

PERSONAL BACKGROUND Born July 15, 1893 in Knäred, Halland, Sweden which is north of Skåne.

SCHOOL AND CONFIRMATION Have to go to work the minute you are confirmed. Hired as a farm boy at age 14.

PARENTS Nils Johansson, farmer and Johanna Svensson. Tomatoes are recently new to Sweden. Father worked on the railroad and clearing land at home.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS See attached.

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER Farmer, lived with them until he died in 1911.

NAME p previously Johan Nilsson. Talks about how it changed.

AGE 14 Through with school. Took care of the cattle. Worked for a cousin. Uncle from Tacoma sent for him, he was a gardener.

FEELINGS LEAVING SWEDEN When young you don't think. Went to Helsingborg, Skåne, Sweden and then to Copenhagen, Denmark. Stories of gold in America.

BOAT TRIP Spoke no English. Would have gone on the Titanic. Rough voyage (seasick). Went on Hellig Olav (Scandinavian American Line). Mostly Scandinavians. Went from Copenhagen to Kristiania (Oslo), Norway to Kristiansand, Norway.

ELLIS ISLAND Couldn't get lost. Similar to a coat house.

TRAIN TRIP Went to Winnipeg, Canada (cheaper than U.S.). Wondered what kind of country he was getting into. Left Sweden April 4, 1912.

ARRIVAL VANCOUVER, CANADA Nearly missed his boat to Seattle.

BOAT TRIP FROM VANCOUVER Old tug. Ticket agent took advantage of him.

COMING TO SEATTLE Saw a policeman. Train to Tacoma and getting to his aunt's place. Language difficulties.

ARRIVED IN TACOMA ON APRIL 25, 1912 Lovely little town, kind of loved it right away.

EMPLOYED AS A GARDENER Cutting grass. Fixing the plants for the rich. Bought out by a fellow employee.

DRIVING TEAM Employed at West End Fuel. Hauled wood. Mr. Rasmussen owned it. Getting wood from Day Island.

STREET CAR STRIKE How it affected people. Later drove truck, became ill and got out of the business, his appendix broke.

MILL WORK 17 1/2 cents an hour. Tacoma, lumber capital of the world. Employed at Fines Mill and the Swedish Sawmill.

LEARNING ENGLISH Went to three different night schools, but still has problems. One was at Stadium High School.

CITIZENSHIP Night school again. Mixed up with another John Nelson. Had to know the judiciary.

CITIZENSHIP Asked if he wanted his name changed. Wife received her papers before him.

EMPLOYED IN ALASKA Mining for the Goodrich Rubber Co to make money to return to Sweden. Conditions were bad and he was fired after talking to the boss about it. This was north of Porcupine and Haines, Alaska. All the rest quit too as a result of him being fired.

BACK TO TACOMA Met his wife at a party.

ORGANIZATIONS HE JOINED Vasa Lodge and Valhalla (lodge with sick benefits). Church, Luther League, hard to get acquainted

MILL WORK 1930 Pay cut in half. Friend was blacklisted because he wouldn't go for this. Friend had to join the WPA.

VASA SVEA BAND Played the alto french horn. Member of the male chorus. Sang in Seattle for Sangerfest and another time in Everett. Talks about the importance of these groups.

FOUR TRIPS TO SWEDEN Family had it good in Sweden. Got money from brothers to travel. Einar, his brother, owned a factory. Called communists when they went on strike here (US)

VALHALLA Longest member (70 years). First Lutheran Church, still a member. Talks about church in Sweden.

CHILDREN See attached.

REAL ESTATE BUSINESS Buys and sells houses. Bought first house for \$2,200.

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH RELATIVES writes to nephew.

IMPORTANCE OF SWEDISH HERITAGE Never bothered him.

Found out what America is. Thought it was the perfect land, discovered that it was far from it.

SWEDISH TRADITIONS Special dishes now and then.

SPEAKING SWEDISH Still speaks it. His daughter is able to read it.

VISITING SWEDEN Brought peanut butter with him for the grandchildren.

SWEDISH WORDS Didn't pray when you went to bed, you were tired.

CLOSING REMARKS Had a good life. Have a very good daughter. Brothers offered to buy him a lot and give him the timber to build a house in Sweden, but he chose to return to his family in the U.S.