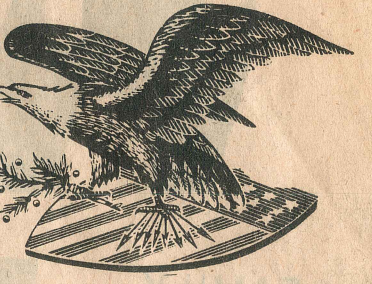


MADRID

AREA

BICENTENNIAL



1776-1976

"Remembrances of Days Gone By"

MADRID FOUNDED BY MISTAKE —

Reasons Anna Delander and Swedes Came to America

Anna Dalander was a woman of bravery and courage. A 54 year old widow with three sons and two daughters, she led a party of Swedes across the Atlantic Ocean in a sailing ship, to their new home in North America.

Many people would be apprehensive to uproot one's family, travel thousands of miles and settle in a strange land, but Mrs. Dalander faced the future fearlessly and openly met the challenge.

Life had always been hard for the common people in Sweden, but it was exceptionally difficult in the 1830's and 40's.

Once rich and fertile soil had lost its productivity and city jobs for young people were almost non-existent. There was also discontent with the rigid social structure, domination of the church, the draft, taxes, and lack of representation in government. Many of these were similar reasons for the early English groups to venture to America in the late 1600's.

The people of Ostergotland province were leaders in this movement, not wanting to lose their rights or heritage. As a result, they led the emigration surge which immediately followed the repeal of an 1840 law that required permission of the king and a tax payment to leave the home country.

Anna Dalander called her family together and told them her plans of following the Peter Cassel family, who had left for America in 1845 and settled in New Sweden, in what is now southeast Iowa, around the community of Lockridge.

Cassel wrote to Mrs. Dalander telling of the large amount of flat land selling for \$1.25 an acre. "The future looks brighter for us in America than it does here," said her eldest son, Eric. The family vote was unanimous so they set out in early spring planning to have their new homes built in New Sweden before the

coming of winter. In all, a group of 42 set out on the expedition seeking a new life in America.

It was early spring of 1846 before everything was packed and ready for travel. Friends, neighbors and relatives saw them off at the dock as they left from Motala by barge, then down the Bota canal to the seaport of Goteborg.

They left aboard the "Augusta" in mid-May, sailing out of the harbor, through the Skaggerak and into the North Sea. Laying north of Scotland they ran into the Atlantic Ocean.

As their beloved Sweden faded into the distance, many hearts were saddened, some cried, and even stout-hearted men gulped away the catch in their throats.

"We will be in Iowa soon," she cheered the members of the party. "Let's not cry over what we are leaving behind, but look forward to a bright future for us and our children."

There was only one casualty on the trip over and that was a young man, named Johannes Jacobsen. His body was wrapped in sailducking and bound to a ballast plank. The passengers stood with bowed heads as the Captain delivered the funeral service and then lowered the corpse into the watery grave.

After two and a half months on the water, the Augusta docked in New York harbor, anchored on the "street of ships" in East River. Many on the boat thought the land they saw was Iowa, but soon learned the contrary.

They ran across a fellow Swede, Olaf Hedstrom, in New York and they asked him about the Cassel party. He told Mrs. Dalander that he had heard of the previous Swedish party but did not know their exact whereabouts. He advised her to take the new train for part of their journey westward. She then went to the depot to inquire about the second part of the ex-

pedition. Learning that the train traveled 15 miles per hour, she decided not to risk riding it, due mostly to the excessive speed.

The Swedes were accustomed to water travel so they bought a barge instead and began the trip down the Erie Canal. The canal extended 364 miles, longer than the state of Iowa and contained 83 locks. Their vehicle was pulled by horse or mule and the new settlers caught a glimpse of American life on the way.

At North Towanda, above Buffalo, the barge was hitched behind a paddle boat and pulled the barge down to Toledo, Ohio, where they were then towed up the Maumee River up to the confluence of the Maumee and Auglaize at Defiance. Then by river and canal to Cincinnati and then to Cairo, Illinois where they were hitched to another paddleboat to be pulled up the Mississippi. At St. Louis they received their first encounter with the slave market and were dismayed with what they saw. Black mothers and children were being separated by buyers who had bid for them in the auction like chattel property. When the Civil War began, this memory firmly planted the Swedes on the side of the North on the slavery issue.

Finally, they reached the southeastern Iowa community of Keokuk where the Des Moines River flows into the Mississippi. The captain of the boat informed Mrs. Dalander that this was the stopping point because he could not navigate the Des Moines rapids between Keokuk and Burlington.

They had finally reached Iowa but where to find New Sweden was the big question at the time. Mrs. Dalander called a council meeting and there the directions sent them by Cassel were once more read.

"When you come to Iowa, just follow the east side of the river and you'll find us," Cassel had written. But his mistake was that he did not know that two rivers emptied into the Mississippi. New Sweden was on the east side of the Skunk River which flowed into the Mississippi just below Burlington about thirty miles to the north.

At the council they all agreed that the Des Moines River was the one to follow. They sold the barge, and with the money from it purchased two ox teams and two horse teams and wagons and loaded their belongings. They bought other provisions before leaving Keokuk.

They were soon on their way again, but this time, walking beside the wagons. They inquired along the way for Cassel, but no one had ever heard of him.

Near Agency, where Indians dealt with the U. S. government in the transfer of land, they were less than 25 miles from New Sweden, but no one knew it.

They found very few settlers along the way as the Treaty of 1833 had ceded to the U. S. only land 50 miles west of the river for settlement.

Treaties later ceded all of Iowa territory to the U.S. but the Indians were not all removed until 1846. However, during their trip, they were not even bothered by the Indians.

Finally, they reached Fort Des Moines, a fortress surrounding a few log cabins, situated at the junction of the Raccoon and Des Moines rivers.

Mrs. Dalander tried to purchase supplies from the soldiers stationed there but the only abundant supplies they carried were tobacco and whiskey, which they sold for 30 cents a gallon.

Fourth of July

Independence Day is the birthday of the United States and 1976 will mark the Bicentennial year. It is celebrated on July 4 each year in all states and territories of the United States. It is the anniversary of the day on which the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress.

The founders of the new nation considered this day an important one for rejoicing. John Adams, second president of the U. S. made the following remarks about the day. "I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of the continent to the other from this time forward for evermore."

It was first observed in Philadelphia on July 8, 1776. It was declared a legal holiday by Congress in 1941.

Early Independence Days were occasions for shows, games, military music and fireworks. Fireworks and the firing of guns and cannons caused hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries each year. In the 1900's, the phrase a "safe and sane Fourth" was coined and as a result, many cities and states passed laws forbidding the sale of fireworks. At the present time, parades, pageantry, music and fireworks all are integral parts of the day.

The soldiers urged them to remain in the area and purchase the land upon which the state capitol now stands. But the group was determined to find New Sweden. One soldier recalled the name of Gaston, who lived 30 miles north of the fort so they set about the trail to find this gentleman.

The group decided to make one more attempt at finding Cassels so they continued up the Des Moines river valley. They finally ran into water and a man but it was Gaston and not Cassels.

It was now the middle of September and Mrs. Dalander called another council meeting. "We are lost in this wilderness and we don't know where New Sweden is. Winter is coming on and we are located near water for food and drink and there is other food in the timber. Gaston has received us well and has offered to sell us food. Let's make this place our home."

They then began building homes and preparing for the winter and shortly after they sent a young man back to Keokuk with a letter to be mailed to the New Sweden colony. However, before they even received the letter, Cassels had learned of the new colony and set out with a group to find them.

A great rejoicing followed when they met after the long separation.

In looking back at this happening, it is safe to say that thanks to the mistake made by these early pioneers, the community of Madrid, is in existence today.



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