

THE SWEDISH IN NEBRASKA

History of the Numerous Settlements in Saunders County.

THE REWARDS OF ENERGY AND THRIFT

Poverty and Privations of Pioneer Life Succeeded by Deserved Prosperity—Early Settlers and Their Homesteads.

No county in this commonwealth has so large a percentage of foreign-born citizens as Saunders county, and nowhere does this cosmopolitan population live and intermingle as harmoniously as is the case in this county.

In these series of articles I have gathered and garnered the facts and incidents of the Swedish settlements of this state, which at the present time will be interesting reading, but will enhance in value with time.

While I have confined myself to one nationality alone, because best qualified to that task, no slight is intended to others. If I record what has been achieved through hard work, privations and economy by the Swedish pioneer farmer, the same is equally true of the German, Irish, Bohemian, Scotch and other nationalities.

First Settlement of the County.

In March, 1857, P. Warburton took up a claim on section 34, township 13, range 9, J. Stambaugh and John Aagaas on section 35, same township and range, and the three built the two first sod houses in Saunders county.

The first settlers near the vicinity of Wahoo were Thomas J. Larson, 1853, a trustworthy authority says that not more than twenty people lived in Saunders county in 1850. The county was organized in 1854.

The first Swedish settler was one Wall, who had settled on Sand Creek, near the present site of the line between Lincoln and 1856 and 1858. This Wall and family had come as far as Nebraska City with a lot of Mormon emigrants, but there separated and made his home on the Sand Creek.

In the year 1853 emigrated from Horjo Forsmaning, Kristianstad Lan, Sweden, the widow Johanna Berggren, with her sons, N. B. A. L. O. and Martin, and her daughter Nellie. The family stopped in Chicago and the eldest son, N. H., found work with the noted gardener and horticulturist, Mr. Peterson, of West Chicago, and soon he became Mr. Peterson's trusted foreman.

Mr. N. B. Berggren was a young man of vim and energy. He had heard of the opportunities of the great west for young men. In 1856 he went on a tour of investigation, and his trip extended as far west as Bart county, where already a Swedish settlement had been started. He was well pleased with the land in that county, but hearing that the state capital was to be moved south of the Platte his business sagacity suggested to his mind the advantages of securing land nearer the capital of the state.

He crossed the Platte and beheld the beautiful prairies of Saunders county. At that time there were no settlers in the interior of the county except Bissell, Carter and Stocking, before mentioned. On the present site of Lincoln the only signs of human habitation were two sod houses.

The following year, 1857, Mr. Berggren returned to Nebraska, and at Fremont secured a wagon and team in conjunction with two gentlemen who were going to take out a mail route to the new state capital. Axes and spades were taken along and when Wahoo creek was reached a halt a day was occupied in bridging the same.

On October 12, 1857, Mr. Berggren filed on section 23, township 15, range 8, and at the same time he filed for four sections, among whom were: L. Christenson, Otto Hocklander, A. L. Berggren, Jonas Sandberg, Erik Peterson, A. Peterson, Frank Peterson, John Johnson and Nels Nelson.

March 5, 1858, Mr. N. B. Berggren and the rest of those who made the first three months before, settled on their respective homesteads, and from them dates the flourishing Swedish settlements of Saunders county. Letters were sent to Sweden describing the rich and promising land they had taken possession of, and the grand opportunities offered to secure a home. It brought forth results.

The Swedish Settlement.

In the spring of 1859, direct from the same province of Sweden that Mr. Berggren had come from, families, all of whom settled around where the first Swedish churches are now located. Among these were the following: N. A. Aspegren, Nels Jansson, Truus Person, John and Magnus Erickson, John and Nels Gibson, Jons and Mons Mortenson, Nels Eliasson, Hans Hansson, Hans and G. G. Kwick. In the fall of the same year they were reinforced by a further reinforcement of about 100 families. It is impossible to secure the names of all the immigrants, but the church on the 20th day of April, 1870, was the following names of members not already enumerated: Carl Carlsson, Carl Benst and Oke Swenson, Samuel Peterson, (Lankoping), Olof Olson, A. G. Olson, Peter Olson, P. E. Anderson, A. J. Goranson, C. J. Larson, Sven Swenson, A. P. Wallin, Andrew Eliasson, Hokan Olson and Truus Peterson.

The Malmo Settlement.

To L. Jansson, the Malmo grain and stock dealer, belongs the honor of being the first Swedish settler in that part of the county. He also built from Kristianstad Lan, Sweden, and emigrated in 1855, arriving in Omaha in the month of May, 1855. He came and settled on his homestead in Saunders county in the spring of 1856. He did not remain alone for more than about two weeks when Mr. Andrew Blomberg came from Omaha with a colony of Swedes direct from the historic Dalarna noted for their brave and handsome men, and located them on the beautiful and productive prairie surrounding the historic Malmo.

The Estina Settlement.

In the year 1857 the county was invaded by a Swedish immigration from another quarter. A Baptist colony settled seven miles north from the present site of Mead, and was called the Estina settlement, from the postoffice name. The colonists came mainly from Minnesota and Maine, and were from the northern part of Sweden. Among them we have collected the following names: Andrew, John A., and Glick Wicklund, P. O. Hjeltnan, A. Ekquist, L. E. Lund, Louis Anderson, P. Olson and Broekly, N. Y.

The Mead Settlement.

The settlement made by N. B. Berggren and his company in 1856 can be popularly classed as belonging to the Mead settlement, for they united and organized the first Swedish church organization in the county on the 15th day of January, 1870, as will be more fully shown in another article.

Among the early settlers (1850-70) of this settlement may be mentioned Sven Heden-

schog, A. Larson, from Nykoping, and his two sons, Lewis and Gust.

His family came to the 10th day of June, 1859, P. Henning arrived in Omaha June 9, 1860, and in November, 1870, he came and located his place on the homestead, while he returned to Omaha to find work. J. A. Almen, Andrew Hainner, Pehr Olson, N. J. Hult, J. Gibson, A. Larson and S. A. Jansson also arrived in 1859.

Memphis Settlement.

In the spring of 1859 G. Savelberg settled on section 9, township 13, range 9, three miles from the present station of Memphis. He came without means, but today is the owner of 240 acres of land, well improved and well stocked and out of debt.

About the same time came Peter Thulin, Andrew Larson and Eric Charing. Mr. Thulin, in answer to my letter asking for information relative to his experience as an early settler, he writes as follows: I came to Nebraska in the spring of 1858 with \$10 in my pocket, a sick wife to care for, but no children. Today I have a wife and ten children and own 640 acres of the finest land the sun shines on. I settled in Saunders county in the spring of 1859 ten miles northwest of Ashland, on eighty acres of Uncle Sam's land. The first two years I lived in a sod house; had to haul the water for house and barn, and worked two miles, from Wahoo creek; drank warm water in the summer and sucked ice in the winter. I first raised corn and sold the same for 25 cents to \$1 a bushel; wheat, from 25 cents to \$1.25 a bushel; hogs, from \$1.00 to \$8 per 100; have been eaten up by grasshoppers and chinch bugs; we have been loaded and drowned out and dried up, and still I "hold the fort" on the old homestead. It would take \$40,000 to buy me out of all my property today. I am giving my children a good education. I have one daughter and one son attending the Wesleyan university, and am 50 years old.

I have now given the names and records of those who laid the foundation of the Swedish settlements in Saunders county. That many deserving of notice have escaped my attention will no doubt be true, but I have done the best that could be done under the circumstances and the time devoted to the subject.

In the next two articles will be given some of the privations and experiences passed through by these early pioneers; how they have succeeded as farmers, merchants, mechanics, professional men and politicians; and how they have been benefited by what they have founded, in short, the progress they have made in material, moral and religious advancement. Eric Jansson.

EDUCATIONAL.

During the last month Yaic has received \$100,000 to be added to her endowment fund. The idea of a consolidation of the University of Nebraska with Columbia college has come to naught.

The will of Dr. Lucius F. Billings of Barre, Mass., has bequeathed the sum of \$5,000 to Harvard university, to be kept as a permanent fund for a scholarship in the medical department.

It is claimed for Miss Dorothea Klumpke of San Francisco not only that she is the woman to rival the degree of "doctor of mathematics" in France, but that she can sharpen her own lead pencils when she desires to engage in a computation. There is no record of a number of students in the liberal branches at Johns Hopkins this year. There are 500 students now at the university. Of these thirty-eight are fellows, 222 graduate students, seventeen students of medicine and 178 undergraduates and special.

James A. Garland of New York has arranged a practical gift to Harvard in the form of four series of art lectures, for which he will pay the expenses. Mr. Garland has also given to the Harvard university museum \$25,000 worth of rare gems.

Prof. George H. Palmer of Harvard university and Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer, his wife, will move after Christmas into the house where Dr. A. P. Peabody lived for so many years in the college yard at Cambridge. The Misses Peabody, his daughters, are building a new house for themselves.

Though ex-Governor Brown of Georgia is in ill health and unable to participate in active affairs of any kind, the city council of Atlanta has elected him a member of the Board of Education, and his name is to be on the rolls as long as he lives. This is in recognition of his efforts in behalf of public schools in that city.

A recent visitor to Washington has been Senator Don Paul Groussac of Buenos Ayres. He is president of the national library of that city and controller of the Argentine Republic. He is also connected with La Nación, one of the most important papers of the republic. Senator Groussac is studying this country, and will travel extensively here before returning.

He arrived via San Francisco and has visited the principal western cities. Miss Helen Gould has just offered a great farm at Irvington-on-the-Hudson to the "Kilgore" and "Hottel" plant associations. The land will be dotted with a number of frame buildings, in which 250 or more children are to be lodged and fed during the summer months. The land is to be divided into lots of one acre each, and each child who is brought there will be allotted a lot of ground and a suitable building. The executive committee of the Western Reserve university has appointed Mrs. Mary Smith as professor of romance languages in the College for Women. Mrs. Colvin was graduated from Mount Holyoke, and after studying and teaching several years she earned a degree in the University of Zurich. In February, 1888, that university bestowed upon her the degree of Ph. D., the summa cum laude, she having been the first woman to receive the doctor's degree from the institution.

Dr. Alexander Martin, vice president of DePaul university, is a denizen. He held the chair of mental and moral science at DePaul university since 1875. In that time he developed into one of the foremost expounders of the science of education in the world. He mentioned for bishop at the two last eccumenical conferences. He took his seat as president of the council in 1878, and he voluntarily resigned to let a younger man succeed him. He was born in Scotland.

RELIGIOUS.

Venezuela has 2,100,000 people and one Protestant missionary. Canon Farrar will put up St. Margaret's church, London, of which he is rector; a memorial to the late Dr. Phillips Brooks.

Today, in India, there are twenty-eight Protestant theological seminaries with 300 students in the undergoing training for Christian service. One of Father McGlynn's old assistants in St. Stephen's church, Rev. Father Behan, has been elected to the Catholic church and embraced Protestantism.

Marie Janet, the peasant girl who founded the Order of Little Sisters of the Poor, died in London, England, on the 20th of November. Her order has now 253 houses and 49,000 sisters. A Lambertville, N. J., pastor, who recently compared those of his flock who play progressive games in their own homes to professional gamblers, finds the membership dwindling.

The Chinese Young Men's Christian association in Canton, China, has recently sent \$12,000 to the Chinese of San Francisco for the Chinese of San Francisco for the evangelization of their countrymen. Dr. Doman, Jr., honorary diplomon recently given by the St. Andrew's university of Edinburgh is one awarded to Rabbi Albert Lewis, the first instance of this distinction having been bestowed by a British university on an Israelite rabbi.

Bishop William Crowell Doane will celebrate the twenty-first anniversary of his consecration at Albany in February next. A new chapter house is to be built at the Cathedral of All Saints in Albany as a memorial to the late bishop. A recent religious census of Scotland disclosed the fact that out of a total population of 4,925,947 the various denominations have 1,111,126 in church communion—736 per 1,000 of the population. The following is the division of the above named total, viz.: Established church (Presbyterian), 1,146,547; Free church (Presbyterian), 77,081; U. C. church, 455,101; smaller Protestant bodies, 233,016; Roman Catholic church, 362,747. This statement leaves 1,062,511 Scotsmen "churchless."

Dobbins, Jr.—"What you read?" "Dobbins, Jr.—"Daredevil Dan; or, the Dangerous Days."—Is he any use. Dobbins, Jr.—Well, say! It's out of sight. It takes a man to write chapters ter kill 'im, an he comes near gittin' soaked for keeps next every chapter!

CHRISTMAS EVE.

Zepporoon. The time draws near, the birth of Christ! The moon is hid, the night is still! The Christmas bells from hill to hill to greet Answer each other in the mist. Four voices of four hamlets round, From far and near, on pead and moor, Swell out and fall as if a door Were shut between me and the sound: Each voice four changes on the wind, That row dilate, and now decrease, Peace and good will to all mankind. Rise, happy morn; rise, holy morn; Draw forth the cheerful day from night; O Father, touch the east and light The light that shone when Hope was born.

THE SISTER WITCHES.

A long time ago, I cannot say how many years, there lived out on the Military road, just this side of Irvington, a mysterious old woman, whose name was a rule and rod but, what her name was or whence she came nobody pretended to know. She was always called the Overland Witch.

She was a scrawny, shrunken, wrinkled sort of thing, with an enormous hump on her back and a large beak of a nose. Her eyes were small and sunken, and overhung with a mat of grizzled brows, which gave her an extremely repulsive look. Her hair was thin and gray, and always streamed loosely from beneath a turban of dirty red flannel. There was no telling how old she was, but all the old-time emigrants who passed over the Oregon trail met her there, and after Omaha had grown to quite a flourishing settlement and farm houses began to dot the prairie about the lovely valley where Irvington now stands she was still there. She looked no older or prettier as the years rolled on, and no one could even guess how old she was.

Her sole companions were an old black cat, with eyes of a reddish hue, and an enormous prairie owl, said to be a demon in disguise. Surprising as it may seem, this old hag had many visitors. They came almost every day, but never at night. Nobody had ever dared call her forbidding howl, and the shades of night had settled down, and peated farmers would hurry by the spot as if they feared some appalling harm would happen then.

One dark, stormy night, however, the old witch was startled by a loud knocking at the door. She was not used to such a thing, because the disturbance came in the midst of her preparations for supper. The black cat sat like a sphinx before the open fireplace and the owl perched weirdly on the back of the old woman's chair.

"Whosoever you may be, go away; this is no time for startling visitors; you cannot come in here!" And the hag stirred the kettle in which she was boiling some sort of mixture of gopher flesh, herbs and herbs. But the banging at the rickety door was repeated, and with a vicious imprecation the Overland Witch opened the door, and she opened it sufficiently to peek out.

"She could just make out the appearance of the intruder; she was a woman and thin in garments blacker than the night itself. "What seek you here, woman?" hissed the witch viciously. "A bit to sup and shelter from the storm; I have lost my way and cannot proceed further."

"That matters not to me, begone!" "Oh, good dame, you will not deny me nourishment and protection on a night like this?" "Won't I, though?" and the old witch siums and bolts the door, then lifting her voice to a high pitch, she shrieked: "Begone, begone, and get out, they would make short work of such as you!"

But to make it worse, even, the black sky opened in a quick, fierce glance of lightning, and the old hag, with a shriek of mingling and rolling over the prairie. A grove of thunder succeeded, then came another glare, redder and fiercer than the first, and the cat's wild mewling and the owl's flapping his deathlike wings added his dismal howlings.

Was not that a horrible scene? But to make it worse, even, the black sky opened in a quick, fierce glance of lightning, and the old hag, with a shriek of mingling and rolling over the prairie. A grove of thunder succeeded, then came another glare, redder and fiercer than the first, and the cat's wild mewling and the owl's flapping his deathlike wings added his dismal howlings.

It was an awful storm, the like of which the old hag had never known before. The lightning kindled an almost stationary blaze in the luminous clouds and there was a continuous rattling and rattling of thunder. All this the Overland Witch beheld, such rage as she had never felt before, through the little cubby hole of a window.

The rain streamed down like rivers, while the awful roaring told that the wind had spread its pinions and the whole outside world glared in forest crimson. The witch, the cat and the owl fairly howled with rage and fear, but suddenly the old woman seized her oven spat, threw open the door and, with a shriek of triumph, intending to administer dire punishment upon the being who had wrought all this frightful turmoil.

The aim of the oven spat was to strike the witch through the black air, and by the force of the blow the old witch fell heavily to the ground upon her face, where she lay insensible until the cat, which, by purring and licking her wrinkled face, brought her back to consciousness.

The stars were peeping forth from flying fragments of clouds, and the storm was rumbling and muttering off in the east. The old hag was surely dead, and a shroud of white laughter as she arose and hobbled into her hut, where she found everything in disorder. The fire was out, the stove was cold, and the floor strewn with litter. She was in a fury and heaped the most unkind imprecations upon her sister and swore by the bat's eye and the adder's tongue she would have revenge upon her.

But how? She did not even know that she had a sister, and she could not find out there was nothing beyond the cunning of the Overland Witch, and stroking the notched back of the owl she said something in a sort of gibberish, and she took a small tin and tossed him out into the open air.

With a lugubrious hoot the bird sprang his wings, and he bobbed down to the ground, sailed away in the wake of the storm. The old witch mounted the cat, stuck a hairpin into his ribs, and with his fur bristling out like the quills of a porcupine, he sprang away so swiftly that she kept beneath the scaring owl.

At last the bird reached his destination. It was a ramshackle, tumble-down tenement that stood on the outskirts of Omaha, one of Tom Murray's very near the old time, and the old hag, who is now being built, which was then nothing but a vast hole, a steep and rugged hill looming up like a giant's head, and a mad wind blowing over the top of it.

This was all the Overland Witch desired to know just then. So calling the owl, and taking the cat up in her arms—turn about she took her way to New York, and a Coffman's lively stable, which stood on the site of the late Boyd's opera house, and hired the hostler to drive her out, but she did not make up her mind to go. The old witch went to enquire her cunning brain to devise ways and means of getting even with her sister, she went to the court house, and took a walk through all sorts of demoralized incantations, drank magic brews of toads and vipers' fat, and made whole cakes of the stingers of bumble bees and the wings of green beetles.

Finally by the aid of these and the wise counselling of the black grimalins and the owl, she arrived at the only plan of depriving her sister of her unearthly powers, which she was convinced must be even greater than her own.

This was to pluck out her eye winkers, which were to be burned at midnight, just as the dawn of Christmas day. In the out of goat's milk, stones and pieces of scrap iron. After weeks of weary waiting she at last made up her mind to see how the plan would work. So she went down to the Pappo, on

whose backs even into this day grows a rare herb, which, if made into a proper ointment and spread thickly over the face for one night, will restore to the oldest and most withered face all the appearance of youth, and gather quantity of this marvelous plant, she made the decoction and subjected herself to the necessary treatment. The next morning on looking into the mirror she was flattered on beholding a beaming, innocent face, with cheeks full of blooming chrysanthemums and open sparkling with all the rosy freshness of innocent childhood.

The old witch was excessively jubilant and she made speed in completing her plans, and went to army and navy stores, to a common farm boy, and at last, just before Christmas, proceeded to the tenement house of her sister in the hollow near Omaha. Secreted in her coat she carried a purse of snuff plasters, and a bottle of subtle opiate, which she had compounded from the roots and seeds of the ground cherry, which very much resembled a half pint bottle of Krug's cabinet lager.

The old witch knocked faintly at the creaky door and was admitted. Her sister was tall, slender and fierce looking, with eyes that seemed to burn holes in everything she looked upon. She was fastened upon the old witch with her piercing scrutiny with becoming fortune, and on being asked in a snail's pace the nature of her errand, she said haughtily: "My good woman, they tell me that you are the lover's friend, and I sorely need your aid, and if you will give it me I will pay thee well."

"You speak like a manly boy. Now what can I do to help you?" "I want a love powder. I love sweet Milly Miller, who lives in the Buifs, but fair mind would believe she does not look with favor upon my suit. You can make her return my love passion."

"Aye, easily, say youth; but place in my palm my reward, and though you be a hundred fold more green than you are, I will adore you madly. But it will cost you two dollars and fifty cents."

"And fifty cents?" "Aye, this love potion is a secret be- known only to me, and I cannot afford to give it away."

"The old hag blundered no longer, but producing five fifty-cent shillings she deposited them in the tall woman's hand. In turn she went to a cupboard and reaching up among the dusty bottles she drew down one containing a dingy looking liquor.

"Rub this bottle, you need not uncork it, over your sweethearts' ears, and no power on earth can win her from me. I have a bottle of rare wild grape wine here, which was sent to my father from last Oak, Iowa."

"I will, I will, generous youth," and the tall woman produced a goblet. Into this the old witch poured half of the powerful opiate and handed it to the tall woman.

She took it and had just touched her lips to the rim of the glass when the huge can, which she held in her mantle piece, splattered and went out. "Ho! ho! traitor, ingrate, do you know this?" the Overland Witch turned to flee.

But the tall woman caught her, and seizing a rolling pin, began to beat her unmercifully. The Overland Witch, who had been suddenly assumed her natural shape. The beating had destroyed the powers of the rag-woman's opiate, and the tall woman had knocked her own head and brain into a pulp. She fastened one on each ear, and ran all around the room with her, finally dragging her upstairs and into a chamber, and flinging her out of the window.

She fell on a pile of paving brick and would have been killed, but she wore a heavy liver and had her eyes closed. She arose sorely to her feet and began to hobble up the hill toward Farnam street, but her ears were so sore from the stretching they had received that she attracted the attention of a lot of boys who were out late and they hooted and jeered and pelted her with mud and stones until she reached the shelter of her own level way out on the Military road.

There she lay until morning, when some boys discovered that the old hag of the Overland Witch was gone, and hunted as hard as you may, even today, they have not seen her. The old hag, who was a wretched hovel, or any person who can tell you what became of either the old witch or her tall dark sister who old live in the hollow at Omaha. SASKY GUTENOW.

A PLEA.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich in Scribner's. In youth, beside the lonely sea, Voices and visions came to me. Titania and her furtive broods, Were my familiars in the woods. From every flower that broke its flame, Some half-articulated whisper came. In every wind I felt the stir Of gentle, earnest, earnest things.

Later, amid the city's din And toil and wealth, and want and sin, They followed me from street to street, The dreams that made my boyhood sweet. As in the silence-haunted glen, So, mid the crowded ways of men; Strange lights my errant fancy led, Strange watchers sat beside my bed. Ill fortune had no shafts for me In this aerial company.

Now one by one the visions fly, And one by one the voices die, More distant the accents ring, More frequent the receding wing. Full dark shall be the days in store, When voice and vision come no more.

THICKING THE PALATE.

Over 600,000 cattle are annually slaughtered to make beef extract for soup. The world's population consumes every year \$5,000,000 worth of black pepper. The hog packers of this country last year killed and packed 20,912,000 hogs.

The American breath is annually scented with 15,000,000 bushels of onions. One district of Tennessee exports annually over 10,000 quarts of blackberries. The world's sugar plantations produce every year 6,000,000 tons of sugar.

One county in New Jersey sends to New York ten carloads of lettuce a day. France and Italy raise 30,000,000 bushels of chestnuts for home use and export. Over 12,000,000 bushels of buckwheat were last year raised in Ontario. In Italy last year 10,000 tons of cheese were devoured, with 16,000 tons of coffee.

One firm of oyster packers at Baltimore claims a catch of 750,000 cans a day. The world's population consumes annually 20,000,000 tons of maple sugar. The people of this country annually consume each 163 ounces of tea and coffee. Switzerland sends to France every year 20,000,000 pounds of cheese.

Paris in 1870 perfumed its breath with 6,000 tons of onions and 700 tons of garlic. The Germans collectively refresh themselves with 30,000,000 pounds of rice every year. Canadian hens lay every year 122,000,000 eggs, to be made into omelets and eggnog. The American people last year drank the decoction from 640,000,000 pounds of coffee.

Restaurants in New York are served in this country with 22,000,000 bushels of carrots. Russia raises 1,250 pounds of grain and fifty-one pounds of meat to each inhabitant. There are 2,500,000 pounds of red snappers sent from New York to New York every year. One district in Florida sends annually to the New York market 50,000 crates of fruit. The world's veneer producer is estimated to amount to an annual valuation of \$25,000,000.

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