

*The town of Gothenburg was founded in 1619 by Gustavus II Adolphus as a port on the Göta river. A town Charter was granted in 1621. The site was on marshy ground between the natural rocky bastions of Kvarnberget and Otterhällan. In order to encourage rapid development King Gustavus Adolphus granted privileges and benefits to immigrants. From very early days trade was an important part of the town's activities. Not least of this was trade between Britain and Sweden.*

In seventeenth century Sweden, an attempt was made to regulate trade through the towns with the levying of taxes on imports and exports. In 1635 a group of British merchants formed a body the British Factory for protecting and supporting their mutual interests. In 1658 the provinces Bohuslän and Halland were incorporated with Sweden. The fire of London in 1666 gave considerable impetus to British imports from Sweden. The first British Factory either failed or was disbanded, and a second British Factory was established in 1699. (The term "factor" is "a merchant buying or selling on commission" - Oxford Concise Dictionary.)

The Swedish Church Law of 1686 made it illegal to hold any public religious worship in Sweden, other than the approved religion of the Swedish State. The national churches of England and Sweden were both protestant but there were differences between the Anglican and Lutheran churches. Many British merchants worshiped in the Swedish Cathedral or in Kristine Kyrke (the German Church), others worshiped in private homes. Townshend and Adams state that "it is recorded that in 1691 there was an English Congregation in the town." The immigrants must have worshipped in private homes. At this time the population of Gothenburg was some 6,000 people.

In June, 1731, the King of Sweden granted a charter for a period of 15 years to the Swedish East India Company. Its ships, such as the Eastindiaman Götheborg, were to sail to the East Indies and trade there. The headquarters of the Company were to be in Gothenburg. One of its three directors was Colin Campbell. The Swedish East India Company was of great importance for the Swedish economy and had an invigorating effect on the development of Gothenburg. When the ships of the Company returned to their home port laden with oriental cargoes, buyers from many parts of Europe bid and bought at the auctions held to dispose of these goods.

The Göta Canal, which was opened in 1832, played an important part in Swedish development and the lives of many Swedish people. The Canal was built during the period of 1810 to 1832 under the direction of Balzaar von Platen (1766-1830). The Göta Canal is considered by many people to be the most extensive example of a technological building project ever carried out in Sweden. Of the total length of the 190km. Göta Canal, 87km. is man-made and 103km. consists of lakes and rivers. Eight million cubic metres of soil were excavated by hand, together with 300,000 cubic metres of rock. Balzaar von Platen employed the Scottish railway engineer Thomas Telford to plan the route for the canal, and many British canal builders worked with the Swedish military officers on the detailed planning and construction work. They most probably travelled via Gothenburg and worshiped with the English community. Fredrik Edelsvärd led the building work in connection with the canal between Mem and Söderköping.

By 1850 Gothenburg had developed into an important Nordic port, and had a population of some 26,000 people. The boundaries of the town were largely the same as in the 17th century, but the advent of industrialisation had begun to affect the town. There were over 120 factories in Gothenburg by the middle of the 19th century, and they employed over 3,500 people. The main industries were connected with handling and processing tobacco, brewing, sugar refining and to a lesser extent shipbuilding. Textile machines had been imported from England, and Alexander Keiller had built Rosenlund's cotton spinning mill and a gasworks. Keiller also founded an engineering workshop and a shipbuilding wharf in 1847. Many British citizens were active in this spread of industrialism. Wilson Line, based in Hull started the first steamship link to England in 1850, for the freight of cattle and oats. Later emigrants took this route from Gothenburg to Hull and travelled from Hull to Liverpool by train, and thence on to America.