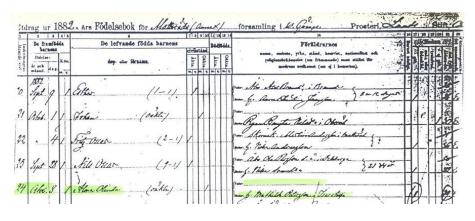
## ALMA OLINDA OLSON October 8, 1882 – August 17, 1963

Alma Olinda Olson was the daughter of Christian Olsson and Mathilda Pettersdotter born on 8 October 1882 in Isakstorp, Matteröd Parish, Skåne, Sweden. She was baptized on 29 October in the Matteröd church. Her godparents were her aunt Elna Olsdotter (sister of Christian) and her husband Olof Svensson Friberg.

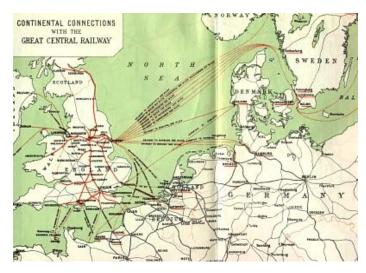


Neither her Swedish birth record nor parish clerical surveys reflected a surname for **Alma**, which was not unusual as in most instances in that era children's surnames were not recorded in the parish registers until they became adults. Thus when she emigrated there also was no surname indicated for **Alma** on the emigrant register (see below). Both her and her mother's surnames were entered as **Petterson** on the ship's passenger manifest. It wasn't until she arrived at Denison, Iowa, that she became **Alma Olson**. (Note: Contrary to what is shown on a web page called "Kiron Kountry Library" Alma was <u>never</u> known as Hlina Christiansdotter. Hlina is a corrupt rendering of **Alma** and ascription of the surname Christiansdotter to her is an incorrectly assumed patronymic.)

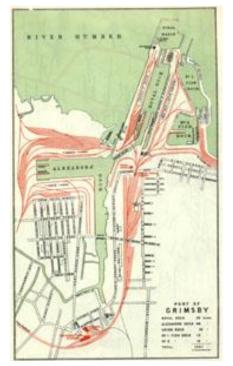
**Alma** and her mother emigrated on Thursday, 6 August 1891, from Malmö, Sweden. The emigration registry signed by Swedish Police Commission representative N. B. Appelquist indicates that **Mathilda Petersdotter**, age 38, and daughter, **Alma Olinda**, age 8, from Matteröd, Kristianstad Län, left on the steamship "Malmö" under contract with the White Star Line whose agent was C. W. Hällström in Göteborg (Gothenburg). Their emigration contract number was 3770:5318. Their fare had been paid from America, and their destination was New York.

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(Alma's father, Christian Olsson, who most assuredly paid their fare immigrated in 1888.)



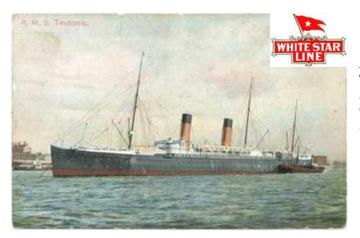
The S/S Malmö was a "feeder" ship that transported emigrants from Sweden to England. It was owned by Thomas Wilson, Sons & Company (also known as the Wilson Line of Hull) and evidently operated in conjunction with the White Star Line.



The first leg of **Alma's** journey to America took her to Grimsby on the east coast of England, a voyage of some 60 hours. She crossed England from Grimsby to Liverpool via the Great Central Railway (below), which was also owned and operated by the Wilson Line.

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**Alma** boarded the White Star Line steamship RMS Teutonic on 12 August at Liverpool for her trans-Atlantic crossing. After an intermediate stop at Queenstown, Ireland, the Teutonic set sail for America on 13 August.

Alma O. and Matilda Petterson arrived at Ellis Island, New York City, on Wednesday, 19 August 1891. The passenger manifest of the RMS Teutonic contains their names on lines 222 and 223 of page 5. Interestingly, their destination in America was recorded as "Duluth."

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Although Alma and her mother may not have been aware of it, they were parties to maritime history. The RMS Teutonic established a new record by crossing the Atlantic in 5 days 16 hours and 31 minutes. An account of the record crossing was published in the New York Times on August 20, 1891, under the title "Beats All Ocean Records."

The article describes the voyage in some detail and mentions that the Teutonic was under the command of Capt. S. J. Irving whose name appears on the passenger manifest above. The Teutonic arrived at Queenstown from Liverpool at 4:52 A.M. on August 13<sup>th</sup> to pick up passengers and mail. It departed Queenstown at 2:05 P.M. with an official time of arrival at New York City of 1:36 A.M. on the 19<sup>th</sup>. The Teutonic brought 478 cabin and 1,029 steerage passengers.



In December 1893 her parents purchased a lot in Denison, built a home, which became 1924 Broadway, and a teenage **Alma** had one of her first encounters with a photographer.

Alma's childhood and young adult life were recounted in a tribute written by Ruth Burnside entitled "Filled role as wife mother, homemaker" and published in the Denison Bulletin on 23 January 1961:

"Mrs. Storjohann attended a country school in Sweden for two years before coming to the United States. The rest of her education was received in the Denison public schools, graduating from Denison High School in 1902.

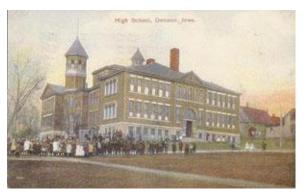


**Graduation Photo 1902** 

Following graduation, she attended the Denison Normal and Business College for one year taking a course in bookkeeping and shorthand. She was employed in the office of George Richards, attorney and insurance, for five years, when she resigned to marry Carl Storjohann.

She definitely recalls her first day in the Denison schools. Her mother couldn't take her so she gave her an apple and she tagged some other children to school. Do you suppose the apple was for the teacher? She liked to study and worked hard in school with Supt. Humphrey, Taylor, Robertson and Fellows as her instructors.

When she graduated in 1902, it was the prevailing custom that each graduate write two ovations. For the subjects she chose "Victors of Peace" and "Industrial America," on the first one she put more effort. Supt. Savage chose "Industrial America" as the best of the two and she felt a wee bit disappointed. Graduation exercises were held then in the Opera House,



**Denison High School** 

located on the present site of the post office.

While attending Denison Normal and Business College she played on the first basketball team of the college. She was also a member of the debate team of the literary society."

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**Alma** and **Carl Storjohann** were married by the Reverend William Frese on 26 February 1908 at the German Lutheran church in Denison. Witnesses to the marriage were **Carl's** brother, John H. Storjohann, and Effie T. Ortberg. (The flower girls are unknown.)



Ruth Burnsides' newspaper tribute details more of **Alma's** life including her family and farm life, pastimes, and later life as a widow in Denison. The article was accompanied by a photo of **Alma**, which was captioned, "Busy at her favorite pastime, Mrs. Alma Storjohann of Denison is shown here as she puts the finishing touches to a tablecloth. Her many friends and her family have received gifts of crocheting she has fashioned with her hands and hook."

The remainder of her life story read as follows.

"To make a complete Today, we must mix without bias equal parts of Yesterday's experience, Today's accomplishments and preparations for Tomorrow's changes. Each 24 hours is a proving ground for Yesterday's ammunition and tools, but we must

still have time enough to improve tomorrow's aim. Many people admire response to what old-fashioned self-reliance and industry has accomplished.

Mrs. Alma Storjohann of Denison can be placed in this category for her yesterdays, todays, and her tomorrows were filled to the utmost with the helping of her husband on the farm, the rearing of her children and the hundred and one duties that a commonplace to every homemaker.

She fulfilled the whole duty of woman, that of cooking, homemaking, and children with joy in her heart. She was like a high priestess at work in her temple and always strived to make her daily routine one of inspiration rather than one of drudgery. She firmly believed that the most real happiness in life is found in your own home.

As a mother, she can remember the little bunches of wilted flowers her children brought her, the little feet that tracked in dirt, the many quarrels she settled for them and countless cuts and bruises she has bandaged. Then too there was the radiant smile of her daughters when they had a new dress of their own, sunlight shining through glasses of jelly, fragrance of new mown hay, song of a robin in the apple tree, pussy willows in and spring and rainbows in the evening sky. All these things and many more filled her days.

Alma Storjohann, the daughter of C. F. Olson and Mathilda (Peterson) Olson was born in Skane, Sweden on Oct. 8, 1882. Her father was born in Sweden and received his education in the Swedish schools. He was married in Sweden and in 1888 he, Ed Olson and Martin Peterson came to the United States, locating at Sioux City. In 1890 the trio came to Denison. Mr. Olson then had his wife and daughter, Alma, come to America, arriving in Denison in 1891.

Mr. Olson was employed as section foreman on the Northwestern railroad after he had first worked on construction with bridge crews. His wages were \$35 per month with no work during the winter months. At one time he worked for L. M. Shaw for ten cents an hour.

Mathilda (Petersen) Storjohann [sic] was also born in Sweden, attended country school there and grew to womanhood.

They [Alma and Carl Storjohann] were the parents of four daughters and one son, Mrs. Claire (Lillie) Prokof [sic] of Battle Creek, Mrs. Carl (Isabelle) Beymer of Denison, Raymond Storjohann (deceased), Mrs. Harold (Julia) Jensen, Denison, and Mrs. Emerson (Elvera) Wight, Denison. There are 20 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

After their marriage they began farming in Goodrich township and remained on this farm until 1939 when they came to Denison to make their home. Mr. Storjohann died in 1949.





Each year they fed out a carload of cattle, all their own raising, and each year marketed a carload of hogs. Some years they made money, some years they broke even and some years they lost a little, all in all their feeding of livestock was a success.

All of the farming in their earlier years was done entirely with horses. The later years tractors were used.



## Storjohann Farm c. 1930. It was located in the "V" formed by the intersection of Routes 141 and 59 about three miles northwest of Denison, Iowa

Her love of cooking was put to a test during the threshing season for the crew was always 18 to 22 men. You not only served meals but lunches in the morning and afternoon. Everything was cooked at home – and some baking it was – for the tables fairly groaned with food. Loaves and loaves of bread were baked as well as pies of various types and cakes. You couldn't go to town then, buy bread or baked goods or cake mixes. You just got busy and did your own making with a cook stove which in July or August could be pretty warm work.

In the summer she raised a big garden, canning the surplus vegetables for use in the winter. In the winter as the jars were emptied, she would fill them again with canned meat for summer use.

They butchered and processed all their own meat, killing several hogs and a beef. The hams and bacon along with the dried beef was smoked in the smokehouse after curing in brine and the rest either "fried down in lard" or canned. One year someone stole all the hams, bacon, dried beef and sausages from their smoke house.

After butchering they always made a great deal of soap, using the tallow. They never bought any soap.

Mrs. Storjohann had never lived on a farm until she was married so had some adjustments to make and she loved it, stating, "If I had it to do over, I'd surely live on a farm. I enjoyed it."



Peddlers and travelers on foot often visited their farm wanting a night's lodging. One day when she was all alone a peddler came along asking her if he could stay overnight. He said he would sleep in the barn or anyplace, she replied, "no, you cannot." The peddler insisted he stay so she grabbed their dog by the collar and pulled on it. This made the dog mad so he barked and growled., the peddler asked her if the dog was a mean one and she replied "What do you think I'm holding him for." At that the peddler departed. Mrs. Storjohann said "the dog wasn't mean. I pulled a bluff by tugging on his collar. I was alone and I wanted to get rid of him."

Often preachers would come through on foot enroute to meetings in Des Moines and would stay all night with them. "I recall a severe hailstorm at one of the neighbors one summer, it hailed so much that the next day they scooped up enough hail to make ice cream," said Mrs. Storjohann.

She has been a correspondent for the Farmer's Union, committeewoman for the Republican party in Goodrich township, both she and her husband served on the Counsel of Defense in World War I.

[An article published in the Denison newspaper in early 1933 recounts that at the first quarterly meeting of the Crawford County Farmers Union on January 3<sup>rd</sup> that year Carl Storjohann was elected a Director. Mrs. Carl Storjohann served as Reporter for the Farmers Union.]

"Before the advent of cars, we had the best time of our lives," stated Mrs. Storjohann. "We, the whole family attended the Farmer's local meetings at the school house. One time the man put on the program, the next time the woman and then the children would have their turn. Twelve of the neighbors all celebrated each birthday and we attended those. That was really a pleasure and a good family life."

The two C's have been her hobbies – cooking and crocheting, with crocheting her favorite of the two. Her cooking is limited now but she really crochets, she has crocheted 10 tablecloths, four bedspreads and miscellaneous other articles. Flowers have also found a place in her life, she has about 45 violets all colors, both single and double as well as a number of gloxinias, a haja plant and many others.

Years ago, there weren't enough Swedes in Denison to have a church so a Swedish minister would stop here on his way to Kiron to conduct services, and hold services in private homes.

Mrs. Storjohann loves children and all the children in the neighborhood call her "Grandma." This proves the young have always been young, the old always old."



Alma and Carl retired in February 1939 from their farm in Goodrich Township to the former home of her parents at 1924 Broadway in Denison. Carl passed away at home on 8 January 1949.

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Alma lived in Denison until her death on 17 August 1963. She was buried with her husband **Carl Storjohann** in Oakland Cemetery, Denison, Crawford County, Iowa on 20 August 1963.

"Alma Olson, daughter of Chris Olson and his wife Matilda nee Petersen [sic], was born Oct 8, 1882 in Skane, Sweden. She came with her parents to America in 1891 making her home in Denison. Here she attended the elementary and high school and later, also the Denison Normal College. After graduation she was employed for five years in the office of George Richards, attorney and insurance man.



Alma Olson Storjohann c. 1960

She was married to Carl Storjohann on Feb. 26, 1908, a union to which five children were born. After their marriage they resided on the farm until coming to make their home in Denison in 1939. Mr. Storjohann passed away in 1949. In poor health in recent years, Mrs. Storjohann was taken to the local hospital on July 1, where she also underwent surgery. She passed away at the hospital.

Surviving her death are four daughters: Mrs. Lillie Prokop, of Battle Creek; Mrs. Isabelle Beymer, Mrs. Julia Jensen and Mrs. Elvera Wight of Denison; twenty grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren. Her husband and one son, Raymond, preceded her in death.

Her funeral service was held at the Huebner Funeral Home on Aug. 20 with the Rev. Carl W. Schmidt officiating. Bearers were: Darlo Jensen, Wesley Wight, Jim Beymer, Bern [sic] Wood, Wilbur Harm and Irwin Harm. Interment was made in the Oakland Cemetery." Carl Storjohann and Alma Olinda Olson had the following children:

- i. Lillie Caroline Storjohann was born 25 December 1908 in Goodrich Township, Crawford County, Iowa. She died 26 February 1989 at Mapleton, Monona County, Iowa.
- ii. Isabel Mathilda Storjohann was born on 3 March 1910 in Goodrich Township, Crawford County, Iowa. She died on 5 March 1980 in Denison, Crawford County, Iowa.

Carl Raymond Storjohann was born on 21 June 1911 in Goodrich Township, Crawford County, Iowa. He died on 17 January 1929 in Goodrich Township, Crawford County, Iowa.



- iv. Julia Marguerite Storjohann was born on 6 April 1913 in Denison, Crawford County, Iowa. She died on 28 February 1997 in Denison, Crawford County, Iowa.
- v. Elvera Eleanor Storjohann was born on 6 September 1915 in Denison, Crawford County, Iowa. She died on 9 November 1993 in Denison, Crawford County, Iowa.



Julia Marguerite, Carl Raymond, Elvera Eleanor, Lillie Caroline and Isabel Mathilda Storjohann circa 1918



Alma and her daughters (left to right) Julia, Lillie, Isabel & Elvera – October 1961