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The Lindblom Letters. Part 2.

The story of an immigrant family in Iowa, continued from SAG 2016/1

TRANSLATED BY PASTOR ROYAL F. PETERSON

SUBMITTED BY CAROL FEJFAR

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The seventh letter

Davenport, December 10th, 1882

Your letter, my beloved children, of November 20th, we received on the 6th of this month, in which we see how the merciful God gives you health, which brought us gladness. And we also thank God for the same divine gift. I want to tell you that Anna was here this morning so she could read your letter.

We talked about how we should work it out so that we could have you with us. We wondered if we should send you a ticket, if you could scrape together enough money so that one of you could make the trip. It would be so pleasant both for you and for us if we could live together. I know very well that you have it nice where you are, but you could earn more money (here) if you were in America.

Anna has already earned for herself more than one hundred crowns; and if you think about it, if I could lay aside as much it would be well. But I have to pay for Otto and Oscar. That takes around fifty or sixty crowns a year. And then I must buy clothes for them. That is another expense. And you would not have any outlay such as this, so it seems to me that you would do better, besides the fact that you are younger. You need not suppose that you will be here forever. You could travel back to Sweden after a few years. But consider how it would be if you could not do that, then we would never see each other again. But I hope that you would never regret your travel, you that are so young. What you plan in

this regard should be done before you have a family.

Here are two Swedish shoemakers who have their families in Sweden. They earn 10 dollars a week. Think what money they could send home when a dollar becomes almost 4.50 (in Swedish money). But in the beginning one gets dishearted, before learning the (English) language, but you do not have to do that as you will have your home with me and all your siblings. Anna was a bit homesick first she came, but not anymore.

As you do not have fiancées, then you have nobody to long for, and you Emil can have Selma for your fiancée, she is not married yet, and she talks a lot about you. But if you listen to my advice there is no hurry with those matters. I saw in your letter, my dear Emil, that you had been disappointed in Tina, but that could turn out to be a good thing.

Thus my dear children our dearest wish is that you should come to us, but you should come here early in the springtime, the earlier the better, then you are certain of getting jobs in the summer, and then you would earn a nice sum of money during the summer.

We could see about sending you a ticket so you could come in February. Now you answer me right away on this letter.

It was good that you received Mother's picture. I thought that sending them that way was best, as a letter would be too heavy. Now I might mention that Adolf and Hjalmar are here with a couple of Swedish farmers. They are not far from each other, but they are ten English

miles from us, but they have it good enough there. I should mention that Oscar can't speak any (English) yet, but Otto can speak English, and he goes to school.

Now I must close writing for this time, with hearty greetings from all of us, both big and small.

Your affectionate father,

C. W. Lindblom

And my dear boys, what a great happiness it would be if it could possibly come to pass that we may meet again. I will not have any peace until you come here, as I have not forgotten my only support, namely, my wife and your mother. But I must thank God that I have not done as Andersson in Hydinge, it has been so sad and lonely sometimes, you would not believe. Now adieu for this time, my beloved children. God be with you and all of us.

Let Johan read this letter too.

The eighth letter

Davenport, Feb. 25, 1883

Beloved Emil and John, may you both be well.

I shall try to write a short letter and let you know that I received a letter from Stockholm eight days after I received your letter. Now I can tell you that I have an extremely nice sum of money from my brother-in-law. He writes to me that Thilda had 14,000 kronor in cash, as well as her loose possessions that he thinks to give to me, as he likes. He has offered to give me only 5,000 kronor, and wants to keep the rest for himself.

This is good for us to have, but I was not satisfied with his proposal. I have to leave this in the hands of the law, as I should be entitled to at least half of her money in cash. If the loose possessions were to be used to pay the debts, this will anyhow not be just half of the estate.

[text missing for two lines]

... in the case you Emil have my will, which I think I remember giving to you. In this it is stated that I and my mother and Thilda's husband each were to have a third of Thilda's estate. As my mother now also is dead, it may happen that the will is understood as if I was to have two thirds and my brother-in-law one third. Thilda never told her husband that I had this will. Now I have written today to him that I am not satisfied with his offer, and that I will send you a power of attorney to guard my rights. As soon as you have received this letter you will write immediately to my brother-in-law and ask which day you can come to him to guard the probate.

Now, when you get to my brother-in-law, ask to talk to the trustee, who has been chosen to guard my rights. To him you should show the will and ask to be permitted to check the list of property, if there is any value there. Now when you have examined all the papers, ask if you cannot take care of the cash sum that will come

on my part, and after having excluded the sum necessary for your needs during the travel here, then you leave the rest in a bank in Stockholm, under the condition that they give you a receipt, or as they call it here in America, a draft, that we can cash at the National(?) bank here in Davenport. Then we are sure they (the money) are not lost during the journey. Then you are to start your journey here as soon as possible. But now, my dear Emil, it is necessary that you be on guard and not let yourself be duped, because then I will be in big trouble.

Perhaps it does not hurt if you let my trustee speak in Stockholm.

Then you will find out how soon I will get information about the other valuables, as from the loose possessions but my brother-in-law or my trustee will probably inform me. It may take some time to untangle all the personal estate.

Yes, now, my dear Emil, you know very well how this business stands. I must close for this time with a tender and dear greeting from us all, both large and small. Signed by your loving Father.

C. W. Lindblom

(Thilda [Auntie] was Carl Victor's sister; she was born 18 September 1841 in Tjärstad. See note 5 in SAG 2016/1).

The ninth letter

Davenport, March 27th, 1883

I received today your letter of the 6th of this month, which I will answer in great haste, in case it reaches you before your journey. It is so distressing, my dearest Emil, that there are so many obstacles in the way of your travel. Has there become such a shortage of laborers now in Sweden that you cannot leave? Well, that matter I do not think is the problem, and then regarding money you must already have got that which Andersson owed you. Can you give the rifles to Svärd in Svängen, so he can get payment for what Anna owed him?

You write, dear Emil, that you have enough heart for us; then why don't you have some heart for your brother Johan also? But you want to let him travel alone such a long way. You are the only one that I could have some support from during my old age.

You should greet Anderson that he need not be displeased that you want to travel to us, and it is fitting that you travel together.

Now I am not going to write much about that matter, as this letter may not reach you while you are still at home.

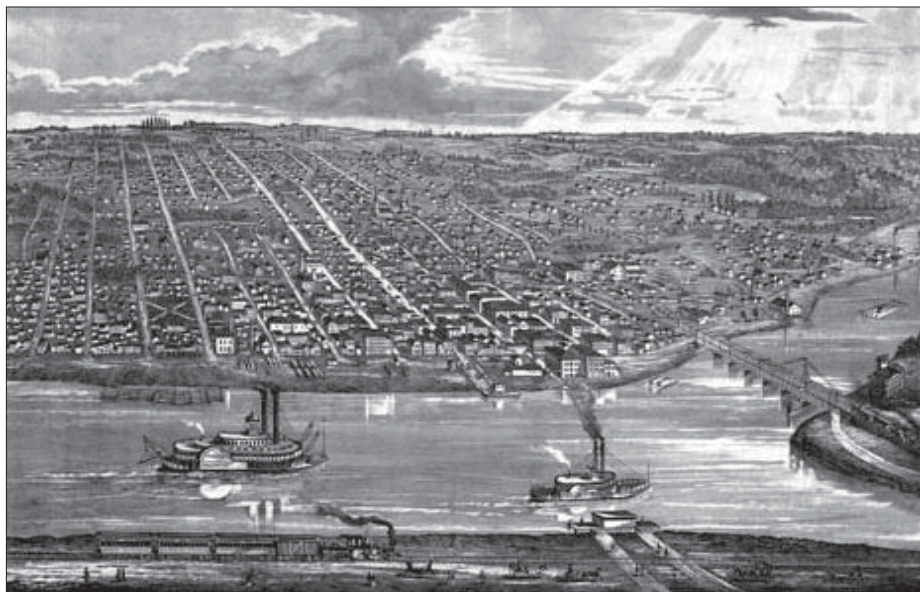
If you get this letter, there is a Swedish shoemaker who wants you to bring two or three good stones(?) to sharpen knives on, and you can also bring some tools.

I close this time as I believe that you have made your plans long ago, and maybe already are travelling.

Thus I will just wish you a happy journey.

Your affectionate Father

BUT: the poor worrying father did not know that in a few weeks he would be gone too, and his children become orphans. Luckily the oldest were just grown up and could take care of the youngest, but still...



Davenport, Iowa, in 1875.

DEATH FROM ACCIDENT.

At his home on Hook Island Street, between Third and Fourth Streets, at 6½ o'clock Sunday evening, died Carl V. Lindblom, from the effects of an injury received in the forenoon of Tuesday, the 22d inst. The deceased was a teamster for Charles Lindwald, dealer in kindling wood, and was engaged on the Tuesday named in loading his wagon at a wood chute at Renwicks, Shaw & Crossett's mill—standing on the step of one side of his vehicle placing pieces of board to hold the load—when a slab came down the chute at a rapid rate and one end of it struck him in the abdomen, just below the navel. He thought little of the matter at the time, as the pain caused at first died away. But in the course of a couple of hours he became so ill that he was obliged to go home and take to his bed. Dr. J. W. H. Baker was called next day, and found it very evident that the injury was an internal one of a very dangerous character. The organs of the stomach seemed incapable of performing their functions, inflammation set in of a kind that foretold death, and the end came as above stated.

The deceased came to Davenport from Sweden about 270 years ago, with wife and eight children, and went to work as a laborer until he found employment with Mr. Lindwald, a teamster. His wife died in a year, and now the children are bereft of their father. Fortunately all the children but three are of an age and size to care for themselves, so far as earning a living is concerned. Mr. Lindblom was 48 years of age. His funeral occurs this afternoon.

Davenport Democrat 23 May 1883. (Copy from microfilm.)

Transcribed text of the obituary

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The deceased came to Davenport from Sweden about two years ago with wife and eight children, and went to work as a laborer until he found employment with Mr. Lindwald as a teamster. His wife died in a year, and now the children are bereft of their father. Fortunately all the children but three are of an age and size to care for themselves so far as earning a living is concerned. Mr Lindblom was 48 years of age. His funeral occurs this afternoon.

(Courtesy of the Richardson-Sloane Special Collections Center/klr, Davenport Public Library, 321 Main Street, Davenport, IA 52801.)

What happened to the children?

In the 1885 Iowa State Census the small boys Otto and Oscar are living in Davenport with a Danish family, Peter Danielsen and his wife Johanna (Iowa State Census 1885, Scott Co, Davenport, page 421).

A family story also tells that *Otto* for a time lived with his sister Anna, and he is recorded in her family in Burt Co., NE, in the 1900 Census.

Oscar lived with several families until he was grown up. In the 1900 Census he is recorded as a farmhand in the family of his future wife, Flossie Hill, in Greeley, Audubon Co., IA.

The older siblings seems to have managed fairly well, and soon married and started their own families.

1) Carl Emil (called *Emil*) was the oldest, born 4 Sep. 1859 in Sankt Lars (Östg.) stayed in Sweden, and became a shoemaker. He died 9 Apr. 1947 in Harmånger (Gäv). He was married on 28 Nov. 1884 to *Matilda* Charlotta Andersdotter, born 9 Feb. 1864 in Sya (Östg.), died 31 Aug. 1941 in Rogsta (Gäv.).

2) Anders Johan (*Andrew J.*), born 10 Nov. 1861 in Rystad (Östg.). He worked as a millwright in Rock Island, but lived in Davenport. He died on 4 Mar. 1944 in Davenport. He married on 15 Nov. 1884 to *Mathilda* G. Samuelson, born 17 Sep. 1861, who died 17 Apr. 1925.

3) *Anna* Lovisa, born 26 Mar. 1864 in Rystad, died 27 Nov. 1941 in Oakland, NE. She married 21 Feb. 1884 to *Frederick* Peterson, born in 1844 in Sweden, died in 1926. He and his wife farmed in the Oakland, Burt Co., NE area.

4) *Gustaf* Adolf, born 12 Apr. 1867 in Östra Harg (Östg.). He worked as a street car operator in Rock Island, IL. He died on 22 Feb. 1936 in Rock Island. On 12 Apr. 1899 he married *Thilda* Larson, born 1865 in Sweden.

5) *August* Hjalmar, born 12 Apr. 1870 in Östra Harg. He was adopted as a young child by a family named *Bischoff*. He worked as a farm manager in Moline, Rock Island Co., IL. He died in 1939 and is buried in Moline. He married *Anna* Swanson, who was born around 1868 in Sweden, and died in 1950.

6) *Elin* Josephina, born 7 Jan. 1873 in Vånga, (Östg.). She died 12 Jan. 1955. On 2 Aug. 1894 she married *William R. Bohman*, born 25 May 1873.

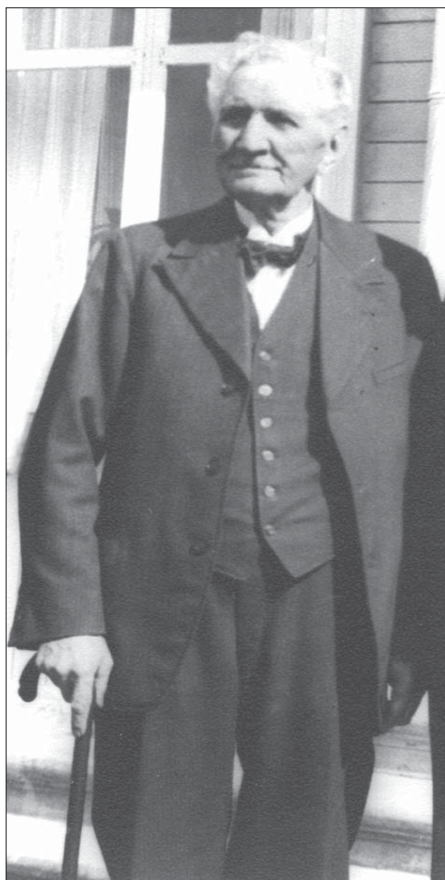
7) *Selma* Augusta, born 26 May 1875 in Västra Harg (Östg.), died the same day.

8) *Otto* Leonard, born 28 June 1876 in Västra Harg, died 25 Jul. 1950 in Lyons, Burt Co, NE. He was a farmer in Burt Co. NE. He married 27 Feb. 1907 to *Dorothy Lydia (Dora)* Lindgren, born 27 Feb. 1885 in Minnesota.

9) *Oscar Leander*, born 28 Nov. 1878 in Västra Harg, and died 27 Dec. 1967 in Atlantic, Cass Co, IA. He worked on farms, but later changed to carpenter and house painter. On 8 Mar. 1906 he married in Anita, Cass Co, IA, to *Flossie Hill*, born 28 Nov. 1887, died 28 Jan. 1984.



Anna Lindblom Peterson, her husband Fredrick Peterson and their children, Elin and Albin.



Emil Lindblom, the brother that stayed in Sweden. His descendants are keeping in contact with their American family.

A Little Poem and History on the Grandest and Oldest Family on Earth Today

by
August Lindblom-Bischoff

The Lindblom Family, which once were nine,

Selma passed away, leaving us eight behind.

Emil was oldest and the first to appear,

Is living in Sweden and the rest are here.

John has retired and is staying with his boy,

Made his money at shoe making which he now can enjoy.

Anna lives in Oakland and has a nice farm nearby,

A nicer widow you could not find, no matter how hard you try.

Gustaf is now retired and has a beautiful home,

Lives in Rock Island and has money to loan.

August has an orchard and a garden spot, too,

With a cow and some chickens, he has all he can do.

Ellen lives in Rock Island and has an elegant home,

And has very fine furniture in every room.

Otto farms in Nebraska and is very well known,

And has in Wisconsin a farm of his own.

Oscar has at farming his money made,

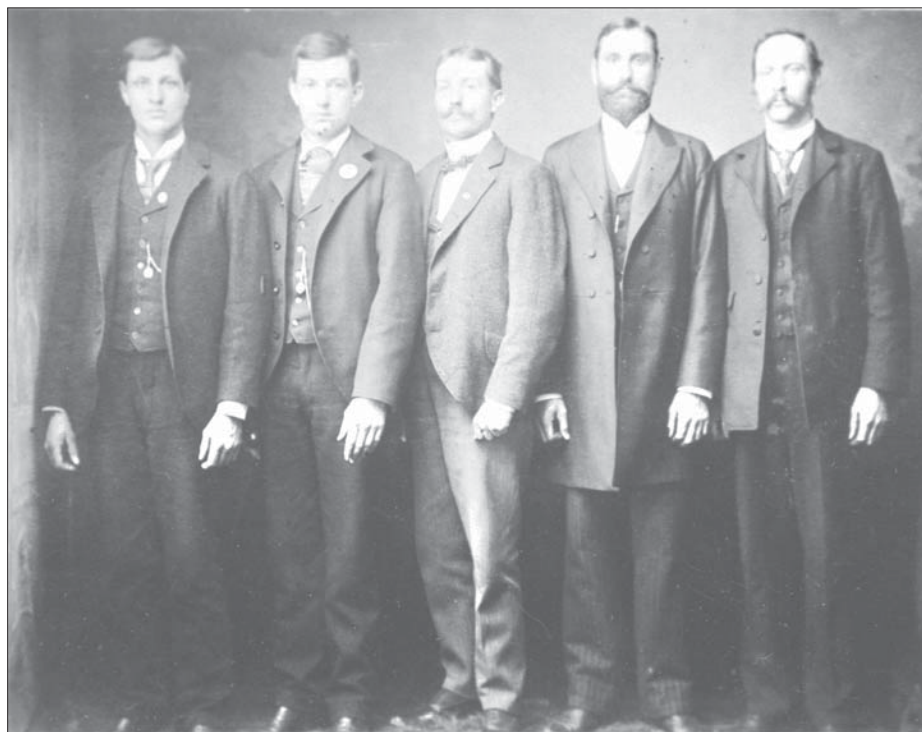
And also at working at the carpenter trade.

Our parents passed away when we were small,

Leaving us stranded, with nothing at all.

Now we own our homes and have money to let,

What more can you from Us Orphans Expect?



The five American Lindblom brothers. From left: Oscar, Otto, August, Gustaf, and Andrew.