

PERSONAL BACKGROUND Born June 15, 1897. Boxholm, Sweden, built on a river because of steel mill, an industrial town also with sawmills.

Employed at age 14 making hinges at local steel mill.

PARENTS Mother, Elin Andersson. Father, Per Gottfrid Ahlm, prior spelled Ahlm, Alm means elm tree. Employed as steel worker (sorted and weighed steel).

BROTHERS AND SISTERS Eight brothers and sisters. (See attached).

MATERNAL GRANDPARENTS Large self-supporting farm. Sold milk and also charcoal to steel company. Lived with grandparents when 7 or 8. Adolf and Christine Andersson.

GROWING UP School was a long walk. Went six days a week for six years. Quit at age 13 and lived with grandparents.

Employed at steel mill at age 14. Promoted to electrical work.

Called to Army in December 1917 (WWI). Received orders from Russia for submarines.

CONDITIONS IN MILLS Worked 10 hours a day. Low wages but not overly dangerous.

ARMY EXPERIENCE Some electrical work. Worked on airplanes.

Quit steel mill and moved to Linköping until 1921. Unemployment great in 1921, after no war no jobs many went to U.S.

ARRIVAL U.S. Age 23 in 1921. Trip took one month to get to Tacoma.

FEELINGS LEAVING SWEDEN Father was dead. Brother was supporter of family. He mailed home money to family in Sweden. Nothing to lose by going to America, everything to gain.

BOAT TRIP Rough hard storm. Third class passage. Played chess with a champion. Ship called 'Stockholm.' Ticket cost about \$300.

ARRIVAL NEW YORK Took train to Chicago on to Tacoma. Ellis Island: Sorted people out, check for sickness and lice.

TRAVELERS' SOCIETY Volunteers that helped immigrants to get around.

TRAIN TRIP Lightning around Minneapolis. Didn't speak English. Ate apple pie and milk on trip. Learned to use American money.

ARRIVAL TACOMA Came in on Milwaukee Line. Met by family. Aunt in Tacoma named Henna Alm married a Johnson. Only brought one little suitcase with him.

CITIZENSHIP Applied one month after arrival. Describes prose. Citizen January, 1927. Took courses to prepare for citizenship.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS TACOMA Nice city. Many ships coming in from around the world. Employed for a while at St. Paul Lumber.

EMPLOYED VARIOUS PLACES Boiler house for a while. Drove boats around Puget Sound. Describes job as a houseboy at Key's place where Roosevelt's history was recently filmed in Lakewood. Edison Foster owned it.

LEARNING TO DRIVE A CAR Taught himself. Didn't need a license in those days. License policy began in late 1920s.

Employed scrapping floors. Also at University of Washington. Attended school at Broadway High School in Seattle.

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES Did much reading. Had a hard time talking and writing.

TACOMA CITY COLLEGE Got electrical degree at YMCA.

EMPLOYED ST. PAUL LUMBER Sorted lumber. Worked on roads for a month, hard work, no tractors, used horses.

CONDITIONS AT ST. PAUL Nice company. Fair wages. Good to workers. Eight hours shifts.

Handicap not being able to speak English. Difficulty getting a job. 'No friendlier people than the American people.'

SOCIAL LIFE Member Valhalla Lodge. Always something going on. Spoke Swedish when they got together. Joined in 1923. Paid sick benefits to those who were sick.

Met Norwegians. Two boarding houses in Tacoma with many immigrants. learned to understand Norwegian well.

MEETING WIFE Met at Valhalla Lodge. Married January 28, 1928. Worked at St. Paul Lumber.

CHURCH LIFE Not involved much because of school and playing soccer.

DEPRESSION No work, no money. People getting food in garbage cans. Wife did housework to help out. Worked six hours a day at St. Paul during this time. St. Paul didn't sell much.

Attended First Lutheran on holidays.

TRIPS TO SWEDEN Five trips back. Many changes in Sweden. Visited with family and friends. Still speaks and writes Swedish. Living prices are higher-care for old people better. Sweden's social conditions are changing.

SWEDISH HERITAGE Very important, not ashamed to be a Swede. Talks of grandparents and dancing in Sweden and Tacoma at Vasa and Valhalla.

Describes Scandinavian Days in Tacoma.

Still speaks Swedish and says something in Swedish.

CLOSING REMARKS Glad he came to Tacoma, been very happy here, good climate, good people.