

LS 0096  
Svea Poore

Svea Poore: My mother and father were engaged in Sweden in 1910. In fact; this is her engagement ring, and it says that they were engaged February 10th 1910. She came to Omaha, - and they were married in 1912. He was a plasterer. He went to school and became a plasterer. He was specialized in corners(?) work. So; consequently: he and his brothers always went on big big jobs, were they had, like court houses, and so on, were they had (?) and plastering around the ceilings. That was the kind of work he did. But; I want to tell You about one time, he and his brother drove down to Abilene, Texas. He wrote to my mother, and I, - a letter - on January the 16th, 1930. I don't know what kind of a car they had, but; the letter is so interesting. I'm going to give You a copy of that. Because, he started: "Dear Svea and mama. Just a few lines about two plasterers' journey to the sunny Texas, were You're sitting in front of a stove and fry Your front, and freeze (?) in Your back bone". And he said: "We started up Monday noon and should have been here Wednesday, but we did not get here until Friday night, on a kind of a bad wether". But; I can go on. I don't think You want me to read it all.

Lennart Setterdahl: You take a part of it. 1930!

Svea: Yes! "The first day we got to Savanna, Kansas; about 350 miles. Not bad for the start. It was cold and it started to snow. The next day it was snowing harder, and the wind was blowing hard and it was getting colder, right along. The driving was not bad, but we had to stop, and warm up and get something hot to drink. We carried about 350 miles That day. The speedometer got on (?), so we could not check on the distance. We stopped in El Reno, Oklahoma, over night. We were about full stiff when we got there. It took us all night to get cold out. The next morning it was Wednesday, colder and still snowing. About 6 inches of snow on the ground. We started out, ten o'clock, got along fine, until we crossed the Texas line, when it turned into rain and slipped that froze on the road and the windshields, so we had to get out of the car and scrape the ice off, every few miles, and there was no more snow on the road. But we were all right, as long as we had gravel roads". No paving in those days. "But when we had hit the pavement, it was nothing but ice and slippery and kind of rounds. We had figured to make Forth Worth, but we gave that up. It was getting dark, and the road was getting worse, so we decided to stop in the next third size town. Coming to a small place, we saw lots of lights down in the valley, so we thought; there must be trouble down there. We found out, in the oil station, that was a truck in the digge and a bus across the road, so I think we were lucky that we did not go down there, or we would have never got back again. We went back to the only hotel in this small place, and got a room, and there again; we were lucky. It was not more then our, and the hotel was full of people and cars, that could not go any fether. I don't know how; all managed to sleep, and keep warm, in this old schack, that had only a few gas heaters, the wind and the cold blowing right throw it - like it was built out of wire fences. We had a small heater in the room, but it was not enough, there was ice in the pale on the floor. Very seldom anybody stopped in this place, so they had let everything freeze up. It was only 14 miles to the next town. Well - we got through the night and the next morning it had stopped snowing, but the wether was cold and the road no better, if not worse. Everybody was waiting for someone to start out. Some of them were going to take Tennessee road, thinking it would be better. Well; we could not stay here, so Al and I started out. We did not have any (?) and that would not have been any good, for the road was slicker and harder then a greased biljard ball. It was just like glass. I have not seen anything like it in all my life and could not hardly stand up on the road. Well - we got going; or crawling. We had not going very far, before we saw what had happened last night. There were cars and trucks, oil

tanks and (?) moving down in the ditch. Cars of all makes, that had skidded, or just slipped off the highway. I think there were not many people hurt, because everybody had been going slow and careful. The 100 miles we drove that day, we saw, at least, 35 or 40 cars on the side of the road, some of them badly smashed up, but most of them had just slipped off and could not get out. We stopped and helped many of them. We turned around once, but we never got off the road, before of Alberts' careful guiding. It was worse going down hill. We could not use the brakes. The minute we put the brakes on, You were gone. That was where most of the drivers made the mistakes. We could see them, in front of us, was going to fast, all over the ground and when they got to a hill down, they stepped on the brakes. That was the end of theirs driving for That day. They would spinning around for a couple of times and then the ditch for them. If we could stop and help, we did and if we could not we just kept going. We stoped once to help a poor fellow with hes family in an old Ford and we could not just start ourselves. we had to back down the hill, about a half mile, to get a good start. We had to do that twice, before we made it. That was a risky business, I'll tell You. Well - we got to Forth Worth and kept going until dark, and got to the town in the Mineral wells. Stayed here over the night and we almost made up our minds to leave the car and take the train in the rest of the way. It was only 125 miles to go, but the next morning it was not quite so cold and a little snow on the road, so we got a pair of chains and started out, and got here 3,35 in the night - two weeks too soon. That was the worst of it. That's the end of a perfect day. Much love and kisses from daddy".

Lennart Setterdahl: This is Mrs Svea Poore, in Omaha, Nebraska. She read from a letter from her father, sent in 1930, back to hes wife in Omaha, in Nebraska.

Svea: Right.

L: Mrs Poore was born in 1914, April 16th, in Omaha.

It's today July 26, 1985.

This Al, he told about in hes letter, was he

Svea: Albert. That was my uncle.

L: That was Your uncle.

Svea: Yes. He came over in 1912. My father was a reader, he read All the time.

L: Your father - he was Mr?

Svea: Andy Rehn.

L: Anders; - I suppose.

Svea: Anders. Right! They says Anders. Oh yes!

L: He changed to Rehn.

Svea: No. Hes father did. Hes father changed it to Rehn. Yes. Yes.

L: And it was spelled R A E N?

Svea: R E H N.

L: Oh; R E

Svea: H N. Aha. Rehn.

L: Rehn. Jaha! I supposed it was Raen.

Svea: Here's a copy of this letter, so You can have it.

L: Your grandfather - do You think he was a soldier?

Svea: Pardon me?

L: Your grandfather - was he a soldier in Sweden?

Svea: My grandfather?

L: Because he changed hes name to Rehn?

Svea: I don't know. He came over to America. I met him. He visited us for a while. He came over, and he died here.

L: Is this Your parents?

Svea: No. This is the grandfather. My grandmother died of tuberculosis in Sweden; on my fathers side.

L: Was Your father the only child at that family, or?

Svea: No. No there was four brothers. I have this picture of the family.

L: They were engaged in Sweden.

Svea: Yes.

L: Johan Rehn, Albert Rehn. Andrew Rehn.

Svea: And: Karl Rehn.

L: No sisters?

Svea: No. Well they had a sister in Sweden: Marie.

L: She stayed there.

Svea: Yes. I was going to visit her. I was going to visit her. We could not locate her, at all.

And then, the second time, when we went back, then we found (?) that she died just the year before. So we just missed her.

L: Did the hole family immigrate then?

Svea: The brothers did, and my father.

L: Where did they locate.

Svea: Here - in Omaha - and: John was here in Omaha - and Karl Rehn landed in Minneapolis.

L: In Minneapolis.

Svea: And they were all! No; the three - the three oldest were in the plastering business. Contracting. And John was in marble; worked on marble work.

L: How could they chose that kind of work?

Svea: They all took up the trade.

L: In Sweden?

Svea: No, here! Here. They reached engineering by the school and they saved money, sent from my mother. (? mening). I was born -14. And mama; when she came over here, then they rented a boarding-house, and she ran a boarding-house.

L: Your mama?

Svea: Yes. And I said: "Mama. How did You do it! You couldn't speak English". I said: "Did You rent girls, or what did You do"? She said: (? resten?". And - she was the shief. She was the shief of the board! Yeh! How the hard they worked. Here is how they looked when they got married. 23rd and Cunnings. That's where I was born.

L: 23, and cunnings.

Svea: That's were I was born. This is how they looked when they were married.

L: Your mother, she was born in Kavakangas.

Svea: Right. And she met my father. My mother started school when she was seven. You know; they didn't start the school at seven. Then she had equipments. She was nine years old and got out and worked, because they were nine children in the family and they had no way to support them. So; she was a 'piga - You know. She took care of children and she worked for a couple, were the woman had a crimped arm, so that she couldn't take care of the children - so my mother did. And she was only nine years old. She started playing with the children - and the woman did say: "when My husband comes home, I'm gona have him giving You lestons, because he play with the children". Something! Well - evidently; she got tired of that. When she was 16, she went down to Söderhamn and she was a made; or a waitress, in a hotel down there. (She is the shortest one). As she wrote on the (?), like: "Känner Du 'å' mig" she says, to

her sister. She sent that card to her sister. "Do You recognize me" she says. And my mother spoke Finish! They spoke Finish in their home. The Kangas is right on Torneo, on the river, which separates Finland and Sweden. So they went to Swedish schools, but they spoke Finish in their home.

L: For how long time did she work as a piga in Söderhamn, before she met her husband?

Svea: No. That was up in - I suppose - in Haparanda.

L: They met?

Svea: No they met in Söderhamn, when my mama was a waitress in a hotel. She went away to be 16 and she didn't come to America until she was about 21. Cause; she worked there, all that time, and she met my dad. I have to tell You about my mother! My mother was the only child of nine children, that got married, and had a child. I am the only grand child.

L: Of Nine children?

Svea: So - consequently; - I don't have any cousins in Sweden, because: I am the only heir.

L: The other didn't marry?

Svea: Only one, that married, and the others - there was three boys: Paul and Levi - and .. I've forgot the name. They came to the Unated States, but they never got married. One was killed in a riot in California. Another one had a appendicitis attack and died - and we have ever heard from the older brother, what ever happened to him. But; then I met aunt Emma, and aunt Mina, in Sweden. And I have to tell You about aunt Mina, because: she paid. My mother made a trip over there in 1964, and aunt Mina paid for her trip. She was buried in Sweden. Fröken Mina Perovaara; She worked for the - and I think it is a Finish name: Perovaara. It's a Swedish mountain - a famous Berg in Sweden - Swedish mountain. 'Berg; is mountain. She worked for the Kungliga Svea engineer Corps Officers Mess. She recieved All these medales from the king.

L: Why did she use the Finish name?

Svea: Because they talked Finish in their home. She used the Finish language. This is her, wearing her medale.

L: - Till minne av tioårigt arbete för officersmässen. - Was it in Boden then?

Svea: No, in Stockholm.

L: In Stockholm!

Svea: Yes! It was The Svea Engineer Corps, which she worked for! And she had that job for about 25 years. So she got all these medales from the king. But look at this! This is from one of her parties.

L: Vilhelmina Perovaara.

Svea: Perovaara. Mhm.

L: She got all those

Svea: Medales. That was aunt Mina. And when she died, she left them in her home. She was very famous. Look at here: Fröken Vilhelmina Perovaara. This is on her 60s birthday, they had a party. And they even made up a poem about it! Look at this. Here! Isn't she a good looking woman! Isn't that lovely!

L: Jaha. Very nice. This was the address?

Svea: Oh yes. The same party. But they talked about it a lot.

L: Here is the old officers.

Svea: Yeh! That was in Stockholm. This is my grandmother. No - that's my grandmother: mamas mother; Maria.

L: Oh - I see. And she also lived in Perovara?

Svea: Yes.

L: Övertorneo kyrka. 1938. And that was sent here to Omaha?

Svea: Mama had one. They said that my father had a good writing. Well. He liked the poems and he would write those poems, but I think there's low for interest. This is a little medale.

L: Did he write on his own?

Svea: I don't know. I don't know.

L: It was a diary. "A book of immigrants, in Duluth, Minnesota".

Svea: That's in a frame. I put it out of the frame. It have to be cleaned.

L: Karl Rehn, who was he? He was the oldest brother?

Svea: Oldest brother. Mhm.

L: He lived on the 17th street.

Svea: Here is that letter. You can have that letter.

L: Did they tell You much about their lives in Sweden; Your mother and father?

Svea: No, not really. And I was just like anybody else; I didn't ask. Except mama told me about how hard it had been. It was no furnitures I could bring.

L: You have been in Kavakangas?

Svea: Yes. I wish I could have brought some furnitures, but I couldn't. I had had two heart attacks. But I'd bring (?) and things like that. Mamas cousin lives in the house were my mother was born, - and - he took my things to the railroad station, for that it could be sent by a railroad car to Oslo, and then we took a ship from Oslo, to home. It was the first day of October. And that was the ship that Edla Worner was on. He said: "Nej, men Svea! Vad har Du gjort? Har Du plockat stenar"! Because; Everything was so heavy. I had all these (?) and the suitcases, - and things.

L: Who did you talk to, when You came over there, to collect all these inheritages?

Svea: Oh (?), Ingvar (?), who lives in Haparanda and he was the one that - the executive.

L: Was he speaking English?

Svea: Oh yes. He speaks English, and he was a tool master in Haparanda, and we stayed in his home. Mama said: "I'll take this, and he'll take that".

L: Did You feel anything, when You came back to Your mothers old home?

Svea: My mother and I would walk to the granne. We were invited to lunch. We went to different houses - that she grow up with! And; the man, who lived across the street, she grow up with him, and he came over every day and brothers Came in with (?). Because: we cooked in her cook stove - You see. Mina went to; - At the time, when we went back to Sweden, my mother and I - the first time we went; my mother(?)s daughter and I went: in 1962. Then mama says: "I want to go back once more". And in the meantime, Aunt Mina had been put into a home - in Övertorneo. So; we had to run out the house! We stayed in the house. We went to the store and cooked - and - we were there for two months! The first time we went, we were going for three months. We always had places to stay, so we didn't - it wasn't - You know - so expensive! But; - we got to live with aunt Mina in the home and she was so stuck up. She didn't speak to the other residences there! She said: "jag har levat med fina folket i Stockholm" and she didn't want to Talk to these other people! She was so stuck up.

L: Perhaps she felt degraded.

Svea: Yeah! She was from The Royal Engineer Corps, were she had lived for 25 years.

L: She had a bad experience of That place!

Svea: Yes.

L: How old was she?

Svea: She was about 85 when she died.

L: Your mother: why did she come back, after all these years here? Was it because of something special?

Svea: No. The first time she went back in 64, she haven't been home for 45 years. She had to go home and see her sister. She said: "I have to bring my daughter, she's a part of me. I have to bring my daughter over here". So; then mama, Barbara and I went; in -62. Then I was lucky enough to go back again in -69. I've crossed the Ocean three times by ship. It was the most wonderful experience of All. We went on the Kungsholm, the Gripsholm and The Fathers Jord. I'm gona tell You when Edla was sick. we left Oslo in Norway in the 1th of October. It was a poor time to cross the ocean, because of the storm. And Edla and I had a cabin together. One day, the sea was very ruf, and mama had sent us to stay in bed. But she and I were sitting in the chairs. We were visiting her before we were going to lunch. All of us was hit from some wave, or something. We went backwards! in our chairs! And mama said: "I wonder what happen to You girls". We were both gone! We were both in the corner of the room! At that time; we heard a big wave, or something. Some-one had starting walking down the stairs. So we went all down the stairs. We had so much fun! She and I laughed and laughed.

L: You were never seasick?

Svea: No! We never got seasick! Mama never got seasick! Edla; she went to cross the Ocean in sex times! She never got seasick.

L: But; she wanted to return, for a visit?

Svea: Yes.

L: What did she say after the journey? Did she want to stay in Sweden?

Svea: Oh No. She didn't want to stay.

L: She had her family here.

Svea: No. She wanted to come here. However: she was very lonesome. Because; when she left home, when she was 16, she never went Back again! She never said God-bye to her mother! because; she said: she didn't know she's gona go so far. And - anyway - she, and my uncle John - came over together on the ship - in 1912. That's my fathers youngest brother. And; they travelled together. And, cause, when they came to Ellis Island, they were supposed to have - I think: 60 dollars. And mama had 60 dollars, but He didn't have it. But when they went through the line, she showed hers, and she handled them back to him, and he showed the same money. And then, in New York, they got on the train to come here, to Omaha. And they bought a (?) with a banana in it. They had never seen a banana in their lifes. They trhrewed that away. They didn't know what that was.

L: There was no problems at the Ellis Island? as she recall. They went threw it?

Svea: Yes. Right.

L: She was alone then on this ship?

Svea: She went with uncle John.

L: With uncle John.

Svea: And He was young - You know. Just a young man!

L: So - she came to Omaha.

Svea: And then she came to Bell Air in Nebraska. Can You believe that, in 1912, that that little town was there! she met at Ada Ariuson, on the boat, and; they were for ever friends and Ada had a sister in Bell Air. So she said: "You'll come with me" and meet my father, course: they had no place to go, until they were married. And then she came down to Omaha. And then they started running that boarding house.

L: So they were very well respected at that time. If You were engaged, You were not supposed to stay over the nights?

Svea: Oh heaven! No. No. And the church they went to was the Free Salvation Army Church.

L: In Omaha?

Svea: In Omaha. Yes. I have been to it many times.

L: You didn't join the Lutherans, or the Covenants, or the -

Svea: Not then, at That time. They were married in a Lutheran church: the 22nd Lutheran Church and - I was baptized in that church, and I Still go to that church. However; When I first got married, we were living in Huston Nebraska for four years. But I lived in Minneapolis two years, when I was a little girl, but otherwise I'd always gone to the 22 Lutheran church! Can You believe that?

L: Was that the church were Wilbur Palmkvist was?

Svea: Yes! Yes!

L: He is dead now, You know.

Svea: Yes. And, then; the Reverend Bernard. We are gona have an anniversary in whis fall, so the Minister (?) are comming.

L: I see.

Svea: Yes.

L: Your parents had the boarding.

Svea: Mama ran it - I guess, while he was going to school and trying - You know - trying to learn a trade. Of course; he Had to, You know. But; in the evenings

L: She was the cook then?

Svea: She was the cook and the house keeper; that; and I don't know.

L: And How old?

Svea: She was about 21.

L: 21. She wasn't afraid to take charge.

Svea: No. And until the day I was born she says: "Slept all day and cried all night"! How she got to work then; I don't know.

L: It was a good boarding-house?

Svea: Oh, Evidently.

L: She had no trouble with the mayor?

Svea: Oh no.

Anhörig: 23rd and Cunnings.

L: 23rd and Cunnings.

Svea: That's were I was born.

L: For how long time did she keep on doing this kind of work? Do You remember growing up?

Svea: No. Then they moved. They bought a house, some land, on the 29th and Curtis Avenue, and; (?) house and - then - we lived in that.

Anhörig: This is the house were Your mother lives now Svea.

Svea: Yes. It was (?) house and then we had a friend in (?), who was an architect. He made up plans and he enlarged the house. But the livingroom and diningroom are original; two rooms.

L: Your father did pretty good in the plaster industry?

Svea: Yes.

L: They could buy a house then. It was in 1918?

Svea: Yeh. That was about the time. About mabee 16. By the way - I did have a brother: Gunnar, but he died in a flue when he was three years old.

L: In Swedish: it is influenza.

Svea: Mhm. He was only three years old. He was born in -16 and he was three years old, so he died in -19. And my mother said, that my father was so sick, that he couldn't even go to the funeral.

L: Were You also sick?

Svea: No. I wasn't sick. No.

L: You didn't get pneumonia?

Svea: No. I didn't.

L: How about the rest of Your relatives? Did they

Svea: No. I don't think so. But; my brother; he died.

L: Were You sick in the epidemic?

Svea: No, I wasn't sick.

L: How about the rest of Your family? Were they?

Svea: No. I don't think so, but my brother. And my father. I thought my father died at home - and my brother died.

L: So; he had the flue too, perhaps? your father.

Svea: Oh yes. Very serious. Very seriously. It was like pneumonia, You see - and then he had pneumonia again, 20 years later, and then another 20 years he even went by and he died of pneumonia, at the same time that he got it. He was gone in -53, - and: - -54 they discovered Sulfa, which they treated pneumonia with.

Anhörig: When did he die?

Svea: About 53.

Anhörig: 53.

Svea: Oh - wait a minute! No he was 53 years old. He died in -37. 37. Right. He died in -37.

In fact: my son was only six weeks old when he died. It was so bad, because my father, he was a (?), he could do anything. And I saw it on my son, he was just like him, exactly like him. And he would have been in very good health. So; when it turned out, I was (?) to my father. I can hit a nail with a hammer. And I like to read. I'm just like my father! Exactly. I read all the time.

L: He was all contracted then?

Svea: He worked for hes brother Karl. Karl Rehn. He was a contractor, and then uncle Albert, and my dad, worked for Karl Rehn. Karl was the oldest, so he was the contractor. He was the one who went around the country and got the jobs.

L: There was all kinds of plastering; big houses, small houses. Hospitals.

Svea: And buildings.

L: Buildings. Outside?

Svea: Outside. Like the court houses. No.

L: Inside.

Svea: Like the court houses. Court houses around, all over the country.

L: Was it good in the 20s?

Svea: It was real good! at that time. But I do remember, then, later, in the 30s. You know: the 30s. Then - of course -

L: It was The depression.

Svea: Then it was The depression. Then I remember that there was no work, aspecially in the winters. And; my mother got a job and she worked in Sherman Edhome(?) laundry and she was a collar girl and she was so proud that she was a collar girl, that she fixed she collars on the shirts. She went around this mashine.

L: So it was a special work.

Svea: Yeh!



L: More paid, perhaps?

Svea: Right. Right.

L: I see. And it was All she did!

Svea: Right.

Anhörig: The collars are separated than.

L: How long was The depression in Omaha?

Svea: Well. -

L: Till the late -30s?

Svea: We were married in -36, when it still was depression, because my husband was only making 14 dollars a week when we got married and we lived on that. We had an apartment, and everything! And 14 dollars a week!

L: There was tuf times then.

Svea: Right. It surely was.

L: Your father; did he continue with hes brothers, in the same business?

Svea: Yes.

L: And he died -- You said, in -37.

Svea: Right. And this letter, that I read. He had a terrible accident when he was down there. He was like executed.

L: In Texas?

Svea: Yes. It was such a co-incidence. My mother liked to go to fortun tellers. She went to this fortun teller; that Mrs Thomson. And Mrs Thomson told her. She said: "Your husband is gone" and of course; mama said "Yes". And She said: "he will come home in a box". So my mother worried herself sick about that and, sure enough, he was electrituted when he was down there. He graved hole of a berry wire. (?mening). "Turn of the switch! Turn of the switch!" which he did - and he recovered.

L: So he was actually working on there in Texas?

Svea: Right! Yeah! But they had to wait two weeks, three weeks, then they started.

L: So; for how long did he stay there?

Svea: I think it was the hole summer.

L: Oh I see! So it was a slacking work in that period.

Svea: Right.

L: They thought Texas was a paradise.

Svea: Well they got job down there. Sure they did.

L: Summer - and good roads.

Svea: Yeah he had all over, the work. I remember: he went to work in Washington; the state of Washington. Galingham, Washington, on a job. And he wrote home, and he said: that was as closed to Sweden as he'd ever seen. It was so beautiful there.

L: Mabee he wrote to Your mother and said: he want to move up there?

Svea: No. He only left, like three months, or sex months.

L: So he didn't expect to stay.

Svea: No. The only time we moved was in 1927 and 28. We moved to Minneapolis and we were there two years. He was on a job up there - and - I remember it so well, because I was so happy, because I was with my cousins - and had a wonderful time. I lived and was confirmed up there in the common Lutheran church.

L: You said that they went to the Salvation Army, to start up with.

Svea: Yes. Because there was Swedish.

L: Yes - but the Lutheran church was Swedish - also. Wasn't it?

Svea: I suppose - But; they went to - and they had julotta. I remember; going to julotta - and this was at (?) street, here in Omaha. I remember going there, many times!

L: It's in the Lutheran center.

Svea: Well.

L: How about Swedish organizations: like the Wikings, or the Wasa?

Svea: Yes! Mama belonged to Astrid Lodge and they went to Wiking. And my father belonged to Helge Lodge, which was the men's organization; previous to this (?) and then they broke up them in this.

L: Oh I see. So he belonged then, when he came here. And there was a (?) insurance.

Svea: Yes. Right. But, at that time, it was a 100 dollars. 100 dollars was the limit of it. Just what You would get to the Burial fund. a 100 dollars.

L: It was the reason to belong to it.

Svea: Right! Sure!

L: There were a lot of Swedes then in Omaha, so they all

Svea: Gathered together.

L: Yes.

Svea: Of course.

L: Did they talk Swedish often?

Svea: All the time! In fact; my mother and father spoke nothing but Swedish in our home. I couldn't speak English when I started school! Absolutely Nothing! And, in fact, there was a little colony of Swedish people in our area. Roy Carlson and Klara, and her brother. We all started in Belvedere(?) school and couldn't speak English! I don't know what the teacher did. And then there was also a little colony of Italians and they're still there - and they spoke Italian and we spoke Swedish!

L: There was two nationalities right there.

Svea: Right.

L: It didn't take long time to pick up the English? Do You remember it was a hard time for You? Did You feel embarrassed?

Svea: I don't remember that, at all, something. But; when I was in Sweden, they said: "You talk such a good Swedish"! They thought that I was born there. And I said: "I just owed all to my mother and father"! In fact: to this day, we keep up with our Swedish friends, - and we talk Swedish to eachother on the telephone. They said: "Ska Du köra Din fina bil eller ska jag köra min"! Och hon har en liten hund hemma och hennes hund väntar och väntar och tittar på 'fönster' och väntar på henne till komma home and han tittar på klockan. Gör han ju inte. Sitter och tittar och tittar på klockan!

L: Så ni räknar med att åka tillbaka till Sverige igen på besök kanske?

Svea: Å, ja, jag önskar att jag kunde gå tillbaka. Nästa år. När min mor var i Sverige, hon sa: "vi måste säva mycket pengar 'te komma Sverige" and jag sa "mamma. Inte säva, det är spara mycket pengar"! Så hon sa: "Du vet svenska better than Jag"! Men; I was so proud of her, because she started at school when she was 7 and had to quitt when she was nine. She spokes three languages fluently.

L: Also Finish?

Svea: Finish. Absolutely. Finish and Swedish and English. And got along very well!

L: There were no Finish people here in Omaha though?

Svea: No, not to many, no.

L: So she never used her Finish?

Svea: That's right. But it all came back to here when she went back to Sweden.

L: You mentioned the word: 'Sava'.

Svea: Säva. 'Säva mycket pengar.

L: Where did she pick that up?

Svea: Well: 'savee' money is English - and she tried to make Swedish of it. So she said. "säva mycket pengar".

L: So - the other Swedes spoke the same way then?

Svea: Sure! Right! "Vi måste säva mycket pengar" she said när vi kom till Sverige. "Nej, mama. Det är inte säva, det är spara. Spara mycket pengar".

L: Were there other words she used, especially like: staketet, spisen. You know: like fence. What did she call the fence? She used the Swedish or the English word?

Svea: I can't remember.

L: How about in the cooking, and baking? Did she teach You how to bake?

Svea: Not really. No. Because. - She did everything, because: I was the only child and I was going to school, so she gave me time to study, Yo know.

L: You were spoiled, at that time?

Svea: Right. Right, I think so, because I was the only child. She was very proud of me though. And; that's while she wanted me to go to Sweden. She wanted her sisters to meet me - and when I came there, they couldn't believe that; my daughter and I: I'm 5Ft7 and my daughter is 5Ft10 - and my mother was only 5Ft2, and her sisters were very short, also. They were only 5 Ft, or 5,2. When we came there, they looked at us, and they said: 'dom är så lång. We were so tall! Because: we took after my father. My father was 6Ft2!

L: Jaha. It was short people up there, Your relatives.

Svea: Right. In fact: when we were over in Sweden, we went over to the (?) mountain, on Midsummer, were all the Finns are, and they are very short! The (!)! The Finish (!) are short! But it's the most wonderful experience to go over there, couse; we were there for Midsummer. The first time we went, we stayed for three months. When we were in Stockholm, we stayed at the Frälsningsarmén hotel in Stockholm, which is a clean, regionable prised hotel and right in the middle of the shopping section, - wether they call it - in Stockholm. I can't pick up the name right now. But anyway: mama said: "Herregud! So... Sover dom alla! No. Sover dom Inte"! Because they slept all night. It was day-light, You see. Day-light; to one o'clock in the morning and then it gets dark, and then it's light again at two. So; she said: "Herregud! Sover dom aldrig"!

L: But she was used to it, when she was a young girl.

Svea: Oh yes.

L: Growing up 'i midnattssolens land.

Svea: Yes. Then mamas cousin had seven children and; Monika was the oldest. She said: "Over here" she said; and she spoke English. She said: "we were told that we should live with a boy, before we get married, to be sure". And I said: "Oh, no. We don't do that in the Unated States" and I told her not to, - and I don't think she did.

L: You mentioned Midsummer. Did Your parents care about the Midsummer festivals?

Svea: Oh yes.

L: In Omaha?

Svea: Yes. They belonged to all the organizations - and - we went down to the Swedish Audithorium, every time they had 'Olle i Skratthult, or anybody, that came from Sweden! We went down there - all the time - to dances. My mother and father loved to dance! And, of

course, we kids, oh we loved it! Because; we were dancing with each other and we flied down the banisters - You know! We just grow up in the Swedish Audithorium. We loved it!

L: The festivals were good to You too then.

Svea: Oh yes!

L: Och: Olle i Skratthult.

Svea: Oh yes.

L: Och Nikolina?

Svea: Oh Niko - - Jag var så kär i Nikolina - och Nikolina var så kär i mig! - - Shure.

L: He came in then for several performances, or just once?

Svea: Oh, several times.

L: Several times? Did he come in on a Friday, or a Saturday, Sunday, or?

Svea: No. I think it was just one particular day, probably on a Saturday.

L: On a Saturday?

Svea: Probably.

L: He didn't have it on a Sunday when he came in?

Svea: I don't think so. I remember; my mother talking about Billy Sunday! They were quite impressed with Billy Sunday, who was going around, preaching.

L: Was it separated between Billy Sunday - and Olle i Skratthult?

Svea: Oh yes!

L: Two separate days.

Svea: Yes. Oh yes.

L: Did they dance on Sundays in the Swedish Audithorium? Do You remember that?

Svea: No.

L: They couldn't do that. That was considered as the religious day.

Svea: I don't think so. Right. I don't think so.

L: Were they religious - Your parents - like table prayer?

Svea: Oh yes. Oh yes.

L: They did? In Swedish?

Svea: Yes.

L: And You had to read it too sometimes, or did You all?

Svea: Every night, when I go to bed, I say: - - 'Gud som haver barnen kär. Se till mig som liten är. Vart jag mig i världen vänder, står min lycka i Guds händer. Lyckan kommer ' lyckan går. Den Gud älskar lyckan får. - - I have said it every night of my life.

L: Your mother taught You that when You were a little girl.

Svea: Oh yes. And my mother always sang to me, when I was sick, or didn't feel good. She always sang to me: - - Tryggare kan ingen vara. - - And, so, consequently, every year, in the church, we sing it; we cry, - because we think of our parents. That's what they are going to sing at my funeral too.

L: Did she prefer the Swedish worship then, instead of the English?

Svea: Oh yes.

L: You have children of Your own, You said. You married in 1937.

Svea: Right. 36.

L: Was it any English name: Poore?

Svea: Yes. My husband is English; Scotch/ Irish/ English.

L: What did mother say then, when You brought an English husband?

Svea: I think she didn't say anything, but my Father didn't care much for him. In fact - one time, when George was going to come over, he went and took a plank and put across the drive way, so he couldn't drive in. No he was very particular who was going to get me!

L: He thought You could pick one at the Swedish Audithorium.

Svea: Right! I'm sure of that.

L: Where did You meet him?

Svea: I met him at a Danish picknick. Hes best friend was Danish. And then hes friend, and Klara and I; we went to. - See; in Those days, You could go to a dance without any fellow and nobody ever harmed You of anything, - or anything. And we met these fellows.

L: You could dance with anyone You wanted?

Svea: Of course! We went stag. So; he was there with hes Danish friend: Earl Sorensen! In fact there were four boys, that always went everywhere together. Everywere together. So; - they had an old Model T Ford. And - they asked if they could take us home - course we had taken the street car out there. So we said: Yes! It was all right, in those days. I had taken me home first. And then Klara said: "I was left with four boys, then they took Me home"! But then - when they took her home - they wanted to know Her name and my name - and - of course: Svea, what kind of name is that! And - so - he wrote it down - and he said: I got to call some time. But in the meantime I went up to Minneapolis, to visit my cousin Ingrid. I was supposed to stay two weeks, but I had such a good time, I stayed three weeks. I got a letter from Klara and she said: That George is going to find somebody else if You don't hurry and come back! And that was the (?) to how I met him. And two years later we got married. And poore - Poore George - he had that Model T Ford. We were eleven blocks from that street car line and he walked there! He walked ten blocks there to come and see me!

L: What was he doing then? How old was he?

Svea: My husband?

L: Yes. When You were married?

Svea: We were 21.

L: 21.

Svea: Well he was 20 and I was 21. When I first met him, he was a stop boy at The Omaha Crockery Company. But he did so well, that they put him on the sales-floor - and - adventurally - they gave him a territory out in Nebraska. So we moved out to Hastings Nebraska and we lived there for four years. That is the best thing that ever happened to us. Then we were out on our own! You see. Got away from our parents.

L: It was hard for Your father to see a different nationality comming in, in the family.

Svea: I think so.

L: He probably wanted You to look for a ministers son, mabee!

Svea: No, I don't think so! But then probably he wanted me to have a Scandinavian, for sure.

L: You have two children - You said.

Svea: Yes; I have a son, and a daughter. They were rased in the Lutheran church, and confirmed. And they both went to Dana College at Blair, which is a Danish

L: Your husband, was he also a Lutheran, when You married?

Svea: To begin with.

L: How about the culture. He was English and You were Swedish. Did the English prevail over the Swedish?

Svea: Yes. I'm afraid that his family prevailed over mine.

L: How about Your mother. Did she try to tell Your children a little table prayers?

Svea: Oh yes. And, of course; when my husband travelled, and then we could put up - displace in different towns - and I would go with him. My mother Always took care of my children. I never had to worry about them. She would just move right into my house and stayed there with the children until I got there.

L: So they learned that You were Swedish.

Svea: Oh yes. In fact: my son still talks about her Swedish panncakes - that she made.

L: Your father - was he interested in politics?

Svea: I really don't know. All I know is that my father never became a citizen, but my mother did.

L: She took the citizen papers.

Svea: After my father died, my mother went to school and she went to take High - and - became a citizen. And she was very proud of that.

L: Was he against?

Svea: I think he was to buzy. Travelling around. He was just to buzy to do it.

L: He was not political involved.

Svea: No.

L: You don't know if he was a Republican or a Democate?

Svea: No, I don't.

Annan person: What was Your mother?

Svea: I think she was Democate.

L: How about Swedish Newspapers in Your home?

Svea: Oh yes. They took the Swedish newspaper.

L: Which one? Do You remember any name?

Svea: Swedish newspaper. Everybody took it.

L: Svensk-Amerikanaren? Tribunen?

Svea: Yeh! Right!

L: From Chicago.

Svea: Right. And I remember: every Saturday night, when my father came home, he had The Chicago Tribune with him. Because - I can say - he was a reader.

L: So; he read The Chicago Tribune!

Svea: Yes.

L: Mabee he was a Republican then?

Svea: I don't know. I really don't know.

L: Did You take any interest in the Swedish paper? Svensk-Amerikanen?

Svea: At that time: no.

L: No. You never read in it.

Svea: I remember looking at the funnies! You know. I just read those funnies. But; I didn't read the paper, no.

L: Did most of the Swedes have that paper, do You think?

Svea: Oh yes.

L: They did.

Svea: Oh yes.

L: And there was adds about Skratt-Olle.

Svea: Right!

L: You remember going to Olle i Skratthult?

Svea: Oh Sure!

L: What did he actually do then on the stage? Did You laugh at him?

Svea: Oh, of course. Of course! And he had this kind of red wig on, You know - and it was always funny. I can't remember, but I know that we sure enjoyed going to see him.

L: There were full house, when he came.

Svea: Right. Right.

L: Do You remember how many that travelled with him?

Svea: No, I don't. Somebody else was here in town. Was there a woman, that went around and sang and -

L: And hes whife was with?

Svea: No. This is a separate entertainment of some kind, who .. - Oh! Lapp-Lisa.

L: But it must have been later though.

Svea: Yeah. I remember going - and we were going to listen to Lapp-Lisa too! She was in our town. And when ever she came, we went.

L: It was in the 60s and the 70s.

Svea: Well I think it was earlier then that. I really do. Because; when I was a little girl, she was here! Sure.

L: I see. She came after the war then. Were did they meet? The Swedish Audithorium?

Svea: The Swedish Audithorium; on the 16th and Chicago. And (?) there too.

L: And it was owned?

Svea: Of Scandinavians. By the Scandinavians.

L: what happened to that, after -

Svea: Well. Eventually, just a few years ago (? några ord) and Astrid lodge and Linnea lodge, I don't know if they bought this church, or rented this church. Do You remember that? That was on Burt(?) street; 33, no 34th and Burt street - or 35th and Burt; until the Adolphus building, that You were in last night. That's were they met. Do You know what we paid - it's hard to believe - but it only cost us 225 dollars per person to cross the ocean for ten days! Fantastic! Board and room. Can You believe that!

Annan person: Was it One way?

Svea: One way.

L: It was in the 50s?

Svea: Yes! And in the 60s!

Annan person: I can't believe it.

Svea: Oh - I'll tell You. I'm so happy that I had this wonderful Swedish mother, and my father cause, but he died so early - and - I'm so sorry that he died - You know - when I was first married. Because: we would have had such good times together. But; I'm so happy that my mother - we came in friendship with her sisters. We went over there and I got to go over there and I loved, just dearly loved it. Because: it's so Lovely over there and so Clean, and everything. My daughter lives in Duluth, Minnesota and she wouldn't move away from there, for anything! I tried to get her to move to Omaha last year and she wouldn't do it - because; she loves it! because it's just like Sweden. All the burch trees up there and it's cold - but they don't mind it.

L: Do they have a feeling about the Swedish background?

Svea: My daughter certainly does, because she has been over there. Now, at Saturday, she's going to have a young Finish student over. She just got married, for the second time, to a Finish man, so she has just taken hes family right in. And they're taking her in, with open

arms. When I just met them, when they were married, the 1th of June, - when I went up to them and were introduced to them, I said: "Huvepäivä"! "Huvepäivä" and they were So surprised, because: "Oh she can speak Finish"! But that's all I know, I just remember that from my mother. In every place she went, she said: "huvepäivä". That means: all my best to You, or something.

Transkriberat från kassettband 2011-11-10 /O-KS