

INKLINGS AND IDLINGS

The Newsletter of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association

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SUMMER 2020

FROM SITE SVCS. SPEC. BRYAN ENGELBRECHT

Last newsletter, I wrote about the transitions going on at the Site after the retirement of Site Superintendent Martha Downey. The COVID-19 pandemic has kept that theme going for 2020. In the span of a week we went from hosting our first Songbag Concert of the year on March 8 to getting a call during the afternoon of March 15 to immediately close to visitors and go home. It was a surprising transition to go from being open the previous day and having a few visitors to shutting down and leaving before completing our shifts. We went from preparing for field trips and the annual Carl Sandburg Festival, to working from either home or behind locked doors at the Site during the next two and a half months. Fortunately, as of May 29, we have been able to reopen the Sandburg Park so visitors can come enjoy the gardens, walk the Quotation Walk, and pay their respects to Carl and Lilian Sandburg at Remembrance Rock. Those who tune their radios to 88.7 FM can continue to listen to a wonderful audio program about Carl Sandburg.

At this time the Visitor's Center, Sandburg Cottage, and Barn are closed indefinitely. Events such as the monthly Songbag Concerts are postponed. The one constant throughout the pandemic is its fluidity, and the changes it has wrought. During this fluid time, the best way to keep up with the Site and its operational status are to visit www.sandburg.org or the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association Facebook page. You are always welcome to call or email us also to find out the latest information. While our lives are disrupted and we cannot go to as many places as we would like, I invite everyone to take some time and read Sandburg's poetry and other works. As the "Poet of the People," Sandburg wrote many words on both the human condition and difficult times. Picking up one of his books and taking a break from all that is going on may give you just the inspiration or comfort you need to deal with this stressful period.

THE 1918 INFLUENZA PANDEMIC

By Barbara Schock

On September 25, 1918 Illinois state public health officials announced quarantine rules. There were to be no public weddings or funerals. Galesburg officials spoke with the state officials about procedures on September 29.

By October 5 there were 500 cases of flu in the city, according to the public health officer. Mrs. John T. Palmgren was the first person to die of influenza. Two

days later there were another 200 cases and five more deaths. Quarantine of the city was announced on October 11.

The *Republican-Register* reported 1,100 cases on October 14 with twenty-two in the Galesburg hospital. The next day, the *Evening Mail* reported thirty cases at Knox College and twenty at Lombard University. October 20 was to be a "churchless Sunday." Suggestions were given in the newspapers for services in the home.

On October 22 it was reported eighty-four patients were under care at the hospital and thirteen student nurses were sick. The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Company listed thirty flu deaths since the outbreak of the pandemic.

By November 3 the colleges reopened and church services were resumed the next day. The quarantine was lifted on November 4. The schools opened a week later.

The *Mail* reported on November 16 that sixty-seven Knox College cadets had been treated at the hospital with one death. On November 20 the newspaper reported nineteen telephone operators were sick. More workers were brought from Rock Island.

A total of 101 deaths were reported in Galesburg: eighty-eight in October, twenty-two in November, and three in December. The *Mail* reported there had been two deaths for every 109 cases of flu in the state. A total of 22,563 persons had succumbed to the disease. State health officials believed that the 350,000 cases reported were about a quarter of the actual number.

As one reads the old Galesburg newspapers on microfilm of the influenza pandemic of 1918, there comes a feeling of sadness. The residents of Galesburg didn't know what was advancing toward them from the east. Advertisements in the papers for "VapoRub" as a cure for the flu seemed useless.

The flu came on suddenly with dizziness, weakness, and aches in various parts of the body. The temperature rose quickly to 103 degrees. After three to five days the temperature would fall. Death resulted from acute bronchitis and heart failure. A secondary complication was pneumonia. Women were more likely to die than men. Most people recovered quickly, but felt weak for some time afterward.

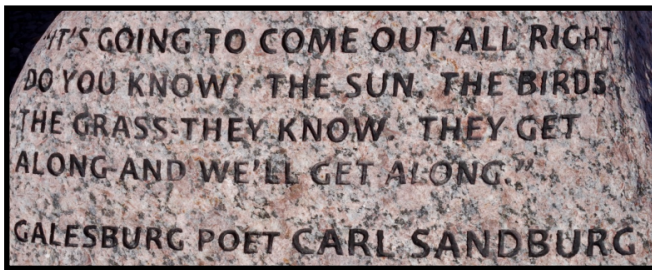
Doctors recommended avoiding contact with the sick, keeping warm, getting fresh air, washing hands often and eating plain nourishing food. They also urged individuals

to cover their mouths when sneezing or coughing. They said "Don't kiss anyone!"

Carl Sandburg, his wife and two daughters were living in Maywood during the pandemic. He was working for the Chicago *Daily News* and preparing the manuscript for his second book of poetry, *Cornhuskers*. A third child was expected in December. In July he had received a job offer with the Newspaper Enterprise Association in Stockholm, Sweden covering Eastern Europe. Many complications had to be overcome before he could acquire his passport and sail to Bergen, Norway, on October 3, 1918. In only a few weeks the hostilities of the First World War would be over.

Carl's mother, brother, sisters and their families were in Galesburg. They were among those who survived.

It is estimated fifty to 100 million deaths occurred during the worldwide pandemic. About one third of the population contracted the disease, and the mortality rate was about 2.5 percent. It began in March, 1918, and continued until June, 1920.



This Sandburg verse from *Cornhuskers* offers hope in these troubled times. It is etched on a boulder at Viewpoint Park in Galesburg. Photo courtesy of Tom Foley.

THANK YOU, CSHSA & KNOX COLLEGE

By Maryellen Larkin

[Ed. Note: Maryellen Larkin is the Faculty Services Assistant for Lillian Goldman Law Library at Yale Law School in New Haven, CT. Though based in New England, she is originally from southern California and tries to visit the west coast at least once a year to see family and friends. She holds a Master's degree in Library and Information Science as well as an MPhil degree in Classics.]

As faculty services assistant for Lillian Goldman Law Library, my job is to find and deliver documents and other resources pertinent to the research needs of Yale Law School faculty. These documents range from the easily accessible to the virtually untraceable. Prior to contacting the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association and becoming acquainted with its members and affiliates, I had feared that one of my document delivery requests would fall into the 'untraceable' category.

Last winter, I received a request to track down a pamphlet which had been referenced in the *Dictionary of American Biography* (1943) entry on Philip G. Wright. The author of the biographic entry--Wright's friend and former student Carl Sandburg--unfortunately, did not provide many details about this pamphlet. His citation read simply: Memorial brochure, Philip Green Wright, (privately printed, n.d.). The scarcity of bibliographic information did not make for a promising start to my quest. From what I could infer, this brochure was likely the type of pamphlet handed out to guests at funeral services. If my assumption was correct, the brochure's

creation would have followed Wright's death in September 1934. The only relative certainty was that Carl Sandburg would have had access to this brochure while he was writing his article. Whether or not this brochure still existed was yet to be determined.



Maryellen Larkin

Lillian Goldman Law Library - Yale Law School

My search eventually led me to the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association. I found the contact information on the Association's webpage and sent an email explaining my predicament. The next morning, much to my pleasant surprise, I found that my inquiry had been picked up by Rick Sayre, the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association's Treasurer, Bookstore Manager, and Webmaster. Rick promptly disseminated my message throughout the Association. As my inquiry was being relayed, I received emails from members rallying to my aid.

Micaela Terronez, Mary McAndrew, and Jeff Douglas offered to search their holdings at Knox College Archives & Special Collections. Micaela offered to send me scans of materials she found. Jeff suggested potential locations of the brochure at University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign) and Western Illinois University. Bryan Engelbrecht, Site Services Specialist of the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site, also suggested University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign) and arranged for his colleague Thomas Wallenfeldt, Site Interpretive Coordinator at the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site, to check the Site's holdings on Philip G. Wright.

Steadily, the pieces began to assemble. From Micaela I received scans of correspondence containing a transcription of a eulogizing piece Sandburg wrote for Philip Wright. Fortunately, the letter's author, Juanita [Bednar?], provided context for this passage, explaining that the piece had featured in "a little printed booklet put out by Quincy Wright and others after the death of Prof. Wright in 1934." I suspected that Juanita's letter contained an excerpt from the very memorial brochure for which we were searching. My suspicions were further supported when Thomas Wallenfeldt sent me a scan of the same passage as that which had been quoted in Juanita's letter; however, this version appeared to have been formally printed and included a facing photograph of Professor Wright. Thomas informed me that more material existed, and Bryan Engelbrecht would be scanning a longer piece Sandburg wrote about Wright.

Meanwhile, Mike Hobbs, editor of *Inklings and Idlings*, reached out and put me in contact with Jensen Rehn, a senior at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, who works in the University's Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Having physical access to the collections at UI, Jensen diligently searched the Rare Book and Manuscript Library's holdings and identified materials matching the description I sent.

Amid the flurry of email exchanges, Bryan Engelbrecht sent me scans of the larger work Thomas Wallenfeldt had mentioned. The document's pagination and text aligned with the quotes referenced in Sandburg's *Dictionary of American Biography* article. I forwarded the scans to Jensen for comparison and she confirmed that, yes, the two items were identical. Confirming that at least two copies of this obscure brochure survive, our search reached a happy conclusion.

I am incredibly grateful for the thoroughness, knowledge, and alacrity of all those involved in this search. It was a pleasure to work with the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association and Knox College, and I hope our paths will cross again someday.

ORSON WELLES TRICKS CARL SANDBURG

By Rex Cherrington



Orson Welles & Carl Sandburg, 1942.

Photo courtesy of Rex Cherrington

There is excitement upon seeing a Carl Sandburg photo that is new, at least new to me anyway. Over the years there has been much joy in the discovery of photos of Carl Sandburg in formal and informal settings. These interesting faces bring to mind the first two lines from Sandburg's poem "Phizzog" about the human face,

*This face you got,
This here phizzog you carry around....*

In all the photographs of Carl Sandburg from his youth through his later years one is so drawn to his remarkable, distinctive and memorable face. Welles and Sandburg each had those faces that could draw you in and make you curious about the person behind the face.

So, being a fan of Carl Sandburg and Orson Welles this photo was a delight, and curious thinking began. When did this meeting happen? Where did this happen?

How did their meeting come about? Did this photograph get published? If so, who published it? Who was the photographer? The questions come quickly, and there is delight. It's also a delight when we can get some answers to our questions.

This photograph of Orson Welles performing a card trick for Carl Sandburg was on the front cover of the tabloid newspaper *PM* on September 13, 1942. The associated story was on pages sixteen and seventeen entitled "Orson Welles on Latin America" by Chan Norris. As is often the case, obtaining the answer to one question gives rise to a multitude of others. What was this tabloid entitled *PM*? It was a weekly journal published in New York from 1940 to 1949. It seems unknown to history what the two letters stood for, but *PM* likely stood for "Picture Magazine". The publisher said he didn't know for sure, but it came off the press in the afternoon and thought that might be how they gave it the name. The publication relied heavily upon photos and became the first to prominently give credit to the photographers. Among their photographers were Arthur Felig (Weegee) and Margaret Bourke-White.

The publication was left-leaning or liberal, and there were accusations made about it being communist sympathizing in spite of articles they ran opposing the positions of the (American) Communist Party. Writers for *PM* included Erskine Caldwell, Heywood Hale Broun, James Thurber, Ernest Hemingway, Ben Hecht, Malcolm Cowley, and Tip O'Neill. I. F. Stone was the Washington, DC correspondent. There was a sports column that frequently featured horse racing. Theodore Geisel (Dr. Seuss) created 400 cartoons for *PM*. The editor/publisher was Ralph Ingersoll, a Yale graduate, who had been a mining engineer in early days but went to New York where he aspired to become a writer, which he did become as well as an editor and publisher. He was among the founders of New Yorker and for a few years was managing editor but left there in 1930 to become managing editor of *Time-Life* publications and while there he was instrumental in creating *Fortune Magazine*. It was in 1940 he began *PM* with the financial backing of Chicago's Marshall Field III. Through most of its years *PM* did not carry advertising since they didn't wish to be swayed by the opinions of advertisers. Marshall Field insisted on accepting advertising for financial reasons in 1946, and Ralph Ingersoll resigned.

Since *PM* gave photo credits we could identify the photographer who created this image of Sandburg and Welles as Mary Morris Lawrence, a Chicago native, who was among the first women photographers hired by Associated Press. After three and a half years at AP she left to become a staff photographer with *PM*. The photograph accompanied a feature story entitled "Orson Welles on Latin America." Welles had just returned from South America and was interviewed while rehearsing for a War Bond drive broadcast presented in cooperation with the U.S. Department of the Treasury. He emceed the first two hours of the seven-hour coast-to-coast broadcast; Carl Sandburg was in the cast. The caption for this photo was as follows, "AND HERE HE IS DOING IT FOR CARL SANDBURG." Half the fun of Welles's card tricks is the patter that goes with them—not just requests like "Take a card" but unusual ones like "Give me the

name of a girl you're trying to forget." Sandburg evaded that one. Welles says he found his card tricks a social asset in Latin America. He began doing them a year and a half ago, and he's made up a few of his own. He invented one in Rio that takes fifty-two decks of cards. A Rio store, not having that many in stock, ordered them. By the time they arrived, though, Welles had left. When the decks catch up with him, he'll see whether or not the trick works."

You will be left disappointed if you wanted to know more about Chan Norris, but if you find anything please let us know.

In the way of an addendum we might say a few words about Orson Welles, though in earlier times it would not have been necessary to elaborate. Welles was a multi-talented individual who excelled in these many endeavors. He was a success in theater, radio, movies, and television. He was a writer, producer, actor in all these entertainment media. Additionally, he had studied art in his early years and was a magician. Welles' rise to fame was launched by a radio production that he had produced and performed based upon the H. G. Wells novel *The War of the Worlds*. His performance was so emphatic that people believed it was a live newscast, and we were really being invaded by Martians. That was in 1938, and Welles was 23 years old. His next major accomplishment was three years later when he co-wrote, produced, and starred in his first movie "Citizen Kane" which won several Academy Award nominations and received the award for best writing. The British Film Institute has ranked the movie as #2 of the 100 greatest films of all time.. IMDb lists Welles with acting in 129 movies and TV shows, which includes those such as "Shogun" where he was the narrator, director of sixty-one productions, writer of sixty-eight, producer of twenty-six plus other technical work. He was also the man we associated with Paul Masson wines for a number of years. A brief video with a few clips from his film career may be viewed at https://www.imdb.com/video/vi2080095257?ref_=nm_rvd_vi_1

DIGGING THE DEPTHS OF THE AMERICAN SONGBAG

By Stephen Griffith

[Ed. Note: CSHSA Member Stephen Griffith is a writer and musician who lives with his wife Lorraine, his youngest daughter Tian, and her four dogs in Asheville, NC.]

After a concert in 2018 for the Drents Museum in Assen, Netherlands, where I matched folk songs to American Realism works of the latter 20th century, I wanted to find another grand project that would take me possibly the rest of my life to complete, something needed, something serious, and something entertaining. It did not take me long to land on *The American Songbag*. My thru-line for this project is a book entitled: *Carl Sandburg and The American Songbag: The Roots of Americana Music*, which I hope will be completed by its 100th anniversary in 2027.

The American Songbag was years in the making, which begs the question, was Sandburg lucky or prescient? People such as Thorp, Lomax, Wolford, Sharp, Pound, Scarborough, and Handy all published

collected folksongs before Sandburg. But these volumes focused on aspects or regions of the United States (cowboy songs, Negro spirituals, or sea shanties, etc.), but Sandburg's *Songbag*, in my opinion, was the Big Bang of folk music. As one writer said, "Sandburg. . . saw the big picture of what these songs represented." In later years it was a foundational document for the folk music revival, an inspiration to Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and Harry Smith, the collector and editor of the influential *Anthology of American Folk Music*



Stephen Griffith.
Photo by Tian Griffith.

When I'm asked, "Why Sandburg and the *Songbag*?" my answer is because it's a big beautiful mess. A GLORIOUS mess. It is teeming with treasures. It encompasses the width and depth of this country from the mid-19th century to the early part of the 20th. It is like a drawer in an ancient bureau that when opened, treasures spill out. And it deserves in-depth study. And if we care to look, we can find out who we are and where we came from.

My first phase of study had me read everything I could get my hands on from Sandburg's pen and from the pens of those who knew him. I love him more every day. Those familiar with the story know the songs he picked up from his hobo days and his singing and collecting of folk songs at poetry readings. It was during this time he began working toward the *Songbag*, while working on the first two volumes of his Abraham Lincoln biography. This stress, with his continued travel and other endeavors, put a good deal of the decision-making into the hands of the publisher. This led me to the second phase.

Classical musicians put the collected songs into notation. Also, no guitar chords. So I went through the *Songbag* page by page, re-notating the *Songbag* digitally, putting chords to all the songs, capturing the text digitally, and slightly editing lyrics. Some, but not all, dialect was removed to make more readable, and a few unacceptable words replaced.

I'm in the third phase now, recording each song, changing keys and chords as needed. Just getting the bare bones of the songs down. Trying to crack them like a nut to get to the meat.

Many of the songs in the *Songbag* have never been recorded, some are not even indexed in the *Songbag*. Although the publisher claims there are 280+ songs, I count 315 so far. Some are well hidden.

In the next phase I plan to dig deeply into the historical contexts of the songs and explore the lives of the many, some very famous, contributors. After the pandemic is under control, I plan to step up my research at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, while continuing to work on the songs, exploring instrumentation, practicing with others, and putting together a few evenings of song. My dream is to perform any of the 315 songs on request.

My last phase is to come to terms with Sandburg's vision of America, and what we can learn or remember about who we are as a nation, and why our shared music is important and essential to remember.

"I don't have any doubt in my mind about the resilience and strength of folk music," David Rawlings, a contemporary singer-songwriter wrote, "We're all basically fumbling through our limited time in the same way and with the same concerns people did before electricity or the steam engine. More or less, folk music's power comes from the fact we haven't really changed that much."

My journey through the *Songbag* is located at FolkSongIndex.com.

WAR

By Paul Appell

[Ed. Note: Except for five years at Iowa State University and then three and one half years in the U.S. Army, Paul Appell has farmed in northeast Knox County. In the Army he started out as a private and after a year of infantry training he received a commission at Ft. Benning. He was then in the 10th Special Forces group in the U.S. a year and then went to Vietnam where he was in charge of an isolated radio site with the 1st Signal Brigade. About 85% of his unit were Vietnamese. He got to experience a fair amount of their culture. He is active in Veterans For Peace which attempts to prevent wars—thus far unsuccessfully. There is a wide range of experiences and hence views of wars by veterans. It did not take him long once he got to Vietnam to realize that he had more in common with the designated enemy than he had with those who sent him.]

Carl Sandburg was on active duty in the army for only about a year and did not quite make it all the way to war, but nonetheless based on my army and war experience his war poetry nails it. Sandburg's fellow writer Ernest Hemingway had war experience and also nailed it in my view. Both writers' early careers started out as newspaper reporters--Sandburg in Chicago and Hemingway in Kansas City. I always thought that this contributed to their honest and unromantic portrayal of war.

Shakespeare was neither in the army nor went to war, but he also expressed thoughts about war that agree with mine. A Shakespeare scholar recently explained that Shakespeare was surrounded by veterans and was a keen observer. Sandburg's poetry shows that he was also a keen observer of all things in life, including war.

This reporting on his keen observations did get Sandburg in trouble with some of the rulers of the people he wrote about. Through the Freedom of Information Act, the *New Yorker* in 1987 got six pages of Army Intelligence files and twenty-three pages of FBI files on Sandburg that covered forty-nine years of Sandburg's activities.

In 1918 upon returning from Sweden as a

correspondent for the Newspaper Enterprise Association, all his notebooks, manuscripts, and books were seized by Customs, the Secret Service, and military officials. Sandburg's editor at the N.E.A. Sam Hughes protested this harassment to Secretary of War Newton Baker telling Baker that he would instruct Sandburg to write exactly what he thought. Hughes wrote "Isn't it fine for the government to treat such a man like a dog or a traitor?" The *New Yorker* article closes the Sandburg section with the following: "In 1964, a Confidential page appeared in Sandburg's file, but it is almost totally blacked out except for the date, June 25, 1964, and the fact that he was born on January 6, 1878, in Galesburg, Illinois. Thus, when Sandburg was eighty-six years old, living quietly at home in Flat Rock, NC, the FBI. was still watching him and keeping his dossier up to date."

J. Edgar Hoover was appointed the director of the Bureau of Investigation in 1924 and when it morphed into the FBI in 1935 was its director until his death from heart attack in 1972. Hoover ruled with a heavy fist for about forty-eight years. He was obsessed with keeping the people subdued. I take great pleasure imagining how upset Hoover would have been if he read Sandburg's poem "And They Obey." I suspect he went berserk if he read the line from *The People*, Yes of the little girl saying, "Sometime they'll give a war and nobody will come." I am sure Hoover knew that this "sometime" would be the end of his rule over the people.

For me Sandburg's poems are the "affirming flame" that W. H. Auden mentioned in his poem "September 1, 1939." I experienced some of what Sandburg wrote about when I gathered with other veterans to defend the 1st Amendment rights of the Occupy Wall Street group in New York City a few years ago. A few days earlier the NYPD had violently removed the Occupy group from the Viet Nam memorial park just a few blocks from the iconic Wall Street bull sculpture. Mayor Bloomberg had ordered that the memorial was off limits after 10 p.m. The memorial has a wall with the names inscribed of all those from New York that died in the war. We decided to read the names of all those on the wall and in the process not only honor our fellow soldiers who never survived the war, but also make the statement that the memorial should be open to all the people all the time. As mostly Viet Nam veterans, we expected that the NYPD would give us a pass for being at "our" memorial after 10 p.m. We were wrong and one by one we were handcuffed and hauled off to jail. I was placed in a cell with another Viet Nam veteran and with a highly decorated WW II veteran, Jay Wenk. Jay's mother was a professional singer and used to bring home other singers including Frank Sinatra to their home in Brooklyn when he was a boy. Jay was always speaking out about any perceived injustice. A friend of mine once asked him if he ever stopped complaining. Jay responded, "Yes, when we liberated a concentration camp in Germany." About 2 a.m. Jay started singing a popular WW II song in French. Soon everyone in the jail was singing along for many songs. The white shirt Lt. that was the night officer was not happy. He could lock up our bodies but could not lock up our voices. I am sure that Hoover would not have approved our action, but I feel Sandburg would have approved.

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC SWEEPS ACROSS THE GLOBE...MEANWHILE...IN THE LAND OF SANDBURG

By Rick Sayre

Yes, to be sure, it's been a challenging Spring throughout the world, but tucked away in our western Illinois homes, a few of us have used some of our excess "shelter in home" time to research and respond to a few Sandburg-related questions from another new friend and longtime Sandburg devotee, Pierre Schori of Stockholm, Sweden. Schori has served Sweden in important political and diplomatic positions, including a four-year term as Sweden's Ambassador to the United Nations. Over the course of a five-week period beginning with an initial email on March 22, 2020, the former Ambassador Schori has provided several of our CSHSA board members and historic site staff with a series of challenging questions related to any documentation that might confirm that Carl Sandburg met with a two of his contemporary writers, Vilhelm Moberg and Jack London, as well as activist/musician, Joe Hill. In addition, the former U.N. Ambassador had some questions related to a lesser-known simplified English-language edition of Sandburg's *Prairie Town Boy* that he had acquired long ago.



Pierre Schori
Swedish Ambassador to
the United Nations
(2000-2004)

Schori's interest in Carl Sandburg started in the late 1950s when he "was doing extra work outside of college in a book shop in Malmö, Sweden. There I encountered *The People*, Yes, and a few years later, in 1958, I had enough money to buy the book. It has been with me ever since."

While researching Sandburg recently he discovered the CSHSA's sandburg.org website...and on March 22, 2020, he sent the CSHSA the following email:

I was very glad to see your web site. It is a gold mine for us Sandburg fans. I have been researching Carl Sandburg over several years and I used to consult Penny Niven till she sadly died. I was then Sweden's ambassador to the United Nations. Now I have retired and will focus on my research. Did Carl ever meet Vilhelm Moberg or know about him?

*Moberg's literary career, spanning more than 45 years, is associated with his series **The Emigrants**. The four books, published between 1949 and 1959, deal with the Swedish emigration to the United States in the 19th century, and are the subject of two movie adaptations and a musical.*

Carl Sandburg and Bishop Hill State Historic Site Services staff member Bryan Engelbrecht shared Schori's email query with a few of us on the board, including Rex Cherrington, Mike Hobbs, and me. Rex Cherrington shared the email with Tomas Junglander, our long-time knowledgeable CSHSA member and native Swede who shares Carl Sandburg ancestry. Also, Mike Hobbs forwarded Schori's email to Jensen Rehn, a

University of Illinois student from Galesburg who just so happens to work for the University of Illinois Rare Book Collection that is home to the substantial Carl Sandburg Collection. Unfortunately, COVID-19 had other designs on Jensen's accessibility to the collection. Still, she shared the email with a few of her library colleagues who assisted remotely. Our "team of researchers" set to work with Sandburg biographies in print, as well as internet resources that are freely available. As an emeritus college librarian, I am fortunate to have account access to Monmouth College's rich database resources. I focused my efforts on these proprietary resources.

Our successes and failures at locating helpful information were shared with Schori via email normally within 24-48 hours of his initial email. Ultimately, searches of full-text archival newspaper and periodical databases revealed no evidence that would confirm a Sandburg-Moberg meeting, even during the several years of Moberg's time living off and on in California (1948-1955), nor did they meet when Sandburg traveled to Sweden in 1959. Tomas Junglander was adamant that Sandburg and Moberg had never actually met with the following email reply to Rex Cherrington.

Carl Sandburg and Vilhelm Moberg never met, neither in the United States nor in Sweden! I once asked Helga Sandburg and Penelope Niven the same question! There were those who tried to bring them together in the United States, but they never succeeded!

*Vilhelm Moberg moved to Switzerland in April 1959. He was home in Sweden during the summer to complete the last part of *The Emigrants* (The four books on Swedish emigration to the United States). In July, he finished the book and traveled back to Switzerland in early August...before Sandburg arrived in Sweden.*

—Tomas Junglander

Schori replied with the following on March 23, 2020:

Dear Sandburg friends,

Many, many thanks for this valuable information.

*In return I can give you this piece of information that I received from Jens Liljestrand, the author of a recent remarkable biography of Moberg, **The Man in the Forest**. Liljestrand tells me that Moberg wrote a letter to his friend Edgar Swenson on 23 January, 1953, in which he states:*

*"I am reading Sandburg's book [i.e., **Always the Young Strangers**] which I like a lot. But I am really happy that *The Emigrants* came out before this book. There are so many resemblances in both books that if Sandburg's book had been published before mine, I would of course have been accused of plagiarism". And he adds: "I can bet you a million dollars that Sandburg never will get the Nobel Prize".*

Moberg was right. But we know that several writers nominated him to the Nobel.

Best regards and stay safe from Corona. —Pierre

Satisfied with the answer to his Vilhelm Moberg query, a few days later Schori emailed for our assistance in confirming any personal contact between Sandburg and American writer, Jack London.

Thus I have two questions for your kind consideration: did Carl ever meet Jack London and did he ever mention the book **Martin Eden**? I see some resemblance, in spite of their very different conditions in early life, between the spirit that guided their youth. Or am I wrong?

All the best,

—Pierre

Once again our “team of researchers” set to work. Bryan Engelbrecht provided a series of PDF scans of pages from Penelope Niven’s *Carl Sandburg: A Biography* (c1991) that showed several references to Jack London’s influence on young Sandburg, but no evidence of any actual meeting of the two, nor any mention of London’s book, *Martin Eden*. We found an article on Jack London written by “Charles” Sandburg for the early twentieth-century periodical *Tomorrow*, as well as other articles and books with references to the influence of Jack London and Sandburg on twentieth-century literature.

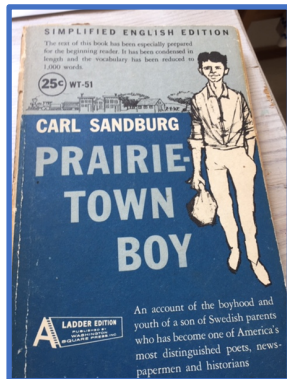
Again, we were unable to confirm any personal face-to-face contacts between Sandburg and Jack London... however, I was delighted to discover some of these early writings by Sandburg in the [Tomorrow Magazine](#) digitized by the HathiTrust. Sandburg also contributed a regular “News and Views” column for *Tomorrow* starting in 1906. The articles written by young Sandburg are very interesting reading!

Then, a few days later, on April 6, 2020, a different sort of question arrived from Schori.

My question this time concerns the following :

I knew of and own two versions of *Always the Young Strangers*, the original of about 370 pages and a shortened version (by Sandburg himself) namely *Prairie-Town Boy* of about 200 pages. (There is a slight difference in length, of course, between the English and Swedish versions).

But digging into my book piles of Sandburgiana in the basement today, I found, to my surprise, a second version of *Prairie-Town Boy*, published in the *Ladder* series by Washington Square Press. It is “a simplified edition” especially prepared for the beginning reader. It is condensed in length and the vocabulary has been reduced to 1,000 words. In the text certain words are printed in boldface and explained in the back of the book, in a Glossary. It was adapted by Aileen T. Kitchin. My copy is first edition, December 1959, priced at 25 cents, and it cost me \$3.50 at the Black Cat Books in Sag Harbor some year ago.



So, my question is this: Did Carl Sandburg actually formally accept this second version? In the book it says copyright 1952, 1953 and 1960 by Carl Sandburg. So I guess he did, but it does not state so, while it did in the longer version.

With my best wishes,

—Pierre

We confirmed that the Washington Square Press was a subsidiary of Simon & Schuster that was launched in 1959 with reprints of over 400 modern classics like *Ivanhoe*, *Tom Sawyer* and others. While Harcourt, Brace published the original *Prairie Town Boy*, it only seems reasonable that Simon & Schuster would have received permissions to publish this simplified English edition. I don’t know that any of the board members were familiar with this edition. It is interesting to note that this Washington Square Press edition is not held in any library in the United States that is part of the WorldCat database. Out of WorldCat’s 85,000 library collections worldwide only three libraries, all in Spain, show a copy listed in their catalog. The target market for this title was likely for schools and children in non-English speaking countries of the world. It may be found in private collections or school libraries not affiliated with OCLC’s WorldCat catalog. There were no copies currently available for sale in any of the thousands of out-of-print book dealers online offerings. So it appears to be a rather unique title, perhaps rare, but its value may be difficult to discern. There was one copy currently available on Ebay in England for approximately \$10 (U.S.).

On April 27, 2020, Schori replied to Jensen Rehn at the University of Illinois with one more query...

May I bother you with another question? I know that both the University and the Rare Books dept are corona closed and that a reply can be long in coming.

But here it is: Did Carl Sandburg meet Joe Hill?

*There is a reference in **The People, Yes** that may suggest that Carl listened once to Joe singing at a meeting. But no other, clear reference is to be found, at least by me.*

I hope you and your family and friends are in good health and that you may come back soon to campus.
All the best, —Pierre (Schori)

While we patiently wait for the University of Illinois’ Rare Books & Manuscript Library to reopen, I’ve done some full-text online archival newspaper, periodical and ebook searching for any possible links. Singer and activist Joe Hill, a native of Sweden, was dubiously convicted of murder in Utah and executed by firing squad by the state of Utah in 1915. He may have been one of the most popular songwriters and performers for the Socialist movement in the United States during this period. Clearly Sandburg was familiar with Joe Hill as an activist songwriter and performer during his time working with the Socialist Movement prior to the Great War (i.e., World War I). I have not yet found anything written by or about Sandburg that would confirm that Sandburg and Joe Hill had actually met prior to Hill’s execution.

So, here’s a challenge for our readers. If you should find anything to confirm that Carl Sandburg met or attended a performance of Joe Hill’s, then please contact us via email, carl@sandburg.org and we will pass it on.

Thanks again to Ambassador Schori for the challenges presented and the pleasant distractions from COVID-19 that we have appreciated over the past few months of “shelter-in-place”. We do hope the best for Sandburg’s ancestral home of Sweden as they deal with their own issues with COVID-19.

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