

# *Sloyd Furniture*

## Pyrography Pieces by Birger Sandzén Amalia Maria Rabenius & G. N. Malm



Image from the book, *Sloyd* by Gustaf Larsson, 1902

Amalia Maria Rabenius was hired in 1900 to teach in the Model School at Bethany College. More specifically, she started a new program in Sloyd, a curriculum of manual training that teaches the use of a sloyd knife to make a variety of structured projects, usually in wood. The early Bethany catalogs show that she was the teacher of Sloyd, Pyrography, and Embroidery and was the “Lady Principal.” Upon completion of the Sloyd objects, it was thought a young person would have learned a wide variety of skills in working with their hands.



Amalia Rabenius while attending  
the teacher's college in Nääs,  
Sweden

Amalia was born in Kaleby, Sweden, in 1868 and immigrated to the United States in 1898 with her brother, Karl Rabenius, who later became a Lutheran pastor and state representative in Rhode Island.

She attended the teacher's college at Nääs, Sweden, in 1897 to learn the Sloyd methods. Nääs was the major school that offered this training. It was established in the 1870's and led by Otto Saloman, with financial backing of his uncle, August Abrahamson. The training was named Educational Sloyd, which is based on a strong educational philosophy focused on the “moral, mental, and physical development of the pupil, the mental development being secured by help of the physical.” (G. Larsson, 1902)

Many teachers from around the world were trained at Nääs and brought Sloyd methods to the educational systems in their countries. Through the efforts of Saloman, there were a number of Swedes who brought the Sloyd philosophy and methods to the United States as well.

Ms. Rabenius taught many students in her Sloyd classes, as it was required of all Model School students. In addition to the Sloyd classes, she taught Pyrography, which is also called pokerwork or woodburning. One of the notable students in her 1900 class was Birger Sandzén.

In addition to her regular teaching in the Model school, in 1903 she began teaching Bible in the Swedish School during the 6 week summer class sessions at Bethany Lutheran Church. She was active with the women of Lindsborg in doing handwork, and was a close friend to Minne Brase, wife of Dr. Hagbard Brase, Bethany's organ instructor and Messiah Chorus director. She participated as a Swedish dancer in a group directed by G.N. Malm.

Amalia Rabenius left Lindsborg in 1907 to accept a position as superintendent of the Orphan's Home of the New York Lutheran Conference in Avon, Massachusetts. When she left Bethany, Lydia Sohlberg Deere took her position and continued to teach embroidery and sewing. The Sloyd and Pyrography classes were no longer offered. She died in 1954 at the age of 86 and is buried in Rhode Island.

Art Department.	
Arbutnot, Juliet	Belleville, Kansas.
Cooper, Maude	Abilene, Kansas.
Graham, Reseda	Peabody, Kansas.
Holmberg, Lillie	Denver, Colorado.
Jacobson, Oscar	Lindsborg, Kansas.
Malmberg, Marie	Lindsborg, Kansas.
Naso, Hannah	Decatur, Illinois.
Olson, Esther	Manda, Texas.
Pearson, Esther	Lindsborg, Kansas.
Rabenius, Amalia	Lindsborg, Kansas.
Smith, N. P.	Manda, Texas.
Springer, Louise	Bushton, Kansas.
Tellin, Anna	Eureka, Kansas.
Winkler, Eva	Kingfisher, Oklahoma.
Wrong, Elizabeth	Concordia, Kansas.

Sloyd.	
Anderson, Anton	Nelson, Lydia
Anderson, Clarence	Olson, Edna
Anderson, Philip	Rosberg, Nettie
Bengston, Enola	Rosengren, Nels
Bengston, Ruth	Runbeck, Arthur
Bengston, Roy	Runbeck, Clarence
Erickson, Bertha	Swenson, Alfred
Ekblad, John	Swenson, Ernest
Gunnerson, Lillie	Swenson, Frank
Grondal, Leonard	Swenson, Carl
Grondal, Ruth	Thorstenberg, Frances
Hoglund, Alma	Thorstenberg, Philip
Johnson, Aurora	VanLoon, Hannah
Johnson, Robert	

Pyrography and Art Needle Work.	
Anderson, Augusta	Berquist, Augusta
Anderson, Pose	Barger, Florence
Anderson, Vida	Bergstrom, Amanda
Bryant, Fannie	Malmberg, Marie
Cross, Addie	McLellan, Jennie S
Dahlberg, Emelia	Michel, Clementine
Erickson, Ellen	Nash, Mary E
Francisco, Inez	Nelson, Minnie
Gentry, Katherine	Olson, Esther
Grizzell, Florence	Sandzen, Birger
Grubb, Lizzie	Swenson, Ellen
Holmberg, Lillie	Swenson, Helena
Jackson, Perte	Swenson, Hannah
Johnson, Emily	Shuyler, Florence
Johnitz, Pearl	VanLoon, Adelia
Larson, Flora	Winkler, Eva
Lindas, Nellie	

Selections from pages 130 & 131 of the 1900 Bethany College Course Catalog showing that Birger Sandzén was enrolled in the Pyrography course taught by Amalia Rabenius

Dr. Marlysue Holmquist



*Birger Sandzén*

- MEMORIAL GALLERY -

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