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A sad fate for a young Swedish immigrant

My grandfather's uncle left for North America in 1910, but never came home

BY ANTON ROSENDAHL

My great-great-grandfather was Karl Oskar Lundström, (b. 1857 Jul. 13 in Burträsk [Väbo.]), who was first married to Viktoria Johanna Nordström, (b. 1861 in Lycksele, [Väbo.]). She died in 1895, having given birth to five children. The family lived at Villvattnet in Burträsk.

Among these children were Hildur Katarina (b. 1886 May 27), who in 1904 Feb. 4 married Per Johan Lindberg (b. 1878 Aug. 14 in Skellefteå), a blacksmith, and lived with him and their children also in Villvattnet.

Another child in Oskar's family was son Karl Gustaf (b. 1891 Dec. 20), who was known as *Kalle*, the usual nickname for boys named Karl.

On 1910 Jun. 22 Kalle and his brother-in-law J.P. Lindberg left the port of Göteborg for England, travelled to Liverpool, and continued on the S/S *Saxonia* to Boston, where they arrived 1910 Jul. 14. They had tickets for Medicine Hat in Alberta, Canada, and presumably took the train there.

Kalle and J.P. Lindberg soon afterwards moved to Fernie in British Columbia. There they both worked as lumbermen.

Unfortunately Kalle became ill during the fall and went to a doctor, but could go back to work after a week. Then he caught typhoid fever and was admitted to the local hospital, where he became sicker, and finally died on Nov. 19 at 2 o'clock p.m.

His brother-in-law J.P. Lindberg wrote the next day to Kalle's older brother Herbert (b. 1887 Oct. 27), and told him what had happened, in a letter that is still preserved.

J.P. writes

"Fernie Nov.20, 1910,

Good day Herbert!

Now I will take up the pen and first answer the letter you had written to Kalle.

I must first tell you that I live as usual

and my health is good, but it is no fun to write this time. Perhaps you already have an inkling of what I will write now, a rather hard message for all of you at home, and not least for me. I have had such sad times now for three weeks. You must tell all the others, but be careful and start by talking of minor things, so you don't tell them directly.

"You are not to suppose that I have not done my best, but it is another man that governs what happens to us. It has been like he [Kalle] would not have any luck here...

"I visited him daily at the hospital and comforted him. He believed himself when he was lying in the ward that death would come to him, and I also sensed this, so I have been praying to the Lord that he should have mercy on his poor soul. He said himself that this would be the only thing that could help him in life and death, and that it would be the only way out for him, to leave everything to the Lord, then it may be as it will.

"He was so calm and content, but wanted us that are left, not to think so much about other things, but consider our departure from this life...

"He is gone home to the Lord, and that is why we shall not be overcome with grief, but ask the Lord for help in this difficult time of sorrow...

"I have nobody to comfort me, but I have to leave everything to the Lord, and be content with that...

"Today we are going to bury him, which is a sad day. We are to meet at 2 p.m. and there are many Scandinavians that will take part in the funeral. I must also tell you that we have made a collection for a nice casket for him, \$25. His funeral will cost \$45, but we have donated \$25, that is nearly 100 kronor. We wanted him to have a decent funeral.

"I will take care of his clothes and everything else he has.

"Now I will have to stop for this time, as my thoughts are so beset with grief, which you can not wonder at. So if you have some words of comfort to send me it will be well.



Karl Gustaf (Kalle) Lundström.

"I think that if I can have my health I will go back home in the spring...

"Signed by me

P J Lindberg

Fernie B C

Canada"

At home in Sweden

Kalle had been engaged before he left for America to Ester Josefina Westman, (b. 1889 Mar. 28), who 1917 Sep. 30 married Kalle's brother Herbert, and had three children with him, before he died of pneumonia after an accident in the forest 1927 Mar. 6. The youngest was my grandfather, John Oskar Lundström (b. 1922 Mar. 18 in Kalvträsk). Ester Lundström died 1974 Aug. 21 in Kalvträsk, 64 years after her first fiancé.

The brother-in-law, J. P. Lindberg, returned to his wife Hildur Katarina and their two children in Villvattnet.

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