

Ella Jepson Nylander Photograph Collection

Cambridge Historical Commission
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Gift of Richard Nylander, April 2014

Collection ID: P002

Dates: c. 1890-1930

Extent: 2 flat boxes

Processed by: Meta Partenheimer, September-October 2016

Access: Collection is available for research under the CHC rules of use

Collection Description:

The Ella Jepson Nylander Photograph Collection consists of loose photographs, cabinet photographs, and card photographs. The images date to the early twentieth century and many were taken by Boston and Cambridge photographers. A large number of the individuals represented are believed to have been family and acquaintances of the Nylanders, including the Anderson, Nelson, Nylander, and Nyman families who were a part of the Swedish-American community in Cambridge.

Provenance and Biography Note:

This collection consists of photographs found in a trunk that belonged to Ella Jepson Nylander. Mrs. Nylander was born Rozella Josephine Jepson in New Sweden, Maine in 1883 to Swedish immigrants Mons and Elna Jepson. Ella Jepson married Olof Conrad Nylander in Cambridge, Massachusetts on May 30, 1908. The ceremony was performed by Reverend C. (Carl) E. Johnson, the couple's first pastor in Cambridge. O. Conrad was born in Sweden in 1880 and after arriving in the United States in 1902, he was self-employed as a tailor. During his career, he worked as a tailor for both F. L. Dunne & Company and Scott & Co. in Boston. The Nylanders had two sons, Wilbur Conrad (1910-1991) and Donald Oliver (1913-2005). The family lived at various addresses in Cambridge, settling at 61 Austin Street (now Bishop Allen Drive) in 1917. In the mid-1930s, Mr. and Mrs. Nylander moved to Arlington, Massachusetts where O. Conrad died in 1943. Mrs. Nylander died in Belmont, Massachusetts in 1970.

The photographs were donated by Mrs. Nylander's grandson, Richard Nylander of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The donor's brother, Robert Nylander, was a historical researcher and key contributor to the Cambridge Historical Commission during its formative years until his death in 1987. Richard and Robert's father was Donald O. Nylander.

Historical Note on the Swedish Baptist Church and the Swedish-American Community in Cambridge:

Cambridge began seeing a rise in Swedish immigrants during the late-nineteenth century, and by 1905 the population had reached 1,645. Many Swedes were employed in trades and as craftsmen, but quite a few of the younger generation began working in a professional capacity. The Swedish and Swedish-American community in Cambridge was a close-knit and religious group during this time, and many of their activities centered on their religion. From 1918 to 1919, the Swedish Congregational Church hosted midsummer festivals in which Swedish music and refreshments were provided to the community. During the early 1920s, the community began holding a get-together called "Annual Swedish Night." This event, held at the YMCA, included speakers from political offices and immigrant communities as well as musical and gymnastic performances. In addition to religious services, there were many clubs and organizations

that catered to the Swedish community during this era. There were the Swedish Singing Society and the Swedish Glee Club, which both sang at events regularly, and the Swedish Club of the Union which held exhibitions, entertainment and programmes, to name a few.

The Swedish Baptist Church in Cambridge was founded on 10 May 1895. In the early years, the eighteen-member congregation worshipped at the Broadway Baptist Church. They soon needed more space and in June of 1896 there was a call for funds to be raised to purchase a house to worship in at the corners of Columbia and Washington Streets. Services began at the new location in 1897. Reverend C. E. Johnson became the pastor in 1899 and began publishing a church paper called the "Evangelical Messenger" in 1901. By 1902 the congregation had expanded to over 100 members and began taking bids to create a new church. Many members of the congregation were said to be poor or working class immigrants, and the surrounding community of Cambridge was encouraged to aid in fund contributions to the new church. Construction began in late 1902, and during this time the congregation worshipped in the YMCA building. The cornerstone for the building was laid on 8 March 1903 and dedicated that following May. As it stands today, the building at 77 Columbia Street is a substantial improvement to its predecessor. The first story is composed of brick while the upper portion is made of wood. The lower auditorium is said to seat 400 while the vestry holds 175 seats.

Processing and Arrangement Notes:

Prior to donation, Robert Nylander sorted the photographs of this collection by name and relationship. The order follows Mr. Nylander's handwritten notes that are present on the reverse of the card photographs. Although some individuals are named and grouped, many remain unidentified. Series I-V are stored in Box 1 and Series VI-VII are in Box 2.

Related Resources:

Digitized images from this collection can be found on the Cambridge Historical Commission's Flickr account:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/cambridgehistoricalcommission/collections/72157674625374406/>

Scope and Content:

This collection consists of 75 photographs of mainly portraits, including some duplicates. Portrait and other photograph subjects include the Swedish Baptist Church and Reverend Carl E. Johnson; members of the Nyman, Nelson, and Anderson families; friends of Mrs. Nylander's husband, O. Conrad Nylander; and various individuals, both identified and unidentified.

Box 1

Series I: Swedish Baptist Church and Reverend Carl E. Johnson (c. 1900-1915)

- Folder 1 of 1: Contains two card photographs of Reverend Carl E. Johnson, who was Mr. and Mrs. Nylander's first pastor in Cambridge and performed their wedding ceremony on May 30, 1908. He also performed the wedding ceremonies of Otto and Ida Anderson as well as Arthur and Carola Weeden. The file also contains one photograph of the Swedish Baptist Church located at 77 Columbia Street, on the corner of Columbia and Washington Street.

Series II: Members of the Nyman and Nelson Families (c. 1890-1920)

- Folder 1 of 1: Contains six card photographs of the following individuals: Anna Nyman, Betty Nyman, Ella Jepson Nylander, Anna Nelson, Ingrid Nelson, and Arvid Nelson. Also contains one loose photograph and photograph card of Mrs. Anna Nelson. Benedikta Gabrielle (known as Benedicta, Betty G., or Rebecca) Nyman was born in Sweden on March 24, 1863 and arrived in the United States in 1893. She worked as a servant and lived as a boarder in Cambridge during

her initial years as an immigrant. Betty boarded at 111 Austin Street in Cambridge in 1904 and worked as a domestic worker until she became the proprietor of this establishment in 1906. This residence would have been a short walk from Mr. and Mrs. Nylander's home at 61 Austin. Betty owned the house by 1930, and when she died in 1939 her sister Anna M. Nyman took over the establishment. Anna was born in Sweden around 1870 and later lived at 111 Austin with her sister. She made a living as a dressmaker. Anna Nelson, born in Sweden around 1890, was the niece of Betty and Anna Nyman. Ms. Nelson arrived in the United States in 1909 and also lodged at the house at 111 Austin in Cambridge. She worked as a stenographer for a number of years and later married Christian A. Nelson, a local physician. The Nelsons lived at 27 Clinton Street in Cambridge.

Series III: Otto Anderson and Family (c. 1900-1925)

- Folder 1 of 1: Contains seven card photographs of the following individuals: Conrad Nylander, Otto Anderson, his wife Ida Linnéa Fredlund, Jennie Anderson, Otto's girlfriend (unnamed), and one photograph in a card of Otto Anderson with his wife and child, unidentified but likely Kaul Anderson.
 - Otto N. Anderson, born in Sweden on December 6, 1883 arrived in New York in 1902 and became an American citizen in 1909. That same year on May 15, he married Ida Fredlund, and the ceremony was performed by Reverend Carl E. Johnson. Ida was born on August 7, 1883 and arrived in the United States on August 25, 1906. The couple had two children, Ruth L. and Kaul Anderson. The family lived in Allston in 1909 and later moved to Cambridge, renting a house at 5 Jay Street. Otto worked as a salesman and later a carpenter before he died on March 21, 1921. Ida worked as a clerk after the death of her husband and continued to reside at 5 Jay Street. Otto's sister, Jennie Anderson was born in Sweden around 1888. She lived with her brother for a short time and worked as a restaurant cook. She later became Mrs. Jennie Larson and moved to Dorchester.

Series IV. Group of Unidentified Individuals Marked "Dad's (O. Conrad Nylander) Friends" (c. 1900-1910)

- Folder 1 of 1: Contains six card photographs of individuals Mrs. Nylander designated as "Dad's Friends"—Dad being her husband, O. Conrad Nylander.

Series V. Identified Individuals (c. 1900-1915)

- Folder 1 of 3: Contains seven card photographs of the following individuals: Alma Anderson, Gustave Carlson, Gotfrid Bernard Carlson, Mr. and Mrs. Yarn Dahl, and "Maude and Eva."
- Folder 2 of 3: Four card photographs of the following individuals: Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Weeden, Sarah Sjölander, Otto Johnson, and Fritz Sjöberg. Also contains one card photograph of Roy and Dorothy Weeden as toddlers.
 - Arthur William Weeden was born in Maine on November 7, 1883. He was employed as a machinist in a shipyard and later credited himself as an inventor. He married Karolina Johansdotter Johanson (known as Carolina or Carola) on October 24, 1908. Their wedding ceremony was performed by Reverend Carl E. Johnson. They had two children, Roy Edward Weeden (1909-1970) and Dorothy Eleanor Benjamin (Weeden) (1911-2001). The family lived in Cambridge during the early 1910's, and subsequently moved to Somerville before settling in Quincy. Sarah Debora Charlotta Sjölander was born on March 20, 1879 and arrived in the United States on June 14, 1896. Ms. Sjölander worked as a servant in several residences in Cambridge and later worked at a nurse in Newton.

- Folder 3 of 3: Contains four card photographs of the following groups and individuals: Joseph Einar Leonard and Alice Charlotte (Carlson) Moody's Baby, Hulda Johnson (later Mrs. Nordell), David Nordell, and the Pitterson Family (four members). Contains two loose photographs of the following individuals: Frances Lindberg (removed from card—card included), and Carl Norling (no card). Contains one mounted photograph of Mrs. Holmes and Baby Morten. Also contains one card cabinet photograph of Reverend John A. Kallman.
 - David Richard Nordell was born on June 25, 1888 and arrived in the United States on September 7, 1905. He was a boarder at 3 Tremont Street in Cambridge and worked as a self-employed tailor for many years. David worked as a tailor and a salesman, and at one time was employed with Scott & Co. in Boston. It is likely that he worked with O. Conrad Nylander at this establishment and perhaps others. Mr. Nordell married Hilda (Hulda) Marie Johnson on June 26, 1909. Hilda was born in Massachusetts in February 1886. The couple had two children: Evelyn Adelaide/Madeline Nordell (b. 1909) and Doris Elvira Poland (Nordell) (1914-2004). After their marriage, the Nordells lived with Hilda's parents before moving to 16 Chilton Street and later to 145 Larch Road in Cambridge. The family moved to Weymouth in 1923, settling at 42 Oakden Avenue. Mrs. Nordell died in Weymouth in 1952. Reverend John A. Kallman came to Cambridge from Maine and was the pastor at the First Swedish Baptist Church from 1916-1919.

Box 2

Series VI. Unidentified Individuals Photographed by Boston and Cambridge Photographers (c. 1895-1925)

- Folder 1 of 4: Contains two card photographs, two loose photographs (one originally placed in a cover), and one portrait photograph inside a cover.
- Folder 2 of 4: Contains one card photograph, three loose photographs (removed from covers—covers included in collection), and one photograph attached to cover.
- Folder 3 of 4: Contains three card photographs, two loose photographs (one with card included), and two photographs attached in card cabinets.
- Folder 4 of 4: Contains three card photographs, one loose photograph (card included), and three photographs attached inside card cabinets.

Series VII. Unidentified Individuals Photographed Outside Boston and Cambridge (c. 1890-1915)

- Folder 1 of 1: Contains seven card photographs. Photographers are from the following locations: Fremont, Nebraska; Duluth; Denver, Colorado; West Newton, Massachusetts; Vancouver, British Columbia; New Haven, Connecticut; and Caribou, Missouri.

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