

LS 0098 – LS 0099
Axel Olson

Lennart Setterdahl: - Jag sitter tillsammans med Axel Olson - i Omaha, Nebraska. Han var född 1898, den 3:e maj, i Trelleborg, i Sverige och han kom till Amerika 1926.

Det är idag den 26 juli 1985. -

Can You tell me a little about Your parents.

Axel W. Olson: My mother, she was born in Småland - and - You know - at that time, they came down to Skåne and took some land. Betor; Sockerbetor, in the summertime. In the soil. To take them up in the soil. They always had a gang taking them down.

L: Both women, and boys.

Axel: She was a young girl then. All her sisters came down after that, she had five sisters. They worked on the same place, all of them - but in different times. And my dad, he worked on a farm - as my mother did - too. He had been down there for many years. So they worked together. Mother, she was 21, when she married, and my daddy was 25. But after they married, they went back to Trelleborg, to the town there. He got a job. They bought a house there - along the water there.

L: Did he work in the sugar beet fields too?

Axel: No no. No he worked on the farm. And she did too, after. She stayed down there. That's the reason that all of her sisters came down there too. He got a job as - he drove a bread truck - out in the country. That's many years ago. They had two horses, and the bread wagon - and they drove around in Sweden - and sold bread. He knew everybody there, You know. He knew everybody around town there and he liked hes whisky and he got to much of that some times. And some times - that's what my mother had told me - he had to much whisky some time, but the horses; they knew themselves. He leighed in the wagon, drunk, as - You know.

L: The horses, they knew better.

Axel: The horses, they knew their way home. The boss - The owner of the bakery, he had to lone him money to buy that house he had. (?). So my mothers brother, he lived in half of the house. So - he didn't know - he couldn't - he didn't know how much he had sold, or nothing. So the fellow, that had loned the money, he wanted to protect hes money so he could lean - not to lean, - what do You call it? Could; - so he wouldn't lose hes money. he - ... I don't know what You call it now.

L: .. I know what You mean. He had to protect himself.

Axel: Yes. He sold the house. Everything.

L: How many children were You at that time?

Axel: We was - At that time we were five kids.

L: And You were born too.

Axel: Yeh. I'm the second one.

L: Oh - I see.

Axel: Now; I'm the oldest.

L: Did You help Your dad too in this bakery delivery?

Axel: No no. I wasn't that old. At that time, that I'm talking about now, I was only four or five years old. Then we had to move out in the farm, as 'statare. They called it 'statare.

L: Ja.

Axel: We drew a team horses. You know: in Sweden, even if they had about a couple of hundred acres; or tunnland, av jorden; the farmer himself, he didn't work at all. But they took that much help: four, or five, hired hands - to work it down, and farm it. Another one took care o the cows. You know what I mean?

L: Yes. Your mother helped too then, så som statare?

Axel: Ja.

L: They both helped of. She was milking the cows perhaps?

Axel: No, not at That time. Later on. So they had to go out in the farm - and - he worked like that for a couple of years. But then he started as a 'ryktare. Det heter väl 'ryktare.

L: Ja.

Axel: My mother, she helped with the cows too and he took care of all the cows; 40 50 cows they had, to take care of and milk them. When he started that I was five or six years old. And .. the time went along.

L: You had a hard life on the farm then.

Axel: They had a long house then. There were five sex families lived in that house, telling lies - and everything.

L: You remember those years though?

Axel: I remember that. I remember that. I remember that, after about sex years old; or five years old. Not all of it, but my mother recited. But after sex years old, I think I remember most of it. And then You grow older. I had to help my dad.

L: With the cows?

Axel: Yeah, and all that. And some times he got to much whisky. When I was eleven ten years old I had to take care of Everything there, he was really drunk.

L: Where did he get the whisky then?

Axel: Well You know - they had - they had - at that time - they had all the whisky they wanted. At That time. And later on, they couldn't -

L: In other words; they could drink on their jobs?

Axel: Mabee somebody did. I don't know. I couldn't tell You that! And then, when I was 12 13 years old, they had to push me out, for farmers. They hired me out to farmers. I haven't quitt school then. I worked; from March to June, goeing to school every day, and took care of the farmers cows. I always was. And later on after school I had to take a team horses and then they had another kid (? Resten av mening).

L: You were a man, then.

Axel: I was a man when I was 12 13 years old.

L: You did a man's job.

Axel: I did. Yes.

L: How much did You get in pay then? Could You keep that money?

Axel: Well. No! I was hired out for 80 crowns.

L: A month?

Axel: 80 crowns, for the hole time, for eight months. 10 crowns a month and - 'mat och logi.

L: Could You keep that money then?

Axel: Well. Yes I could keep the money, the most of the money, as I was hired out up to the 24th of October, You know. During the summer, this farmer, that I worked for, he had loned me out to some other farm, that he knew. There was threshing and he paid me two crowns for that day - that farmer. - And I remember all these stuf You know! Then, when that 24th October come, my farmer, that I worked for, he wanted me to stay a day over - because I had worked for the other farmer and I was paid 2 crowns. But I didn't want to do that - so he took of 2 crowns from me, of my value. So, You know!

L: It was tuf going.

Axel: That was tuf going then.

L: After the 24th of October, they didn't want You any more?

Axel: Then I had to go to 'läsa för prästen, to bli konfirmerad.

L: That started at the end of October?

Axel: Yeh.

L: And You stayed at home then?

Axel: I stayed at home then over the winter when I went 'till läsa för prästen.

L: What were You doing then?

Axel: Then I had to take care of most of the cows - You know - and help my dad. And make the cows. Some times I had nine ten cows to make. No, I didn't get pay for them, I was living at home. And then, after that confirm, that I was back at the farm. He hired me out to farmers and I worked for a farmer. I worked for a farmer till I was 18 years old. After I was about 14 or 15, 14 I guess I was, my dad he brought a house, not too far from the farm were I worked. He brought a house, with 3 'tunnland jord. So I had a cow - raised a cow - course I was still with them home. We were two boys. We were out working for farmers then. And then the third boy, he started learning. This was outside of Eslöv, just about 6 kilometer, outside of Eslöv. This boy, he is two years younger then I am. Then he started to learn in the painter trade, and he was there for that painter, learning his trade. And - You know, - he stayed with that painter, to he let my brother take over the shop and he died. Course; my brother kept on trading. He's still living too.

L: How about Your parents?

Axel: The parents, they still lived in that house. It was a house. That was my house, while I lived in Sweden. (Foto).

L: This house?

Axel: This house.

L: Du menar; det var statare i det huset?

Axel: No no no. It was their own house, they brought later on.

L: You know how they look like?

Axel: Yes.

L: Jaha. In statarhuset, there were seven families together?

Axel: I don't know if it was seven, but at least five. But I was the only kid, 3 4 years old, then.

L: And they had kids in the other families.

Axel: All of 'dom hade' kids.

L: You all played together then.

Axel: All played together.

L: What did You do then?

Axel: I don't know.

L: You don't remember!

Axel: No, I don't remember that far.

L: Do You remember even it was hard times, sometimes.

Axel: Oh, sure it was hard times.

L: In what way, do You mean? Did You have enough to eat?

Axel: Well - You know; 'statarna, they had so many 'barn. He had to plant potatoes on. There was a part of his wages.

L: Yes.

Axel: And he had so many liter of 'mjölk.

L: Varje dag.

Axel: Varje dag, ja.

L: Was it enough, do You think?

Axel: No, it wasn't, because they had so many kids.

L: Oh I see.

Axel: And then there came some more kids after that. We were four five kids then and then there came a sister of mine. She's 80 years old now. I remember, when she was born. Yeh, I remember when she was born. But; You know - when they were statare - they had to take on So many acres of (?), so they could make extra money. My mother, she could work in the spring, but not in the fall. In the fall, I remember, my sister was born. I was five years old and I had to be out with my dad in the evening, because he took care of the job in the evening. He worked in the moon-light and he had a karosene light with him. So the times was like that. It became hard.

L: So their life was to work on a big farm?

Axel: Right. To drive the team of horses and do things what ever was to do.

L: Was it a big farm then?

Axel: Just a big farm, of 200 acres; 200 'tunnland. Well; - it's about 400 acres. And -

L: It was work every day in the week. Did You have some day off?

Axel: Well. As long as They drove the team of horses, they had the Sundays off, not every Sunday, but they had; most of the Sundays. After he took the job as a 'ryktare, then he had to work seven days a week.

L: Seven days a week. De ryktade på söndagen med.

Axel: Oh yeh. Sure, they had to fead the cows.

L: Ja, men rykta dom. Did they that in the Sundays too?

Axel: Yeh they did that too.

L: Jaha.

Axel: Yes.

L: Do You remember if You went to the church on the Sundays?

Axel: We never did go to church.

L: Never?

Axel: We never did go to church. My dad, he never did go to church. My mother; - she was a kind of religious. She brought up in that way in Småland, but my dad, he never did. So we never did go to church before we went to confirmation. Then we had to go to church every Sunday. We were going to the confirmation präst.

L: Did everybody go to confirmation?

Axel: Yeh.

L: Everybody.

Axel: Yeh, they did, yeh. But; after the confirmation, nobody went to church. In my family. And in the most of the families in Sweden.

L: You didn't see the pastor so often then?

Axel: No.

L: He never made any home calls?

Axel: No. You know - the 'regering - what You call it. The taxes belonged to the state; the states church.

L: How about the other churches - like the missionshus?

Axel: Yeh - they had that in the cities, yeh.

L: But not out in the country?

Axel: No. Men Frälsningsarmén, that is an army.

L: So then, did You go to the military service?

Axel: Then I (?). So then I was 18 years old and quitted the farm. I went up to Göteborg and worked in the ship yard there in Götaverken. And I worked there. I worked with Everything. I was homesick. Even if we had a hard time, being so many kids at home.

L: So You wanted to go home.

Axel: Yes. I stayed there for quite a while, with all kinds of work. I worked in black smith jobs - and - then - later on - i worked in a place where they built ships; Götaverken, in Skåne.

L: I Göteborg?

Axel: No. In Landskrona.

L: Did they have the Götaverken?

Axel: Yeh. And I worked there for a couple of years. And; like I said; I worked with Everything. I was about .. 22, It was just before I had to go in to the military and I had to go in there for 6 months, at That time. After I came back from the military, well, i Guess i worked with Everything. I worked in buildings and I was tempted to the brick layers. They had a lot of hard work there, to (?) labours.

L: Were You the only one from Trelleborg in Your place? Did you have any friend with You from there?

Axel: No no.

L: You were alone.

Axel: Yeh. It was around 1925. My uncle, he lived here in Omaha - it's my mothers brother. They were all down there, there were seven or eight kids. And; he talked me to go here. I had had a little money, but not much - and he loaned me the rest of it, to get here. It was in 25. He came home to Sweden in 25 to Christmas. His name was Hilding Håkanson. So I came here and I lived with him for about four or five months, so I had paid back my (?). I (?) him 600 crowns - I don't know how much it was in dollars.

L: He bought the ticket for You?

Axel: No, I bought it myself. But - he helped me - in the way, course: if I had to go to the regular channels, it would have taken me a hole year to get in here. But; if You went to a farm, as a farm hand, You could get there, right away.

L: You had to go to a farm then?

Axel: His wife - she knew some farmer in Oakland, Nebraska, - Ekdahl I think his name was. So; I was supposed to go to him, but I didn't go there. This is the - this is the way to get in here; sooner. Ekberg was his name, yeh.

L: So he signed the papers?

Axel: He helped me with the papers, but if he ever did; I don't know. But he helped me with the papers. I was supposed to go with him, at the time when he went back, but I didn't have all my papers ready then, so I had to go with the following boat.

L: Did You leave from Copenhagen?

Axel: No, I left from Göteborg.

L: Göteborg.

Axel: Yeh.

L: On what boat then? Drottningholm?

Axel: I don't know if it was Drottningholm or Stockholm. I don't remember anything about that. I don't remember that. I think it was Stockholm. It was the name of the boat.

L: It went straight to New York?

Axel: Right to New York.

L: Was Ellis Island closed?

Axel: No. I had to go through there, the 7th; 7th of April 1926. It was evening. We had to stay on the boat to the following day - and they had a ferry, came and took us up and took us to Ellis Island. And we spent most of the day there; to go through all our papers and doctors, and

everything, You know. Towards the evening they took us to different railroad stations. There was a lot of people that was going out to California - and girls too. I thought I would go with them. (? Början på meningen to Omaha, but - No - No - I didn't get there! They just took; me and a girl, a girl that was from Helsingborg in Sweden, she was going to Kansas city, and I was going to Omaha. And they took me way on. First they stopped in Philadelphia and then another lady came and took us out of the train. We had to sit there, like to sit in a yale there. It was like a yale, course: You had to do it, so they didn't lose You. So; they put us on another train, which went to S:t Lewis. There, they took us out of the train again. And the girl, she was going to Kansas city - and I would go to Omaha. And they put me on a train and it was the wrong train, that I found out later on, because after I had another train for about an hour, so; they took me out of the train again! And: I didn't think it was right, so I said: "No. I don't know were to go"! They knew I wouldn't want to go out, but; they finally got me out. Brunswick was the place - the station were they took me off. And I was supposed to be here in Omaha the day before. Because they sent me on.

L: What happened with the girl to Kansas city?

Axel: At first, we left New York, We bought a lunch box for three days.

L: Three days.

Axel: There was so much in it, but we didn't eat, none of us. We couldn't eat nothing. The girl, she had such a headache in two days, so; she couldn't eat at all. And I didn't really feel like eating either. I was worried about things.

L: Did You have any food packed in Your suitcase from Sweden?

Axel: No. You don't have to have That.

L: What did You pack, when You left Trelleborg?

Axel: We lived in Eslöv then.

L: In Eslöv ja. What did You pack then, when You left for America? Do You pack anything special, clowing or?

Axel: No. Just what I had on me. It was just what I had on me, that's all. And I had - my mother sent me the bible.

L: Did You have an overcoat?

Axel: I had an overcoat. It was in the wintertime.

(Skr hoppar över kassett 1:s sida 2, då ljudet hörs för svagt och osäkert. Går därför nu över till kassett 2, sida 1).

L: You stayed as a carpenter, for how many years?

Axel: Eleven; i think it was.

L: And You liked it?

Axel: Yes. My wife, really she want to come up in Nebraska again. One night, when I came home from work, she said: "How about set the house up for sale, and take a trip to Sweden. So we did. I had spent a little money, I did myself. When I bought it, I asked 2 700 for it, but I gave them down to 2 200 and I paid 200 down, and 60 dollars a month.

L: That was a good deal then.

Axel: Yeh. And I worked there for a long time; for Swedes, most the Swedes I worked for., Swedes the bosses. And we went to Sweden. After we came to Sweden: my dad, he didn't like, because I hadn't tought the kids Swedish.

L: You had one child with You to Sweden then? Or both of them?

Axel: Two.

L: Both of them.

Axel: Yes. One was five and one was ten. He didn't like that I hadn't taught them Swedish!

L: Did You and Your wife talk Swedish with each other when You met in 1930?

Axel: No.

L: There was all English.

Axel: Yeh. I had been here for ten years then.

L: It was no reason to use the Swedish.

Axel: No. She knew all the Swedish.

L: But You didn't

Axel: No, I didn't have to.

L: Your dad, he reminded You, that You had two Swedish children, they couldn't speak Swedish.

Axel: Right!

L: You were in trouble.

Axel: Yeh!

L: So what did You say?

Axel: Well, I don't know what to say. What could I say? I couldn't say anything.

L: Did they learn any Swedish during Your stay?

Axel: The boy, he learned Swedish with my dad. He spoke Swedish, all the time.

L: With Your dad?

Axel: Yeh, on the farm. And we had a girl from Sweden. They always spoke Swedish. So he knew quite a bit, but he's forgotten it now, I guess. We came back from Sweden. We stayed here on the farm for a while. Then we went out again. I had a car, waiting for me, here in Nebraska. So we set up for California again. We came out there and didn't have a place to stay. You couldn't hardly get a place to stay!

L: How was the times in California then?

Axel: I don't know what it was, because; You couldn't go to a place to rent, or nothing.

L: But Your wife had changed Your mind of going, or staying here.

Axel: No. We didn't know what we wanted!

L: Did You want to be a farmer up in Stromsburg? You know; it's a good land there.

Axel: No! No I didn't want to live there.

L: But You could afford a farm if You wanted to though.

Axel: Oh mabee I could ever. Oh, yes. No I didn't know how to do farming in this country, because I have never worked with a farm here, in this country.

L: But You worked with Your father in law, with his farm.

Axel: Yeh, but it works differently than they do in Sweden. We didn't like it. In Sweden, we had seen so many pretty places. So we discussed in California. There is nothing in California that I think is pretty. In the summertime, everything is burned up.

L: You discovered that during Your visit to Sweden?

Axel: Yes. Well. I don't know if we discovered then. So we went back, we stayed over the winter, because the kids had to go to school. The spring came when we went back to - it was in 48 - to Omaha. It took us five days to come back again. Here in (?). You know (?), in Omaha?

L: It's a suburb?

Axel: Yes. That's a very nice place up there.

L: It's the north west, isn't it?

Axel: North north/ west, yes.

L: North west. Of Omaha.

Axel: Yeh. We came round here, I knew the house. I just had a little money, and wanted to spend it.

L: You had still money left!

Axel: Oh yes. Even when we went to Sweden, we had a little money. We had to pay 3 000 dollars for the lot.

L: It was not expensive, at That time.

Axel: Yeh. We don't know, because: it's 50 years ago. No - that's not 50, that's about 40 years ago. I built the house too. I was staying with people. Because I put an add in the paper, that we needed a place to stay. It was a Danish couple, that answered the add. They were going to do a vacation to Colorado and they needed somebody staying in their place. So they took us in. It was down on the 27th, and (?). So we stayed there, while they were going on vacation. I did my house. I had the roof on, and everything, but I hadn't finish the inside. I had the doors on, and the outside doors on. So we moved in there. And I went to work.

L: You didn't have any work during that time?

Axel: I didn't want a work. I wanted to build it, anyway. As soon as I got on the roof, to move in there, I looked for a work. In my foundation, there was a Sweede too; Carlson was hes name, he did work for a contractor in the name of (?), here in Omaha. He wanted somebody to run the work. So he told him about me. The contractor came out to me and asked me about if I wanted to go to work for him. And I did. Stayed for him, for ten years, as a forman. He was a pretty good man.

L: And then You finished up Your house.

Axel: I finished it at my spare time. It took me four years to finish it.

L: As a carpenter, You didn't belong to the Union?

Axel: Like I said; I was lucky to join the Union. But, as a carpenter, i wasn't, at that time.

L: How was Omaha; in the 30s - and in the 40s? Was it a strong union?

Axel: No, it wasn't.

L: It wasn't.

Axel: No. No.

L: It was not as Chicago then, for instance.

Axel: No, but it busted up, during the Depression.

L: You went to Sweden.

Axel: Yeh. I got to keep up my union dues either.

L: What happened then?

Axel: After the times got better, I started building. I joined the Union.

L: Was it the last time that You visited Sweden with Your wife in 1946?

Axel: No no. I have been there twice, after that. The children was eleven and eight years old. My daughter, and my whife, they went to Sweden in -77. My daughter, she wanted to go to Sweden and meet her cousins there. She has a lot of cousins there. So I asked her if she wanted mam to go with her, because she can't talk Swedish, not enough, she can a little. And she did. They went in -77. I went in -78, took her with me. So how many times has she been there? Four times.

L: How has Sweden changed now, in Your eyes?

Axel: Oh, that has changed a lot. I have would going back the next day, if I had money!

L: How about the organizations: like the Wikings, and Wasa. Did You join? The First Covenant church then?

Axel: No. My uncle, he took me down to the Wikings here in Omaha.

L: In the Swedish Audithorium.

Axel: In the Swedish Audithorium; - and I went to join the Wikings, and put 1 000 dollars in (?).

L: Was it in the 1940s?

Axel: No , there was in 1926.

L: It was Your uncle?

Axel: Yeah.

L: Could You aford to pay that premium every month?

Axel: I paid the premium on it, for a long, as long as I stayed here in Omaha. But after I got back to Rockford. I stayed there in four years. I dropped that, during the Depression. So I didn't pay. And then I had to join again. I joined the Wikings - not to long ago - but 16 years ago.

L: And 1946, they met on the Swedish Audithorium.

Axel: Yeh, they did. My uncle took me there and had me to join.

L: But not until You married, then You joined the Covenant church?

Axel: No, I didn't join the Covernants. The Lutheran church, in California.

L: The Lutherans.

Axel: Yeh.

L: Your children were growing up in California?

Axel: Yes.

L: How did they like to move back to Nebraska again from California? Did they like it up here?

Axel: They didn't talk about it, I think. He went to school, and to college. My daughter, she never did go to college, but she went to high school, and she have done pretty good. She has been there for 23 years- were she is working now.

L: What kind of company is that?

Axel: (?) Company. I don't know if You want to ask me something?

L: I want to ask Your whife now.

Axel: Yeh, You can do that.

Lennart Setterdahl: You, Mrs Olson, You were born in Stromsburg, Nebraska.

Anna Olson: That's right.

L: And You've grown up there on a farm. Was it a name on the farm?

Anna: No. It belonged to my dad's uncle - and he farmed there for a couple of years. And then he moved, he had another farm. He always was a farmer.

L: And they came from Sweden.

Anna: Yes.

L: Your dad came from Vena - and Your mother from Markaryd.

Anna: That's right. She was 18 years old when she came to this country.

L: Your father?

Anna: He was a little older. I think he was about 28 or 29.

L: There was a lot of Swedish spoken up in Stromsburg then. Did Your father and mother meet up in Stromsburg?

Anna: No. My mother: when they came from Sweden, they landed in Pennsylvania; in Ludlowe and Kane. And there they stayed for about three or four years.

L: Did they came together?

Anna: No. They met in Ludlowe - and then they got married. And then; my dad's uncle preceded them to come to Stromsburg to farm, hes farm. That's why she came with him back here, - and they came to Stromsburg.

L: For how long did they stay in Ludlowe, and in Kane?

Anna: I don't remember.

L: Did he work up there?

Anna: Yeh, he worked as a plumber. And my mother; when she first came to this country, she worked in a laundry - got a dollar a day.

L: In Ludlowe?

Anna: Yeh.

L: He didn't work in any tannery? It's many of them up there: in Sheffield and Ludlowe, and in Wilcox.

Anna: No.

L: So - he moved to Stromsburg.

Anna: Yeh.

L: And he came, in what year, to Stromsburg?

Anna: 19 .. 19 ..No they came here about 1905. Because my two oldest brothers, they were born back in Pennsylvania - and then they came here to Stromsburg. So I think it was about 1905 when they came to Stromsburg.

L: Did he come about four five years earlier then, if they had two kids?

Anna: No, they didn't.

L: They came back then to farm.

Anna: Yeh.

L: He was turning away from the plumbing.

Anna: Annd to farming. He had to stay in Pennsylvania, because he was doing real good. He had done much better there than he did on the farm.

L: He said that?

Anna: Yeah.

L: He took over the farm, or?

Anna: No, he just farmed it. Hes uncle was (?) and so he ran the farm from somebody else.

(Skr. Hoppas över ett stycke, då ljudet är för dåligt).

L: You were born then, on this farm?

Anna: Yeh.

L: How big was it?

Anna: It was 80 acres. It wasn't very big.

L: But it was enough?

Anna: Yeh You could live on it - now and then.

L: It was corn and weat and oat, at that time?

Anna: Yeh.

L: Was it a dry place, when You came, or was it irrigation?

Anna: No, it was no irrigation.

L: If You look at a farm today - with irrigation, - and 80 years ago - it was different.

Anna: Sure, it was.

L: Sometimes it didn't grow up, I suppose.

Anna: There was many times, we didn't even raise anything. It just burned up then in the summer time, because the wether was so hot.

L: I see. What did they do then. I mean: då var dom på bar backe.

Anna: Well they had to live on pork and potatoes. Pork! I got sick and tired of pork!

L: But; You are still alive.

Anna: Yeah.

L: It must have been good to You! They had salt pork then? They salted in the fall?

Anna: (? För mening).

L: In the summer time too!

Anna: Yes.

L: No beef?

Anna: we used to canned that.

L: Canned beef.

Anna: Yeh, they smoked the ham out of the pigs. But; - we never went hungry.

L: And You raised Your own potatoes?

Anna: Yes.

(Lite överhoppat).

Anna: But in all things - there was hard times too, because - when I went to school, we all were in the same way. We had to wear our brothers overcoats. We were all pore farmers. I know what the Depression was.

L: You were right in it.

Anna: Yes.

L: But; You didn't go to the school during the Depression! You were married then, more or less, during the Depression, but You remember it was a tuf time.

Anna: Yes.

L: You remember the three big brothers Jonson?

Anna: Yeh.

L: Two of them came to prison.

Anna: I know that they got lost.

L: Was it after You were born, or was it before Your time?

Anna: No. It was after I was born - cause: I remember that. We were married when it happened.

L: OH, it was in the 30s then?

Anna: Yes.

L: Did they live far from Your place?

Anna: They lived not in Stromsburg, I think. It was around Stromsburg, in some place.

L: They said: there were three heavy fellows. They (?). And they lived on a farm?

Anna: I don't know if they lived on a farm, or what, but I know they lived around Stromsburg.

L: You remember a lot.

Anna: I sure did. Walked to school - and all. It was, mabee 4, 5 degease cold when we walked to school. We had about 2 miles to walk.

L: There was no school bus to bring up.

Anna: No.

L: You went to the school every day. In a one room school house.

Anna: Yes.

L: The teatcher, was she of Swedish background?

Anna: No.

L: American.

Anna: Yeh.

L: And she had to listen to all the Swedish talks.

Anna: She had to listen to me talk Swedish!

L: You didn't know any English then?

Anna: I didn't know any English when I started school, seven years old. All I knew was Swedish.

L: But how about the class-mades?

Anna: Yes, the Swedish ones. There was the same.

L: Did You talk much Swedish after You started school?

Anna: Yes. Dad; he wouldn't talk English. He talked broken Swedish until that he died.

L: He did.

Anna: He wouldn't go complete in English, but mother did.

L: Your mother was 17, - and You had a difference there.

Anna: Yeh.

L: Did Your mother help You when You came home from school?

Anna: No. She didn't know how. We had a struggle for ourselves.

L: You were the third in the line?

Anna: Yes.

L: You had two brothers?

Anna: Two brothers.

L: Did they help You with Your school work?

Anna: Yes.

L: So they still used Swedish as well as English.

Anna: Yes.

L: Your father - did he become a citizen after a while?

Anna: No. He didn't want to. My mother wanted to become a citizen, but he real didn't.

L: What was the reason for that?

Anna: Well. He put hes first papers in and somebody told him that he was a citizen, but he wasn't. He had to take some more papers out.

L: Was he a Republican or a Democate?

Anna: No.

L: Did he take part in any politics?

Anna: He thought he was a Republican. He went and voted, but - You know - they didn't count, because he wasn't a citizen!

L: Were they All Republicans out in Stromsburg?

Anna: Not all.

L: Who were the Democrates, by the way. Were there any Swedes?

Anna: The ones that lived in town, they were, but most of the farmers were Republicans.

L: Then The businiss men.

Anna: Better Democrates.

L: But most of the business-men in Stromsburg, they were Swedes. And You had Your own doctor and dentist.

Anna: Yeh.

L: And You had Your own bank?

Anna: We had two banks.

L: Two banks!

Anna: Yes.

L: Were they both Swedish?

Anna: Yeh, there were Swedish people.

L: Dominant.

Anna: Yes.

(Hoppar över ett stycke på band 2, sida 1).

L: How about festivals - like the Lucia festival. Did You have that?

Anna: No.

L: How about Midsummer?

Anna: No.

L: No Midsummer festivals! No 'påla in the church?

Anna: Oh yeah, we had that.

L: Which church did You belong to?

Anna: (?) church in Stromsburg.

(Överhoppad text återigen).

L: How many horses did You have on this farm?

Anna: We had - I think - about eight of them.

L: Eight horses!

Anna: Yes. and then we milked about eight to ten cows.

L: So there was always something to do. You were a team out.

Anna: It was my brother!

L: It was Your brother.

Anna: Yes.

L: You were together as a team.

Anna: Yeh.

L: In the hot sun.

Anna: Yeh.

L: You were 21 then, when You finally left.

Anna: Yes.

L: You said: it was enough.

Anna: Yeh.

L: What was the deciding factor for You?

Anna: I didn't want to be on a farm. I thought it was to hard work.

L: How about Your friends. Did they do the same work - or something else - before they left?

Anna: They have done the same thing.

L: They wanted to get married.

Anna: Yes.

L: Didn't You look forward to get married to a farmer down there in Stromsburg?

Anna: Noo!

L: You didn't.

Anna: Then I found him.

L: That was Your lucky day.

Anna: Yes!

L: What kind of work did You get in Omaha?

Anna: A made in a home.

L: How was that, compaired to be on a farm?

Anna: It was rather easier. It was hard work, but it was still better than on a farm.

L: You did a lot of washing and cooking?

Anna: I've done everything.

L: But the farming was?

Anna: To hard.

L: But wasn't it a free feeling though on a farm? In the winter time, what were You doing then, before You left the farm?

Anna: We used to go to school. When we came home, we had to do our own ironing. We had to iron clothes, and things like that. We always had to work.

L: But after You were finished, from the school - and the confirmation, when You were 17 18, and 19. What did You do then during the winter time? You had to iron then?

Anna: Yes.

L: All washing.

Anna: Yes.

L: There was a lot of baking.

Anna: Yes. They baked everything.

L: They had a lot of bread to the dinners.

Anna: Yes.

L: Your parents - how did they use the weat?

Anna: They used to take the weat to a mill and have the grain into flouer. At the town, that was named (?), they had a mill, that goes the grain into flouers. And that will take so much and then we came home, mabee we had four or five sacks of flouers.

L: It was told as the old happy time. It was a hard work.

Anna: Sure, it was.

L: Did You have to eat; from one day to another, or was it tuff sometimes?

Anna: No. We never did go hungry! We didn't have a lot, but we never went hungry.

L: Do You remember - when You were growing up at the farm - if anybody from Sweden immigrated to Stromsburg? Or; was it to late?

Anna: No - I think it was to late. There was a lot of them; - All the neighbours around us was of Swedish farmers.

L: But No-one came in?

Anna: No.

L: They did, like Your husband, - they stayed in Omaha, and in the bigger cities. They had enough of the farming.

Anna: Yes!

L: Your father bought another farm, You said.

Anna: No, he didn't buy it, he just rented it. He just rented the farm.

L: How about Your brothers. Did they become farmers?

Anna: One of my brothers, he became a farmer - and the other one, he left. He worked for my uncle in (?) down in Texas.

L: How about during the Depression. A lot of farmers left Nebraska at that time.

Anna: They sure did.

L: Even in Stromsburg?

Anna: There were some, that left, and went up to California, and then they got stuck out there, because they couldn't find any work up there.

L: They did return again?

Anna: They came back.

L: So there was a tuf time.

Anna: There was.

L: You remember that.

Anna: Yes.

L: And it was more open fields then, at that time. - It was just blowing and blowing.

Anna: But - You know - now; the farmers said: they are not living as close together, like they used to live. To farm now; 7, 8, 9 hundred acres of the land; each farmer, - to make a living, they have to, now adays.

L: So many farms in between are gone.

Anna: Yes.

L: Were these farmers retired, or quitt farming, or moved off?

Anna: No. There were a lot of them that was retired.

L: There was very ruf years then, even in the 20s. Pretty tuf going to be a farmer.

Anna: It was.

L: So You didn't even think about making a living out there?

Anna: No.

L: But it's the Fureria - if You are there in the summer time. In the winter time it's a bit chilly, a cold, all the way up to Saskatchewan!

Anna: Yes!

L: You said that You lived so closed with the farmers, and that they were all Swedes. Where did You gather - outside of the church?

Anna: The farmers used to go together on Sundays - and we had mabee supper together and we kids played our games. That's the way we entertained ourselves.

L: It was a couple of neighbours then?

Anna: Yeh.

L: What kind of games did You play, at That time?

Anna: Drop the handkerchief.

L: There was for the kids.

Anna: Yeh, there was.

L: What did the older people do in the summer time, when they came together for picknicks?

Anna: They just sat. They were tired!

L: No activities on the Sundays.

Anna: No. As the Sunday was a day of rest. They didn't do, like they do now. They never did work on Sundays, cause they said: that was the sabbat day, You are supposed to rest.

L: And All observed that?

Anna: They observed that day. They didn't work, like they do now. Now; they work on Sundays, or any time.

L: How about the pastor. Was he closed to the families?

Anna: He used to come out and visit a person.

L: When he was sick, or?

Anna: Yeh.

L: Who took care of the fund raising of the church?

Anna: You know: After we got confirmed, we gave 12 dollars a year for a membership.

L: At the family?

Anna: No, each one of us. We gave 12 dollars, each one of us, for a year. That when we were confirmed. But it wasn't very much, 12 dollars a year.

L: That was a lot of money to make extra though.

Anna: I know that.

L: How much did You get pay for husking 100 (?)?

Anna: He told my brother, and I, that if we could husk a 100 bushels of corn, in a day, he would give us 40 dollars - and - well; - we thought it was something - so we (? några ord) and we did make 100 bushels!

L: And he paid You 30 dollars.

Anna: Yeh.

L: And 12 dollars went to the pastor.

Anna: Yes!

L: And three dollars for Yourself! What did You think then?

Anna: It was very much.

L: How about insurance?

Anna: They had insurance - that Lutheran Brotherhood.

L: Did You join that?

Anna: No.

L: Did most of the people join it, or - what do You think?

Anna: Not to many.

L: It was an extra cost?

Anna: They couldn't aford it.

L: They took a chanse on it.

Anna: Yes.

L: If something happened? If a person got a broken leg. Who paid for it?

Anna: Some doctors - they didn't have any things. The farmers couldn't pay him.

L: But - I suppose - the people didn't go to often to the doctor though.

Anna: No!

L: It was only when they were really

Anna: Really sick. When we used to have a cold, my mother used to fry unjons and put it on (?), and clothes and put it on our chest, just as hot as it could be. It was to break the cold.

L: And it Did break?

Anna: Yeah. And we took some kind of liniment: Watkins Liniment, in water, when we had a cold or stomy ache and that helped us. We didn't go to a doctor, like You do here now.

L: Did You go to the doctor in any time, when You were growing up?

Anna: Yeh. No. Mr (?); he pulled my teeth out. He used to pull our teeth, he used to put a string around a baby tooth - and then pulled it out.

L: But the other teeth. Did You go to a dentist?

Anna: Yes.

L: Did You go to the hair dresser when You were young?

Anna: No.

L: That was not a custom, at that time.

Anna: We had long hair and we had it in a bun, a bun or something, back of our heads.

L: All the girls had it like that!

Anna: Yes. You braid Your hair and then it got curly.

L: And there was no make up, with lipstick - and?

Anna: Noo. We didn't have it then. Eye shadows - and everything, that they use now!

L: How about the hey. They didn't bild the hey like they do today?

Anna: They built the hey.

L: In Your time too?

Anna: No! They didn't. When I was growing up they were just (?). Just (?), without being baled.

L: Over the years. Do You remember; the summers were very dry and warm then. The crop didn't grow?

Anna: No. There was lots of summers were we rased good crops.

L: But there was always a cry for rain.

Anna: Yes.

L: Nobody said it rained to much in the summer. How about grass hoppers. Do You remember them?

Anna: Yeh. Grass hoppers, and potato bugs. They didn't use all that kind of stuf to kill the bugs. We had to go out there and pick up all the potato bugs, by hand.

L: Did You put them in oil, or something?

Anna: Yeh, to kill them.

L: But they didn't show up every year though?

Anna: No. We had a hole wagon (?) potatoes, and the next summer we had new potatoes. That was the way You Had to do - and just the same thing with pork. They used the butcher in the winter time, salted it down and smoked it. There was one farmer who had a smoke house and he used to smoke it for people. And the beans - we always canned that. It was good!

L: You never went hungry.

Anna: no. And then, during the crushing time; there we had all those men to cook for. They crushed the weat. Sometimes mabee 18 men.

L: How long time did the crushing take? A couple of days?

Anna: A couple of days for each farmer. Then it goes to somebody else.

L: Your dad then - did he save that grain, or did he sell the most of it during the Depression?

Anna: He saved - then. And then he sold it the way he wanted. He didn't sell it right away.

L: He kept it then for awhile.

Anna: Yeh.

L: Was it mostly wheat or corn, or?

Anna: Oats, and corn.

L: No soiling?

Anna: No. I've never heard of soiling when I was growing up.

L: How about sun flowers?

Anna: I've never heard about it either.

L: They still have sun flowers down in Your park.

Anna: I read in the paper that some farmer is raising some sun flowers and he sells the seeds.

L: Yes, they have it more up in the North, in South Dakota.

Anna: Yes. Up in Minnesota they have it too.

L: Did You travel far? You went to Omaha; it was the biggest town?

Anna: Yeh.

L: How about ?

Anna: Yeh once in awhile.

L: And how about the west? How far west did You go, before You were 20 years of age?

Anna: When my father went (?) Home(?). And then it was another town we used to go fishing, were they had this flour mill, and that was named (?). That was so far we went. Oh we went to York.

L: How about Malmo?

Anna: No, I never heard of that before I came to Omaha.

L: That's a Swedish town too, You know.

Anna: I know.

L: So You didn't know of that.

Anna: No.

L: When You look back at Your work at the farm. How do You look at it?

Anna: No. I didn't think anything of it. I just thought it was something I had to do. We never complained that it was a hard work. We just decided that we had to work.

L: Did Your mother sometimes try to change Your ideas of what to do.

Anna: Yes.

L: What did she say then?

Anna: She let us know it.

L: How about Your father? Could You change his ideas of running the farm at any time?

Anna: No.

L: How about Your brothers?

Anna: They didn't either. They done it the way dad did.

L: None of Your grandparents moved to this country?

Anna: No.

L: And You went over to Sweden in 1947.

Anna: Yes.

L: It was the first time. Your mother, she never went to Sweden.

Anna: No - and my dad neither.

L: What did they tell You before Your journey to Sweden?

Anna: My mother, she wanted me that we should go to Markaryd, were she was from. And we hunted that town up. Then we brought some things back to them.

L: Did she have brothers or sisters in Markaryd?

Anna: She had a brother there, but he died when he was 50 years old - and - he had five children, and they are still living. She had that three brothers that came to America and ; another sister. And then that one brother, he stayed in Sweden.

L: What did they ask You, when You came back from Sweden?

Anna: They wanted to know all about it.

L: They didn't want to go with You?

Anna: No.

L: They thought they were to old, or?

Anna: No; they didn't have the money. We didn't have enough for our own trip!

L: You were happy to not become a farmer in Stromsburg. You fixed the right man! and it was a Swede! What did Your parents say then, when You came home with Axel?

Anna: They were just thrilled, because I was the only one that picked a Swede. The rest of them married Germans. Their parents were from Germany. They were from (?) from Germany.

L: There were many Germans? In the west of the country - wasn't it?

Anna: Crebs; I think their name is.

L: They are Germans?

Anna: Yeh.

L: Did Your father ask Axel to became a farmer?

Anna: No.

L: Axel had worked on a farm in Sweden.

Anna: That was enough.

sTranskriberat från kassetband 2011-12-01 /O-KS