Overview of the Collection

Creator
Carlson, Ed (Carl Gustav Edward)

Title
Ed (Carl Gustav Edward) Carlson Oral History Interview

Dates
1981 (inclusive)
1981 1981

Quantity
2 file folders
1 sound cassette

Collection Number
t096

Summary
An oral history interview with Ed (Carl Gustav Edward) Carlson, a Swedish 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

Ed Carlson was born Carl Gustav Edward Carlson on June 17, 1897 in Åsa, Småland, Sweden. Ed's parents, Emma and Johannes Carlson, had three other children: Einar, Alved, and Selma. Ed attended school for seven years and worked on a farm after classes. In 1916 Ed left for the United States on his own and settled in Aberdeen, Washington. After working for a time in a shipyard building boats for the army, Ed got a job at a Swedish sawmill where he worked for 25 years. In 1924 Ed married Anna Anderson, and they had four children. Ed is a member of the Vasa Lodge where they practice Swedish traditions; he still speaks the language at times. Ed has taken several return trips to Sweden, although he is glad that he lives in America.

Lineage

Content Description

The interview was conducted with Ed Carlson on September 30, 1981 in Aberdeen, Washington. This interview contains information on personal background, emigration, settling in, work, family, social organizations, and return trips to Sweden. The interview was conducted in English with some Swedish towards the end of the interview.

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 Donna Mallonee 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
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>042: CARL GUSTAV EDWARD CARLSON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One name from the King, one from his father. Born in Åsa, Småland, Sweden. Åsa is the name of a church and a community in the southern part of Sweden. Born June 17, 1897.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>052: PARENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emma and Johannes. Father worked in the woods cutting up squares. Ed also worked in the woods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>061: BROTHERS AND SISTERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>065: GRANDPARENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lived one and half miles away. Grandfather was a watchmaker. They visited once or twice a week. Grandma baked good bread.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>072:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother's father was name Lindblad. He was a farmer and active in politics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>078: HISTORY OF THE FAMILY NAME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grandfather's name was Carl Granat. That was a name carried down from many generations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>085: CHILDHOOD HOME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Painted red. A farmhouse. Living room, kitchen, upstairs. Had a barn, cattle, and pigs. Raised lots of vegetables. Stored them so that they could have vegetables all year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>098: SPECIAL FOODS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main food beef, pork, and herring. Lived close to a lake so caught pike and bass. Spent their leisure time fishing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>109: CHRISTMAS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ed (Carl Gustav Edward) Carlson Oral History Interview, 1981
http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv92342
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>Had a tree. In Sweden you invite the neighbors in. Also go and visit neighbors. Had sleds and skis. The lake froze over in the winter and they went ice-skating. Caught fish in the winter under the ice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 96, side 1  | 125: SCHOOL  
Walked about one mile. No buses. Had boots for walking in the winter. Took their lunch to school, had handmade basket. |
| 96, side 1  | 141:  
Mother baked pastries, bread, and coffee bread. |
| 96, side 1  | 147: SCHOOL  
Went for seven years. Worked for a farmer after school. Lived on the farm where he worked. Worked some in the woods. |
| 96, side 1  | 153:  
LEFT SWEDEN IN 1916. He came over by himself. |
| 96, side 1  | 156: LEAVING SWEDEN  
Looked forward to going to America. Ready to quit picking potatoes in Sweden and he did not want to go in the army. |
| 96, side 1  | 161:  
War broke out soon after Ed arrived in America. He worked at a shipyard that built boats for the army. This excused him from the army. |
| 96, side 1  | 169: TRIP OVER  
| 96, side 1  | 179:  
Had two brothers and a sister already in America. They met him at the depot. He did not speak any English. |
| 96, side 1  | 184:  
Worked at a Swedish sawmill handling lumber. Hard work. Learned to inspect lumber, stamped it. Worked for the Bureau for 25 years. Lived in a boarding house in Aberdeen. |
| 96, side 1  | 202: LANGUAGE  
Did not take long learning English. No problems. |
| 96, side 1  | 205:  
Made good wages working for the Bureau. |
| 96, side 1  | 209: LOGGING CAMPS |

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Ed (Carl Gustav Edward) Carlson Oral History Interview, 1981
http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv92342
One camp hired all Finnish people. One camp all Swedes, and one camp all Norwegians. Good food, good wages at the camp. Had bunkhouses. The men all worked ten hour days. The owner of the camps caused competition between the camps.

243: People spoke their native tongues in the camps. Ed tells a story about a Norwegian who worked four years in a logging camp and made enough money to buy a ticket to the old country. It was hard to get paid in paper money. They paid in gold and silver.

278: LOGGING CAMPS
Healthy looking guys. They knew how to use an ax, fall a tree. Americans had a hard time keeping up with the other men working in the woods. Mr. Poulson owned the logging company. There were many men working in the woods. Explains how they got logs down the river where they floated to main bay and taken to the sawmill. There were no highways in the woods.

304: Talks about huge logs, some 7ft. in diameter. Men today wouldn't know how to handle this. No women working in the mills, they stayed at home.

313: There was fishing going on in Aberdeen. Canneries in town. Mr. Strand made a fortune on a cannery.

322: Could keep timber in the river for one year and it would still be good.

328: MEETING WIFE
Anna Anderson. She had Swedish parents. She has relations in Aberdeen. Married in 1924.

338: CHILDREN
Four. All went to school and college. Dale is a civil engineer and professor at University of Washington. Alan is a Lutheran pastor in Beaverton, Oregon. Paul is an electrical engineer. Youngest son is a doctor in Seattle.

360: VASA LODGE
Member at Aberdeen's lodge. Have dances, music and speakers. Finnish and Norwegian people had their own organizations.

372: TRIPS BACK TO SWEDEN
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>388: Parents have passed away. Brothers are still in Sweden. His family is doing fine. Does not regret living in America instead of Sweden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>410: Worked in the mills for 25 years. Worked as a councilman for the City of Aberdeen for 10 years. Collected money, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>443: Still speaks the language at time. Many Scandinavians in the area. Still go to church early on Christmas morning as in Sweden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>464: SPEAKS SWEDISH Says prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96, side 1</td>
<td>482: Always got silver on payday. Had to go to the bank if you wanted paper money.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Names and Subjects

**Subject Terms:**
- Christmas
- Education -- Sweden
- Emigration and Immigration
- Family -- Economic aspects -- Sweden
- Family -- Sweden
- Sweden -- Social conditions -- 1945
- Swedish-Americans--Northwest, Pacific--Interviews
- Swedish-Americans--Social life and customs

**Personal Names:**
- Anderson, Anna
- Carlson, Alan
- Carlson, Carl Gustav Edvard--Interviews (creator)
- Carlson, Carl Gustav Edward
- Carlson, Emma
- Carlson, Johannes
Carlson, Paul
Granat, Carl
Carlson, Anna
Carlson, Dale

**Corporate Names:**
Vasa Order of America. Lodge Number 363 (Aberdeen, Wash.)

**Family Names:**
Anderson family
Carlson family
Granat family
Lindblad family

**Geographical Names:**
Aberdeen (Wash.)
Småland (Sweden)

**Form or Genre Terms:**
Oral histories

**Occupations:**
Loggers
Sawmill workers

Finding aid prepared by Kerstin Ringdahl and Amity Smetzler
2004