

**The history about foundation contractor  
Alfred Larson-Blomberg's life**

**written by himself 1909**

**At the age of 60 years**

Translated to English 2012  
by Hans Forsslund

## ***Foreword to the English translation***

This translation is made from the book published by Sundsvall's museum in 1988. That book is a "photographic copy" of the first book published in 1945. I don't know exactly how the original book is made. It seems that the book is based on a transcription from a handwritten original written by Alfred Blomberg. The text looks like it is close following the original in old Swedish language and no corrections of the language or punctuations seem to have been made. The language is also that of spoken old Swedish. The text for today's Swedish readers is therefore often difficult to read and it is easy to misread. To be able to understand, sentences often have to be reread many times. I have tried to translate without rewriting the story and keep it as close to the Swedish version as possible. I hope that this will give a more authentic feeling when reading Alfred Blomberg's memories. Without Neil Blomberg's proof reading and suggestions on changes, this translation would not have been possible.

### **Some background**

In Sweden for a very long time there was a system with tenant farmers called "Torpare". These cottages were called "Torp". By working stipulated days, they paid for having their small farm that belonged to an owner of a big farm or estate. The "Torpare" almost owned their "Torp" and it could be past on to next generation, as long as they did their working days. This system did not end until 1943. If they could not work for the property owner, they had to leave the small farm and often the only solution was to move to relatives or to a "backstuga" which were small houses without land. These small houses were sometimes built by the parish or community to be used by poor people. It was in such houses Alfred grew up after his father had died.

Daretorp where Alfred was borne is a small community and parish about two miles south of Tidaholm. Today only 500 people live there. His family had lived there in an area of 2 times 4 miles for at least 300 years. The cottage (Torp) where he was borne has these coordinates 58° 8'30.00"N 14° 2'20.60"E

Sundsvall is a town along the coast in northern part of Sweden. Sundsvall's fire, in 1888, was the largest fire in the history of Sweden. What caused the fire is not clear but most evidence suggests that a spark from a steamer was the cause. June 25, 1888 was extremely warm, dry and windy. Not a single drop of rain for a month. Strong winds combined with dry land and buildings of wood had devastating consequences. The city was in ruins and 9000 people were homeless.

Interesting to note is that the whole city of Umeå burned to the ground the same day. The fire started apparently only about half an hour later. Extensive national and international collections were made in favour of the two cities' homeless population. The same day a small town Lilla Edet in mid east also burned. Many houses in Sundsvall were well insured and this lead to a construction boom. The city was rebuilt in stone and today it constitutes the centre of Sundsvall.

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<http://www.tittihans.se/hans-research-documents>

## **Foreword to the Sundsvall's Museum book 1988**

The magnificent stone buildings in the centre of Sundsvall, like the first lot of industries and power stations, were mainly built by people with roots in the old poor, Sweden. Many of them remained poor while others prospered.

From the foundation contractor Alfred Larsson Blomberg's recorded memories we can deduce that he was among those who, thanks to thrift, hard work and skill "come up" in life. Situations of such people were good in Sundsvall in the late 1800's and early 1900's, when a town of stone was rebuilt after the [European] continental model and the pulp industries were established in the district.

Alfred Larsson Blomberg was born in 1848, son of a day's work tenant in Daretorp parish in Skaraborg County. He ended his days in Sundsvall in 1925 as the wealthy foundation contractor, owner of a country house in Sidsjö and a four-story stone house in the city. The years between 1848 and 1925 were to him full of many hardships and adventures, all suffered with a great confidence in God.

There are, in addition to journal materials, only a few written documents preserved, describing how the construction works were done during the turn of the century in Sundsvall. The information of material purchases, labour forces' wages, working hours, conditions for builders, etc., which are found in foundation contractor Alfred Larsson Blomberg's memories, and in his posthumous books of accounts, have great historical value.

Sundsvall Museum thanks Alfred Larsson Blomberg's surviving relatives for giving permission to do a reprint of the version of his memoirs, entitled Grandfather's book printed in 1945 for the family's own use. Special thanks to Mrs. Karin Hjertman, Sundsvall, who arranged contacts between the family and the museum.

The reprint has been attached with a number of photographs which, unless otherwise indicated, came from the Museum of Sundsvall archive.

Sundsvall's museum April 1988, Barbro Björk / 11:e intendent/



Foundation Contractor Alfred Larsson Blomberg Photo 1925 M. Kihlbaum



*Alfred Larsson Blomberg, later foundation contractor in Sundsvall, born 1848, son of a day's work tenant in Daretorp parish in Västergötland. The photo shows a day-croft house. A tradition in Daretorp says that it is the house his mother lived in. The house was moved from the original location.*

*Photo: Hans Forsslund 2010*

I Alfred Larsson Blomberg was born in 1848 on 5 March, Daretorp parish Skaraborg county, in a day-croft called the South pasture (Södra Hagen), cottage that was situated next to the highway about a fourth Swedish mil north of Daretorps church

Our father, Lars Erlandsson Modig (Brave) was also born in Daretorp December 30, 1803 and died March 23, 1855 in Söderhagen in Daretorp where his dust rests. The cause of death is unknown to me, but our father was born in a farm named Erlandstorp, and his father's name was Erlandsson, who probably would have been a soldier and had been named Modig (Brave). Our mother Maja-Stina was also born in Daretorp, 1815 August 26 and died 17 January 1897 in Tidaholm where her remains are resting. The cause of death was probably old age. Our mother Maja-Stina's father was called Blomqvist, who had the title "Klarinettblåsare" (clarinet blower) at the Kings Skaraborg regiment. He was accidentally shot with a rifle at age 40. He was born in 1780

My parents Lars Modig and Maja-Stina, who was born Blomqvist, had a Torp (small tenant farm) that would give three man-days work a week to a farm called Töretorp. The main house at this cottage Södra Hagen (Southern Pasture) was a cottage with a room, a fireplace and a large oven. On the side of the fireplace were two small windows with arches of lead, and the roof was of birch bark covered with sod, and above the sod on the

roof were planted some kind of flowers which we called roof onions (Tak lökar).

The potatoes were stored in deep round pits over winter in the nearest sand hill. In the mentioned croft Southern Pasture our parents had 11 children, four died as little children due to a disease that is not known me. The seven survivors were four boys and three girls.

Nr 1. Anders Johan born 1839 April 2 death in America, January 8, 1910 wife Betty, born Nilsson from Frykforsen in Wärmaland plus 11 children, cause of death was egg white discharge in urine and gangrene of the feet.

Nr. 2. Sven August born 1840 October 10 Death in America around 1869.

Nr. 3. Anna-Lisa was born in 1843 June 8 widow of husband carpenter Lindelof, residence in Tidaholm.

Nr. 4. Carl Modig named after our father was born in 1844 December 2 dead in Härnösand October 12, 1909, leaving behind a wife and 12 children, the youngest 10 years, he died at Härnösands Hospital of gastric ulcers, and at his death passed on a fortune about 70,000 kronor, he was the last years a merchant in the manufacture in Härnösand and he died in the faith of his God.

Nr. 5 Undersigned, Alfred born on 5 March 1848

Nr. 6. Matilda born 1849 December 6 is now widow of Tailor Nordquist, they had four children together. Their residence Nyland

Nr. 7. Gustafva married to a merchant Ellzen in Tidaholm, she was born in 1852 September 18

We were then seven living children and were growing up in the greatest poverty. As I was only 7 years old and some days when our father died, I remember so well how the cottage looked both inside and outside, and even when our father was buried, and how beautiful church bells rang for us at home. It was the last greeting sent by our dear father to our mother and her seven little helpless children.

We children are three and four in each bunk, with rye straw lies loose in the bunk over the length, then when it was prepared a rag covering was put over straw. A cushion of straw was used for a pillow and then a ragged covering over us.

Some matches or kerosene did not exist, so it was heated by the large fire, and all got their light from it. When we needed some light there were dry wooden sticks to light.

Our poor mother always got to bed last in evening so it was for her to

scrape the ashes over the fire embers until morning, when she had to find any glow in the fireplace. Small wooden sticks that were dipped in molten sulphur. Then such a stick was put in the glowing embers there was fire.

Or maybe it was to use what we called “Fnöske” tinder. Our dear Mother had no maids to command that would be up and cook coffee to serve on the bed. She had to do everything herself.

It was probably the last Christmas that our father lived, as I remember it, when all the children would be washed on Christmas Eve in warm water in a tub of wood. One by one, each got on knees beside the bowl, was washed both their heads and their face, got clean shirts and better food at the table. Now there was joy in the high ceiling of our cottage among children. We had never heard of Christmas Trees.

How long our father was sick, is unknown to me. I do not think any doctor was requested, partly because my parents were poor, and it was twenty kilometres to the nearest town Hjo.

Before he died, father gathered all the children and our mother around him and told them that by Grace and Mercy he had received forgiveness from God through Jesus our Saviour. He held a special cautionary speech to all the children to surrender into God’s hands, so it would go them well in this life and especially in the life hereafter.

Father's heart ached when he thought about leaving so many little helpless children. I do not remember this but my brother Johan who was oldest talked many times about it and has even written to me about it.

When our dear father was dead my brother Johan who was the oldest child had to do” the day work” for the cottage three days a week, but it did not work for a long time.

The oldest four children had to come out in life on their own to earn their bread each in their own way.

And at the same time our mother left Södra Hagen, probably about 1856 or 1857. Our mother then moved with her remaining three children to a place called Rommarehemmet about 5 kilometres from the Södra Hagen. Rommarehemmet was about 2,5 kilometres from the nearest village road. The only people that lived around it were a poor peasant without children. I think his name was Lars.

I mentioned that our home was a large room, to the left of the hall a small room with a fireplace without a damper. There we would now have our residence. Now that our poor mother had straw on the beds have got out two pots a larger, one small frying pan all with feet under. Some barrel of wood and a few plates of wood. Knives used were carving knives to cut with. Any china plate or a glass was not found in our home that I can remember

Something about the food in childhood: There was the oat porridge and sometimes it was mixed with rye and pea-meal together. Mother could not afford rye bread. Potatoes were the main food. When they were cooked the pan was set on the table. Our wooden plates, salt and water on the table- We peeled with our nails the potatoes on wooden plates and then dipped them in salt water. Or if there was any pork lards you cut off a piece and melted it, poured the water on and salt, and then stirred in flour that was at hand. That is what we called for "doppa" dipping. The frying pan, when it was prepared, was placed on the table and everyone dipped their potatoes in it.

A kind of gruel was used quite often and we called it water gruel. It was boiled with a few bones or a little pork lard was put in it or maybe only water, and then was stirred with flour when it was finished. It was served in a container and if there was milk it was poured into gruel so it got messy. Then we all ate with wooden spoons from the same container. We did not know what coffee was.

We were now in Rommarehemmet and I remember it was summer when we moved there. We did not go on the railroad or go in a cab, but mother with her three children walked following the loaded wagon. However, when our Mother Maja-Stina had put everything in order for her and their children, it was for her to work at a small estate. If I remember correctly, it was called Bruntahemmet. She had to go early in the morning and come home late at night. During the time we were at the Rommarehemmet we could not see or speak to our mother during the day but only in the evenings because in the morning when she went the children were sleeping. Probably she got food at the manor.

There was much snow that winter that we got completely snowed in for three days and had no food, so our poor mother whet out to get us some potatoes. On the way home in the dark, she fell and was lying in a snowdrift so it was close to the end for her, but luckily she was able to come home again to her children, but the potatoes were somehow left in the snowdrifts. During these three days we had only little peas which she fried for us in the frying pan. We ate them dry. The way my mother did it I do not remember. A fence outside the door was used for firewood to melt snow for water.

We three children Alfred, Matilda and Gustafva lay and sat in bed those days but we were not idle because we read the New Testament during that period.

When winter had come to end our mother moved back with her three children close by Södra Hagen (South meadow) to a cottage called the Mocklestugan. An old man had owned the house before but was now dead, he was called Mocklegubben. The cabin was about 10 to 12 feet square with two windows that were about one and a half feet square. The window frames were of lead, also the roof covered with sod and planted with roof-



onion. That cottage was better for us closer to the road and with very nice people around us. They were generally very poor, but still generous. Our nearest neighbour was a tenant who they called the Husen. I went to see him almost daily and when I came to him he always said, "Do you come now Allenfred?"

We had many portions of meals given to us from them. They used a lot of sauerkraut which the old woman cooked. It was a treat food for us. The sauerkraut was chopped into small pieces and pressed in a large barrel. There was also a peasant named Pettersson from a farm called Pålstorp who had two daughters. They were particularly kind to Maja-Stina's children, and they often came to us with food, mainly milk and bread. The daughters' names, if I remember correctly, were Louisa and Anna. In passing I may mention how strange the way things happen. It was a peasant woman that sent her daughter, or was it the maid, to other peasant people who should have a so-called harvest party, with milk, etc. When the daughter or the maid came home the housewife asked what the neighbour woman said. She was told: Maja-Stina was gone and the children were alone at home and they had no food, they became so happy. Yes, but the wife said you were supposed to go "there and there" with the milk and food. Presumably, Maja-Stina's children were in greatest need of food. Who led the daughter or maid to us? Because we were very poor our mother had to be away to earn her bread for herself and us children. As it was far from home she could not come home more than every Saturday night. It could also happen she did not come until Sunday morning. However, when she came the children's joy was in the high ceiling and of course our dear mother was glad to come and we were even more happier that she came home to us.

Then mother spreads out for us all the food she had earned during the week. It became a party for the children because she had some food instead of money where she worked. When the joy of the party was over it was for our poor mother to examine our heads and clothes. First she had to use a brass comb and it was not easy. Because in our heads there was due to mismanagement large ulcers with white insects, both small and large. Then in the clothes there were both white and black. Then she had to clean and prepare, for usually our brothers and sisters who were near home came home on Sunday. The home was poor but it was still dear to them to get home to meet with both mother and siblings.

In the summer I started school and my youngest sister may have started at the same time but I do not remember. Schoolmaster as we called him was named Johan Sandin. At the school we poor kids were served dinner that was given by the parish, and it was half a cake of rye bread, half a herring and a few potatoes in a round wooden cup.

Before I write further I remember my parents' appearance and temperament. My father was, if I remember correctly, quite tall and blonde. I do not think he had a beard. My mother was small and chubby

with dark black hair. They had good spirits and were generous, always happy and content with their lot. If she had more in the chest than that was spent for the day, she said that she always had so much grace of God, so she did not know where she would make of it. She always said that God was especially good to her, especially having given her such good children. She would always say there is no one who has such good children as Maja-Stina. She was pleased with the little things. Our dear parents died in gratitude to God and our Saviour for forgiving their sins.

And my earnest desire is that our dearly beloved parents and we children that are left to say on the great reckoning: See here I am, and we are here with the children that you gave us, God of mercy.

The school reading was mainly what we would learn. We learned the small and large catechism by heart, and also a part of biblical history. Because we would learn to write we had a long bench with wooden slats on the sides that had fine sand in it. We had wooden sticks to write words and numbers. Then when we became more educated we had a slate to write and count on. I cannot remember if I became such high scholar to be allowed to write on paper. I do not remember if I was at school for three or four years.

Now it was my turn to go away to earn my bread. I shall now to a coppersmith named Bergström at a place called Aplåsen and become herd-boy. They had two cows and a bull. It was about a 2.5 kilometres to walk before arriving at the place where I should water my heard. It was always necessary to keep an eye on the ox because he took the fences down on his horns went whenever he wanted. Now it was for me to follow these animals on weekdays as well as on Sunday in the woods from morning until night. The food was some salty bacon bits and a bit of hard bread in a leather bag on my back. On my chest I had a big horn from a goat to blow. On my arm I had a straw braid and rye straw stems that I braided with. The Copper smith had two daughters, Louisa, and Maia, who sewed straw hats to be sold. Every night when I got home they checked how many yards the boy had braided for the day.

All summer, even if it was cold or hot, I had to walk barefooted. It was not at all unusual when it was hot to be scared of one and several snakes that lay and hissed here and there.

There were not many days that passed without my tears falling and longing for something better. Soon, there was no home the poor mother also had to be away to work for others, and there was no one there to feel compassion for the fatherless shepherd boy. I got clothes from the coppersmith that was always made from a little cotton fabric, so it was to both freeze and starve.

In the fall of the second summer, I leave the leather bag and bock horn and straw braids with the coppersmith's daughters. Now my brother Carl returned from railway building, station named Vretstorp, we now go

together where he had been before. Now I carry food to locomotive drivers and fireman who were on a train carrying gravel. One Krona per day and I got the food that they left which was much different from being a boy herding.

Brother Johan was also at Wretstorp and worked at a mountain. Now it was to save in order take a lot of money coins with us back home. At Christmas time all three Maja-Stina's boys goes together home, each with their old sack on their back containing our rags. Now when we were returned home it was to try to get clothes with our saved money.

Mother and I went together to the store and bought brown "målskin" for a full suit. So fine I had never been as I now became when I got it completed. (Målskin from English mole a kind of cotton fabric that was used for working clothes)

Then I got work as a farmhand near our home at a farmer named Johan Pettersson in Munt-Åsen. I was there for three years. During the first year I went and read for the priest, who was a pastor and was named Hjärpe. The first year I was at Pettersson I got food and clothing. When we were to "stand in the aisle and read for the priest in the church", as we called it, it was also my master's duty to make his farm hand boy fine because the master was a rich and respected man and also a prominent alderman who wanted not be worse than others. The målskins clothes were now both small and old, so I could not wear them when the whole Daretorp parish was in the church to hear children read. The farmer had a cottager who was an artisan in many things; he was a tailor, cobbler, watchmaker, jeweler, carpenter and blacksmith, etc. The tenant should first make boots with long or high shank but with of course small feet so it was painful to get them on your feet.

Then there was the makeover of an old blue homespun coat from his master redesigned having small tails and buttons on the back. The pants were black, and if they were new or old I do not remember, but what I remember is that the pants were wide as bags around the legs and also were short half-breeches. The cap I had received from mother.

Now I was nice looking again with the blue homespun coat and the black trousers that stopped in the middle of the legs to the top of the big boot tops.

The second year I was in Muntåser I received a salary 15 riksdaler, two pairs of boots, two pounds of wool, twelve "alnar" tapestry "bläggarnsväv" shirts. (Alnar One aln=two feet)

The third year I got 25 riksdaler, two pairs of boots, two pounds of wool, twelve cubits tapestry. It was called "småpersedlar".

In the mentioned Pettersson's in Muntåser all eat and lie in one room and the master and wife in their bed. The maid on the couch, I and the only son

in a couch down at the door. All eat at the same table in the same dish with wooden spoons. It was a good place to eat and where the wife was very kind. The master divided normally "sovlet" core food for us. He was not stingy with the food.

In the winter the Petterson wife, otherwise known as dear mother, and the maid are sitting at the spinning wheel until 10 o'clock at night and spinning both wool and flax, also tow, that would be made into shirts and linen. The farmhand handles the fire burning in the fireplace. Any lamps or kerosene were not yet known. The farmhand also spits sticks and makes brooms so they would be available for the upcoming summer. On Sundays, all were in the church except dear mother or maid Gustafva.

Master Johan Petterson was always kind and friendly to me, but he was very stingy about money so we could not agree on salary for the fourth year. He would give 200 daler (32 kronor 37 öre) and I wanted 40 riksdaler.

However now it was October 24, 1865 or 1866 when it was for me to take leave of my mother, master, wife, their son, the maid Gustafva, plus master's parents. Member of Parliament and his wife plus maid, who lived in a farm next door. I cry and we all cry except the master and former Member of Parliament Petterson.

It was my first time to move out into the world on my own. A farmer drives me the long way three miles ( Eng. 6,2 miles) to Falköping. Then by rail to Alingsås. I had 8 riksdalers in my pocket left of my salary when I left Muntåsen and had paid the drive-farmer and ticket. In Alingsås I bought the first trousers that have been on my legs. Now there is a drive-farmer who meets me in Alingsås for further transit on the long road three and half "mil" to a parish called Bollebygd and the farm named Erikstorp

I had taken a job to serve at a son of a forester named Nyman who was from Daretorp, and was now the owner of the farm Erikstorp. Little Nyman was a gentleman and his wife was the lady so they were too fine to participate in any work. His wife was the ruler, and was not nice. Now it was another time for me and now I had moved from bad to worse. When I needed food I had to go into the large kitchen to sit alone, and in addition to that much of the food was poor. A young bad maid cooked the food. Now I did not have my last nice master and (mistress) wife and not their good dining room table. I could not visit mother or my siblings on Sundays. Little Nyman had two tired old horses and I would take care of them and drive with them. It was usually to drive to Alingsås once a week with boards and with planks to sell at the market. Because it was very poor at Mr. and Mrs Nyman's it was also bad in all what was at Erikstorp. The horses were old and lean, broken, and crooked wagons plus old tools. As it was 3 1/2 mil to Alingsås I had to load in time so that I could plod away at two o'clock in the afternoon and then come to first inn 1 1/2 mil from Erikstorp, the name was Tulsjöholm. Normally I was there at about eight

o'clock then it I had to give the horses food and water and let them rest for one hour.

At 9 o'clock, it was to plod away again to the next inn. It was called Kullabo and I get there at two o'clock at night. Now it was to bring the horses into a shed and give them food. Then it was for me to take a sack of hay into the innkeeper's yard and find myself a place on the floor with the other carters who came before me. They lay like pigs on the dirty floor. Now it was to rest a few hours. In the morning when all the driving peasants awoke and got up from the floor, there were tens of them. Some had planks and some boards and some great high loads of casks. All were there in town to sell their loads. Usually, they all buy coffee with brown icing sugar and buns before their journey continued. In the morning at nine o'clock they appear unwashed and uncombed in Alingsås Square to sell their loads which generally went very slowly. When one had sold their load and got the money then they would buy items for home and the wife and for their cattle as far as their money would go.

While I was in Bollebygd in the summer of 1866-1867 there was cholera in Gothenburg and several other cities. When rye and spring grain would be harvested in that fall it rained almost every day the corn sprouted in the field, so it was a poor harvest.

When the fall came, the sheriff arrived and sold Erikstorp for little Nyman as well as all that existed there. Now he was as poor as me but he could keep his wife along with three children. Poor little Nyman. At the same time, I also got to say goodbye to Erikstorp but now no tears were shed. Little Nyman and I are riding after the old horse in an old wagon with my little chest and a hay sack tied at the back. Going the long way to Vänersborg to a small estate called Lilleskogen (Little-forest) that was located between Halle and Hunneberg.

There, the old horse, and I would stay with an older brother to Little Nyman called Janne. He was the owner of Lilleskogen (Little Forest). He was a widower with two children, but he had a mamsel (unmarried woman) about 40 years old living with him whose was named Lindberg. There were two maids, along with four farmhands, three horses, two pairs of oxen, and about 15 cows. Now I had better conditions. I did not have to be out driving at night, had better food and did not have to sit alone in the kitchen when I would eat. We had a hired men chamber in one wing and there were two in each bed.

At five in the morning the foreman rang the gruel bell. Then we would have had coffee in the kitchen in a smooth cup, with sugar cubes divided for each one. Since there were no machines on behalf of the agriculture so we had to work hard all day. The work started at 5 in the morning. Breakfast 8pm gruelling, a half raw herring and bread. They baked bread of half rye and half oats for the people once a year. The bread was dried on a spit in the ceiling and was subsequently stored in large crates. Dinner

was at noon, afternoon dinner at five and at 8 pm the work ended and then we got porridge and milk. On Sunday morning we had butter on the table.

Janne Nyman was always kind to me. I spent very much time indoors with him on winter evenings and read in agriculture books. There were also tasks to patch socks and other items for myself. The housekeeper was particularly good to me and always called me the boy. I got many good treats from her in both food and drink. If I saw in her eyes that she wanted something done, then I was not slow to do what she wanted, and she did not have ask me more than once. She was like a mother to me. On Sunday mornings I was often at the courtyard building reading the sermon for them.

My salary for the first year was eighty kronor, the second year one hundred, and in the third year I had become foreman when I had risen through the ranks. The foreman was paid by 120 per year. When it was time to move and complete work with Mr. Nyman I had 150 left of my wages. I had never felt so rich because I still had nice clothes but it was to using every penny to have this benefit. Now, after three years elapsed at Lilleskogen my wardrobe was better and money in my pocket. But now it was time to take leave of Mr. Nyman and the mamsel and maids and farmhands and others. They cry and I cry and it all is like a dream.

1868 was a bad harvest and a very difficult time especially for those who were poor. Rye flour cost 3 kronor for each pound. The normal working profit of 50 or 75 öre per day all work stopped. Now it was my goal to go the Promised Land America where they could eat wheat bread instead of us poor Swedes who could only eat oats and rye together. Even oat bread was lacking in many places and, in addition to that, cost many dollars a day. Very many people traveled across the Atlantic that year even though there was nothing to marvel at for those earning big money over there at that time.

However, before I leave of the Swedish fatherland, I wanted first to take leave of my old mother. I went to Falköping by train and by shanks `s pony to Daretorp 3 mil. I then met my oldest brother Johan who had been in Wärmland working on railway buildings and was a foreman building bridges and culverts. It became clear there would be no dollars or wheat bread for me in America. We decided to stay at home in Tidaholm and get the foundation job for a carpentry shop, which only took a short time which was nice especially for me. We stayed with a farmer who had two sons and a daughter whose name was Anna. The first salary I got at Tidaholm was 25 kronor which I thought was a lot of money for a short time. I was so happy that I could have carried the inspector on my arms. I would have done it because he had paid me so much. His name was Wänbärg.

Now my brother Johan's former boss recommended him to go to Dalsland for a pulp factory to be built at Dalslands channel called Långed. He went

immediately to Wärmaland and married his Bätty. Two weeks later, I left Tidaholm and met with brother Johan and sister in law at a place called Frykforsen in “Wärmaland du sköna” (Wärmaland you beautiful).

Now it is summer 1870 and the carnival trip starts from Frykforsen. A farmer drives all of our effects. Brother and sister in law, I, and three railroaders. Then it was off to Seffle, further on to Åmål, and then two mil and we were at our goal Långed. All must walk following our horse farmer. If I remember correctly, it was about 8 mil as we all were young and healthy so there were no boring days.

My brother rented a room and kitchen a quarter of a mil from Långed at a farm called Ene. All of us were in one room, the newlyweds in a bed I and the three railroaders in pairs in separate beds. Bätty cooked and carried breakfast and dinner to us.

Work began in Långed at 5 am ended at 8 pm. Now started to learn to cut stone, but it was not easy to start with and the rubble dust wanted to get into my eyes.

As my brother was a foreman, I was involved in all sorts of jobs that occur in such work that were extremely useful for me.

Now it was to work and save some of each payment. When the food was paid with 67 per day, the rest divided, some clothing and the remaining was put into the bank. Demands were not big back then, there were no unions or strike funds to pay, and it was not for us to smoke cigarettes or cigars all day, every öre was spent on benefits except for the extra half a “stop” (1.5 pint) liquor normally at each pay time. It cost if I remember correctly about 33 öre.

Our commander was a lieutenant named P. Laurel and an engineer named F. Bothén. At Långed and Dalsland it was a very poor situation for the people. Because it was not built around Långed so the people had short and long way to go to work so they had food with them for the day. When they come in the morning, they have a so called (“träbytta”) wooden container on the front and back. In the back one it contained porridge and milk in the second. Also they had a bag on their back containing thin oat porridge, which we called the Wennersborgs newspapers. It would be for breakfast dinner and supper. The work was hard. If I remember correctly it was paid a krona for the day for various jobs. I had 1.40 per day of 12 hours.

It was surprising that everyone was happy and satisfied with both the rigorous work and the payment.

On Sundays, all in the church youth on the old, we had about half a mil to walk. The church, or the parish, was called Tilleskog. It was a small old wooden church probably hundreds of years old that also had a little old bell tower. They had a good priest in Tilleskog.

It was common talk that in the entire Dalsland there were not so beautiful girls as in Tilleskog and I think that was true for they were beautiful.

As mentioned in the first page the name of our father was Lars Modig Erlandson.

I always was called Larsson. I did not like the name of Modig. Also brother Johan did not like that name. When brother Johan was at the railway in Wärmland he had taken the name Blomberg. When we came together on Långed I decided to take the name Alfred Blomberg for it suited me not to have a separate name. Since Långed I had the name Larson Blomberg which also then was recorded in the church book.

In 1871 in the month of November the factory was finished and allowance within the factory was 1.20 per day. Due to the low payment, we decided to try our luck elsewhere. The goal was a railway in Frövi, Ludvika which was then under construction. Now it was to be given a rating by my superiors and repack my wardrobe in the new trunk which has been with me ever since.

Parting time was first with brother Johan and sister in law along with friends and peers. With tears in my eyes, I stepped on board the steamer Laxen (Salmon) for travelling to Vänersborg. It was a boring trip. First night we had to spend on a small lake due to an ice barrier. On the fourth day I arrive in Lindesberg. Trains ran slowly and were without heat, which was the situation at that time in the trains, so it was both freezing and starving for the trip.

The journey continued by horse to the Nya Kopparberg (New Copper Mountain). Because I could not afford to pay as much as other travellers, I had to stay in an outbuilding in a chamber for farm-hands. By previously exchanged letters I was promised stone work at a bridge construction north of Kopparberg.

Because there had been a lot of snow and cold, and Christmas was approaching, people from Småland Västgötland and Blekinge traveled home to spend Christmas with friends and relatives, so I had no work. Likely, with tearful eyes, I returned to the designated servant chamber that for the moment was my home. Since it was the first time I was out looking for work the hours were gloomy.

I was alone and a stranger to everyone, but after dark God lets the sun shine.

Meanwhile I found out that an installation was planned for a Besemer steel plant at Bångbro, about a quarter of a mil from Koppasberg. Happy in mind and with rapid steps in that direction I, met a tall man on the road and took my hat off. That's not the engineer at Bångbro is it? Well yes, the answer was. Is there work for me? I offered him my ratings that I had received from Långed. When the rating was read by him I got a yes for an



answer. You may start tomorrow a crown per day, so my hat was off and I said a grateful thank you. The engineer was called Stridsberg. Now the sun started to shine in my mind when I knew that I had a job. Now it was to continue on to get a shelter which also went well at a farmer who I think was called Per Erson. He had two sons and a daughter who was called Dirt Eva because she was dirty, as was the whole house. At that place I did not want to grow old.

However, as I got to the mountain in the morning five men had begun to cut out the stone. Now it was to show my co-workers that I could both beat and turn stone and explain to them my name and what country man I was and where I had been before.

Now it was soon Christmas and I had by then moved from dirt and Eva, and found a nice home at a "Hutfogde" called Erson. They had no children. But there was one bedroom and a kitchen. I was able to be in the kitchen. The food I have arranged myself. Madam Erson cooked for me for some payment.

They soon became almost like my parents. Madam did cooking, patched and washed, and kept my clothes in order. She always wanted me to look nice. Boxing Day came with an order from the engineer that I should appear before him in his office. I was very kindly received and asked if I would undertake the foreman position in the mountain. You will have piece rate, so that you and your team can earn a lot of money and in addition you will get 50 öre per day as a foreman benefit. I was naturally delighted with the promotion and was very grateful and promised to do it to the best of my ability. And that is what I did. I had great confidence from the noble engineer. We earned 3 to 3.50 per day.

On the third day of Christmas I introduced myself as the foreman at the mountain, and now I got verve in my eagerness and also in ignorance. I loaded explosives in the mountain several times, but I was in a mysterious way always saved from accidents.

In the summer I and my team went down to Långbro to build a foundry for an iron mill and the blast furnaces, etc. Here we worked under a senior foreman but the days were anything but pleasant. Monday, Tuesday, and even on Wednesday, most of the team would go and drink beer and vodka. Those who did not want to go along were often threatened with a beating. I was also with them one Monday, the only one in my life. Most of them were from Småland, Blekinge, yes even Wästergötland. Because times had become good, people seemed to be able to afford to waste time and money.

At that time there was no strife between capital and labour, and everyone was happy and satisfied with his lot.

In Kopparberg, it was nice. The inhabitants, old and young, were exceptionally nice people. The last Christmas I was there I was together

with my host and hostess to visit a professor. If I remember correctly his name was Carlberg. We spent the whole Christmas Eve there with his family. To Christmas morning service in Kopparberg, he offered a ride. All transport had their torches that burn. It looked really nice. The service began at 4 o'clock in the morning. Nya Kopparberg (New Copper Mountain) was a beautiful and especial for me a nice community. The first pair of galoshes that I used was bought in Kopparberg. During 1873 in late summer I pack my trunk again and take out my saved money from the bank again. I took farewell of my host Erson and Johanna. It was rather sad for them both, and also for me and all the rest. My new mother, who I always called madam, received a pocket watch from me as a memory of her "son".

My goal was Småland. My brother Johan was at Kalmar on Emmaboda rail working with ducts and bridges. I was offered 4 kronor per day. Going on a train from Kopparberg to Wäxjö and after that a horse to Emmaboda.

There was heavy days-work, a quarter of a mil to go morning and evening. Work was from 5 am to 8 pm as long as the day would allow.

I lived with brother Johan and sister in law. On Sundays I was usually in Wissefjärdens church which had a very good priest but an ungodly people. It was not unusual with fights among the young members out at the stables, particularly if there were a few of their peers from the adjacent parish. Luckily I did not get beaten either at the church or in the rest of Småland. But when you would walk past the many stalls you needed to know who you were due to all kinds of raw expressions and laughter. There were ill-nurtured people in Wissefjärden. Our bridges are now finished, and we say goodbye to Småland.

On April 24, 1874, we took the first train that went directly from Wäxjö to Karlskrona and to a fortress building named Rang Holmen. The old building would be demolished and a new one built. The fortress was situated on an island next to Kyrkö, about one mil from Karlskrona.

In Kyrkö we rented a room and a kitchen. A temporary wooden bridge was placed between the fortress on Kyrkö so it was possible get there and back. It took about twenty minutes to go there. At five in the morning the entire working staff would be organized in the courtyard. Then a lieutenant made the prayers, together with the "klockaren" church servant standing in front of us. The entire workforce was several hundred. Then we sang your bright sun up again, thank you my God, and read the Lord's Prayer and asked the Lord bless us. (Din klara sol går åter upp, tackar Dig min Gud, Fader Vår, Herren välsigne oss.)

All work performed on piece rate.

As it was good times all over our country, it was also good for us at the fort. Brother Johan did not like it long time at the fort. He was there about half a year. Then I took over the work with about 30 of the 40 men. Then

there was trouble. I was very inexperienced for the necessity for very careful work, and in addition for the strict command. It was a major Knös, Captains Högfeldt and Gustav Bergman, also Lieutenants and Sergeants, and everyone was afraid they would criticize the work. All the work needed to be done well and carefully with correct dimensions and levels. I always got help with that from Sergeant Pil.

Through good will everything went well, but the worst thing was that I could not count on anything. For the Time Works lists I had to hire someone to help me. I was also very weak with writing so after the end of the job I went to school to learn to count from a non-commissioned officer whose name was Lundberg for 25 öre per hour.

All work stopped at noon every Saturday. A steamer, Charles the Eleventh, went into town with a large barge in tow that carried the people that did not fit on the boat. The entire work force had their homes there, some on the islands and others in the parishes adjacent to the city.

I rented a room in the city. When my purchase was made on Saturday for the next week on Saturday night and on Sunday morning I take lessons on how to write. On Monday morning at 6 am we would again be gathered at Rangssbron to board the boat and barge. Now the brewers are at the dock with hundreds of containers with small beer 7 or 15 or 30 pint each.

We all have a basket on our arm with provisions for the week. Some also have a container with "Smitten droplets" so that they are in good spirits after an hour voyage. When arriving at the fort it becomes a life on the barge before everyone finds out where his drinking container is. With the drinking container on the shoulder, and basket on the arm, each person pushes on to their barracks. There is beer at the fortress and Petterson, who has the canteen, has beer well as food for those who wanted it.

The fortification consists of shelter and bedding, a regular horse blanket, a mattress sack, one pad of sacking, and two sheets to each one. Rye straw was used instead of feathers. Some of them live in the fortress in so-called casemates with walls of limestone. It was 10 to 15 , or up to 50 men in the old church, and it was a great air in those places.

Some have their place in a large barracks building with two floors and corridor in the middle and room on both sides. In each room there are bunks along one long wall. Two on top, and they could hold up to 20 men in each room. There was no lack of a job on any day during this time for those who came in there first on Monday morning. There were millions of fleas and other animals, but remarkably everyone was healthy. When we would wash it was in the lake of salt water.

When food in the basket ran out it was necessary to turn to the boatswains who was guarding the fort and would get food portions of cheap price peas, soup, porridge without milk, a piece of butter was added to each measure of porridge instead of milk, thick elongated "ankarstockarna"

(anchor stocks) of very coarse rye flour.

At the fortification there were excellent officers. As time passed I got more and more confident with them, both high and low positions, in particular the son of Lieutenant General Leijonhufvud. He was particularly good to me together with sergeant Pihl. Since I had never seen a drawing before, it was to think and then ask again and again when it was something I could not understand. I got a lot of precision work to do. I had the privilege that I never heard a harsh word from the officers' side. While I in turn tried to run my position to the officers' satisfaction, but I was anxious many times. Any strikes or labour unions were not known of at the time, and everyone is satisfied, happy and thankful.

In winter we were in the mountains and took out and chipped the stone that we used during the summer. The largest stone, which I took out of a rock on Kyrkö, was to be placed over a large arch over the entrance to the fortress. It was about 25 feet long 5 feet wide, 3 à four feet high. To armour the battery, we used a lot of stones that were 10 à 12 feet long 4 à 5 feet high in width. The large stones could not even move except with winch and jacks, and transported on barges to the fortress.

The last year 1879 or 1880, we were building a fort on the land side of Karlskrona named Oskars Värn that lies near the railroad about a quarter of a mil from the city.

In previous years we had also reinforced the old fortress Wästra Hästholmen with higher granite walls facing the sea along with gun walks for the big guns. They we poured with concrete.

Now, 61/2 years have elapsed since I was at the fortification. By diligence and frugality, I had acquired during bygone years 8000 kr placed in Karlskrona Savings bank. On October 16, 1880 the fortresses were completed. Officers and staff assembled together in a common celebration with refreshments. Captain Högfeldt offered his gratitude to the officers along with supervisors and the others for the past years that we loved, and through understanding worked, together to get the mammoth work finished. And then the crown set upon this work was the three-tongued blue and yellow flag that was hoisted. A thanks and a prayer to God for us, King and Country.

The fortification was a good school for me. It was that all dimensions and heights would be in the small millimetres, and all work would be good and strong.

I now left the fortification and all the troubles, and thanked my dear heavenly Father that he had in past years given me health and blessed all my business and kept me in the past years from thousands of dangers. Thank you dear, dear God.

I had always rented a room in the city from Saturday evening to Monday

morning during the time I was at the fortification. At the same time I became acquainted with my wife Emelia Petronella. When we become really familiar with each other, we would of course like any other people of quality become engaged, and this occurred on 12/8 1877.

My father-in-law was the Brewer on large Björkholmen in Karlskrona. They had a small farm there with 6 rooms and a small brewery in the yard.

He was born December 10 1828 and died on 28 November 1898. My father-in-law was born a farmer's son and named SM Håkansson from Hoby parish in the neighbourhood of Karlshamn. The cause of his death was pneumonia.

Mother-in-law's name was Elsa Persdotter, date of birth 31 mars 1824 and died on 18 April 1907. They rest in a family grave in the Karlskrona cemetery. My in-laws had two daughters together. Emelia Petronella was born 24/1 1860 and is now my wife.

Our wedding was celebrated in the bride's home in large Björkholmen on October 16, 1880. There were a portion of my command attending plus relatives and friends of the bride's side. It was a great wedding.

Before I married I bought an old house on Patarholmen with my saved money that paid the 8000 kronor. In the house we had two rooms and the kitchen. The hall was about 10 or 12 feet long and about 8 feet wide, without a fireplace. The bedroom was about 8 feet square with a fireplace. The kitchen was about 5 feet square with a fireplace to cook in. We had our apartment one floor up. In the house there were 14 rooms including kitchen.

At this time I was married with a wife, but no job and no income, only the rents in some of our rooms, but they were all poor tenants. It was to get a few kronor at a time which was better than nothing.

We were foolish because we considered ourselves to be sort of noble people to invite relatives to parties and also attend such ourselves. Whoever stands must ensure that he does not fall.

In the spring of 1881 I got a job at the Navy shipyard in Karlskrona paying 22 öre per hour and a 10 hour day. When the clock struck six in the morning every man must be within the gates. Inside the gates we obtained a badge, each having a number on it to be put in another box.

A prefect then determined if all the numbers were at work. Police officers guards the gates. They open and close them and were called shipyard Cops

When the badge was left at the designated place, every one went to his workplace. We were called the granite masons. Our job was to build both new quays and repair quays or docks, and a new swing bridge, etc.

We had a special place to gather in the morning. We also had one or more so-called master builders, who were the lowest officer, who would give orders on what to do for the day.

After that was done it was necessary to seek out the nearest timber sheds to change clothes. We got from the crown a so-called sailor's jumper with trousers of burlap to wear outside of our other clothes. Off with the shoes or boots and on with massive cast clogs on the feet. In appearance we looked similar to prisoners.

The last year I was in the navy yards I was inspector at a min-storage that a private builder called Jonsson would build. Probably I had great confidence in our highest officers who were entrusted with such a large task. He was a captain and was named F. Bathen. Otherwise there were a lot of officers in the yard Head commanders, Captains and Lieutenants. As I had previously been foreman for many years and even had a little practice, it many times felt a little bit odd to go as a prisoner day in and day out.

And, besides that, I had just over half an hour time to go from Pantarholmen, so I could not go home for dinner, and it was too difficult for my wife or maid to walk to me with food. It was necessary to have it with me in the morning, usually a few slices of sour bread called Skåne bread with butter and a bottle of milk. At five pm the work was finished for the day. Payroll was received four times a month on 5-10-20 and on the last day of each month.

In summer, it was usual to work on the old house in the evenings after work stopped at the yard.

In 1882, May 7 our first son, Oscar Sanfred, was born. In 1884 May 9 our second son, Lars Ivar, was born, but he died at 2 1/2 years of age from diphtheria. He was sick for 12 hours. He was a good boy and we missed him for a very long time.

In 1887, December 3 our first daughter Anna Armida was born.

At this time the mother had breast pain and could not breast feed the child. Mother cry, child cry. In the shipyard in the daytime, at evenings, and nights I serve the mother and carry the baby around on the floor. Grandmother quarrelled the first eight days she was with us, and then it was time to hire a maid to help. Wonderful memories.

The other kids never were breast fed by their mother. These three mentioned children were born in our house on Pantarholmen, Karlskrona.

In 1886, my wife was in Ronneby, drank well and bathed (Today's Spa). She had then our only child with her, Sanfred, along with Aunt Hannah. I was for the time alone at home cooking for myself, morning and evening ,and cleaning as I want it, and at the ship yard during the day.

The same year my wife and I went to Wastergötland and visited my mother Maja Stina, and we met Wändla Modig from Harnösand.

In the spring of 1888 I sold my old house in Patarholmen to a carpenter who worked at the ship yard called Andersson. I lost about 800 kr on him.

When the farm was sold we rented a two bedroom apartment in Björkholmen near my in-laws. There our second daughter Elsa was born on April 25, 1889.

It seems to me that God, if we want to follow the guidance of His Spirit, has provided where we shall have our bread and what we shall do here on earth.

When Sundsvall had burned June 25, 1888 I had a feeling that I should go there with the intent that I could possibly help them to rebuild the city. I also would be able to earn more than I did in the navy yards, and could avoid the almost life-sentence prisoner in the gray "bussarong" (sailors shirt) clothes and having to wear massive cast tree-clogs all day long day in and day out. I was earning two kronor and 20 öre per day along with free medical doctor in case one became ill. My debit and credit would not fit together.

Anyone who did not belong to the sailor corps or navy sailor was called day labourers. The day labourers had a contract with the Royal Majesty and the Navy Shipyard. There was eight days notice for mutual termination.

In 1888 in the month of August I cancelled my job. Eight days later, I took leave of my highly beloved Captain F. Bothén, five officers and comrades.

August 20 the parting time had come to say farewell to my wife, also our children Sanfred and Anna who then lay in the cradle.

It was one of the grimmest days I ever experienced, to leave the dearest thing I loved and go to an unknown fate.

I got on board the steamer named Drottning Sofia (Queen Sofia) stopping at Kalmar, then go on to Stockholm.

With tears I took leave of my wife, as well Sanfred, who followed me to the boat waving their handkerchiefs and weep. I also cried.

When we got out of sight of the handkerchiefs there came forward a Jewish businessman and asked if it was my wife and son who cried on the quay, and I said yes. He wanted to know my destination and who I was and so I told him. Then he said that I travel therefore under God's providence, and I answered with a yes, yes.

Before the goal of the journey, I had given everything to my God that he

would continue to be my helper and protector.

On August 24 I disembarked on a Sunday morning for the first time in Sundsvall. Everything was in ruins and ashes from the old town which is now known as Stone Town.

An old Crown Vessel was berthed down by Selångersån, called if I remember correctly Wiktoria, and it served as a Hotel but it was too expensive for me to live. I was able to stay with people at the upper end of the Gasverksgatan.

Because it was Sunday it was a day to rest after the trip.

On Monday it was the task to locate all the foundation contractors for work. All have abundance of foundation workers, finally I managed at a couple companions Rosedal from Köping, and Mattson from Stockholm.



*Already in the autumn of 1888 after the devastating fire Sundsvall Alfred Larsson Blomberg came to Sundsvall to seek his fortunes. He started with the stone cutting and laid up a supply for the future foundation work for the new city. Photo: Nordic Museum.*

They had undertaken to cut supporting walls for so-called Hellberska house, by the main bridge, to be repaired. They took large stones from the land of a farmer named P. Höglund, in Böle.

On Tuesday morning, 26 then it was to unpack everyday clothes and wooden shoes from the trunk, and pack in a bag and walk the long hilly road with a sack on my back. The trunk was then taken by horse.

Finally arrived I had to gain shelter, which I also managed at a farmer



named Janson at Midskogsbron. I had to stay in brew house, there were three “gentlemen”, stonemasons already staying there. They were from Stockholm and of a sort of inferior character, so-called bums.

It was anything but pleasant to live with these men, and in addition there was only a wall between us and the cows and horse that stomped on the beat with their cowbells throughout the night. And it was not strange for them as well as us to have millions of flies to fight with. Food, when I was at Höglund, was a crown a day. It was provided by a nice woman who always had good food, one of the best cooks I had seen. We were four or five men who besides her husband, three children and two cows that had to be fed and fit. This she took care of herself and the food was always ready in time. It was a wonder she never appeared to be in a hurry.

Unable to work at Rosendal and Mattson any longer, did not get money.

When the salaries would be paid was not enough money. I would have been 30 ore per hour. I got about half.

I got my own mountain to work at nearby. Bought tools and began to take out the foundation wall stones to sell next year. I got four men to help for the winter.

At Christmas I went back to Karlskrona to visit my wife and children. I spent four days on the train, the first day to Bolnäs, second day to Stockholm, third day to Alvesta, and on the fourth I am in Karlskrona.

When I got home my wife was ill, having been lying in bed fourteen days. I was at home with my family until after the Epiphany when my wife was then better. It was hard to separate from them, but necessity knows no law.

After four days of travelling, I arrived back in Sundsvall to start with my foundation wall stones. During the Christmas season it had become a meter-deep with snow and it was a strange winter.

On October 12, 1888 there was a lot of snow but it went away within days. On October 20 it was over half a meter. The snow was left over the winter. It was hard work and was very expensive to keep on with work in the mountains because of the abundance of snow.

Through another foundation contractor who was going up to Umeå, I took over building a few foundations from him that he would make. One was for wholesaler P. August Dalen at Bergsgatan, and another was a foundation for a barn at a saw mill named Eriksdal.

Entrepreneurs were for P. August Dalens house, was one from Stockholm called Möller and an architect from Sundsvall called Österlund. When the foundation and socket walls are done, I had to request some two thousand two hundred kronor, but received only 50 kr. Before the house was finished, the high lords went into bankruptcy. The foundation contractor

and others had to take the rents for their claims.

From Eriksdal I also have great memories. Foundation contractor F. Andersson, who had undertaken the foundation, had already appointed people who would carry out the work that had been started. When the foreman Lundberg from Stockholm received the third salary for himself and colleagues of 330 kronor, he then ran off from there with the money.

Then it was the next day, with the horse again, to go there in about 30 degrees below zero and pay people. It was a pleasant journey. The foreman Lundberg was arrested in Stockholm fourteen days later. I got about around 75 kr returned.

Meanwhile, I wanted to get back a cash loan of 2000 kronor from a foundation contractor. He, too, was a fellow from Stockholm named Noren. He also ran off leaving behind four horses and two stone cranes that I had take with much trouble and bad things for my 2000 kronor. It was the first learning experience dealing with money I had to pay in Sundsvall. To me it was a boring winter.

In the spring of 1889 I began to sell the stone that we had cut during the winter, and the first foundation I did was for a corner house on South Railway Street on Nybrogatan for a couple of master builder from Stockholm named Östran and Johansson, if I remember correctly. I received 9 kronor per square yard.



*Alfred Larsson Blomberg was one of the many people helping rebuilding after the fire in Sundsvall in 1888 with his work from house to house replacing the temporary wooden buildings with stately stone buildings 3-4 stories high. Photo from 1889-90 by Carolina Olsson from Storgatan in Sundsvall with temporary wooden houses and a few stone houses.*

As we wanted to be little better class during the time I worked in the shipyard in Karlskrona for 2 kronor on the 20 öre per day, which was not sufficient. We had prominent relatives and did not want us to be look worse off. On special occasions we must of course be wearing a tuxedo suit and other clothes to match, and the lady must surely also be a bit modern. However, when I sold the old house and paid my debts the property had gone down from 8 to slightly over 6000 kronor. Those were the funds to accompany me to Sundsvall.

The 6000 kronor were now used both for work and speculation

In the summer I and Fallman from Bole started to buy building beams for the great stone buildings that were to be built. We bought over the summer and the next winter several thousand pieces. They were generally 6 x 10 inches. Prices were generally 50 öre per yard pine in purchasing.

It was a good deal but also a great risk for me. Fallman had no money. The profit would be divided, but he was a professional. It went extremely well because he was a good salesman and knew to be well-paid. For my part I think I was a better buyer and measurer than my companion after I had been at it some time.

At midsummer, the same year, my wife came to Norrland, along with our three children and maid. I had rented a room and kitchen in Böle for the family. Elsa was only two months old.

As I had both work and business with beams and spars in the city, I could walk the half mil long road in morning and the evening.

In the spring of 1890, we moved closer to town to the widow Tandlund in Sidsjö. We had two small rooms and a kitchen for a price of one hundred and fifty kronor for several years.

There our two sons Ivar, was born August 19, 1890 and Joseph Emanuel was born August 15, 1891.

When the business with the beams from the farmers ended in the spring I then undertook earth excavations and foundation and socket walls for the corner building at Södra Järnvägsgatan (the southern rail road) and Nybrogatan in the block Bokhållaren. The builder was named B. Almqvist from Stockholm.

At the same time I undertook earth-moving for the foundation and socket walls of a house that I now own at Nybrogatan. The builder was also from Stockholm called Zätterling.

And at the same time, I had committed socket walls of the stone house N:o 5 at Nybrogatan and stone house N:o 5 at Södra Järnvägsgatan. The

stones for the socket walls under the four stone buildings in the block Bokhållaren I took from Juniskär and freighted them on barges. All builders are from Stockholm. Therefore, the houses are named Stockholm houses.

We also sold all the beams and spars for the housing described above.

The same year of 1890 there was a lot of work throughout our country. Then a tailor, Palm, from Stockholm held convincing speeches, saying that the workers are slaves. It would now become equality and the brotherhood in Sundsvall. It would be worked further on 10 hours instead of 12 then eight but equal incomes.

Now begin our glorious union. Now it is they who must determine wages which was then 25-30 to 35 öre for stone workers. Now it was to be awake almost night and day in the mountain, at the foundations and masonry and socket wall frames. At night it was helping with the children because they were all small.

In 1891 I had the foundation and socket walls of a magazine next to the bridge over the Selångersån Per August Dalen a so called wholesaler, and also did socket walls for a storage building for a wholesaler named Sladin. There was much work on these grounds and also very low income.

Two foundation and socket walls were done for stone hammer, one of them a foundation for a stone house. A construction man named Edman was a real scoundrel and I almost lost 2000 kr to the fox. The second builder was named Ångman who had a much higher degree of concern for all the rules than Edman. I also sold beams and rafters to that worthy fellow.

The first foundation that I did in the stone town was for consult Wikström's house on the Esplanade at Köpmangatan. The foundation walls were taken from Ragunda by rail. It was the first foundation wall stone that came to Sundsvall from Ragunda. Consult Wikstrom was a good man and I got 15 kr. in gratuities when I had the foundation and base completed.

A foundation and socket walls were done for a corner house on Storgatan at the Northeast corner of the Vängåvan I took from Ragunda. There were two master builders from Stockholm, Lindetål and Törnqvist. It is now the Fire Insurance Company's corporate Sveas property.

At this time the unions were active and they were the ones who would determine the wages. The foundation workers were divided into three classes, "postbasar", "skalare" and "stampslagare", each one in his class would have an equal pay if they were capable or incompetent, or if they were lazy or industrious. I did not, of course, correct myself after their paragraphs. I paid them for their diligence and ability.

I was asked to appear in the Gotemplare house on Stenhammaren and they gave me a thorough reprimand. According to their expressions their legs tickled a part of them so that they could not sit still before they had read their laws to me. They were poor wretches, but I have fond memories from that time.

A foundation and the socket walls for wholesaler J Röst's account at the Storgatan. Because of the severe winter and much snow, it was difficult to get stone from the mountain. Very little load the stone crane broke when a man came under as it fell on him and was seriously injured. I had to pay the hospital bill. Jakobsson and Eriksson were the master builders.

A foundation and socket walls for Hantverksförenngens house were worked on with everything to be ready in two months, and 50 kronor fine for each excess day. I had it finished before the deadline. Jakobsson and Eriksson were also the builders.

A foundation and socket walls for a wooden house at the Esplanade were done for wholesaler Röst. Now the owner is shoe merchant Ekholm.

At the same time a foundation and socket walls, together with a high retaining wall, were completed, below the house for wholesaler, on August Blomberg's behalf at the Southern end of the Skolhusallén.

Since it rained almost every day in the autumn, were both driving and wages were expensive. I lost between 6 or 700 kronor because there were many Foundation Contractors. It was great competition so it was like to be cheap and a humbly servant if you could have the honor to carry out the work for the high lords. If I remember correctly so I had 15 öre per cubic foot.

A foundation plus earth excavation and socket walls for a large kerosene basement at Nacksta. Jakobsson and Eriksson were the builders of Blomberg's house and the kerosene basement.

The kerosene basement work was very fast and it took only 7 weeks for me to have everything finished. If I remember correctly, I had about 30 horses to pull the soil loads as well as men to finish.

The same year in the fall, I bought the stone house at Nybrogatan No. 3. At that time it was only walls and the roof was not finished. It was necessary to clean and decorate it. In spring of 1893 I had the house finished. We were the first who moved into two rooms and the kitchen on second floor. It was there where two of our children were born.

Pontus was born in 1892 on 15 October, and Hulda Emelia born in 1894 on April 24. 1892 was a very cold winter with much snow.

In spring 1892 I started with the foundation and socket wall for the Nordstjernan brewery and had it done in the fall. The manager was called

Carlsson.

The builder was from Stockholm named G. Johansson with a foreman named Winter. Winter became the master builder of the Parliament building in Stockholm.

At Nordstjernan the stone drivers had a strike wanting me to give them more money.

In winter 1893 I started with the socket wall at Garden Street for a farmer named Tjärnlund. The builder was CA Olsson, a Smålander carpenter by profession.

In the spring all the foundation workers in town were on strike. Would naturally have more money. Foundation-workers had a special association. They were striking for two weeks but then started back to work at the same pay. From that day on it was the end of Foundation worker's union even with their standard. These were wonderful memories.

A foundation and plinth were made for a wooden house at the Södra Järnvägsgatan for a schoolteacher named Winberg. Now the owner is August Styf.

Then a foundation and socket walls for a glazier named Hugo Malmberg at Kyrkogatan along with excavations and a foundation, also a foundation socket at the front side of a theatre.

Björklund was the builder of the theatre and Glazier Malmberg's house and foundation and socket wall to a Post house at Ånge where there was a Builder Master called NO Anersson. The same year, in the month of December, I start to take out the stone for the pulp factory in Matfors. As usual, one needed to be less expensive for the deal. The work would be done quickly and with quality, all following drawings. In Matfors it was laborious.

The rock that I had to blast away where the factory was to be located could not be used other than to fill. I had to take the stone half mil away at Attmars old rectory. It was expensive, if I remember correctly, so I had to pay 2.25 or 2.50 per load

I used 50 of the 60 men each day for Matfors, piecework prices were 15 cents per cubic foot of all rock, which was blown away, 16 öre per cubic foot for all socket walls as well as arches and pillars to be built together.

Operating earnings were small from 22 öre to 35 per hour.

The company had paid his people at 17 öre hourly. All work day works list and payments I took take care of myself.

At the same time in the spring, in the summer of 1894, I had also bases in

the city which had a foreman named Östlund.

I went myself into town every Saturday and paid salaries to the foundation builders, mountain blasters, earth drivers, blacksmiths and iron workers, gunpowder and dynamite traders and so on.

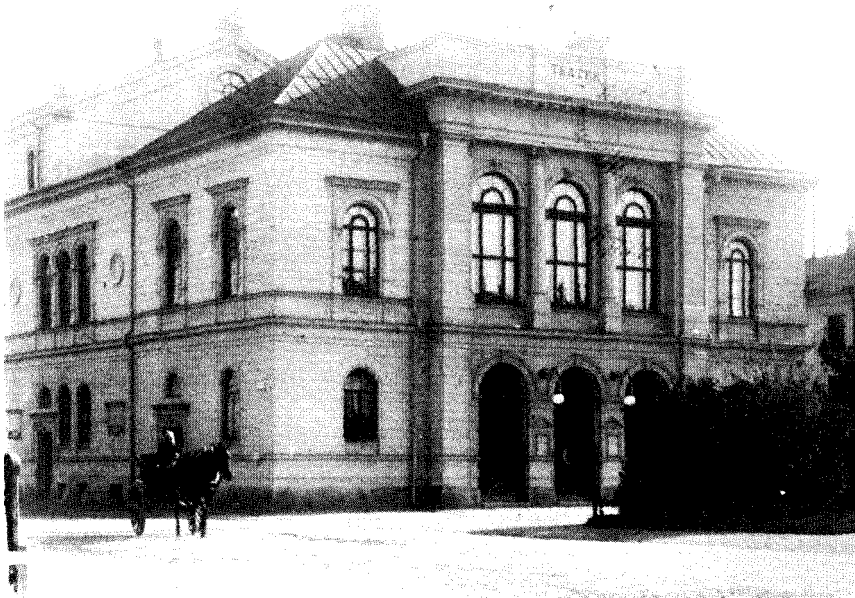
While I was in Matfors we placed a foundation for a sea captain named Aberg, also did ground digging and bases at the farm. Also a foundation for the ironworker Näslund and Wiklund.



*In 1892, Alfred Larsson Blomberg bought one of the so-called Stockholm houses at Nybrogatan south of the railroad and moved with his family one floor up. Photo: N. G. Nilsson.*



*Photograph of the foundation of Sundsvall's new church 1891st Photo: Adele Kindlund.*



*Year 1893 when Alfred Blomberg was responsible for the foundation work for the Sundsvall new theatre building*





*Storgatan's east part in the early 1900's. Closest to the right merchant Cassels house with its tower. On the same side of the street, after a small house, big-builder CA Olsson's house. For these houses Alfred Larsson Blomberg and his labourers made the foundation works in 1894 and 1902. C.A. Olsson was a builder for many of the buildings where the Alfred Larsson Blomberg provided the 'underground excavation, foundation and socket walls'.*

A foundation for widow Dalberg at Järnvägsparken (park by the station) was done, and a foundation for a forester named Kassel at the Northeast corner of Storgatan at the railway station, now owned by Captain Nordberg.

Since I was almost finished with my work in Matfors in July, I took care of my own work in town. While I was working in Matfors our daughter Hulda Emelia was born on April 24, 1894.

In the month of July, my wife took our oldest daughter Anna to Ronneby to "drink the well waters" and bath (Today's spa).

While mother is away Elsa, Joseph and Pontus were left with the farming people in Bole called Höglund. Hulda, who was then only a few months old, had to be with the Mrs Artelius. Sanfred and Ivar were at my house. I had to go on with my foundation works, so Sanfred and Ivar had to serve in place of a maid.

While my wife was in Ronneby, I bought a house with 7 rooms and kitchen, plus about five acres of land around it in the Scenic Sidsjö for 7000 kr.

When my wife and daughter came home from Ronneby, so we moved

right in to our new home, and collected children to our wonderful new living place in Sidsjö. My work was finished, so I was able to stay at home with my family for a short time. 1894 was for me hard work but it provided a good year.

In 1895, I started with the excavations at the Market Hall for a Smålänning named Otto Holmström. It was cold winter. The soil frost was about 6 feet deep.

Then I had to apply at the “register office” for permission to crack the frost with Dynamite. When the troublesome excavation was made, I did the foundation work later in the spring to the food hall and a condominium of three floors at Sjögatan. Employment rates during that time were 25 or 35 öre per hour for stone workers, and soil drivers were paid 22 or 25 öre per load. All the soil was transported west of the town. Horse and driver earned an average of 4 kr per day. The foundation work was done at the upper end of Storgatan for a hat-maker named Sundberg.

Builder was CA Olsson, a Smålänning by birth. The earnings were always disappointing and even losses occurred when you had with that man to deal with. He wanted everything for himself. I also had “the honour” to lend him 500 or 1000 kronor from time to time without interest. Of course I just had to be accommodating in every way to have the opportunity to build foundations for the builder when they got a house on contract.

A foundation was done for a magazine (storage building) at Sjögatan for a wholesaler named S. Wåhlstedt. The builder was one who was called N.E. Andersson, a former carpenter who was industrious, but no earnings for me.

At the same time, for the same builder, the base and column supports for Gustaf Adolf’s association’s tree house at Busofska lake west of the city.

In the same year the foundation and socket walls for Alnö Church were done. A lot of work but no profit, little payment. Short on both foundation stone and socket wall stone. Rates were 15 cents cubic foot of foundation stone and 1.50 square foot for the socket wall with installation and rear wall. The whole work was 3.919 kr, and CJ Bjorklund was Builder

Now 1895 has come to an end with all the hardships and troubles. Fortunately, God had kept me and my people from thousands of dangers.

1896 a new year and new worries.

There were many foundation entrepreneurs in Sundsvall during that time so the competition was great. When we were told that a house would be built, you had to stay ahead at builders and contractors, one would go with a cap or hat in hand, or under forearm, and ask if you could have the honour to perform soil excavation, the base foundation and the supports. As they considered themselves to be great men, you could not make a deal

with them either the first or second time, but would have to return again another day. When, at last you would be cheap enough to take on the job, but with no money until the roof came on the house, and even until the house was finished. Then you had the honour to carry out the work. In many cases what the deal was, in general, to get a bill of exchange for the remaining money.

On New Year's I started with soil excavations for Otto Holmström's behalf, the large corner house on the main square. All soil was taken away to about 8 feet below the street on the entire lot that would be the basement under the courtyard, market hall and under the house. At the same time we laid foundations of the house and yard, and the columns under the Market Hall, for the sum of 14150 kr. In February all the snow went away and we had to take foundation stones from Tjuvholmen. Hauling stone on ice, soil excavation and foundation base for the whole thing was finished the first of May.

In spring, when I had finished at Otto Holmström, I started with soil excavation and foundation for a plaster-maker named Johansson. The stone house was located on Kyrkogatan (Church Street) next to the post office. C.A. Olsson was the builder.

In the month of November I took my little horse Grälle, with manpower and tools, along with the stone crane, and travelled on the train to a station called Dockmur. When we arrived there we loaded our tools and stone crane on sledges, and span my little horse to pull it to the Strålnäset in a parish named Stugun.

Because of poor sleighing we had to help Grälle to pull the load that was quite heavy. At Strånäset I was to provide a foundation for a big barn for a Lord (wealthy man) named E. Holmberg, a good Lord to work for. I received 5000 kronor for the foundation and supports with cut joints.

When I came home for Christmas most of the children are sick, but luckily recovered over the holiday. For my wife it had been both boring and hard work while I was gone. We had two cows and two maids during that time the children were small. Yes, thank you Dear Lord for this bygone year.

In the month of January, on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1897, our last son Nils Alfred was born. Now began a new year and new jobs. The first foundation was for a snuff merchant named CO Malmström on Storgatan. A three story stone house now rests on the ground. C. A. Olsson was the master builder.

When the Malmström's foundation was ready, I started with the excavations and foundation of a stone house at Rådhusgatan for an upholsterer named Sundgård. CA Olsson was also the builder there. A foundation for a barn at Gustafsberg on Alnö, and the base of a chimney for the saw for wholesaler Röst.

He was a good man to work for, cash payments when the work was ready,

and in addition always grateful for what I did for him.



*In the winter of 1895 Alfred Larsson Blomberg began excavation work for the dealer Otto Holmström's house with market place at Stora Torget. In spring the foundation was laid.*

Tillgångar den 31 Des 1896

Fästigheten i Sten	45000
Fästigheten i "Sidsjö"	8500
Kösko	3000
i Skedehusets folkbank	1000
factran på Remiss i Kasselar	1370
i Arbeten	1000
Diverse fadringar	250
En häst	150
Två kor en gris	250
Gröda	600
3 sty Stenvagnar	250
3 sty Stenkranar	300
Verktygen	200
Agarebrukets redskap	100
En släde + Kåtkor	50
2 sty Lufforsäkringsbref	1700
	<u>63720</u>
	<u>32188</u>
Tillgångar kr :=	31532

Skulder den 31 Des 1896

Des Riksbankens i Gernsönd	30000
Till Edv Olsson i Karlstunga	2188
	<u>32188</u>

Foundation contractor Alfred Larsson Blomberg's book of accounts.  
Financial Statements year 1896



*Sundsvall's new fire station in the red brick was finished in 1899. Alfred Larsson Blomberg did the foundation work.*

A foundation, soil excavation and socket walls of a forge workshop were done at Badhusparken, along with adjoining workshops, for an axe blacksmith named Holmsten from Stockvik.

That same year I did a large bridge, or so-called culvert, under the highway at Qvisle Njurunda which was a difficult job and was underpaid.

In 1898, in the month of January, I started with soil excavations and the ground and base of Sundsvall Pulp Mill in Essvik. There were several competitors and it was necessary to be low price if I was to be the lucky one. Then I had to be awake all day on Essvik to do the work myself. In town I had a foundation foreman called Östlund who would work by himself with the men, and he would lead the work and keep the time. Salaries are for me in Essvik and then one Saturday in town for the others.

On Essvik I had to do the project throughout the year. The engineer was a Norwegian called Qviller who was practical and also a great guy. I received 500 kronor in tip money when I had finished the work. In town I put up a foundation for a wholesaler named Gustafsson and Widlund at Church Street. C. A. Olsson was the master builder.

A foundation was done for the Fire station at the upper end of Köpmanagatan (Merchant Street) near Läroverket (College). N. Nilsson was the master builder.

A foundation for a workshop and foundry for the combined workshops was done. And then a foundation and socket walls for a paper factory in Matfors, but there was never anything built on it. Now 1898 had ended, and my work that I had committed myself to was ready, and all in good time. Earnings had not been large relative to the large workforce that I had that year.

For months I had 100 men working for me. But I was happy and grateful to God who had given me health, strength and wisdom to lead and complete my work to everyone's satisfaction.

An accident occurred on Essvik during my work there, through carelessness by a worker at the soil excavation who had his leg broken. Otherwise, we were all preserved and safe.

That year, on March 5, I celebrated my 50th birthday. At Essvik I invited my people to coffee and bread. In town I had a birthday party at the Central hotel for my people, together with wife and children, those who were so grown up that they could be with us, and also some master builders and others. I received congratulations from my people with a snuff-box of silver and a pair of cufflinks. It was a festive evening. From my inmost heart I thank you my dear good and loving kingdom Father for that year and for the past 50 years. I promise the Lord that I may not forget in my soul what good he has given me.

Yes dear, dear God be with me the remaining days, and bless and preserve me together with my wife and children.

In the fall of 1898 I began to blast and take out the stone for a power plant in Wiforsen, and in 1899 it was to continue with 60 or 90 men. We would blast down 42 feet deep in the rock and 25 feet square. Working night and day in the turbine pit and in the channel with blasting work.

We also simultaneously made a granite wall next to Kungsådren of three meters width, plus other walls.

It was the most difficult work I have done as a result that it was a half-mad engineer named Hjalmar Smitt, Norrbagge ("North Ram" nickname for a Norwegian). Meanwhile, work continued in Wiforsen and it was for me to watch over the works pretty much night and day. I lay down to rest at 12 noon or one o'clock because I had to get up at three or four in the morning to always be present at each charge of the blasting.

In general it had been my lot to have a little profit, I had to lead the work myself, and had to note the time for each one, and handle the payment to them.

At Wiforsen I got 3.50 per cubic meter for blasting and transportation and 8 kr for all the gray stone walls that were laid in cement plaster. All Materials were charged to the foundation builder except cement.



Blasting, extraction of stone and foundation work for Wiforsens powerhouse at Ljungan was carried out 1898-99. In spring of 1899 the workforce went on strike and spring floods took away dams and cranes, but in December the foundation works were completed. Photo: 1899.

Feb 22	Grundläggning	Transport		
		574	57	2177 28
	Arbetslön i Stenhammarberg	175	65	
	Körning från dit 247 ton a 90	224	05	
	Arbetslön i Rolsbergs	94	70	
	Körning från dit 70 ton a 175	122	50	
	26 Kilo Dynamit		52	
	ÖLufspulsförsäkring		120	
	10-0 Kändhatten		2	
	10 ringar Träl		2 30	
	3 Allra		15	
	Bergfyra		7	
		1409	71	1409 71
Mar 8	Grundläggning	605	50	
	Arbetslön i Stenhammarberg	190	35	
	Körning från dit 242 a 90	217	80	
	Arbetslön i sidogården	122	75	
	Körning från dit 85 ton a 175	148	75	
	Smutsen Dynamit 17 kilo		34	

From the foundation builder Alfred Larsson Blomberg's books of accounts



Fine blasting is from 25 to 40 öre per hour. All material, no matter what kind, I had to pay for.

In the spring, the entire workforce went on strike so that I would pay more. The strike continued about fourteen days. All of them returned to work for the same payment.

In the middle of the month of May the spring water flooded and took away the dykes and cranes. Everything that was floating was recovered down at Njurunda.

The Turbine channel that was almost completed was filled with stone and gravel, stumps and logs. Some of the big strong retaining wall was also damaged.

The work had to be stopped until the great spring flood passed. It took until the month of August before the turbine channel was clean again. At that time it had been full of gravel and stones, and everything that was damaged had to be repaired, at the company's expense of course.

In the month of December I finished all my work, the settlement day had come between me and the engineer Smitt. He refused to pay between three to four thousand kronor for piece work and extra work that I performed. Through a process I had there was no doubt and I got my claim. But such tasks were disgusting. However, I had completed work for Wiforen Company for the amount out of my own funds, except all of the major worries and trouble, day and night, during that time work was going on, Smitt rested quietly at his parents in Norway.

While I was in Wiforsen I had an extension on Qvislebron (a bridge) that would be about 40 feet wider.

When the dam and everything was demolishing in Wiforsen a message came that even Qvislebron bridge was about to collapse. The spring flood undermined the bridge. Lovely information. Now it was immediately to harness my horse and ride a mil over a hilly road as fast as the horse would go.

Finally I arrived and could see the bridge remained on its base, but it looked threatening that the bridge would collapse at any moment.

As the bridge shortly before completed except for chip the wall above and below the bridge so I have no people where available. A brief survey revealed that the water had taken a different path on the side of the bridge in the loose sand going into the deep valley.

Now it was to be quick, in both thought and legs, to go to a trader in the neighbourhood to get a lot of empty bags to fill the first full holes, and

then dirt and gravel. Little Arvidsson is also with me from Wiforsen, plus two tramps who came to our aid after some high payment. So we fortunate became master of the water, after hard work the bridge was now safe, for the moment, while I got people and materials to erect tensioned walls and make dams at both ends of the bridge. This was for me a few hundred kronor loss on the splendours besides all the trouble and sorrows.

That same year, soil excavations foundation and walls for a barracks building on Essvik were completed.

While the spring floods raged in Wiforsen, in June I travelled with my wife to Westergötland and Blekinge to visit our relatives and acquaintances to ease our concerns somewhat. That year had been the most troublesome year that I had lived through. It had taken a lot of both body and soul out of me. Low payments because the competition was hard along with strict contracts. The highest paid workers could take days off, one or two or even three days vacation, after pay days. Then they go and booze. Fights were always present on such occasions, and many other troubles and discomforts.

At our home are all the children were small and perhaps disobedient at times, but with shining eyes that met those of their father on Saturday nights. Moreover, I am like them, perhaps that in my mind I was happier than anyone was after the week's labour, and had come home to my wife and children, fresh and preserved from countless challenges. When joy was at its best, and then came the report of who were most disobedient during the week. Now it was to take out the switch, and each one would naturally get what they deserved. The one who had been most disobedient were always first.

At year's end all my work was done, and all the troubles and worries were now only a memory. I thanked dear good and gracious God, the Father in heaven, who had given me health and strength, and kept me and my people from thousands of sources of danger during that past year.

1900, in that winter I put in a foundation for the brewery Nordstjernan for an office building, at 17 cents per cubic foot.

The lean years were not yet over.

*Examples of contracts for Alfred Larsson Blomberg.*

Between foundation contractor A. Blomberg, Sundsvall, such contractor and Timber Company Svartvik, as employer, have agreed upon the following: The undersigned Blomberg undertakes until latest on the 31st March 1906 to have completed the following work, namely:

Soil Excavation, along with removal of the excavated soil, rock blasting and putting up a drywall of good foundation stones and pedestal to the outer walls of the following buildings belonging to Svartviks new Pulp

Mill: the boiler house, screen housing / sink / and paper hall, - all according to the engineer K. Mörch prepared drawings at the following prices:

for excavation and removal Kr 1: 25 per cubic meter

for rock blasting 3:50 per cubic meter

for drywall including pedestal 7:50 per cubic meter and I /Blomberg/ commit to, without additional compensation interconnect the gray stone wall with cement mortar, the Wood Products Company Svartvik thereto supply the necessary cement, lime and sand, as well as I commit myself not to charge the Timber Company for transporting the excavated soil to the place nearby, which is therefore assigned.

Excavation shall be enforced to the required depth at the bottom and at such great width, engineer or inspector in charge. All socket walls shall be careful of large earth rock or blasted granite that is well adjusted before mounting, so that good connections will be available. Collections of small stones inside socket walls not allowed and I am /Blomberg/ obliged to, that wherever such are encountered, tear down and redo that part of the wall.

Next to one / 1 / feet in width on each side of the outer walls had to be filled with gravel or sand, which filling, however, was be provided by Timber Company. Any errors that might occur through my own or my people's fault, I, Blomberg, had the duty to rectify, free of charge.

I declare myself also satisfied that to these works performance use of wood products company's people, so many that do not have to be dedicated professionals, and also in this work occupy two foundation workers from Ånge named Pettersson, father and son, of whom, the father at the same time shall serve as Timber company's controller, and therefore I only receive half pay to the other half paid by the Timber company.

The workers, who for me Blomberg employed in this work but are not on Svartvik permanent residents, must I myself pay for accidents insurance so that compensation is paid the fourth day after the accident.

All materials of whatever nature they may be, with the exception of wood held by me Blomberg and start work immediately.

For work proper execution do I, Blomberg, approved bail and commit myself to have these works fully completed the thirty-first / 31st / March 1906 or duty payable to Timber Company Svartvik One hundred / 100 / Kronor for every additional day.

Timber Company Svartvik undertakes to the extent of work time gradually pay in accordance with this Agreement, subject to deduction

of fifteen / 15 / per cent, which is retained until the work has been completed and approved.

If a dispute arises, the same will in no case be pulled before the court trial, but it shall be settled by a compromise committee, composed of three / 3 / qualified personnel, of which each party appoints one, and so elected the third. Board's report shall appeal for either party redounded to the following correction, and the cost of inspection and judgment should be payed on an equal share of the parties jointly.

Of this contract, which is not without Timber Company's consent, may not passed over another person, are two equally obedient specimens prepared, signed and exchanged, as happened in Svartvik October 4, 1905.

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*The foundation works for Black's stately mill, south of Sundsvall, began October 2, 1905 and ended 31 March 1906, which meant that Alfred Blomberg and his workmen were finished on time*

It was a difficult winter with much snow. When the foundation was finished and measured, I lost 800 kronor except considering my time. Master builder C. A. Olsson was also where the Lord.

Because the construction work was not active, I was during the summer at home in the scenic Sidsjö, and managed my land along with my family.

In late summer I learned that they would build a pulp factory in Hemgraven in Nedansjö parish on Skönvik company's behalf. I was immediately ready to present myself in Skönvik's office requesting to perform soil excavation and foundation blasting, but I got a short answer that it was not decided if they would build or not. I requested to be remembered in the event there would be some building.

In the month of October I got orders from Managing Director Welin from Skönvik company that I could immediately start with the preparatory work. I continued there until 1901, in the month of September, with 60 or 70 men working each day doing excavations, foundations and socket walls for the factory, including blasting and cleaning in the tunnel and excavations. Foundation and socket walls were also done for 3 housing buildings.

It was often associated with some pretty big concern even at Hemgraven but it was a practical and good command of both high and low ranking.

Managing director from Skönvik was named, as mentioned, Welin. The examiner was City Engineer from Uppsala called Laurell, and the builder was named O. Boström

That same year I constructed for Otto Holmström a foundation to a stone house at Götkroken.

Thanks to dear gracious Father for this past year, and for His great mercy

In the winter of 1902 I put up a foundation for Master builders CA Olsson on Main Street in the number 6-8, and it was the last work I did for that gentleman. I naturally did not receive a penny for the foundation until the house was completed as we had agreed.

He was a sort of an inferior master builder. He never kept verbal agreements. In the month of May I started with soil excavation and foundation for the fifth stone house on request of Otto Holmström at Storgatan next to Knaust.

Now the owners are the Sundsvall Köpmanbank (Merchant Bank)

When the foundation was ready Otto Holmström ended his days and was buried in Sundsvall church cemetery with great solemnity

He was an honest Smålander and we were very good friends, but he now lies west of the city in his family grave. Peace to his memory. That same year I started with excavations and foundation for the Ship Traders Widerstedts for the large stone house next to Otto Holmström's, down beside the Hotel Knaust, on Storgatan, for the sum of 16.500 kr. This work was not finished until in the spring of 1903.

In spring 1903 I started with soil excavation, drove piles and grounds for a

planer factory at Stockvik Njurunda parish, and a foundation for a magazine for wood products and a foundation of the chimney for the saw. There was also excavation and blasting for water and levelling of a lumberyard. It was a master builder named B. Lindström

Soil Excavation and Foundation were done for a Stone house at the Rådhusgatan for a coppersmith Egnell. Then 1903 ended with many hardships and worries, and your blessing dear Father has been great to this day with me. Oh yes my dear, and Heavenly Father, thank you for this and all the bygone years.

In the winter of 1904, I did the foundation for the Sundsvalla Handelsbank (commercial bank) on Storgatan På Vängåvan. Builder Björklund was the builder. That was the last work I did for him.

One foundation and excavation was done for a wooden house in the block Gesällen for Managing Director Sundsvall's magazine called Walrot.

Three foundations to the so-called "own home" west of town and south of Nordstjernan Brewery.

A foundation plus excavations for a Bookkeeper named Numelin. Öman & co was builder of all these wooden buildings.

1905, A foundation for the Godtemplarehuset at Köpmansgatan together with David Larsson and some other works.

On October 2, 1905, I started with excavations and a foundation, and socket walls of a sulphite pulp factory in Svartvik. I had to accept a very strict contract with a guarantee along with one hundred kronor in fines for every additional day. The time was very short as required from the company's side. But even that went well and good. I had the work finished before the deadline, and to the great satisfaction of its top manager wholesaler Bråthen, also the Director Barth along with engineer Märtz

These three gentlemen were all Norwegians. My contract was for the 31st March 1906 but much extra work developed so I had to continue do work for that company until the end of 1906 but with a smaller workforce.

It was a good company to work for. When the roof was finished at the factory I got 100 kronor, my people got 4 kr. per man for the so-called taklagspengar to acknowledge the good work. In my experience, as well in Svartvik and elsewhere, I was usually at work first in the morning and the last to leave in the evening, partly to keep track of time for everyone and to lead the work. Everyone had to be on time when starting their work otherwise there was a deduction for the missed time.

In Svartvik, I had about 60 men while we were doing the earth-moving, foundation and support columns for the factory building.

Payroll was every two weeks, or every other Saturday, with an hourly rate from 30-55 cents per hour a man, 60 cents for a horse and coachman per hour.

Then 1906 ended and I was within my inmost heart thankful to my God and Heavenly Father who has given me understanding, health and strength, so I was able to carry out the work I had undertaken, and to the great satisfaction from the owners and superiors side, and also for the benefits and blessings to me and my family.

In 1907, January 2 began with soil excavation and foundation work for a sulphite pulp factory that was named Södra Nyhamn on behalf the Manager Director, Mr. Enhörning, in Kubikenborgs along with Consul Åslunds.

In the last days of a past year, together with Mr. Enhörning, Engineering Lundberg and Manager Director Mr. Carl Linden, we agreed that I would perform the described work. On New Years, I got the drawings from Engineering Lundberg. A few days after that I received a notice that he was dead.

Now I had to be both engineer the foundation contractor. I had from said Lundberg received notice of the factory's location when we signed up. At the beginning of the month of March, the company had a new engineer named Hjalmar Senrein who was a practical and good engineer of approximately 35 years. We worked in good agreement with each other with those troubled and modern strikes that always occur with any major work to be performed.

I worked with 60 to 70 men together with 15 to 20 horses to move the earth and stone getting a salary every two weeks. Wages were 30-55 öre along with free shelter and firewood and for horses with coachman 60 for 70 cents per hour. Most work was performed on the piece rate, and then the earning would be much more.

I followed my habit to care for and guide the work by myself, which takes up time and pays every other Saturday. While doing this I left the excavations and foundation to a planer for a box factory in Svartvik

There I had a foreman and I paid the salaries. At half past one I went by boat to Svartvik. At half past two, I had come back again, at three I had eaten my dinner.

At 3 was a dinnertime at Södra Nyhamn, from the table to work again, and continued throughout the summer until 8 or 9 in the evenings.

After the end of a work day, 2 or 4 men drilled into the ground to shoot with dynamite to get it loose for the next day.

We were able to shoot up to 10 kilograms per day because the earth was

hard as a rock

At 6 on the following morning it was to be at work again to get everything running again. In November of that year our engineer Senrein got ill at dinner in the evening, so an extra boat was ordered and we carried him onto the boat, but in six days he, too, was dead. At our arrival in the hospital in Sundsvall he immediately had surgery performed. It was found he had ulcers in the stomach. There was a funeral in the Sundsvall Church with great solemnity. The entire work staff attended.

His remains were then transferred to the railway station for onward transmission to Gothenburg there where the remains would be burned to ashes.

That was a great loss for the company, for me and for the entire working staff. Peace be upon his memory, our highly valued engineer Senrein.

A young engineer was taken on by the company named David Arven who would make the plant ready.

1908 in the month of February I finished all my work for the plant's behalf and earth-moving and foundation of four workers housings with more other jobs.

The work was arduous at Södra Nyhamn, and was associated with worry and concern, along with great risk and responsibility that I had addressed to myself, but luckily I was always finished with the work before the expiration time.

Although they went on strike two times for me, my works luckily were of great satisfaction to my officers.

As an acknowledgment from the Director, Mr. Carl Linden, a large photograph of the factory, along with a thank you for a job well done, was given to me.

It was a flattering New Year's gift in 1909, so it is not so odd if I am a bit arrogant in my old age.

As mentioned, my work was finished at South Nyhamn in the month of February. With regret I said farewell with heartfelt thanks to my supreme Head Manager, Director Mr. Enhörning and the Director Mr. Carl Linden, whose noble mind especially affecting me which I will never forget. Mr. Enhörning was the noblest man I was ever in contact with during my 60 years of life. Then there was a fond farewell to the rest of the staff along with my people.

A never to be forgotten memory for me is from South Nyhamn. All of the officers, as well high and low, looked with awe and reverence to the old foundation contractor as if I would have been their most affectionate



father. The foundation contractor would always be with them to be their advisor in which way to go, either to the right or left. It is no wonder that I love South Nyhamn and their managers. When the end of the way is all good, then who am I to not thank for everything good?

I thank you my dear good gracious kingdom of love and the kingdom of the Father in heaven, for that you brought me from one place after another, and from one community to another, and always you have, my God and my father, helped me and blessed and preserved me from thousands of accidents, and gave much more than I wanted or asked you about from this earth. My deepest wishes and prayers to my God from childhood was that he would give me health, strength and wisdom to be able to manage the heavy burdens from my childhood through sweat and toil and privations and anxieties of many kinds that I was faced with.

During all the years gone by, the wishes and prayers from my childhood that were learned from my dear and beloved mother have come true and even far more. Thank you dear God for all this good.

In the next few days I will have seen the light of day for 60 years, and when I finish my work at the Southern Nyhamn my wishes and prayers will be good for the completion and beyond, and I will now leave all contract work in order to spend my remaining days in peace and quiet as long as my Father's kingdom of grace will allow me to remain here on earth with my wife and our eight living children who are all healthy and happy, and have so far with reverence and affection always looked up to their parents.

My strength and mood begins to subside so I need to rest after all the painstaking work and worries of many kinds, but everything is now like a dream, and that when the end is good, yes then all is good.

And my soul rejoices with gratitude to my God and Father who has given me such great reward for my work as noted in the previous writing.

1908 Annual Financial Statement is low estimated Kr. . . . The only thing that helped me was that I generally had been there from morning to night, and led and supervised the work. And I always had a good confidence and was advised from man to man from place to place, and work was always carried out so that it was always finished in the agreed time and the deal was good, except in Wiforsen where I worked for around 4000 kronor for nothing.

As in any process or compromise I have had disgusting times. Engineer Smitt was not quite normal. My health has always been good, and added to that, in general I have been in a good mood.



*Gravestone of Alfred Larsson Blomberg, his wife, Emilia, and their sons Joseph and Nils. Västra kyrkogården (West Cemetery) in Sundsvall. Alfred died May 17 1925 77 years of age. Photo: Anna Porsmyr*