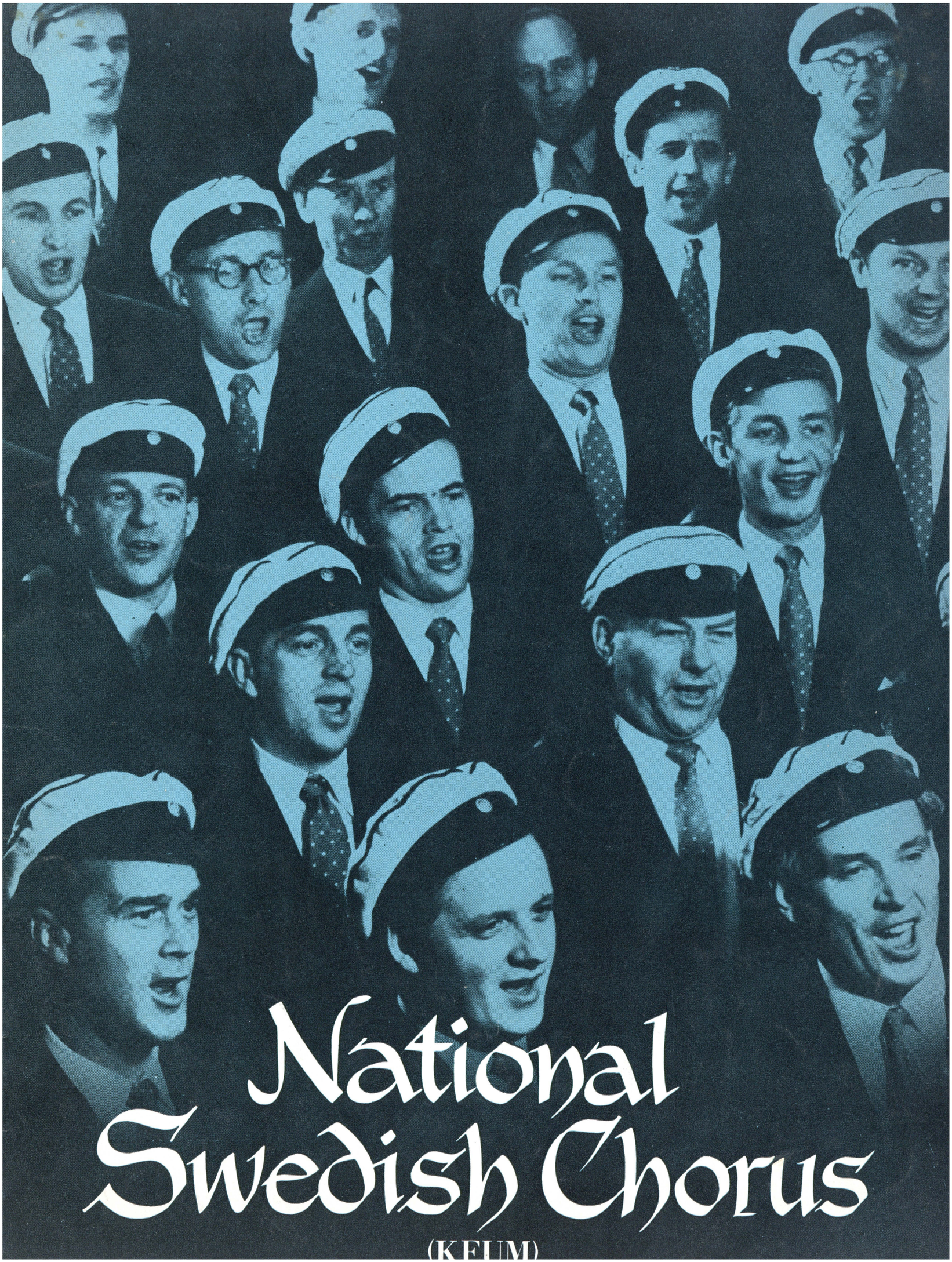
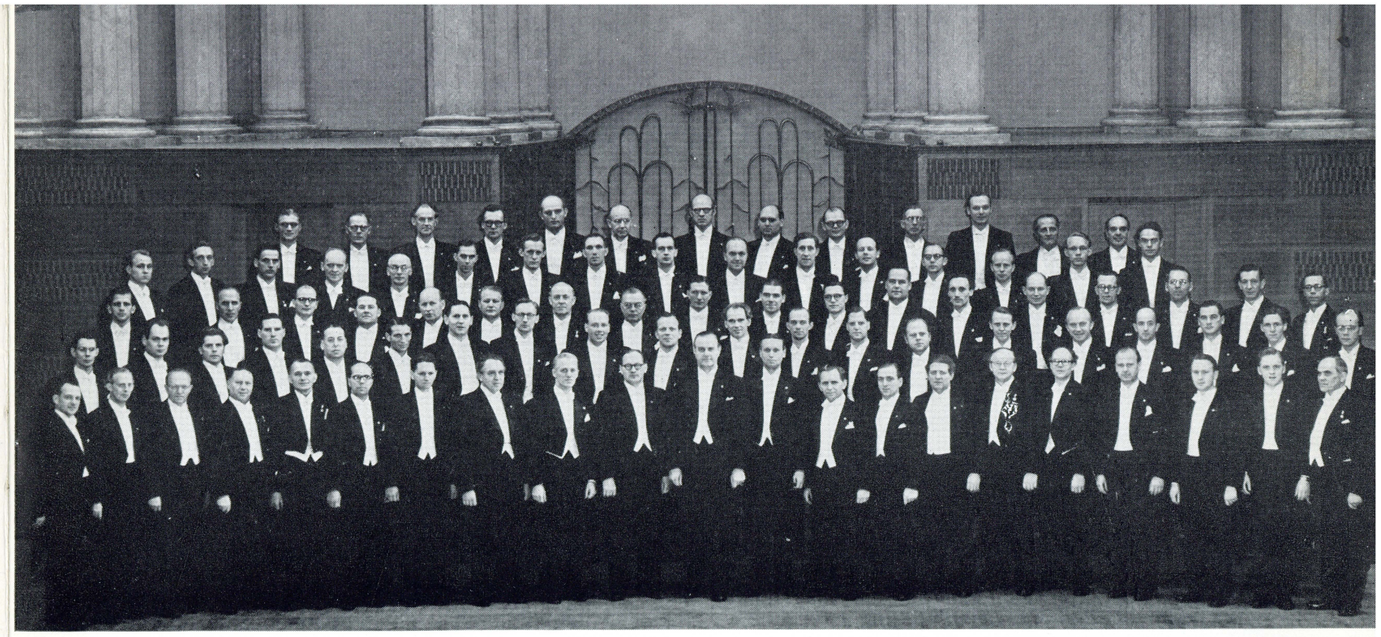

National
Swedish Chorus
(KFUM)



Under the High Patronage of His Majesty The King of Sweden

S. HUROK

presents

National Swedish Chorus

(KFUM)

Sweden's Extraordinary
75-voice male chorus

1998.11.41

he National Swedish Chorus (KFUM)

"It is well known that choral singing is a special affinity of the Scandinavians; for the National Swedish Chorus to rank at the top of its kind is a guarantee of something special when they sound their *A* for America." So wrote Irving Kolodin, distinguished music editor of *The Saturday Review* after hearing the group in Stockholm last summer.

Under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Gustav Adolf of Sweden, the National Swedish Chorus is currently making its first visit to the United States in 50 years. The Chorus last toured here in 1906. During the nearly 70 years of its existence, it has functioned in association with the Swedish YMCA and in its native city, Stockholm, it is often called the KFUM (YMCA) Kören.

In Stockholm the Chorus is a feature of such State occasions as last summer's entertainment for Queen Elizabeth of England, and the funerals of Prince Charles and Prince Bernadotte, Count Folke Bernadotte (who was an honorary member of the Chorus), and Crown Princess Martha of Norway. It has also given many official performances as Swedish representatives abroad, such as those recently before President Paasikivi of Finland in Helsingfors Palace and Crown Prince Olaf and Crown Princess Martha of Norway at Skaugum Castle. In addition to its concerts in Stockholm's concert halls, the Chorus often performs at the King's request at the City Hall and the Royal Palace. It has made some 60 recordings, many of them best-sellers in Scandinavia.

First formed in 1887, the Chorus came into prominence with its performances at the World Conference of the YMCA in Stockholm the following year. In 1891 the Chorus' reputation became international with a series of highly praised concerts in Amsterdam, and, in 1894, 66 men were in the Chorus that created a sensation in London with performances at Royal Albert Hall, Queen's Hall and in other places.

The chorus rehearses with Martin Lidstam.





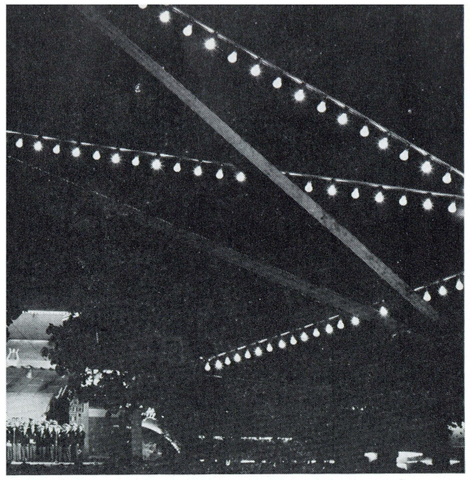
The National Swedish Chorus outside Stockholm City Hall with the old city in the background.

Between that time and a hiatus in the group's organization that occurred in 1922, the Chorus made some 20 tours in and out of Scandinavia including the one across the Atlantic. For the first eight years of the Chorus' existence it was lead by Axel Taube, a banker of Malmo. For the 25 years thereafter, Hugo Lindquist was the Musical Director, improving steadily the group's already high level of musical excellence.

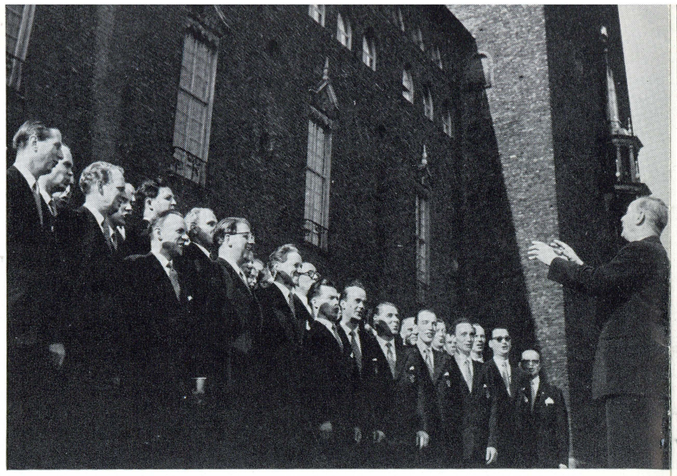
In a country as addicted to choral singing as Sweden is, there were other excellent male choruses besides the National Swedish. From 1914 on, the men's choirs of the smaller churches in Stockholm had banded together into a remarkable organization called the Excelsior. Shortly after the dissolving of the KFUM Kören in 1922, musical leaders, church dignitaries and the central office of the YMCA persuaded the Excelsior group to reorganize itself to take the place of the departed organization. Gunnar Berggren, the leader of the Excelsior Chorus, directed the Chorus until 1935.

Martin Lidstam, who succeeded Mr. Berggren as choir director, had been the conductor of various Baptist choruses in Stockholm. Under his directorship the Chorus has reasserted its position in the international musical world and won renewed recognition at home.

At Mr. Lidstam's opening concert on May 12, 1935, the group consisted of 40 men. Now the membership is about 120. From 1935 to 1949 the Chorus met for practice 617 times and gave 517 public concerts, including 100 broadcasts for Swedish and foreign radio programs. During the same period the Chorus made 23 concert tours in Sweden and four abroad to the other Scandinavian countries, Scotland, Iceland and West Germany.



orus performs at the Swedish Tivoli.



Outside Stockholm City Hall after performing for Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh.

Since 1950, the Chorus has made 15 concert tours including a 400-mile journey to the Upper North as far as Narvik near the Arctic Circle in 1951, to Oslo in 1952, to Gothland in 1953, to Smaland and Finland in 1954 and to France and Western Germany in 1955.

Within Sweden the Chorus has formed the Y.M.C.A. song organizations, which at present include some 20 choral groups with more than 500 members, and also organized biennial Swedish *Song Courts,* which bring together choruses from all over the land.

As a manifestation of Nordic solidarity, the Chorus organized in 1941 a *Song Court* to bring together choral groups from all over Scandinavia in a time of war and occupation. Representatives from both Denmark and Finland attended, but the Norwegian choruses were denied permission by their German occupiers. At the War's end another *Court* was held in Denmark and a third took place in Oslo in 1952. The next such gathering is scheduled for Finland in 1957. Between these great *Courts* smaller inter-Nordic meetings are held among the various countries.

The National Swedish Chorus' extensive repertoire, which is numbered at more than 1,000 individual pieces, is based on the classical, baroque, romantic and folksong repertoire but also includes a number of contemporary compositions, some of which are in the most demanding of modern styles.

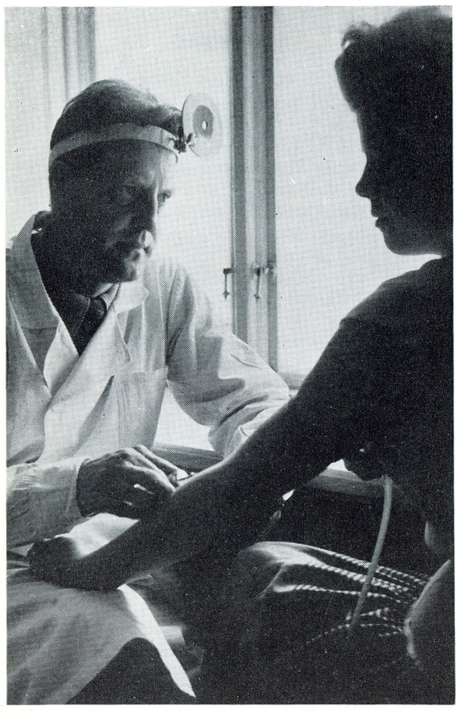
The members of the Chorus, who have devoted so many of their leisure hours to preserving this group as the peer of any in the world, are drawn from every walk of life. Engineers, doctors, salesmen, barbers, businessmen of all kinds, detectives, teachers, contractors, millworkers, executives, clerks, printers, designers, shoemakers, clergymen, bus drivers, insurance men, and aviators work happily together to maintain this standard of musical and choral excellence.

y King Gustav Adolf congratulates esident Rev. Bror-Axel Lindorn.



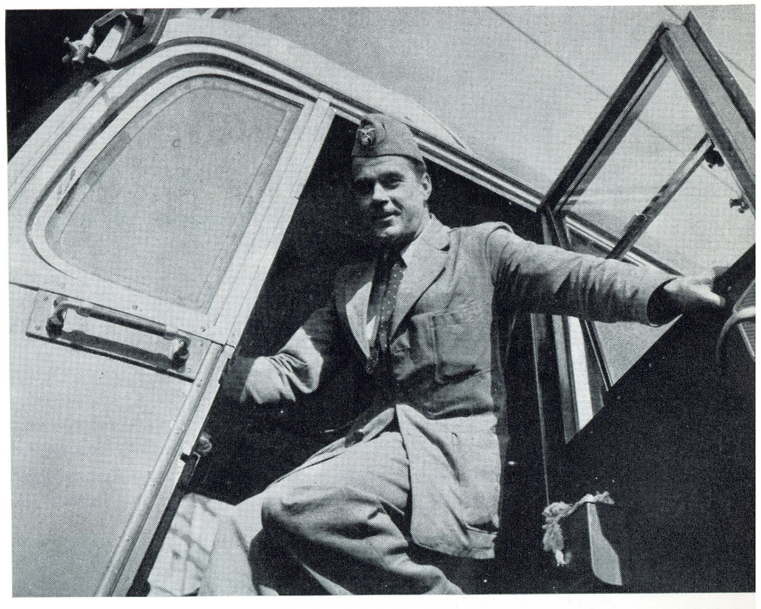


Carl Evald Grill, Baker

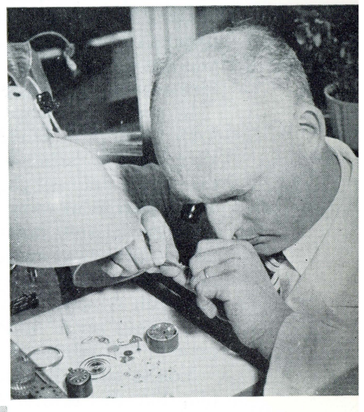


Otto Herbert Nyman, Doctor of Medicine

Off-stage with Members of the chorus



Gustav Lennart Jansson, Bus driver



Svan Ture Risberg, Watchmaker



Otto Olof Martin Carlsson, Cobbler



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Martin Lidstam

Conductor

MARTIN LIDSTAM is regarded as Sweden's foremost choral conductor for his work with the National Swedish Chorus (KFUM). Mr. Lidstam took over the direction of the Chorus in 1935 and is only the fourth conductor in the organization's sixty-nine-year history.

For some 30 years he has conducted or supervised local, district and Swedish Baptist choruses and was for many years the conductor of Stockholm's Male Chorus Union in which some 60 choruses numbering 2,000 singers took part. He has conducted the National Swedish Chorus on its many tours and won praise from critics and audiences not only in Scandinavia but throughout Western Europe.

Mr. Lidstam has often been cited by Swedish critics and musicians for his service to Swedish music and that of the other Scandinavian countries. He has constantly encouraged native composers and, as his U.S. programs indicate, features their music in his concerts. He has also given considerable time and effort to the discovery and preservation of Swedish folk music.

Born in Sodermanlands in 1899, Mr. Lidstam, despite a musical schedule that would exhaust most full-time conductors, finds time to be a successful businessman in a totally different field. When not directing choruses, he is the Sales Director of an important banana importing firm in Stockholm.



Offstage Mr. Lidstam directs sales of banana import business

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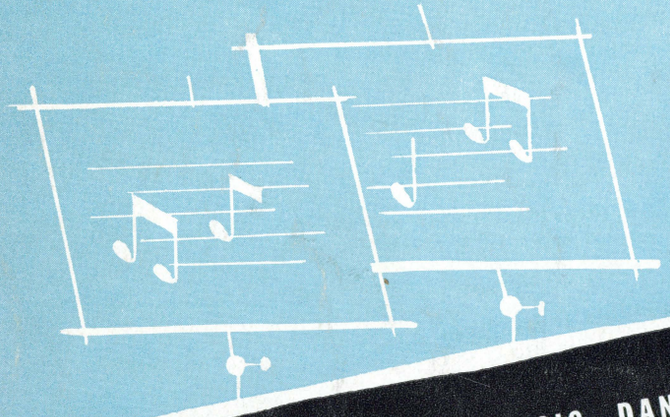
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