

Arriving in Berkeley (1959)

It actually began in Uppsala and Stockholm. The plan had already taken shape during my two years in Korea 1953-1955 when I drafted a letter of admittance to the Registrar of the University of California, Berkeley, a letter that was probably never sent. The dream remained and back home in Sweden I soon contacted the America-Sweden Foundation for a fellowship for studies in America. My first application was refused in 1957 and I hesitated whether to apply again. I waited until the very last day and if my fiancée Gunvor had not pushed it would probably not have been submitted. But thanks to her prodding it was. Imagine our surprise

when it was announced that I was one of the lucky receivers in the spring of 1978. I was then married with Gunvor and to complicate things it was clear about the same time that Gunvor was pregnant. It was a nervous time that followed, but Gunvor was courageous. She accepted to be left alone with the baby and let me go alone. She would join me with the baby in the following year. This is what happened. She prepared for the baby and I prepared for departure - on the very last day of the year. This was one of the conditions for the fellowship. One had to leave for America before the end of the year, that is, to begin the stay over there in the year that

the fellowship was given, at least be on the way the last day of the year. And so it happened that the passenger Gripsholm left Göteborg on New Year's Eve and I was on board. The baby was born before, on 15 November, and baptised at Johannis Church in Uppsala at Christmas. Her name was Karolina. It was a stormy trip over the Atlantic. It was rough seas all eight days and the ship had to slow down. But 8th January in the early afternoon we passed by the Freedom Island in dazzling sun and came up to 42nd Street and landing. The wife of my cabin friend, Gunnar Norrman, waited since morning for us. I was well received at

Swedish Seamen's Center in Brooklyn, paid 10 dollars for a week's stay and went back into Manhattan and had an evening together with the Gunnar Norrmans. We visited the Radio City Music Hall and saw a movie: Auntie Mame. The rest of the week's stay I went sightseeing and visited the United Nations to see my KOREA friend Harald Thelander. I enjoyed a steak dinner at his home. During continued sightseeing ordnade jag tågresa till Californien. Den 15 January I was ready for the first lap: over Philadelphia to Washington.

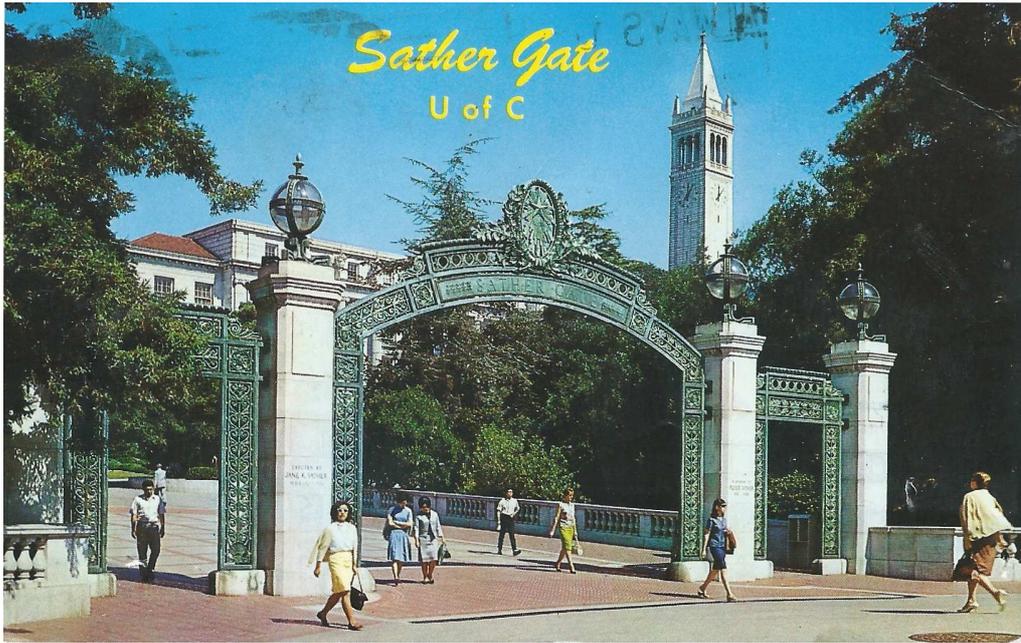
The Philadelphia stay was only a day at Ernestine Chamberlain's home and already next day I continued onwards to Washington DC where I was cordially received at the Clagues. I stayed four days at their home and Llyn was home from school in Ohio and took me around. First evening I was invited to a party by Caroline Thomson that lasted until early morning! It made me sleepy for a day. We visited government buildings, a museum, and Mr. Clague took me on a car sightseeing tour around the whole Washington area.

On the 20 January I was on the road again. Mr. Clague drove me to the station and I was on the night train to Dayton, Ohio, where Llyn had returned before. It was winter weather and Ohio was flooded. Next morning Llyn fetched me and took me to his college where I had the first experience of American school life. Little did I dream that this was the beginning of ten years of such life. Llyn fetched me and brought me to his dormitory where I met an international group of students. They served a spaghetti dinner and later in the evening I was invited to a student hall for beer and a snack called "pizza". Pizza "BELONGED TO STUDENT

LIFE IN AMERICA” I reported in a letter home to Gunvor. Then I slept in Llyn’s big bed while he slept on the floor. Next morning, 22 January, Llyn took me in his borrowed car to Dayton, where I had to wait for a late train. I came on the train and the travel continued through a rather flat Indiana and then Illinois. While eating and reading in the diner, I was addressed by a lady. She turned out to be the widow after a well-known Lutheran Pastor (Walter E. Mayer). She lived in St. Louis and she came after much conversation to invite me to stay at her home for a night. I was after all a “Fellow Lutheran. “ I had anyway to stop at just St.

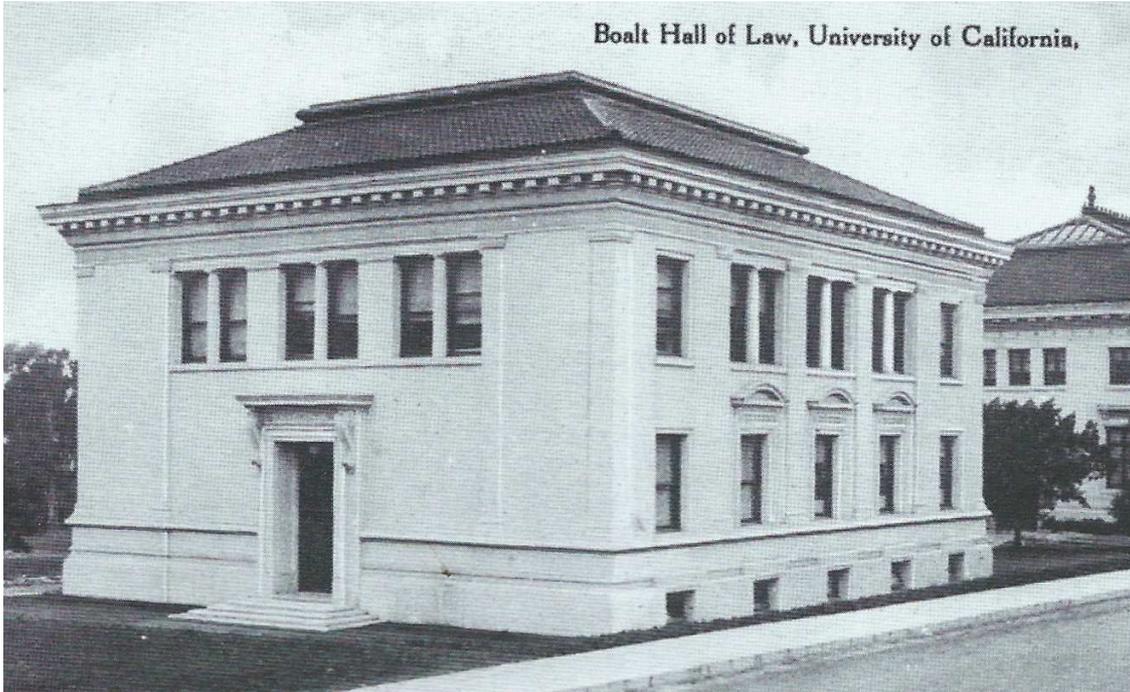
Louis (the train was four hours late) and planned to stay at KFUM. So I accepted willingly. It most delightful evening awaited me at her home. Next morning the journey continued and not it was strait going to California and Berkeley where the train arrived in the early afternoon 25 January. It was a lovely day and a wonderful arrival at the International House. I was met at the reception by a Japanese whose first words were, "You are in trouble, sir!" But I was allowed a room for a night together with a student from Colombia. He was freezing - I changed my long johns for shorts. Next morning I found out that a room on the fifth

floor was booked in my name! A new life began that lasted for ten years beyond the Sather Gate.



The

Sather Gate entrance to the University of California.



Durant Hall, earlier Boalt Hall

A day later I was in hurry to visit the university and especially the East Asian Studies that Was placed in the Durant Hall in the very midst of the university. There on the second floor I met Professor Edward Schaffer who was going to be my advisor and also my teacher of Chinese. We decided that Japanese would be my primary study and Chinese would come second. Together they formed a package. When I mentioned also Korean, there came a ringing “NO” from the professor. That was the beginning and end of my Korean studies at Berkeley. I was soon to know that professor Schaffer was right. Japanese and Chinese was

enough. They left no time for other studies. I came to have classes in classical Japanese for Donald Shively who was also my Japanese advisor as regards my Japanese programme, Japanese literature history for Douglas Mills, Japanese linguistics for Denzel Carr and classical Chinese for Edward Schaffer. This was just one semester but a mundfuld with quizzes, midterms and finals. It took all time, long days and often partly nights! And this was repeated semester after semester. Korean was not needed. There were changes among the teachers in the sixties. Mills returned to England and Cambridge. Frank Motofuji

came in Japanese literature, Harumi Aoki in linguistics and finally Helen and William McCullough in Japanese literature. The East Asian Studies was enlarged and strengthened by the arrival of Professor James Bosson in Mongolian and Tibetan Studies. I enrolled in both his Mongolian and Tibetan classes. This was the academic side of the Berkeley life. It was not the only side to face, Then followed the economic side and last also health. To go for a Master of Art and finally a Doctor of Philosophy meant first three-four years and thereupon three years for the doctor degree. I managed but to little degree thanks to professor

Donald Shively who truly cared for me. My fellowship from Stockholm paid for the first semester in the spring 1959 but when it was finished it was Donald Shively who saved me when he offered me a teaching assistantship in Japanese that was repeated and lasted finally until 1964-65. It offered a monthly meager salary but, moreover, free studies and the status of junior staff. This was a great breakthrough academically and it paved the way to an Acting Assistant Professorship post at Davis in 1965 and thereupon to a professorship in Copenhagen from 1968. This was jumping from a rolling train and to this day I do not know whether

it was a wise thing to do. Then came Gunvor and Karolina in August 1959. Karolina was by that time 10 months. I had moved from the International House to a one-room apartment on 2399 Prospect Street and there we settled together in the best way possible. As Karolina's bath we used the sink in the kitchen and so on. We managed well and never dreamt of much more. We celebrate our first American Christmas. Jag "doppade i grytan" in the Swedish fashion. . . . By New Year 1960 we were invited by Gunvor's farbror, Alfred Håkanson, in San Pedro by Los Angeles with travels paid and this goldened a perhaps drab existence for

all three of us. The next year we were offered a bigger two-room apartment on the front side of the same house and I became the janitor of the whole house. We stayed for two years in this apartment until October 1962, when we were asked to move by the owner. Our second daughter Cecilia was born while we were there. We were asked to be the janitors on Panoramic Way above by the owner, Mrs. Geldert, and on 1 October 1962 we moved up climbing the hill, I carrying Cecilia up the path almost falling on the way. The apartment was 28 Panoramic Way, and a stairway led down from the Panoramic Way above to the

apartment. It was a roomy three-room apartment that we loved from the day we moved in. We had the view of San Francisco in front, the Bay Bridge to the left and the Golden Gate to the right. Further north towered the mountain tops of Marin County. We looked down upon the Bay area. Karolina and Cecilia got their own room front and Gunvor and me a bedroom back.



The years that followed, 1962-1968/9, were our happy years. I finished my academic life with first the Master of Art in 1964 and then the doctor's degree in 1967. I also slowly got our economy under control when I was employed as an Assistant Acting Professor at Davis, the second University Campus of California University, in 1965. From the

same year Gunvor acquired a car together with Mrs. Geldert for shopping and for us as a family. Gunvor became an American citizen and the girls went to schools and became used to American life. I continued my research and writing. My doctoral dissertation was being printed at Ann Arbor. It was a rolling train from which I jumped off from at the invitation from the University of Copenhagen.