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An Early Swedish Druggist in N.Y. State

Ted Rosvall*

Inspired by Nils William Olsson's article on "Swedish Pharmacists in America 1840-1907" (*SAG*, Vol XI, No.2, 1991) I will present another contribution that fits this particular category

His name was Frans Friedrich Lange, born in the St. Gertrude's German Church in Stockholm 6 Jan. 1821, the third son of a cabinetmaker named Christian Friedrich Lange (ca. 1781-1830) and his wife, Anna Elisabeth Sjöström (1791-1852). Whereas the mother was of Swedish stock; she was born in Skövde in Västergötland, it is not known where the father was born, other than some place in Germany. Since, after his death, the widow and some of the children lived for a while in Danzig (now Gdansk, Poland), it is possible that the Lange family originated there. There was, however, a sculptor named Carl Gottlieb Lange residing in Stockholm at the time that Christian Friedrich arrived there, and it should also be noted that Christian Friedrich's eldest son was named Carl Gottlieb. The elder Carl Gottlieb came from Breslau in Germany, and was the brother of a master tinsmith in Stockholm named Johan Jeremias Lange (1719-1794).¹ There is a possibility that there is a connection between these two Lange families.

The children of Christian Friedrich Lange scattered all over the world. Carl Gottlieb Lange (1816-1883) emigrated to America in 1837 and settled first in Catskill, NY, but later moved to Olmsted County, Minnesota, where he first farmed and later became a janitor. His descendants still reside in the North Star State as well as in California. Another son, Johan Andreas (John Andrew) Lange (1822-1886),

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emigrated to New Zealand ca. 1858 and settled in Hokitika, where he worked as a goldsmith and jeweler. He had no less than eight children. A third child was Augusta Dorothea Lange (1824-1893), a music teacher, who moved to Marseilles, France ca. 1850 and married there in 1855 a Louis Eugene Rossat. They had one daughter, Valentina Rossat (1856-1903), who in turn married in 1895 an Italian count named Federico della Lenguiglia. A fourth child was a son named Herman Wilhelm Lange, born in 1827, who became a sailor, and concerning whom we have no information.

Now we turn back to a fifth child, mentioned above, Frans Friedrich Lange. In 1840 he enlisted in the Swedish Marines but was discharged already in 1842. Two years later, in 1844, he headed for "foreign places" and we now find him in Astoria, Long Island, NY, where he is listed as a druggist and pharmacist. He changed his name to Francis F. Lange (sometimes just Lang) and was naturalized an American citizen in the Supreme Court of New York 13 Oct. 1868. He died in Astoria 30 May 1884 and is buried in the St. Michaels Cemetery in East Elmhurst, NY.

Francis F. Lange married Magdalena Moest (ca. 1835-1916), who came from Württemberg in Germany. With her he had at least six children:

1. Mary Lange, b. 1855, who married Theodore V. Ayers (1849-1948). They resided in Astoria and had at least six children - Charles F. Ayres, b. 1874; Edwin E. Ayres, b. 1877; Flora A. Ayres, b. 1880; Theodore W. Ayres, b. 1882 and Catharine M. Ayres, b. 1884. One of these daughters was living in 1948, being married to William Greer of Lake Ronkonkoma, Long Island.

2. Eugene Lange (1866-1876).

3. Magdalene Lange (1867-1905), married Frank L. Smith (1866-1934). She resided in Astoria and left one son, Crowther F. Smith, b. 1892.

4. Francis Lange, b. 1868.

5. Herman E. Lange (Lang) (1868-1943), pharmacist in New York. He married Catherine O'Connor (1878-1957) and left a daughter, Ethel (Pat) Lang, who married Thomas W. Sullivan and who resided in Mamaroneck, NY until ca. 1970.

6. Augusta Valentina Lange (1872-1954), whose married name was Ernst.

The author welcomes additional information on this Lange/Lang family and would enjoy getting in touch with any living descendants.

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Johan Jeremias Lange had a son by the same name, Johan Jeremias Lange or John Lang, as he called himself in America. He was born in Stockholm 9 Aug. 1751 and became somewhat of an adventurer. From his father's will we learn that he had a wife and family in Philadelphia, and that he had "scurrilously" left them and returned to Europe. After having promised his father to go back to his family in America, he instead went to London, where he married once again, thereby committing bigamy. When the father received word of this turn of events he disinherited his son in favor of the grandchildren in Philadelphia. Johan Jeremias the younger returned to Stockholm shortly after his father's death in that city 1794, and became a burgher in Stockholm 1797. He soon departed once more, perhaps back to London, or perhaps even to Philadelphia. Who knows? Can any reader of SAG help me find out what happened the Johan Jeremias Lange/Long family in Philadelphia?

-oOo-

A Swedish Bible Inscription

In a book of homilies (*postilla*) by the Swedish theologian Lars Linderot, published in Göteborg 1829. we find the following inscriptions:

Inside the front cover-

"This Book, blessed by God, belongs to me, Nils Månsson in Norra Ämterud, Eda Parish (Värm.). I was born 20 Nov. 1808 and my dear wife, Märtha Eriksdotter, was born in Grythål, Gunnarskog Parish (Värm.) 17 March 1814. In 1836 we were joined in Christian matrimony, which was confirmed on Midsummer Day. On 16 Aug. 1838 our daughter Birgit Nilsdotter was born and on 18 May 1841 our second daughter was born named Kjerstin Nilsdotter. On 2 Oct. 1843 our son Anders Nilsson was born.

This book was purchased at the Winter Fair in Arvika 1848 and cost me 5 *Riksdaler Riksgälds*."

Inside the flyleaf is the following notation:

"I bought this book at an auction after Nils Månsson in Norra Ämterud 25 Oct. 1850."

Brynte Olsson in Norra Ämterud"