

D Dedicated To My Dear Grandchildren
Laurie Lee, Cindy Marie and
David Med Eaglesham.

At the request of your Mother
I will attempt to write down a
few recollections of my home, my
early childhood and my youth
as I can see it.

First of all I want to tell you
that I grew up in a very stable
and happy home. My parents were
deeply religious people. They belonged
to the Swedish Covenant Church.

I was the seventh of eight children.
Four girls and four boys.

My eldest sister Ruth was born
Oct 11th 1891 and my youngest
Lydia 14 years later Oct 8th 1905.
Two years between each child
except me, I was the only one
born in an even year.

My parents were married June 23rd.
1896 in Tafta Ljungby in my mother's
home. Uncle Lars Petter gave the
wedding.

2. My Father had bought his home in Halmen, about 50 miles from my Mother's home, when he came back from America, where he had been working for five years. They settled in Halmen and that is where Ruth was born. However they sold that home and bought my Mother's home, and that is where all the rest of us were born. As I said before, ours was a happy home. For instance I can never recall that my Father ever said a cross word to my Mother. They always seemed to have mutual respect for each other.

One of the earliest recollection I have was the way we celebrated Christmas. For many years there were fourteen people at the table. Father and Mother and eight children. Also Aunt Johanna, who lived in a house next to us. Aunt Vilhelmina who lived in Ljengby and a cousin Eric Cleve who was raised by Aunt Mina, and also our school teacher who shared the apartment with Aunt Mina.

3. Altho we did not have much of the worldly goods there always seemed to be plenty of food at Christmas time. As we were living on a farm we always had a pig to butcher for Christmas, so there was a good size ham and Mother made all kinds of sausage, even blood sausage.

We always had a Christmas Tree, cut from our own forest set up in the living room, and some ornaments, they may not have been so very elaborate, some of them home made, also live candles. I have always wondered in later years that we never had any fire, with so many people in one room. We also had a nice fire in the fireplace.

We always started the festivities Christmas Eve. After the big dinner either my Dad or Aunt Mina read the Christmas Story from the Bible. Then we opened the Christmas presents. My older brothers

4. And I always got a knitted sweater from Aunt Mina, as she had a machine and that was her profession knitting. From our schoolteacher we used to get an orange with a dime stuck into it. Aunt Mina also knitted some nice mittens and stockings so my sisters got some of those.

In Sweden they always had early Church service Christmas morning. In the State or Lutheran Church usually 2 A.M. and in the Mission Church at 6 A.M. We always attended at least one of the services.

After Church we were all invited to my Uncle Johanson for morning coffee. He was a schoolteacher and lived in the town of Ljungby. He had three daughters.

Uncle Jönas lived a few miles out of town in the opposite direction from us and he and his wife Karin had nine children. Aunt Emma and Uncle Eklund lived in town and they had five children.

5. So you see we were quite a few cousins and they were all there Christmas Morning. Later in the season we were invited there again to glorify the Christmas Tree.

Another thing I remember very vividly was our Sunday School party at Christmas time. My Father was teaching Sunday School for about thirty years. We met in each others home about a dozen families that belonged to the congregation at 3 P.M. Sunday afternoon, all through the year, but around Christmas we had a party.

We each received a little Christmas magazine and some oranges and apples and a few candies. Sometimes we formed a ring around the Christmas Tree and sang carols. It is all happy memories.

One incident I can recall when my Uncle has passed away and my Father and Mother were going to the funeral. He lived close to where my Father was born

6. So it was about fifty miles away from my home. It was the year 1916 in the fall. I was chosen to go with and open the gates. This was before the time that there were many automobiles on the roads, and the roads were not in very good shape either. There were about 72 gates between our home and my Uncle's home and it was my job to get off the buggy and run and open the gate and close it again when my Dad had driven through. As often is the case in Sweden in the fall it was raining and this was no exception. We had one horse or I should say Mare, her name was Blenda and she was a very good runner. We drove 25 miles in a stretch and rested one hr. Then we drove another 25 miles before we arrived at our destination and the last 25 miles it was raining continuously. In those days we did not have very good rain gear either, so you may know that

7. we were not in a very good shape for the funeral procession the following day. However I was with and opened a few gates that day also, but then I got a few nickels, as was customary for the gate boy, but it was a lot of running as there might have been 20 carriages in the procession.

As I told you before my Father was a deeply religious person and he was always called upon in the farm community when there was a death in the family. In those days they did not have funeral parlors as they have now. The farmers gathered at the home of the bereaved family usually Sunday morning and had a light lunch before starting the procession to the cemetery. It was my Father's duty to speak a few words of consolation to the family and lead in a couple appropriate songs. One other farmer was also called upon to drive the hearse.

He had two beautiful black horses, so he and my father were always the standbys. It seems that my father always could find some consoling words from the scriptures. However he told me there was one time that he found it very hard. It was right after Christmas 1913. A neighbour of ours had gone out with some other farmers Christmas Eve and they had been drinking. On the way home he had taken a short cut over some fields and had fallen by a ditch and frozen to death. Christmas morning there was a house to house patrol to go out and search for him. I remember my brother Jahan was with in that search party, so he was found after a few hours. His son was one of the victims of the Titanic in April 1912. He had gotten some money as insurance after his son, and some people felt that it was a contributing factor to

his death. It was a sad Christmas and you may know that my father felt it.

My Father was a stone cutter and mason by trade. In his younger days he had been traveling all over Sweden building bridges on railroads and erecting dams for a Steel Mill in Dalarna, central part of Sweden. In 1883 he was working in Stockholm and decided to go to America. He traveled by boat to Bremen Germany and then took a ship from there over the Atlantic. It took about a month at that time. He settled around James Town Penn. There he was working mostly in the forest cutting down timber and they used a lot of bark for the tanneries at that time. But he cut and layed a front step of a church and that was there for many years as he had a good friend in Jamertown that he corresponded with that told him.

10. As it was just a small farm we had, my father often had to leave and go out and work in his trade to supplement the income. I remember when I was five years old, he was away building a hydroelectric Station. He sent me a very nice birthday card and I can remember I kept it until I went into military service.

I also remembered it 70 years later when I was in Jerusalem and called Laurie Lee on her sixth birthday. The modes of communication have changed greatly.

As I have said we were 8 children in the family and all were comparatively healthy. But Oscar the one next older than I was born with a deformity. The bladder was partly outside the body. When he was about 8 years old my mother took him to Stockholm for surgery to correct the problem. He was in the Serafimer Hospital

one of the best in Sweden. He underwent a number of operations and was helped to a certain extent, but he could never control the urine, so he always had to use some kind of bag. The doctors did not think he would be very old but he was 60 years old when he died. His infirmity delayed him starting school so although he was 2 1/2 years older we were in the same grade.

With all his trouble I think he was the most gifted in our family. He was a good speaker and a very good singer. He had musical talents, when he was a young boy he played the mouth organ, then he played the accordion, violin and mandolin and he even tried the piano after we got one at home. He never had a music lesson, it was all by ear. As you know the family may become very attached to an animal. You have Ginger

2. that you love very much. In our home it was the Mare Blenda. I will never forget when I was out in military service and my brother Oscar wrote to me that he had to have Blenda put away. He said it was just as she sensed the way she looked at him when he had to take her to the slaughter house. She had contracted emphysema and could not breathe properly.

In 1928 my brother Anders came home from America, he had left in 1922. He had been working as a bricklayer in Chicago and had made a good living. When he left I decided that I wanted to come here, as there was not enough work on the farm for both my brother and myself.

I got my visa Feb 4th. 1929 and March 28th I left Sweden.

I have been back to visit five times and enjoy the visit every time. Some day I hope you

can make the trip over there
and see my old homestead.

My niece and her husband
saw it now and I'm sure
you would be most welcome.

I took your mother over there
in 1954 when I went home to
celebrate my 50th birthday.

One thing I want you to take
a look at is the fruit cellar
my father built around 1910.

The roof is of stone blocks he
cut out of a big boulder about
20' x 18" x 18". And I'm sure the
drainage from the cellar is still
working, as I have not heard
anything to the contrary.

I would like to take you over
there myself, but I cannot
expect to do that. Then I might
even take you out to the forest
and show you some of the
trees I helped plant when I was
in grammar school.

I will enclose a few pictures
of our family.

. They may be of interest to
you as you grow up.

Now I will close my letter
to you with the best wishes
for a healthy and happy life.

Your Maternal Grandfather

Arvid D. Anderson

484 Western Ave.

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May 16th. 1982.