

Some old buildings and names in the
history of chemistry and mineralogy
in Uppsala

Johan Kjellman

for the

**9th International Conference for the History of
Chemistry, Uppsala, Sweden**

21-24 August 2013

9th ICHC



LABORATORIUM CHEMICUM

Västra Ågatan 24

The site was bought in 1752 for 12 000 thaler copper and a single-storey house incorporating a laboratory was erected and completed 1754 for the first professor Johan Gottschalk Wallerius (1709-1785). He held the position from 1750 to 1767. Wallerius assistant A. P. Tidström (1723-1779), known for his linnean crystal models, gave lectures in chemistry, assaying and mineralogy here between 1759 and 1774. In 1767 Torbern Bergman (1735-1784) became professor. After a fire 1766 extensive reconstructions commenced in 1768 and a second floor was added to house the mineral collections.

Johan Afzelius, who succeeded Bergman as professor in 1784, was mainly interested in mineralogy and continued working on the mineralogical collections. In 1796 he incorporated the mineral collection of Magnus Bromell with the main collection. This collection contains some of the oldest preserved natural history objects in Sweden.

Anders Gustaf Ekeberg (1767-1813), who was appointed "laborator" in 1799 worked in the building until his too early death. He is known mainly for four things in the history of chemistry: (i) introducing the first Swedish antiphlogistic nomenclature in 1795; (ii) naming of the new "earth" *yttria* in 1797 (iii) supervising Berzelius's disputation on the mineral water from Medevi in 1800; (iv) discovery of tantalum in 1802.

Lars Walmstedt (1782-1858), mainly devoted to the mineralogical field in chemistry, was the last professor to work at LC.

APOTEKET UPLANDS VAPEN

Dragarbrunnsgatan 48B

Carl Wilhelm Scheele (1742-1786) worked as a pharmacist in Uppsala between 1770 and 1775 at the pharmacy *Uplands Wapen*. It is still in existence but the old buildings were torn down in the 1960s.



THEATRUM OECONOMICUM

Gamla Torget 2

The oldest parts of the building goes back to 1650. From the 1740's it housed the first chair of economics at the university, which was held by Anders Berch (1711-1774). Berch kept large collections of materials and models pertaining to agriculture and the textile and crafts industries. These collections are still preserved at Nordiska Museet in Stockholm (textiles) and Ultuna University in Uppsala (models).

In 1750 the mineral collection of the mining councillor Anton von Svab (1702-1768) was acquired for the newly established chair of chemistry as a utility for teaching purposes. However, since the first professor Wallerius chose to use his own collection when lecturing, the Svab collection was stored in the attic of TO. In 1767, when Torbern Bergman became professor, Svab delivered the last parts of his collections. It was not until 1769 that the collections finally was exhibited and lectured upon in Laboratorium Chemicum. The collections at LC contained not only minerals and ore samples but also samples representing the complete metal extraction processes of the different metals, as well as all kinds of machines and mechanical devices pertaining to the mining industry.



OLD CHEMICUM (*Gamla Kemikum*)

Engelska parken

After more than 100 years of existence the chair of chemistry was divided into three disciplines in 1853. Work on new buildings in Engelska Parken commenced the same year and were finished in 1858.

Elof Wallquist (1797-1857), who held a position as lecturer at the old department, was transferred to the Medical Faculty and became the first professor in medical and physiological chemistry. The main chair was split into two chairs. One in mineralogy and geology that was kept by the sitting professor professor L. P. Walmstedt. His son, Edward Walmstedt (1858-1884), was appointed to succeed him in 1860.

The second chair, in general and agricultural chemistry, was given to Lars Fredrik Svanberg (1805-1878). Svanberg was succeeded by Per Theodor Cleve (1840-1905). Cleve is most renowned "for his researches on the chemistry of the rare earths" - especially the discovery of the elements holmium and thulium in 1879 – for which he was awarded Royal Society's Davy Medal in 1894. Scandium was another element discovered the same year in the same building by Lars Fredrik Nilson. All of the element discoveries in Uppsala from the time of Ekeberg to Nilson was made on minerals from the Ytterby feldspar quarry at Resarö in the Stockholm archipelago, about 70 km's away.



NEW OLD CHEMICUM *(Nya Gamla Kemikum)*

Engelska parken

Old chemicum was extended first in the period 1901-1904 after planning by Cleve's successor Oskar Widman (1852-1930). The new facade exhibits busts of Bergman, Scheele and Berzelius.

A second extension was performed in the late 1920s under the supervision of Theodor Svedberg (1884-1971), who was professor in physical chemistry from 1912 and received the Nobel Prize in 1926.



ROYAL SOCIETY OF SCIENCES and MUSEUM SCHEFFERIANUM

Sankt Eriks Torg

The Royal Society of Sciences (*Kungliga Vetenskaps-Societeten*) is the oldest of the royal academies in Sweden. It has its origin in *Collegium Curiosum* founded in 1710.

The ochre-coloured house was built in the late 1700s as a residence for the mining inspector J.A. Gyllenhaal (1750-1788). He had been a student of both Linnaeus and Torbern Bergman and kept large natural history collections. Together with a student friend and fellow natural history collector, the pharmacist Fredrik Ziervogel (1727-1792) from Stockholm, Gyllenhaal had set up plans for a major donation to the RSS. The Ziervogel-Gyllenhaal donation ensured that the natural collections of both men as well as the houses should be bequeathed to the Society after the death of either of the two.

The management of large botanical, zoological and mineralogical natural history collections became with time a too great task for RSS to maintain. Thus, around 1860 the different collections of the RSS were donated to respective university institution.

Museum Schefferianum, the oldest building on the site, was once the private library/museum of professor Johannes Schefferus (1621-1679). It is considered to have housed the first natural history cabinet in Sweden. Samples from Schefferus mineral collection were recently found in the previously mentioned Bromell collection, which is contained in the old academy collections now preserved at the Museum of Evolution.



THE WALMSTEDT ESTATE (*Walmstedtska Gården*)

Sysslomansgatan 1

The former home of the chemistry and mineralogy professors Walmstedt. Building began in the mid 1850's by Lars Peter Walmstedt and was continued by his son Edward Walmstedt. In the 1860s, during the move from Laboratorium Chemicum to the new premises (Old Chemicum), one part of the building – "Å-huset" – was used as a transit station for sorting the university mineral collections. Father and son Walmstedt upgraded the mineralogical and petrological collections and, in the process, meticulously recorded the provenance of the old specimens from Svab, Bergman, Afzelius, the Royalties and Eric Thomas Svedenstjerna (1765-1825) that comprise the bulk of the current collection.

Today part of the house is a museum depicting a reconstructed "middle class" home from the late 1800s. Å-huset (smaller picture) houses the Uppsala Artist Club (Uppsala Konstnärsklubb), that also runs a small art gallery in another part of the building.

On the upper picture the estate can be seen to the right and partly hidden behind the trees. Peeking up in the background one can see the famous Anatomical Theatre, on top of the Gustavianum building, that was drawn and constructed by Olof Rudbeck in the 1660s. To the left the Dome and in front of it the old food market hall.

SOURCES

- Annerstedt, Claes *Uppsala Universitets Historia*. Uppsala 1877-1931.
- Cleve, P. T. *Institutionerna för kemi samt mineralogi och geologi*, in Uppsala universitet 1872—1897, Festskrift, Upps. 1897.
- Frängsmyr, Carl *Uppsala Universitet 1852-1916*. Uppsala 2010.
- Lundgren, Anders *Anders Gustaf Ekeberg, the Anthiphlogistic Chemistry and the Swedish Scene*. Berzelius Society Serie no 5, Stockholm 1997.