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Alexander P. Anderson, inventory

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Alexander Pierce Anderson

– The Swede who invented puffed rice!

BY ELISABETH THORSELL

A few years ago I visited the Goodhue County Historical Society Museum in Red Wing, MN, and noticed a photo in a display box on a wall. The photo was of a man called *Alexander P. Anderson*, and he was a locally famous person, the inventor of the process to produce *puffed rice*. This was something that was often served as a dessert in my childhood home with milk and some applesauce, so I had that as a fond memory, and also thought that an Anderson in that area must have some Swedish connection.

So finally I did a little research and came up with a web site that was useful: www.andersoncenter.org/ from which I was able to get much more information than found on the internet. His grandson Karl Hedin was most helpful, and sent me a booklet, *Alexander P. Anderson 1862–1943. A biography of his life which was devoted to the study of the natural world*, published in 1997.

This gave enough information to be able to find Alexander's family in Swedish records. In the back of the booklet there was also a graphic ancestor table, which followed his father's lines back to the middle 1700s. Here you will find more detailed information on all his ancestors for three generations.

Immigration

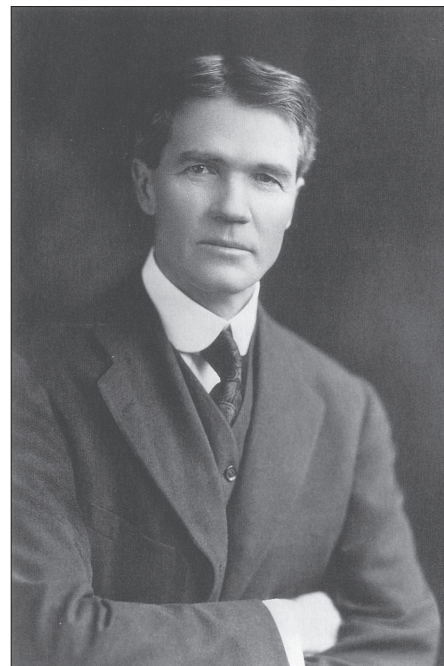
His parents, Johannes Andersson and Brita Maja Gustafsdotter, with two small children left their home in Boarp Stakagård in Södra Ljunga parish in Kronoberg län in August 1855. After 11 weeks at sea, they travelled by train to Chicago, continued to Moline where they boarded a packet boat for Red Wing. There they bought a homestead of 160 a-

res, for which they paid \$14. This was in Featherstone Township, where they had the company of Johannes's brother Solomon who had come the year before.

In due time more children came along, and on 22 Nov. 1862 Alexander Pierce was born. He went to a one-room school, and also was baptized as a Baptist in 1878 in the Cannon River. He started to teach school in 1882 and continued doing this until 1890. During this period he also attended university for short periods. In 1890 he left the farming life that he had pursued at the same time as the teaching, and began in earnest his studies at the University of Minnesota: He got a B.Sc. degree in botany in 1894, and was able to get his M.Sc. next year due to a scholarship he won. In 1895 he left the U.S. and went to Munich in Germany to study for a Ph.D. in botany, which he accomplished in 1896.

A new theory

While still in Minnesota he had heard of a theory that it was possible that the central nucleus of a starch granule contained a very small amount of free water. After his return to the U.S. he started to do research on this theory and in the winter of 1901–1902 tested many kinds of grain to



Alexander Pierce Anderson.

see if it was possible to explode the granules. This was successful, and in 1902 he formed a partnership with the Quaker Oats Company to market this new cereal. The venture was very profitable, which enabled Alexander to build a gorgeous home on the bluffs above Red Wing, which is now the *Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Studies*. Alexander passed away on 7 May 1943.

A note on emigration

Johannes's brother *Salomon* left his parents' home on 11 March 1854 for the U.S.

Brita Maria's sisters *Eva Cajsa*, *Brita Stina*, and *Ingrid Greta* all went to Denmark. Their mother *Märta Stina Eriksdotter* also went to Denmark in 1862, after becoming a widow. *Ingrid Greta* came to her sister Brita Maria in 1869 in Minnesota.



Swedish and American puffed rice.

The Småland ancestors of Alexander Pierce Anderson

1 *Alexander Pierce Anderson*, born 23 Nov 1862 in Spring Creek, Goodhue Co, MN, USA, died 7 May 1943. (Father 2, Mother 3)

Generation I

2 f *Johannes Andersson*, born 27 Aug 1826 in Södra Ljunga, G, died Jan. 1890 in Goodhue Co, MN, USA. Homestead owner at Boarp Stakagård, Södra Ljunga.

Moved 1 Aug 1855 from Boarp Stakagård, Södra Ljunga, G, with his wife and two children to USA. (Child 1, Father 4, Mother 5)

Married 5 Jan 1851 in Södra Ljunga, G, to the following ancestor.

3 m *Brita Maria Gustafsdotter*, born 22 Sep 1826 in Mjäryd Norregård, Södra Ljunga, G [C], died in Aug. 1889 in Goodhue county, MN, USA.

She was a maid at another household in Boarp Stakagård before she married Johannes. (Child 1, Father 6, Mother 7)

Generation II

4 ff *Anders Persson*, born 3 Apr 1790 in Össjö Knutsagård, Södra Ljunga, G, died 1869 in Goodhue County, MN, USA.

Moved 1811 from Sommansäte Andersgård, Södra Ljunga, G, to Blekinge. Moved 1825 from Gillernäs, Jämshög, K, to Boarp Stakegård, Södra Ljunga, G. Farmer at Boarp Stakagård i Södra Ljunga.

He and his wife moved without their proper papers 6 Apr 1868 from Boarp Stakagård. (Child 2, Father 8, Mother 9)

Married 12 Oct 1825 in Vånga, L, [Vånga C:8:375] to the following ancestor. Marriage records: he a farmhand from Gillernäs, the name of the bride was not given.

5 fm *Cecilia Åkesdotter*, born 25 Jan 1799 in Vånga, L [not found in records there], died 1883 in Goodhue Co, MN, USA.

Moved 1825 from Vånga, L, to Boarp Stakegård, Södra Ljunga, G.

6 mf *Gustaf Svensson*, born 7 Dec 1797 in Mjäryd Kuggagård, Södra Ljunga, G [C], died 25 Jan 1857 in Gustafslund on Boarp Björsagård lands, Södra Ljunga, G.

Farmer first at Boarp Västergård, where Gustaf owned a part, then in 1844 to Runkarp Norregård in Södra Ljunga. In 1848 they moved to cottage Jonasboda on Boarp Björsagård lands, then to nearby cottage Gustafslund. (Child 3, Father 12, Mother 13)

Married 16 Jun 1821 in Södra Ljunga, G, to the following ancestor. Marriage records: both from Mjäryd Norregård.

7 mm *Märta Stina Eriksson*, born 22 Jun 1796 in Mjäryd Norregård, Södra Ljunga, G [C]. Moved 1861 from Gustafslund on Boarp Björsagård lands, Södra Ljunga, G, to Denmark (Child 3, Father 14, Mother 15)

Generation III

8 ff f Per Bengtsson. Born 11 May 1758 [1767 also mentioned], died 31 May 1829 in Boarp Stakegård, Södra Ljunga, G.

Farmer at Össjö Knutsagård i Södra Ljunga. Moved around 1795 to Sommarsäte Andersgård, and from there around 1812 to Boarp Stakagård.

Married 2 Oct 1785 in Södra Ljunga, G, to the following ancestor. Marriage records: he from Össjö Mjöl-nare gård, she from Össjö Knut-sagård.

9 ff m *Maria Johansdotter*, born 1 Apr 1762 in Össjö Knutsagård, Södra Ljunga, G, [C]. Died 7 May 1837 in Boarp Stakegård, Södra Ljunga, G. (Child 4, Father 18, Mother 19)

12 mff *Sven Erlandsson*, born 1770, died after 1818.

Farmer at Mjäryd Kuggagård in Södra Ljunga. In 1818 he seems to leave the parish and it is not known yet where he went.

Married 1st to the following ancestor.

Married 2nd to *Anna Håkansdotter*. Born 7 May 1788, died in childbed 16 Sep 1816 in Mjäryd Kuggagård, Södra Ljunga, G [F].

13 mfm *Bengta Nilsson*, born 1773, died in childbed 24 Dec 1803 in Mjäryd Kuggagård, Södra Ljunga, G. (Child 6)

14 mm f *Erik Persson*, born 1768, died 29 May 1810 in Mjäryd Norregård, Södra Ljunga, G.

Farmer at Mjäryd Norregård in Södra Ljunga. (Child 7)

Married 6 Jun 1790 in Ljungby, G, [E] to the following ancestor. Marriage records: he from Mjäryd, she from Ljungby Södergård.

15 mm m *Sara Persdotter*, born 1771, died 24 Nov 1845 in Runkarp Norregård, Södra Ljunga, G [F]. (Child 7)

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[C] = date from birth records

[E] = date from marriage records

[F] = date from death records

G = code letter for Kronoberg län

K = code letter for Blekinge län

L = code letter for Kristianstad län

f = father

m = mother