

Stockholm, Nov. 8, 1908

My Dear Loving Wife,

We reached this city yesterday morning at 9:30, and will remain here a few days. Brother Sundvall, the president of the Swedish mission was called away to attend his sister's funeral and won't be back until Monday. When he gets back I suppose I will find out where I will have to labor. I hope I won't have to go way up to the North Pole. Alma Monson of Manila is laboring in Luleå, a place far north of Stockholm and he is there alone, so one of us will be called to go there. In that place you can only see the sun for two hours each day in the winter and in the summer it never gets dark. Well dearest I am here ready and willing to go where ever I am called.

Well my loving wife, today is Sunday and I attended Sunday School which is held here at headquarters. After that at 11 o'clock meeting commenced and to our surprise we elders were asked to speak. There are five of us but only John Anderson and myself had courage enough to try to say anything. I had never attended a meeting before in Sweden and being the first speaker I hardly knew how to express myself, but I guess I must have held her down in grand style for at least a half minute. What I could not say in Swedish I would say in Danish and English. There were about fifty saints present and they seemed quite glad to hear from people who had just come from Zion. As I stood before the congregation trembling and thinking of something to say, I would have given twenty-five dollars if I could talk to them intelligently for a half hour. I never expected to talk to the people the first Sunday I was in Sweden but now I have started and I suppose I will have to keep on.

I am still well and I always pray to God that my loved ones at home are well. I believe the last time I wrote to you was when I was crossing the North Sea. The journey across the sea was a pleasant one, the weather was fine and there was scarcely a wave on the ocean. We had heard so much about the North Sea that we almost dreaded to cross it but now I am not afraid to go back. We landed at Esbjerg at midnight the night I wrote to you last. We left Esbjerg at 11:45 the next day and arrived at Copenhagen at 8:30 p.m. In crossing Denmark we had to ferry twice. It took us 20 minutes the first time and an hour and a half the second.

We remained in Copenhagen one day and two nights. During the day we visited the Danish Museum. Here I saw many interesting things. Many images of horses and people, many beautifully painted pictures, many curiosities that were dug from Egyptian and Roman graves. Also coins that were used before the time of Christ by the Romans and Egyptians. During the day we also visited the zoological gardens of Copenhagen, here I saw many animals that I had never seen the same kind of before.

The next day I left for Stockholm. We reached Malmö at about 1:30 and remained here until 9:30 with some elders laboring in that branch. Our trip from Malmö to Stockholm was the worst one yet. It took us all night until 9:30 the next morning. The seats had no cushions and besides we were somewhat crowded so we were very uncomfortable all night. But I have almost forgotten that already so that will be alright.

Well dearest, I read that letter you sent to me, every day and will keep reading it until you send me another. Anything from home looks good. I must now close hoping to get a letter from you almost as soon as you get this one from me. Tell the folks hello and be very good to yourself. Write soon. Your Loving Husband Niels.

Sundsvall, Nov. 16, 1908

My Dear Loving Wife –

It is just one week ago today since I wrote to you, so it is with pleasure I again relate a little of my experience which I have had since I wrote to you. You no doubt are anxiously waiting to hear from your loving husband who is so far away from you and who would be very happy if he could see you and talk to you for a few minutes. It would be a great pleasure if I could receive a letter from you today so that I might know how my darling wife is getting along. The letter which I suppose Stena sent me, reached Liverpool after I had left. It was sent to Stockholm but they not knowing anyone by my name and not thinking of me coming, sent it back to Liverpool. They have sent for it again and I am expecting it any day. It would do me a great deal of good if I could receive a letter from home. I don't expect to hear from you for about two weeks or more. That is a long time to wait but absence makes the heart grow fonder.

In my last letter to you I believe I wrote of the possibility of me being called to the far north to labor. Myself and Wilford Mortensen of Spring City, Sanpete (the fellow I showed you at Salt Lake depot that was going to Sweden) were called to labor in the Sundsvall Conference. This conference includes the northern part of Sweden and also Finland. Elder Mortensen is going to labor in a place called Östersund about 100 miles northwest of Sundsvall, the place where we are now. I have the honor and privilege of traveling another 500 miles due north to the place which I told you in the last letter that I hated to go. This is the city of Luleå, the most northernly branch in Sweden. I think the days are short and gloomy enough where I am at present, but in Luleå they say the sun is out of sight all but about two hours each day in the winter. This makes it very gloomy and makes us burn a great deal of oil if we want any light. We have to light the lamp about four o'clock here in Sundsvall and in the morning we have to keep it light until 9 o'clock.

Well my dear I don't know as I have any choice as to where I want to labor for there is no place in Sweden that I am stuck on yet. I am willing to go wherever I am called and do the best I can. In the summer it is light nearly all day for the sun only goes down for two hours each day. This is another extreme. I am afraid I will forget to go to bed when it is time and I will have to sleep while the sun is shining. I won't be able to make hay while the sun shines. I feel as though it will be a great experience to me to be in the land of the midnight sun. I suppose I will have a chance to see the northern lights.

Myself with Elder Mortensen left Stockholm last Tuesday night at 9:10. After spending another unpleasant night on the Swedish train we arrived at Sundsvall at 11 o'clock. We were met by Elders Schade and Liljenquist and taken to their headquarters. On arriving at their house we met another Elder David Woodard from Elsinore, Utah. These three elders labor there in the Sundsvall branch. The next morning President Wilhart Schade

and David Woodard left Sundsvall for an eight days journey to some saints, and to distribute tracts and try to make friends while on their way. On account of these two elders being absent, Victor Siljenquist insisted on us remaining until Monday so we could preach to the people. We held meeting and I made an effort to preach. This makes two times that I have pounded the pulpit in Sweden.

Tonight Elder Mortensen and myself will leave Sundsvall. We leave at 6:25 and travel together for about 30 miles then we will have to bid each other goodbye, and we won't meet until next spring when we are at conference. It will take till Wednesday noon before I reach Luleå. The train doesn't go direct so I will have to make two stops. I am glad that I can speak the language a little or I might be left out in the cold. At one place I have to stop off at 11 p.m. so I will have to hunt a bed.

I have written to my companion Alma Monson and notified him of my coming so I suppose he will meet me at the depot. I am going to dinner now then I will finish my epistle....

Well dearest I have had dinner now and I feel like the gospel is true. It is just one month today since I left you at Salt Lake and it seems a long time that I will have to wait before I have the pleasure of seeing you, but I feel well in the cause of truth and am here to make the best of it. I will now have to prepare for traveling. I will write again as soon as I get settled. Well my dear, write as often as you can scrape a nickel and I will try to answer them. From Your Loving Husband xxxxxxxxooooo Nels.

Box 147, Pleasant Grove, Utah, Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>, 1908  
[Envelope addressed to Svartensgaten, Stockholm  
(corrected to Svartöstaden, Luleå), Sweden,  
plus forwarding markings, 5¢ postage.  
Letter mailed Nov. 20, arrived Stockhom Dec. 5, Luleå Dec. 8.]

Dearest Brother,

We received your card that you sent from Liverpool and was very glad to hear that you were well and had got over the ocean OK, and tickled to note that you had not been seasick. We think you are just a little extra smart to stand your trip so well. Hope you will enjoy your trip across the North Sea as well. Did you take Wm. Lim's advice and eat lots of lemons? We are all well as usual only I think Ernest is coming down with the whooping cough. Lavina's children have all had it and have it yet. And they have all been playing together. Hope it will be a light case.

Today Mart left for his mission, he came over this morning and bade us goodbye. He seems to be feeling pretty well but it is quite hard for a young man to leave home for such a long time. Tears stood in his eyes but I do not need to tell you how he felt because you know by experience and that very recently.

Last Thurs. night the P.G. choir had a surprise on Mart at their home, they gave him a donation of ten dollars. Friday night the Scandinavians had their do in the basement of the meetinghouse for him and Oskerson. They each received \$9.50. There was not such

a good turnout as there was to your party and everybody were invited (English and all). They had a pretty good programme arranged. You can imagine that, as they even had your humble sister recite. Monday night they had the missionary dance. We had a good time. The Spanish Fork orchestra played, it's a fine band. Boss Peterson's son Niels belongs to it, he plays the cornet. I like it fully as well as the Epperson.

The Sunday School officers had a party after mutual Tuesday night in the basement of the M. H. There were only about half as many present as there were to yours. The party was in honor of Mart but it was not a surprise as it was discussed in teachers meeting after Sunday School. By the way, they have not put anyone in yet to take your place in Sunday School. Everything is the same as usual.

The P.G. Mercantile store has got a whole glass front, it just looks fine, you would not think it was the same store. Oh yes! Wm. Clark has had the windows of his store washed and the floor washed and the dishes dusted, so there! Mr. Singleton that clerked in the drugstore clerks in Clark's now. That accounts for the revolution. Emma Bush clerks in Clark's store too. Rally, this is very interesting, don't you know?

The neighbors are all very well and inquire about you every time they see us. They all seem very interested in you. I am writing on different paper. I am afraid that so much of the linen paper will be too heavy and I do not want you to pay extra postage on it as it is not worth more than a nickel.

Viola was up today, she had received your letter that you wrote on the North Sea, and she said you had stated in your letter that you had not received my letter that I wrote you to Liverpool. I was disappointed to hear it and I know you must have been disappointed also. I sent my letter two days after Viola sent hers, it must have got lost or detained some way. I sent you a letter to Stockholm on Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> and hope you have received that one, Lavina sent one the same day.

Maybe you would like a picture of home as it is at this hour. It is now 9:10 o'clock p.m. Ernest has gone to bed and is asleep. Chris is sitting in the rocking chair with his feet upon the stove, a toothpick in his mouth and sound asleep, dreaming of his Edith that has just recently got married to a Mr. Hallet from Provo. Mother is sitting in another rocking chair under the electric light reading "David Copperfield." She is getting a cracker jack to read English. She has read four books since you left. It keeps her from worrying so much about her little boy in Sweden. She is proud of you, I can tell you.

The weather here is just lovely, it is warm enough so we throw the windows and doors open in the daytime but it is a little cold at night. The hay is in the barn, the beets are over to the sugar factory, and the potatoes are in the cellar. The boys have sold some few of the potatoes.

[At this time, living together in the home built over the dugout: Mother, Hannah (father, Andreas, died in 1894 at age 61 {when Niels was almost nine}, Hannah lived until 1919, age 70); daughter Stena (married Clarence Clayton in 1901, he died in 1904), their child Ernest (born in 1903); and son Chris (who married in 1911 {Delilah} at age 34). Other siblings were Jens, the oldest (married Lavina in 1900) and Carrie, the middle child

(married John Edward Christensen, Lavina's brother, in 1897). Of interest, Carrie died in 1928 and Stena married John C. in 1929. These were Niels' four (all older) siblings.]

John Christensen was over last week and ploughed down in the field and they have planted their fall grain. I think Jens is going to mark it off tomorrow. Lewis Nielson still works here every day. He is hauling manure now and has been for three days, there is lots more to haul yet.

How are you fixed with money? You must write and let us know before you are out, it takes a long time to answer each other's letters. Mother says you must buy yourself a new overcoat as soon as you can. She says you must look respectful and neat.

We are expecting to hear from you in a few days and hope you will write often as we are all very anxious to know how you are. As you haven't a feather cushion to sit on, I will close before you get corns. Trusting you may have health and be prosperous in your labors. I am your humble servant and Sis. Stena.

Pleasant Grove, Utah, Nov. 20, 1908  
[Letter marked as "No. 5" (first four are missing).]

My Dearest Nels:

I got your letter that you wrote on the North Sea night before last and was so glad to hear from you again. I wasn't expecting it so soon for after I got your card from Liverpool I didn't think you would write again until you got there so you can imagine what a pleasant surprise it was. Yesterday I took your letter up and read it to Stena and your mother. They were glad to hear from you too. I am glad you got my letter at Liverpool. I was afraid you wouldn't get it. I gave your Liverpool address to the folks the day I got your card with it on and Stena wrote to you the next day but her letter was a day later than mine and I guess it didn't get there. It was too bad to disappoint you but she thot sure you would get it.

I have already written three letters to Sweden to you. I got the headquarters address over three weeks ago from Jeppie Nielson and gave it to Stena and Lavina and they both wrote to you too. So you will hear from home sooner than you expected. This is the fifth letter I have written to you since you left, tell me if you get them all when you answer this letter, won't you dear? I have received six letters from you and eight postcards.

Your mother, Stena, Ernest and I are going out to Carrie's today in the surrey. Oh dearest I wish you were here to go with. I am so lonesome without you. It seems like you have been gone long enough to be back now. Mart left here yesterday morning and he leaves Salt Lake today so I guess you will see him before long. I haven't seen him since Sunday and so I didn't get to tell him goodbye. They had a dance for him and Oscarson Monday night but I didn't go. Then the Sunday School teachers had a party for Mart Tuesday night and I didn't go to that either. I have been to Sunday School every since you left and am going next Sunday but after that I don't think I will be able to go anymore.

Oh Nels we have got a nice big duck for Thanksgiving and oh I do wish you could be

here to help eat it. Ike is coming down for dinner. I told Esther [sister] that I was going to send you a piece of duck and some potatoes and gravy. Do you think it would be very good by the time it got there?

Esther and Ike are going to be married the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December, that is just twelve days. I guess they will be married before you get this letter. We have been sewing quilt blocks yesterday. We are going to make a quilt just alike. I wish I was going to use mine as soon as she is hers, don't you dear? Ike gave Esther a gold watch and chain the other day that cost \$40.00. It is pretty but I like mine as well. She has got an engagement ring too. Dell Banks is going to be married Wednesday. Annie [sister] is going over tonight and stay till after the wedding. [Dell was the youngest brother of Elias, Annie's deceased husband. He married Harriett McKell (younger sister of Ruby Fugal's mother) and also (polygamy) Mary Sophia Jex (whose grandparents and Harriett's were one and the same).]

Jens has got all the potatoes and beets up. He didn't have to pit any of the beets. Louis is still working up there. He has been there ever since you left.

Well dearest I was glad to hear that you hadn't been sick since you left and I do hope that you will have good health all the time you are away. I hope that you will enjoy the work and that you will do much good while you are away. It seems such a long time now looking ahead until we see each other again but I hope that you will be so interested in the work that the time will not seem so very long to you. Stena is going to write to you again before long. May the Lord bless you and be with you at all times is the constant prayer of your wife, Viola xxxxxx

Annie said to tell you hello and Esther said she would send you a card in a day or two. Write often, it is so nice to hear from you. Your mother and Stena will be here in a little while and then I will go with to Carrie's.

Pleasant Grove, Utah, Nov. 29, 1908  
[Written on onion skin paper.]

My Dear Husband:

It has just been a week since I wrote to you last but it seems much longer. I have forgotten what I told you in the last letter so if I tell you the same thing over again it will be alright, won't it dearest? The last time I wrote to you the weather was fine, now everything is covered with snow. I believe it was Sunday night that started to snow and it snowed a little all day Monday. I don't know just how deep the snow is but it is quite deep and is frozen. It is a little warmer today but yesterday it was freezing all day. We washed yesterday and the clothes would freeze as soon as they were hung out. I am sitting here by the stove now while writing and am not any too warm. I hope it is nice weather where you are. I suppose you had a better trip than Mart will have, it is so much colder now than it was when you went. I am glad you went when you did for I don't think it would be a bit nice to travel now.

I told you in my last letter that Esther and Ike were going to be married the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Dec. but

I think they will wait a week longer, that will be the 9<sup>th</sup> of Dec. They are going to live in two rooms of Sundberg's house until spring and then they are going to get a place. I guess they have been getting furniture and lots of things. I do wish that you and I could start to house-keeping that soon but that is impossible so I guess we will have to be contented. As soon as you get home we will get some kind of a place and live by ourselves, won't we dear? We don't want to live with other people any more.

I suppose you are settled down now and are hard at work. I got your last letter Tuesday night, the one from Stockholm. Esther and I walked down thru the snow at night and I felt well paid when I got your letter. Annie is still in Spanish Fork. She went over a week ago Friday to Dell's wedding. He was married last Wednesday. Tomorrow is Sunday but I don't think I shall go to Sunday School. Perlinda's class has joined ours now. I thot the boys in my class were mean till hers came down and now I think they are pretty good by the side of hers. I guess Perlinda [Christiansen, Martin's sister] will think I quit Sunday School because she came down but I can't help what she thinks, I can't go any more. You told Mart in that letter to bring your ring but Mart had gone when the letter came and Perlinda opened it and read it. Do you want me to send you your ring?

Thanksgiving day Ike was here for dinner and stayed all afternoon. Maybe you think I wasn't lonesome and wishing that you were here. At night he and Esther went to the dance. It was the first time I missed going to a dance Thanksgiving night since I can remember but then I guess it won't be the last for my dancing days are nearly over.

Jennie Rasmussen is married to a fellow from American Fork. Aunt Lettie [only living child, born 1875, from the polygamist marriage of Viola's grandfather, Joseph C. who died in 1880 at age 56; her mother, Martha Alldredge Keller, died in 1925 at age 86] had a rag bee yesterday but we were washing so we didn't go. She just passed here going downtown so I went out and talked to her and she is going to call for me when she comes back and I will go up and sew today. I haven't been up to your place for over a week. We have been so busy making Esther's quilts and sewing for her and then it has been so stormy too. I saw Stena Sunday and that's the last time I have seen anyone of them. She got your letter a week ago today from Stockholm and when she told me about it Sunday I felt sure I would get one that day but I was disappointed. Then Monday I was disappointed again and Tuesday again. I had just about given up all hopes and Tuesday night I went down but didn't expect to get one and so I was surprised and it was a very pleasant surprise. I wouldn't have been expecting it if Stena hadn't got one and that one came for Mart Saturday too and I thot if you could write to both of them you could surely write to me too, but it came at last and was very welcome.

Esther is going up and clean up her rooms today and put down carpets. I will write again in a week. This is the fifth letter I have written to Sweden and one to Liverpool, six in all, have you got them all, Nels? I am so glad that you have been well while you have been gone and do hope and pray that you may have good health all the time you are away and enjoy yourself very much. I may call in and see your folks when I come from Aunt Lettie's and then I will tell you how they are. I will let Pa post this when he goes to Seventy's meeting tomorrow. The last letter I wrote was posted Friday and this one will be Sunday, just two days over a week. We went out to Carrie's the day I posted your last letter and had a nice time. Stena and I got a pretty post card to send to you but Stena has

mine up there so I guess I won't send it till next time unless I get it when I call in tonight.

It is getting quite warm now. The sun is shining and if the ground was dry it would be quite pleasant. I believe I told you before that they got all the beets and potatoes up and didn't pit any of the beets.

Well dearest, I had to stop writing to go up to Aunt Lettie's and after I left there I went over to your place for a little while. They are all right and Stena is going to write to you tonight. I am going up there tomorrow for dinner. I had supper up to Aunt Lettie's and she said to tell you that she wished you had been there too and you bet I wished so too. Be sure and tell me if you have got all my letters. Esther and Ike just left to go up to Sundbergs. Esther goes up there every [torn] ... with Ike and then they ... back down here. I ... didn't send you way up north there.

Leona Jenson, Steve's daughter, was married yesterday to a fellow from Midway. They were married in Provo and next Wednesday they are going to the temple to be married over again. There is no more news now that I can think of so will close for this time. Write to me often dearest and tell me all about it. It seems a year since I saw you. Please write soon and don't forget, yours forever, Viola.

P.S. This is the card I told you about, I got it tonight. I don't know whether you will get another letter from me before Xmas so will wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Pleasant Grove, Ut., Nov. 29, 1908  
[Still forwarding, from Stockholm to Svartösten, Luleå, Sweden.]

Dearest Brother,

Received your dear letter that you sent from Stockholm OK and was more than pleased to hear from you and to note that you were well. Too bad you had to sit up all night in that crowded car but hope you will be sure to keep your feet dry and dress warmly. Have you bought yourself a new overcoat, if not you better get you one so you can keep yourself warm and comfortable.

Today I went to Sunday School. It seems about the same as usual. Today they summed up all those that have attended S.S. regularly and are going to award them presents Christmas. We had twelve in our class that makes us feel fine. Viola was up to see us today. I have just come home from seeing her home and she played me a few tunes on the graphophone. She played Arawana and Ten Thousand Fathoms Deep. It sounded just like it might have been you singing it hopping up and down in your big high-topped shoes and swinging the towel around Viola's head. Say kid, it's as cold as blazes here now, we have had snow here for about a week, it squeaks pretty under your shoes. I suppose there is plenty of snow and cold weather where you are.

I was talking to Perlinda today, she had received some cards from Mart from the Niagara Falls, and he is feeling fine and was going to get on the ship yesterday morning. He sails from Portland, Maine. Perlinda received the letter you sent to Mart two days after he had

gone, so we haven't sent your ring yet but I guess Viola will send it in the sweet by in by.

By the way, Esther and Isaac are going to step off the earth next week. Thanksgiving we had all the folks gathered here except Viola and she had promised Esther that she would stay home that day because Isaac was going to eat dinner to Youngs. We had quite a nice time but it would have been nicer if you could have been with us too. It did not seem complete without you.

Leona, Stephen Jenson's dater, got married last Friday to a fellow from Midway. Isn't this interesting? Lew has been plowing in the snow for three days. The boys did not get their plowing done before the storm so Lew is wading knee deep in the snow and mud. But he can't plow any more now until it thaws.

Albean has bought all the sheep now, he took the last three old sheep the other day. Mother got Joe Jacobson to shear the lambs. We are not going to sell them now. I guess we will keep them until spring unless we eat them all before then.

Next Tuesday we are going to kill the pigs, won't that be a butchering for you though. We are going to sell two and keep one. Jens has decided not to keep his pigs another year, so he will have his killed some time this fall too.

Oh yes! We had a parade here the other night. Jens, Chris, Lew, and I were out getting the chickens out of the trees, Jens would look up to grab a chicken, then the chicken would fly up a little higher and he would get his face full of snow. I didn't do anything only carry the hens to the coop and put them on the roost. Mother sold about thirty of them so we only have a couple of dozen left.

Chris has a regular customer now to buy potatoes who comes down once a week and gets her cart full. That's all Lotta can pull up the hill. He is doing a rushing business I can tell you. He received a check from the Fruit & Produce Co. amounting to \$37.00. They wrote that that was payment in full. Jens and I counted up the number of cases we had sold and averaged it up we cleared about nine cents a box for pears and all. We certainly received a fortune on our fruit this year. That was about enough to pay Lew and for picking it.

Just think Ally has had the whooping cough but is OK and goes to Provo to school. He started last Monday. He is taking the missionary course.

Today Ezra Walker spoke in meeting and he said that he did not go without his dinner while he was on his mission. He said the way he did he and his companion would go to a place about 11:30 o'clock and ask the lady of the house if they could go in the house and rest a while, she would say yes and while they were resting they could smell the dinner a cooking and of course she invited them to have dinner with them. Sometimes they would call at a place about noon and ask for the man of the house and sit down on the porch and wait until he came home from the field. While they were resting they would be singing or humming and the lady could hear them in the house. They took dinner with the family to be sure and the people invited them to sing. Of course they sang and the people were so charmed with them that they were invited there several times. If I don't quit soon you

will think I'm writing you a sermon but I thought maybe you would like to hear some of Ezra's experience.

Be sure and write to us often. I hope they do not send you way up north where you cannot see the sun but hope you are to labor in some nice place. I guess you are busy now trying to read Swedish. Have you given them an oration yet?

I suppose you have received three letters from me by now. I wrote you one on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Mother asked me to write you a little poem in Danish but I will have to write it in English the best I can. It is this:

If sorrow seeks to win your heart anytime,  
Drop a tear and sing a song, and it will disappear.

I notice that it doesn't rhyme like mother said it but it's as near it as I can write it. She feels pretty good and is sitting under the light reading and Chris is in his natural position asleep in the rocking chair. Ernest coughs about the same or else he is well. He talks about you every day and wants to know if you can't come home on a horse from Sweden. If I don't end my epistle now you will need King Oscar's sympathy. So goodnight and be very good to Nels. Hope you may be blessed with good health and some good friends.

Your Loving Sis Stena.

P.S. Chris was going to write you this time but he says there isn't room for any more this time.