

= Jean Abraham Grill =

Jean Abraham Grill ( 21 July 1736 ? 12 March 1792 ) , sometimes called Johan Abraham Grill , was a Swedish merchant , supercargo , director of the Swedish East India Company ( SOIC ) and ironmaster at Godegård with several factories .

Grill journeyed to China twice as the representative for the SOIC . He lived in Canton ( now known as Guangzhou ) as well as Macao for a total of almost ten years , doing trade for the company during the arrival of three Swedish ships . In China he lived the life of an adventurer ; survived a shipwreck , traded with other East Asian countries together with his partner Michael Grubb and smuggled opium from India to China .

He returned to Sweden in 1768 , a wealthy man and lived the rest of his life in Swedish high society , writing minor essays about his travels as member of the Royal Swedish Academies of Sciences and Music . He married Lovisa Ulrika Lüning and bought the Godegård Manor and several ironworks , which he renovated and improved . When Grill died in 1792 , his wife took over his business and ran the ironworks and factories .

His most notable legacy is the notes , correspondence , accounts , cargo lists and books he kept during his life . They are preserved in the Godegård Archive and in the Gothenburg University Library .

= = Early life = =

One of the Grill family , Jean Abraham Grill was the eldest son of merchant Abraham Grill , the Younger ( 1707 ? 68 ) and Anna Maria Petersen ( 1713 ? 54 ) . He was born in Helsingør where his father was the Swedish consul at that time . In 1746 , the family moved to Gothenburg where his father had started a trading house . When Jean Abraham was 14 years old , he started working as an apprentice in his fathers office , and three years later he became a clerk at the Swedish East India Company ( SOIC ) . Through his fathers mediation he was appointed to second assistant on the ship Sophia Albertina for its journey to Canton ( now known as Guangzhou ) between 1755 and 1756 .

Being ambitious , Grill aimed for the higher positions in the SOIC , and to achieve that he had to learn more and gain more experience . So when he returned to Sweden from China , he decided to go abroad again as soon as possible . He started out at the trading office of Kristian Holm , Swedish consul to France , in Montpellier where he worked for about six months . He stayed in France for five years , and in 1758 , he was employed by the Mallet & Blancheney firm in Marseille . Grill 's letters to his family during those years indicates that he enjoyed his time in France and was interested in style and his own appearance . His initial plans had been to set up a business in Marseille , but his family , especially his uncle Claes Grill , advised against it . Claes had started out as a merchant in the European market , but he soon moved on to the more lucrative Canton trade and encouraged his nephew to do the same .

= = In Canton = =

Grill followed his uncle Claes ' advice and went to Canton as third supercargo on the Fredric Adolph in 1761 , during the second carter of the SOIC . On 3 September 1761 , the ship ran aground at the Pratas Islands in the South China Sea . The ship 's captain , Daniel Shierman , did what he could to lighten the ship and tried to get it afloat again , but to no avail . Seven hours later the ship was a wreck , resting on the rocks and everyone aboard went into the boats . Twenty men stayed behind to guard the ship , while 122 men , including Grill , immediately set off for the nearest port . Five days later they landed on the Chinese mainland , in the " province of Catsi " [ sic ] , where they eventually got permission from the Chinese authorities to proceed to Canton . In Canton they met with the men left to guard the ship , now 17 in number , who had arrived two weeks earlier . Three expeditions with divers , one of them led by Grill , went to recover the cargo from the wreck . They managed to salvage about two @-@ thirds of the silver , tin , iron , coral , lead and copper from the

cargo , plus one cat and a dog .

After the shipwreck , Grill remained in Canton as resident supercargo for seven years . As such he was the company 's representative in Canton , contacting Chinese merchants as well as buying goods and cargo for the ships . He was supercargo for the arrival of three more ships of the SIOC : the Stockholms Slott ( outward journey ) in 1762 , the Stockholms Slott ( resident supercargo in Canton ) in 1765 and the Cron Prins Gustaf ( journey home ) 1768 . One of his tasks in Canton was to make sure that the Swedish factory at the Thirteen Factories was in good order and maintained . The Swedes rented factories or houses from the mandarins at other locations as well , but the one on 13 : e Faktorigatan ( the 13 : th Factory street ) operated as their main building . Grills records of the Swedish factory are detailed and provide good insight into life in Canton at that time .

He also started a successful private company in partnership with the older and more experienced Michael Grubb , one of the directors of the SOIC and founder of the first Swedish trading office in Canton . They traded in Canton and Macao , which technically was against the rules and regulations in the charter of the SOIC . Grill took advantage of the fact that his father was a director of the SOIC , and until his father 's death shipped his own goods on board SOIC ships . From Europe the ships brought objets d 'art , corals from the Mediterranean Sea , expensive clocks and other mechanical automats known to the Chinese as sing @-@ songs . Such goods were appreciated by the Emperor and the rich mandarins .

The Grubb @-@ Grill company used Chinese junks to trade with India , Java , Indochina , Philippines and Japan . From these places they traded in Japanese silk , pigments , spices , gold and silver treads , pearls and lacquerware . The most profitable product in that trade was opium , the smuggling of which became Grill 's own private business . During his time in Canton he smuggled " considerable quantities " from India to Macao . It is documented that he in 1767 received a shipment of 150 chests of opium sent from Madras ( now known as Chennai ) by Jacob Hahr , another supercargo . Consequently , Grill became Sweden 's first major drug runner .

The resident supercargo was responsible for buying goods such as tea , porcelain , silk , arrack , sago and miscellaneous for the next ship arriving from Sweden . The SOIC traded mainly with the Chinese merchant Puankhequa , who had his factory next to the Swedish , and judging from their letters , Puankhequa and Grill became friends . Grill was entrusted with funds from the SOIC for buying tea and other goods during off @-@ season when the price was at its lowest . He bought most of the tea from Puankhequa , and several contracts are preserved . However , he did not buy the tea from the Chinese merchant on the SOIC 's behalf but instead bought it through his own company and sold it on to the SOIC at a slightly higher price . After some time the SOIC became suspicious and director David Sandberg was sent to Canton to investigate the matter in 1766 . Grill and his companions , Grubb and Hahr , had to sign an agreement not to misuse their position within the SOIC . In 1768 , Grill was ordered to return home as supercargo on the ship Cron Prins Gustaf . Even so , Hahr stayed behind in Canton , continued their business and was able to transfer Grill 's share of the profit through international bank notes .

By 1770 , Grill was a partner in the Carlos & Claes Grill Trading house , and as such he became a director in the third charter of the SOIC in 1778 .

= = Science and music = =

Grill wrote a number of essays for the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences about his observations and experiences in Canton , and in 1773 , he became a member of the academy . In 1774 , Grill became its preses or president . He was also an accomplished flute player , and on 16 June 1772 , he was elected as member no . 46 of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music .

Grill was also interested in porcelain . Part of his orders may have been just a way to get his money transferred from China to Sweden after he was ordered to return home in 1768 , but he also ordered his own armorial dinner service .

= = Ironmaster and estate owner = =

When Grill returned to Sweden in 1768 , he first lived in Stockholm where he occupied himself with trade . He owned a malmgård ( suburban manor ) at Ersta in the south part of Stockholm , where he established a crucible steel factory with the help of Bengt Andersson Qvist in 1770 .

Grill married Lovisa Ulrika Lünig ( 1744 ? 1824 ) in Stockholm in 1772 . They had ten children . She was the daughter of wholesaler Johan Christian Lünig and Margaretha Sabbath . In 1775 , Grill sold the manor and the steel factory to Qvist and moved to Godegård where he had bought the manor and the ironworks from the estate of Jean de Geer . In doing so he followed the pattern of other supercargos who made their fortunes abroad during a short period of time in the East India trade and on their return invested their money in Swedish factories and farms .

Aside from renovating the factories in Godegård ( the largest ironworks in Östergötland ) he also had an English park planned and built at his manor in Godergård . The park had an orangery , canals , bridges and pavilions and was modelled after the larger park at Drottningholm Palace with its Chinese Pavilion . The Godegård estate also included Mariedamm with the Trehörnings blast furnace and the De Geersfors manufacturing house . Grill also bought the Bona estate in Västra Ny , where he built a wrought iron factory and the Medevi seat farm in 1779 , ( sold the following year ) . In 1782 , he bought the Flerohopp ironworks .

Grill established a small scale trade monopoly at Godegård in 1775 . Before he became owner of the ironworks , the farmers around Godegård had refined the wrought iron from the factory into large quantities of nails using small trip hammers . The nails were sold in Askersund . As a trader Grill would not abide this . First he decreed that the farmers had to buy all their goods at the ironworks ' general store . Second , he forbade the farmers and tenant farmers to sell nails to the merchants at Askersund , at that time a center for nail trade . In this way Grill assumed control over all nail trade himself .

Jean Abraham Grill died on 12 March 1792 , in Norrköping under " mysterious circumstances " and was interred in the Grill family grave at the Godegård Church . When Grill died , his wife Lovisa Ulrika took over and ran the ironworks and factories until their children succeeded her .

= = Archives = =

Throughout his life Grill kept meticulous notes of his business . Some of these are in the Gothenburg University library , and most of them , along with Grill 's letters and correspondence , are now in the Godegård Archive in the Nordic Museum . Most of the 7 @, @ 000 documents in the archive have been digitized following a request from the Macau Historical Archives in 2003 . They are available online , including documentation , letters , cargo lists , provisions for the ships and accounts for the Swedish factory in Canton during Grill 's time with the SOIC .