

THE IMMIGRANT'S CHILDREN

Hulda E. Thelander, M.D.

Among Father's papers, I once found a poem in Swedish, dated the year he immigrated to America. I have undoubtedly translated it with many errors, but the sentiment is there and gave me an insight that I never got from our parents.

AMERICA ONWARD!

"My trunk is packed! I shall sail far away to a foreign land. And why is this not all joy when one is a poor laborer? Certainly, it feels both heavy and sad for the second time to sail from Sweden, and from my dear (beloved) girl friend, whom I shall never forget.

America is the shore where my future lies; and there in a free land I want to seek my fortune.

Although last time I did not find it there, four years passed, I lost my job, sickness and strife intervened.

One may encounter so much!

Yet, farewell my old homeland, once more I will leave you for to be a slave with a master on hand, no longer pleases me. NO! Freedom I love and an honest righteous law that treats the rich and poor alike, and doesn't sell ones self for money.

So, farewell, mother of mine, weep not, shed no tears, only seek to forget that I am far away.

Say a prayer for me, that the Lord be with me. He will then protect me so I may again be with you.

Farewell to both relatives and friends who have wished me well; and to all who know me, I bid farewell. The woods, the elfs, the dale-you were my childhood home; the cottage where I slept and dreamed my childhood dreams.

And so farewell also to my darling sweetheart. Be true to me and don't forget me. Send a thought over the sea to me and keep me in your mind.

The promises we gave to each other, I can use as my staff when wandering. And, if you should change your mind, I shall wish you only good luck.

Now I end my poor rhyme and I am ready to leave, my last
greetings to you all
When the signal blows, farewell to all and live happily.

These are my wishes and those of my traveling companions
as we leave the Ryd Station.

Oskar Olmstad
May 4, 1886

Neither Father, nor Mother discussed their childhoods much. They were born in Sweden. Father came to America in 1886 at the age of 22 years. His brother, Gustave Erik, two years younger, had preceded him by a couple of years and settled in St. Peter, Minnesota. Swedish immigrants drifted to Minnesota probably because the climate, cold winters and hot summers, rugged terrain and lakes, reminded them of their homeland.

On my first visit to Sweden in 1934, I spent time with the family of my maternal aunt, the Jacobsons in Stockholm and tried to find out more about our background. According to Aunt Emma, both sides of the family had lived on farms and had been agriculturists ("Landbrukar"), back as far as anyone knew. At one time, some members of Mother's family had also managed a stagecoach, but I could find no record of doctors, preachers, or other professionals. In those early days, it seems most of the people lived off the land. Both sides of the family were frugal, honest, industrious, self-employed farmers.

According to letters in my brother Eric's collection, the family name was first spelled "Tellander". It was not changed to "Thelander" until Father received his citizenship papers. Uncle Gust had changed his surname which had been "Persson" in Sweden, because he thought there were too many Swedes in America with names ending in "son". It was not unusual for immigrants to select a new name upon their arrival in the States, and there was no legal difficulty in doing so.

Apparently, Father and his "sweetheart", Ida, had an understanding that she would join him in America as soon as he was settled in a job, because within a year of his emigration from Sweden, he sent for her. Ida arrived in Minneapolis in late 1887, where the brothers had moved, and on April 21, 1888 Johan and Ida were married. For the wedding ceremony she wore a blue silk gown that must have fitted her waist snugly for I remember it seemed small even when it became a dress-up costume for Amelia and me. The simple lines of the Empress design curved gracefully until it touched the floor, and because of our short legs then, the flow ended in a heap. Although it was a beautiful gown, equal to any I have seen preserved in museums, it met an ignominious fate as material for numerous doll dresses.

Mother told me that she was homesick and shed many tears her first months in America. In fact, her love for the country and farm life may have inspired them, after four years, to find a place about 100 miles north of Minneapolis. It was in Darling Township, near a village called Little Falls, which had been built on a waterfall of the Mississippi River.

They purchased wilderness land and were among the first settlers at the community. Charles Lindbergh, Sr., an attorney in Little Falls, helped with some of the legal details. Father, who had had the Swedish equivalent of a high school education in the United States, wanted to continue his education but in Minneapolis he had to work and chose the carpenter's trade.

When he moved to Darling, he helped organize and construct the Swedish Lutheran Church and the public school. Later, he was treasurer of both of those institutions and of the Darling Township and Farmer's Mutual Insurance Company, as well.

In 1915, Clara Fuller wrote in the History of Morrison and Todd County:

"In addition to his farming, Mr. Thelander gives particular attention to the raising of livestock, favoring the Guernsey breed of cattle and having at present time thirty-five head. These he raises to sell as dairy cows. Mr. Thelander pursues no haphazard methods in his farming, but is most thorough and systematic in whatever he undertakes... Mr. Thelander has so ordered his life that he is in every sense worthy of the high regard in which he is held by his fellow citizens. His strict integrity and unpretending bearing have been appreciated and his influence is well known to have a most elevating effect, socially, morally and educationally, upon those about him. Because of his successful career and his high personal character, he is eminently entitled to representation among the leading men of his country."

Using skills he learned as a carpenter, Father built our home. With gables on either side of the roof, the upper half of the building shingled and the lower half covered with siding, the original house stood one and a half stories. A trim of white trapezoids cut from shingles decorated the gables, and a hand-carved trim, the roof edges. Attached to the northern side of the building, a "lean-to", housed the summer kitchen. Because of heat generated by the wood stove, particularly during warm summer weather, the kitchen was constructed as a separate unit. In this way, the house remained cool inside and less attractive to flies during the summer canning of wild berries or vegetables from the garden. Later Father expanded the kitchen on the western side of the house, creating a T-shaped farmhouse and added a front and side porch. This expansion enclosed the well and for the first time, we did not have to go out into the biting cold winter to pump water. The hard well-water, however, was so difficult to lather and use for washing clothes, that Father also built a cistern to catch soft rain water.

Upstairs, I shared a double bed with Amelia in the north-facing room. The four boys slept in a larger room with two double beds and a small room over the kitchen eventually became a third upstairs bedroom. On the first floor, were Mother and Father's bedroom, a livingroom, dining room, and kitchen. Outside, a machine shop stood near the kitchen and from the opposite side of the backyard to the south came the constant

chatter of chickens in the henhouse next to the granary. North of the garden, the pasture stretched with trees and a tongue of green. A creek flowed through the pasture and in the belly of a swamp, a lone grey boulder rose out of the water for 15 or 20 feet. Still further north, the scrub pines and agate treasures beckoned us to explore other playgrounds. This also was where we picked blueberries. Often we would bring lunch with us and during the lunch recess we would climb the pines to see how far we could see. In spite of our climbing, none of us ever had a broken bone.

In the spring, we sometimes found lady slippers, the Minnesota State flower, in the wooded areas, always a great thrill because they were scarce. Now, they probably have disappeared entirely. We tried to transplant them in our garden but never succeeded. In the meadows to the south we picked wild strawberries and some years, we even found enough to can. Mother made jellies or jams from the raspberries and strawberries that grew along the fence. Raspberries and strawberries tended to "settle" or crush in the pails, and it took much longer to pick any quantity. It was easier to fill a pail with blueberries or blackberries.

The original barn was built of logs, but mother did not like log buildings; she thought it indicated poverty. Also, she wanted the barn far from the house. Eventually the old log building was replaced by a new one which had a hip-roof. This allowed much space for hay and a hayfork was installed to ease labor. The barn was painted red. Later, a large round silo was added and the place began to take on an air of elegance.

As Father built the barn, I had great fun rambling all over it. Before the roof went up, I enjoyed walking on the planks which spanned the studdings. Mother was afraid to even watch me and begged me not to do it, but to me it was just fun. The greatest pleasure, however, was laying the shingles for Dad. I can't recall that Father even thought I was in the way or a nuisance, no matter how busy he was. We usually took a coffee-break mid-afternoon and during that interval had a nice chat. Some afternoons when the blueberries were ripe and I wanted to go up the bills and pick them, if no one else would go, Father would take time off to do it, rather than let me go up there alone.

My brothers, however, also supported me. We played such games together, such as hide-and-seek, horseshoes, and baseball. If any of the boys, brothers or others, would say, "girls can't do that," and father heard it, he would say, "She can do anything you can do". The present discussions about girls and boys games seem trivial and amusing to someone reared as I was.

Before automobiles, tractors and other motorized vehicles, the farm work was done with horses. Cattle was the chief industry but we also had sheep, pigs and chickens. Eggs were exchanges for groceries and just about paid for them. In the early years, mother churned the cream to butter. Some surplus grain, corn and potatoes were sold. Hay was baled and also sold. Another source of income was the sale of animals, such as cattle, sheep and hogs.

All the animals were raised on the farm. The birth of a colt was an exciting event. I remember my interest in the hatching of eggs. It bothered me when the chicks began to pick their way out; I wanted to help them but soon learned that many of them did not survive when thus assisted. Even chicks seemed to need a little hardship to develop their best potential.

We grew up taking for granted that there was enough to eat and that we could get new clothes when we needed them. Dirt, rags and waste were disgraceful. The house was always neat and orderly, and so were we.

The daily life on the farm was also orderly but full and busy, too. Mother was an efficient and hard-working person but tender and loving also. Sunday was a holiday except for the necessary chores of feeding and caring for the family members and the domestic animals. Except for mother and the babies, we all went to Sunday School. Afterwards, our house was usually full of people. We could bring home any number of friends we wished. We never had to get permission, and there was always enough food. Both the dining room and the kitchen had large tables that could seat 10 or 12 people. Most Sundays they were fully occupied for both dinner at noon and supper. Later, this custom was hard on some brides who had been reared differently but most of my sisters-in-law were soon converted to our habits.

Mondays were days of recuperation, especially for the feminine contingent who had borne the brunt of the "holiday" onslaught. But we still performed the routine work of meals, sweeping, dusting and tidying up the house. Tuesday was washday. In the family of eleven and before the days of drip-dry, this was a big task and took most of the day. We soaked the clothes, then scrubbed them on a washboard, and finally rinsed them. White clothes were boiled on the kitchen stove with soap and bleach in the water. A hand wringer squeezed out the rinsed clothes and then the fresh air dried them.

Curiously, the ironing on Wednesday was the one house chore that I enjoyed. On mending day, Thursday, we sewed on buttons, patched holes, and closed ripped seams. On Friday, we thoroughly cleaned the upstairs rooms by changing the linen, washing floors and dusting furniture. We put the area in tiptop order. The same cleaning process was applied to the downstairs on Saturdays, except the smaller rugs and rag carpets were taken outside and dusted. Friday and Saturday were also baking days. We baked the bread twice weekly to keep ahead of the farm appetites. On Saturdays we confectioned enough cakes, cookies and pies to last a week.

In addition to this daily routine was the seasonal work. We spent long winter evenings sewing, knitting, crocheting, spinning and sometimes weaving. For wool we sheared our sheep each Spring, washed their wool and then carded and spun it into yarn - - all done at home. With the yarn we knitted hose, mittens and sweaters. In later years, we sent the wool to nearby woolen mills and exchanged it for yarn. When we were little, Mother knitted with the natural color of the yarn. As we youngsters grew a little

older, we became sensitive to this color and objected to it since other children wore black hose and colored mittens and sweaters. Mother then dyed the yarn to please us.

Mother, and fairly early with the help of sister Amelia, made the girls' dresses, underwear and, at times, even coats. All the men's shirts were homemade, too, with the exception of Sunday shirts. These white shirts were bought. They had loose stiff collars that had to be attached with collar buttons to the body of the shirt. Sheets and pillow cases were also homemade, often from flour sacks, then made of cloth, that had been washed, bleached and sewed together. To trim some of them, we crocheted lace, embroidered designs or even did hemstitching.

In the Spring we carried out a thorough cleaning from the attic to the cellar, and from the yard to the utility buildings. We planted vegetables and flowers and kept the yard areas free of weeds. As soon as the plants and fruits ripened, canning began. Each year we preserved several hundred quarts of fruits and vegetables. The farm produced rhubarb, apples, plums, currants, gooseberries and tomatoes. The surrounding hills and meadows yielded blueberries, strawberries and choke cherries. To add still greater variety we purchased peaches, pears and apricots by the crate and canned those, too. The cellar kept potatoes and such hardy vegetables as carrots, rutabagas and turnips throughout the winter but we canned the corn, peas, beans and beets.

Some animals were slain as Fall approached because then we could rely on a continuous frost to keep meat frozen through the cold winter--Minnesota's natural frigidaire. The winter supply of meat included lamb, pork, veal and beef. Chicken was available the year 'round. During the winter we cut ice from the lakes or rivers and stored it for summer by packing it in sawdust in a shed. Ham was smoked in the smokehouse, then kept all summer. Since all edible parts of the animals were utilized, we were familiar with head cheese and pigs feet as well as liver, kidney and even sausages. For many years the blood of animals was also made into sausages.

In addition to cream and home made butter, Mother made huge cheeses. She would heat milk, add rennet, and when the curds were properly formed, she pressed them into molds and let them age. She used left-over serum, a whey, for another type of cheese by boiling the whey until only solids remained. It made a dark yellow, soft, creamy cheese which was my favorite. We were amused when a little city child visited our farm once and after observing the cow being milked by hand, asked, "Mother, may I have my milk from a carton?"

With a baby born every other year, how did Mother get all that work done? The hardship of repeated pregnancies and the responsibilities of a large family concerned all of us. The heaviest burden of care fell to Amelia, because she was the eldest girl. Before her marriage she often spoke to me about child bearing. The hard work made us fearful of marriage and offspring. Otto and I were concerned and curious enough to send for some

literature on birth control that we saw advertised. So that no one would see us, we sneaked upstairs to read it. It did not give us much information because the pertinent material had been deleted in compliance with postal laws of that period.

Is such a large family as ours desirable? I recall Mother saying on more than one occasion in her later life that hearing a new baby's cry made her shudder; she had hated pregnancy but always loved the baby when it arrived. We children always felt wanted and that we belonged.

Our family attended Sunday School faithfully. We usually walked, as there were no automobiles. When I was four or five years old, I insisted on going even though Mother thought it was too far for me to walk. Instruction in Sunday School consisted of an ABC book for beginning readers, then the catechism and an abbreviated Bible history. The service opened with a song in which all participated. The reading of Bible verses followed. John Johnson, my brother-in-law, Amelia's husband, Father and others served as Superintendents. But Father only served when no one else was available; he never liked performing in front of people.

Church members conducted the classes, which were all in Swedish. I learned to read Swedish in Sunday School before I learned English. The teaching, patterned after the Lutheran Church in Sweden, was factual and unemotional. We memorized the catechism--the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer and learned to tell stories from the Bible. I still think this was good basic training. Why not learn religion by memorizing direct quotes from the source, the Bible?

Church services were infrequent because there was no pastor for the congregation and a visiting speaker was relatively rare. Later, a number of churches combined so that one pastor served all of Little Falls, Darling and Freedheim. Divinity students frequently practiced their preaching on us.

Later, another church, the Mission Covenant Church, was organized by people in the community who thought the Lutheran Church had too much ritual with too little meaning for them spiritually. The new church appealed more to the emotions than the Lutheran Church which we attended. There were more prayer meetings, spontaneous confessions and testimonials. It seems to me now that people with different temperaments need different forms of expression, but when I was a child, this division in the churches was somewhat disillusioning, especially since the religious differences were carried over into the public school. Occasionally, the children of the Mission Church, especially after a revival meeting, would gang together and refuse to play with the rest of us. This might continue for awhile, then would be forgotten and we would be friends again. Our parents taught us tolerance, and not to take their aloofness seriously. We were always discouraged from retaliation-in-kind.

The important maxims we were taught to live by were these three: Judge Not That Ye Be Not Judged; Pride Goes Before a Fall; and Do Unto Others As You Would Have Them Do Unto You.

The old Swedish middle-of-the-way practiced by our parents was transmitted to us more by example than teaching. Both parents were rather non-verbal. They believed that too great a strictness in childhood and youth often led to rebellion and rejection of teachings later in life. On the other hand, we were warned against drinking, gambling and dissipation. "Pride Goes Before a Fall" was a frequent warning and in retrospect, we may have received this humbling admonition too often because all of us grew up with somewhat of a feeling of inferiority. First generation Americans tend to have enough of an inferiority complex without being reminded regularly to remain humble.

With three older siblings in school ahead of me, I learned of the ridicule suffered for not knowing the English language at the start of school. They brought home the idea that it was an embarrassing experience to be called "Greenhorn". I was probably at an impressionable age because I became determined to speak English before I started school. It became almost a phobia and I believe more so with me than any of the others. Playing "School" became a frequent pastime, with the younger members as the pupils and the older ones acting as teachers. I insisted that in speaking to dolls and toymen we used only English.

Near the time of my high school graduation, the editor of the Class Bulletin consulted classmates and published a list of the graduates and their personal traits, anecdotes, and possible futures. After my name there was only one word -- "Hulda." I assumed this meant that I was a bit of an enigma to my classmates. I felt incompetent, always fearful I would fail and in reciting before the class, I would slip up on "th" sounds which I had not known in speaking Swedish as a child. If then someone in the class giggles, I was crushed.

Even though I graduated at the head of my high school class, I still feared I would fail when I entered college. I wept when the girls in my medical school class leaked to the press that I graduated at the head of that class and that the Minneapolis Journal printed my picture with the caption "Bobbed Haired Girl Wins Top Honors Over Men Medics". To make it worse, some of the boys teasingly called me "an advertising doctor".

Since I had accepted an internship at Children's Hospital in San Francisco, I made a fellow graduate, who also was interning there, promise she would never tell a soul about my grades or the resulting publicity. Then I put my AOA and Sigma X keys in a box and tucked them away. During my internship in the hospital I just smiled to myself if I spied such keys dangling conspicuously on the watch chain of a visiting physician.

Gradually the attitude towards the plight of children with foreign born, non-English speaking parents has changed. Now, in the last decade, teachers have accelerated the remedy with culture studies, appropriate exhibits and parental visits to the classrooms. In the practice of medicine, however, I frequently encountered mothers with a poor mastery of English who complained that their children were critical of them and often disobedient. I would then approach the little patients alone, telling about the similarity

of my own childhood and perhaps the patient's parental background. As I watched children give orders to their parents and the mothers become exhausted from trying to please and obey every whim of their children, I wondered how my parents succeeded in making us feel that we wanted to help and spare them whenever possible.

Somehow it was transmitted that our parents worked hard for us and that we should help them whenever we could. The idea was that they needed rest. On Sunday mornings I would tiptoe downstairs to make breakfast as a surprise for Mother and Dad. Otto would sneak down early in the winter-time, too, to build a fire before they were up so the kitchen would be warm for them. Amelia and I often locked ourselves in the summer kitchen so Mother could not get in while we did the washing for her. Even when we were ill, we would help each other rather than awaken Mother at night for a drink or other aid. One night I was apparently somewhat delirious with fever, and every time I closed my eyes, I thought wild animals were coming at me. Each corner of the room had a fearful tiger or a lion ready to lunge. I cried out and woke up Mother, but I would not tell her how I felt because I did not want to disturb her.

We learned the principle of reciprocity but not to desire or expect either reward or payment for helping family members, friends and neighboring farmers. Because of the scarcity of ready cash, farmers simply swapped labor and equipment as needed for haying, building, road-making and hauling. This indoctrination occasionally had the disturbing effect of making it impossible for me to do "business" with family members. I would make a loan, but I couldn't take repayment in kind without feeling guilty. I, therefore, resolved to make outright donations when needed.

It was difficult to learn to deal with people who had been reared differently. Frequent offers to do something for the other fellow and experiencing no reciprocation often not even a "thank you", became annoying and was a difficult lesson to learn. The hardest thing for me to do was accept money for a sick child; I hid behind an office organization. My volunteer practice in the Child Development center at Children's Hospital for over 20 years gave me the greatest satisfaction of my career. Often I have thought that if I had started pediatric practice along I would have ended up a pauper.

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Halda E. Thelander, MD.

Among Father's papers I found a poem in Swedish dated the year he immigrated to America. ~~Possibly the poet, if it was not Father, was on the same ship; although the poem is in Father's handwriting, he may have copied it from the original.~~ I have undoubtedly translated it with many errors, but the sentiment is there, and ^{gave me an} ~~gives~~ insights that ~~we~~ ^I never got from our parents.

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(The Minnesota State House)

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As father built the barn, I had great fun rambling all over it. Before the roof went up, I enjoyed walking on the planks which spanned the studdings. Mother was afraid to even watch me and begged me not to do it, but to me it was just fun. The greatest pleasure, however, was laying the shingles for Dad. I can't recall that father ever thought I was in the way or a nuisance, no matter how busy he was. We usually took a coffee-break mid-

afternoon and during that interval had a ^{nice} friendly chat.

~~Curiously, no one else seemed to care for that break.~~ Some afternoons when the blueberries were ripe and I wanted to go up the hills and pick them, if no one else would go, father would take time off to do it, rather than let me go up there alone.

My brothers ^{however} also supported me. We played ^{such} games together ^{as} as hide-and-seek, horseshoes, and baseball. If any of the boys, brothers or others, would say, "girls can't do that," and father heard it, he would say, "She can do anything you can do." The present discussions about girls and boys games seem trivial and amusing to someone reared as I was.

Before automobiles, tractors, and other motorized vehicles, the farm work was done with horses. Cattle was the chief industry but we also had sheep, pigs, and chickens. Eggs were exchanged for groceries and just about paid for them. In the early years, mother churned the cream to butter. Some ^{surplus} grain, corn, and potatoes were sold; hay was baled and also sold. Another source of income was the sale of animals, such as cattle, sheep, and hogs.

All the animals were raised on the farm. The birth of a colt was an exciting event. I remember my interest in the hatching of eggs. It bothered me when the chicks began to pick their way out; I wanted to help them, ^{but} I soon learned that

many of them did not survive when thus assisted. Even chicks seemed to need a little hardship to develop their best potential.

We grew up taking for granted that there was enough to eat and that we could get new clothes when we needed them. Dirt, ~~was~~ rags, and waste were disgraceful. The house was always neat and orderly, and so were we.

The daily life on the farm was also orderly but full and busy, too. Mother was an efficient and hard-working person but tender and loving ~~also~~. Sunday was a holiday except for the necessary chores of feeding and caring for the family members and the domestic animals. Except for mother and the babies, we all went to Sunday School. Afterwards, our house was usually full of people. We could bring home any number of friends we wished. We never had to get permission, and there was always enough food. Both the dining room and the kitchen had large tables that could seat 10 or 12 people. Most Sundays they were fully occupied for both dinner at noon and supper. Later, this custom was hard on some brides who had been reared differently, but most of my sisters-in-law were soon converted to our habits.

Mondays were days of recuperation, especially for the feminine contingent who had borne the brunt of the "holiday" onslaught. But we still performed the routine work of meals, sweeping, dusting, and tidying up the house. Tuesday was washday. In a family of eleven and before the days of drip-dry, this was

a big task and took most of the day. We soaked the clothes, then scrubbed them on a washboard, and finally rinsed them. White clothes were boiled on the kitchen stove with soap and bleach in the water. A hand wringer squeezed out the rinsed clothes, and ^{then} the fresh air dried them.

Curiously, the ironing on Wednesday was the one house chore that I enjoyed. On mending day, Thursday, we sewed on buttons, patched holes, and closed ripped seams.^{On} Fridays we thoroughly cleaned the upstairs rooms by changing the linen, washing floors, and dusting furniture. We put the area in tiptop order. The same cleaning process was applied to the downstairs on Saturdays, except the smaller rugs and rag carpets were taken outside and dusted. Friday and Saturday were also baking days. We baked ~~all~~ the bread twice weekly to keep ahead of the farm appetites. On Saturdays we confected enough cakes, cookies, and pies to last a week.

In addition to this daily routine was the seasonal work. We spent long winter evenings sewing, knitting, crocheting, spinning, and sometimes weaving. For wool we sheared our sheep each Spring, washed their wool, and then carded and spun it into yarn -- all done at home. With the yarn we knitted hose, mittens and sweaters. In later years, we sent the wool to nearby woolen mills and exchanged it for yarn. When we were little, Mother knitted with the natural color of the yarn. As we

youngsters grew a little older, ~~however~~, we became sensitive to this color and objected to it since other children wore black hose and colored mittens and sweaters. Mother then dyed the yarn to please us.

Mother, and fairly early with the help of sister Amelia, made the girls' dresses, underwear and, at times, even coats. All the men's shirts were homemade, too, with the exception of Sunday shirts. These white shirts were bought. They had loose stiff collars that had to be attached with collar buttons to the body of the shirt. Sheets and pillow cases were also homemade, often from flour sacks ^(then made of cloth) that had been washed, bleached and sewed together. To trim some of them, we crocheted lace, embroidered designs or even did hemstitching.

In the Spring we carried out a thorough cleaning from the attic to the cellar, and from the yard to the utility buildings. We planted vegetables and flowers and kept the yard areas free of weeds. As soon as the plants and fruits ripened, canning began. Each year we preserved several hundred quarts of fruits and vegetables. The farm produced rhubarb, apples, plums, currants, gooseberries, and tomatoes. The surrounding hills and meadows yielded blueberries ^{strawberries} and choke cherries. To add still greater variety we purchased peaches, pears, and apricots by the crate and canned those, too. The

cellar kept potatoes and ^{such} hardy vegetables as carrots, rutabagas, and turnips throughout the winter but ^{we canned the} corn, peas, beans and beets

Some animals were slain as Fall approached because then we could rely on a continuous frost to keep meat frozen through the cold winter -- Minnesota's natural frigidaire. The winter supply of meat included lamb, pork, veal, and beef. Chicken was available the year 'round. During the winter we cut ice from the lakes or rivers and stored it for summer by packing it in sawdust in a shed. Ham ^{was} smoked in the smokehouse, then ^{it} kept all summer. Since all edible parts of the animals were utilized, we were familiar with head cheese and pigs feet as well as liver, kidney, and even sausages. For many years the blood of animals was also made into sausages.

In addition to cream and home made butter, mother made huge cheeses. She would heat milk, add rennet, and when the curds were properly formed, she pressed them into molds and let them age. She used left-over serum, a whey, for another type of cheese by boiling the whey until only solids remained. It made a dark yellow, soft, creamy cheese which was my favorite. We were amused when a little city child visited our farm once and after observing the cow being milked by hand, asked, "Mother, may I have my milk from a carton?"

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With a baby born every other year, how did Mother get all that work done? The hardship of repeated pregnancies and the

responsibilities of a large family concerned all of us. The heaviest burden of care fell to Amelia, because she was the eldest girl. Before her marriage she often spoke to me about child bearing. The hard work made us fearful of marriage and offspring. Otto and I were concerned and curious enough to send for some literature on birth control that we saw advertised. So that no one would see us, we ~~would~~ sneak upstairs to read it. It did not give us much information because the pertinent material had been deleted in compliance with postal laws of that period."

Is such a large family as ours desirable? I recall Mother saying on more than one occasion in her later life that hearing a new baby's cry made her shudder; she had hated pregnancy but always loved the baby when it arrived. We children always felt wanted and that we belonged.

13

Our family attended Sunday School faithfully. We usually walked, as there were no automobiles. When I was four or five years old, I insisted on going even though Mother thought it was too far for me to walk. Instruction in Sunday School consisted of an ABC book for beginning readers, ~~and~~ then the catechism, and an abbreviated Bible history. The service opened with a song in which all participated. The reading of Bible verses followed. John Johnson, my brother-in-law, Amelia's husband, ~~father~~, and others served as Superintendents. But ~~father~~ only served when no one else was available; he never liked performing in front of people.

Church members conducted the classes, which were all in Swedish. I learned to read Swedish in Sunday School before I learned English. The teaching, patterned after the Lutheran Church in Sweden, was factual and unemotional. We memorized the catechism -- the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer -- and learned to tell stories from the Bible. I still think this was good basic training. Why not learn religion by memorizing direct quotes from the source, the Bible?

Church services were infrequent because there was no pastor for the congregation and a visiting speaker was relatively rare. Later, a number of churches combined so that one pastor served all, ~~Little Falls~~, Darling, and Freedheim.

Divinity students ^{frequently} practiced their preaching on us, ~~before that development, however.~~

^{Later} Another church, the Mission Covenant Church, was organized by people in the community who thought the Lutheran Church had too much ritual with too little meaning for them spiritually. The new church appealed more to the emotions than the Lutheran Church which we attended. There were more prayer meetings, spontaneous confessions and testimonials. It seems to me now that people with different temperaments need different forms of expression, but, when I was a child, this division in the churches was somewhat disillusioning, especially since the religious differences were carried over into the public school.

Occasionally, the children of the Mission Church, especially after a revival meeting, would gang together and refuse to play with the rest of us. This might continue for awhile, then they would be forgotten, and we would be friends again. Our parents taught us tolerance, and not to take their aloofness seriously. We were always discouraged from retaliation-in-kind.

The important maxims we were taught to live by were ~~probably~~ these three: Judge Not That Ye Be Not Judged; Pride Goes Before a Fall; and Do Unto Others As You Would Have Them Do Unto You.

The old Swedish middle-of-the-way practiced by our parents was transmitted to us more by example than teaching. Both parents were rather non-verbal. They believed that too great a strictness in childhood and youth often led to rebellion and rejection of teachings later in life. On the other hand, we were warned

against drinking, gambling, and dissipation. "Pride Goes Before a Fall" was a frequent warning, and, in retrospect, we may have received this humbling admonition too often because all of us grew up with somewhat of a feeling of inferiority. First generation Americans tend to have enough of an inferiority complex without being reminded regularly to remain humble.

With three older siblings in school ahead of me, I learned of the ridicule suffered for not knowing the English language at the start of school. They brought home the idea that it was an embarrassing experience to be called "Greenhorn". I was probably at an impressionable age because I became determined to speak English before I started school. It became almost a phobia and I believe more so with me than any of the others. Playing "School" became a frequent pastime, with the younger members as the pupils and the older ones acting as teachers. I insisted that ^{in speaking for} dolls and toymen ^{we} use only English.

~~Swedish~~ Near the time of my high school graduation, the editor of the Class Bulletin consulted ~~a few~~ classmates and published a list of the graduates and their personal traits, anecdotes, and possible futures. After my name there was only one word -- "Hulda." I assumed this meant that I was a bit of an enigma to my classmates. I felt incompetent, always fearful I would fail, and, in reciting before the class, I would slip up on "th" sounds which I had not known in speaking Swedish as a child. If ^{then} someone in the class giggled, I was crushed.

Even though I graduated at the head of my high school class, I still feared I would fail when I entered college. I wept when the girls in my med-school class leaked to the press that I graduated at the head of that class, ^{and} ~~so~~ that the Minneapolis Journal printed my picture with the caption "Bobbed Haired Girl Wins Top Honors Over Men Medics," ~~and~~ To make it worse, some of the boys teasingly called me "an advertising doctor".

Since I had accepted an internship at Children's Hospital in San Francisco, I made a fellow graduate, who also was interning there, promise she would never tell a soul about my grades or the resulting publicity. Then I put my AOA and Sigma Xi keys in a box and tucked them away. During my internship in the hospital I just smiled to myself if I spied such keys dangling conspicuously on the watch chain of a visiting physician.

16
Gradually the attitude towards the plight of children with foreign born, non-English speaking parents has changed. ^{Now} In the last decade, teachers have accelerated the remedy with cultural studies, appropriate exhibits, and parental visits to the classrooms. In the practice of medicine, however, I frequently encountered mothers with a poor mastery of English who complained that their children were critical of ^{them} their parents and often disobedient. I would then approach the little patients alone, telling about the similarity of my own childhood and perhaps the patient's parental background. As I watched children give orders to their parents and the mothers become exhausted from trying to please and obey every whim of their children, I wondered how my parents succeeded in making us feel that we wanted to help and spare them whenever possible.

~~Far from disobedient, I was between 10 and 12 before I even realized that parents could disagree, and they never spanked us.~~ Somehow it was transmitted that our parents worked hard for us and that we should help them whenever we could. The idea was that they needed rest. On Sunday mornings I would tiptoe downstairs to make breakfast as a surprise for Mother and Dad. Otto would sneak down early in the wintertime, too, to build a fire before they were up so the kitchen would be warm for them. Amelia and I often locked ourselves in the summer kitchen so Mother could not get in while we did the washing for her. Even when we were ill, we would help each other rather than awaken Mother at night for a drink or other aid. One night I was ^{apparently somewhat} partly delirious with fever, and every time I closed my eyes I thought wild animals were coming at me. Each corner of the room had a fearful tiger or a lion ready to lunge. I cried out and woke up Mother, but I would not tell her how I felt because I did not want to disturb her.

We learned the principle of reciprocity but not to desire or expect either reward or payment for helping family members, friends and neighboring farmers. Because of the scarcity of ready cash, farmers simply swapped labor and equipment as needed for haying, building, road-making and hauling. This indoctrination occasionally had the disturbing effect of

making it impossible for me to do "business" with family members. I would make a loan, but I couldn't take repayment in kind without feeling guilty. I, therefore, resolved to make outright donations when needed.

It was difficult to learn to deal with people who had been reared differently. Frequent offers to do something for the other fellow and experiencing no reciprocation can become annoying and was a difficult lesson to learn. The hardest thing for me to do was accept money for service to a sick child; I hid behind an office organization. My volunteer practice in the Child Development center at Children's Hospital for over 20 years gave me the greatest satisfaction of my career. Often I have thought that if I had started practice alone I would have ended up a ^{pediatric} ~~general~~ practitioner. ^{often not even co} ^{thank you}