The Swedes in Kansas Before the Civil War

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THE census report of 1860 accounts for only 122 Swedes in Kansas. Thirty years later, in 1890, when 17,096 Swedes were residents, the highest point in the Swedish-born population was reached. Kansas then ranked tenth in the nation as to the number of Swedes, who constituted the third largest national group in the state. In 1880, the 11,207 Swedes placed Kansas fourth in the nation as to Swedish-born population, with only Illinois, Minnesota and Iowa showing greater numbers, and ahead of New York by forty-three. In 1940, fifty years following the highest point in Swedish population, there were only 4,540 Swedish-born residents in Kansas.¹

The exact date of the arrival of the first Swede in Kansas is unknown. There is considerable evidence to indicate that Lars Anderson from Västergötland, C. Johnson-Lindahl from Småland and Henrik Olander from Skåne settled in Osage county in 1948.² George J. Johnson, Peter Paulson and John and Peter Peterson arrived in the same county in 1854 or 1855.³ L. A. Lagerquest came to the future site of Big Springs in Douglas county on July 4, 1854.⁴ Considerably more is known about John Rosenquist who came to Kansas from Knoxville, Ill., with the Rev. Thomas J. Addis of Addington. The journey was made by covered wagon in March, 1855. Upon arrival at Lawrence, Rosenquist was directed to the “Upper Neosho” settlement. He selected a claim below the junction on the Neosho and began building a cabin.⁵ In May, 1855, Charles Johnson located on the Cottonwood river in Lyon county and during the same year L. H. Johnson settled on the Neosho river, above the present city.⁶ Kansas must have been quite well known to the Swedes, as is indicated by a statement

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4. Ibid., p. 308.


in the recently founded Swedish newspaper, Hemlandet, det Gamla och det Nya, on March 31, 1855, when Kansas was described as “an excellent country.” 7

The most important development in the coming of the Swedes to Kansas before the Civil War occurred when John A. Johnson came to the Blue valley near Cleburne on June 20, 1855. In May, 1852, two brothers, John A. and N. P. Johnson, together with the latter’s wife Mary, started the long trip to America. The voyage from Gothenberg to New York on the sailing boat Virginia took approximately six weeks. The journey westward brought them to the well-known Swedish settlement, Andover, Ill., on July 30, 1852. John Johnson found employment with Wm. Shannon, a farmer, near Galesburg. In 1855, the prospectus issued by Gov. Andrew H. Reeder of Kansas territory, outlining the advantages of the area, became known to Shannon and Johnson. They decided to go to Kansas and arrived in the Blue valley on June 20. Johnson was favorably impressed with the land and its possibilities and he decided to stay there. He built a simple log cabin which became the first dwelling place in the fine Mariadahl community. 8

John A. Johnson’s brother Peter and his wife stayed in Illinois where they worked for a farmer near Ontario for a short time until the husband found employment at Galesburg. On April 22, 1856, the Johnsons and their infant daughter started the arduous trip to Kansas in a covered wagon drawn by oxen. They approached Kansas via St. Joseph rather than by Lexington, thereby avoiding the great danger from Proslavery partisans. In the company of four “American” families they traveled to the Vermillion river. At that point they went on alone in search of brother John. Toward dusk one day, Peter, realizing that they were lost in a strange country, reluctantly left his wife and daughter in a frantic search on foot for his brother. When in despair and ready to return to the temporary camp, he saw a small cabin and a man coming out of it. To his great joy he discovered that the man was his brother. They hastened to join Mrs. Johnson and the in-

7. Hemlandet, det Gamla och det Nya, March 31, 1855, hereafter referred to as Hemlandet. It first appeared on January 3, 1855. The editor and publisher was Dr. T. N. Hasselquist, pastor of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church, Galesburg, Ill., famous and influential pastor, editor and educator and the first president of the Augustana Lutheran Synod. Hemlandet was an influential newspaper and was read widely in America and also in Sweden. Complete files are available in the Denkman Memorial Library, Augustana College, Rock Island, Ill. A representative collection of letters to the editor of Hemlandet, including some from Kansas are found in George Stephenson, “Hemlandet Letters,” Yearbook of the Swedish Historical Society, v. 8 (1922-1923).

fant daughter. There was great rejoicing and deep gratitude to God on that day, May 22, 1856.9

The two brothers were anxious that their mother and brothers and sisters should come to America following the death of their father on February 27, 1858. The interchange of letters resulted in the departure of the family from Snararp, Rumskulla, about June 7, 1859. The itinerary was via Hamburg, which was the port from which they embarked July 11 or 12 on the sailing vessel Doanu, arriving in New York on August 24. They came to Kansas by rail via St. Joseph, then by wagon, pulled by horses and mules, to the Blue valley on September 30, 1859. In addition to Maria, the mother (after whom the settlement was named Mariadahl), David, Gustaf, Victor, Christina, Charlotta, Emma and Clara joined the two brothers. Upon their arrival in the Blue valley, the following Scandinavians were there, in addition to John and Peter Johnson: N. P. Axelsson, S. P. Rolander, C. J. Dahlberg, Niels Christensen, Lewis Persson, Peter Carlson and John Sanderson.10

The Swedes who came to the Blue valley in the 1850's were devout and pious people. Informal religious services, which consisted of hymn singing, reading of the Bible and Martin Luther's sermons and prayer, were held regularly in the various homes. They gathered for the traditional festive early morning Christmas service, Jul Otta. Some of the members of the colony had belonged to Dr. T. N. Hasselquist's Lutheran congregation in Galesburg, Ill. Appeals were directed to him for pastoral services from the Kansas Swedes. Hasselquist was the first president of the Augustana Lutheran Church, organized in 1860, and in the autumn of 1863, the Rev. John Johnson of Princeton, Ill., was sent to minister to the Swedes in the Blue valley. He stayed for a period of six weeks, baptizing, conducting confirmation services, preaching and teaching. The Mariadahl Swedish Lutheran congregation was organized by Pastor Johnson in the home of N. P. Johnson on October 14, 1863. Thus the first congregation of the Augustana Lutheran Church was established in Kansas.11

10. A. Victor Johnson's reminiscences, in J. C. Christensen, The Johnson Family of Mariadahl, Kansas (Privately printed, 1939), pp. 12-15. This 20-page pamphlet edited by Mr. Christensen, the historian of the Johnson family, contains the reminiscences of one of the children from their home in Sweden to early developments in Kansas. Another Swede, C. J. Dahlberg, arrived in the Blue valley in July, 1857. A fascinating account of the journey to Kansas and early pioneer life is found in a statement by his son, C. V. Dahlberg, in Bethany College collection, "Misc. SK 18."
While strife over the slavery issue was undoubtedly an important factor in keeping many Swedes from coming to Kansas in the 1850’s, individuals in the territory urged their countrymen to join them. Late in the summer of 1856, an unknown Swede described in Hemlandet the advantages of Kansas. It was a beautiful and productive land. He realized that the calm in the state’s political life might be of short duration and that the future of the state depended upon the North. He predicted that if Fremont were elected President, Kansas would be free, but if Buchanan was the victor, it would be necessary to fight for freedom. The editorial policy of the influential Swedish paper Hemlandet encouraged Swedes to come to Kansas. It was suggested that immigrants should take the land route through Iowa and southern Nebraska in order to avoid the difficulties caused by the struggle over Kansas.

Many Swedes turned toward Kansas in 1857 in spite of the uncertainty of the future. In April, Hemlandet observed that “immigration to Kansas is much stronger than in any other direction.” A correspondent had assured the editor that four-fifths of the residents were Free-State men. He was certain that his countrymen would never regret coming to Kansas, but he urged them to do so in large groups, in order that they might maintain their identity.

On April 19, Henry L. Kiisel sent in a rather lengthy report on developments in Kansas. He had gone there the preceding summer and was living in Grasshopper Falls (now Valley Falls). The difficulties of the previous year had been shared by him, and in order to avoid imprisonment at Lecompton with other Free-State men, he had left Kansas and visited various places in Iowa. He hoped now that the Free-State forces had been able to consolidate their position. The victory in the election of the mayor of Leavenworth was a sign of hope. He was uncertain if the decision of the Free-State men to refrain from voting following the Topeka convention was a wise one. The future seemed to depend now upon the action taken by the new governor. He was quite certain that Kansas would become a free state and in that event he would be delighted to build his home there, but if Kansas became

12. Hemlandet, August 15, 1856. Hasselquist was actively urging the election of Fremont. The slate of candidates on the Republican ticket was published in Hemlandet so that the readers would make no mistakes in voting.—October 10, 1856.
13. Ibid., August 29, 1856.
a slave state, he considered going to Galesburg, Ill., where he could be with his countrymen who were not numerous in Kansas. The immigration to Kansas was really amazing, according to Küis, and for good reason. Nature was kind and all who wished to share in the bright prospects of the future should plan to come to Kansas. Enthusiasm for Kansas continued to run high when it was declared by another observer that the productivity of the state could provide for one hundred and fifty million people.\textsuperscript{15}

The editor of \textit{Hemlandet} apparently realized that the few Swedes in Kansas were overly enthusiastic and pointed out that great praise for their place of settlement was a common response of pioneers everywhere.\textsuperscript{16} The official policy of \textit{Hemlandet}, however, was to encourage immigration to Kansas. On July 14, the editor addressed “Some Words to Recently Arrived Immigrants and Others Who Are Seeking Their Luck in America.” The statement pointed out that the Eastern states were already crowded and that times were hard there for newly arrived immigrants. Land in Illinois and Iowa was already too high in price for poor people and for those of modest means. The wise thing to do would be to go to some new territory like Kansas or Nebraska.\textsuperscript{17}

One of the factors in the encouragement given to settlement in Kansas by \textit{Hemlandet} was the interest which the editor, Dr. T. N. Hasselquist, showed in a colonization project proposed by Dr. C. H. Gran, a physician in Andover, Ill. In the June 3, 1857, issue of this Swedish newspaper, under the heading, “To Each and Every One Who Wishes to Improve His Circumstances,” the announcement was made about the proposed Scandinavian colony in Kansas.\textsuperscript{18} The statement indicated that Gran hoped to bring the colonizers to Kansas in April, 1858, or earlier. The first intent was to settle along the route to California, since Gran was certain that some day there would be a railroad to the West coast. He was convinced that slavery never would nor could exist in Kansas. There was nothing to fear from the Indians. Gran had traveled widely in Kansas, eaten their food and smoked many pipes with them. He felt as secure in their wigwams as in his own house. These natives of Kansas had their own schools and churches. He had a grammar of their language. The chief inducement, however, for choosing

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., May 20, 1857.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., June 3, 1857.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., July 14, 1857.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., June 5, 1857. Hasselquist’s interest in the Gran plan was based on his desire to encourage settlement by the Swedes in a manner that would keep them identified with the Lutheran Church.—Oscar Frithiof Ander, \textit{T. N. Hasselquist—The Career and Influence of a Swedish-American Clergyman, Journalist and Educator} (Rock Island, 1931), pp. 33, 34.
Kansas was the rich land and the suitability of the climate and soil for agriculture. Wood, stone and water were available in abundance.

This original statement on the proposed Kansas colony invited inquiries to be addressed to Gran, with the request that each applicant over 21 years of age should place one dollar in the envelope to cover preliminary expenses. Each name would be entered in a permanent record book. Gran announced that he planned to visit Kansas again in the early autumn. He would find the most suitable land and secure guarantees that it would be available for the colony. He urged the Swedes to participate in this enterprise. While Gran pointed out that he was nicely situated professionally and financially in Illinois, he was willing to spend time and money on this Kansas project which would mean so much to the Swedes. Hasselquist endorsed Gran’s plan, pointing out that Kansas was south of Illinois and Iowa, thereby offering mild winters and that the Swedes already in Kansas were enthusiastic about the advantages there.

In July, 1857, Gran’s plan for a Scandinavian colony in Kansas was formally announced in a four-page supplement (Bihang) to Hemlandet. The brochure answered the question “Why Go To Kansas?” by describing the fine soil, the mild climate, the opportunity for settlement, and the cheap land which made it possible to secure 160 acres in Kansas for the price of 20 acres in any other state. Twelve reasons were listed for undertaking settlement as a member of a colony rather than individually. Among the reasons cited were the savings in large scale purchase of supplies and equipment, the establishment of a trading post within easy access of all members of the colony, the privilege of being governed by officials chosen from among themselves, the possibility of having the comforts and conveniences of an older settlement within the least possible time, the certainty of having a church and school immediately, and a guarantee of prosperity and progress for all members of the group.

The Gran plan provided that the future Kansans should assemble at Illinoistown, Ill., opposite St. Louis, on May 1, 1858. The rules and regulations of the company should be adopted at that time and necessary equipment purchased. Upon arrival in Kansas an elected committee should pick the townsite. Land should be distributed by lot as the most equitable method.

vote should be taken on such questions as the following: How large should the house be on each quarter section? How much land should be plowed and fenced? Perhaps the members would vote that the house should be 18 by 12 feet and 8 feet high with a middle partition, three windows and two doors and that 20 acres should be plowed on each quarter section. The entire membership would then begin the work in common for which they were best qualified. Gran stated that he would not be able to do heavy work, but he would take care of the sick and injured without any cost from the time they met in Illinoistown and as long as the work proceeded in common.

When the townsite had been established, houses built and a certain amount of land plowed, the company was to be dissolved. Each member would then go to the closest government land office and take out title to the property allocated to him. Each individual could do as he chose with the certificate of title. If some wished to trade holdings so that friends and relatives could live in adjoining tracts, such an arrangement was possible.

Gran pointed out that $200 would be needed if a member was to secure title to 160 acres at the initial sale price of $1.25 per acre. Payment could be made within a year. While the building of houses and breaking of sod was to be done in common at the outset, food and other household and personal needs were not to be shared in this manner. The enthusiastic originator of this Kansas plan emphasized continuously the advantages of joining in a large company. There would be good roads and bridges, churches and schools, many conveniences, the fellowship of kindred spirits with a common language and great economic advantages.

In order to promote the plan, Gran announced again his intention of traveling to Kansas in early autumn to select the best location for the colony. He had arranged for some competent Swedes, who knew the territory well, to assist him. Several factors had to be considered before the final location was determined. Communications with other settlements, possibilities for factories and potentialities for growth were important.

A cordial invitation was extended by Gran to join in this colonization project. Interested individuals were urged to see or write him immediately. He wanted to know how much land would be required by the company before going to Kansas. Information as to age, family, trade and profession should be included with the
inquiries. Gran stated that he had spent between $400 and $500 of his own money and that he was ready to leave a successful medical practice in order to promote the colony. He suggested that “Kansas Clubs” be formed in various communities in order to stimulate interest in the project and to make available information as to the plans. Individuals and clubs should also send suggestions to Gran as to the best way of carrying out this plan for a Kansas colony.

Leading citizens endorsed Gran’s plan and certified that he was of “the highest respectability, intelligence and moral worth” and that “His plans can be accepted with greatest trust.” Endorsing the plan and the reputation of Gran were two of the greatest pioneer pastors of the Augustana Lutheran Church, the Rev. T. N. Hasselquist, pastor of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church at Galesburg and Knoxville, Ill., and the Rev. L. P. Esbjörn, pastor of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church at Princeton, Ill. Other well-known supporters of the projected colony in Kansas were former Sen. Ben Graham, justice of the peace, and S. Cronsoie, publisher of Den Svenska Republikanen i Norra Amerika, at Galva, Ill.

Gran’s plan was received enthusiastically in many quarters. Hasselquist discussed the proposal in a three-column front-page story in Hemlandet. This distinguished leader of the Swedish element in America urged the Swedes to go to the West. He expressed grave concern that if they stayed in the Eastern cities many of them would become members of “the poorer classes.” While expressing enthusiasm for Gran’s plan, he admonished the Andover physician to provide adequate spiritual care for the colonists. He reported that this aspect had been discussed with Gran at considerable length and that the physician had assured him that the Kansas colony would make careful provision for the spiritual needs of the members.

Inquiries about the Kansas colony came from a wide area. In September, Hasselquist reported, following a visit with Gran at Andover, that 200 individuals had already signified their interest in the plan. On Monday evening, September 14, a “Kansas Meeting” was held at the Swedish Lutheran Church at Galesburg.

20. Hemlandet, July 28, 1857. At this time Gran was trying to raise money for his Kansas project. He had compounded and marketed a “Floss Medicin” which was advertised widely. Great claims were made as to its curative power for theague and other illnesses. In Hemlandet for August 4, 1857, Gran urged all who had acquired this medicine through Dr. Hasselquist to make payment which was due.

People were in attendance from far and near. Gran spoke to the group about the advantages of that area and answered many questions. He announced at the meeting that he was soon leaving for Kansas to seek the best location for the colony. The following were to accompany him: John P. Swenson from Richmond, Mo., Henry Kiisel who resided at Grasshopper Falls, K. T., and one other person. 22

Gran went to Kansas in September and on December 3, *Hemlandet* reported that he was back at Andover. In a review of his journey we find that he arrived at Wyandotte City, K. T., on September 27. "When one gets up on a bluff and looks over the fruitful plains and woods, these wonders of God's creation, the soul is filled with a stirring that words cannot describe," he wrote. The beauty of the Smoky Hill, Republican, Big Blue and other rivers in Kansas appealed to him greatly. There were optimistic descriptions of the products of the area, nuts, plums, potatoes, beans, wheat, oats, corn, tobacco and a new kind of molasses. The quality of the products was good and the yield was bountiful, with corn producing 60 to 70 bushels per acre, wheat 30 to 45 bushels per acre and potatoes 100 to 300 bushels per acre. 23

Support for the project came also from Henry L. Kiisel in Kansas who wrote on December 15:

*Countrymen in New York and in all other Eastern states. You who work hard every day for your small daily wage, now is the chance for you to get your own home where you can live independent of Americans. You will escape working so hard, and cease to be dependent upon your daily wages. . . . If God lets me live and gives me health, I want to live among my countrymen again, who will be interested in founding a good Swedish congregation together with building its own school and church.*

This lonesome Swede ended his appeal by urging his countrymen to join in Gran's project and come to Kansas. 24

The invitation from Kiisel to the Swedes was extended again in January of 1858, as Gran formulated plans for the journey to Kansas in the spring. The loyal Kansan reported that the past winter had been mild and comfortable. He expressed the hope that the stories in the newspapers about the strife in Kansas would not be taken too seriously. Conditions were not as bad as reported. "He who minds his own business," he wrote, "and does not interfere in politics, can go in peace. Countrymen, come next April.

You can improve your condition in beautiful Kansas and secure a fine home for yourselves and your children.”

Meanwhile, Gran completed his plans, said farewell to his friends at Andover and with a few companions started for the appointed meeting place en route to Kansas. When he arrived at St. Louis on April 5, he experienced a great disappointment. Only a few people awaited his arrival. However, he learned from them that a large group of Swedes had left for Kansas earlier. They had become impatient following reports that good land was getting scarce. The people who were now with Gran decided nevertheless to go with him to Kansas immediately and left St. Louis on April 6.

The number in Gran’s party was too few to carry out the grand design of the original plan. Only about a dozen people continued with Gran to a place on the Saline river. Here a townsite was laid out with the primitive measuring device of a piece of string and the name Granville was given to it by the Illinois dreamer. On May 25, Gran wrote a detailed letter to Hemlandet about his unfortunate experiences, designating the place of origin with wishful thinking as Granville, K. T. A. M. Campbell and A. C. Spillman assisted Gran in measuring off what the doctor thought was a square mile for a townsite. Campbell and Spillman were promised four lots each for their services.

Gran stayed in his newly founded colony for only a few days. He stopped briefly at Ft. Riley and then returned to Illinois. However, he still urged people to consider Kansas as a place for settlement. In a communication to Hemlandet he suggested that prospective residents of Kansas should go to Wyandotte City, Lawrence, Burlingame, Emporia, and then to Whitewater in Butler county or to El Dorado in Hunter county. A colony of Swedes located in 1858 on the Upper Walnut creek and De Racken creek and others on Cole creek in Butler county.

Included in the group of people who came to Kansas with Gran was L. O. Jaderborg. He was born in Järbo, Gästrikland, Sweden.

25. Ibid., February 16, 1858.
26. Ibid., May 25, 1858.
27. Ibid.; Andreas-Cutler, op. cit., p. 698. Andreas refers to Dr. Gran of Illinois but his brief description corresponds in detail with the complete account in Hemlandet. The statement that Dr. Gran came to Kansas in the early 1860’s and that he went to the Neosho valley has no basis in fact.—Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, v. 4 (1886-1888), p. 287.
28. Hemlandet, May 25, 1858. Dr. C. H. Gran was burned to death in his bed at the Invalid’s Hotel, Alpha, Ill., of which he was proprietor, on March 15, 1883. The bed apparently took fire from the lamp by which he had been reading.—The Henry County News quoted in Henry L. Kenner, History of Henry County, Illinois (Chicago, 1910), v. 1, p. 763.
29. V. P. Mooney, History of Butler County, Kansas (Lawrence, 1916), p. 301.
January 28, 1829. Influenced by “Amerika feber” (America fever), he left his native country on the sailing ship *Maria*, July 22, 1855, and after a brief stay in England, came to the United States on October 16. He worked at Andover, Ill., where he joined Gran and the Kansas colonizers. Information is made available by Jaderborg about the fate of the Gran colony. The leader stayed only a few days in Kansas, leaving his associates there with food and provisions for two weeks. Near the end of that time the few Swedes remaining at Granville became alarmed at their desperate condition and started for Ft. Riley. Heavy rains and floods caused great hardship. They were without food for two days before reaching Ft. Riley. Only Jaderborg stayed there. The rest of the party hurried on to Illinois.

Jaderborg secured employment as a blacksmith with L. B. Perry who ran the ferry at Ft. Riley. He learned that a Swede, John Swenson, had settled in Center township in Dickinson county. At Christmas time and lonesome for contact with a fellow Swede, he sought the Swenson home. He arrived there on Christmas eve. The Swensons and their small daughter lived in a small eight by eight foot cabin but there were no limitations to their hospitality. The visitor stayed there until the day after Christmas. Jaderborg was impressed with the land and made arrangements to take out a pre-emption claim. He returned in the spring of 1859 to work the land and made occasional trips there. In April, 1861, he joined the Second Kansas cavalry as the driver of a provision wagon pulled by six mules. The first action for him was at Pea Ridge and the last at Prairie Grove. He returned to Kansas and participated in the action associated with Price’s raid. In the autumn of 1865 he went to his land near Enterprise. Peter Joshua Peterson, who had been there in 1859, and Isaac Broman lived with him that winter in a dugout. Jaderborg became a leading Swedish-American citizen in Kansas, identifying himself with the Bethlehem Lutheran Church near Enterprise and giving generous support to Bethany College at Lindsborg.

Several other Swedes who were not associated directly with Gran’s “colony” came to Kansas in 1858. The first Swedish settler in Marshall county was Peter Froom. He came to the United States in 1855 and arrived in Kansas from Knox county, Ill., in 1858, when

he settled on a homestead in Rock township. P. J. Peterson, who became a contractor in Lawrence, arrived in that city in 1858 from Chicago where he had learned the carpenter's trade. He had come to America with his parents in 1855. Several Swedes settled in Osage county in 1858, including Peter Peterson in Junction township, and Chris and John Peterson in Fairfax township. Pål Peterson and six sons came to the county also in 1858.

While Dr. C. H. Gran had great plans for Kansas in 1858 and lived to see them fail, another Swede, Andrew Palm, came to Kansas that year with dreams and hopes that became a reality to a considerable extent. He was born in Killeöd, Bellinge Socken, April 30, 1835. His name until he became a naturalized American citizen was Andrus Person Palmquist. Graduating from the University of Lund in 1855, he arrived at Bloomington, Kan., four miles from Lawrence, three years later. He was associated with Hyde, Swain and Palm in the saw and grist mill business. However, the Missouri bushwhackers burned the mill and Palm's house was destroyed by fire. He thereupon moved to Lawrence.

Andrew Palm possessed an imaginative mind that produced practical ideas leading to several inventions. In the spring of 1862, together with John Wilder, the decision was made to construct a huge windmill in the west part of Lawrence. Palm returned to Sweden in November and purchased all the equipment for the project. Accompanied by 12 mechanics, he sailed for America. En route the ship was stopped and searched by the crew of the famous Confederate raider, the Alabama, but since Palm's vessel was of German registry, it was permitted to continue the voyage. On June 15, 1863, Palm and his associates arrived in Lawrence. They started work on their unusual project and all was going well until that morning of August 21 when Quantrill and his band rode into town. L. Johnson, one of the workers on the windmill pro-

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32. Emma E. Porter, *History of Marshall County, Kansas* (Indianapolis, 1917), p. 228; Schön, *loc. cit.*, pp. 187, 188. Peter Froom was born in Ockelbo, Sweden, March 21, 1825, and died in Marshall county, July 9, 1894. He was active in the Salem Lutheran Church in the Swedish settlement near Axell. It has been stated that two Swedes lived on a farm near Marysville in Marshall county in 1855 but nothing definite is known about them.

33. Lindshørg *Posten*, April 4, 1906. Peterson was born at Rodja, Småland, Sweden, February 8, 1838. He died in Lawrence in 1906. He was president of the Scandinavian society in Lawrence and a stockholder in the Lawrence Flour Company.


35. Bethany College collection, "Misc. SK 24"; Schön, *loc. cit.*, pp. 193-199; biographical sketch of Andrew Palm, by Mrs. Blenda (Palm) Greenwood, in manuscripts division, Kansas State Historical Society. Palm came to America on the sailing boat *Unonia*. He lived for a while in Boston where antislavery agitation was high and this fact influenced his decision to come to Kansas. He died at Lawrence, November 5, 1906.
ject was shot and made a cripple for life. His son, Gus, was slightly wounded. The workmen hurried to Wilder’s stone residence in the 700 block on Kentucky street. Quantrill’s men assumed that the place was well fortified and hence did not attack it. Eighteen men, including Palm, were unharmed.36

Work on the mill continued until the early autumn of 1864, when it was completed at a cost of $9,700. The structure was octagonal, five stories in height, the basement constructed of stone with four foot walls. The structure above ground was of native oak. The huge wheel was 80 feet in diameter, with canvas sails 10 feet in width, making 13 revolutions a minute. The result was a force equal to an 80 horsepower engine. It was used for grinding wheat and corn until 1885. It burned in 1905. Palm and Wilder also established the Wind Mill Agricultural Works which manufactured plows to break the virgin soil, cultivators, other farm equipment and household goods. Palm is said to have cast the first plow in Kansas. He took out several United States patents. Included in Palm’s inventions were a riding cultivator, a barbwire lifter and grading scrapers.37

The few Swedes in Kansas at the time of the gold rush in the Pikes Peak region became enthusiastic about the possibilities of achieving great wealth, and others in Illinois and elsewhere contacted their countrymen in the state about the prospects. An unknown Swede, who apparently represented some of his friends, reported on the prospects when writing from Leavenworth in May, 1859. His letter stated that on the previous Saturday the first express arrived from the Pikes Peak region with $5,000 worth of gold dust. Some of the precious mineral could be seen in small bottles at Russell’s bank. Rumors were circulating that additional gold to the value of $10,000 was en route, although some skeptics doubted the authenticity of reports of the discoveries. Since there was so much uncertainty, this Swede stated that he and his friends would delay their journey to the gold fields.38 The interest among the Swedes in the gold strike was so great that Hemlandet warned its readers not to be misled by the glowing reports.39 In the spring of 1860, interest in Kansas as a gathering point for the journey to Colorado is shown by a feature article and a large map on the

36. Schön, loc. cit., pp. 197, 198; Lawrence Journal-World, June 28, 1941. C. Rodell, a Swede who was in Lawrence during Quantrill’s raid, described the event for Swedish readers and reported that among the Swedes only Carl Anderson was killed.—Hemlandet, September 30, 1863.
37. Andreas-Cutler, op. cit., p. 390; Greenwood, loc. cit.
38. Hemlandet, June 8, 1859.
39. Ibid., March 15, 1859.
front page of *Hemlandet* indicating the routes to “guldlandet,” the gold country.⁴⁰ Gust Johnson, S. P. Rolander and Jonas Magnus Johnson of the Mariadahl colony were among the Kansas Swedes who went to the Pikes Peak region in the spring of 1860, returning that autumn.⁴¹ There is no record of Swedes sharing extensively in the riches which seemed so promising at a distance.

While the prospects in Kansas had been favorably portrayed to Swedish people through the influential newspaper *Hemlandet*, the strife over Kansas and a series of criticisms of the state were factors in discouraging immigration. A. Thorson, writing in July, 1858, pointed out that Kansas is the battle ground and the source of discord between two powerful political parties, and the end of the struggle is far off. For this reason at present Kansas can only with difficulty be settled and occupied by peaceable people who must earn their bread by the sweat of their brows.⁴²

*Hemlandet* described a meeting of Swedes in Galesburg on February 28, 1859, at which a letter from a Swede in Kansas advising his countrymen not to come to that area was read. Louis Lybrecker, who had spent several months in Kansas in 1857 with a surveying party wrote to his countrymen:

> My knowledge about Kansas is of such a character that from the bottom of my heart I never want to think of it. What is home for us people from the Northern Countries without woods and water? Are we accustomed to an endless prairie with its eternal monotony? No, we feel at home when we are surrounded by beautiful nature, by evergreen forests along a lake or river. That the climate is healthful I deny absolutely. Ague is so prevalent throughout the entire state that scarcely a person can be found who has not suffered from it. . . . Let us rather found a colony in Southwestern Minnesota, or near our countrymen in that state. I have never been in Minnesota, but it seems to me to be the right place for Swedes.⁴³

Additional criticism of Kansas appeared in *Hemlandet* in October, 1860, when an article was reprinted from the Chicago *Tribune* describing terrible conditions of conflict, poverty, starvation and distress.⁴⁴

The pattern of settlement, at least temporarily, followed the advice of Lybrecker. Minnesota, unlike Kansas, was not in the center of the conflict that split the nation into two armed camps. It was easier to go to Minnesota than to Kansas, many Swedes were already there, several Swedish churches had been organized,

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⁴¹ Christensen, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
⁴² *Hemlandet*, July 6, 1858.
and the natural surroundings there seemed closer to those of the homeland than did the wide prairies of Kansas. Moreover, the failure of the Gran colony plan undoubtedly discouraged many Swedes. While Hemlandet published letters for and against Kansas, the former enthusiasm for the state had disappeared.  

However, there was a change in the situation within a decade. The end of the Civil War aroused new interest. In 1869, several hundred Swedes, under the leadership of two Lutheran pastors, the Rev. Olof Olsson from Värmland in Sweden and the Rev. A. W. Dahlsten from Galesburg, Ill., settled in the Smoky valley in central Kansas. While Gran and his Kansas “colony” became almost a legend, the idea of the Andover physician that the Swedes should settle in large groups was kept alive. In the Smoky valley, the First Swedish Agricultural Company of McPherson county in the Lindsborg area and the Galesburg Company in the Freemont community acquired thousands of acres of land upon which hundreds of Swedes settled. Similarly along the Republican river at approximately the same time, the Scandinavian Land Company promoted colonization in the Scandia area. Out of the settlements in the Smoky valley came Bethany College and the “Messiah” chorus tradition at Lindsborg. From these and other groups, came the religious and cultural values which have made it possible for the Swedes of Kansas to make their contribution to the great symphony of American life.

45. Ibid., March 15, 1859, published a favorable report on Kansas by A. Lars Person from Riley county and the severe criticism by Louis Lybecker.