

Pearl Husby Carlsson Lund Oral History Interview, 1978

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Lund, Pearl Husby Carlsson
Title	Pearl Husby Carlsson Lund Oral History Interview
Dates	1978 (inclusive) 1978 1978
Quantity	2 file folders 2 sound cassettes 1 compact disc
Collection Number	t007
Summary	An oral history interview with Pearl Husby Carlsson Lund, a Norwegian immigrant.
Repository	Pacific Lutheran University, Archives and Special Collections Archives and Special Collections Pacific Lutheran University 12180 Park Avenue South Tacoma, Washington 98447 Telephone: 253-535-7586 Fax: 253-535-7315 archives@plu.edu
Access Restrictions	The oral history collection is open to all users.
Additional Reference Guides	
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Biographical Note

Pearl Lund was born on July 1, 1891 in Kristiansund, Norway. There were nine children in her family, but the first four died. Pearl was the second oldest of the remaining five. When Pearl was fourteen, she began waitressing in an old-fashioned kaffe store in Kristiansund. It was the town's nicest restaurant, serving only to people in proper attire and implementing strict rules for the fifteen girls who worked there. When she was eighteen, Pearl decided that she wanted to immigrate to America and contacted a cousin of hers that lived in Mt. Vernon, WA. Her cousin, Inga, promptly sent a ticket and twenty-five dollars. Once she arrived in New York, the train trip to Mt. Vernon took much longer than anticipated. In St. Paul, Pearl boarded the wrong train and ended up traveling through Canada. Leery of strangers, she remained scared and hungry while traveling through Canada. She ended up losing twelve pounds. At one station, two men approached Pearl and told her they were part of a Vasa lodge and were responsible for helping immigrants. The men took her to a house where two Norwegians cooked for her and saw to it that she boarded the correct train the following day. After living in Mt. Vernon for a year, Pearl was ready to return to Norway. She missed her family's customs and did not know Inga's

husband's family very well. She soon met Carlsson, a farmer, and was married in 1914. They were married until 1935 when Carlsson died of cancer and had one son, Sherman. In 1948, she married Lund, who lived in Bellingham and had been her neighbor in Norway. That year, she also returned to Norway upon her family's request. Her brother wanted her to come and attend to the business of their apartment house, which had been burnt down by the Germans during the war. Her family had managed to survive the war, but times had been very tough. The Germans had taken over everything, and there was little food other than herring. Lund was charter member in the Sons of Norway, and he and Pearl made several other trips back to Norway under their plan. They also belonged to the Lutheran Church in Bellingham, and Pearl kept up with Norwegian cooking, which she learned after coming to America. At home, her family had always had a hired girl to do the cooking. Around 1963, Pearl's husband was killed on a road job; a logger ran over him. Pearl opted to stay in America rather than returning to Norway since her son was here.

Lineage

Full Name: Pearl Husby Carlsson Lund. Maiden Name: Pearl Husby. Mother: Ingrid Knutesdatter Langli. Brothers and Sisters: There were nine children in the family, but the first four died. Spouse: Carlsson Lund. Children: Sherman Carlsson.

Content Description

This interview was conducted with Pearl Lund on April 27, 1978 in Stanwood, Washington. It contains information on her family background, work in Norway, emigration, marriage and family life, and the German occupation in Norway during World War II.

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

There are no restrictions on use.

Administrative Information

Custodial History

The Oral History collection project was started during an experimental course on Scandinavian Women in the Pacific Northwest. Students in the course were encouraged to interview women and learn about their experiences as immigrants to the United States. The project was continued and expanded with support from the president's office and by grants from the L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, from the Joel E. Ferris Foundation and the Norwegian Emigration Fund of the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project was directed by Dr. Janet E. Rasmussen. The collection was transferred to the Archives and Special Collections Department.

Acquisition Information

Related Materials

To search and view Pacific Lutheran University's digitized images, visit our [Digital Assets Website](#)

Processing Note

The interview was conducted by Inger Nygaard Carr using a cassette recorder. A research copy was also prepared from the original. To further preserve the content of the interview, it is now being transferred to compact disc. We deliberately did not transcribe the entire interview because we want the researchers to listen to the interviewee's own voice. The transcription index highlights important aspects of the interview and the tape counter numbers noted on the Partial Interview Transcription are meant as approximate finding guides and refer to the location of a subject on the cassette/CD. The recording quality is good

The collection was transcribed by Mary Sue Gee, Julie Peterson and Becky Husby.

Bibliography

Rasmussen, Janet Elaine. *New Land New Lives: Scandinavian Immigrants to the Pacific Northwest* Tacoma, Washington University of Washington Press 1993

Detailed Description of the Collection

The partial interview transcription highlights important aspects of the interview. Numbers may be used as guides to important subjects. Two numbers separated by a slash indicate that the first number is for cassette and the second for CD.

Container(s)	Description
Cassette	
7, side 1	006/08: Mitt navn naar jeg reiste fra Norge var Hugla ? Ingara Husby?. She is now 97 and her name is Pearl Lund; she was born in Kristiansund, Norway.
7, side 1	028: EMIGRATION "I wrote to my cousin who was here before me and told her that I thought it must be nice to live in the United States. ...Before I knew it, here came a ticket and 25 dollars that you had to have to show the custom officer when you arrived in the United States". Pearl was 18 when she emigrated. At the first boat stop, eyes and ears were examined and if anything was wrong, you were sent home. The boat went to Hull and Liverpool. While staying at an emigration hotel for two weeks [waiting for the boat to come], she hung around with two Swedish girls. Pearl had learned English for two years in school, so she knew a little. The three girls went over town shopping and having a lot of fun. [Story about being short-changed at a shop and asking a policeman for help.]
7, side 1	092: TRAIN TRIP They met three Norwegian boys who were also going America and attended Easter services with them in England. In NY she was separated from the

Container(s)	Description
	<p>Swedish girls. She stayed alone at the station waiting for a train to St. Paul. Once on the train, she didn't dare get off because she didn't know its schedule. But a fellow sitting beside her, finally convinced her to get off for one good dinner, which lasted her a couple more days. During the trip, she lost 12 pounds. The compartment consisted of two benches separated by a table; there were no beds. "I didn't take my clothes off from the time I left Norway till I came to my cousin in Mt. Vernon".</p>
7, side 1	<p>154: The train trip took a long time because she was on the wrong train from St. Paul and traveled into Canada. She was only 18 years old and "all you heard on your trip was, `don't talk to strangers`, because there was so much white slavery going on. Oh, boy. I was so scared--scared and hungry". In those days people could make tea and coffee on board, it smelled so good to her. One lady finally offered her a cup of tea, noticing Pearl's hungry looks.</p>
7, side 1	<p>190/09: Pearl had been on the wrong train and got off in Canada at a little lumber place. She had 25 dollars but didn't dare spend it. When the train stopped in places, she ran out to mail some pre-stamped, pre-addressed envelopes to her cousin in Mt Vernon. Pearl kept writing that she was coming, but she didn't know where she was at. The trouble was that her brother in Norway had put Norwegian stamps on the envelopes, so the cousin never received any of the letters.</p>
7, side 1	<p>214: At one station, she sat all night and wrote a letter to this cousin. When she went out to mail it, the door locked behind her and she couldn't get back in the station. She sat on the platform all night. The station manager let her in at 6 am and about 11 in the morning, the train came. On board, she felt there was something wrong. Sure enough, at the next small lumber place, the conductor picked up her suitcase and took it and her off the train about 8 in the evening.</p>
7, side 1	<p>272/10: A fellow came up and asked where she was going. Washington, she replied. "He said, you sit there. Don't go. Someone else will come and talk to you". Pearl told herself, "Now. Better be careful". Two fellows came and she refused to talk. They asked if she was Norwegian and she did affirm that. They told her they worked in a lumber camp and were in a Vasa lodge. It was their responsibility to look out for immigrants because so much happened to young girls. They invited her to their friends' home, two ladies from Oslo.</p>
7, side 1	<p>320/11: "I could come there and stay, and I could sleep on the davenport, and I could get my supper. That's what got me--that's what got me--supper!". He asked her to believe him, because if she didn't go with, it was their duty as helpers to remain with her all night until the train came. Pearl thought he sounded honest,</p>

Container(s)	Description
	but she took an awful chance and went. Indeed there were two Norwegian ladies who made her a good supper and a good breakfast.
7, side 1	<p>345:</p> <p>The next day, one of the fellows brought her bananas, oranges, and apples for her train trip and told her not to de-board until Mission Junction. Pearl told him that she needed to go to Mt. Vernon but believed she was on the wrong train. She also told him that her cousin [Inga] would be worried about her. He took Inga's address and sent her a card. Then he had Pearl promise to send him a card when she finally arrived in Mt. Vernon.</p>
7, side 1	<p>372:</p> <p>The only thing she remembers about the boat from Norway is that many people were sitting on deck and covered with blankets. These were Polish people who were so lousy, they weren't allowed below.</p>
7, side 1	<p>398/12:</p> <p>At Mission Junction [Canada] she was reunited with the two Swedish girls. They had been on the wrong train too. She was so happy to see them, and they walked around Mission Junction like greenhorns. The three found a place to eat. Three loggers approached them; one spoke Swedish and invited the girls to eat steak and strawberry shortcake with them, which the guys paid for. So Pearl still had her 25 dollars.</p>
7, side 1	<p>438:</p> <p>She got on the train for Bellingham. Once there, she was shown to a hotel in old Bellingham by a fellow she didn't quite trust. He wanted to take her to another hotel, but she refused and got a room in the one she'd selected. After dinner, the lady proprietor suggested she go to the sitting room where a Norwegian boy was sitting and reading a paper. He was down from the woods for Saturday.</p>
7, side 1	<p>480/13:</p> <p>Pearl told her story to the fellow, and he assured her the Interurban would take her to Mt. Vernon. She spent the night on a davenport, and in the morning, she accompanied him to a drugstore where he called her cousin. The first thing Inga said was "Where in the world have you been?" She'd had the card from the guy in Canada and knew Pearl shouldn't have been up there. Every time a train came into Seattle, they'd been down to meet it. When Pearl didn't show up, they were ready to send for the FBI.</p>
7, side 1	<p>506:</p> <p>The Norwegian fellow put her on the Interurban, and she arrived at the depot in Mt. Vernon. There another guy approached her and said "Where do you think you're going?" Pearl replied, "It's none of your business!". He looked at me and said, "Yes, it is my business. You're going to my house for dinner today.</p>

Container(s)	Description
	Inga and the rest of the family is coming. ...I'm here to get you". He was Inga's brother-in-law. After dinner, they returned to Inga's farm via horse and buggy.
7, side 1	530: Immediately upon arrival, Inga took her to the porch and asked her to remove all her clothes. There were white lice eggs on her clothing. Inga burned all of Pearl's clothes, which had been newly purchased in Norway for the trip.
7, side 1	545/14: FAMILY BACKGROUND AND WORK IN NORWAY For four years Pearl had waited on people in an old-fashioned kaffe store in Kristiansund. Fifteen girls worked there and they dressed in costume for the tourist trade. This was a very strict place; no liquor was served or could be brought in. The girls lived in rooms upstairs and had a house mother. They could only go out in the evening in groups of two and three.
7, side 1	564: Father, Peter Husby?, was a fish buyer and also owned two fishing boats. He and mother owned a big apartment house in Kristiansund and had five children. All lived there until they grew up, went to work or were married. Pearl was next to the oldest and the first to move out. She never forgot how her mother cried. Pearl wrote to Inga even though she had a good job and a nice place to live. At the restaurant, they couldn't accept any tips. And if someone came in drunk, they stepped on a button by the desk. The police from the nearby station would come and escort them out. This was the town's best restaurant, which had a dining room that took reservations from 12 to 3. Down below there were rooms for fishermen and farmers who came to town. The restaurant supplied them with lunches and coffee.
7, side 1	593: In those days, there were three classes of people in Norway poor, middle, and rich. The rich and middle classes thought they were so much better, and the restaurant didn't allow people to enter if they weren't dressed decent. However, the girls liked to wait on the farmers and fishermen better, because those people had fun. It was a very good place for young girls to work. There was little smoking in those days. "Decent girls didn't smoke. It was only those bad girls, running around with every Tom, Dick, and Harry. And we didn't have to wait on them when they came in". There was a street where these girls--prostitutes--lived. They could come in if they looked decent; otherwise, they were told to leave. Pearl had done that quite often with the "painted and stockings" women.
7, side 1	621/15: The first Christmas on the farm, Pearl cried so much; she was lonesome for her folks and home and customs. She came from probably a middle class family, but had been taught to help other people. Extra food was given away, and extra Christmas foods were made and given away to the poor and retired people.
7, side 1	648:

Container(s)	Description
	<p>At five o'clock in Kristiansund, the church bell rang and everything closed. Then they had a wonderful Christmas dinner at work and received a little money. Many of the food stuffs were given to the restaurant by the suppliers meat from the butcher, cakes from the baker, and candy from the candyman. Afterwards she went home for Christmas Eve. Since Kristiansund was a port town, it wasn't safe for her to go alone. A policemen escorted Pearl to the dock to catch a ferry which went to four islands, one of which was her home. At home, they had a large Christmas tree with the whole family home.</p>
7, side 1	<p>679/01: She missed those Christmases because she wasn't very old, having come in 1913. Furthermore, she didn't know Inga's company --her husband's folks--very well. Pearl was ready to write her brother and have him send her a ticket back to Norway. She still had her 25 dollars in a sack.</p>
7, side 1	<p>693: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY But then she got acquainted with a farmer--Carlsson--and was married in 1914. [Lund was her second husband.] She explained to Carlsson that she didn't know much about farming, but he said, "I don't marry you for a farmhand!". To which she replied, "You're not getting any". She didn't know a carrot from a beet in the garden. She never milked, but she learned to raise chickens. They rented a big farm by Mt. Vernon and had 75 milk cows.</p>
7, side 1	<p>714: Pearl had one boy--Sherman--who now lives in Seattle and is the head of Todd Shipyard. He has two boys that are fishermen and married with children.</p>
7, side 1	<p>720/02: She returned to Norway in 1948 right after the war and saw how the Germans burned and flattened the town. Her brother asked her to come home to attend to business of the apartment house. In 1948, she was already married the second time, as her first husband had died of cancer. She lived in Mt. Vernon from 1913 to 1941, and was married to Carlsson from 1914-1935. Her second husband lived in Bellingham. His first wife, Tora, had died, and they had both been her neighbors in Norway. Pearl married him and moved to Bellingham in 1941. In between she stayed with her sister-in-law and worked in a laundry.</p>
7, side 1	<p>742: RETURN TRIP TO NORWAY The family wanted her to return to Norway in 1948. She went to Seattle to arrange for a ticket, but it was very hard to get passage to Norway. Everyone wanted to go home and check on their families. She realized she had a brother-in-law who was a captain on the Vilhelmson ? Line in Oslo that carried cargo to Cuba and New Orleans. So, Pearl traveled to New Orleans in an attempt to connect with the ship.</p>
7, side 2	040/03:

Container(s)	Description
	<p>From New Orleans, she learned she had to go to Pt. Arthur on the train. There she contacted the ship's office and located her people. It was the first time she'd seen her sister and brother-in-law for 30 years.</p>
7, side 2	<p>117: The group returned to New Orleans and then home to Norway where she was reunited with all her folks. Dad had died before Pearl left, and Mom had died six weeks before she returned. One brother was a newspaperman, one sister married to a sea captain, and another married to a light company fellow. The families were doing well.</p>
7, side 2	<p>148: The grandparents had been farmers in Festøy, an island that was reached only by boat in those days. Father came to Kristiansund first, then Mother. Later, they were married. Inga was her father's niece. Pearl only knew this aunt, but had heard about another sister of father's that had married a captain who drowned at sea. Pearl knew her maternal grandfather and his second wife because they had moved to Kristiansund also. Langli was the family name, and Pearl's mother's name was Ingrid Knutesdatter Langli.</p>
7, side 2	<p>204/04: Pearl's parents had four children who all died and then five more. She can remember a little of one sister. Her brother who is two years older remembered more of the "first" family. None of Pearl's siblings emigrated because they all had good jobs and were satisfied in Norway.</p>
7, side 2	<p>227: Pearl is glad she came, but feels she would have done equally well in Norway. She could have returned and lived in Norway on her Social Security, but her children were here. In Norway, Americans shouldn't be proud, overbearing people because the Norwegians are very cosmopolitan, well-educated, and well traveled.</p>
7, side 2	<p>275/05: Her son [an only child] speaks both Swedish and Norwegian in his job around the shipyard. He and his wife haven't visited Norway because she doesn't care to fly. Her brother visited here for four months and was very forward with his English and independent traveling around Washington. His daughter, Ruth, was here too, but was bashful about talking.</p>
7, side 2	<p>322: The hardest thing was to adjust to American ways. Pearl had never cooked, because mother hired a girl for that job. The kids scrubbed the floors, cleaned the house, etc. Pearl had a very good childhood--played ball, skated, etc. She felt bad about not returning home in time to see her mother.</p>
7, side 2	322:

Container(s)	Description
	Pearl received her citizenship through marriage.
7, side 2	372/06: TRADITIONS Pearl learned and kept up with Norwegian cooking. She made lefse, sylte, etc. On the farm there was a lot of cooking and work. She hired a woman to help in the summertime to make bread and do most of the cooking. She made wonderful bread, biscuits, pancakes "she was a humdinger".
7, side 2	397: Her husband was a charter member of the Sons of Norway. Pearl traveled to Norway five times under their plan. They belonged to the Lutheran Church in Bellingham.
7, side 2	411: Pearl always had insurance to help pay for medical care. She now has and utilizes Medicare.
7, side 2	440: Her second husband, Lund, was killed on a road job around 1963; a logger ran over him. She had just arrived home from work when St. Luke's Hospital called. She didn't get to see him before he died because he had massive injuries. A safety person from the logging firm came to visit her and told her that his firm would pay her \$472 per month as a settlement. This plus her Social Security amply takes care of her living expenses at the Home. The thinks the Home is clean and nice; she's not a sick person at 97 and enjoys her life.
7, side 2	509/07: VIEWS ON OLD AGE AND LIVING WITH CHILDREN Pearl lived with her children for awhile. But realized this wasn't the best arrangement. "I had that figured out; it's just as hard for the old people to live with the young people as it is for the young people to have them." She had cared for her aged in-laws [Carlssons] for over 15 years. Mother-in-law was very lively, but Grandpa just sat around, chewed snus, and provided trouble. Grandmother Carlsson was a big help with household jobs. Pearl used to tell the hired girls in the summertime, "Leave Grandma alone. It won't do you any good. If you want trouble, just start in on her. Just let her do her thing--go out and pick potatoes, peel them, and do--because she done a good job". Although she was a Lutheran she liked to go to Sunday church and Ladies Aid at the Methodist Church. Grandpa didn't go with and didn't like his wife to go. One time, Pearl became tired of his complaining and said, "Grandpa, this is the last time I want to hear a word out of you about Grandma going to church. She's going to church and she's going to go to Ladies Aid and if you want to go to hell, go--sooner or later".
7, side 2	569/08: HER FAMILY AND THE GERMAN OCCUPATION The Second World War was tough on her family in Norway. The apartment house was burned down. One brother, Olaf, had an oil station and car sales and repair business. When the war came, the Germans took them over all. Olaf

Container(s)	Description
	<p>permanently moved his family to a summer country home including his blind mother. Sometime later a fellow told him that his house was the only one left standing in Kristiansund. When Olaf went to look, he found people sleeping on floors, tables, etc. The Germans kept Polish prisoners in that neighborhood. They had to sleep outside but whenever a fire started in that house, they rushed over and put it out. Eventually they used the house.</p>
7, side 2	<p>618: Some Norwegian people went in with the Germans during the war which Pearl felt was the worst thing.</p>
7, side 2	<p>638: Her family managed to survive the war. Her youngest brother, the newspaper man, worked with the Underground. His wife and kids didn't even know about his involvement. Towards the end of the war, one niece had a baby by a German doctor who wanted to marry her. But she would have lost her citizenship and refused to go to Germany with him. He came to the older brother and put his money in account for the niece. The brother administered the account without the other brother's knowing about it. Years after, when the baby girl grew up, she worked in an Italian travel agency. She corresponded regularly with her father and arranged to meet him in Germany.</p>
7, side 2	<p>659: Her brother told her about one of Pearl's old friends. Her husband and the two boys worked for the Germans, and Pearl was real disappointed to hear that.</p>
7, side 2	<p>/09: They had to eat a lot of herring during the war. "Herring for breakfast, fresh herring for dinner and fresh herring for supper--cooked, fried, cold". Norwegians were hired by Germans to salt down the herring, and the workers would sabotage the food by putting coal oil in the barrels sent to Germany. The Norwegians sold cats to the Germans as chicken meat. The Underground newspaper would have coded messages in it, and was delivered on bikes by girls who supposedly had milk delivery routes.</p>
7, side 2	<p>715: "To this day, I have no respect for the people--I don't care who they are--that went in with the Germans and destroyed their country, their town". The Germans dumped at least 50-75 Norwegian bodies in the Kristiansund bay. At the war's end, the Polish soldiers dressed in their uniforms and surrounded the German soldiers. Her brother's son had contact with the Polish prisoners and advised them where to get extra food.</p>
7, side 2	<p>745: There is a cemetery in Kristiansund where German soldiers are interred. Flowers are put on the graves for respect of human life and of the parents of the German boys. Many German children had stayed with Norwegian</p>

Container(s)	Description
	families during pre-war summertimes. A lot of the soldiers forced into service in Norway were these boys as they could speak some Norwegian. They came to Kristiansund in order to capture the king. But he escaped to England where the Crown Prince already was. The wife and daughter went to Washington, DC. They had been invited to return to her father's castle in Sweden, but she refused because of Sweden's accessibility to the Germans.

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Christmas
 Emigration and immigration
 Family--Norway
 Norway--Economic conditions
 Norway--History--German occupation, 1940-1945
 Norway--Social conditions--1945-
 Norwegian-Americans--Northwest, Pacific--Interviews
 Norwegian-Americans--Social life and customs
 Ocean travel
 Railroad travel
 White-slave traffic

Personal Names :

Lund, Pearl--Interviews
 (creator)
 Carlsson, Sherman

Corporate Names :

Sons of Norway (U.S.) Wergeland Lodge No. 21 (Bellingham, Wash.)

Family Names :

Carlsson family
 Husby family
 Langli family
 Lund family

Geographical Names :

Bellingham (Wash.)
 Kristiansund (Norway)
 Mount Vernon (Wash.)

Form or Genre Terms :

Oral histories

Occupations :

Waitresses

Finding aid prepared by Kerstin Ringdahl and Amity Smetzler
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