of whom are living. August and his wife live on their farm in
Norman County. Elaine and her husband, Harold Sirjord,
reside on their farm near Bejou. Carl and his wife Margie, live
on their farm in Montello, Wisconsin. Bernard, an ordained
minister, now retired following several years of directorship in
International Child Evangelism Fellowship in the Scandinavian
countries and Germany, lives with his wife, Harriet, in
Moline, Illinois. William and his wife, Ida, live in the rest of Cali-
fornia but have close ties in Fertile. Leonard whose twin brother,
Raymond, is deceased, is now retired and lives with his wife,
Charlotte, in Fertile. He also runs his farm in Norman County.
Evelyn and her husband, Raymond McBurney, live on their
farm in Garden Township.

It is interesting to know more about the origin of the A. T.
Swenson family which goes back into Sweden. We are indeb-
ted to Harriet and Bernard Swanson formerly in Sweden for
twenty years as directors of the programs of Child Evangelism
Fellowship in the Scandinavian countries, for the historical
facts and Swedish pictures that are here recorded.

A. T. Swenson’s parents were Sven August Olsson and his
wife, Kajaslena, who lived in Gullaboby, Smaland province,
in southwest Sweden. As was customary in Sweden, Sven
Olsson’s sons took the father’s first name, Sven, and added
“son” to it thus getting the name Svensson which in the U.S.
became Swenson. This then became Swenson and some of the
family have changed it to Swanson to avoid mix-ups with so
many Swensons.

The accompanying pictures (pictures 1 and 2) show the origi-
nal home in which the children were born and raised and the
smaller home built by Sven Olsson after some of the children
had left for the United States.

There were five children born to Mr. and Mrs. Olsson all of
whom migrated to America over a period of time. A. T. Swen-
son’s brother, Elof, often spoke of the fun he and Anton had
playing by a brook that ran by the houses. This brook is shown
in the picture. (picture 3). Anton Theodor, the eldest of the
children, came to America first, in 1888, and his brother Elof
and sister, Ida, soon followed to Fertile. Elof and Ida, who
became Mrs. E. G. Erickson, lived and raised families in this
vicinity.

Elisabeth Lundin who became the wife of A. T. Swenson
after she moved to Fertile from Sibley County with her par-
ents, was born in 1871 after her parents, Johannes and Anna
Lisa, had come to the U.S.A. four years earlier. Elisabeth was
one of fourteen children born to the Lundins. Her father,
Johannes, was born in 1835 in Hogsater socken (township) in
Sweden. Elisabeth’s mother was born Anna Lisa Svensson (no
relation) in 1838 in Fargelanda, not far from Hogsater in Dal-
sland province. The accompanying picture (picture 4) is of the
lake and wooded area is near their home on the border of the
city of Ed in Dalsland province. Johannes and Anna Lisa were
married in Dalsland, Sweden on August 8, 1861 and came to
the U.S.A. in 1867, settling in Gordan, in Sibley County, Min-
nesota a few miles southwest of Minneapolis. They moved to
Fertile thirteen years later as mentioned at the beginning of
this report.

It may be of interest to mention Mrs. Ida Bergstrom, shown
in the accompanying picture, (picture 5). Mrs. Bergstrom,
where she was born of stock quite a bit of time ago and is
stead with her mother who was a relative of the family by mar-
rriage and helped a great deal with the household work. Mrs.
Bergstrom died in 1965 at the age of 93. Mrs. Bergstrom and
Ida (Sven Olsson’s daughter — later Mrs. E. G. Erickson) were
close childhood and teenage friends. Evelyn Swenson
McBurney and family, while on a visit to Sweden, were enter-
tained by Mrs. Bergstrom in her home in Stockholm.

Elisabeth Lundin Swenson died on January 2, 1945. Her
husband, Anton Theodor Swenson, died on February 1, less
than one week prior to his ninety-sixth birthday.

The preceding was traced from the front page of Sven Ol-
son’s Bible.

THORVALD TORPET

Thorvald Torpet was born near the copper mining town of
Roros in Norway in 1852. His father worked as a miner. Tor-
vald’s education was meager. As a youth he worked two sea-
sons for an Englishman who captured and trained falcons
which he shipped to England, where the lords used hawks for
hunting.

After serving his time in army training, he worked for a time
as a shoemaker’s apprentice, then went to work in the timber,
both in Norway and Sweden. Finally he worked on railroad
construction. While working on the new Meraker branch he
met his future wife, Elen Brende of Meraker.

Times were hard in Norway at that time; a scanty living was
all a hard worker could expect, so Thorvald, like so many oth-
ers, decided to emigrate. At first New Zealand was consid-
ered, but finally he and some friends signed up to work on the Cana-
dian Pacific railroad, which was being built across Canada at
that time.

However, when they arrived in the fall at Fort Garry, the
work was shut down for the season, so they ended up in
Crookston, where work was available on the section, mostly
shoveling snow.

Polk County was opened for homesteading at that time, so
in 1880 he filed on a homestead in Garfield township, Polk
County. He and Albert Anderson built a log cabin straddling
the line between their homesteads, each one living in his end of
the cabin.

In the summer he worked on the railroad out of Beltrami, or
Edna, under a foreman named Fitzpatrick. Torpet was the
only Norwegian, the rest were Irish, so, of course, Thorvald
became “Tom” from that day on.

In 1881 his parents, Ingebrit Haugen and Johanna Torpet,
arrived from Norway with the rest of the family, Christen,
Ingeborg, Berit and Marit. They all settled in the area. Berit
married Sven Kuras, and Ingeborg became Mrs. Tuff.

In 1883, Elen Brende, from Meraker, came to join Mr. Tor-
pet on the homestead. They were engaged before he left Nor-
way, and waited until he had a home where they could start
married life.

The homesteaders had a rugged struggle to survive, but they
worked hard, and did not give up. Mrs. Torpet carried eggs
and butter to Aldaeh Valley, or the Ladue Grove to exchange
for some of the most necessary items.

Before the railroad came to Fertile in 1886, wheat was
hauled to Beltrami by oxen for sale, and usually to Red Lake
Falls to be traded for flour.

The Torpets were members of the United Lutheran Church
of Fertile, and attended regularly.

Nine children were born to the Torpets, six of whom grew to
adulthood: Johanna, the oldest daughter, married Selmer Lien
of Hazlet, Saskatchewan. They had two daughters; Thelma
married Ed Colter. They had nine children, and many grand-
children. Phyllis married Orlie Robertson. They have two sons,
as yet unmarried. Minnie, the youngest daughter, married
Oscar Lien of Hazlet, Saskatchewan. They had two children.
Dennis lives in Medicine Hat, Alberta, they have four boys;
Janice married Ken Davies of Edmonton, Alberta, and they
had two boys. Bertha married Oscar Gullickson of Fertile.