_petter\_patron\_family because it is related to everyone in Johan Petter Patron's family. The second story I have put in the uncle Hjalmar's library because it concerns only him and his family, even though I had set up a family library with Hjalmar's father's name, Mattias Linna. The documents placed in the History and Memories Library are documented on the website [www.tornedaliens.com](http://www.tornedaliens.com).

There is a list of Stories and there are links to emigrant-related stories and memories, but also to those contained in the unrelated documents in all / history and all / memories. This is done manually in the documents.

The ambition is to document what happened to the emigrant in the new country, mainly the United States and northern Norway, did he / she marry? Did they have children? Which became first generation descendants. If you find documents that show that the emigrant settled in the new country, it is not so important to search and report travel documents and other documents to show that he really traveled. Being able to search in the Ancestry among census for the years 1910,1920,1930 and 1940 is often rewarding and nowadays you often find Public Family Trees where the emigrant is found and there are usually also the emigrant's parents and siblings and the emigrant's family and descendants of the new country.

If a link from EMUS is made to a public family tree in Ancestry the creator should look forward to a note of thanks from me with an invitation to join a Facebook group where live tower demolitions and emigrant's descendants can meet. The problem of linking to the family tree is that if the holder for some reason removes the tree, EMUS will lose information. It is then important to find another document in Ancestry to link to, for example a Census report. If you have not found a Census document, it is important to search for and link to travel documents that show that the emigrant really traveled. It may be passenger lists from Gothenburg and NY. If possible, check id made to find out if the emigrant returned to Sweden and Tornedalen.

To work with Ancestry and for the visitor to see the links to documents in Ancestry, subscriptions are required. Without membership, you cannot read documents linked to. The database was actually designed in an advanced way. Because of that, I have had to lower the ambitions when the work is run ideally and not by a company with extensive knowledge and efficient database management. But there is nothing that prevents the database from being developed technically later. This can also happen during work.

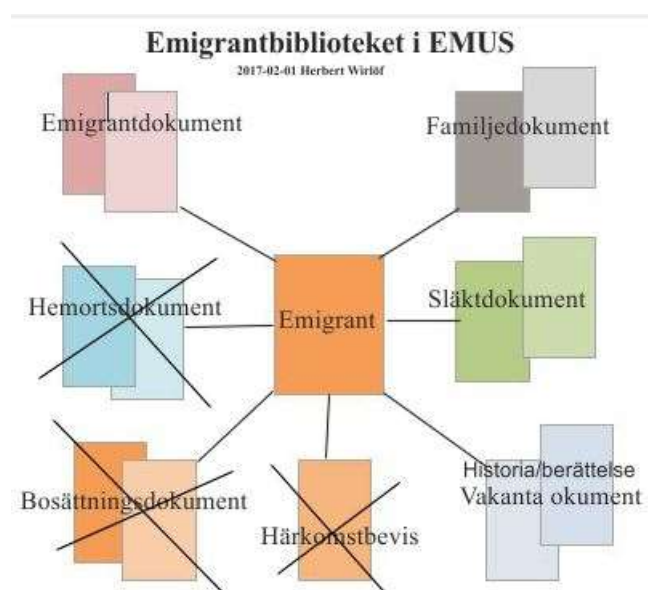
This is the main menu of the local database which I am using.

Internet users see EMUS in the form of excerpts from the local database used by me. It is currently in the form of the following reports published by Haparanda - Tornio Genealogical Society

### 1. Examples of emigrantprofile's layouts

2. Emigrants sorted by the complete surname
3. Emigrants sorted by the short surname, emigrated year and age
4. Emigrants to Brazil sorted by the complete surname
5. Emigrants to Norway sorted by the complete surname
- 6 Emigranter to Finland sorted by the complete surname

There is a lot of work behind these reports and the underlying structure of the emigrant library I want to describe as follows:



- a. **Emigranttable**
- b. **Emigrantdocument** one per emigrant containing 2 documents
  1. Emigrantprofile, containing description, pictures and s.o.  
Ex. *aagard\_bjorn.html*. There is a link to document 2.
  2. Linklist with links to interesting documents in Ancestry or other found documents  
Ex. *aagard\_bjorn\_lista.htm*
- c. If several or the whole family emigrated a **Family document** is created.
  1. Ex. *alla/aagard\_bjorn\_family.html*. There is a link to document nr 2.
  2. Ex. *alla/aagard\_bjorn\_family\_lista.htm*
- d. If several siblings emigrated a **Relation document** is created
  1. *alla/aagard\_birger\_family.html*. There is a link to document nr 2.
  2. *alla/aagard\_birger\_family\_lista.htm*
- e. A story related to an emigrant or family are placed in an Emigrant/Family or Relation document is placed in the folder where the linklist is and from there is a link to the story.
- f. A story which cannot be related to an emigrant or family is put in a **History document**

### 1. *alla/historia/dokumentnamn*

Characteristics of a database are that the tables / documents should be related to each other. In this type of activity based on volunteering during free time among single members of the association, you cannot require knowledge about database management without doing the best you can with the knowledge you possess. Therefore, this database is a compromise where you create relationships between emigrant documents manually in the actual documents in the html files. As the level of knowledge in the future increases, members of the community will certainly be able to undertake the task of creating related objects and this by postponing the information with the support of the programming language VBA MsAccess.

In order to make it easier for the Emigrant team to produce Emigrant libraries, I have, with the data in the Emigrant Table as a basis, automated the boring work of creating the libraries and the information-bearing html documents from template documents so that the emigrant team can spend the entire time researching and present the facts.

I take care that in this box you also put the truth about the arrival of Meän flaku



The Tornedal flag, which I designed, pattern protected and marketed since 2006, I have handed over to Svenska Tornedals Riksförbund STR-T in June 2013. It is basically a symbol of the meänkieli speaking people but of course also a symbol of all the demolitions and their descendants wherever they are in the world.

It was lifted for the first time on June 1, 2006 in Vitsaniemi city and more officially July 15, 2007 in Övertorneå.

The picture below shows simultaneous hoisting of the flag at Knuuti old birkarla farm in Vitsaniemi village Swedish Tornedalen (current Björk's farm) and Nikka's farm in Pekanpää on the Finnish side of Torne river.





The colors of the yellow white blue flag symbolize the bright sun, the winter white nest and the summer blue sky. The flag is to be hoisted with the yellow field at the top.

My speech below, which I held July 15, 2007, accompanies the flag to STR-T and into the future. The languages below describe the 1808-1809 boundary drawing that shared a people in two.

In English:

## The flag for the Tornedalians

In Torne river the high temporal drew a boundary  
that divided ONE people into two  
in its deepest groove is it drawn  
invisible and for us difficult to understand

When the temporal came to the village  
a torne-valley woman is said to have shouted to them  
'the summer blue sky can you not to divide  
not neither the white winter neighbourhood  
and not neither the clear yolk sun  
that you now cannot to divide

it eternally will consist'

When we now have flyed the flag  
and is looking on its fields  
there you have a blue field for the summer sky  
a white field for the wintry neighbourhood  
a yellow field for the clear yolk sun  
that they could not divide  
were intended for eternal to consist

Look, the flag lacks the cross's strain  
neither the Swedish yellow or the Finnish blue  
because we have not been crusaders  
but been used in crazy wars as few  
if you want to see a cross  
ii is white and verge that a snow white river

The flag for Tornedalians!  
blaze proudly between the Torne river valley's low hills and surrounding lakes  
you are for us, we with same language and same manners  
flap away the shame that on us older set touch  
give back the pride to our young  
give them the strength to want to be ONE and same people,  
The Tornedalians, the people of the Torne river valley

By Herbert Wirlöf

Thanks for reading!

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Vitsaniemi by  
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