

Bicentennial Forum

THE LUNDELL FAMILY
By Justine Weatherford

Gladys Lundell Drake (Mrs. Cleo), Ione, has a record book about her pioneer Swedish family. She lives in the home where her grandparents Frank August and Anna Louise Lundell lived from 1918 until their deaths. This home contains furniture, dishes and other items they brought from Sweden, where they married in 1870 and where their first five children were born: August Wilhelm, Carl Emil, Ernest Richard, Anna Emily and Ellen Augusta.

Mr. Lundell came to California in 1881 and soon sent for his family to join him. Their first American home was at Balota, where they engaged in farming, where their twins Mary Louise and Oscar and then a son Algott Walfred were born and where their daughter Ellen Augusta died.

Having learned land was available in Morrow County, for homesteads, Mr. Lundell came to Gooseberry in the spring of 1887, filed a homestead claim and returned to California for his family. The parents and their seven children moved to Oregon that fall by covered wagon and buckboard. All went well until they reached northern California where one of the wheel horses of a six-horse team belonging to another wayfarer became frightened and jumped from a bridge. The harness held, swinging the horse in mid-air until the harness could be cut and the horse dropped into the dry river bed.

At Gooseberry, while they were building their house on the homestead, the family lived with another pioneer neighbor Andrew Peterson. The Lundells continued farming, gradually increasing their 160 acre homestead to a prosperous 1100 acre wheat ranch. (Charles "Swede" Carlson farms this land today.)

For their education the children walked to Gooseberry school. They all attended Sunday School and Church at whatever places were provided until the completion of the Valby Lutheran Church in 1897. Frank Lundell, who had worked as a stone mason in Sweden, was chairman of the church building committee. He later took part in the building of the old Congregational Church at Ione, now torn down.

Frank and Anna lived at their ranch until 1918 with the exception of several years spent in Portland. They moved to the 2nd St. house in Ione where their granddaughter Gladys now lives. They celebrated their Golden Anniversary in 1920. In 1926 Anna died at the age of 84. Frank continued to live there until his death in 1932, also at 84. They are both buried at Valby.

All of their children are gone now. Their first son August Wilhelm went from Morrow's public schools to graduate from the Albany Oregon College of Music. He married Ninna Naoma Akers. He was director of the Pendleton Round-Up for some years. His children were Leon Wilhelm, Virgil Elmore, Eva Leonora and Frank Harvey.

The second son, Carl Emil farmed on his homestead until his death in 1918. He never married.

Ernest Richard Lundell, the third son, married Lena Pearl Baker in the Valby Church in 1904. They farmed in that area until they moved to Ione in 1915 where their children had more convenient schooling. Ernest bought the Independent Garage, later run by his son-in-law Cleo Drake and now run by Cleo and Gladys's son, Robert Drake. Ernest and Pearl's children were Gladys Augusta, Frank Martin, Walter Richard, Ernest Norton, Mildred Irene, Helen Margaret and Shirley Louise. Presently Frank lives in Milwaukee, Richard in Pendleton, Mildred (Mrs. Lloyd Morgan), Helen (Mrs. Paul Pettyjohn) and Gladys are at Ione.

To return to the second generation—Mary Louise Lundell married Emil Swanson and their children were Eleanor, Irene, Garland, Norman, Alice and Eva (Mrs. Adon Hamlett, Ione.) Anna Emily Lundell married Otto Lindstrom in the first wedding performed in Valby Church in 1899. Their children were Albert, Effie, Louise, Franklin, Roy and Edna. Oscar married Mary Petrie and their children were Harlan, Dale and Kenneth. Algott married Beulah Wagner who is living in Portland. Their children were Charles, Raymond and Wallace.

Many of the families of the Ione area are related to this pioneer Swedish family. Several members of the family have been mayors of Ione—Gar Swanson served for several years; Robert C. Drake is mayor now. Roy Lindstrom served on the town council for many years. Many family members have played important parts in the development of the county.

In 1945 the children of Frank and Anna Lundell held their first Thanksgiving reunion—a custom they continued each year until the mid-1960s.

Ernest Lundell's death at 95 in 1971 brought to an end the original Swedish member of this family who came to this county in 1887.

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