

## Inga Carlson Lorin Story

An account of the massacre in the New Sweden area where my great-great grandparents, Pehr and Chastie (Kirsten) Carlson and their family lived. My great-grandmother, Inga Carlson Lorin (pronounced Loreen) was a 9-year old girl at the time. She had sailed to America in 1854; first settled with her family in Batavia, Illinois until 1858, when they traveled to Minnesota by oxcart and settled in the New Sweden area. My grandfather, a Lutheran pastor by the name of Rev. Albert Loreen, wrote this about his grandparents as part of his autobiography.

*One of the serfs, Pehr Carlson by name, had married Chastie in the late 1840's. The first born daughter, Bengta, came to bless the home and as the years went by Elna and Inga were born. The young couple saw that with the growing family the going would become harder and harder. Thinking over the situation and having heard of wonderful opportunities in America they decided to emigrate. Inga had been born December 7, 1853 and in the spring of 1854 the family was ready to leave Sweden forever. It was a hard decision to make but with youthful enthusiasm and faith in God, the family ventured forth.*

*This was the day of sailing vessels and a trip across the ocean for people of no means was a real hardship. The passengers had to carry their own food supply and bedding and find a corner in the ship wherever they could. It was a long and tedious journey for the Carlsons, but after seven weeks of ocean travel they came to the American shore.*

*The overland trip to Chicago by train was not much easier. There were no Pullman cars and no upholstered seats; the passengers had to sit on plain planks and again had to carry their own food. After several days of jolting the family arrived in Chicago and from there were directed to Batavia, Illinois, where they had decided to locate. In the party were also Mr. and Mrs. Carl Nelson and a young man, Jon Pehrson, who later became an Augustana pastor.*

*The building of a log cabin became the first concern, and in a cabin, likely the size of Lincoln's birthplace, eight people lived together. Work was scarce and pay was small. The men cut cord wood at fifty cents a day and had to take their pay in whiskey which they tried to sell.*

*Pastor Erland Carlson had organized a congregation in St. Charles and there the family attended services. But this was a serious time, on account of the cholera epidemic. Many began to think of a better climate and set their minds on either Iowa or Minnesota. The Carlsons chose Minnesota.*

*In the meantime little Elna died and was buried at Batavia and two other children, Swen and Elin, were born. Transportation to Minnesota was non-existent, so the men prepared a covered wagon, hitched it behind a pair of oxen, and started North. How long his trip took is not recorded, but some time in the year 1858 the family came to the township of New Sweden and took a preemption on 160 acres of land. The Carl Nelsons located just to the South of the Carlson farm.*

*The land in New Sweden was prairie and quite easily worked, but with the primitive implements it took time. The reaper or selfbinder had not yet arrived and Pehr Carlson cut his first crops with scythe and cradle. Eventually two more children were added to the family, Olaf and Hannah.*

*Minnesota was at that time a new land; the Indians roamed at large on his hunting trips. More than once the Indians came to the Carlson home and begged for food. They were not turned away empty handed, and this good gesture paid good dividends.*

*In 1861 Lincoln became President and that year the Civil War broke out. Most of the able-bodied men were called into the service. The Indian Chief Little Crow of the Sioux tribe saw this as an opportunity to get back some of his land and staged an uprising. Pehr Carlson, with other men who had not been called into the army, was drafted to go to New Ulm to resist the Indians. The new settlers were in imminent danger of the Indians and had watchers posted to the West to give an alarm if they saw Indians approaching. The families were in readiness if the alarm should come.*

*One day one of the watchers came riding in post haste and warned the Indians were near. Two or three families were piled into a lumber wagon and started off for St. Peter some twenty-five miles away. The Indians pursued and came so close a bullet hit the end gate of the wagon box, but a rail fence hindered the horses of the Indians and the families escaped to St. Peter.*

*The Indians burned and ravaged as they went. The Eric Johnson home, next to Carlsons was burned and Mrs. Johnson was killed but the daughter escaped by hiding in the tall grass of a swamp. On the Carlson farm, however, not a thing was harmed, a fact the family attributed to the kindness that had been shown to the visiting Indians.*

*Pehr and Chastie Carlson were my maternal grandparents and Inga was my mother. Mr. Carlson was a man five feet nine inches tall, rather heavy set with a perfectly bald head except for a small fringe around the back of his head. He walked with a pronounced limp because of an accident. The horses ran away with the hay mower and Grandfather was thrown into the sickle bar, almost severing his one leg.*

*Chastie was a short stocky, peppery woman with a lot grit and gumption; in fact, she was the boss. But she was a kindly woman and loved by her friends and neighbors. She was kind and considerate to her grandchildren and they loved her. It was always a red-letter day in the family when we were to make the long trip of 12 miles to Grandfather's house. This happened about two times a year. We looked forward to a visit with much anticipation and especially if we could stay overnight. Grandfather Carlson passed away in 1896 and Grandmother in 1906. They are both buried in the Bernadotte Cemetery.*

*Pehr and Chastie were both God-fearing people and became affiliated with the Scandian Grove Congregation, where Rev. Cederstrom was pastor and where Jon Pehrson, mentioned above, later became pastor. Inga was confirmed there.*