

①

LETTERS RECEIVED FROM JOHN BERGWALL OF STOCKHOLM
THROUGH VICTOR BERGWALL OF BOSTON IN 1947

Translated from Swedish. Letters were kept until safe to send them to America.

Vanhem, April 8, 1858

Dear Brother:

Since one of my friends and countrymen, Mr. Unonius, is leaving for Sweden, I shall write you a few lines. To tell you the truth, I do not know to whom to send this letter, as I have neither yours nor anyone else's address. I hope you will write a few lines as soon as possible for you will want to hear from me again. I am now fifty-two years old - with no old-age symptoms - vigorous and in perfect health. I do practically all of the work myself as it is ruinous to hire workers. My home life is very happy with a tender loving wife and five well-born children. My farm is at present in pretty good condition, and have had good harvests for three years. I have paid \$150.00 on my land debt - have left to pay \$300.00. Owing to money value going up and down, we receive nothing this year for our produce. Nevertheless I hope things will be better.

Once you mentioned in one of your letters that you intended to do something for me in a money way. Now would be the right time if you are able for I am old and in need of help. I would then not need to work so hard.

A common laborer here receives \$150.00 per year board and laundry while we receive not more than \$2.00 profit a barrel (Swedish) for wheat or 8 Rex R.G.S.; one barrel of oats for 4 Rex; one barrel corn 6 Rex.; one barrel for the Germans 8 Rex.; one barrel buckwheat 6 Rex.; You see, therefore, how up and down it is to pay a worker 600 Rex, not including board and laundry. No one is better off in America than he who works for others. Doctors do well. We have one doctor in Waukesha who is a homeopathist. He figured his accounts after being here two years and found his income to be \$40,000 - 160,000 Rex. He is only a student from Northoping, by the name of Lotstrom. Greet your wife and children very sincerely and all who belong to me. Kiss your wife and children for me. Let me know Alexander Bundson's address. It would be nice to hear about former friends and how they are doing - I presume one is up and another down. May you live successfully to the joy of your dear brother,

Edward

My address is:

Hartland P.O.
Waukesha Co.
Wisconsin
North America

2

Vanhem, Jan. 22, 1859

Dear Brother Anton:

In the spring of 1859 I sent a letter to Sweden with Gustaf Unonius, not to you only, but to Hedda and John, but since I received no answer from any one of you, it might be possible that the letter I sent with Unonius on the New York was lost. I do not want to be out of touch with you so am taking the liberty to write you again, not certain as to which place I shall send same, since you have given me no definite address.

I have good health, thank the Lord, but less active (agile) because of my weight. Still I do all hard work myself. I am usually up first and last to bed. My circumstances won't permit hiring help except when necessary.

My son Knut, is now ten years old and getting to be of some help, though of course not so much since he must go to school so he can someday be useful to himself and to his community. I have three pretty girls, Charlotte, Hedda Emma. Agnes, my wife's daughter by her former marriage, is a good girl and very useful to her mother. She helps a lot with household tasks when not in school.

My farm improves each year, thanks to hard work and good management, but I have \$300.00 mortgage on it, the Lord only knows when I'll be able to pay it. \$36.00 interest a year heavily rests upon me and makes my hair grey.

Most of the Swedes who settled here with me are gone, one here and another there - trying something else. Some have been successful while others have failed miserably. Still I would not exchange places with those who have succeeded. For despite many cares, I find myself happy and content amid my family circle - A GOOD WIFE AND HEALTHY HOPEFUL CHILDREN.

On my wife's side I have many relations, most of whom are doing well. How is it with my son, Johan Edward? I wonder if he has any love for a father, who has thrown him upon his own resources out into the world, to build himself a new home since he could not make a living for himself on his ancestral home. My heart was sorely tested when I must needs tear the bonds that held me to my beloved fatherland to make my living here with hard work. But this is as nothing compared with the thought that he (my son) might be cold and indifferent to a Father who was driven to make this step.

How is Hedda to whom I feel so much indebted for all sacrifice she has made for me? Would that she might live without too many cares, and if she is in need of anything, I ask you to see about it, and let me know as soon as possible how she, Jon and A. Bundsen and family are, and how they have it. Also, I wish to know where they live, so that I can send them a few lines - I know Bundsen lives in southern Sweden, but do not know to which Post Office I shall address the letters.

You must let me know about all my friends there at home, how they have it, who are living and who are dead. I have never heard anything from Birndes. How is Napoleon Winnberg and the Westrings - all young companions together at the Custom House?

Now I must let you know that even here I am trusted with public funds. I am at present treasurer of our town, having to collect and disburse the taxes. The taxes were high this year - went up to \$3359. Besides, I am school treasurer. I receive \$80.00 per year for the first mentioned office, and was elected as per usual

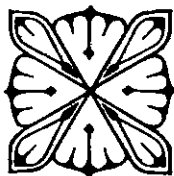
for one year. For the second I receive work and prestige - this for two year period. Possibly I may be elected to the first office again the ensuing year. I want you to know that I have many friends - both among Americans and Scandinavians. Among the latter are many Danes who bought from Swedes and Norwegians. We are all Republicans and against slavery which cannot exist much longer. This shameful thing must be blotted out from Freedom's Star-Spangled Banner if need be with the most precious and holy on earth our brother's blood.

I happen to know that Dr. Pohlman had received letters from all of you in Sweden, but I did not see them. Let us know that hereafter we don't send letters by anyone but send them directly by mail. Do you have plenty of money, or in other words, are you in a position to help a far-away brother? You have seen from what I have written previously that I am in need of funds for the mortgage and for hired help. A little lift under the arms for the old man would help a lot. Be sure that I would not be lazy on that account - no, that would be to pour oil upon the fire.

Now greet your wife and children from me, and kiss each one. All of mine unite in sending greetings. Kiss John and Hedda.

Your brother,
E. G. Bergwall
(George Edward Bergwall)

My address is:
Hartland P.O.
Waukesha County
Wisconsin
North America



3

Vanhem, April 10, 1859

Beloved brother Anton:

I have at last after a long and painful waiting received a letter from you with news of you and the rest of mine, all so very dear to me.

That Pohlman luxury vanished I knew through a previous letter. From that you will realize in what a long time I have not received any news from the Fatherland and those whom I so tenderly cherish (nearly 5 years). I have not altogether given up the idea of going back to Sweden, therefore, it would be kind of you to send me a report of my affairs.

What you mention concerning John's success in the profession he himself chose makes a father's heart happy and very pleases. One does not need to fear that God on high will not extend His blessing on all of his tasks; furthermore, I appreciate with all my heart everything that you and my loving sister have done for my John.

It makes me very happy to know that Hedda is living a quiet and carefree life. Oh, if I could come to Gb. and personally thank her for all she has done for John since that hard moment when I left him and all that I held dear in the old world.

It makes my heart glad to see that all has gone so well with Alex Bundsen. I wish that the all-good God will care for him and the rest of his family and community. What a joy to once more be able to see them all.

You did not mention whether you received the position as Regiment doctor or not. I hope your wishes came true.

You want to know how I have it here. I will be able to tell you that in a few lines. I still own the farm, but sold 45 acres of which I had no use, so now I have only 80 acres left. I have 45 acres under plow in good cultivation. This summer I am planning to plow 16 more acres with a big plow and 5 (pair) yoke of oxen. I will be able to have more clover, thereby increasing my stock. I have not like my neighbors been able to build nice homes. I still live in my old log house. I have, however started work on new outbuildings, of which a barn is completed. Next, this summer, will be a granary, large and roomy, after which I will put up a house. My stock is as follows; 1 pair good oxen worth \$125.00, 4 cows, 3 calves, 8 pigs, 20 sheep, and a flock of chickens. I have good farm implements. My wagon cost me \$100.00, a lot of money for a farm wagon. I have a mortgage of \$300.00 on my farm, and almost \$400.00 in debt, all with 12% interest. What hurt me and many others most was that up to 36% interest could be asked on money to be paid for land. To borrow on such terms was equal to leaving the land, but praise God, that period is over. My dear brother, I will completely forego my claims to money from your land, since you have informed me of the expense you had on John's behalf. Do not tire doing all the good you can for him, and I will trust God for strength to work my farm a few more years. I will then be able to balance my accounts. Perhaps when I get more land cleared and get good crops and high prices on the produce it will be possible for me to shorten my debt register. A few days ago I was again elected Town Treasurer and Tax Collector for one year - which office in 1850 brought me \$100 in salary. I do not expect it will be that much this year. It is not usual to hold the office more than one year as they want to spread the salary to the most needy in the towns.

You want to know how my brother-in-law, Glerup, is and I will proceed to tell you. His work has been writing at the Record Office in Madison. His pay was according to the amount of work done, and believe me, he worked hard to earn as much as possible, but the man who had the office hired another writer, thereby, making less work so he (Glerup) could hardly make enough to pull himself through. It was then his Wendla got the idea to stamp patterns of embroidery on fine linen and the like. Glerup himself made the stamps, which were a real work of art. In this way they make pretty good money on the side, and all seemed to go well with them in Madison; but as nothing in America is lasting, another was elected as Glerup's principal which made the whole personnel of 4 married men without the income expected. Then in 1/1/59 Wendla worked at her stamping and Glerup secured work at writing, for which he received \$50.00. Now he worked day and night. When he had a little more than the above mentioned \$50 (I believe he had \$100) he went along to Chicago and took his nice furniture along by train. Wendla went to Milwaukee to see her brother Knut, and from there to Hartford to a married sister Katrina, then to me. She made the money at each of these places by her work, so her trip was free and she had some money left when she got back to her loving Glerup in Chicago. During that time Glerup had had two positions with little pay in both; one was bookkeeping, the other clerking at the Post Office. The latter he kept I believe at a salary of \$600 per year. I do not know whether Wendla will make good in Chicago.

I know that Glerup received \$600 from his father. Had he made good use of that he would now be a rich man; or if not rich, he would have the capital left even if not increased. Developments followed. Blanxius, his brother-in-law, was in Chicago when Glerup received his first check. He (B) persuaded G. to borrow his partner in hardware business in Milwaukee. B's received \$300. The result of this affair was loss. The other clerk went the same way. Illness took a part and clothes for both of them so that they could appear well in the city took the rest. It was too bad that their money was so mishandled, but Glerup had at the time too little business experience to handle the business on his own. Therefore, things went as they did. Now he must pay apprentice fee as nearly everyone has to when he comes to this promised land. Did you know Blanxius in Sweden? How was he thought of at home, and his family?

My brother-in-law, Knut, came back from Oregon. He is in Milwaukee doing well. He is here with us often. Then I always have a feast as he is not short on rarities - oysters from New York, beer from Scotland, cognac from France - a pleasant lad.

Nils is in Chicago. He is best of them all. He is in big business as a contractor. Two years ago he built the largest hotel in the West, 6 stories high. He had it on contract for \$80,000 and at the same time he had many other small and large buildings to put up. He has lost a lot, but had many good jobs. I believe he has made about \$15,000 and is very careful of a dollar.

I have one brother-in-law who is no good - the prodigal son. Sten Peterson, the youngest of the boys, is a fine energetic, young man. He was married a few days ago and has nothing but hope for the future. It is not unusual nor out of order to take such chances here in America. You know Glerup has a crown of a wife. She is a goddess with a clear head. They surely have the sweetest boy. I do love him.

Is Emil Bundsen alive? If he is greet him from his brother-in-law here, C. Balkman. He is my closest neighbor. My wife and children greet all of you. I hope God will protect and care for you all. This is their and my honest prayer from a true heart. Greet John and Hedda in particular from me and my wife. I will soon write both of them. My wife has written to sister Hedda, but received no answer. Greet all friends and acquaintances from me. We have lived apart now seventeen years. Green Wenberg from me perhaps he would like to do something for me. I have a son and 3 daughters. My wife had a girl, Agnes, by a former marriage. Agnes is of great help to her mother. Now good-by, my beloved Anton. May God protect and keep you and yours in happiness.

From yours sincerely,
E. G. Bergwall

My address is:
Hartland P.O.
Waukesha County
Wisconsin
North America

P.S. Pharmacist Bergstrom arrived a year ago last summer. He said you are a well to do man, that you had plenty of money and were looked upon as wealthy. Another rascal said you had been to the Baths in Germany the past summer. Bergstrom also told me that my son John had discontinued his studies.





④

Vanhem, Aug. 12, 1862

Beloved brother Anton:

As my brother-in-law, Glerup, because of poor health has to leave this country and go home to Sweden, I will send these few lines with him and promise to send you a letter by mail soon when the fall work is over. Everything goes on as usual here - work from sunrise to sunset. We surely have a devastating war in the country, but so far we have not felt the real effect of it. The time will come when the war tax must be paid in order to continue the conflict, which at present costs us \$2,000,000 a day. My crops looked fine this year, until a few days before harvesting was to begin, the #*%\$& flies or what they call cinch bugs here put in their appearance. They smell like bedbugs and are legion in number, surrounding the stalks of grain and sucking the sap which should make the kernels. The kernels dry up to about half of their normal size and the weight is accordingly - yet it makes good flour. 19-1/2 acres were damaged. I have 10 acres of a different kind of wheat, which is strong, has shining straw, resists attacks of flies and is good, thank God. I am sending with Glerup my photograph taken with an implement which is used for cutting grain. I think it is pretty good and it will be interesting to learn whether you recognize me. I wrote you a while ago regarding a will for my daughter Agnes, but have not received an answer so do not know if you received my letter. An inheritance was to come through the death of a captain in the Dahl regiment, Balk by name. We should like to know if there is anything for Agnes to inherit after her father Frederick Leonard Balk. We are all in good health and my wife and children join me in hearty greetings to you and yours.

Your affectionate brother,
E. G. Bergwall

P.S. Sincere greetings to John, Hedda and Bundsens from us all.





5

Vanhem, March 13, 1865

Beloved brother Anton:

It is a long time since you had from me, but indifference is not the reason - more time and determination. I had the misfortune of being injured by felling trees in the woods. The tree I was felling broke and fell unexpectedly so that I had to make the greatest of haste in order to save my life, but my right leg was fractured at the knee. I have been on crutches for two weeks after having been on my back in bed for 4 months. It was very hard for me, who is always used to being active. One bone in the leg is broken and the other crushed. Besides I have a deep cut at the large joint in the ankle near the foot. Six inches above the cut the bone was broken. The doctor tells me that I will again have a good leg. A doctor came from Milwaukee in four hours after the accident, to set the bones - free trip and fee \$20.00 which was considered very reasonable. Besides I have my old doctor, who has been here, the Lord knows how many times, but I am sure he does not forget to make a note of it. So, all in all, this let will cost more perhaps than it is worth to a 59 year old. Enough about the leg. I thank you so much for letter with you and your son's photographs. I did not recognize you, but likely would have, without the hat. Since my last letter my wife has presented me another boy, who received the name Anton Edward. He is now a very active wholesome boy at 2-1/2 years, and shouldn't wonder if he becomes president sometime. It would be interesting to know what the people in Sweden think of the war in America. Since I do not know your opinion of it, I will let you know mine. It is as all other undertakings in America: magnificent. This is a war of life or death for what is most precious to humanity - Freedom. This rebellion has developed because the mighty ones in the South or the big and small slave owners could no longer keep the government in their hands due to the increase in population in the North and in the West. As a result we people of sound mind, free will and divided wealth became the stronger party at the elections and put into office the president and others. In the South all were Democrats and would not have dared to rebel except as they depended on the Northern Democrats for support. These no doubt would have helped them all they could or dared, but praise to a Higher power for the strength, we Republicans had not only to whip the South, but also to keep the Democrats in our own states in chastisement, and the admonition of the Lord. The rebels are now on their last legs. The 300,000 men we have are for the most part volunteers not conscripted, no, people realize the value of freedom and

promptly enlist - that is what my brother-in-law, Sten, has done. He left wife and children also the farm, and shouldered a gun. God help the rebel who comes within the range of his gun. Of this 48th of Wisconsin's Regiments, 2/3 are well-to-do men with families. There are soldiers worth over \$50,000 and many of considerable wealth. Our war debts are large and no country except ours could stand such expenditures - only a country whose foundation is liberty. Vanderbilt gave \$5,000,000 to the government when it was in need of money at the beginning of the war, also many of his fine big steamboats were equipped for the states service. He stated that it was not more than right that he do this for the country that had enabled him to acquire wealth, as a result of its free constitution. Much is lost during this war, but also much won. In the first place the United States now has the right to be called "Free States" as slavery has received its death blow. In the second place the people learned how to fight, something heretofore neglected and thirdly, we now have a fleet so large that we can call ourselves masters of the sea. We could, if need be, this moment whip both England and France, thanks to our countryman Erickson. In the last fight we had to take Wilmington with its Fort Fisher, the strongest fortification in the world, and there it was proved that our Monitors could withstand severe rifled English cannon all along the line, anchored at only 1000 rods (1 rod 16-1/2 ft.) away, without damage and without the loss of a man. According to the latest report from the War Department we had lost not less than 200,000 men through fighting and illness. This is, however, not many more than are replaced by emigrants, so when the war ends our populations will not be decreased as would be the case in countries of the old world. In the South where there is no emigration and where slaves make up half the population they feel now and will continue to feel for a long time the lack of men. The slaves they dare not take as soldiers for they know, as well as I, which way they will take. We had in this war, a regiment made up of Scandinavians that took part in many bloody conflicts. This regiment returned a few days ago, its flag in tatters and only 2 companies strong after 3 years of service. When they left there were more than 1000 men. Among other things which prove the patriotism in our country, I wish to mention that the wealthy in New York, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh have proposed that when the war is over all of the war debt estimated to be 2,000,000,000 be paid the cities to assume 2/3 leaving only 1/3 never before heard of in the world. I shouldn't wonder but what we may use our army after we are through with the South, to whip Maximilian out of Mexico, for the United States cannot tolerate a Crowned head by its side. That would be a small matter hardly worth mentioning. I, for my part, believe it was the most foolish thing Napoleon withdrew his minister from Washington. That seems to be significant. There is great excitement here regarding the finding of petroleum. Large companies have been formed to drill the earth, and its interior in many places has been examined. A short time ago in Chicago, they drilled 700 feet but did not find petroleum. They, however, found some of the most wonderful water. They tried again a few rods from this place and found what they were looking for. The well produces not more than 12 barrels a day, but even this is not considered a bad find. There are oil wells, however, that produce 7000 barrels a day. It seems to me that they should drill for oil in Noganas, Sweden. It is to be found where there are salt or coal mines.

We have had a steady winter since the middle of November with snow and good

sleighting and while I am writing this snow is falling heavily. We hope to have an early spring and a good year. Last year in most parts of Wisconsin the harvest was poor, but prices were high on the little we had to sell so we were well repaid for the things sold. Prices were proportionately high on things purchased. For example: a calico dress for my wife costs \$6.00, a pair of shoes 3 to 4 dollars, a pair of heavy boots from 8 to 12, coffee 60 cents, sugar from 25 to 40 cents and other things accordingly, so that in order to clothe and feed a large family requires a good income. Immigrants who come here now and who came during the war are making good, for earnings are good, and workers are few. I will not be able to hire anyone this year as a man would cost from 250 to 350 dollars not including good food, room and laundry.

When we are busiest, my son has to try to take care of the farm with a little help. Christmas eve my mother-in-law and brother-in-law (Sten) with his three children were with us. We had a Christmas tree hung with candy and small gifts for the children not forgetting to mention the prettiest apples from our own orchard. Everything was made as festive as possible for my enjoyment as I lay with my leg in a sling. Christmas presents were distributed as usual. I received 120 dollars in money from my brothers-in-law to help me along besides other gifts. We had fine Baltimore oysters, turkey and ducks beside the indispensable rice pudding and baked things. Wine is out of the question in the country until we are able to make it ourselves which we will do soon. Many have already started to grow grapes successfully on a big scale. Cotton was grown successfully in Illinois last summer. Raising sugar beets continues in the West with success, also tobacco so as time goes on we'll soon have our own supply. I believe there will be much immigration from the East to the South when the war is over and slavery is abolished. Then the southern states will become America's richest provinces. Under the slave whip not so much could be done for the masses, only the individual. I wish you would get P.V. Lijestroms travels in the U.S.A. published in Stockholm in 1852. In this book you will find that this countryman already at that time predicated this rebellion. He also predicated that it would have a happy ending. You will also find in it something of America's enormous resources. You may think when I am praising America so highly that I have forgotten my Fatherland, but this is not so. I love it with all my heart and search the papers for news therefrom and happy to learn of progress and improvements made. Nothing would make me happier than to once again set my foot on that - for me - blessed land, but I do not think I would like to live there all of my life.

My brother-in-law, Nils Peterson, who bought land next to me has left farming and gone back to Chicago to become a wholesale merchant carrying on a pretty big business. First he was a mason, then a contractor and architect, and now a wholesale merchant. I just mention this to let you know what he is doing. Possibly I may have to try something else. If my leg does not heal and get strong, I will be of no use on a farm. My daughter, Agnes, is in high school in Milwaukee. I think she has one more year to go then she will be able to earn a good deal in a year, as she will have enough knowledge to be a teacher. I know some who earn up to 600 dollars a year. It was on her behalf that I once wrote you regarding an inheritance from her deceased grandfather. You must by all means look into this - legally inquire if there is anything to inherit after the deceased Captain Balk, who was with the Dahl regiment. If the father of Frederick has not disinherited him

through a will, there remains an inheritance for I know positively that the father was wealthy. You should make inquiry the counsel way and make use of, I think, none other than Jeanne Bundsen. Balks dwelling place was Fahlund, he had both city and country property. You mentioned that it might be possible for John to come here to see me. I believe such a trip would be of great benefit to him and what a joy it would be for me to see him. Had he been here during the war, I am sure he would already have made his fortune, but since he perhaps can make it where he is, it would be unwise to cross the river to get water. In the meantime may God be with him in all his endeavors; he could by the way, sometime gladden his old father by sending a few lines - they would be so very welcome. I have not heard from sister Hedda for a long time either. Were I in better circumstance, I would send her something that would be a joy and of usefulness to her, but I am poor and poor I remain; but since it does not take wealth or money to make me happy, I am perfectly content with my lot in the world. If I and mine may remain well I'll have all that I can wish for in this world and gold magnetic power shall not make my departure difficult.

How are Alexander and Jeanne, also their children? Have they been in good health? What joy it would give me to see them and all of you, in good health. But as this can not happen I can only wish. Still I am with you continually in thought and so take comfort. Does Alexander buy and sell property yet, or has he found something that his heart desires to keep as a permanent dwelling place? Do you see George Glerup often? Greet him much from me, also his wife and children. I intend to write him soon, when at that time I send you a few lines. He was one of the few who could not find happiness in America. He could not get used to the American way of living. He had, as a foreigner much too great expectations, but it is the same the world over, one must crawl before one can walk. Could he have had his health things might have been very different. Luckily he had a good home in his Fatherland and a kind father.

Among new inventions here is one that will revolutionize the whole sugar production. It is to make sugar out of corn at an unusual low price. The patent was purchased by one in New York and if I remember rightly paid to the inventor not less than 100,000 dollars. Heretofore, corn has been used to fatten pigs and for whiskey, etc., and with the price low it did not pay very well to raise it here in Wisconsin but hereafter no doubt it will bring a rich reward. Sheep raising is on the increase since the war started. I am planning to raise sheep exclusively. I have at present a flock of 50 and will increase it in the Spring.

I just received a message from one of my brothers-in-law, Ebbe. He has enlisted in the Artillery as a substitute for another for 600 dollars. He is a funny passenger. He has been in the service over 6 months and not one of his folks knew anything about him until now.

Now you must be satisfied with this. My wife and children join me in hearty greetings to all beloved relatives in old Sweden, but most of all are you greeted from affectionate brother.

G. E. Bergwall

P.S. You might let this circulate as I can hardly write to them all.

P.S.S. Answer now in a short time, and a very short time at that. Do you hear?

Edward

(6)
North Lake, April 15, 1865

Beloved brother Anton:

I promised in my last letter to write you soon, or when I wrote brother Glerup so I shall now fulfill this promise, hoping that these lines may find you and yours in good health. Since my last lines to you there have been both glad and sad happenings. Greater and shall I say no more insane delight could be demonstrated than that in the free states when victory was won; the rebel army under Lee was completely destroyed, and Petersburg and Richmond were taken by our troops - the first to enter the city - place the old Star-Spangled Banner on the city hall and on other public buildings. This took place in Charleston also - hot-bed of rebellion. It seems as if Fate would have them punished for their sin against this race. Two and a half million dollars worth of property was destroyed by rebel troops in this place before they left and our troops - to the contrary - instead of plundering the city worked hard to save it - an unheard of thing in all history - taking into consideration that our soldiers occupied these cities almost a year besides losing 50,000 men or comrades. I mention this fact as a proof of the general enlightenment of the people of the North as compared to that of the South. Now to the sad part of my story. Our very gentle and generally beloved President Abraham Lincoln while attending a theatre in Washington was shot through the head by an assassin named Booth, and because of this infamous deed, millions of fairminded citizens have been plunged into the deepest grief. Yes, many million eyes have not been dry nor will be dry for a long time, because of the loss of this fatherly patriotic president. He stood as a mediator between the victorious North and the defeated South.

Vice-president Johnson was immediately sworn in and now holds the reigns of government in his hands. I think, he will do well, but I do believe that many a rebel, who would otherwise have gone free, will be hung. Perhaps it was Fate that Lincoln should no longer rule since coming through so successfully thus far. He was too kind a person for the continuance of the great work. A stricter master was needed and to be sure Johnson will bring them up in chastisement and the admonition of the Lord.

For my part, I wish the people of the South would be dealt with kindly since they will be united to the North with the strongest of bands; but the leaders of this unnatural rebellion in my estimation should hang until they die.

I have now most of my Spring grain in. Winter wheat and rye look very good and I am expecting good crops from them. We will, I believe, have a good market in the southern states when peace is established, for the country there is much neglected or ruined. The blessing that will follow, the freeing of the blacks, will soon be felt, for they, like the whites, love money and will gladly earn it honestly.

I have been thinking of renting my farm since my brother-in-law, Nils, has promised me the use of his lovely house free of charge. It lies only a few stones throw from my own estate, so I could observe what my half-share farmer does. All this depends a lot on my leg, for if I get well again so I can work, I'll do well to keep what I have. I now make a meager living, but if two families were to occupy the same place, I would not have enough for the support of my family. My taxes and those of others have been very high this year owing to the fact that large sums have been paid out in our town this year for volunteers for the war in order to avoid drafting. In the last two weeks we have almost lived on wild ducks, pigeons and partridges. My son is an excellent hunter, and in a short time he brings home enough for 2 or 3 days and this food I like better than anything else.

My smallest son, Anton Edward, is a regular health-bed, excellent in all ways. He is a boy who does not blow his nose with his foot (ie. he is not dumb). The grass is growing well, already a part of my spring wheat is up. This is what I

call an early Spring, always a good sign of a good harvest.

Greet Hedda, John, Alexander and his wife and children so much from me.

The doctor tells me I'll have a swollen leg for a long time. If so, it would do no harm to send me a recipe for something that might take away the swelling.

Wife and children join in greetings to you and yours and you are all sincerely greeted from your affectionate

E.G. Bergwall





7

Vanhem, September 25, 1865

Beloved brother Anton;

Early this year I wrote a long letter to you and somewhat later you received a few lines from me enclosed in brother Glerup's letter. You must have received the letter, as four weeks ago I received a few lines from Glerup in reply to my letter. In the meantime I have heard nothing from you, but presume you have written and your letter lost in one way or another. I have a lot of time in which to write so if you or the others at home would honor me with a few lines they will be answered as I am still a cripple. My two doctors, one known as a good surgeon, were here about three weeks ago in consultation. They declared that my leg could not be healed except I risk an operation that they called flap-up, that is to cut away the flesh above the break and throw it back against the leg, then cut away that which has grown on the stumps of bone permitting them to grow together. Both doctors explained the reason to be that I did not wish to be operated upon since I was growing older day by day and was not too hopeful of the outcome. I will describe the condition of my leg when over a week ago I called another doctor who though he did not give me much encouragement though

he could get the bones of my leg to grow together. He has made an easel for my leg holding it firmly in place without hindering the blood circulation. My description of this; where the bone was broken a joint permitted free movement due to the weight of the foot, which was swollen badly when the leg was in a hanging position. Now I have talked enough about the nearly 60 year old leg.

Last Spring my wife presented me with a little girl named Jeanne after sister, She is a healthy and pretty youngster. A fortune in my misfortune. I have a son of seventeen who runs the farm and a wife, praise the Lord who has good health, and not afraid to take hold of things outside. She feeds 8 pigs and plans to sell around 2000 lbs. of pork at 9 to 10 a pound - living weight. I wish her good luck. My harvest this year was very poor as a result of flies that destroyed the wheat and barley. The rest of the grain was fairly good. The hay crop was poor. Crops have varied some very good others miserable, but in general, Wisconsin will come out well, for prices are rather high on all farm products. It is true that all a farmer buys is expensive, but we who buy wisely purchase as little as possible and vice versa. I saw by the papers that cholera is beginning to make its rounds in Europe. I believe though it will not be as fatal as when it hit me 2 or 3 times in Gothenburg (Gotsborg).

The American Nation has just come through its hardest test and showed the world what a people prompted by a love of freedom can do. Not enough that we had to fight rebels with weapon in hand, but we had to combat thousands upon thousands who among us favored the rebels. We had to fight foreign sympathizers and keep them at bay as they stood by watching the great spectacle. We had to fight against the press which was free during the war to spread its high-to-heaven lies gladly received by England and sent around the world. This nation's ennobling cost the North 1,000,000 men and 3,000,000,000 dollars. Most of this unheard of sum belongs to the people. Has the loss been great, so has the gain, for its people have learned their strength. No more slaves in America. That shame has been blotted out with blood. Nevertheless much is still undone to bring everything into good order. That must be left to Congress. 4,000,000 blacks of which half are nearly as white as you and I were under a more burning sun, and must have the right to vote, but before that can be accomplished I would not give much for the sympathy of the South for the North. No, the Negro shall receive a necessary education equal to that of a Swedish farmer who can read and write. Then things will be different. The southern states will then become the richest provinces in the world with a loyal people of all colors and languages. Then the overlords will feel better about paying for work done than, as formerly, steal work from their brothers in Christ.

I have now babbled enough and must close with hearty greetings from all of mine to you and your environs. A thousand hearty greetings to my John and all of mine - even to friends and acquaintances that perhaps might inquire about me and herewith I close.

Your affectionate brother,
E. G. Bergwall
Now write soon.

P.S. My address
North Lake P.O.
Waukesha County
Wisconsin
North America

P.P.S. I have at present two pretty fine mares - one colt 2 years old and one year old for Spring, so you see I am beginning to raise horses. This is profitable. I have a few (Timlic) sheep and other stock. I did not pay for this letter. I believe letters go more quickly unpaid. You should not pay for letters to me.

60

North Lake, March 15, 1866

Beloved brother Anton:

I hope that you and the others at home do not tire of my letters so I sit down to again write you a few lines and the enclosed to John. Please forward after you have read it and you will know all about my shattered leg.

I saw by the papers tha Frederica Bremer had died in Sweden so I think it a good time to read her (Homes of the New World) in English. I was pleased with what she has written regarding her stay with us. It was all correct, perhaps a little too colored, but it is hard to judge from her viewpoint.

I received Unonius' book in three parts when last I was in Milwaukee. They are good enough, but could have been better. Many more things of interest could have been included regarding our Swedish colony at Pine Lake. Among other things I well remember how I and two Norwegians worked at Von Schneidarr, and how terribly cold it was in his cabin, how the corn pudding froze to the plates before we had time to eat it, and then how we lay in his attic with an open roof where we could study the stars, his dead child beside the bed could not be buried while the frost was deep and the cold too penetrating - how the Norwegians swore and were afraid of ghosts, and how one morning there were 7 inches of snow on the bed and on our clothes; damn cold and unpleasant it was in the morning to jump into our trousers. One has to experience a thing like this in order to fully realize it.

Brother Bundsen thanks heartily for the photograph, and when I get better I will try to send some of me, wife and children. I should like very much to see some of Hedda, Jeanne and your wife.

It is beginning to look like Spring. We shall see what the harvest will be. I pin my hopes on the Giver of all good gifts.

I shall try to get a town office, the same that I held last time before. It will be a little help - bringing in 600 Rex Swedish or more, equal to 2 months wages. At the same time I will try for another office, county, which would offer 1500 dollars a year for two years. This would be alright. It is where the purchase and sale of property is registered, also mortgages. We shall see what friends and friend's friends also brother Masons will do. I have many who stand ready to help me, so it is possible that I may get it. It will depend upon the greatest number of votes in the country.

It would not surprise me if there were changes in the government, owing to the attitude taken toward slavery. The slaves have been freed, but the people especially in the South do not want to give them a free man's right to vote, and heap upon them all sorts of accusations. This is what I and millions of others cannot tolerate. I think if they are not permitted to vote after having learned to read and write that we shall have to play that great drama over again. At present we have in Congress the nation's best men as speakers and patriots, so however dark it may look at times, I believe that things will work out for the best of the Union. A big mistake was made at the end of the war, for it was then decisions should have been made once and for all, or more beating up. My son, Knut does not like farming and wants to try something else in Milwaukee, so some nice day I'll have to let him go. I hope there will be a way out. My step-daughter Agnes

has now finished school and is likely to take teachers' examination so she can support herself. Most likely, she will find someone to take that task over. However, it is a good thing that girls through their own efforts support themselves rather than sit and wait for suitors.

My youngest son, Anton Edward, is now three years old, a very smart boy strong and bold, perhaps a little too daring, but time will tame him, I know it has me. My oldest daughter, Charlotte, helps her Mother and goes to school. She also wishes to be a school ma'am. She is now 13 years and Hedda is 10 year, Emma 9 years and little Jeanna, the youngest, is almost a year old. Think she will be the last. All are good children, who together with their mother, united in greetings to all relatives in Old Sweden, but most sincerely are you greeted from your

Affectionate
E.G. Bergwall

My address is:
North Lake P.O.
Waukesha County, Wisconsin, North America



9

Waukesha, January 10, 1867

Beloved brother Anton:

It is awfully long since I heard from you or John. I cannot wait longer to bring myself to your remembrance. I have not had a word from Glerup in years. Remind him of that when you see him.

Crops here were average last year, but prices on products have been high, so I fared well after all.

I have rented out my first farm for two years. I had more than one reason for doing this. First my son, Knut, who is now 18 years of age, has left home and secured a fine job as clerk in a Register's Office in Chicago. He receives 300 dollars a year with room and board and has free use of his foreman's house where he is located, and there is treated as one of the family. So he has come to a good place. The family is one of the most respected and well-thought of families in Chicago. The second reason is that I was fortunate to be elected County Treasurer of Waukesha County with a large majority, I am now sitting in my office writing these lines to you. My salary is 1000 dollars a year with this office. There is not much to do, so I can go home to my family every now and then and see to things and caress my wife and children. My home is 16 miles from there and I can go home by train, or drive, at my pleasure.

This place has a population of 2000. There is another Swede beside myself in this place. He is a watchmaker and jeweler by the name of Estberg (Ostberg). He is an exceptionally fine countryman and is very busy and has a pretty villa or dwelling place with extensive strawberry and grape gardens round about. Waukesha is a pretty place. It has many factories and two banks. All money that I handle I deposit at the bank. When an expenditure is to be made I make out an order for the sum to be paid. This is the regular procedure in this country. I had to give a bond for 100,000 dollars and these bondsmen must be accepted by a committee. I had not the slightest difficulty in getting my bondsmen. Three of the wealthiest men in our town came to sign for me, but the amount needed has already been offered.

How is John? Please be so kind as to send this letter to him and to the rest of our folks. I expect you all will be happy to know that I have become active again. This work, if I remain well for two years, (my term is two years) should enable me to set my affairs straight and possibly if I am well liked and have not too strong an opponent I may get in for another term.

My leg gets stronger with every six months, but it will never knit as it should. I have one joint too many on the right leg. I use a leather support which laces on lightly in the morning and is taken off at night when I go to bed. Through my window near by I see gentlemen and ladies from the city skating in full swing, and almost without cease. The railroad cars pass by from the east to the west and from west to east. Just now a train of 34 cars went by.

Greetings sincere to Bundsens, Hedda, to John and to all whom I hold dear in the old beloved Fatherland. Oh, how I wish I might see and talk with you. This may never be, but we can write to one another and a little oftener than usual. I am asking you for the sake of brotherly love to answer these lines immediately and have the others write to me at least once a year.

The war is over and there is peace in the land, but thus far we have not been able to regulate the southern states, but they must meet our demands in the North. If not, we'll have a spectacle again. We have paid a large amount for our national debt already, and 25 years hence the whole debt will be paid. I am sending you a copy of the ballot in my town of Merton and one from Oconomowoc, the neighboring town. We have 16 towns in the county.

My Ebba and the children are living on the farm for the sake of economy. Things would be different if it were not necessary to save and scrape for future days ahead.

Greet heartily your wife and children from your affectionate

Brother
E. G. Bergwall

My address is:
Waukeşha
Wisconsin
Box 400



(10)

Waukesha, June 21, 1867

Beloved brother Anton:

Your most welcome letter of May 17th was received on the evening of this month, and I shall now answer the same and also explain the reason for my delay in answering your 2 previous letters. Before I begin answering, I want to thank you so very much for your letters, and don't let it trouble you that I paid for the last one. If you would send me one a week, I should be only too happy to pay postage on the same.

Your letter of February 5th this year I received March 1st and according to the post stamp it had made the journey from you to me in 18 days. I call that fast mail service. Your letter written November 20th, 1866 can't boast of such a rapid journey, for it arrived the last part of March - in all probability it had wintered over in some cold region not too well known nor indicated on the map.

I see by this letter that your wife presented you with a 6th boy and in my way of thinking a wonderful gift, for boys are boys. Glerup, too, has had an increase in his family. To think that Alexander is giving his third girl in marriage. He surely is having good luck with his girls. I remember well how dark the outlook for girls in Sweden as far as marriage was concerned at the time I lived in my Fatherland. I presume the opportunities for young men to get established have not increased much.

It is with great pleasure I see by your letters that Sweden exports farm products to England. This will be source of rich income, which will spread in all directions with good results.

Regarding trichina in swine herds - nothing much is heard of this at present, but people have a great fear of this disease. Still, pork is eaten, boiled and fried, as much as ever. The old country folks are the heavier losers because of this vermine for they eat salt pork, but I have always eaten salt pork and believe if it falls to my lot _____ for these insects _____ surely will do so from all points of view _____ in the meantime butcher and use for one's need the best pigs in the herd and my opinion is that if the pigs look fat and healthy there will be no risk.

I had a letter from Glerup a month ago wherein he described in his easy lively manner his visit with you and your wife and children, how you had refreshments in your garden spot enclosed by lilac bushes (bergea) with the Swedish flag on the staff and I was transported to your side in my thoughts the glasses clinking and singing a song suitable for the occasion.

I now belong to the radical party in more ways than one for I want you to know that I belong to the Sons of Temperance. I am through with wine, liquor and beer as they are injurious to me. My stomach cannot take those things nor cannot stand them. As the Temperance Society goes forward I can see what good it is accomplishing and I felt it my duty to join and do what good I can especially since my position gives me a lot of prestige. For more than a year ago before this society existed, I had stopped the use of tobacco which was harder to do without than liquor and beer, etc.

Glerup mentioned in his letter that he sent a photograph of your home and family, etc. to Chicago together with books for Pastor Carlson, but thus far I

had not heard from the minister. I shall soon be reminding him.

Now in short I shall answer your welcome letter of February 5, 1867. The letter you sent through Glerup has not arrived so not only the photograph of Lindwed together with your and Glerup's families were lost, but also the photograph of your Alma which I deeply regret. You will in due time receive mine, and my wife's photograph, I promise you.

I have been very busy since the 1st of January until the 20th of May, so this will serve as an excuse for not writing you. I have been at home from the 20th of May until June 19th playing around with my folks on the farm and checking upon the farm work which my wife had been supervising - all was stable and satisfactory. We expect the greatest harvest that Wisconsin has witnessed if nothing unforeseen happens. Spring has been unusually late and cloudy skies enabling the seed to get well rooted so it might withstand the coming hot weather. To see such a field is a pleasant sight, indeed. I am somewhat fearful lest the grain might fall before the kernels are formed. That would be disastrous. As far as I'm concerned I shall not worry that such a thing shall happen to me for my soil is far from being too rich. Fruit generally speaking, but specially apples, will be plentiful so it looks as though we shall be blessed with the good things of life.

Before I left my office for home I balanced my accounts and found them accurate to the cent, but I was owing to the treasury \$3.00 and a few cents which cannot be accounted for. I think this is good enough in as much as between 50 and 60 thousand dollars have traveled through my stiff and unbending fingers.

In two weeks I'll be going home again. At present I must be here to receive about 6,000 dollars school money from the State of Wisconsin to distribute among 16 sub town treasurers who in turn divide the same among school treasurers. Finally the school teachers - men and women - the latter in the majority, are properly paid. On last April 8th I was 61 years old and feel well and pert as a fish, praise God, and I limp around pretty well with the support of my cane. Were my digestion better I'd feel still better. My wife is well and strong. She weighs somewhat over 200. The children are healthy and full of life and behave well. They are brought up from birth in freedom. You, no doubt, know that infants are not bandaged as in old Sweden.

It would indeed be a happy occasion if I could once more see my brothers and sisters ere I leave this stormy life and to see and acquaint myself with their families and their circumstances in general; to converse in a familiar way about the things that have happened since I last was in my Fatherland; and how pleasant it would be to meet many a faithful friend - With regard to friends. I've had letters from Lindstrom, Evarlof, Ekborn and my old comrade Unontus, all in or around Stockholm. All have received replies from me.

Now I wish to thank you so much for your last letter which informs me that John has completed his difficult and tiresome doctor's study and received his degree - also that he is now a married man. So now he has reached the goal of two important ambitions, and I hope all blessings from the Rich River and the Great Master, shall be his. If, as you say, one is wise not to marry before he is well established in business then many would not reach the goal of their desires. I'll admit that to be married and have a growing family to support and interest to pay on money will be tryin, but in as much as we strive for wealth, we must be content when our families enjoy health and we have our daily bread and when we can give our children a good bringing up. This is the richest inheritance that

we can pass on to our children. I am at present trying to free myself of debt and I believe with good management to be able to reach that goal. If I reach it, I shall feel strange as if I had lost everything. However, I must build me a good house, neat and comfortable. Then I'll be in debt again. Should I (and it is not impossible to be again elected to the office I now hold) for another 2 year period, I'd be well taken care of economically for the rest of my life. I do like this office. I have many leisure hours during the day and also during the summer when I like to be at home fishing in the lakes.

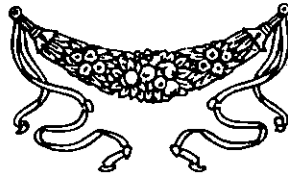
There is not much political argument at present, but November will show the result of the votes of those made free and I think it will be for our party's as well as for the whole country's best. The South has acknowledged that the Republican Party is patriotic and wants to do right. Many of their best men are going over to our side, declaring they stood for principles, but since they lost, they do not wish to miss the opportunity of gaining the name patriot, even at the 12th hour.

Jefferson Davis is free upon a 10,000 dollar bond and as I see by the papers there is talk of executing Maximilian. The person accused of high treason goes free and the tool who lusted for honor will probably be put to death.

Heartily greet all from your affectionate brother.

E. G. Bergwall

Luck more than chance that the last letter came through. Hence the difference in paper.



(11)

Waukesha, June 25, 1867

Honored brother Glerup:

Herewith I thank you most heartily for the most welcome lines of March 7th this year. With joy I find that your health is improved and your Vendla and children are well and thrive on the Swedish soil. It was of special interest to read the part of your letter telling of your stay at brother Anton's and the scene you pictured of refreshments enjoyed in the summerhouse just outside the living quarters. Yes, my dear brother, I could not help being transported in thought to your side, partaking in the old Swedish way of song and drink. As yet I have not heard anything from Pastor Carlson regarding photographs sent us and if they do not arrive soon I shall have to remind him. He could leave them with brother Nils or Knut Bergwall, both of Chicago.

It is a satisfaction to know that you are doing so well, I wish with all my heart a continued improvement in health and success in your work.

I am well satisfied with my business. It just suits me. During the summer I am for the most part at home in the country with my family. I come and stay a week or so, and stay on if some work should remain unfinished, which however has not happened yet.

Stens have only 3 children now. They lost a little darling boy last Spring. He died of croup. Sten sold his farm to Nils, excepting 8 acres which he planted in hops. I believe if he takes good care of this he will do better than at farming.

The old Dane at Pine Lake who bought of Mrs. MacLean (McLean) has sold the house and that which is on the side of the road to Mr. Tully, (Tuly), a lawyer of Chicago, for 1200 dollars. He wants it for a summer residence. There is great demand for such places and I believe in a few years many summer homes will be established around our lakes. Here at this place many plots have been laid out with landscaping. Brother Nils has now it pretty nice. He beautifies his place as much as he possibly can. He has Jean out there now. I hope her asthma will leave her. It would be a relief to both her and Nils. He brought two single horses and two buggies with him from Chicago - the one horse and buggy cost 1000 dollars, the other around 600. He also brought from Chicago a billiard table so when the gentlemen are tired of fishing and hunting they may have a game. It will also be a good pastime for a rainy day. North Lake is now becoming. Shears built and put into working order a wool carding machine, one of the best in the country, and are planning to put up a spinning and weaving mill. His mill is considered one of the best. He has gotten a patent on one of his inventions - water wheel - Kilbourn, his son-in-law, is making big improvements on the place. During the summer he employed over 20 Danes. He pays \$1.50 a day; he will spend over \$10,000 on buildings this summer. His father has promised him 12,000 for this project, but he thinks it will not take that much. The 4th of July I want to be with my family, and will celebrate independence day in quiet with them. Many asked me to take part in the Waukesha celebration, but I have no love for revelry. Waukesha now has a population of 3,000 and nice factories. You find here a few lines from K.P.

All of mine, including my old mother, are well. Blancius with his family are in Chicago. Ebba was married in Madison. Candet and Carin thrive in their pion-

eer cabin. With many greetings to you and your Vendla and children.

With brotherly affection,
E. G. Bergwall

P.S. I wrote Anton a few days ago in Lund and Norra Landwes. Everything seems to go on well with our Reconstruction of the Southern States, despite the fact that Pres. Johnson is a rascal; and our railroad to the Pacific progresses wonderfully. It will eventually pay for itself. This was a bold undertaking, right during the war and with our enormous expenditures. The whole thing is an honor to Americans, their extraordinary enterprise and endurance.



①
12

North Lake, February 14, 1871

Beloved brother Anton:

Very sincerely I wish to thank you for your most welcome letter wherein you enclosed prescription for my illness and recipes for medicine. I have not as yet received the medicine from Milwaukee but will get it soon. I have, however, made use of cold application around my waist at night and an anema regularly daily. A good diet and not too much in my stomach at a time I believe will help more than medicine since master doctors have been giving me a lot of calomel for a long time. About 3 weeks ago I had a very bad attack so that I myself thought, also my family and neighbors, that I could not survive. I had had several vomiting spells as usual, bile with very little of undigested food and I thought that as usual this would be all of that, but my stomach churned and bloated until it grew to a big round globe and after a few hours of agony I had another vomiting spell and threw up what seemed to be livered blood, also a fresh flowing blood which came up easily and in great quantities - a whole pot full - after this followed a great weakness. A doctor was sent for though it was in the night. He made three calls for which I paid him \$6.00 though he thought he should have had \$7.50. He left me some medicine. This doctor is a young man who has just begun to practice. My old doctor was elected Senator in Madison and was there at the time. One thing is certain that master doctors charge plenty and usually grow wealthy in a short time if they stay sober and take care of their practice. I have just received a doctor's bill from my old doctor for 125 dollars and am expecting another bill for

about half of that amount from another. So I have offered plenty to doctor's altars.

Now I must tell you a piece of news that is, that I sold my farm. I had an offer of \$4500 and accepted it. The man who bought it, or rather the widow of William Norris, who is to marry the man, bought it. Mr. Thompson is very wealthy, both are from the South. She has a yearly income of \$10,000 from her capital. They also bought horses, cattle and farm equipment that I wished to dispose of so I received in all \$5000 from them. With this sum I paid all my debts, bought a neat little home and eight acres of land from my brother-in-law Sten Petersen, for \$1300 and put the rest out at interest at 10% to be paid every 6 months.

On this place I can feed 3 cows, 1 horse, 3 or 4 pigs, also 100 chickens. It is only a stone's throw from the lake where I may sit in peace and haul in pickerel and bass. I won't need to hire a man the year around who not only eats up the profits of my property but by his carelessness destroys the same - the destruction equal to a greater sum than the yearly salary I pay him. It wasn't easy to leave the place which I had created out of wild woods - dating back to the days of creation, but I am now completely satisfied with the deal as the place I now own will make a suitable home for wife and children after I am gone. In 10 years it will be worth at least \$5,000. I didn't care to have far to move, and I didn't - only 160 rods and am nearer to church, school, mill and store.

If my health permits, I shall improve this place. The other place needed improvements and that was the big reason for selling it. At present money is scarce and it is hard to sell. The folks who bought it, also purchased a piece of land - 40 acres - from brother Knut Peterson paying \$1000. This was wild land and suitable for wood and pasture. This piece of land joins the land they bought of me at North Lake on which they will build a villa this summer overlooking the lake. The buyers are planning to have a place mostly for breeding high-priced horses. They bought out 3 horses - one pair of blacks cost 1000 dollars a piece. To correspond with these they must also have carriages and sleighs. They have money but they will find that the income from the farm will not be in proportion to what they expended. For all their wealth they are not proud but behave as ordinary folk just the kind of neighbors we like to have around our pretty lake. I am not much interested in politics at present, but it hurts me to think of poor France, but the drama has not yet ended. It is certain that the Germans have planted seeds of discord that will grow through future generations, and the suffering France of the present endures, will sometime be paid back with interest to Germany. We on this side of the ocean sit in peace and deliver to the struggling parties weapons, ammunition and food. America's policy is: that the power of kings in the Old World shall weaken, so the free spirit of the people will have more and more opportunity to unfold and this be sure of; that America will not help any nation in the Old World with exception of an established and recognized republic. Now farewell for this time. Greet wife and children so much from us all through your affectionate brother.

E. G. Bergwall

P.S. Much snow, but on the whole a mild winter. I was reported dead and one of my old friends came up to comfort my wife and children and to see me in shroud, but was pleasantly surprised to see me alive.

13
North Lake, September 26, 1872

Beloved brother:

It is such a long time since I wrote you that I find myself duty-bound to do so now. My health has been poor as usual. Especially in the spring and early summer I was not well at all. My vomiting spells became more and more frequent so that I could not regain my strength and there was nothing left of me but skin and bones. I was in bed about three weeks during which time as previously I followed your orders faithfully, but there was no change nor improvement. So I consulted my doctor (Reis) who is reputed to be a good doctor but a poor surgeon. He looked your prescription over and declared that he had used the same for me previously without good results. He thought best to try some other medicine and prescribed the recipe you find enclosed. In the two months following I had only one attack, but it was a hard one. I should be pleased to know what you think of this medicine.

Our presidential election is rapidly approaching and President Grant will be re-elected with a bigger majority than any president has ever had. The democrats have put Greeley on their ballot and this man who formerly had much influence on the people has seen his glory vanish never to again appear. Such is also the case of other great men, who because of greed help Greeley and down Grant - they too are forever defeated and our party want nothing more to do with them. I sent you two illustrated newspapers both dated the 14th of this month - let me know whether or not you received them. They will give you a fair insight into our political policy, etc. at the present time. I am enclosing a few small newspaper clippings which you may scan. Chicago is growing with such speed as to amaze even Americans. The new buildings are magnificent and more substantial than the old. My brother-in-law, Nils, is putting up two buildings, one 4 stories high, on a lot leased for 90 years at a cost if I remember rightly of 1500 dollars a year. Good rent for a few feet (square).

My daughter, Charlotte has taught school three terms - is now in Whitewater studying - not only to receive the necessary knowledge for teaching, but to learn how to manage a large school which is the purpose of this academy. A few days ago I had the pleasure of reading an article in the newspaper that our state ranks highest in America in quality of teachers and instruction and that is saying a lot. My Hedda, next to Charlotte, attends high school in Chicago. She also wishes to try her luck in the teaching profession. When Charlotte shall have finished her courses she wants to teach in Milwaukee at a salary of perhaps \$600 per year that is two terms of 4 months each.

Now my dear Anton will you do me a favor by sending me Swedish flower seeds of all kinds, but especially Sofkoyer, lackvioler, carnations, etc., not forgetting asters. Also send me seed of pine and spruce if you can and of mountain ash and cumberland hawthorne. It doesn't matter if your letters are a little over weight. I will send you things from here that you may like. I intend to send you some potatoes by mail.

Now farewell my dear Anton with hearty greetings from us all to the beloved community. May God protect you is the wish of an affectionate brother.

E. G. Bergwall

P.S. I read in the Swedish American of your appointment to Knighthood and allow us to congratulate you on receipt of this honor. Now listen write soon and send the seed. Your children might be pleased to gather them otherwise buy them and I will repay more than they are worth, I promise you.

14

North Lake, February 1, 1879

My dear Brother-in-law:

Your most welcome letter should have been answered long ago, but changing circumstances from joy to sorrow that have taken place in my family since you last heard from us is the principal reason for my delay. I needed time to quiet my mind as much as possible and to heal the wounds I have suffered before telling you of our new loss. First of all, I shall relate how I, together with my children spent the summer. We all were unusually well. Charlotte and Hedda were at home with me also Emma, Eddy and Ida, the two youngest went to school three months where Charlotte was teaching. My oldest daughter, Agnes, who has been married over three years and living in Memphis came with her little daughter to visit me also. They have moved to Chicago and are getting along well. Her husband is a good man and they are happy. You were informed through my deceased husband's letters, of our oldest son's mind and physical health. He had improved considerably the last years. After his father's death he seemed to sort of care for me and his younger brothers and sisters with the greatest tenderness. After he had helped me with our little Spring work and planting he hired out to a neighbor - a well-to-do farmer for five months, receiving a hundred dollars, and his meals. He came home every Sunday and often evenings to see how we were. They liked him very much. His greatest pleasure was hunting. His time there was up in the middle of November and we were glad to have him home again. As usual he took his gun on Sunday morning and went down to the boat by the shore, to hunt ducks on the other side of the lake. We became worried about him here at home and waiting anxiously for his return late in the afternoon. But he didn't come. I was alone with the two youngest children. I called the neighbors for help, but we were unable to accomplish anything in the way of finding him until the following morning. Then men went out in every direction to seek him. First they found the boat with the gun in it and later in the afternoon they found him lying dead on the shore twelve feet from the boat. It appeared that he had crawled after the ducks with the intention of dragging the gun after him and as he was left-handed the gun went off; the shot going through his left side under the heart piercing his lung. The doctor said he had died immediately after the shot and hence had not suffered. You can imagine how hard it was to gather strength and courage to as calmly as possible bear this deep sorrow and loss, and this so soon upon the loss of my first and best support. But praise God I lived through it and am trying to live content and happy as possible, with those whom God let remain. I am so grateful that we have things convenient and pleasant. I harvested 25 bushels of potatoes, 9 barrels of apples and I have sugar for the year. Wood, we will cut and get from one of the neighbors, paying only for cutting.

Charlotte secured a position as teacher in Milwaukee last fall. She receives four hundred and fifty dollars for ten months. And is well pleased with her work. She comes home every holiday and whenever she has time off. Hedda is in Chicago with Agnes where she attends school so that she may pass examination to teach same as Lotten (Charlotte). Emma recently spent a month with her sisters in Chicago is home at present. We were glad to see her home again. Eddy and Ida go to school. Eddy is a real good boy. He does the chores morning and

evening - reads and ciphers well and finds much pleasure in reciting poetry. I shall try to send you two kinds of very good potatoes that we have here as soon as there is no danger of freezing. I wrote to John in October, but do not know whether or not he received my letter as I have received no answer.

I have to read your letters to my children many times over. They find them so sincere and impressive and the Swedish language so beautiful.

I am sending you a few of the flowers we picked on my husband's grave, and pressed. They are mignonette and candy tuft, also a lock of his hair.

Many thanks for the photograph of your youngest children. They are sweet and look to be good children. I hope you all may remain in good health.

Greet Glerup when you see him. Now many greetings from all of us to you and your family, through your very affectionate sister-in-law.

Ebba Bergwall

19



North Lake, April 12, 1879

My dear Brother-in-law:

You have not as yet answered my last letter to you dated February 1st, but since I promised to send you a few seed potatoes I shall keep my promise the best I can - this is to say that I cannot send more than a pound as it costs too much. As you will notice, I took small ones for the reason that there will be more to a pound and I have been told that they grow just as well as the large ones. We are all fairly well praise God with an exceptional illness occasionally. Charlotte had her vacation during the Easter holidays. She spent it at home among us. She was tired out from too much work and not so well, but felt rested and much better when she left us. She now had to begin with 56 new pupils as her old pupils had moved up a grade. I hope she will not find things as difficult as she expected. She is satisfied however to have left the country even though there is more work to do. I only hope that her health holds out. At the present time she is the child I have every reason to be happy over. With little help many trial and much perseverance she has advanced to the position she now holds. I miss her advice and help at home but I also have learned and experienced much during the past year. I hope and believe that all will work out for the best.

After an unusually mild winter spring is here. Farmers in our neighborhood are busy plowing and sowing. I have three acres which I plan to sow with spring wheat. One of my neighbors has promised to work it for me. The seed cost \$1.30 a bushel.

I had an offer to sell the place - had strong thoughts of moving to the children in Chicago for I found it lonely and empty without the departed ones. But when I counted all the costs of moving and then how much more expensive it would be to live in a city, I decided to keep what we have and take as good care of it as possible. I believe it was my dead husband's wishes that I do so but he figured that I'd have Knut to help me. The Lord planned otherwise. I am trying to do His will. I have much to be thankful for though I complain at times.

I hope these lines find you all in good health. Many tender and heartfelt greetings from us through your sincerely affectionate sister-in-law,

Ebba Bergwall

P.S. The potatoes in the little bag are early and here they are called Early-Rose. The others are later - Peach Blows - is the name.

16
Milwaukee, August 17, 1881

Dear brother-in-law Anton:

Hearty thanks for your most welcome letter. It should have been answered long ago, but was postponed time and again. Your information regarding my relatives, as well as my dear husband's was most welcome. We shall be glad to continue to hear from all of you. I hope you've been well and successful since you last gladdened our hearts with a letter.

In our family many changes have taken place, since I last wrote, but praise God as it now looks all is for the best. My health condition has varied. For several months I suffered pain in my left hand and arm, but now am so much better that I can use it for certain kinds of work. I have hope that after a time I will be completely well.

During this time the children were very thoughtful and kind to me. That eased my pain a lot and made me happy. The children in the meantime have not felt their best but have been restored to health so at present we are all well. Charlotte, the oldest, has been promoted. She is now principal of a new school with a salary of \$900 a year. She has four teachers under her and is pleased with her work. Hedda, my other daughter was married in April a year ago, to a minister by the name of Frank Myers. He seems to be quite successful in his calling. She is a good help to him. Charlotte has spent her vacation with them this summer. They live in Iowa in a little city named Maquoketa, 200 miles from here. This summer a cornerstone for a new church was laid which is encouragement in their work. Both of my youngest daughters are at home with me. Emma has helped me with the housework. Ida has done well in school this term but she does not want to become a teacher in a school like the other two sisters. She is talented for music and should like to be a music teacher. She has had lessons, but I want her to first finish her studies in school before I fulfill her wishes. We are happy to have a good piano belonging to a friend, but after a while I want to get one of our own. Eddy, my son, still works at the place where he began over two years ago. He has tried to leave on several occasions but was persuaded to stay with an increase in salary. He receives \$42.00 per month and was offered \$52.00 per month for the same kind of work. However, he remained on his old place. He may do as he pleases. I wouldn't stand in his way. He pays me \$16.00 a month for his board. I try to make the home as pleasant as possible for him. As far as I know he has no bad habits. There are so many temptations in a city, but I trust with the help of God, that he will resist them.

Now for my financial affairs. I sold my little farm last year in May - had \$1250 left after the lawyers were paid. With it I bought a lot here in Milwaukee, 30 feet wide and 140 feet long paying \$600 for it. Built a house which cost me \$1600. I am in debt for about \$800 - pay rent 7% and the children have helped me somewhat. It is equipped with several modern improvements. Water is piped to both first and second floors, also to the basement. There is a bath tub on the second floor with cold and hot running water. For this I must pay \$16.00 a year to the city, but it is a great comfort. Even gas pipes are laid under the house leading to every room, but we do not use them yet. We have lamps for lighting. We have renters in order to enable us to pay for the up-keep. Expenditures are

heavy with taxes and interest, but all in all have done well I think. We are very comfortable, but must work in order to remain so. We have had a lovely warm summer, but had an unusual cold and hard winter with deep snow. Nevertheless, the crops look promising, but not the fruit. We had much of it last year. It is usually plentiful every other year.

I went for a few week's visit this summer to my youngest sister who is married to a Dane by name of Spillman. They have a fine farm 140 acres of which is under cultivation. Danes are located all around them. Most of them are well-to-do and good farmers.

Greet Hedda and John from us. Is it not possible that at some future time we may see John here on a visit in America? That should be a very profitable and interesting journey for him. With the greatest of joy we would receive him. His youngest brother Eddy and especially two of his sisters, Charlotte and Ida are perfect likenesses of his father and theirs.

Greet my sister Vendla also. I hope she is well and continues so. I don't meddle into politics much so can't inform you along those lines. Our president had a very narrow escape, but is now better and out of danger.

Now many tender loving greetings from all of us to you and family from your affectionate sister.

E. Bergwall

P.S. Our address is
N. 633 Washington Street

