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Family Ties to the Dakota Uprising – Minnesota 1862, Part 4

By HELENE LEAF

On August 18, 2012, my husband John and I attended a most unusual family reunion in Swift and Kandiyohi counties in Minnesota. Neither my husband nor I had met any of these people before, although a few people knew some of the others. Over 120 people attended, and they were from all parts of the country and even at least twelve of them came from Sweden.

What was it that brought us all together that day? It was an incident that happened on August 20, 1862, in which 13 Swedes were killed by Indians. Everyone who was gathered there was in some way related to the Lundborgs or the Brobergs who were killed that day. My husband is distantly related to the Lundborgs. The youngest attendee was the 5 month-old great-great-granddaughter of Johanna Lundborg Paulson, and the oldest was 100-year-old E.W. Solyst who for many years had organized a picnic around this date for the descendants of the survivors.

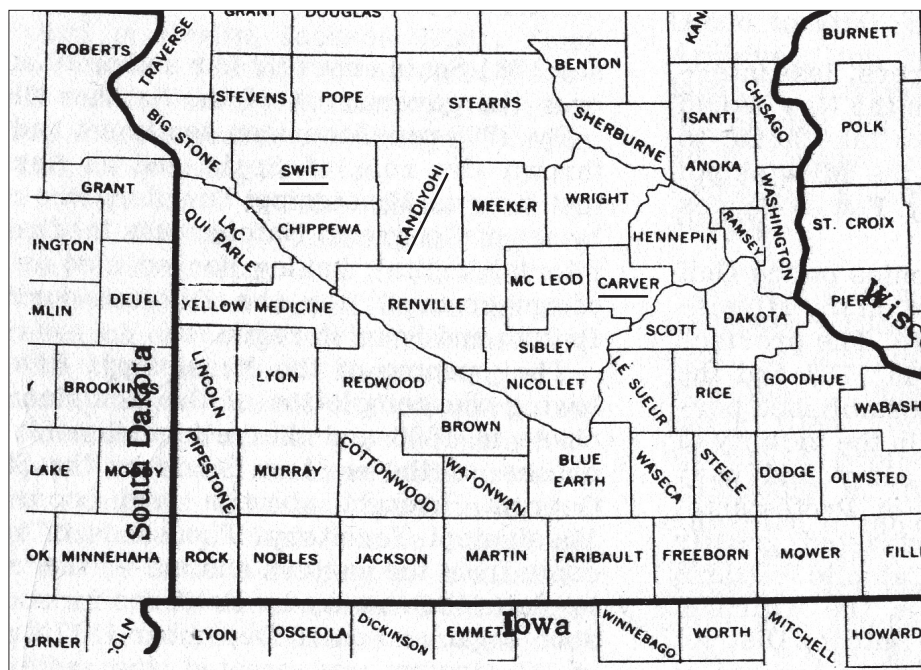
Previous articles

In the June, September, and December 2007 issues of SAG I had written about these family ties to my husband's Carver County ancestors (Pehr and Catarina Carlson in the East Union area) who had known these two families. In 1858 three brothers, Johannes, Anders Petter, and Lars Andreasson Lundborg, immigrated to Carver County, Minnesota. In 1860 they claimed land in western Monongalia County (now Kandiyohi). This was the far western settlement of white people in Minne-

sota. In 1861 their parents, Andreas Larsson Lundborg and Lena Johansdotter, brothers Gustaf and Samuel, and sister Johanna joined them. One sister, Sara, had remained in Sweden. Also two brothers, Anders Petter and Daniel Petter Broberg and their families, immigrated and claimed land two miles west of the Lundborgs in what is now Swift County. All joined the Norway Lake Lutheran Church which had been founded in 1859 by Pastor Peter Carlson from East Union Lutheran Church. There was no church building so the pastor, Andrew Jackson, traveled from home to home conducting worship services.

The attack

On the morning of August 20, 1862, Pastor Andrew Jackson was holding a service at the Lundborg home when little Peter Broberg interrupted the service by saying that the Indians were bothering those children who had been left at the Anders Broberg home. Anders Petter Broberg, Gustaf, Lars, Samuel, and Anders Petter Lundborg ran to the Broberg house. Andreas Lundborg followed more slowly. Daniel Petter took the women and children in the oxcart. Those running arrived first; they were shot and all were killed except Samuel who survived a wound to the side and being beaten. Andreas arrived to see his sons shot. The Indians shot at



The Minnesota counties mentioned in the article. From Handy Book for Genealogists 6th edition (1971).

him, but he managed to escape. The oxcart came into view, and the Indians fired at it. All were killed except one child from each family, Anna Stina from the A. P. Broberg family, and Peter from the D. P. Broberg family. The survivors hid in the tall grasses and on the Isle of Refuge in Norway Lake and eventually found safety in St Cloud. A more complete telling of this incident is in the September 2007 issue of SAG.

The memorial gathering

Our gathering was to start officially at 10 a.m. on the 18th at the Shelter House at Monson Lake State Park (in Swift County, Minnesota), but by 9 a.m. the people started to gather, to meet each other, to visit, and of course to have a cup of coffee and *pepparkakor*. The weather was perfect. The organizers had a color-coded system for the name tags to help us know the ancestor of the attendees. The six ancestors were Johannes, Johanna, Samuel, and Sara Lundborg, and Anna Stina and Peter Broberg. While Sara Lundborg had remained in Sweden, some of her children immigrated.

At 10 a.m. we walked to the nearby marker where the Anders Broberg house had stood and where those 13 victims were killed and originally buried. Charles Berget, a great-grandson of Anna Stina, read her

account of the incident. A wreath was placed on the monument. There were three flowers on the wreath, one for all the whites who were killed during the Dakota War, one for the Indians, and one for the soldiers. A Swedish flag was also on the wreath. A prayer for peace, healing, and reconciliation was said.

Then we traveled by car the two miles to the marker for the Lundborg cabin. A long train of 48 cars traveled this country road which may not on most days have that many cars pass by all day long. As we drove along, I thought about little Peter Broberg, age 7, running this distance through the woods. This property on Route 7 a few miles south of Sunberg is still owned by the great-grandson of Johannes Lundborg.

To New London

Then it was off to Peace Lutheran Church (formerly Lebanon Lutheran) in New London. We were had a wonderful *smörgåsbord* and had a chance to look through various pictures, family trees, and artifacts. From 1 to 2 p.m. the Monongalia Historical Museum was open. This building was the original Lebanon Lutheran Church and had much information about the early years in New London and area. This building was just up the hill and on the other side of the church cemetery.

About the survivors

Back at Peace Lutheran at 2 p.m. we had a sharing time. One descendant from each of the six survivors told of what had happened to their ancestor after the massacre. Sadly there was no one descended from Peter Broberg at this gathering. One of the poignant moments was when a descendant of Anna Stina said thank you! to the descendants of the Lundborgs because it was the Lundborgs who had saved the lives of the Broberg cousins and had cared for them during their escape and later.

One of the descendants, Carol Lundquist, had prepared a huge family tree and had research to show that the Brobergs and the Lundborgs



Anna Stina (Broberg) Peterson (1846–1933). From Findagrave.com.

were descended from Torsten Algots-son, born 7 October 1712 in Södra Härene (Vägö.) and his wife Karin Persdotter. It had been said that the Lundborgs and Brobergs were related.

Pictures and music

There was time for pictures. There was a large group picture on the steps of the old Lebanon Lutheran Church – a tradition from previous gatherings. There were pictures of family groups and of the family tree. Modern technology allowed us to share pictures and information.

At four o'clock we gathered in the sanctuary to listen to Anders Bergström from Sweden play some typical Swedish music on his violin. Then Pastor Paul Lundborg, a great-grandson of Johannes Lundborg, reflected on Pastor Andrew Jackson's memories of that day as he looked back on it in 1890. Twenty members of his congregation were killed in just a few days and his congregation spread out across several counties and was dispersed as the settlers vacated their homes to seek safety in eastern Minnesota. In 1863 Pastor Jackson started teaching at St Ansgar Academy in East Union, Minnesota, and eventually became the pastor at West Union Lutheran church, also in Carver County.



Charles Berget places the wreath.

The final event of the day was to return to the Lebanon cemetery and gather around the monument where the 13 members of the Broberg and Lundborg families were reburied in 1891. The state of Minnesota placed the monument there. A wreath similar to the one placed at the monument at the massacre site was placed by the monument in the cemetery. Once again there was a prayer for peace, healing, and reconciliation.



The 1891 monument. Picture from Findagrave.com.

We have traveled in Minnesota many times and lived there for 10½ years, but never before have I been as aware of this need for healing between the races. On August 17 we heard that all flags in Minnesota were to be flown at half-staff in memory of the start of this war. Throughout the Minnesota River Valley there were numerous events. Also on the 17th about 300 gathered on the South Dakota-Minnesota border. This was a symbolic welcoming home of the Dakota Indians, who were forcibly removed from Minnesota in 1863 by federal

law (which has never been repealed). Minnesota secretary of state Mark Ritchie shouted “Welcome Home” to the 11 Indians on horseback and the parade of walkers who crossed the border into Minnesota amid Welcome Home signs. Historical societies had programs and churches had special services throughout the state.

Old Log Church

On Sunday morning we worshipped at The Old Log Church near Norway Lake. This church is a replica of the log church that was built in 1868 when the settlers returned to this area of Minnesota. Trees were cut locally to build this church. Every year on the third Sunday of August a worship service is held to remember those early settlers. About 75 worshippers filled the little church, but outside about that many sat under a canopy to see and hear the service. Nearby an original log building had been moved to house a museum to tell the story of the area.



The log building is “The Old Log Church” which is a replica of the church built in 1868 at that site in Kandiyohi County. Both Swedes and Norwegians attended that church at the time. The Norwegians have rebuilt the church and on the third Sunday in August hold a church service to remember those pioneers who were killed in that area in 1862. It was mostly Swedes and Norwegians living in that county in 1862.

Mankato hanging

Our last stop in Minnesota was in Mankato. We went by Reconciliation Park. This is the location of the hanging of 38 Indians on December 26, 1862. Over 300 were originally sentenced to be hanged, but Abraham Lincoln eliminated a number of

names from the list. This is the largest mass execution ever held in the United States. John’s great-grandfather Pehr Carlson was in attendance at this event as part of the 9th Regiment, Co. H. Pehr’s brother-in-law, A. J. Carlson, was also there. In his memoirs of his time during the Civil War, he did not write about the hanging, but he said that he would let what others wrote speak about it. Perhaps even 30 years later it was too painful a memory.

Then: about 500 white settlers were killed, some soldiers died, a number of Indians were killed during this brief war, and 38 Indians were executed. White people were driven from their homesteads and did not return for about three years, if at all. The surviving Dakota Indians in Minnesota were driven from their ancestral lands and relocated in another state. Now: remembering, but also healing and reconciliation seemed to be the themes for the weekend. It is time.



The man in the center is E.W. Solyst who for years organized the picnic to remember the massacre. He is 100 years old now and walked around at all the sites. The lady in the center is Joan Wilcox, a great granddaughter of Johannes Lundborg and one of the organizers of this gathering. She grew up on the farm where Pastor Andrew Jackson was preaching on the morning of August 20. It has been in her family since the claim was filed for it about 1860.

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