

Introduction

The following article is an edited version of sections of an unpublished book manuscript written by Stephen Forslund, of Tacoma, Washington in approximately 1975. Readers are encouraged to refer to the original document in the Scandinavian Immigrant Experience Collection at Pacific Lutheran University (endnote 1) as dates and names may not be accurate due to the difficulty of reading the original. In addition, Forslund writes from the knowledge of the time which may not be always accurate in light of current information. Any editing mistakes are the responsibility of this editor. Question marks indicate items that were not resolvable by this editor. Where possible, the original wording as written by Forslund is used to capture the flavor of thinking at the time of writing. Some wording may be offensive to some readers.

The editor would like to express appreciation to Kerstin Ringdahl, Curator of the Scandinavian Immigrant Experience Collection (SIE) Pacific Lutheran University and to the University for assistance and allowing access to the original material.

Stephen Forslund was born in 1892 in Borlänge, Dalarna, Sweden. He immigrated to the United States in 1911 and worked for the Griffin Wheel Company in Tacoma. With an intense interest in Swedish Tacoma, he wrote many articles for the Tacoma News Tribune and saved his articles in several scrapbooks along with a draft book manuscript.

Early Swedish History of Tacoma, Washington and the Surrounding Area

Forslund writes that the first known white settler on the present site of Tacoma, Washington was a Swede, Nicholas Delin. (Although Forslund lists his birthplace as the island of Gotland in 1819, his gravestone gives his birth date as July 13, 1817 in Kävlinge, Skåne.) (endnote 2). He learned the cabinet maker's trade in St. Petersburg Russia;, emigrated to New York (possibly 1848);, then to Massachusetts and then sailed on the *Edward Everett* to California seeking gold. There is no record of any luck on this venture and he arrived in Portland, Oregon in 1850 and walked from Kalama, Washington to Tumwater, Washington reportedly building a sawmill there before finally ending up at Commencement Bay, Tacoma, April 1, 1852.

He filed a claim for 318 acres, an area that now includes most of downtown Tacoma and built a dam to impound two creeks in order to build a sawmill. The exact location is not known but was probably where Puyallup Avenue and Dock streets now converge. The mill was water powered and the turbine was of Delin's own design with a capacity of 2000 board feet a day. Much of the lumber was sent to California. A brig, the *Mary George Emory*, arrived to load 350,000 board feet of lumber and had to wait several months before enough lumber was cut to fill the order. *Forslund states he had a crew of 5 eventually – Pete Anderson (probably Swedish), a brother Andrus Delin, and Peter Gethsen (German). A fifth person is not named but could have been Stephen Gethsen, a son of Peter.*

The Gethsen's, who later changed their name to Judson, were members of Johan Nielsen's Emigrant Train, the first to conquer Naches Pass in Washington. A family by the name of Mueller also traveled on this train but died of cholera with the exception of Gertrude, a 15-year old daughter who was a niece of the Gethsens. (*However, information on Gertrude Mueller's grave site states the parents died before leaving and gives a different name for the emigrant train leader.*) (endnote 3) A claim was filed by the Gethsens on the land adjacent to Delin's tract and Nicholas married Gertrude in 1854. They were the first white couple to be married in Tacoma and the ceremony was performed by a Mr. Bonny, a Justice of the Peace, in the Gethsen home.

Even though it took about 6 months to make up a ship's cargo of lumber, this ad appeared in the *Washington Pioneer* in Olympia in January, 1853:

Saw logs Saw logs.... The undersigned will let a contract for furnishing his mill with logs on the following terms. He will allow \$6 per log to be paid in lumber at \$20 per thousand. Application to be made at his mill on the Puyallup Bar.... Mr. De Lin It was common practice among the Swedes of his era to start the second syllable of their surnames with a capital letter when writing their names. Hence the division in Delin.

Delin operated his mill for about three years to the fall of 1856. Forslund states that "*The Indians had been troublesome for some time and became more arrogant as the time went on.*" Forslund writes further: in October 1856, Stephan Gethsen, the son of Peter, heard 25 or 50 Indians having a Pow-Wow. On investigating, he found that he was shunned by those he knew. He was ignored as the dancers grew wilder except for one who gave a warning "Kist-a-wa, Klat-a-wa" meaning "Go Away, Get Out". The Delins and the Gethsens feared an attack and decided to leave. Loading their belongings and provisions on a scow they went as far as Port Defiance in a drenching rain and then rowed to Steilacoom on a favorable tide. They returned in the spring of 1857 and found homes and property undisturbed. There is a disagreement if Delin ever operated his mill again but he sold the mill and holdings to John L. Perkins in 1861.

Hunt's *History of Tacoma* (endnote 4) stated that the first Delin child was born in Steilacoom and that a girl, Grace Alice, was born in Tacoma in 1860 and was the first white girl born there. Later in this same history, it is stated that another girl born in 1870 was the first white girl born on the future site of Tacoma. Hans Bergmans *History of the Scandinavians in Pierce County* (endnote 5) stated that Grace Alice was born in Steilacoom in 1879 and became Mrs. J. T. Richards in Portland Oregon. Forslund writes that he did hear the Delins reared four children and that one son was named Oscar. Gertrude's grave states that there were six children and the three sons were Oscar, William and Mathias (endnote 3).

The Delins then moved to Seattle and both brothers were employed in construction of the new University. They then moved to Tumwater or Olympia and built another sawmill. The final move in 1865 was to Portland, Oregon where Nicholas Delin died on May 15, 1882 and was buried in Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery (endnote 1). Gertrude Delin who was more than 20 years younger than Nicholas, was still alive in 1916. She passed away August 13, 1925 in Portland. A short street in Tacoma is named after Nicholas and preserves his memory. (endnote 6)

Nicholas Delin apparently was an active member of the Masons. He was listed as a Charter Member and First Tiler (Outer Guard) of Willamette Lodge, the second Lodge chartered in Oregon in 1851. He was also listed as a petitioner for a Charter for an Olympia Lodge in 1852 and was the first Treasurer. Here he signed his name as N. De Lin.

STEILACOOM

Threats of Indian attacks led to the establishment of Fort Steilacoom in 1849 on the grounds where Western State Hospital is now located. In 1851, Lafayette Balsh staked out a 315 acre donation claim in the vicinity. Another pioneer, Lehn Chapman, had the audacity to name his claim Steilacoom City. This caused some complications and incidents but the rivals seem to have made up. Balsh made a donation of land for public purposes and renamed the place Fort Steilacoom. In 1853, a Military Road was established between Steilacoom and Walla Walla. By an act of the Territorial Congress in 1854 Steilacoom became the first incorporated town in the newly formed Washington Territory. The first newspaper in the territory came off the press there in 1855. The editor became excited over the progress of the town and listed 70 dwelling houses, six stores, 2 blacksmith shops, a tailor shop, a cabinet maker shop, three hotels, 3 saw mills and a gristmill in the vicinity but he did not list the number of saloons. Steilacoom and Walla Walla were the principal trading places of the era and were also noted for the sin and iniquity that flourished in those towns. The town was the county seat of Pierce County and in 1858 this fast growing twin of Walla Walla received a further boost as an outfitting place for the Fraser River Gold Rush. Steilacoom lost out in its bid to become the State Capital in 1860 but continued to grow as a trading center until the railroad bypassed the town in the early 1870's.

Peter Rundquist. The name would indicate that the bearer was a Swede or had Swedish ancestry. Forslund writes that he was not able to establish where nor when he was born, nor where he passed away. It appears however that Mr. Delin may have had a Swedish predecessor or at least a contemporary in these parts. "Our (Forslund's) interest was aroused a number of years ago when the local newspaper contained an item stating that the youngest and last surviving son of Peter Rundquist had passed away in some distant city." This notice also stated that Rundquist Sr. had been a ferrier with the US garrison at Ft. Steilacoom and when his enlistment had expired he had opened a blacksmith shop in the nearby town by the same name. Rundquist was a veteran of the Mexican War. With two other veterans of the same conflict, Carl Gerich and Jacob Kershner, they first lived at Sblook (A Puyallup Indian name for a burial area on the Puyallup River) (endnote 7). Kershner had an Indian wife and eventually Rundquist married one of his daughters. Sblook is now the location of the Indian cemetery and the Cascadia Juvenile Diagnostic Center in Tacoma. Rundquist was a blacksmith and made implements, hoes, rakes and plows for the farmers. Later he moved to Steilacoom and became a blacksmith for the garrison.

Rundquist's name is often misspelled Runquist, Ringquist, or Ronquist. It was the duty of the Sherriff in the early days to take the census and report males subject to military duty. The roll for 1859 contains 185 names, among them P. Delin, Nicholas Delin, and Peter Ringquist. In 1854, Rundquist was drawn for jury duty. A number of years ago a carpenter told me that he and some others had torn down the old Rundquist home in Steilacoom. It had been put together with wooden dowels and hand wrought nails.

Agnetta Larson arrived with the Adam Byrd party in 1852 at the age of 18 and the same year married *Thomas Chambers*, age 57, a widower with 8 children. Thomas had taken a donation claim at the mouth of Steilacoom Creek and erected a saw mill and a flour mill, renaming the creek to Chambers Creek. Agnetta died in Tacoma Dec 24, 1916 at the age of 82. Forslund does not give any other history regarding the possible Swedish origins of Agnetta. However, he later states that a “Mrs. Malm” was the first Swedish woman to arrive here sometime after 1870 according to W.B. Bonney’s history (end note 8).

Anton Malm and *Fredricks (Ahlstrom) Malm* arrived in Steilacoom in 1870. They had left Sweden in 1867 and spent three years in Chicago before heading west. Anton worked in a brewery and then logged and acquired land at Millhurst (now part of the Fort Lewis Military Reservation). Here he grew hops and cut Tan-Bark (end note 9) for an Olympia tannery. They lived there until 1900 when they acquired ten acres in Puyallup. They had four children.

The only other Swedish person Forslund mentions during this period in Steilacoom is *Peter C. Neilsen* who was a cook at the mental hospital in Steilacoom in 1874. He was born in Sweden in 1846 and went to sea at an early age. He came to New Orleans in 1871, lived in California and then came to Puget Sound. He later settled in Tacoma and married *Ingred (?) Swensson* in 1864. In 1866 they homesteaded 180 acres near Eatonville and had 8 children.

THE UNION PACIFIC/NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD

The Union Pacific Railroad was completed to Portland Oregon in 1869. Forslund traces two Swedes who worked on the transcontinental system; *Nicholas Lawson* and *John Peter Molander*. Both worked on the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad from Kalama to Tacoma and were from the island of Gotland. Molander was the foreman of the steel gang and head spiker and must have arrived first. Lawson was the conductor on the first construction train to arrive and later he was the conductor on the first passenger train to arrive in Tacoma on this route.

Nicholas Lawson (original name *Lars Sackerson*) was born near Visby, Gotland and was the son of fairly well to do parents. His father had financial reversals and emigrated to America, joining the Union Army in the Civil War. He died after being wounded in the Battle of Shiloh and his wife was reported to have died of grief after hearing the news. In 1864 Nicholas went to sea sailing on Clipper ships between Liverpool and New York. He then went to Oklahoma and joined the Union Pacific Railroad system as a worker and a foreman. In Portland, he transferred to the Northern Pacific Railroad. Later he worked in construction on power plants, waterworks and railroads. He was a Commissioner of Light and Water for the City of Tacoma from 1912 on.

John Bolander was born in Hefdam (?) Gotland in 1848 and was left fatherless at age 12. He emigrated to America in 1869. After a brief stay in Kansas City, Kansas, he went to San Francisco and from there by boat to Portland, Oregon and worked on the Northern Pacific Railroad. He later became a locomotive fireman and engineer. He brought the first train of wheat from Kalama to Tacoma -- which became the first cargo of wheat to be exported. Before retiring, he worked for the Tacoma Park Department and was the foreman in charge of Lincoln Park.

During the 1870's, most of the Swedes arriving in Tacoma were single men. *Peter Carlsson*, missionary for the Augustana Synod, found only one Swedish family, possibly the *August Johnson* or *Gust Sehlstrom's* during a visit. It was not until 1852 that he was able to start a Swedish Lutheran congregation.

ARRIVAL OF SWEDISH FAMILIES

The *John P. Ekenstam* family left Småland, Sweden in 1871 to become homesteaders in Kansas. After having proved up, John Ekenstam disposed of the farm and came to this area in February 1879. He immediately acquired 212 acres on the southernmost tip of Anderson Island, then known as Wallace Island. He settled there with his wife Anna and 7 children. According to a contemporary historian, the Ekenstams were well- to- do people in Sweden. Mrs. Ekenstam had originally come from a home where they kept 7 servants. Mr. Ekenstam reportedly gave up extensive business interests in Sweden for his four boys and five girls because he wanted them to have the better advantages that America offered. However, to Forslund's thinking, there seems to have been other compelling reasons. To give up extensive business interests in Sweden for a homestead in Kansas hardly seems as a step in the right direction. The name Ekenstam also suggests that they were no ordinary peasants but rather so called "better folks". They also must have been people of considerable means as, unlike most settlers who had to start out with a log cabin in the woods, the roomy Ekenstam residence was built of the finest planed lumber. It was also furnished in grand style. The parlor furniture was shipped from the east and made of solid walnut upholstered in rich crushed velvet. Forslund states that history records that Mr. Ekenstam was an inept farmer. By aptitude and training he was a businessman and his incompetence as a laborer was offset by his four husky boys. For them, he acted as a consultant and overseer. Eventually the land was cleared and was a fine farm with stock, grain fields, meadows, pasture, and a fine orchard. Mr. Ekenstam had the fruit trees shipped out from the East and those gnarled old trees as well as the house still stood there a few years ago. Perhaps they are still standing there, old and forlorn. In the 1880s and 1890s it was the social center of the island where people came from far and near for picnics and barn dances.

John P. Ekensten was born on July 22, 1824 and died on May 19, 1896. According to tombstones in the old Tacoma cemetery, (end note 10) the spelling is usually "Ekenstam" – other spellings vary between Ekenstem (which Forslund uses), Ekensten and Ekenstem. No wife is listed on the cemetery records on Find a Grave(endnote 10) but Forslund writes that a wife, Anna Ekenstem (possibly *Anna Peterson*) was born March 9, 1830 and died December 3, 1901 and there were 11 children born of which 9 survived. Two probably died in infancy. The youngest and last daughter was named "Elva" which means "eleven" in Swedish but it could also mean "fairy". Forslund also writes that an assertion that "Ekenstem" means "Oakstem" in Swedish is only partly correct. He states that oak trees usually grow big and have a large trunk rather than a small stem. None of the four boys married so the name Ekenstem became extinct and appears only on state maps as Ekenstem-Johnson Road (End note 11 — current spelling Eckenstam-Johnson Road) which bisects the island from north to south. Two of the sons, Will and Edward, acquired separate properties on the north end of the island where they built homes and lived out their days as bachelors. No mention is made of the other two brothers. One of the daughters, Louise, married *Carl Johan Öatling*, a native of Boden, Sweden who had come to Nebraska with his parents at the age of 13

in 1879. In 1886 he came to the Puget Sound country and worked around Seattle and Tacoma and at a brick yard on Anderson Island. There he acquired some acreage and converted it into a well improved farm. A daughter, Edna Öatling-Myers, lived at Long Branch a number of years back. Elva Ekenstem married *Charles Koucher*, (Kucher) a son of John Koucher, the manager of the brick yard. Incidentally, brick making seems to have started sometime in the 1880s and came to an end in 1894. No reference has been found on the other three Ekenstem daughters other than one had the name "Carrie".

In 1881 another Swedish family, the *Bengt Johnson's* who also had been homesteaders in Kansas, arrived on Anderson Island. When he arrived in this area Mr. Johnson had originally taken a claim at Osceola, near Enumclaw but he found that the bears were too numerous and too intrusive so he had to give up. Looking for a new location, Bengt Johnson arrived back in Tacoma and heard a man who was doing some loud cussing in Swedish. Engaging in conversation with him, he learned that his name was Larson and he owned a sizable tract of land on Anderson Island. His new found friend gave such a rosy description of the island that Mr. Johnson decided to investigate. The pair walked to Steilacoom and rowed across to Anderson Island. It did not take long for Mr. Johnson to make up his mind that "this is the place". A tract of 750 acres was available at \$2.50 an acre which he purchased.

Bengt Johnson was born in Vegatorp, Halland on September 26, 1836 and arrived in America in 1863. After a brief stay in Illinois, he went to Arkansas. A stone mason by trade, he was engaged in building fortifications and bridges during the Civil War. In 1866 he homesteaded near Lindsborg, Kansas. He lived on this place alone until 1879 when he met and married *Anna Nilsson*, 20 years his junior, who had just arrived from Enö, Skåne, Sweden. Two years later, Bengt, Anna and their newborn son came west and arrived on Anderson Island on their son's first birthday in May, 1881. Their first home was a log cabin chinked with burlap held in place by plaster. Feed sacks were tacked to the inside walls and were covered with newspapers printed in both Swedish and English. When things needed to be freshened up, all that was necessary was to paste new papers on the walls - - so, in a manner of speaking, there was always fresh news there. This cabin seems to have been some distance from Bengt's holdings and the family stayed there only until Bengt got the necessary buildings erected on his own place. His next project was building a dock where the Puget Sound steamers could land. With 750 acres of probably virgin timber, Bengt had a cash crop waiting to be utilized. All of the steam boats in the mosquito fleet (endnote 12) were wood burners and there was a ready market for cord wood. Bengt began to supply this need and before long he was in business in a big way and had to hire both wood cutters and teamsters. The wood cutters worked in pairs and received 60 cents a cord for their labors. In the early 1890s when an hourly wage became the custom, the Tacoma area wood cutters received 12.5 cents an hour but on the island they paid 15 cents. For a ten hour day and six days a week, this amounted to \$9 and was considered fair wages. A couple of decades later when most of the steamers had converted to fossil fuel, something like 80 thousand cords of 4 foot wood had come off of Bengt Johnson's tract of land. Nobody thought it then but some decades later, a daughter of the Johnsons expressed the thought that "it certainly was a frightful waste of good building material".

In 1887 when a beacon was put on nearby Eagle Island, Bengt Johnson became the lighthouse keeper at \$12 per month. When the first post office was established, he became the postmaster and named the Post Office "Vega" in honor of his birthplace. Seven children were born to the Johnsons of which six

survived. The Johnsons became charter members of the Swedish Lutheran Church when it organized in 1882. At the 90th anniversary in 1972, of the now First Lutheran Church, Mrs. Bessie Cammon, a daughter of the Johnsons, who was then 86, was able to be present and represent the family. In 1896 when the Swedish Lutheran "Sunne" congregation was organized on nearby McNeil Island, the Johnsons transferred their membership and became charter members there. Bengt Johnsons' busy life came to an end in 1917. Mrs. Johnson was still active on the farm in the mid-twenties and the farm was worked by two sons, Bengt and Otto.

The *Olaf W. Nelson* family arrived in Tacoma in 1861 and first settled in the woods near the present 15th and Fawcett Ave. They came from Hjorted near Västervik. Nearly all of the children were born there so it can be assumed that they left sometime between 1875 and 1880 and after a sojourn in Illinois came to Tacoma. The family is listed as Charter members of the First Swedish Lutheran Church. In asking one of the descendants on what he knew about his grandsire the reply was that "he only remembered that he was old and blind and just sitting there".

Emil Jacobson was also a native of Västervik, Småland a shoemaker by trade. He had arrived in Illinois in 1876 and came to Tacoma in 1881. He may have been a relative of the Olaf Nelsons just mentioned or at least an acquaintance from the old country. Besides working at his trade he had various kinds of employment here until 1889 when he was married to *Anna Charlotta Lindberg*, also a native of Småland. She had arrived with her parents to Andover, Illinois at the age of 7 in 1867. After their marriage, the couple acquired a large tract of land in Ohop Valley from the Northern Pacific Railroad which they cleared and improved and converted this wilderness into a modern farm with all modern equipment and buildings. There were 4 children; William, Mary, Ernest, and Ethel. Emil Jacobson passed away in 1921. Captain *Gustave F. Lindquist* and his family also arrived in Tacoma in 1880 or 1881. He was a Civil War veteran and was born in Gothenburg in 1826. He went to sea at the age of 14 and sailed until about 1856 (?) when, after a shipwreck in the Indian Ocean, he came to New York and from there to California working in the mines until 1857 when he returned to New York and entered the grocery and restaurant business. At the outbreak of the Civil War, he disposed of his business and enlisted in the Union Army. He participated in 30 battles, was made a corporal and then advanced to Lieutenant and finally Captain. In the battle of Manassas his regiment, the Fifth New York Volunteers, suffered the greatest casualties of any regiment -- out of a total of 462 men, 367 were either killed or wounded. Originally, Captain Lindquist came west to manage a cooperative colony. When this venture failed, he came to Tacoma and found employment in a Northern Pacific Railroad office. He also had political ambitions like most of the veterans and held some minor offices in the embryo metropolis. Shortly after the close of the Civil War, he married *Karin Lundberg* from Stockholm. They had 4 children. In 1886 he founded Pioneer Flag, Tent and Awning Company which he was still operating in 1906. In 1896 he was also listed as the proprietor of a restaurant at 17th and Jefferson Ave. A son, George, is listed as a waiter at the same address, perhaps as the manager. Captain Lindquist was a member of a number of fraternal, patriotic and military organizations and was elected the first president of the Swedish Order of Valhalla when it was founded in 1884. The family home was at 2534 South J Street. A daughter, Francis, was married to Dr. E. C. Case in 1884. Captain Lindquist died in Seattle in 1912.

Undoubtedly some Swedes must have arrived in 1882 but the only one I can find in my files is *Charles Julin*, who settled on McNeil Island. Charles Julin was born in Virestad, Småland in 1838. He was an early settler in Kansas in 1877, and was married there to *Ida Sofia Peterson*, born 1859, who had arrived in Kansas in 1870 with her parents. Charles Julin acquired a tract of land at Still Harbor on the island. For a time, this was called "Julin Bay". The land was cleared and turned into a farm. He established a store on the property and became the postmaster when the Post Office was established and named it "Gertrude".

Of those that arrived in 1884 we are only able to trace *Charles F. Erickson and Andrew Sellgren*. Charles Erickson was born in Västra Vingåker, Södermanland and came directly to Tacoma. His father was a builder and taught the trade to Charles. Upon arriving in Tacoma, he was employed as a steam engineer in the C.M. Johnson Sash and Door factory, soon advancing to foreman. Later he became manager of the F.M. Paulson glass department. Still later he became a contractor for both building and painting. He partnered with John Turner as a dealer in paints and wallpaper located on Tacoma Ave. Finally, with his brother Hjalmar they formed Erickson Brothers, a paint and wallpaper firm. He was active in several fraternal orders and was married in 1882 to *Anna Victoria Nelson* of a pioneer Tacoma Swedish family.

Andrew Sellgren was born in Hille, Gästrikland. As a youth he went to sea. He seems to have had an adventurous life both as a sailor and later as a farmhand in the mid-west before arriving in Tacoma in December, 1884 with 50 cents in his pocket. Eventually he landed a job in the Hanson and Ackerman mill in Chebenlin (SIC) at 11 cents an hour. During the hard times in the 1890s he suffered some financial reverses and with the few dollars he had left he moved to Mason County and acquired some raw land near Hood Canal which he turned into a productive farm.

The Hanson and Ackerman mill employed hundreds of Swedes during the more than five decades it was in operation. It was built in 1868 by San Francisco interests. Hanson was Danish, Ackerman may have been. There was no Tacoma in 1868. What is now known as Old Town or Old Tacoma was then known by the Indian name "Chebenlin". The next year, General M.M. Carver acquired a tract of land from Job Carr and platted Commencement City. As the years went by, the mill was generally referred to as the Old Town Mill but among the Swedes it was usually called "Fattigmöllan" which means "The Poor House Mill". The wages in this mill were usually the lowest in town and from what Forslund heard there was a great deal of labor turnover. Except for some key men, most of the fellows stayed only long enough until they could get something better. Newcomers from abroad arrived constantly and the greenhorn could not be too particular. During the last years, the majority of the crew were Japanese with a light sprinkling of Hindus. The mill went out of production in 1914 but was still owned by the Hanson family.

In the files I can only note one arrival in 1885. *Olof Nelson* settled on McNeil Island where he obtained a job as a brick maker, a trade he learned as a youth in Sweden. He was a native of Höganäs, Skåne, a district known for its clay deposits of unusually high quality as well as for the pottery and ceramic products manufactured there. In 1889 he acquired a tract of land on the island which he eventually cleared and made into a productive farm. In the early 1920s when we visited the place, there was a substantial farm with a nice home and outbuildings. They even had had their own light plant. Olof pointed to where the buildings stood and claimed that he had cut 400 cords of wood in the early 1890s

which he sold for 85 cents a cord and that only paid wages with nothing for the timber. Olof Nelson was married in 1895 to *Olivia Nelson* also from Höganäs, who had arrived in the US in 1885.

The Northern Pacific Railroad came down from the Cascades and the Swedes began to arrive in numbers.

The railroad had reached as far as the Spokane Falls by 1881, but it took another 6 years to reach Tacoma. The first train to reach tidewater arrived on June 6, 1887. More than 2000 men were working on the Stampede Pass tunnel but the management decided to build a series of switchbacks over the mountains to be used prior to the completion of the tunnel and thus reach Tacoma much sooner.

Nicholas Lawson was sent to supervise the operation and found that the contractor had laid the tracks on frozen ground and with the spring thaw the entire project became dangerous and had to be rebuilt. Forslund have heard that *Arvid Rydstrom*, a topographical engineer for the railroad, was on one of the first passenger trains. Arvid Rydstrom was born in Småland in 1857 and was a civil engineer with some experience on the building of early Swedish railroads before arriving in the US in 1881. After railroad construction tapered off, he was a partner in several engineering and construction firms, served for some time as Superintendent of Public Works in Tacoma and did some contracting on his own

Peter J. Johnson also arrived in 1887. He was born in Stockholm and had learned the blacksmith trade from his father. He arrived in Hastings, Minnesota in 1880 and remained there for 7 years before coming to Tacoma. After working for others, he established Johnson Carriage and Wagon Works in the early 1890s. About the turn of the century, his firm consolidated with the pioneer Fawcett Wagon Works and Peter Johnson became the general manager. With his brother-in-law *Bernhard Anderson* as a partner, the firm continued for several decades. The last years of his life he operated a garage. Mr. Johnson was married in 1891 to *Hulda Mary Nelson*, daughter of the pioneer O. W. Nelson family. One son and two daughters were born to them. The family was active in the Swedish Lutheran Church where Mr. Johnson directed the choir for 14 years. After several decades, the family transferred to St. Johns Lutheran church after a disagreement within the congregation.

Olof Johnson, born in Huaröd, Skåne, was another arrival in 1887. He had arrived in the US in 1885 and spent his first years in Minnesota. In partnership with a brother, he operated a dairy the first years. Later he went into cattle dealing, road grading and several other occupations, including a miner in Nome, Alaska, a traveling guard for the Monroe Reformatory and a constable for Pierce County. He acquired a considerable amount of property in the vicinity of 66th and Pacific Avenue and built a service station in the mid-1920s which he operated for some time.

Horace Greeley's admonition to "Go west young man, go west" was a familiar phrase in the later decades of the last century. Washington Territory had only 23,955 inhabitants in 1870, 75,116 in 1880 but by 1890 the figure was 367,232. Corresponding figures for Tacoma were 74 people in 1870, slightly under 11 hundred in 1880 and 36,006 in 1890.

Gustave Pehrson was born in Örebro County, Sweden in 1859 and learned the tailor trade. He came to Des Moines, Iowa in 1880. After arriving in Tacoma, he worked briefly as a cutter for a local tailor shop.

Then he partnered with Peter Holmgren for a season until he established his own business, considered as one of the better tailor establishments in the city.

Charles Williams was born near Stockholm in 1861. He tried his hand at several occupations, sailed the seven seas and spent some time in the mid-west before coming to Tacoma in 1888. He worked as a carpenter, a contractor and went to Alaska in 1896 spending some years at Cook Inlet and Dawson -- a successful venture. In partnership with *Algot Berggren*, he established Tacoma Clothing Company at 1305 Pacific Avenue around the turn of the century and worked there until retirement.

C.J. Anderson was born in Småland in 1865 and was a sailor for several years. He left his ship in San Francisco and came to Tacoma where he worked in the local sawmills for a number of years until acquiring a tract of land at Edgewood and developing it into a productive farm. He had several real estate holdings, and after his wife died in 1916, he retired and devoted his time to looking after his real estate and business interests. Mr. Anderson was active in Temperance work and a member of the Good Templars.

A. T. Gustafson was also a native of Småland, born in 1856. He came to America in 1883 and lived in Michigan and Minnesota until he came to Tacoma in 1886. He married *Anna Swan* who had arrived in American with her parents when she was 3 years old. They had two daughters. He worked at various occupations including 7 years with a piano company. He became custodian of the US Circuit Court, a position he held for several decades. He also invested in real estate and was a faithful Valhalla member. Long after he was unable to attend meetings and lived with his daughter, he remembered the brothers with a box of cigars every now and then.

Algot Berggren, born in Jonköping County in Småland, learned the carpenter trade. He arrived in Minnesota in 1883 and came to Tacoma in 1886 and married *Ida Kristina Anderson* the same year. They had two children, Arthur Wilhelm who became a prominent automobile dealer and industrialist in Tacoma and a daughter, Lillie Helen Florence. In 1892, Algot took up a homestead near the present town of Eatonville. After proving up, he returned to Tacoma, spent a couple of years in the Yukon Territory and then returned to Tacoma and went into partnership with Chas Williams in the Tacoma Clothing Company around 1900.

Swan Samson was born on a farm in Kronoberg County, Småland in 1869. He came directly to Tacoma in 1888. He tried sawmill, hotel and restaurant work until 1892 until leasing the Northern Pacific Hotel in South Tacoma which he operated for about a year. This hotel was located on the South-east corner of 52nd and Union Avenue – now South Tacoma Way. It stood until the late 1930s. Then he was the proprietor of the Peoples Hotel and Restaurant at 913 Pacific Avenue, the present site of the Provident Building. Early in the century he acquired for a very nominal sum, a large hotel building on the corner of 15th and E. Street (now Fawcett Ave.) which was built during the boom times. The defunct hotel was renamed the Samson Hotel and still retains the name in 1973 even though it has changed hands many times. He married *Sarah E. McCullem* in 1896. A tragedy struck on a hunting trip in 1911 when Mrs. Samson accompanied her husband. Mr. Samson took aim at a seven point buck; the bullet struck the antlers, ricocheted, and hit Mrs. Samson, killing her on the spot. Several years after his wife's passing,

Mr. Samson married a woman young enough to be his daughter and I believe there were a couple of children. Mr. Samson had an attack of the flu in the epidemic of 1918 and never got over the after effects. He lingered for a few years and passed away in the 1920s. Mr. Samson was active in several civic and fraternal organizations and was a stalwart republican. He never sought political office but was able to place several of his friends in appointive positions. He made several political speeches around election times and would perhaps have liked to have become a Republican spellbinder but he was no orator and could never get over his Småland accent even when he spoke English.

Olof Bloom was born in Eringsboda Parish, Blekinge in 1865. He came to the US in 1881 and spent the early years in Illinois and Wisconsin before arriving to Tacoma in 1888. He married "Anna" from Östergötland in 1889. He was one of the early employees of the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company when their first mill started. He worked in the lumber industry all his life, mostly as a Tallyman. There were two daughters, Ruth and Adeline, and three sons. Two of Olof's brothers came while he was in the east but they returned to Sweden and never came back. Olof Bloom did not exactly cause a population explosion by his coming to Tacoma but he certainly generated a population impact. Three of his brothers arrived here.

Charles Bloom, a Northern Pacific carpenter, came in the 1890s and married Selma Person (SIC), a niece of Gustave Pehrson the tailor, and had two girls. *Fred Bloom* arrived at the turn of the century and was a cook and restaurateur. He married but had no children. Need to join paragraphs –computer won't cooperate!*Edward Bloom*, a baker, married Tillie who was born in Hamburg, Germany and had 4 daughters and a son. This nucleus of Blooms caused a number of nieces and nephews to emigrate to Tacoma in the next few decades. Martin Johnson came in 1901 and married Emma Johnson in 1915. She was born in Kramfors, in 1888 and they had 2 daughters and a son. Alma Johnson came in 1907 and married Andrew Nelson, also a native of Västerbotten, and had a daughter and a son. Edla married Victor Ghilstrom, born in Ångermanland and had a son and a daughter. In 1916 another brother, Helmar, arrived. He married Aline Carlson born in Munsele, Finland and they had a daughter. A sister, Signe arrived at the same time and was married to John Anderson of Portland, Oregon. They had two sons. In 1911, Ida Swanson, from another branch of the family arrived, married me -Stephan Forslund, born in Borlänge, Sweden in 1892. Ida was followed by a sister, Edith, in 1922 who married Ivar Alm, born in Östergötland in 1897. A third sister, Gunhild, followed in 1929 and married Gunnar Lindquist, a native of Ångermanland, Sweden. They had one daughter. Still from another branch of the family was *Albert Swanson* who came in 1916. He married Lillie Larson, they had one son. The peculiar part of these relatives was that they kept track of each other through the generations. In 1953 some of the younger generations thought there should be a family reunion and started to work on this project. They delved into the early history of the family and found that there were 121 descendants of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Isacsson of Eringsboda Parish, Blekinge (the parents of the Bloom boys), living in the US. About 80 showed up for the reunion. Some came from Oregon and some as far away as Northern British Columbia, Canada. Another reunion occurred in 1970. Mrs. Edith Lund of Davenport, Washington carried on extensive correspondence previous to the reunion and had 205 descendants registered. One hundred fifteen came to the second reunion. The majority still live in this area but some are scattered up and down the coast. One couple came from Wyoming and one from Iowa. By now the descendants

are intermarried with all kinds of nationalities but still most of them know who is who. As of this date, all of the first generations have passed away and some of the second generation and soon this strain will have been absorbed into the great American melting pot. Even so, Olof Bloom's arrival in Tacoma had a decisive impact on the population.

Forslund writes that the *Hedberg brothers, Carl Magnus and John*, were well known in the Swedish community when he arrived here in 1911. At that time the brothers were operating a retail shoe store on the west side of C Street (now Broadway) between 11th and 13th Street. The sons of a shoemaker family, both had probably learned their trade from their father. Previously they had operated separate shops, Carl at the triangle at 17th at C Street and Jefferson and John at 515 South 11th Street. Carl, or Charles as he was commonly known, was probably the oldest. He and his father left their native Småland for America in 1885, settling first in Cadillac, Michigan. The rest of the family arrived two years later. Besides the parents, there were several sisters and it assumed that the entire family came to Tacoma in 1888.

P.O. Peterson was born in Jämtland, Sweden, the seventh child in a family of 15 children. He spent some time around Sundsvall and emigrated to Muskegon, Michigan at the age of 25 in 1882. Early in life he had shown some unusual musical talent but in such a large family there wasn't any means to develop this ability. He was discovered by a music teacher who was probably an organist in the state church who encouraged him and gave him some instruction. On his arrival in Muskegon, he became the organist and choir director in the Swedish Lutheran church. There he met his future wife, *Beda Anderson*, born in Värmland in 1862 and who arrived in Muskegon in 1880. They married in 1882 and eventually raised seven children, six boys and one girl, all with musical talents. While in Muskegon, Mr. Peterson also directed a Brass Band for several years. In 1888 the family came west and settled in Tacoma. Besides being a musician, Mr. Peterson was also mechanically inclined and made his living both as a pattern maker and a millwright. After his arrival in Tacoma, Mr. Peterson served as the organist and choir director in the budding Swedish Lutheran church for some time. Through the years Mr. Peterson also directed the Tacoma Military Band and the Independent Band. He directed the first Swedish Male Chorus and later sung in both Thule and Vasa Choirs. Mr. Peterson's active life came to an end in 1932. There was also a brother, *Andrew Peterson*, who played clarinet in the original band as well as in some of the other bands. He was a painter by trade and reportedly was an excellent craftsman. He painted the original curtain in the Old Tacoma Theater which had a Grecian motive. It was supposed to be either the Temple of Diana or the Temple of Minerva. Forslund does not remember which. He doesn't believe he ever married and there is no further data about him.

Frank Anderson, a brother-in-law of P.O. Peterson, was also a member of these bands and reportedly was the best tuba player in these parts in his time. He was around a lot but Forslund has no details about him except that he remembers that he came to an untimely end about the time of the First World War when he was trying to learn how to operate a Ford touring car and went in a ditch and was crushed underneath.

SOME IMPORTANT SWEDES WHO ARRIVED IN 1889

Gust Bjorkman was a native of Kil, Värmland, born in 1864. He emigrated to Muskegon, Michigan in 1886 and was employed in the lumber industry until 1889 when he came to Tacoma following the same line of work. He later bought half interest in Fridlunds Grocery on South 11th and Cushman (O Street at that time). Later the business was moved down to 11th and K Street where they were burned out and a brick building was erected in the same location. After the death of his partner, Mr. Bjorklund acquired his share and Bjorkman's Grocery was a going concern for several decades. He married *Tilda Larson* in 1893. She was a native of Gävle Parish in Värmland and they had three sons and a daughter. The family were active members of the Swedish Tabernacle, now the Covenant Church.

C.C. Carlson was best known as "Alaska Carlson". He was born in Nybro, Sweden in 1865 and emigrated to Menominee, Michigan in 1885. He was in the mid-west until 1889 and then came to Tacoma. He was in charge of a construction gang in the building of the Northern Pacific Grays Harbor Line to Aberdeen. He worked as a millwright for the Tacoma mill for a season until 1895 when he went to the Yukon, coming to Juneau in early March. From there, he and his party headed for Circle City. The trail lead over the Chilcot mountains to Lake La Barge and they pulled tons of supplies behind them. From there they went down the Yukon to their destination. After a rather successful season, the party came out in the fall and Mr. Carlson went to Duluth, Minnesota where he married *Augusta Carlson*, a native of Växjö, Sweden on December 22, 1895. The couple went back to Circle City the next year and remained there until the Klondike rush of 1897. Their son Alfred was the first white child born in Dawson in 1898. In 1900 Carlson went to Nome and mined in conjunction with the Pioneer Mining Company for the next 15 years. Besides Alfred, there were two other children, Ebba and Reuben. Reuben became a prominent attorney in Tacoma. The family always considered Tacoma as their home town and Mr. Carlson did make some substantial real estate investments here which occupied his time in the later part of his life.

Frank Ekberg was born in Kosta, Småland in 1865. Frank Ekberg emigrated to Spring Lake, Minnesota in 1886 and then to Tacoma in 1889. He had various kinds of employment including that of a police patrolman for nearly two years, plus City Storekeeper (?) and other appointed positions. Around 1896 he started writing fire insurance as a sideline which eventually grew into Frank Ekberg Insurance Agency. In 1905 he went into partnership with J. F. Visell in the book and stationary business until 1913, when he sold his share to Mr. Visell. Very early he had obtained a Notary Public commission and was a registered notary with the Swedish Consulate. As such, he attended to the affairs of a great many people on both sides of the Atlantic. When a member of the Swedish community needed assistance or advice in business matters they always sought out Mr. Ekberg. In 1904 he married *Jenny Peterson* from Växjö, Sweden. They had two daughters and a son. Mr. Ekberg was a member of several organizations and was very active in Valhalla and the Odd Fellows. He lived to be 93 years old. Mr. Ekberg had two younger brothers; Charles, who was a mail carrier and had a downtown route for his entire career, and Efraim, who worked in the City Public Works for a season and then worked for the Tacoma Smelter. Charles was a widower and had no children. Efraim married and had several children. Both were active in the Swedish Order of Valhalla. Efraim was secretary for so many years that when he finally resigned he claimed that it would be over 500 years before it would be his turn again.

Gus Callson was from Björke Parish in Västergötland. Sweden. He came to Ottumwa, Iowa in 1882 and learned the tailoring trade. In 1889 he came to Tacoma and resided there the rest of his life except for

the period 1894-1895 when he took a business course at Bethany College in Kansas. After working for others, he started his own business in 1900. In 1901 he acquired C. J. Ahmquist as a partner and the firm of Callson and Ahmquist continued for at least 25 years. Mr. Callson was a member of Valhalla, Masons, Swedish Male Chorus and several other organizations. He married *Signe Resen* from Algutsboda, Småland in 1912. They had one son and two daughters.

Carl Johan Ahnquist was born in Jonköping County, Sweden in 1854. He was a tailor and emigrated to America in 1886, first to Des Moines, Iowa and then to Tacoma. He married *Betty Gustafson* from Torap, Halland, Sweden in 1889. He worked for others for about a decade, including Gross Brothers, the leading Tacoma clothing store. In 1901 he became associated with Gus Callson. There were two sons and three daughters. One son became a minister in the Lutheran Augustana Synod and the other became a physician. One daughter married Eric Dahlberg.

Gustaf Lindberg was born at Molnbacka, Värmland, Sweden. His father was a foreman at the smithy producing both pig and wrought iron. As a youth, Gustaf was a clerk in the general store and later worked in Stockholm, eventually becoming manager of a grocery business. He was about to start a store of his own when his two older brothers who had spent some time in America persuaded him to accompany his parents and a sister who were about to emigrate to Tacoma and join the two brothers already there. The family arrived in May, 1889. Gustaf became employed as a clerk in the firm of Lester and Forbes, retail grocers at 214 C St. (now Broadway). With his brother, John Lindberg, they then established Lindberg Brother's Grocery at 1101 South C. St. This venture was successful and in 1900 Gustaf sold his interest in the business to his brother and established a wholesale grocery at 1822 Pacific Ave. under the name of Lindberg Grocery Co. In 1894 Gustaf married *Caroline Johnson Johnson* (Sic) born in Hallaryd, Småland who had arrive here at an early age and was a clerk in First and Backrack's Ladies Furnishing Store. Eventually there were two sons and two daughters.

In 1903 E.A. Younglove acquired a third interest in the firm and in 1905 purchased the other two-thirds. After a year's rest and a trip abroad, the Lindberg Grocery was again established at 23rd and C. Street. Besides operating the Wholesale Grocery, Gustaf Lindberg acquired large tracts of timber on the Tacoma Eastern Railroad and operated a sawmill around Mineral and Morton. The little community around the mill was named Lindberg.

All went well until the Scandinavian American Bank failed in 1921. Mr. Lindberg was a Director in the bank and it was discovered that loans from the bank had been extended to Lindberg Grocery despite the fact that the laws provide that such accommodation could not be extended to anyone in a fiduciary capacity. Criminal charges were brought and there were trials and appeals. The case was finally settled by intervention of the Governor's Office. Lindberg Grocery went into receivership. Mr. Lindberg then started Standard Grocery Company on Puyallup Avenue and in 1975 this firm was still in business, run by the third generation, and catering to the institutional grocery trade. The timber holdings were merged with those of the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company and a son of the late Mr. Holding Lindberg was awarded a directorship.

Gustaf's brother Carl, is listed in the City Directory as a Blacksmith and living at 1929 South L. Street. About 1909 (?) he acquired a tract of land at Graham and some of his descendants still live there. Forslund never heard of what happened to John Lindberg after he gave up his grocery but John's wife had a good business as an importer of Swedish Linen.

Peter Sandberg also emigrated in 1889. He was born in Troskefors (Sic), Värmland, learning the carpenter's trade as a youth. He spent a short time in Minnesota before moving here. His first job was building the depots on the Northern Pacific Grays Harbor Line. According to rumors, on a visit to the city he went in a saloon for a drink and the bartender was rather clumsy and spilled the drink all over the bar. Peter had the reputation of being a rather frugal man who hated to see anything go to waste and remarked that the bartender would make a better blacksmith than a bartender. This made the bartender sore and he tore off his apron and challenged Pete to do better if he could. He did, according to conversations Forslund had with some of his contemporaries, and before the day was over, he had bought the saloon. As Sandberg prospered, he extended his holdings. He had an interest in several saloons, owned a wholesale liquor company, several hotels and built the town's first skyscraper. By then he was rated as a millionaire and became influential in local politics. In the early part of the century there were loud complaints that there were too many prostitutes soliciting on the streets. A city councilman made a motion to make a deal with Pete Sandberg to erect a building to house these women and get them off the streets. This building was subsequently erected at 16th and A Street and Pete had the biggest part of this business corralled for himself.

There were also two telephone companies serving the city and for years there had been efforts to tell them to consolidate but to no avail. Pete was delegated to tell them to get together which he did in no uncertain terms and the consolidation occurred. Towards the end of 1910, the city adopted a new charter and adopted the commissioner form of government with a recall law. Several years later, the mayor and the commissioners of public safety were recalled on moral grounds. Pete's brothel was the main issue. Politics make strange bedfellows and what eventually happened was that the liquor interests were provoked at the city council for passing an ordinance prohibiting treating in the saloons and they financially supported the do-gooders to clean up the city. The Mayor had been the main instigator of the ordinance. All the dives were raided and closed as they had been many times before but this put a crimp in Pete's influence. The State Prohibition Act a few years later wrote the final chapter of an era. Sandberg tried other lines of business which he knew very little about and was not successful. He lost some of his properties and by the time he passed away there was not much left. Sandberg was one of the few Swedes that have been buried in a Catholic cemetery from a Catholic Church with a full requiem mass. It was often rumored that in his wheeling and dealing, Sandberg was in partnership with a pioneer catholic priest. There is no proof but in the estate of the priest there included a building that for years housed one of the most noted dives in the city.

Edward Forsberg ran a cabinet shop at Pine Street and 6th Avenue in the mid-twenties. He was born in Ljusnäsberg, Västmanland, Sweden in 1866. He emigrated to Kansas in 1887. After a short sojourn there and in California he arrived in Tacoma in 1889. He established his own business in 1907 after working for others. He married *Anna Johnson*, born in Stalidalen (Sic), Västmanland and they had three daughters.

Charles Peterson, a well-known painting contractor was born in Högstad , Östergötland, Sweden. He served an apprenticeship in Linköping and worked for a time in Stockholm. He emigrated to Escanaba, Michigan in 1888 and came to Tacoma in 1889. In 1905 he became a partner in the firm of Erickson Brothers. In 1915 he went into business on his own and in 1923 his son Carl became associated with the business, starting a retail store with paint, wallpaper and other painters supplies. Mr. Peterson also owned a business block at 6th Ave. and Steele Street. He was very active in the Swedish Order of Valhalla, particularly in the early days. In 1891, he married *Louise Carlson* from Närke, Sweden and they had two sons and four daughters.

Eric Nyberg was born in Alfta, Hälsingland, Sweden and came to Kansas with his wife (Martha A. Soderstrom) and six month old son Eric in 1883. They arrived in Tacoma in 1889 and after a short stay, settled on McNeil Island where he found employment and cleared a small tract of land for a productive farm. Besides the son, Eric, there were also three daughters. The family belonged to the Swedish Lutheran "Sunne" Congregation on the island.

Jacob F. Vissell was born in Östergötland in 1856 (?) and came to America the first time at the age of 12. He returned to Sweden after three or four years and took a business course and became established in a commission business in the city of Norrköping. In 1882 he returned to America and worked in a General Merchandise Store in Orion, Illinois for several years. He then went west and was employed as a bookkeeper for a lumber company in Sumner, Washington for a season. He then moved to LaConner, WA where he was a partner in the Polson General Merchandise Store for the next four years. In 1889 he moved to Tacoma and established a Book and Stationary store which he managed the rest of his life. He was a partner with Frank Ekberg and the firm was known as Visell and Ekberg. Jacob was also the local agent for a number of steamship and railroad lines and did a brisk business selling prepaid tickets to and from Europe during the heavy emigration years. In 1886 he married *Mary Asplund* who was born in Sweden arriving with her parents to Orion, Illinois as a child. There were three sons and two daughters and the family belonged to the Swedish Lutheran Church. Jacob Visell was an old time member of Valhalla. The Book and Stationary business was continued by a son until sometime in the 1950's when the son also passed away. It was then continued by C. Fred Christensen (a Dane) who just rubbed out the V. and continued as Isell Book and Stationary. Another son, Alden E. Visell, settled at Key Center in 1920 where he established a lumber yard and a shopping center. He passed away about 1968 and was the last survivor of the Visell family.

Carl A. Anderson came to Tacoma in 1889 direct from Sweden and worked in loggings camps and sawmills until 1895 when he bought a 16 acre tract of land north of Puyallup. The present Riverside school is built on part of this property. He kept a dairy herd for some time but later became a berry grower. He had been confirmed in the Lutheran faith in Sweden in 1882 so he must have been born about 1867 or 1868. Bonney's history does not mention where he was born or any family.

Axel Henry Hedborg was born in Sweden in 1867, location unknown. He was the son of Carl and Matilda Hedberg. His father was a sea captain and had been in California at the time of the gold rush. Later he operated a schooner trading on the Pacific Coast before returning to Sweden. Axel H. Hedberg emigrated to Minnesota in 1887 and came to Tacoma in 1889. He then homesteaded 160 acres in the

vicinity of what is now called Alder on the Mountainside Road. To this acreage he added another 160 acres in 1925. In 1898 he married *Brita Matilda Anderson*. She was born near Sollefteå, Ångermanland in 1869. Her mother died when Brita was 5 and she was placed with an aunt in Dalarna and grew up there. At the age of 20 she emigrated to America and came directly to Pierce County. Her father had arrived in 1880 and had squatted on a piece of land in Ohop Valley. He was the first settler in this valley. In 1885 he took a homestead on Ohop Lake and remained there until 1900 when he went to live with his daughter until passing away in 1906. After a short stay with her father, Brita Matilda came to Tacoma and secured employment. She bought a house and rented out rooms to working girls. She also obtained a cow and peddled milk even though her house was near the center of the city. When she and Axel settled on his claim, the trees stood so close and were so high that only by looking straight up were they able to see the sky. By the combined efforts of the couple, the greater part of the area was cleared. They raised three daughters and a son.

Another well-known Swede in a bygone era was *Edward Johnson*, a veteran employee of Tacoma Railway and Power Company. Usually known as Motorman Johnson, he arrived here in 1889. Mrs. Johnson may have arrived later but both were natives of Mellerud, Dalsland, Sweden. There were two sons. Roy became a merchandiser, buying and selling inventories of various kinds and Bertil was an attorney in private practice. He did serve a term as a Prosecuting Attorney for Pierce County and was ultimately appointed Judge of the Superior Court by Governor Langley. He was re-elected several times and spent nearly three decades on the Bench. A son of his, Bertil F. Johnson, is now a practicing attorney. One daughter became a school teacher and another, Astrid, was a legal secretary and tax expert.

THE GAY NINETIES WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE NOT SO GAY

The 1890 census gave Washington a population of 357,232 – more than four times the 75,116 census of 1880. In 1870 the figure for the state was 23,995. Tacoma had 74 inhabitants in 1870, some 12 or 15 hundred in 1880 and 36,006 in 1890. This was a decade of big events. Tacoma was a boom town and the conditions in the embryo metropolis were best described by Forslund borrowing a quotation from Rudyard Kipling the famous British author who visited Tacoma at the time:

“Tacoma was staggering under a boom of the boomiest. The rude boarded pavements on the main streets rumbled under the heels of furious men, all hustling drinks and eligible corner lots. They sought the drinks first. We passed down streets that ended abruptly in 15 foot drops and nests of brambles, along streams that began in fir planks and ended in living trees. Real Estate agents were selling lots on unmade streets for thousands of dollars. They are all mad here said my companions – all mad”.

This was the atmosphere that greeted the new arrivals. Everything was going great guns. Money was free and easy. Prosperity reigned. Few surmised that a black panic was lurking just around the corner.

A number of Swedish settlers arrived in 1890. Who came first is hard to discover so we may as well start with Capt. *Axel Uddenberg* who came here for the first time in 1888 as a Captain on a Swedish sailing vessel. Capt. Uddenberg was born in Stockholm, Sweden in 1855. He went to sea at an early age, attended navigation school and received his Master’s License at the age of 21. He commanded both

sailing and steam vessels and visited every important port in the world. In 1888 his vessel came here to pick up a cargo of lumber for Australia. From there he went to the Dutch Indies for a cargo of coffee and spices for Holland. Arriving in Holland, he relinquished his command and returned to Sweden. With his family, he emigrated to Tacoma in 1890, settling onto a tract of land at Spanaway purchased on his visit in 1888. He developed this into a good farm which he operated until 1899 when he sold out and bought a hop ranch which he operated until 1905. Then he moved into Tacoma and operated a General Store for about a year. After disposing of this business he moved to Gig Harbor where he erected a building and opened a General Store. (This store was still operating in the mid-twenties and I believe there is an Uddenberg Super Market still operating in Gig Harbor. (1974) Mr. Uddenberg was married to Angelina Uddenberg, a distant cousin in Hull, England. (Time and date not given) There were six children; Hobert who was born in Australia, Robert C., Bettie, Dorothy, Signe, Arthur who was born on the island of Celebes, and Aida who was born at Spanaway. The son Arthur went down with his ship in 1923.

Hjalmar Erickson arrived in 1890 from Västra Vingåker, Sodermanland at the age of 17. He joined his brother Charles who had arrived in 1884 and by now was established in business. After working as a painter for some years for his brother, the two brothers established the firm of Erickson Brothers catering to both the retail paint and contracting business. Later they also started a factory to mix their own brand of paints and the Erickson brand of paints was a well-known brand for years. The firm did change location a few times but remained around 11th and Tacoma Ave. With the passing of the two senior Erickson Brothers, the retail business was abandoned. None of Charles F. Erickson's sons entered the business but it was continued by the two sons of Hjalmar until the last and youngest son passed away just a short while back. Hjalmar was married to *Johanna Johnson*, born in Dalsland, Sweden.

C.W. Johnson was well known in the Swedish community in Tacoma from the time of his arrival in 1890 until he passed away in the early 1930's. He was born on Öland in 1868. He was left fatherless at the age of 8 and had to shift for himself. He arrived in Pennsylvania in 1888 where he met and married *Anna Hanson*, born in Norrköping Sweden. In 1890 the couple with an infant daughter arrived in Tacoma. Eventually they reared two daughters and two sons. Mr. Johnson was engaged in various endeavors during his years in Tacoma. For a time he was an expressman (?). He also peddled buttermilk and earned the nickname of "Buttermilk-Johnson". Some Swedes referred to him as C.W. Kärmjök (Buttermilk). He also ran one of the outdoor cigar counters in front of the Carlton hotel – where you could also get all the buttermilk you could drink for 5 cents. In partnership with Axel L. Anderson, he had a confectionary business and soda fountain at 11th and K Street for several years before and around the First World War. The family home was at South 21st and Sheridan. Nearby were several houses which he had built or converted into small apartments. The quarters were cramped but the rent was reasonable. Many young Swedish couples spent their honeymoon there and remained until the size of the family called for more room or when they could afford something better. Mr. Johnson was a teetotaler and in the nineties seems to have been a member of a Good Templar Lodge that existed then. This was one organization that the young Swedes recognized from the old country and several attempts were made to keep one going. C.W. Johnson was always a leader in these attempts and he was also a member of the Swedish Order of Valhalla even if this society could never be classified as a temperance organization. He did

some admirable work there. When a Lodge from the Vasa Order of America was organized here in 1912 he became one of the early members. In fact, he joined before the Charter was closed and became very interested in the work of the local as well as the District Lodge. He was a delegate when the District Lodge was organized in Seattle in 1912. Always a stickler for the ritual and prone to be critical of the work performed on the floor at initiation, installations, etc., he sometimes got himself in some ridiculous situations when he tried to exhibit all alone on the floor how the work really should be done and got himself all mixed up.

E.E. Rosling was a prominent attorney in Tacoma in the nineties. He was a member of the law firm of Parker, Garretson and Rosling. He was born in Stockholm in 1855 and had arrived in Boston, Mass. with his parents a decade later. He was also educated there and came to Tacoma in 1890. With J. Visell, T. Sandgren and some others, he founded Tacoma Savings and Loan. He died in his office in 1905 after an attack of pneumonia, leaving his wife and three children.

Andrew Christofferson was born in Töcksmark, Värmland in 1869. He emigrated to Red Wing, Minnesota in 1886 and worked on the construction of the Great Northern Railroad in North Dakota and Montana. He came to Tacoma in 1890. Here he was employed in the laying out and improvement of Wright Park. This tract of about 27 acres had been donated to the city in 1886 by Charles B. Wright, president of the Northern Pacific and perhaps also the president of Tacoma Land Co. and the Northwestern Improvement Co., both subsidiaries of N.P., with a stipulation that the city would spend no less than one thousand dollars per year in improving the park. Several years went by and no improvements were done and not a cent spent. It became a favorite spot for some to go there and fell trees and cut their firewood. Some even went there and cut down the cedars and sold them as shingle bolts. There was some talk that the Land Company would demand that the tract be reverted back to them as much as the city had not carried out their part of the bargain. For fear of losing this valuable donation, a newly elected or appointed Park Board hired E.O. Swagrel, an experienced gardener and landscape architect to clear and improve the area. With a considerable crew he went in and cleared the area of logs and underbrush and turned the swamp into a small lake before starting to grade. Andrew Christofferson, who had been indentured to a gardener in his early youth in Sweden, was made foreman and remained as such for the next 5 years until the work was completed. So it is by the combined efforts of Mr. Swagrel, Andy Christofferson and Eben Roberts, who came later, that we have this beautiful oasis so close to the city center that we have today. George Brown, who was about to embark on a European trip about this time, was authorized to buy and ship plants and trees not indigent to this area. In this he seems to have gone overboard and plants and trees were received faster that they could be transplanted and had to be healed in until a spot could be found for them. Some plants and trees could not stand the winter here and Forslund understood that Mr. Christofferson had quite a time with this mess. Soon there were some voices that Mr. Swagrel was spending too much money foolishly. There were some political machinations and the usual cry of "kick the rascals out". Mr. Swagrel was a gardener and not a politician and withdrew. He was succeeded by Mr. Eben Roberts who has some ideas and plans of his own but he did follow the original plans.

Andrew Christofferson did remain as foreman of the project until the job was finished. In 1894 he was married to *Nettie Wehl* who was born in the vicinity of Trondheim, Norway. The couple had two sons

and two daughters. In 1896 he and his family located in Juneau, Alaska where he started a transfer business. He was also the proprietor of the Chilcot Pass Tramway Line hauling freight for the gold seekers over the pass. After 4 years he disposed of his business interests in Juneau and returned to Tacoma where he was in the hotel, restaurant and saloon business for the next 8 years. He had a flair for politics, was a stalwart republican and was appointed Sergeant at Arms quite often in county conventions. After disposing of his hotel and saloon business, he was employed by the City Light and Water Department first as a storekeeper and later in a supervisory capacity at the building of the gravity water system and the building of the original Nisqually Power Plant. The landscaping around the residences for the employees was done under his direction. In 1917 he ran for Commissioner of Public Works but came in third in the primaries. He was a pretty good trader, so by promising one of the top men his influence with voters, he was awarded the position of Superintendent of Streets by Roy Harrison from 1918 to 1924. Andrew was a member of a number of fraternal organizations and did some valuable work for the Swedish Order of Valhalla, serving on the Board of Trustees and on the Building Committee when the Temple was built. Frlund thought he also played the trombone in the original Valhalla Band in the 1890's.

An accident that happened while clearing Wrights Park is almost too good to not mention. *Gus Lindell* was driving a team of horses and had the team hooked to a stump. The horses were pulling for all they were worth and Gus thought he would give them "da boost" and put his shoulder to the stump about the time it was ready to let go. When it went, Gus wrenched his back quite severely. Over a period of years, he spent a small fortune on doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors and liniments to no avail. Some 25 years later when he was farming up in Benston, near Eatonville, a calf was bothering a cow he was milking so he got up to give it a swift kick – and slipped. Then when Gus did not come in from the barn at the usual time, the family went to investigate and found him in the muck on the floor unable to move. With the help of neighbors they got him in the house and in bed. As the days went by Gus thought he felt better than he had in years. Apparently a vertebra that has slipped out of place years before was forced back in place when he took his spill for his back never bothered him much afterwards. So a calf did him more good than all the professional men he had visited before

Tobias Sandegren was born at Getinge in Halland in 1858. His father was a schoolteacher. After graduating from Junior College he entered the University of Lund majoring in mathematics and theology. Apparently he may have been bent on becoming a minister in the State Lutheran Church and may have had the bishops venia (?) to preach even if he had not been ordained. After his death, Mrs. Sandegren turned over a number of sermons which he had written and kept through the years to the Swedish Archives at the University of Washington. Instead of becoming a minister, he turned to journalism and served as editor and reporter on some local papers in his home district until he emigrated to Minnesota in 1883. He taught for a while in a military school at Fort Snelling and also worked on some of the contemporary Swedish newspapers. There he met up with a *Nils Peter Lind* who also had a divinity degree from the University of Uppsala. Although Nils was also never ordained, he had been employed by the state church to fill vacancies in various parishes. He had also worked on newspapers there until he emigrated to America in 1879. After arriving, he seems to have alternated between newspaper editing and preaching in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Between themselves, Sandgren

and Lind decided that there must be a crying need for a Swedish newspaper out in the Pacific Northwest and came to Seattle in 1888. A previous attempt to publish a Swedish paper had been made in 1885 by *Frans Lagerlöf*, which folded after a few issues. *Ernst Skarstedt*, a prominent Swedish-American journalist in his day who was something of a traveler, visited Lagerlöf in Seattle about this time and describes him as a gloomy and melancholy man who has no use for Seattle, the Washington Territory nor for the United States in general. Besides trying to be an editor he was also a teacher in a public school. He must have been in an awful hurry to get out of town when he left for he sold the whole aggregate of Swedish type and some other equipment to a German printer for 5 dollars. Forslund writes that Lagerlöf was a relation to Selma Lagerlöf, noted Swedish authoress and Nobel Prize winner, who made many attempts to locate him. He may have been a rather close relative as she had a brother who emigrated and was never heard from. (endnote # 15)

Sandgren and Lind contacted some of the more prominent Swedes in Seattle. By advice of Judge Nils Soderberg, they approached B.A. Anderson, a real estate operator and O.E. Olander, a Methodist minister who did show some interest. Soderberg was a former typesetter born in Skåne, Sweden who has somehow got himself vaccinated (Sic) into law while working in Carson City, Nevada and had just been elected Justice of the Peace in Seattle. Mr. B.A. Anderson had become so enthusiastic over the project that he had gone out and solicited \$500 worth of advertising for the projected paper. The four met in Rev. Olander's study to form the new corporation. It was agreed that it would take about \$900 to get the project off the ground. Mr. Lind who perhaps had a tendency to be a bit windy, had given the new partners the impression that their assistance was needed more for moral than for financial support so when it came to crucial part -- just how much each of them were to chip in, the conversation became strained. Mr. Anderson finally demanded to know just how much money the two newspapermen had to put in. There was a painful silence. Finally Lind had to admit that he only had about \$25 and Forslund presumed that Mr. Sandgren had about the same amount. Anderson thought that the two had a lot of crust to come here and try to start a newspaper with this amount of cash but "*I like your nerve and I am willing to risk \$400 in the venture, even if I had only intended to risk \$200 originally*". Rev. Olander agreed to contribute the same amount and the Swedish Publishing Company was in business. The first issue of *Västra Posten* came off the press in March 1889, with N.P. Lind as editor. Later the same year Sandegren bought Rev. Olander's share and was the editor. About a month after that Sandegren and his head printer also acquired Mr. Anderson's share.

In Tacoma, a Swedish Publishing Company had also been organized with E.E. Rosling as president and was called *Tacoma Tribunen*. Apparently the principals had induced Mr. Sandgren that theirs was a more solid organization than the shoestring operation he had in Seattle. So Sandegren and his printer W. Hoffstedt, moved *Västra Posten* to Tacoma where Sandegren was to edit both papers. In April 1890, the first issue of *Tacoma Tribunen* came off the press. After only a couple of months in Tacoma, *Västra Posten* was purchased from Sandegren and Hoffstedt by a newly organized *Scandinavian Publishing Co.* of Seattle and the paper moved back to Seattle. *Tacoma Tribunen* continued to be published by Mr. Sandegren through good times and bad times. By 1902, the publishers of both the Tacoma and Seattle papers seemed to have agreed that it would be to their best interests to consolidate. The product of this joint effort was called *Västerna Tribune* and was published in Seattle. Apparently this consolidation did

not get the salutary effect expected from it for in 1905 Sandegren was back in Tacoma promoting another Swedish paper which received the name *Tacoma Posten* and the first issue came out in November 1905. The paper was printed partly in Seattle and partly in Tacoma. Mr. Sandegren deplored the fact that it was no longer possible to start a printing plant with a couple of hundred pounds of type and a few simple tools and that typesetting by hand was out of date. Modern presses and typesetting machinery would run thousands of dollars. In 1907 however, Sandegren did receive the assistance he had been looking for when Peter Sandberg agreed to finance the purchase of a full set of modern printing machinery and even provided a basement location at 14th and Pacific Ave. in Tacoma for the new printing plant.

To give the paper a wider circulation, the name was now changed to *Puget Sound Posten*. For the next 20 years or so the paper and printing plant remained at 14th and Pacific. Then it was moved to about 12th and Tacoma Ave. The last location of the paper was at 13th and K Street in the Valhalla Temple. *Puget Sound Posten* merged with *Svenska Posten* in Seattle in 1935 in a scheme by Oscar Hallstrom to unite all the Swedish papers on the coast into one. The idea had merit but did not materialize. It did mark the end of *Puget Sound Posten* however. Some years before, Mr. Sandegren had given up the editorship of the paper as well as the management of the printing plant. The business was sold but the new owners could not make a go of it. In fact, the partnership, corporation, or whatever it was, went bankrupt. Valhalla Lodge was out about \$800 in the failure. Sandegren was not much of an orator although he was sometimes called upon to talk before various audiences. As an editor and writer he towered head and shoulders above most of the Swedish-American editors of this era. Forslund credits the late editor of *Svenska Posten* in Seattle, Harry F. Fabbe, as the authority for this statement. Mr. Fabbe had bound volumes of several Swedish American newspapers in his library and had the means to evaluate their efforts.

Tobias Sandegren was married in 1883 to *Marie L. Thelander* born in Goinge, Skåne. She passed away in 1899. Three daughters were born to them. He remarried in 1900 to *Carrie A. Paulson* born in Minnesota. There were four sons that Forslund remembers: Andrew, First World War veteran who became a Chicago architect, and later relocated in Missouri and went into some other line of business; Paul, a newspaperman, who worked on the now defunct *Tacoma Times* and was for years editor of the *Tacoma Labor Advocate*; and Raymond and Thomas-that he does not know much about. There could not have been two more unlikely partners than Tobias Sandegren and Nils Peter Lind who started *Västra Posten*. Sandegren had a faculty of getting along with people and was not adverse to a little conviviality now and then. Lind was a strict teetotaler, obstinate and overbearing. He did get the job of editing on several Swedish papers but never kept a job very long. He also tried to start several Swedish periodicals from time to time without any success.

Andrew German was born in Sweden in 1857 and came to Sumner in 1890. He purchased 40 acres of school land partly cleared. He cultivated hops until 1895 when he went in for truck and berry farming and poultry. He disposed of the place in 1898 and went to Alaska where he followed mining for a couple of years, returning to Sumner in 1900. He purchased another 80 acre place which was partly cleared and planted berries and built greenhouses. At one time he was the largest grower of tomatoes in Pierce County. In 1922 he sold the place and retired. He was first married to *Christine Flyget* and they had 7

children, 5 of which survived. She died in 1897. He married again in 1905 to *Christine Westerlund* and they had 2 children. After retirement, he went in for fur farming with his son and raised silver fox east of Parkland. The venture was incorporated as Standard Fur Company with Andrew German as president.

Frank Johnson born in Leonhövde (?), Småland came to this area in 1890 and worked on the construction of the Northern Pacific and Grays Harbor line and other construction work until 1893 when he and a brother invested in 55 acres of land on Oro Bay on the south side of Anderson Island. No improvements were made for the next ten years while the brothers had other kinds of employment. The land was eventually cleared, buildings erected and the brothers went in for dairy and poultry on a large scale.

SOME OF THE SWEDES THAT ARRIVED IN 1891

Bernhard Anderson was born in Göteborg in 1866. He was a carpenter and also had some training as a machinist. He arrived in Tacoma in 1891 and was employed by the Pacific Naphtha Launch Co. for three years and later by the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Co. He acquired a half interest in Johnson's Carriage and Blacksmith shop (Peter Johnson and Anderson were brother's in law) which later merged with Fawcett Wagon Works when the two partners acquired the interests of A.V. and F. M. Fawcett. The firm was known Fawcett Wagon Works until 1918 when Peter Johnson disposed of his share and the firm became known as Pioneer Auto Works. In the 1920's the firm was listed as having Bernhard Anderson as president and H.M. Anderson (no relation) as general manager.

According to rumors, Bernhard Anderson was a little too generous with the stock in the company for his own good. He gave some to employees as bonuses and perhaps sold some until he had less than 50% of the stock and was voted out. Apparently, the new management did not have the ability to cope with the mechanics of the business and with the effects of the depression of the 1930's, the enterprise went to the wall. Mr. Bernhard Anderson lived to be over ninety. In 1899 he had been united in marriage to *Teckla Ulrika Nelson*, born in Sweden and a daughter of the O.W. Nelson family, pioneer settlers in Tacoma. The Andersons were members of the Swedish Lutheran Church where Bernhard was a perennial deacon.

Olof F. Larson was born in of Ekshäred in Värmland. He emigrated to Willmar, Minnesota in 1879. Later he settled in Minneapolis where he learned the carpenter's trade. He came out west in 1890 and spent a year in Spokane before coming to Tacoma in 1891. There he engaged in house building and built several hundred residences before he tackled larger contracts. His first large contract was the original Horace Glenn School, a large two story frame building of pleasing design. Among others erected by him was Olympus hotel, O.W. RR & N. Freight Shed,(?) the Jason Lee Junior High and many others. In his later years, his son Marcus (Mike) was associated with him and the firm was known as O.F.Larson and Son. After Olof Larson's demise, the firm was continued by the son under this name. He passed away at a comparatively young age and the firm is now extinct. Olof Larson was married to *Matilda Johnson*, who was born in Östergötland and had arrived with her parents in America at the age of seven in 1879. There were four sons, Wallace R., Marcus, Henry and Richard. Olof Larson served as a member of the Park Board, a director of Puget Sound Bank and was active in many civic and religious undertakings. He was a

devoted member of the Swedish Tabernacle (now the Covenant Church), serving for 20 years or more as the chairman of the congregation. When the congregation's former church edifice was built at South 8th and I Street he supervised the construction without a fee.

The *Peterson brothers, John and Peter*, were grain, wood and fuel merchants and were well known in Tacoma for decades. Both were born in Småland and came to Pennsylvania in 1887. They spent some time there and in St. Paul, Minnesota before arriving in Tacoma in 1891. Here they worked at construction work for a season. In 1894 they acquired a patch of timber and started to sell wood. In 1896 they added a line of hay, grain and feed to their fuel business. Originally their business was located on the southwest corner of So. 11th and Yakima, later it was relocated to So. 10th and K. St. After a fire, they erected a building that extended from K. St. to the alley - with offices and a warehouse on the ground floor and apartments upstairs. This building stood there until the late 1960's when the fire department burned the structure down in a practice maneuver to make room for the modern office structure which now occupies the corner. Beside the K St. location the firm also had a mixing Plant at So. 30th and Wilkeson. The Peterson brothers also had an interest in the West Coast Chair company which had a plant on East E. Street behind the Milwaukee tracks. There John Peterson was the president and Peter Peterson the vice president. The stakeholders were all Swedes and it seems that the father of the late Dr. David H. N. Johnson was secretary-treasurer and General Manager. Peter Peterson was married in 1895 to *Annie Westberg*. They had 3 children, of which Rudolph N. was the treasurer of the company. John Peterson was married in 1910 to *Frieda Olson*, 5 children. Both families were active members of the Swedish Tabernacle, now the Covenant Church. The fuel business tapered off as people turned to electricity and other means for cooking and heating. The feed business also diminished as people gave up having chickens and a cow to supplement their income. But the firm stayed in business until the demise of the original proprietors. The brothers must have hung on to the property at So. 11th and Yakima. In the late 1920's they erected the Roosevelt Apartments which now occupies this corner.

John August Magnuson was an erecting foreman (?) in the Northern Pacific locomotive shops in South Tacoma when I knew him. Best known there as "Maggie". Born in Småland in 1857, he moved to the province of Uppland at the age of 14 and served an apprenticeship as a blacksmith and machinist. He then became a locomotive fireman and was later promoted to engineer and emigrated to America in 1886, working as a machinist in San Francisco. He took a trip to Melbourne, Australia but returned to the States again the same year. He came to Puget Sound in 1891 and worked as a machinist both in Bellingham and Tacoma before entering the employment of the Northern Pacific in 1892. A couple of years later he took a trip to Sweden where he remained for about a year operating a locomotive on the government railroad out of Luleå. He resumed his employment at the South Tacoma shop in 1895. In 1897 he went to the Klondike to hunt for nuggets but returned the next year, minus nuggets. Except for a short sojourn at the Bremerton Navy yard in 1901, he remained with the Northern Pacific Railroad until his retirement. Mr. Magnuson was a skilled mechanic who even built his own automobile. He married in 1905 to *Anna Beckman* from Öland. There was a son and a daughter born to them.

John E. Nelson was born in Fröderyd, Småland and arrived in Minneapolis in 1882. He lived in Rockford, Illinois before coming to Tacoma which must have been about 1889 or 1890 as his first job was putting in the foundations for the old City Hall. He worked at various occupations until 1900 when he went to

Alaska and spent the next ten years there, returning in 1910 and went into the wood business and did general hauling. His wife was the former *Christina Holmquist* who was born in Ekshäred, Värmland. Three daughters were born to them.

SOME ARRIVALS AND SOME EVENTS IN THE NINETIES

Emil Julius Bertle was an interesting figure in the Swedish Community in Tacoma for about a half a century. Apparently he arrived here in the early nineties, became a member of Valhalla in 1893 and elected president in 1894. We know that he was born in Värmland, probably in the late 1860's. He was married but the couple had no children. A shoemaker by trade he had from time to time half interest in several shops. He was endowed with a beautiful tenor voice and with proper training he could have developed into a lyric tenor. About the only time he had for this gift in the early days was at picnics when the Swedes and the Germans or some other nationality had a Tug of War and Bertle would encourage his countrymen to greater efforts by singing "Mandom mod och Norske men". N.O. Nelson, later a banker, seems to have been the permanent anchorman. Emil also played the clarinet in the original Valhalla band. Some decades later when the Svea Band existed he played the same instrument there. Bertil liked a little nip now and then. Like everyone else imbibing the stuff, sometimes he could get a little dizzy. The band played at a Swedish picnic at Stone's landing (Redondo) and someone had treated Bertil a little too well and he kept on blowing some sour notes. Peter O. Peterson who was the director of the band, asked Bertil to kindly retire from the bandstand. This provoked Bertil to the extent that he went out on the dock and threw his clarinet in the bay. At the next rehearsal Bertil showed up with a brand new instrument. When the boys started to kid him about it he declared that he had known for some time that his clarinet had been out of tune and he had been unable to adjust the reed so he had decided long ago to make the change. He was a member of all the Male Choruses that ever existed in the Swedish Community in Tacoma. In 1915 he went with the Thule Male Chorus to the Pacific Coast Singers Convention in San Francisco. At the business session when they were looking for a place to hold the next convention and there seemed to be no offer, Bertil got up and resolutely invited the singers to Tacoma two years hence in 1917. This took the Thule boys by surprise and they were too paralyzed to do anything about it. There were of course a lot of misgivings but it turned out to be the biggest thing the Swedes ever put on here in Tacoma. Over 14 thousand people attended the Grand Concert in Tacoma Stadium. Bertil may have been a bit high when he invited the singers to come but Forslund states "God Bless him for his vanity and bravery, this was one time that all the Swedes got together and accomplished something."

Almin Linus Swanson was born in Levene parish in Västergötland in 1877. His father emigrated to America in 1885 and had located in Tacoma some three years later. In 1892 the rest of the family left Sweden for America. While in England the mother became severely ill and was unable to continue the journey so the children had to proceed alone in charge of Almin who was also the oldest. After many delays and difficulties, Almin and his brothers and sisters arrived in Tacoma and were united with their father on Almin's 15th birthday the 7th of September 1892. Their mother arrived the following year. His first employment was in the printing office of the *Tacoma Tribune*, a Swedish weekly newspaper which had been started a couple of years earlier by Mr. Tobias Sandgren. Here he remained off and on for the next couple of years. In between he was a glass and water boy in Chilbergs restaurant and also worked

part time in a drug store. He entered public schools in the 4th grade and finished the 8th in one year. He attended Professor Powelson's Academy (?) housed in the basement of the Swedish Lutheran Church and did some janitor work to pay for the tuition. In three short years after his arrival in Tacoma, Almin had accumulated sufficient knowledge of the English language and had acquired enough of an education to enable him to accept a position as a clerk with the Commonwealth Title and Trust Company. There he remained for the next 12 years and became an expert in the Title and Abstract field. He then accepted a position as Secretary-Treasurer with a newly organized firm, the Title Insurance and Investment Co. By now he was also reading law under the direction of Judge Ernest M. Card of the Pierce County Superior Court. About 1907, Mr. Swanson with some partners acquired a large tract of sage-brush land in Yakima Valley, where they promoted the town of Selah. While it would hardly be fair to infer that this was an attempt to form a community of true believers of their own faith, nevertheless several aspects of this project had denominational overtones. All of the promoters were active members of the Swedish Mission Covenant Church. The sub-division was widely advertised in the periodicals of the denomination, offering acreage and independence. Most of the secular advertising was also slanted in the same direction. A congregation of their faith was formed and a church was built. After the sagebrush had been cleared and the apple trees planted, it would of course take several years before the orchards would produce any fruit. This was perhaps something some of the more enthusiastic colonists had failed to take into consideration and there was some grumblings. Those who were able to stick it out however, seem to have come out quite well and the promoters realized a handsome profit on their investment. Mr. Swanson used his share to form a Title Company of his own which he headed for the next two or three decades. Soon after their arrival in Tacoma, the Swanson's became members of the Swedish Mission Covenant Church. Here Almin found an outlet for his energies. He was the president of the Young Peoples Society for 8 years and Sunday school superintendent for nine. Besides serving on various boards and taking an active part in the work of the congregation, he even filled the pulpit in the minister's absence. At one time he headed the local Gideon Society, served as president for the local Y.M.C.A. for a season, had a term as president of the local Rotary Club, was a Director of Puget Sound National Bank, was a member of the Tacoma School Board from 1918-1920 and was active in the Boy Scout movement. He was married in 1905 to Jennie Martinson from Karlskrona. They had 4 sons.

Otto Carlson arrived in Tacoma in 1892. Two older brothers, Albert and Gustaf, had located here previously. They were born in Hycklinge, Östergötland where Otto was born in 1892. There he worked in a sawmill to start with and later was a blacksmith in Pete Johnson's Wagon Works. He became well known in the Swedish community in Tacoma, especially in the fraternal circles. He joined the Swedish Order of Valhalla in 1894 and immediately became engaged in the work of the Lodge and in Lodge lingo as he went through the chairs. He was president of the Lodge for the first time in 1899. Just how many terms after that Forlund could not state. Carlson always had an office or was a member of some Board or Committee as long as he was able. Nothing was ever quite right unless he had a hand in it. He finally earned the title "Mr. Valhalla". Then the Vasa Order of America came along about 1912 and became a sore spot with him. Vasa is a national Swedish-American beneficial organization for both men and women. Apparently he felt that if this organization gained a foothold here it would prove detrimental to Valhalla. He even forbid his wife to trade with a grocer who had become instrumental in getting the lodge started. As the years went by I suppose he realized that his fears were unfounded as both lodges

experienced a healthy growth. New prospects arrived from Sweden regularly in the years just prior to the First World War. So he recanted and joined the Vasa lodge and became just as Eager Beaver there as he was in Valhalla. He went through the chairs and was President of the Lodge and held other offices. He went on to the District Lodge and became District Master of the Northwestern District covering Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana and became known as "Mister Fixit". He was married in 1897 to *Augusta Magnuson*, born in Småland. The couple had one daughter.

I recall there were also three Nordstrom's from Småland who must have arrived here in the early 1890's or before. Gust worked at Regents Park (Fircrest) when this subdivision was laid out by Major Rowel (?) and was a maintenance man for several years afterwards. He also worked some years at the Griffin Wheel Co. plant. John and Sem were tomato farmers down by Titlow Beach. Each had separate acreages there. Biographical data is lacking. They may have had originated the Narrows Tomatoes for all Forslund knew. There are some descendants of the three brothers around yet in 1975. A sister was Mrs. John Hedberg.

Pete Nylander was from Värmland, born in 1866. He went to Minnesota in the early 1880's and to this area about 10 years later, farming near Eatonville and working as a painter and paperhanger. He did spend some years in Alaska where among other occupations he had a Road House on the Yukon Trail. After his return to this area he had an interest in the Hillside Saloon. After the state went dry, he went back to the decorating business. He married *Anna Bloom* in 1893. She was born in Vasa, Finland. They had a daughter and a couple of sons.

John S. Manson was born in Sweden in 1870. He went to sea in his early youth and jumped ship in Astoria, Oregon at the age of 18. He arrived in Tacoma in the early nineties and worked for a couple of years on the Northern Pacific Railroad and then for several contractors and finally for Puget Sound Dry Dock and Machine Company. With partner Capt. C.E. Wyman, he built the steamer *Vashon* and operated it out of Tacoma to Vashon Island. Later he built and sold several steamers. In 1925 he organized and operated Tacoma Machine Works at 1501 Dock St. He married *Sophia Hogberg* in 1893 (born in Sweden). There were two daughters and a son, Ted, a machinist by trade. John possessed a beautiful tenor voice and was a member of Thule Male Choir.

Martin Miller was born in Malmo, Sweden in 1861 and emigrated to the US in 1880. It is not known when he came to this area but it must have been very early. He acquired tracts of timber and ran logging camps of his own east of Tacoma. Later he was interested in several sawmills on the Tacoma Eastern Railroad. He served as President of Sixth Ave. bank in Tacoma where he was a prominent stockholder. He met his future wife Clara on a visit to Sweden in 1909. After their marriage, they settled on Prospect Hill in Tacoma. There was a son and two daughters born to them.

THEN CAME THE HARD TIMES

Tacoma had enjoyed a boom ever since the Northern Pacific reached the city by the switchback over the Cascades. As many as 5000 persons passed through St. Paul, Minnesota in a single week and immigrated to the Pacific Northwest. Everybody was optimistic about the future of the region. Eastern money had poured in in a never ending stream and nobody even gave a thought that this wouldn't continue.

Tacoma had 24 banks spread down all the way to 24th and Pacific Avenue. When there began to be ominous signs of a recession, no one paid any particular attention until one bank after another closed its doors. Perhaps less than half a dozen of the banks were able to weather the storm. When the Northern Pacific also went into bankruptcy, the collapse was complete. Owners of downtown buildings had to be their own janitors and stoke the furnaces themselves and even financiers who held mortgages in some of the buildings operated the elevators. This depression was of course, not peculiar to this area or this region but affected the entire country and perhaps a big part of the world. In fact in some quarters it is claimed that it was the collapse of the great London House of Baring that was the principal cause of this crash. However, the fact is that the entire country from New York to the Pacific was shaken and the reverberations finally hit the Puget Sound country where they were the least able to stand the shock. Tacoma had lived high on the hog and now the party was over almost overnight. Building along Pacific Avenue stopped all at once as if someone had blown a whistle for them to stop. Northern Pacific had begun to build the Tourist Hotel. This construction stopped abruptly when the railroad went bankrupt. The skeleton stood there for a good many years until it was acquired by the Tacoma School Board which converted it into Stadium High School about 1904 or 1905. Eric Bonn, a master carpenter who was a lead man on the rebuilding and well-known in Swedish-Finish circles, purchased left over bricks when the project was finished and built a residence with several extra rooms to be rented out. This house is at South 13th St on the north side between L and M streets.

Before the crash, the westbound trains had been loaded with passengers bound for Puget Sound. Now the trend reversed and everyone that possibly could, got out but only a few had the price of a ticket. Scions of well to do families in the East has arrived well healed to grow up with the country, and ended up broke. One of these tried to evoke some sympathy from a prominent lumberman but the only consolation he got was "well, you came here with ten thousand dollars and no experience, now you have the experience". The land agent for the railroad who had lived high wide and handsome learned that he was under suspicion and that some of these three penny auditors who are apt to be rather nosy were on their way out from headquarters to scrutinize his books. He told his Japanese butler Kono "I am going on a long journey" and wrote a farewell letter to his sweetheart and blew his brains out. Money was the most elusive thing in this area. Where formerly some of these speculators and optimists had gold pieces jingling in their pockets, they were now reduced to the soft tinkling of nickels and dimes. With a lot of idle hands all around and no money anywhere, a lot of people were reduced to the starvation level. According to some of these old-timers it was the lowly clam that saved this situation to some extent. One old fellow told me (Forslund) that "when the tide was out, the table was set". There were clam beds along the shores up and down the sound. Restaurants featured clams on the top of their menus and the housewives vied with one another to invent new ways to prepare delectable dishes of butter clams, steam clams, rock clams, horse clams and geoducks. That led to the famous statement by Congressman Cushman later in this decade when he told his fellow congressmen that the economic conditions out in his district were so bad that the people subsisted mostly on clams and their stomachs rose and fell with the tides. Clam bakes became popular events. There was plenty of driftwood to be found on the beaches and like the clams it was free and people soon learned the trick of clam baking. For those who could dig up two bits, there were boats for rent at the Andrew Foss boathouse and salmon was plentiful. Nearly always there were fishermen pulling in at Andy's dock with an oversupply

of salmon and were glad to get a dime for a ten-pound salmon. After all, money was the most elusive thing around these parts.

Among the Swedes who arrived in the early nineties was *Edward B. Johnson* of Old Tacoma. He was born in Vänersborg in 1868. At the age of 15 he was apprenticed to a boat builder for 6 years. After becoming a journeyman he worked in a shipyard in Stockholm. From this period he remembered when the American Cruiser “Baltimore” arrived at the Port of Stockholm with the remains of John Ericsson aboard. In 1891 he emigrated to America settling first in Omaha, Nebraska and worked as a house carpenter. The depression of the nineties began to be felt in Omaha and he found Nebraska prairies rather boring and unattractive considering he was a boat builder and was raised on the shores of Lake Vänern in Sweden. So after about a year in Omaha, he decided to travel to the West Coast arriving in Tacoma in 1892. If times were tough in the Midwest he found it to be still worse here. Unemployment was rampant and hundreds if not thousands were walking the streets in search of work. In Tacoma, most of the ships that arrived in port were sailing vessels. After having been buffeted by storm and waves they were sadly in need of repairs when they arrived, especially those which had rounded the “Horn” either from the East Coast or from Europe. Johnson soon became known as an expert in this line of work and was often called upon to make repairs. In 1893 he received a call from the North American Trading Co. to travel to St. Michael, Alaska and supervise the building of a 250 foot sternwheeler for use on the Yukon River. On his return he went into business for himself and with a partner built fishing boats for both South Sound and Alaska fishermen. Their plant was located between Old Tacoma and the Smelter (end note 13). Like a good many others he took off for Dawson during the gold-rush and spent a year in the Klondike, with a minimum of success. Back in Tacoma again he was Superintendent of Crawford and Reids shipyard for some years. During this time the *Zapora* was built for the International Fish Company under Edward’s supervision. This was the first mother ship to be used exclusively for halibut fishing. Later the same company had two more similar vessels built at Crawford and Reids shipyard again under Edward’s supervision. In 1911 he went on his own again and established a shipyard at East 21st and D Street usually referred to as the Head of the Bay. There he continued to turn out fishing and pleasure boats of all sizes for the next two decades or more until 1935 when he was 67 years old until he retired. However, in the late thirties Hitler was cutting up over in Germany and there were rumors of war. The era of wooden boats and ships was not entirely over for certain purposes and there were juicy contracts to be had from the Navy. Edward Johnson was called upon again and before he finally retired he assisted two new firms to establish ship yards. Edward Johnson reached a ripe old age as Forslund interviewed him on his 92nd birthday for *Svenska Posten* and knew that he lived for some years after that.

Forlund could only speculate just how the Swedish community may have fared during the hard times in the nineties. For those who were fortunate enough to get some work, wages were low. A dollar or a dollar and a quarter a day seems to have been the average. In a speech, Judge Bertil Johnson claimed that his dad had piled bricks for 40 cents a day. Some of the old-timers claimed that they had cut wood for 50 or 75 cents a cord or 12.5 cents an hour. Peterson Brothers who later became prominent Fuel and Feed dealers, lost their jobs as construction workers when the bottom fell out of things. But as they were natives of the flat, mossy and rocky province of Småland, this proved to be no great hardship for them. They acquired a patch of timber and started to peddle wood. Others who got started in business

during the lean years were; Lindberg Bros. grocery, Swan Samson's restaurant, J.C. Lindahl's photographic studio in 1891 and Frank Ekberg's Insurance Agency in 1896. C. W. Carlson (Sjömans Kalle) was appointed to the Fire Department in 1894 and eventually became Chief some decades later. Not everyone could become self-employed or get city jobs. Scores were walking the streets and were in severe financial straits. Some sought aid from the Swedish clergymen but they were probably as hard up as the rest. Valhalla seems to have been very active in trying to ameliorate the suffering among their countrymen whether they were members or not. An entertainment to raise some money for this purpose was held in Germania Hall and raised \$119.75. A very pathetic letter of thanks was found in the Valhalla files from a countryman, not a member, written in a scratchy hand where he thanks the lodge for the aid received and invoked the blessings of heaven upon the members of the Lodge and stated further that his circumstances were entirely due to lack of employment. There is no uncertainty among the historians that 1893 or 1894 were the worst years of the difficult financial situation. One writer calls 1893 the year of panic and the year of gloom. Locally, 1894 may have been the most severe as there was a strike by the locomotive engineers to contend with and Tacoma was a railroad town.

The engineers lost the strike and this was probably when John Bolander (mentioned earlier) became separated from his position as an engineer on the Northern Pacific and eventually became head gardener in Lincoln Park. Among other events in the Swedish Community, *Reverend P.A. Mattson*, a newly ordained clergyman arrived and became the pastor of the Swedish Lutheran Church. He remained in this position for the next five years. In spite of the depressed financial conditions that prevailed, he was able to get the congregation to pay off a \$3,733 debt. He also organized a Swedish Lutheran Church on McNeil Island which was named the Sunne Congregation. Just why it was given such a name is a little hard to understand at this time. Sunne is a parish on the shores of Lake Fryken in the province of Värmland, widely praised by poets and writers for the beautiful surroundings. Rev. Mattson was a native of this province which may explain a whole lot. A modest sanctuary was built on the west side of McNeil facing Anderson Island. As only a narrow body of water separates the two islands, the membership of the congregation was drawn from both islands. The membership was never very large and the congregation was served by a minister from Tacoma.

The original name of what now is called South Tacoma was "Excelsior". At the time the Northern Pacific shops were built in the early nineties Thomas Alva Edison was a great hero on account of his inventions. He had also donated laboratories to worthy industries. Someone conceived the idea that the shops could perhaps benefit from this largesse if they named the community "Edison". No lab was ever received and the confusion started. The Post Office was called Excelsior, the community "Edison". The train dispatchers and the railroad were prone to refer to the station as South Tacoma. Charles Atkins who later in life became a city official, was at this time a time-keeper in the railroad car shops and claimed that he put an end to this confusion when he took it upon himself to have one of the painters in the shops paint a sign "*South Tacoma*", and had it placed by the depot.

The island regions adjacent to Tacoma had their share of early settlers from the Scandinavian countries. It is safe to say that the Swedes predominated on Fox, McNeil and Anderson Islands. Tobias Sandgren, editor and publisher of the Swedish weekly newspaper in Tacoma, said Swedes probably dominated over in the Wollochet Bay area as they were numerous enough to have two churches in this vicinity.

There were Swedish settlers in the bays and coves along the shores of the lower sound clear into Mason County.

The late *Max King*, a free-lance writer by evocation and a rail road engineer by trade, contributed several stories to the local press about his maternal grandparents who apparently were reasonably well situated in a town adjacent to Stockholm. They left Sweden with the intention of becoming homesteaders in America. After a year in Chicago they came west. The head of the family was *John Alfred Sebenius*, a master cabinetmaker by trade. The wife's name was *Hilda*, and there were two sons, William and Alfred, and two daughters, Tekla and Ester. Just how they came to file on a homestead in the wilderness in Mason County near Mason Lake is not known. They arrived in Tacoma Christmas week 1886 and left Tacoma on a little stern wheeler which zigzagged back and forth to the little settlement along the sound, arriving in Olympia 11 hours later. Their fare entitled them to spend the night aboard the boat and the 15 passengers bound for Shelton had to make their beds on the floor of the passenger compartment. The next morning the boat continued on to Shelton. They left Olympia at 7 AM and arrived in Shelton at 3 PM, too late to start out for their homestead which was still about 15 miles away. They had to find accommodations in Shelton which was then only a collection of shacks along the waterfront. The next morning Alfred bought a large rowboat and loaded his family and as much of his worldly goods as he could and the family rowed the next 9 miles to Walkers Landing. From there they had all of 4 miles to the homestead site and there was 6 inches of snow on the ground. This was Christmas Eve, 1886. No doubt that their morale was very low and they wished themselves back in their cozy home in Sweden. With no roof over their heads, snow on the ground, and out in the wilderness, their plight was indeed deplorable. In true pioneer spirit however, other homesteaders gave the family temporary housing in their cramped quarters. The menfolk of the neighborhood pitched in and in two days' time a shack, which later became a woodshed, was built of split cedar and the family moved in. The family was lonesome for their friends and relatives and the security they had in Sweden. But the head of the house could only note the rich black loam soil. "Soil that grew trees 8 feet in diameter, just think what a garden, fields and orchards would produce when the land was cleared of trees". And he was anxious to start clearing. Their cabin was built on the banks of a fine stream abound with hungry trout. This, with wild ducks, and other wild fowl and the venison which was plentiful, solved the meat problem. But the staples and every day necessities had to be brought from Olympia and packed in, a 4 day, 38 mile trip. On these trips Alfred Sebenius and his two boys walked to Walkers Landing where they had their rowboat stored. From there they had to row the boat clear into Olympia, spending the nights under an inverted boat. On one occasion there was only a dollar and a quarter in the till. From this amount the trio were supposed to bring home groceries to last at least a month. But being the astute man that he was, he had a plan. From a bright tin can he fashioned a number of wobbler trolling spoons. There were plenty of salmon in the sound and on this shopping trip they trolled all the way to Olympia and arrived with 41 salmon in the boat. They sold and bartered them and their receipts were enough to cover all their purchases. In fact they came out so well that they could afford to treat themselves to a 25 cent restaurant dinner before returning home.

A better home than the drafty and cold split cedar shack was a necessity. Cedar to split was in abundance. The big toolbox which had been brought from the old country was opened and Alfred went

to work. His grandson claims that no finer lumber ever came out from a mill than the planks and boards that grandfather turned out with his adz and planes. With his skill as a carpenter and cabinetmaker the new home became the best constructed and the nicest home in this neck of the woods. The beautiful panel doors he constructed became so popular in this vicinity that they replaced the split plank make-shifts which adorned most of the houses in the area. The closest school was at Allyn, several miles away and Alfred was instrumental in organizing a school district in the neighborhood. In 1890 he built a one room school house which remained in use for the next 29 years, until 1919. After the turn of the century, W. Seymour, a Tacoma financier began to buy up homestead rights for timber purposes. Many of the settlers sold out but not the Sebeniuses. They had given their all and had carved their home out of the wilderness and preferred to remain. Mr. Sebenius lived until 1908 and Mr. Sebenius until 1921. By now, except for the Bremerton-Shelton Railroad which runs through their former front yard, the wilderness has re-claimed the area and it has gone back to brush and timber.

The first settler on Anderson (then Wallace Island) was a Danish sailor who jumped ship in Port Gamble in 1870 and worked his way up the Sound and staked out a claim on Anderson Island. Two years later he sent for his sweetheart from Denmark and they were married in a mass ceremony in the Methodist Church in Steilacoom along with 16 other couples who had arrived to make their home in the territory. Fifteen years later *Christensen* passed away, leaving his wife and six children with the seventh on the way. With the help of a manager she carried on the logging and wood yard activities. Two years later she married *August Lindstrom*, a great deal older than herself and judging by the name may have been a Swede. Apparently the "old man" as he was referred to by the Christensen children, was accepted by them and the family lived happily together on the Lindstrom claim. A son, Conrad, was born to the Lindstroms. In 1897 when Conrad was about 5 years old his father took his son with him when he was going to do some work at the Christensen place. When they failed to return, some of the older children were sent over to find out what had happened. They found little Conrad murdered and the father had committed suicide and had left a note that he did not want a son of his to grow up in this cruel and dishonest world.

OTHER SWEDES WHO ARRIVED EARLY LEFT THEIR MARK

Operating saloons was a type of business which seemed to have attracted quite a few of our countrymen from the early days and until the state went dry in 1915. Several reasons could be assigned for this. In the first place the investment for fixtures and stock needed not to be too great and Forslund understood that it was possible to get financing from both liquor houses and breweries even as it was rumored that the interest was quite excessive. Operation did not take too much experience, nor too much business acumen either. Anyone could pour a drink and learn to brew a beer in short order and finally to count the receipts in the till at the end of the day. The main thing was that the bar-keeper was a congenial fellow that could draw the trade and have a following. Forslund never heard of a saloonkeeper that went bankrupt. In the outlying areas the saloons were more or less a neighborhood pub and depended on the local trade. In the central or downtown area the saloons had to offer several other services for the transient trade. Consequently the barkeeper had to be a semi-banker, postmaster, baggage-keeper, etc. for a floating population. Up to the time of the First World War, logging and construction camps furnished a place to eat and a bunk to sleep in. This was the extent of the

accommodations and the workers had to furnish their own bedding. This they carried in a roll hung over their backs when they came to the city or moved from camp to camp and earned the title of "Blanket-stiffs". This held true until after the First World War. Most of these workers were unattached single men, and a great many were Scandinavians. When they arrived in the city after a longer or shorter stay in the camp they had to find a place to deposit the "blanket roll". The saloons which catered to this trade always had room for this purpose. Very likely the worker had a sizable check to be cashed and the bar-keeper could also accommodate him in this respect. If the worker was too timid to carry all his money when he went out on the town, he could leave it and draw as he needed it. Perhaps there could be a letter or two from the old country waiting for him in case he kept his address there. First thing however, there had to be a drink or two and after a few more, the party involved probably felt flush enough to set up drinks for the house. After a few days of celebrating, these workers usually had spent all of their hard earned cash and were ready to go back to the camp. It was not unusual that the saloon keeper had to loan the logger enough money after he had drawn all he had coming so he could get back out to the woods again or the construction worker back to his camp. In a few weeks or months the same thing was repeated again. Of course this was not true in all cases but it was a fairly common occurrence.

The frequenting of saloons for both drinking and sociability was a common practice among the early immigrants. There the itinerant workers met as equals on the same level; there they found out about employment opportunities and housing conditions in the various camps and if they fed well. This was a system that grew up with the country in an era where there was a surplus of men and a shortage of women. There was a Stockholm Saloon in Old Town and Nystrom and Larson were proprietors of a saloon in South Tacoma. The Atlas Bar close to the Union Depot kept going all through prohibition selling near beer and soft drinks until the building was razed some decades ago. Melvin Johnson was the proprietor until his demise. Oscar Moberg owned the "Tonie" at 11th and K Street. Pete Nylander had an interest in the "Hillside" at 9th and Tacoma Ave. Emil Munson and Pete Olson were partners in a bar at 1556 (?) C Street (now Broadway). Munson was from Småland.

John Lund ran the White Horse Saloon at 11th and A Street. This establishment was torn down to give room for the Parkins Building and he acquired the West End Saloon at 12th and K Street. The Vega Saloon at 13th and Commerce Street was a popular place. It was owned by *F.A. Carlson* who was a native of Krammaboda (?) and had arrived here quite early. He acquired considerable property around 14th and 15th and G (?) Street where he had a number of rental units. There were several other Swede Saloons downtown which cannot be traced now. Scandia Saloon at 1315 Tacoma Ave had *Alfred Childberg*, (Swedish) and Ben Melnes (?) (Norwegian) as the proprietors. This partnership apparently existed in the mid-nineties and they were still doing business at the same address when the state went dry in 1915. Alfred Childberg was from Värmland. Just when he arrived in Tacoma is not known, but Forslund noticed that he was an elected officer in Swedish order of Valhalla in the early 1890's. He played clarinet in the Valhalla Military Band and was reported to have been a swell dresser. Being a son-in-law of Pete Holmgren, a pioneer Swedish Tacoma tailor may have had something to do with it. After Alfred closed his establishment he acquired some property in the highlands north and east of Tacoma and became a goat rancher. As a goat farmer he probably received more fame and notoriety than he ever did as a saloon-keeper in Tacoma. The local newspaper published stories about the goat farmer and

every now and then someone referred to the actions of the "Goat -Man of the Hills". Scandia Saloon was located on the lower side of Tacoma Avenue. The site is now covered by the Employment Security Building. In order to get the main floor level with the streets a large basement had to be built. This made quite an undercroft (Sic) which was made into a hall which was used for meetings and festivities. Valhalla had rather ambulatory existence during the early years and finally ended up there and met there for several years before they got their own building on K Street.

The first automobile in Tacoma was acquired by the Henry Hewitt family in 1900. *Peter Olson* was employed by them as a coachman and gardener at their residence. When the new vehicle arrived, Peter Olson was taught to drive and maintain the car and thus became the first chauffeur in Tacoma. Many years later the Hewitt's made Mr. Olson a present of the car and he drove it well into the 1920's. The steering wheel was on the right side so the passengers on the left side of the car had to stretch out their arms and give the signals in later years when the traffic became heavier and Peter no longer had the streets to himself. Peter Olson was born in Skåne and never married. Through the years he had made some judicious investments in real estate and had accumulated a considerable amount of property. At his demise there were several apartment houses in his estate. He was rather frugal when it came to money, but nevertheless made some substantial donations when the First Lutheran Church was built. He was a brother of *Nils Hammerlin*, who may still have some descendants in Tacoma (in 1975). One son was Harold S. Hammerlin who was for many years the manager for a major oil company in the Grays Harbor area. After his retirement he returned to live in this area.

The State Apartments on North State Street were originally the Girls Dormitory of the College of Puget Sound, when the college was located on the present site of Jason Lee Junior High School. When the college moved to its present site (and later became a university), Peter Olson moved the building across the street and had it remodeled into apartments. In the 1920's he sold this property to Mr. and Mrs. Otto P. Walters, formerly of Montana. They came here during the First World War and after returning to Montana to live a couple of times, came back for good and made the investment. Like Peter Olson, Mr. Walters was from Skåne and the two became good friends. Mrs. Walters was born in Langasjö, Småland. She stated that she had numerous rides in Pete's ancient car and had learned to give the proper signals.

Dr. *John Reynolds Brown* arrived in Tacoma about 1903. Dr. Brown was born in Sjötofta, Västergötland in 1865. In 1882 he accompanied his father to New Britain, Connecticut where he worked in a lock factory for a couple of years. In 1891 he graduated from Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois. After teaching in some junior colleges for the next three or four years, he took a pre-med course at Yale and completed his medical studies at Northwestern University. In 1899 after completing his internship, he practiced in a Swedish community in Texas until he came to Tacoma. Here he built up an extensive practice which he continued until he succumbed to a heart attack in 1927. Mrs. Brown (*Hanna Morris*) was born of Swedish parents in Chandlers Valley, PA. They were probably descendants of the group from Östergötland who got sidetracked in Buffalo in 1846 while on their way to New Sweden, Iowa and ended up in Chandlers Valley. The Brown's were members of the Swedish Lutheran Church and Dr. Brown took part in Swedish activities to some extent as far as his time would permit. There were two daughters and a son. One of the daughters, Florind Brown, was a teacher in the Tacoma public schools for many years. After Dr. Brown's arrival, Valhalla had two lodge physicians. Dr. Christian Quevli, had

filled this position for a good many years and had always taken a keen interest in the lodge. He was born in Norway in 1864 and was brought to Minnesota by his parents at the age of 5. He received his M.D. degree from the University of Minnesota in 1886. He came to Tacoma in 1888. He traveled to Europe no less than four times for post graduate work. It would take a special occasion more or less to bring Dr. Brown to the lodge but Dr. Quevli was a frequent attendant even if he had one of the largest medical practices in town. He certainly loved to come there and swap yarns with the old-timers.

Svea Hotel and Saloon was located at 11th and Commerce St and was a pioneer establishment started by Sandberg and Nyman in 1884. Pete Sandberg's original place of business was at 1110 C. Street, now Broadway. After Mr. Nyman had disposed of his interests Mr. Sandberg operated the business alone for a number of years. By 1904 however the saloon seems to have been located at 15th and C. Street (Broadway) and was then acquired by *John F. Rignell* who was the proprietor until the state went dry in 1915. Mr. Rignell was born in Småland in 1877. He had taken a course in an agricultural college and had managed a large Swedish estate before he emigrated to Tacoma in 1901. He had various jobs the first years until he entered the saloon business and his establishment was neither better nor worse than the average. During the entire time the saloon was operated by Mr. Rignell, *Carl Hegglund* was employed there as a bartender. He was something of a character and we mention him later. After the state went dry, Mr. Rignell was engaged in logging operations and road building contracting. He also acquired a farm at Mud Bay near Olympia where he built his own dock and even operated a General Merchandise Store for a season. He was also instrumental in getting a Post Office for the area which was given the name "Rignall". After his retirement he returned to Tacoma not doing much of anything but he was not above peddling "moonshine" on the sly. It was rumored that he got religion towards the last and that a religious racketeer got away with a chunk of his money.

In Tacoma, lower Broadway kept on deteriorating. The former Svea Saloon building included, but the name Svea stuck. It was used for various illicit purposes. Every now and then the police raided the place and much to the chagrin of the Swedes the daily papers published these raids. Finally urban renewal came along and the place was torn down and the name of "Mother Svea" was no longer desecrated. Incidentally the site at 11th and Commerce St. where the original Svea Hotel and Saloon was situated was for years occupied by the Warburton Block and housed some retail stores, a restaurant and a Public Market with offices in the upper stories. This building also went down with the Urban Renewal process and the site was acquired by the United Mutual Savings Bank and a substantial building was erected as headquarters for their widespread operations.

Carl Hagglund, mentioned earlier, was from Ångermanland and born in 1883. He came to Wisconsin in 1900. After a couple of years there and a sojourn in British Columbia, Canada he arrived in Tacoma in 1904. Carl was a happy and congenial fellow but could also be quite erratic if by chance he had one too many. After he left Rignell's establishment he went in the wood and hauling business for a season. He was a partner with Axel L. Anderson in a confectionary and cigar store for more than a decade and then was involved in several other enterprises including a cooperative saw-mill venture in California. He served twice as President of Valhalla, also Financial Secretary for several terms and in his last years he was the perennial Chaplain.

Clarence O. Lynn came to Tacoma in 1901. He was born in Wyanet, Illinois and in 1878 the family moved to Aurora, Nebraska and settled on a farm. In 1897 he entered a business college in Omaha where he completed his education and was a bookkeeper for a wholesale firm until he decided to move out to the Pacific Coast. Here he entered the employ of A.F. Hoska, Funeral Director. The funeral home was located at 730 St. Helens Ave, a predecessor to the present Buckley-King. Together with Mr. W.L. Gaffney, Mr. Lynn established his own Funeral home at 945 S. Tacoma Ave. on Feb. 1, 1906. The name of the firm was Gaffney & Lynn. This partnership probably did not last too long. When Forslund arrived here in 1911, the partners had separate establishments on Tacoma Ave. Mr. Lynn catered to the Scandinavians and advertised his establishment as the Swedish Funeral Home in the Scandinavian press. Mr. Gaffney was a Catholic so there was no real competition between them. But for years Mr. Lynn was the busier of the two. In 1918 the building on the east side of Tacoma Ave. where the Funeral home is still located was built. The present manager is Mr. John Lynn, a grandson of the founder. Mr. Lynn was married to *Hilma Johnson* in 1905 who was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Johnson from Värmland, arriving in Tacoma in 1889 from Muskegon, Michigan. Mr. Johnson was a veteran boiler-room operator for the Wheeler-Osgood Co. Before her marriage Miss Johnson was employed as a stenographer and was also the organist in the Swedish Lutheran Church. The Lynn's had two sons; Nathan and Marvin. Both were associated with their father in the business and both passed away in middle age. Mr. Lynn Sr. passed away in 1962 and Mrs. Lynn in 1969. Frank Lynn was a brother of Clarence. Early in the century, Frank was listed in the city directory as an employee of City Restaurant and with a couple of partners acquired the business. Later he operated restaurants both in Seattle and Olympia. He died in Olympia in the early seventies well past 90 years old. Both brothers, having been raised in the early Swedish settlement in the Midwest, spoke excellent Swedish. The surname of "Lynn" was adopted. The original family name could have been Isrealsson but Forlund was not certain.

J.C. Lindahl came to Tacoma in 1891 and established a photographic studio. In 1907 he became active in real estate as a broker and disposed of his studio to *Ernest Peterson*. Ernest was born in Stockholm in 1885 and was brought to Tacoma in 1894 at the age of 9. His father had arrived here some years before. Ernest Peterson was an artistic photographer and was for many years the leading photographer in the city. Originally the studio was located in the Lucerne Building (Hess Bldg).

ONWARD FROM 1908

In 1908, Ernst T. Skarstedt published "Washington och dess Svenska Befolkning" (Washington and its Swedish Population) a work of some 800 pages containing geographical data of the state and some 300 biographies of some of the more prominent Swedes of this day. This was a commercial venture and the authors did not claim it to be a complete history of the Swedes in this era. In compiling this semi-history Mr. Skatstedt was assisted by Mr. F.W. Lonegren. A number of the more prominent Tacoma Swedes of this day subscribed to the book and their biographies and pictures are to be found there. Both these gentlemen had come from prominent families in the old country and had received both secondary and university education. After arriving in the U.S. they had served as editors on some of the numerous weekly Swedish newspapers that existed during the immigration era and tried their hands at various other occupations. After obtaining his secondary education and attending a technical college, Skarstedt spent some time as a sailor and arrived in America in 1878. He held various occupations such as

farmhand, carpenter, news reporter etc. in some of the Midwest states for the first few years but homesteaded in 1885 in the woods near Battle Ground in Clark County, Washington. During his lifetime he edited Swedish papers all the way from New York to San Francisco and in between. Every now and then he got in his head that his natural bent was to be a farmer and between his editorships he had several farms both in Washington and in California. He had some particular ideas. He detested curtains – “who wants curtains? We want the sun”; he had an aversion for using soap when he washed himself; would not speak in a telephone; and would rather run up ten flights of stairs than to ride in an elevator. He was an accomplished violinist and carried his violin case wherever he went. When he visited in Tacoma he appeared on several prominent programs at Valhalla Hall. He was the author of several books in Swedish all of which are out of print long ago and by now mostly forgotten. His last hitch as an editor was on *Nordstjernen* (North Star) in New York for some years in the early twenties. It was during this time that he was delegated to represent the Swedish American newspapers at some conference and was awarded a free trip to Sweden. Forslund never heard much about his experiences on this trip, except that when he visited a brother, Waldemer Skarstedt, a newspaper editor in Falun in central Sweden who was a fanatic teetotaler, he found that he had the largest Temperance library in all of Sweden. “When I came in that room it almost made me nauseated” he said but Forslund doubted that Ernest was much for liquor himself. For his literary efforts both as an author and a translator, he was awarded a decoration by some Royal Literary Board in Sweden “Litteris et artibus”. He did translate the works of some American authors into Swedish - among those Longfellow’s *Hiawatha*. He did write some very acceptable poetry, even if he disclaimed being a poet. After this sojourn in New York he returned to his farm on one of the San Juan Islands. On a visit to Seattle, he found himself short of change when he was to return home so he took his “Litteris et artibus” medal to a pawnbroker and was able to raise enough money on it for his return fare. This caused a great deal of consternation among his friends when they heard about it and they lost no time in redeeming it for him. Skarstedt was a frequent visitor in Tacoma, mostly to his friend Tobias Sandegren, editor and publisher of *Puget Sound Posten*, a Swedish weekly newspaper. Mrs. Skarstedt (*Ellen Hogberg*) also had a brother living in Tacoma - *C.E. Hogberg*, a bricklayer and contractor who had arrived in Tacoma about 1906 after a couple of decades in the mid-west. The Hogbergs hailed from Motala and had arrived in America in the eighties. Around the turn of the century Mr. Hogberg had invented and patented a Bake Oven used in larger restaurants and bakeries. The sales were handled in the western states by himself and by another company in the east. The electric bake ovens which later became popular, put Mr. Hogberg out of business and in the last of his active years he was running a marina near Day Island. As far as Forslund could remember, he never associated with the Swedes. He tried to be a politician and received an interim appointment to the city council about 1908, but this seems to have ended his political activities.

Personally Forslund writes he saw Tacoma for the first time in the spring of 1911. He had left his home town in Borlänge, Dalarna on the last day of February and arrived in Seattle on the 23rd of March. Travel had improved he supposed, but this was still a tedious journey. There was no direct connection by passenger ships between Swedish ports and port of entry in America so he had to embark in Göteborg for Hull, England and then by train from Hull to Liverpool. From there it took 10 or 12 days over the Atlantic to reach Boston and a full week cross country to Seattle. After spending a couple of weeks with friends there, he headed for Tacoma. He could not remember the exact date, but he mentioned that

Tacoma had a distinguished visitor that day – ex-president Teddy Roosevelt. A large delegation of distinguished looking gentlemen with silk hats and Prince Albert coats were aboard the boat to Tacoma having badges “Roosevelt Committee” to meet the ex-president and to escort him to Seattle aboard a special steamer.

Tacoma was in the throes of a recall election about this time. Having just arrived from the old country Forlund’s knowledge of English was just about nil at the time so he writes he had no personal memories of the issues. He understood that the recall was on moral grounds. The city was full of sin and iniquity and the big bad wolf was a countryman- Peter Sandberg, whose biographical sketch had been given earlier in this paper.

The 1910 census published in 1911 indicated that there were 683,158 Swedish born persons living in the United States. This was an all-time high. There were 3,567 in 1850, and 571,926 by 1900. After 1910 there has been a steady decline with 594,333 in 1930 and 10 years later the figure was 445,070.

FOX ISLAND

There were also Swedish settlers on Fox Island about which as far as Forslund knew, nothing had been recorded. In the spring of 1911 he spent some time with relatives and made the acquaintance of a number of these people and did keep in touch with some of them for many years afterwards. Just who was the first Swedish settler on the Island he had no idea. *Gus Carlson* may have been one of the first ones in the 1890’s. He had considerable acreages in strawberries beyond Sylvan and the Swedes were apt to refer to him as “Strawberrykungen” (The Strawberry King). Gus Carlson was born in Värmland and Mrs. Carlson, who passed away before reaching middle age, seems to have been from the province of Narke. Other data are lacking, except that Mr. Carlson was an early employee of the Tacoma Smelter and a friend of his told me (Forslund) that before he moved his family to the island, Gus would row all the way from Tacoma to clear his land at every opportunity he had.

Another early settler was *David Lundblad* who probably arrived around the turn of the century. He was from Östergötland, and arrived in Iowa in the 1880’s and by the end of decade he had brought his parents and brothers and sisters who by that time had their own families. They settled on stump farms on the island. His sister *Hilma* was married to *Axel Whalquist* and sister *Alma* to *John Whalquist*. The Whalquists were brothers and were born in the vicinity of Stockholm. In their youth they had sailed the seven seas under both sail and steam. In Iowa they had been coal miners. They settled at Cedrona Bay then called “Hope” which was also the name of the post office where Alma Wahlquist was post master. Mail arrived as often as John Wahlquist rowed across the sound to the vicinity of Day Island from where he walked up hill to the vicinity of the present University Place, where he then caught the Steilacoom streetcar to 11th and K Street where he transferred to the cable car down to the main Post Office. The remuneration for the Post master was the amount and value of the stamps affixed to the letters, post cards and packages brought in.

On the northwest side of the island and next door neighbors to the Dave Lundblads were the *August Carlsons*. They were also from Östergötland and had arrived early in the century via Iowa. By hard work they had made one of the most productive diversified farms on the island. Just how many Swedish

settlers there were on the island Forlund could not estimate. It could have been 25 families or more. Several besides these already mentioned were former residents of Iowa. It could also be noticed that many of the families had their roots in Östergötland. It does seem a bit strange that people that had grown up in Östergötland which has the reputation of being the granary of Sweden and later tilled the rich black soil in Iowa would end up as stump farmers on an island in Puget Sound.

The soil here was not always fertile and rocks and hard clay were abundant. It took both dynamite and hard back breaking labor to remove all the large stumps that dotted the landscape, especially the cedar stumps which left a web of roots which could only be chopped out with a pickaxe or mattock. However, Forlund never heard anyone complain or wishing themselves back in the mid-west with the oppressing heat in the summer and frigid winters. Of course, there were some who though there were easier ways to make a living and gave up. A druggist, Henry Hjertelius, arrived from Chicago and acquired a tract of raw land. He also brought his elderly parents and all were imbued with the idea of having a few acres and independence. The old folks soon gave up and returned to Chicago but between practicing his profession off and on, Henry hung on to the property for a number of years.

Forlund's own relatives had lived in Iowa and farmed in South Dakota before coming west in 1910. They also fell for the tale of raising berries and vegetables on just a few acres and they would make a decent living but they soon learned different. Having been used to the wide open spaces, Forlund also thought they felt more or less hemmed in by both woods and water and soon turned to other pursuits, eventually acquiring a 200 acre farm in Kittitas Valley.

Any produce that these farmers had to dispose of had to be shipped by boat to the city. Tomatoes and strawberries were perhaps the principal cash crops. These were a couple of highly perishable products and the farmers were more or less at the mercy of the commission houses as to price and other conditions. Sometimes it happened that the farmer received a notice that the produce had been received in such condition that it had to be dumped. As far as Forlund was able to ascertain, the Swedes on McNeil and Anderson Islands were rather homogenous both in religion and politics. Good Lutherans and ditto, Republicans. On Fox Island it was different. He doubted there were any Lutherans among them. With the exception of one family who were Mission Friends (Covenants), most of the others did not adhere to any of the commonly known denominations. One group were followers of a sect known as Efraim's Budbärande (Ephraim's Messengers) also known among the Scandinavians as "Lianare". They were followers of a Dr. Lie who originally had been a carpenter but somehow during the American Civil War had entered the medical profession. If he was a Swede or a Norwegian Forlund never learned. After the war Dr. Lie seems to have returned to Scandinavia and lived in both Norway and Sweden, where he found a limited number of followers. Forlund remembered the colporteurs that came around now and then, always in a group of three, that preached a rather liberal gospel. It is doubtful that Dr. Lie's doctrines had any impact on the American public. Most of the people Forlund thought, had already been converted in Sweden.

Another group was known as "Vankretsen" (The Friends Circle) Their prophet and leader was a husky, bewhiskered elderly gentleman by the name of *Welfred Nordstrom*. He had been born in Värmland probably in the 1840's. In Sweden, he had attended the Methodist seminary. By reading the scriptures in

the light of prophecy he had gained an opinion that most of the teachings and practices of the recognized denominations were entirely wrong. Except for a couple of cardinal principles that he was always harping on, the doctrines he expounded were quite flexible and he was apt to reverse himself from time to time. From Deuteronomy: 5:8 he quoted "Thou shalt not make thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth". This, according to Rev. Nordstrom, meant pictures and photographs of every kind and description, even to family pictures and snap shots. Some of his faithful did burn or destroy whatever pictures and photographs they had on hand. Others just forgot about this part of his preaching. Also from the same chapter of Deuteronomy: 5:14 "But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work... etc." This was an order which the preacher was rather adamant about and Forlund believed that most of the flock observed this command to some extent. This was a pretty good trick. On Saturdays, the menfolk and the whole family went around all dressed up, while their neighbors were grubbing stumps or doing other chores. The faithful did not do much work on Sundays either. So this sort of gave them two holidays a week and this was long before the labor unions began to advocate free Saturdays. So it really appears that the followers of Rev. Nordstrom were way ahead of their time. Before coming out to this area Nordstrom was farming out in Puyallup Valley. In earlier years Forlund understood that he was a controversial figure in the Swedish community in the Midwest as he traveled around and held tent meetings in the various localities. In later years he published a book, which was a combined memoir of his life and an explanation of the doctrines he taught.

Another gentleman that sometimes appeared was *F.W. Pearson*, who had a truck farm and some greenhouses at Arletta. He also had his own religious views but was by no means as controversial as Nordstrom. Periodically he published a small paper "*Tjänaren* (The Servants) issued as often as the Lord desires and at the Bible's price (Free)." There was no dearth of evangelists and colporteurs that came around, most proclaimed some strange doctrines. When some of them got too long winded it could happen that Grandma Lundblad who had belonged to the Salvation Army in Sweden, started to think aloud and either agreed with or disagreed with the speaker. Some of the menfolk thought these colporteurs came around once too often and called them *Smörgåspredikanter*" (Sandwich-preachers) who would rather preach than work. But these cottage meetings gave the people a chance to get together and gave them a break in an otherwise hum-drum existence. Looking backward Forslund says he spent an interesting period among some rather interesting countrymen on Fox Island, even if he had a very low opinion about stump farming and was anxious to get away from there to something more exciting. He even got to go to a public school for a few weeks to learn the first rudiments of the English language. There were 8 grades in the same room. The teacher was a young lady by the name of Lila Bell Acheson, later known as Lila Bell Acheson Wallace, with her husband, the founder of Readers Digest. Her father was a Presbyterian minister and was attached to Withworth College in Tacoma. Finally he did remember that a periodical known as "*Forakören*" (The Researcher) also had a couple subscribers on the island. This was a well edited but an out-and-out anti-religious and anti-church viewpoint published in Minneapolis. So it is safe to say that our countrymen on Fox Island were more heterogeneous than they were on other islands in the sound and perhaps elsewhere.

Tacoma Early 1912 and On

By 1912, stump farming and land clearing was left behind. After a sojourn at the Pioneer Sand and Gravel Company near Steilacoom, Forslund was now employed in the City. Looking backward over the years one realizes that Tacoma still had a shimmer of the old west, and had not entirely lost its frontier status. It was not unusual to see prairie schooners on the streets. Loggers and itinerant workers with their blanket rolls were a common sight. Pacific Ave. was the main drag, crowds paraded up and down aimlessly especially on Saturday nights. About every other door led to a saloon. No women allowed. But Tivoli, the Annex and a few others had a Ladies Entrance. In the upper stories of some of the lower grade hotels, the red lights were clearly visible. Pete Sandberg's Standard Hotel had been closed as mentioned before, so the gals just moved up on D street and there were bawdy houses all the way from Jefferson Ave. to St. Helens Ave. Pete still had his wholesale Kentucky Liquor Co. in the Standard Building at 14th and A Street. In the immediate area were a number of employment offices, so the area was also referred to as "The Slave Market". It was a common practice those days to buy jobs at these offices. Some unscrupulous bosses had a graft going by splitting fees with the employment agent whereby the worker would be fired after a few days and a new man would arrive in his place. It was reported that in some instances one man would be working, another would be going and a third man coming. This was probably an exaggeration, but at any rate this system got so bad that these employment offices were put out of business by legislative action around 1914.

Visell and Ekbergs book store was located near 14th. Mr. Visell operated a travel business in conjunction with the book store. There the Swedes came to buy tickets and send to relatives and friends in the old country. Those who had been fortunate to amass a small fortune (*gamla lands steken*) so they could return to the old country and buy a farm, also came there for their transportation. Mr. Ekberg operated an insurance agency in conjunction and was also a notary public, registered with the Swedish consulate. In a basement location at the corner of 14th, Tobias Sandgren printed *Puget Sound Posten*, a Swedish weekly newspaper. So this was one place one could meet some acquaintances.

Strangely, there were no Swedish saloons in this vicinity. The Baltic, owned by *Hjalmar Nyman* and Atlas owned by *Melvin Johnson* was further down the street closer to 17th. *Charles Dufstrom* who had been a wrestler and earned the title "The Terrible Swede" was a bartender in the Board of Trade saloon at 14th Street which was also the city's open air "Forum" a haven for all kinds of "Soap Box" orators. Many kinds of strange religious views were proclaimed there. Holy Rollers, Salvation Army and others came there not only to save souls, but also to drum up business. Pitch men of all kinds extolled their wares, peddlers of various kinds of nostrum, good for man and beast guaranteed to cure most anything from stomach ulcers to a broken leg, were ever present. One of the store rooms in the Standard Hotel building was occupied as the headquarters of the Industrial Workers of the World; commonly known as the IWW, a left wing socialist labor organization. They held street meetings whenever they could get a crowd and carried regular pulpits with them from their hall. They used to entertain their listeners by singing the *International*, "You'll get pie in the sky when you die, Workers of the World Awaken", from a little booklet. Most of these songs were composed by Joe Hill whose real name was *Joel Hillstrom*, born in Gävle, Sweden around 1880 and had arrived in America in 1902. He must have picked up his English rather quickly for before long he was composing poems and songs. As an itinerant worker, he came in

touch with the IWW and became an active member and also became their poet-laureate. In his travels he reached Salt Lake City where he evoked the displeasure of many of the citizens for his IWW activities. After the hold-up of a grocery where the grocer was killed, he was accused of being the perpetrator of the crime and was convicted on circumstantial evidence and was executed, although there were serious doubts about his guilt. The execution caused some international complications. The Swedish Ambassador and President Wilson interceded in his behalf but the Mormons were adamant and demanded an eye for and a tooth for a tooth. Joe Hill is known as “the man that won’t die”. This incident happened around 1918 but just a few years back a full length movie was made of his life. Yes, downtown Tacoma had lots of color and many things of interest early in the century, especially around 14th and Pacific Ave.

Forslund writes, one of the first acquaintances made after he arrived in Tacoma, was *Karl W. Von Walter* who was then a clerk in Dickson Brothers Home Furnishings Store. As the name may indicate, he was a descendant of a family that once belonged to the nobility. The name of the family Winblad von Walter is still registered in the House of Knights in Sweden although their privileges expired generations ago. He was born in Piteå, Sweden in 1887 and arrived in Tacoma in 1905. At first he had to take whatever work that was available, but he soon found work in a department store. He was with the Dickson firm for a couple of decades until 1930 when he went into the insurance business as representative of the Travelers Insurance Co. While he joined some fraternal orders, he never became active in any of them. He was more church oriented and was a charter member of Bethel Lutheran Church and retained his membership for about a decade. Afterwards he joined the first Presbyterian Church. He was elected Elder and before his demise, created “Elder Emeritus”. He was also a life member of the local chapter of the “Gideons” where he served as president. He tried politics and ran for representative in the legislature, but this was during the Hoover administration and not too many favored the Republican ticket then. Mrs. Von Walter was born in Iowa of Swedish parents. There were a couple of sons, one of which took over his father’s insurance business.

By now Forslund said that he had acquired sufficient knowledge of the English language to realize that a number of his countrymen, and women too for that matter, spoke a heavily accented Swedish when they spoke English. This was especially true of older people who had lived in Swedish settlements in the mid-west before coming to the coast. They were also prone to use a great deal of English idioms when they spoke Swedish. Too bad there were no tape recorders around to pick up the idiomatic expressions of that era and over the decades, the use of this language has disappeared. This may serve as an example: Walking down the street with a friend we met a fellow and this conversation took place “Du kunde han Jan Larson, some bruke jobba for räilrod kompaniet, han har blitt killed av en strit kars i Salt Lake City”. (You know Jan Larson, who used to work for the railroad company. He has been killed by a street car in Salt Lake City.) Uncle Carlson, who at times would pinch hit for the minister in the Swedish Methodist Church, was one of the best-or worse- exponents of the kind of “svenglish” in his sermons. One of his favorite expressions was: “Dä payar sig inte to trya to fola Gud” (It does not pay to try to fool God). This, of course, was neither English nor Swedish but a jumble of both. Sometimes this kind of a dialect was referred to as “Minnesota English”.

A colorful personality of the era was Capt. Fred Anderson in charge of the Scandinavian Corps of the Salvation Army. Their hall was located in a basement on the NE corner of 13th and Tacoma Ave. He did not have too many recruits and soldiers at his command, but on Saturday nights the entire corps used to march down to Commerce Street and hold street meetings in front of the Scandinavian saloons of which there were several, and then invite people up to their hall. F. Street was then becoming more and more of a gathering place for the Scandinavians and later the street meetings were moved up there. It was the fervent desire of the corps to acquire a hall of their own. By pursuing various schemes, Capt. Anderson raised enough money to have their dream come through. A hall was built in 1914 at So. 12th and L Street. Capt. Anderson was ordered to Portland but was soon back again as his successor was not able to keep things going. When America entered the First World War, Capt. Anderson with a detachment of Salvationists, were ordered to the front in France. When he returned, he had earned the title "Capt. Anderson, the Flap Jack King". At the front he had rigged up a wheelbarrow with a steel plate which he could build a fire under it so he could bake hot cakes for the GI's. It was said that when the Germans had evacuated a town, Capt. Anderson would be there ahead of the US Army-- baking hot cakes when they arrived. This, of course, became the big event in his life. For years afterwards whenever there was a parade, carnival or any other public event, Capt. Anderson came with his wheelbarrow and greasy war bible and he never tired of relating his experiences at the front. The public tired long before him. One Armistice Day 35 years after the war was over, he pushed his wheelbarrow to K. St to celebrate the event but somehow he lost his knack of hot cake baking. No matter how he fussed with the dough and greased the griddle, the flap jacks got burned. Even the youngsters rejected his invitation to sample them. "Well, they liked them during the war" said Capt. Anderson and gave up. After the war he never resumed his position as a Salvation Army Officer. He took a job as a custodian in a Tacoma school where he remained until his retirement. He passed away at 88 largely a forgotten man. Legionnaire's and others at the time who had covered him with honors, also forgot him. A biography is lacking. Forslund understood that he was from Småland and arrived in America in the 1890's. He attended the S.S. War College (?) before the turn of the century, where one of his classmates was Albert Dahlstrom who later became a free-lance preacher. On his first visit to Tacoma he let it be known that Capt. Anderson was known as "Glada (Happy) Fredrick" in the East. This nickname stuck but Capt. Anderson did not seem to mind. People from Småland are supposed to be able to get by under any and all circumstances and Salvation Army officers have the reputation of being able to subsist on a bare minimum. Otherwise it is hard to see how anybody could have kept this operation going, kept body and soul together and raise a family on the support of the few members that belonged to the Scandinavian Salvation Army Corps.

PAY DAY

Most factories and mills as well as other places of employment usually paid only once a month. The time computed was from the first to the last day of the month and then it would be a week or two before the pay-roll was completed and the checks made out. This would mean that in most instances that if a person went to work around the first of a month it would be 5 or 6 weeks before pay day. Wages up to the time of the First World War were not much to brag about. 20 cents an hour was fair wages and a nine or ten hour day prevailed. Craftsmen and skilled mechanics usually drew 10 to 15 cents an hour more and as a rule worked 8 hours. But everything is comparative. Young fellows could

get board and room for 5-6 dollars a weeks and if they boarded with a family, the lady of the house might even throw in your washing for the same price. Restaurants advertised "Meals 15 cents and up". At this price it was of course mostly fish or beans but a square meal could be had for 25 to 35 cents and if you wanted to splurge, a porter house steak with all the trimmings was 65 cents. A schooner of beer was a nickel, a shot of whiskey 10 cents, by the quart \$1, and \$1.25 for the bonded stuff. Forslund was less acquainted with the price of groceries and victuals of the era, but he recalled that if he bought 5-6 dollars' worth of groceries when he was first married in 1915, the grocer would deliver the purchases by pony cart. All the staple stuff came in bulk and people usually stocked up. Most meats, pot roast, hamburger etc. were 10 cents a pound. Round steak was 15 cents and other cuts somewhat higher. A load of wood was \$2-\$3 and if you became ill you could see a doctor for one dollar. There were no fringe benefits to fall back on in those days, in emergencies you were strictly on your own. With the prevailing wages and so far between pay-days the housewives had to be good managers. Not all of the young fellows could be complimented in this respect. Right after pay-day they could be very liberal with their funds and really splurge if they had a girlfriend.

There were two Vaudeville Theaters. The Pantages and the Empress were downtown. There were also a couple of new movie houses, the Blue Mouse and the Colonial that had been built and both ran full length features and the days of the nickelodeons were past. There were also some fancy Ice Cream Parlors of which Forslund remembers the Cave, Dewy's and Maulenbrish's as the most prominent and most frequented by the young Scandinavians. Well, an evening on the town like this could cost a young fellow several dollars and could not be repeated every week on earnings about 15 dollars a week. So around the first of the month (pay day was usually around the 15th) the young people suddenly developed an interest in going to church. There was no admission there and nobody knew how much they put in the collection plate. An often heard saying among the Swedes was the "Lördag kväll after Pay-Day på Wheeler-Osgood, då är hela luttet-förbundet nere i stan". (Saturday night after pay-day at Wheeler-Osgood, then the whole Luther league is down town.) Forslund could not vouch for that one because he never worked at Wheeler's and never did belong to Luther League. Scandinavian Salvation Army Hall was as a rule filled to capacity on Saturday nights. This was their biggest meeting of the week. Perhaps the audience could have been better behaved at times but stomping and handclapping was encouraged and there was no lack of music singing and entertainment. Most of the money for expenses was probably collected on Saturday nights. But it did happen that when the collection was too slim Capt. Anderson would get mad and rake his audience over the coals. He let them know that this was not enough and sent the tambourine around once more.

PIG PARADE or the Maids Parade.

Perhaps as many young women as young men arrived during the immigration epoch. Upon arrival most of them found employment as domestics in well to do homes. Scandinavian girls had the reputation of being natural born housekeepers and were very much in demand. Hours of work and rate of pay were perhaps deplorable in many instances. Some newcomer girls had to start for as little as 10 dollars a month and their keep. Average wages were around 20-30 dollars per month with very few getting above this. The work day extended from early morning to late at night with possibly some rest periods. There was an unwritten rule that Thursday and Sunday afternoons were time off for the girls and very few

households required the girls to come home and serve supper. So Thursday after noon there were dozens of girls downtown doing their shopping and attending to their affairs. The Swedish word for "Maid" is "piga" so somewhere along the line some brighthead had coined the word "pigperaden" for this feature. But it did happen that some of us young fellows also took the afternoon off to meet the best girl for an afternoon show and an evening supper. Forslund imagined that some of the mills and factories could be kind of shorthanded on Thursday afternoons. This so called "parade" was a feature until the early thirties by that time the emigration from Scandinavia had practically ceased and most of the girls had married. As a rule it never took more than three or four years at the most before the newcomer girls headed a household of their own so hardly any of them became "old and faithful servants". But when the temperamental "Lena" no longer was available we noticed that many of the "North End Mansions" either got boarded up or made into apartments. In his book *Green Timber*, (endnote 14) the late T.E. Ripley, former president of the Wheeler Osgood Company, claims that he saw some plaques in some dining rooms in north end homes reading: God Bless Our Home – and damn the hired girl".

With the beginning of the First World War, the emigration from Sweden to the United States slowed down to some extent. After having hovered around 15 to 20 thousand persons most of the years for the decade previous to 1914, the arrivals shrunk to 9589 in 1914 – 4538 in 1915, 7268 in 1916, 2462 in 1917 and to a low of 1415 in 1918 after the United States had entered the war. Presumably Tacoma got their share of those that arrived, but churches and lodges did not have as many newcomers to draw from as previously.

In 1917 after America entered the First World War, all eligible young men had to register for the draft. Just how many young Swedes eventually were drafted into the army would be hard to estimate. Each organization had their own service flag and as many of the young men held membership in more than one organization and it would be hard to separate them. The local Vasa Lodge had 17 stars on their flag and the Swedish Lutheran Church had 52. Just how many the other churches and organizations had Forslund did not know. One of the first to be drafted and sent across was Ferdinand Forslund (no relation). He had arrived here from Sweden in 1912 and was not yet a citizen. But he claimed no exception and spent the entire war over in France. In his years in Tacoma he had been a member of the Swedish Fraternal Orders and the Lutheran church where he belonged to the Young Peoples Society and sang in the choir and was one of the key men in Thule Male Chorus. When the war was over and while waiting to be shipped back to the States, he conceived the idea of getting discharged in France so he could visit his family in Västerbotten, Sweden before returning to the US. Just what kind of documents he did sign, nobody knows. At any rate, when he tried to return to America, the immigration service in Sweden wouldn't give him a visa, so he could enter the United States. This caused some consternation among his friends here and efforts were made to straighten things out. Rev. Bloomquist enlisted the aid of the then congressman Albert Johnson who did assure the interested parties that the case would be taken care of. But the case dragged on and Forslund couldn't wait forever so he decided to relocate in Sweden. Apparently he was a victim of both military arrogance and political bureaucracy. In this connection Forslund mentioned that after the armistice when thousands of soldiers were discharged at Camp Lewis, the Swedish Lodges appointed a committee to inquire of the authorities at the camp if they

could be of any service to Swedish nationals returning from the front. This committee only got a rude and almost hostile reception from the commanding officers. In the post war years, the chauvinistic elements had a field day. Anything that did not coincide with their warped thinking was termed highly unpatriotic. Their vision was particularly aimed at anything foreign. An Episcopal minister who otherwise acted quite rational, began to deplore the fact that 15-20 churches in the central part of the city were conducting their services in foreign languages and declared that this was not in the best interests of America. In the Oregon legislature, Senator Albin Walter Norblad (born in Sweden and later elected Governor) introduced a bill making it illegal to print practically anything in any language except in English. Needless to say, the bill was not passed. This wartime xenophobia rubbed off, and in Valhalla a resolution was introduced in 1919 to abandon the Swedish language and make English the official language of the lodge. But the modern Vikings were not ready for the switch and this came about 20 years later.

The Twenties

In 1920 we began to see a few newcomers from Sweden again- 16,691 entered America this year. Sweden experienced a recession as an aftermath of World War I which gave impetus to emigration. The newcomers seemed to have preferred the Vasa lodge and at the end of 1920 there were 354 members on the membership roll. Valhalla was also going forward, but at a slower pace. Among those who were active in the Vasa Lodge, we might mention that Miss *Anna Person* (a daughter of the Nels Persons) who joined the Lodge in 1917 while she was still in high school, was elected pianist the same night. About 1924, she became Mrs. Carl A. Anderson. He was born in Grycksbo, Dalarna and came to Tacoma before 1902. Except for a 10 years sojourn in Portland, Oregon where Mr. Anderson held a responsible position in a furniture manufacturing plant, the couple spent their entire married life in Tacoma, and were very active in the Swedish community. Carl occupied all the chairs in the local Vasa Lodge and served a term a District Master. Just how many terms Anna has served as Secretary in the Local and District Lodge would be hard to estimate. She is presently (in 1975) serving the local lodge as secretary at the age of 75.

Elmer Wilson arrived as a young man of 18 in Tacoma in 1904. He was employed in the woods in the Grays Harbor area and also on construction work in the eastern part of the state for a number of years. Towards the end of the second decade of the century, he settled permanently in Tacoma where he became very active in the Swedish community and served as president in both of the existing fraternal societies. He also contributed to the Swedish American press with both poetry and prose. He was an able speaker and was often called upon to address gatherings. The only trouble was that on occasion he could be both acid and uncouth in his remarks, especially if he had it in for somebody or found himself frustrated in some respect.

BANK FAILURE

As early as 1895 there was a Scandinavian American Bank at 1539-1541 Pacific Avenue listed in the City Directory. If this bank had been in business continuously, Forslund did not know. At any rate there was a bank by that name located in the Berlin building on the north east corner of 11th and Pacific Avenue when he arrived in 1911. This was considered a safe bank and while the bank appreciated business from

all categories, they catered especially to the Scandinavians. In their ads in the Scandinavian papers and occasional publications, their ads were slanted to read "You should do your business with your own people". They also advertised "We own our own building". If the bank had been reorganized or started anew about 1908 Forslund also did not know, but something happened about that time. In 1917, an advertisement read "We have entered upon the twelfth year of successful business in Tacoma." Sometime in 1918 or 1919, the manager, W.H. Pringle resigned and Haakon (Sic) Berg who had been cashier of the bank for a number of years, also resigned. Ole S. Larson (a Norwegian) and a Seattle resident, was appointed manager and entered his new position with a great deal of enthusiasm. All kinds of innovations were inaugurated and banker Larson became quite the man both in the Chamber of Commerce and in the community, even if he never became a resident of Tacoma. The Berlin Building must have been acquired about 1910 for when Forslund arrived here the following year, the bank's name was still on the windows of their former location at the SE corner of 11th and Commerce Street. The Berlin Building was probably built during the boom time in the early nineties but it was a substantial building (8 stories) that served the purpose. But the bank had to have a new home. Elaborate plans were drawn for a much taller and very elaborate building. The bank moved to the SW corner of 13th and Pacific Ave. a location which had just been vacated by the Bank of California, which had moved to their new location north of 11th St. The Berlin Building fell to the wrecking ball and construction of the new building began. There were frustrations from the start; steel and other materials were not delivered on time and there were other irritations. Ugly rumors began to float around that certain interests were working against the building project. The solvency of the bank began to be questioned, which in turn caused a run on the bank. (Banks kept regular hours those days and beside regular hours they opened the banks for two or three hours on Saturday evenings from 6:00 PM on.)

The Scandinavian American Bank kept regular hours on Sat. Jan 16. They experienced heavy withdrawals from deposits during the day, in the evening they failed to open the doors for the regular Saturday evening business. Before the run the bank had 10 thousand depositors. It was a fearful crowd milling around 13th and Pacific this particular evening. It was a large crowd but no disorders. Unable to salvage any of their hard earned money, for many it meant that their life savings were in jeopardy and it is safe to assume that the Scandinavian community was hit hardest of all. On Monday Jan 19, 1921 the bank was declared bankrupt. Governor Louis F. Hart appointed Forbes P. Haskell a former banker, as special bank examiner with Attorney Guy E. Kelly as legal advisor. Later Mr. Haskell was appointed Receiver by Federal Judge Cushman. It was a sordid story of gross mismanagement of the bank which was unraveled in the next few months. Everybody that could seems to have had their fingers in the till. In one instance the manager had appropriated \$60 thousand for his own use. The receiver sued Eric O. Lindblom and Jafet Lindsberg, two noted San Franciscans (both of whom we shall mention later) for \$454,955 which was due the bank, plus interest. Gustaf Lindberg, President of a local wholesale grocery company had borrowed \$13,000 improperly while he served as director of the bank. There were other instances of a criminal nature too numerous to mention. A Grand Jury was called. This Grand Jury turned in 38 indictments against Ole S. Larson, the manager of the bank. Also indicted was Gustaf Lindberg for illegally borrowing money from the bank while serving as director. Indictments were also returned against most of the directors. None of the directors were convicted. Of the 32 criminal cases against Mr. Larson 19 were dismissed, one acquittal and 3 convictions. In Pierce County Superior Court, Mr. Larson

was sentenced to 3 to 5 years in the State Penitentiary. On appeal, the State Supreme Court affirmed the lower court's sentence and ordered the remaining cases dismissed. After a trial in Pierce County Superior Court, Mr. Lindberg was given a sentence of from 1 to 5 years in the State Penitentiary. On June 18, 1923 Mr. Larson presented himself at the State Penitentiary to serve his sentence. On Jan 30, 1923 Mr. Lindberg was given a rehearing in Superior court but the court reaffirmed the conviction. On Oct 9, 1923 the State Supreme Court denied a rehearing of Mr. Lindborg's case and affirmed the lower court's decision. On the following day Lieutenant Wm J. Coyle, setting Governor in the absence of Gov. Hart, issued a full and complete pardon to the convicted Lindberg. This action was severely criticized in Pierce County and elsewhere in the state. It was learned that a son of Lindberg had been a close friend of Lieutenant Gov. Coyle for years. Lindberg Grocery Co also went in receivership. Lindberg went down on Puyallup Ave. and started a new wholesale house, The Standard Grocery Co.

Efforts to extradite Jafet Lindberg of California to stand trial were stymied several times. Finally an order was issued and Rex Rodebush, then Asst. Prosecutor of Pierce County and a deputy went to San Francisco to bring him here. Arriving at Jafet Lindbergs house, some of his relatives began to bring out their shooting irons and the officers withdrew. Lindbergs lawyers then got busy and the extradition order was again rescinded.

The 16-story skeleton of the proposed Scandinavian Bank Building stood for years as a monument of mismanagement and deceit. On July 6, 1923 the Federal Court had set a minimum price of \$430,000 on the Bank skeleton but eventually it was sold for less and is now the Washington Building. Eventually the depositors realized 68% on their deposits. Ugly rumors persisted that some influential people had impeded the building operations in their own interest and argued that a bankruptcy such as this that could pay 68% to their creditors after having been ripped up the way this bank was and put to an expensive receivership with high price lawyers and other functionaries, couldn't have been so bad off after all in spite of their unorthodox ways of doing business.

John E. Brynteson, Eric O. Lindblom and Jafet Lindberg made a spectacular gold strike on Anvil Creek 4 miles inland from the beach on which the city of Nome was later built. Just how the trio met is not known. They became known as "The Lucky Swedes". Brynteson was born in Ärtemark, Dalsland and apparently was of the Covenant persuasion judging by the donations he made and the interest he showed in this denomination. Biography and details are lacking. It is known that he returned to Sweden and became an industrialist in his home area. Eric O Lindblom was born in Dalarna and learned the tailor trade in his youth. He spent 6 years in London before arriving in America in 1886 at the age of 20. He came to San Francisco in 1893 via stopovers in New York and Butte, Montana. The story is that he was shanghaied on a whaling ship in 1898 on the San Francisco waterfront after he had told somebody that he was a tailor and that somebody thought he said he was a sailor. At any rate he jumped ship in Alaska where he met up with his companions. After he struck it rich, he made investments in mines, real estate, public utilities and banks both in California and the State of Washington. Jafet Lindsberg must have been a Laplander for he came to Alaska in 1887 at the age of 20 as a reindeer herder when reindeer were imported from Scandinavian Lapland to augment the food supply. If he was a Swedish or Norwegian Lapp is not clear. He also made investments in banks and elsewhere which eventually got him into trouble as we have seen.

Over the Labor Day weekend 1922, the local Vasa Lodge was host for the second time in its 10 year existence for the District Convention of the Order. Nothing of great importance happened as far as I can remember. In the summer the same year the Railroad Shop crafts went out on a general strike. The Northern Pacific Shops in South Tacoma employed about 1200 persons at the time. A large percentage of the employees were Scandinavians and Forslund believed that the Swedes were predominating. The strike dragged on and the strikers began to trickle back. The Scandinavians were by no means the first ones to return to save their jobs and in the end a good many lost their positions. When Charlie Orman left his forge and anvil, he left for good. As others went back to beg for their jobs, Charlie claimed that he had done enough hard work in his days, besides that, his knees were too stiff to go and beg for his job. He opened a gasoline station. It is not unusual for this kind of enterprise to get held up and a couple of highwaymen tried that with Charlie, but it was a “no go”, he bluffed them out. Charlie never lost his Värmland accent and when someone told him that he never liked a Swede the retort came fast “Mej weife is a nuvegian if that helps you any”.

1923

In the years immediately following the First World War there was a general recession in Sweden. This coupled with the privation the population had suffered during the war years led to an increased emigration in the post war years. In 1923, 24,948 Swedes entered the United States. Tacoma and this area seemed to have got a fair share of this number. The newcomers had fresh ideas and the membership and activities in the Swedish societies and to some extent in the churches increased. At the same time there was a gradual transition in the churches to the use of English in their services. At first, Sunday evening services began to be held in English rather than in Swedish and by the end of the decade the use of English predominated. The Covenant Church or as it was then called “The Mission Friends Church”, held out the longest and held Swedish services into the 1930’s.

In the summer of 1927, one of Sweden’s leading Male Choruses “De Svenska” (The Swedes) made a brief stopover in Tacoma and gave a concert in the Greenwich Coliseum. (This building was located at 13th and Market St. and fell during the urban renewal.) Other Swedish choruses had appeared in America before but none had ventured this far west. They arrived on the noon train 45-50 strong. As both Swedish Male Choruses had ceased to exist, the Norwegian Male Chorus was prevailed upon to greet the guests at the Union Depot. The concert was given early in the afternoon, and the singing was really outstanding. Afterwards the singers were given a tour of the city and a dinner in the First Lutheran Church and departed on the evening train for Seattle. Apparently their PR man did not get a very good impression of Tacoma. In his travelogue in a Swedish paper, he implied that Tacoma was still a frontier town. The chorus had to sing in an auditorium which resembled the “Old West”. Parts of the city which they went through on their tour were also termed quite primitive. The only thing which hit the spot with him was the dinner in the First Lutheran Church which was regarded as “very delicious”. T. Sandegren printed a rejoinder in *Puget Sound Posten* of which he was the editor, and forwarded a copy to Mr. Afzelius in Sweden. Mr. Sandegren deplored that there was no other centrally located auditorium available at the time then the Greenwich Coliseum. The Tacoma Theater was closed for repairs and the sanctuary of the First Lutheran Church was not yet finished. He was sorry if the hall had caused any embarrassment to the singers, for he realized that the acoustics were not the best. The auditorium was

mostly intended for union activities and for wrestling and boxing matches. At the same time Mr. Sandegren took the opportunity to inform the PR man that their countrymen in Tacoma were also a bit embarrassed by the appearance of the chorus who appeared at the concert in their traveling clothes which were rather snugly fitted and not well pressed. The group reminded one of a bunch of loggers who had just arrived in town. But no one made anything about it for we knew that in the few hours that they were here there was no time to change. So under the circumstances, Mr. Sandegren felt it was poor taste to come with undeserved criticism afterwards. He also called to attention that the net income to the chorus was the next highest of any city on their tour.

No doubt the roaring twenties were about the busiest and most interesting decade in the history of the Swedish community in Tacoma. There were enough pioneers and semi-pioneers left who had arrived before or early in the century and enough new arrivals to make things interesting. The old-timers and the new arrivals did not necessarily have the same opinions nor looked at things the same way. Occasionally there could be some frictions but on the whole we Scandinavians got along rather well.