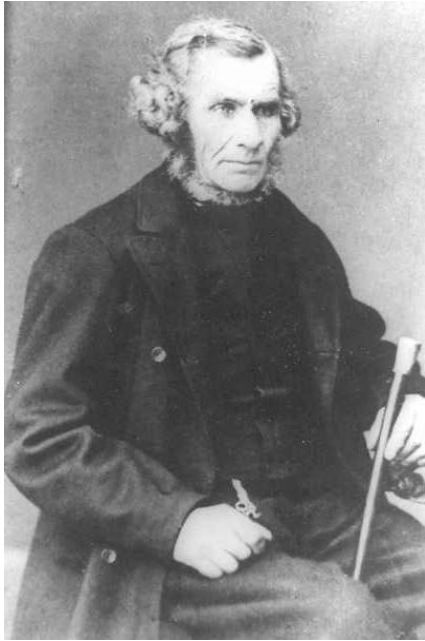


Olof Niclas and Eugenie



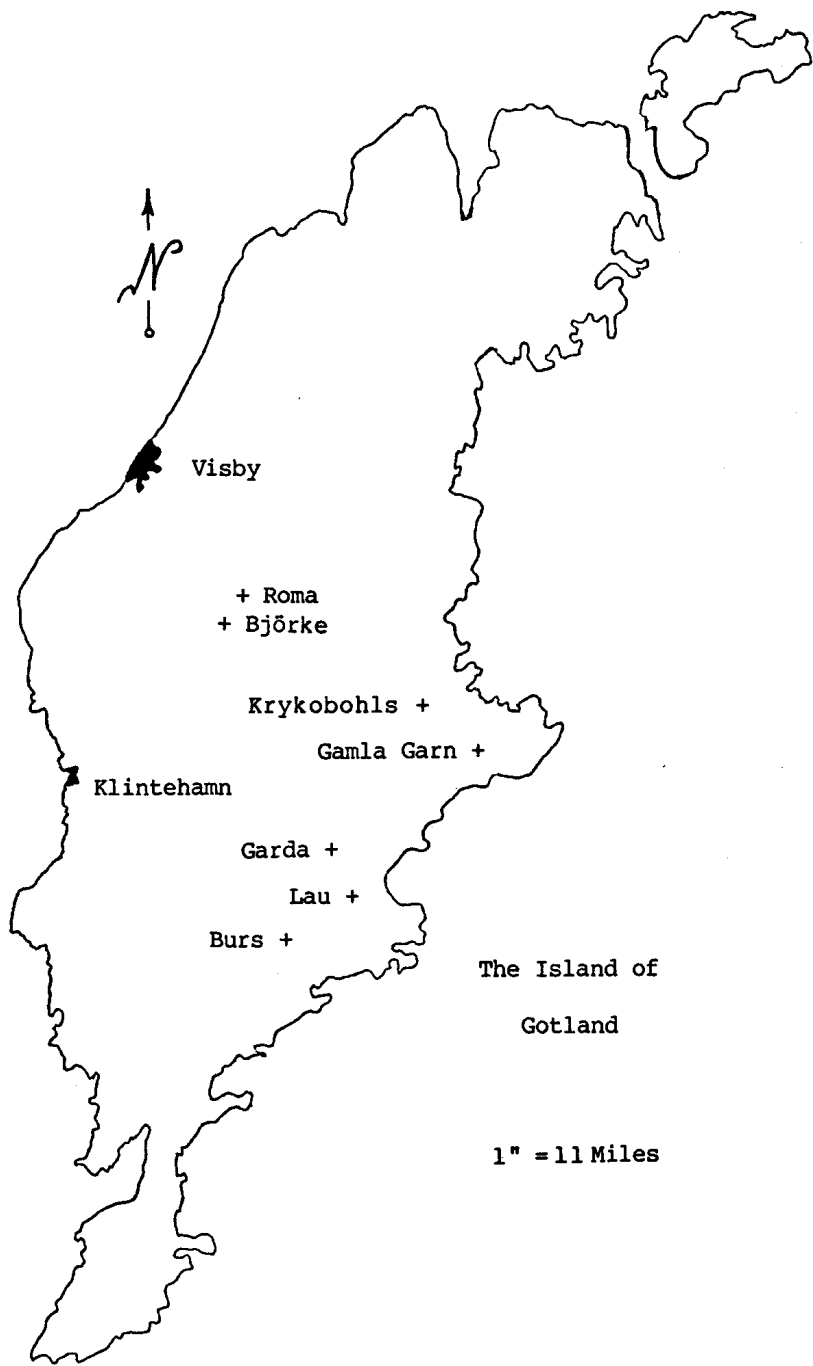
Pehr Olofsson



Christina Olofsdotter

On a farm on the island of Gotland, a part of Sweden, Pehr Olofsson and his wife, Christina Helena Olofsdotter, raised their family of four children. They were a hard working religious family of the Lutheran faith. The three oldest children were girls named Anna Christina, Maria Magdalena Olivia, and Margaritha Catarina. The last child was Olof Niclas, my great grandfather.¹

Olof Niclas was born on June 9, 1851 at Krykbohls, Garda, Gotland, Sweden. He attended school regularly until eleven years of age, and at that time completed his elementary education. His good handwriting, his basic knowledge of mathematics, and his desire to



advance in knowledge all show that this early education was of a very high standard. To further advance in knowledge and to get practical experience, his parents arranged to have him enter a merchants store as an apprentice. He relates that at the age of sixteen he was often left in full charge of the store and had the responsibility to figure selling prices of merchandise from the known costs. His services were gratefully appreciated and the following is quoted from his Sea Log under the date of 1868. "The owner of the store I was serving gave me a vacation, a trip in one of his schooners from Klintehamn, Gotland, to Neustadt, Germany. While at Neustadt, took a trip to Lubeck." While he was on this trip he fell in love with the sea.

In 1869 he made several trips to Germany aboard the schooner Laura. In 1870, aboard the barque Scaramanga of Stavanger, he sailed to Constantinople, Turkey; Thangarock, Russia; and Falmouth, England. In 1871 he sailed to England, Holland, Belgium, Canada, and Ireland. In 1872 he made his first trip to the United States and visited New York on April 19, 1872, where he often told of seeing the foundations for the Brooklyn Bridge. He continued to ship out on sailing vessels and told of times when there was no wind and they were put in small boats out in front to pull the large ship. If they did not make the required distance they were beaten with a piece of rope. Sometimes they only went four miles a day. During the following years he sailed to every part of the world.

The following is copied from his Sea Log and is typical of the experiences he had at sea:

1875

North Africa\, Tripoli

January 8. Arrived at Tripoli (North Africa).

February 9.	Sailed from Tripoli.
April 9.	Anchored in River Umber.
April 13.	Arrived at Shields.
May 10.	Shipped in the ship "Golden City."
May 16.	Sailed from Shields.
July 23.	Off Cape Good Hope in a hurricane – lost three men overboard – was badly injured on left ankle.
August 23.	Captain Owens died from injury after the heavy storm off the cape.
September 10.	Anchored off Anger Point and buried the captain.
September 14.	Arrived at Batavia.
September 17.	Sailed from Batavia.
September 22.	Arrived at Samarang (Java).
November 15.	Sailed from Samarang, was fourteen days in the hospital with fever.
November 23.	To Sourabay, where I was in the hospital again. Three men of the crew died with fever.
December 30.	Sailed from Sourabay.

One entry made in 1878 states, "July 12, took train from Malmo to Calmar for a visit to Gotland, the last time I saw my parents."

The various ships that he served had often sailed into ports on the East Coast of England and it was there that he met Eugenie Marrington in Sunderland. She was the sixth of nine children born to John and Ann Lacey Marrington, both of Sunderland. He now had reason to make his home in England. Also, since England was not his native land, changes had to be



Olof Niclas and Eugenie Marrington Pettersson

made. One change included his name.

If he had remained in Sweden his surname would have been Pehrson, or son of Pehr. However, since the English derivative of Pehr is Petter, the surname of Olof became Petter's son, or Pettersson, when he made England his home.

Perhaps he met Eugenie Marrington because of his and her association with the sea. He was a seaman and the Marrington family owned and operated ships. Corder's histories of the families of Durham lists, "Marrington, Merrington, intermixed. Taken to try to trace John Marrington, partner with Kirkbride and Carruthers, shipbuilders, Ayres Quay in 1830 and later with Geo. Frater and Company launching small boats to 1840 and then gone. I cannot find him." The records identify Marrington families from the mid-1700's. At the turn of the century there were only a half dozen Marrington families in the Sunderland area among

which were the Peter, Matthew and John Marrington families. One of these families produced John Marrington, a marine worker, who married Ann Lacey.

It is claimed that Ann Lacey descends from a family that traces their ancestors to about 1200 when two brothers from France were given grants of land in southern England, and that this is the same family that traces its line to northern England with a branch to the Crown Colony of Virginia about 1611. Ann Lacey's uncle is supposed to be a General Lacey who served under Lord Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 and that his name is inscribed on the Lion Mount just outside of Brussels, Belgium.

Ann's father, George, did have three brothers. One of them died young, but perhaps one of the other two was the General Lacey mentioned. Her grandfather, Thomas, was a sailor, and her father, George, was a mariner.

Olof Niclas Pettersson married Eugenie Marrington at St. Paul's Church in Sunderland, England, on March 24, 1880. He still made the sea his occupation, but now Sunderland was his home. The family started increasing with the birth of his first son, Nicholas Peter, on October 15, 1881. Another son, John, arrived on October 5, 1884. With this added responsibility it wasn't long until he obtained his Master's license. The license is dated August 6, 1884.

In 1885 Olof and Eugenie were introduced to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Their conversion was not easy, but once made their commitment was total. Their decision to join the church changed their future.

Carl Emmanuel Pettersson describes his parent's conversion to the church as follows.

“His wife, Eugenie, having been brought up in Sunderland, England, had many friends from her childhood. Among these friends were Dorothy and Sarah Snaith. So close was this friendship that the children called them Aunt Dorothy and Aunt Sarah. Dorothy Snaith married Carl Immanuel Rindfleisch, who was also born in Sunderland. Carl Rindfleisch was an engineer and therefore was often away from home. Dorothy and Eugenie lived in the same two-family house, as very good friends. Eugenie visited with her friend Dorothy on Sunday evenings when cottage meetings were held in the home of the Rindfleisch family and thus became acquainted with Mormon missionaries. When Olof returned from a voyage he was somewhat alarmed at this new association with people of such low reputation. However, he also attended some cottage meetings, even though quite prejudiced. His close acquaintance with Carl Rindfleisch and his wife Dorothy was the reason for his willingness to investigate further into the teachings of these missionaries. Having been brought up a Lutheran during boyhood and singing in the choir as a youth, his desire for Christian learning had made him quite a student of the scriptures. His travels and studies had given him the knowledge to meet ministers of various faiths and ask questions that had never been answered to his satisfaction. The Mormon missionaries could give satisfactory answers to his questions and the added assurance of Carl Rindfleisch that these teachings were revealed through the restored gospel was cause for further investigation.”

Another son, Nicholas Peter Pettersson, describes

their conversion as follows.

“They lived in the same building as some people named West who were Mormons. He and his wife were invited to a social and went expecting the worst. He was amazed to find that these low people opened the social with prayer. They had some singing and fun and then he was really amazed that they closed the meeting with prayer, but he was still violently opposed to them. He moved to another house and by coincidence those people were also Mormons. He was not satisfied to stay there and so moved again, this time into a home occupied by Presbyterians. He was content to remain there. One day he and his wife were talking about the things they had heard the Mormons teach, and he got mad just talking about it. Finally, his wife asked him just what they had said that was wrong? He really got mad – he even threatened to leave her if she attended any more meetings – and he left the house in anger. He returned in about two hours and said he had been thinking about it and he couldn't remember anything wrong in their teachings. He looked up Brother West and studied tracts and scriptures and eventually was converted.”

As related by his son, Matthew Marrington Pettersson.

“Brother West was influential, although not so much as Brother and Sister Rindfleisch. Carl Rindfleisch, whom they called Manny, told of Olof's conversion in the following way, "Missionaries were conducting cottage meetings in the

Rindfleisch home and one night Olof and his wife attended a meeting. He left the meeting and returned to his own apartment. The missionaries came down and were introduced. He told them to get the devil out of there, that he didn't want anything to do with them. A tract was left and got into his sea bag which he took to sea on his next trip. He read the tract and asked Manny if that's what the Mormons believed in. When told yes, he said that's what he believed too."

Olof was baptized and confirmed a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on June 28, 1885. Eugenie became a member on July 12, 1885. When Olof was confirmed a member, he was told in his blessing that "The sea shall never swallow thee up." He was ordained a priest on April 6, 1886 and an Elder on December 12, 1886. Once he had accepted the gospel his entire life was dedicated to living up to the teachings of it.

At a conference held in the Oquirrh Stake some years ago, a son of Olof and Eugenie Pettersson, Matthew, was asked by Stake President Sutton if he was related to an English sea captain named Pettersson. When told that he was his father, President Sutton told of how faithful Olof had been back in England where the stake president had served on a mission. He told of how Olof would come to the mission headquarters after each trip and pay his tithing in gold. This is just one instance of his faithfulness. He served as a counselor to Thomas Varty, President of the Sunderland Branch, for a number of years, and through his contributions helped save the mission when serious thought was given to closing it down. The Thomas Varty mentioned was the



Olof and crew aboard ship

father of Emily Varty, who married Olof's son, Matthew Marrington Pettersson.

Olof and Eugenie desired to come to Utah. On March 11, 1903 Olof declared in Baltimore, Maryland, that he intended to become a citizen of the United States. He was admitted as a citizen on December 21, 1905.

He continued as a captain of British ships, having been appointed captain of the SS Leven on December 14, 1899, and captain of the SS Kirkby on December 13, 1900. It was during the time he was sailing on the SS Kirkby that he made an extensive study of the bible. He had a special bible bound with one blank leaf between the pages of the Old Testament and two blank leaves between the pages of the New Testament. He inserted on the blank pages the most appropriate translation for any passage of scripture that was in question. To accomplish this the Authorized Version of the bible was used with the blank pages inserted. The Swedish bible, the Revised Version of the English



Olof and crew on ship at the dock

bible, the Inspired Revision of the bible by Joseph Smith, parts from the Book of Mormon and the Pearl of Great Price were used. The periods of time when he was at sea which were free provided him with the opportunity to make this extensive study of the gospel. Hundreds of notes that he made indicate his desire for acquiring additional knowledge.

Work for the dead was another part of the gospel teachings that received his careful attention. He had a chart prepared, at considerable expense, containing the names of hundreds of his ancestors and their families. From this chart an excellent genealogical record has been developed.

Music was important in the Pettersson home. Olof showed an interest in music and was accomplished on the violin and harp. He often performed at church and



The Pettersson home in
Sunderland
Olof, Eugenie and Ann

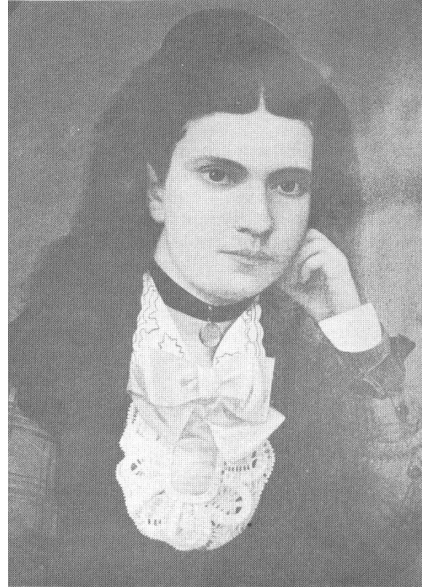
socials. And he had a keen ear for the music coming from the practicing of his daughters in the other room at home. Once, when Eugenie and Annie were practicing a selection that they were planning to perform, they made a decision to leave out a grace note, something most people would not notice. However, Olof noticed and enticed them to play the music as written. They practiced it to perfection. Second best was not good enough for a performance from one of the Petterssons.

Eugenie continued her quiet, progressive way of life, somewhat retiring but always looking after the interest of her husband and family. Whenever possible she would visit with her husband in the various parts of Great Britain and often countries on the continent. While yet in England they lived in a modern seven-room house in a new development of the town of Sunderland. In those days wives of the ship's officers would leave their homes and accompany their husbands on trips at sea. Her contributions to the advancement of the missionary work of the church and her desire to have her children advance were praiseworthy.

The last trip made by Eugenie to her husband's ship was in November of 1906 with two of the youngest children. On that trip Eugenie, Matthew and Carl

accompanied Olof on a trip to Glasgow, Scotland. Soon after that, on July 7, 1907, Olof served for the last time as master of British ships. The family he and Eugenie headed was starting to dwindle in size and they wanted to join the body of the saints in Utah.

John had arrived in New York on May 12, 1906 and was soon established as a resident of Brooklyn, New York. Nicholas, who had married Emma Jane Preston, had emigrated with his wife and daughter to Utah in October of 1907. Olof left his family in Sunderland on November 22, 1907 and arrived in Salt Lake City, Utah on December 9, 1907. Economic conditions in Utah were very poor. After a short stay in Nevada, where he operated heavy equipment, he returned to Salt Lake as a laborer, but eventually worked as an assistant to his good friend, Carl Rindfleisch, who was chief engineer at the Salt Lake Brewing Company. It was during this employment that his wife and four youngest living children arrived in Salt Lake City on August 21, 1910, having sailed from Liverpool, England on August 6th on the SS Cedric, a White Star Line ship and arrived at New York a week later. They stayed in New York about three days and visited with their son there while en route to Utah. The family home in England was sold at a great sacrifice to effect this move. The Pettersson family made their home at Eleventh East and Fifth



Eugenie Marrington
Pettersson

South Streets and attended the Thirty-third Ward.

Much of the temple ordinances for those hundreds, whose names had been gathered by Olof, was accomplished under the most trying circumstances. His work day consisted of twelve hours a day for six or seven days a week and left little opportunity to do this work, which was one of the main reasons for coming to Utah. However, it was under these conditions that he did many of the baptisms. After his long workday he would go to the temple and there be baptized for scores of his departed relatives.

Olof Niclas and Eugenie were sealed to each other on September 21, 1911 for time and for all eternity in the Salt Lake Temple. Their purpose for coming to Utah had now been satisfied.

The following year he was again unemployed, but through the efforts of his son, Matthew, and his former branch president, Thomas Varty, he obtained work with the Utah Copper Company at Arthur, Utah. He remained on this job, where he was expected to work 365 days a year on different shifts, until May 1915, when the call for experienced mariners caused him to return east.

He left Salt Lake on June 1, 1915 and arrived in New York on June 4, 1915. The following is quoted from his sea log, "On the seventh of June started school for an examination. On July fifth passed the examination for master, and received the license for master on that date." At sixty-four years of age he received a first-class master's license which he renewed in 1936 at the age of eighty-four which granted him license to sail any steam or motor powered ship in any ocean or inland waters. Once again Olof was the captain, but this time of American ships.

Eugenie returned east and settled in Brooklyn, New York, in August of 1915 and immediately set up another home.

Olof was an officer aboard ship in the army transport service when notified of the serious illness of his wife and he returned home to Brooklyn from Europe where he had been sailing during the war. He arrived in Brooklyn on May 16, 1918 and remained with his wife until her passing on July 16, 1918.



Captain Pettersson

Eugenie Marrington Pettersson died at the age of sixty-two years, three months and nineteen days and was buried in the Evergreen Cemetery.

After the death of Eugenie, Olof again sailed the seas as an officer or master on a number of ships. His spare time was devoted to gathering genealogy and he was in a position to have much of the work for the dead done. He arranged to have endowments done for hundreds of those whom he had baptized during his stay in Utah.

During the first world war he had many experiences of interest. One was witnessing the explosion of the SS MontBlanc at Halifax Harbor in which 1,500 men died and another 4,000 were injured. Another incident, which was published in the church missionary paper, occurred when his ship's steering gear broke down while in a convoy in the Atlantic. His ship was left behind. The French port to which they

were to report was heavily mined and the convoy was piloted in, ship by ship, by a French pilot who knew exactly where each mine was located. He steered his ship as best he could, arriving at the French port and entering the harbor and anchoring without touching a mine. No one would believe that he had come through the harbor without a pilot until they checked his story. He simply reminded them of a blessing he had received at the hands of an elder when he was confirmed a member of the church. In all the years he sailed as captain he never lost a man at sea. In one storm a man was washed overboard and then back on deck again. That was the closest any came to being lost at sea.

Aunt Eugenie said, "My father continued to sail the ships, and in February 1921 asked me to come to Salt Lake City from Winter Quarters as he was coming from New York to do a lot of sealings in the Salt Lake Temple and he wanted me to help him. So on the ninth, tenth and eleventh of February, and on the fifteenth, in 1921, my father and I had sealed about 100 parents together and over 300 children to their parents. I brought my two youngest children with me. Carl was four years old and my baby John William was three and a half months old so they stayed with a lady in the temple while father and I did these sealings."

He visited Sweden to gather further genealogy in 1922 and had all the work done for the new names he gathered. He had visited the temple in 1921 and finished up all the names he had. His last visit to Salt Lake was in 1937. He had been ordained a seventy on May 9, 1910 by Jonathon G. Kimball and a High Priest on June 20, 1931 by Rudger Clawson. The last years of his life were spent in taking his daily morning walk and reading at least three newspapers each day. He enjoyed receiving letters from his children and

grandchildren and answered each one on the typewriter up to the time of his last illness. Much time was also spent studying the gospel.

During the early 1900s temple work was recorded on accounting ledger sheets. These sheets were called a Temple Book. A copy of his Temple Book is in the possession of the author of this book.

Nicholas Pettersson describes the death of his father as follows.

“My testimony is that it is the word of God that we Latter-day Saints have embraced, and I know because of experiences that I've had in life where the Lord has blessed me. Even at times when I wondered why certain things took place, and thought, why has God forsaken me, only to find out afterwards that He knew what was coming and prepared the way that I would escape it and go forward in His work.

“I've had lots of experiences and I know of the experiences that my father had after he joined the church. He received a great blessing when he was confirmed a member of the church. A blessing to the effect that if he kept steadfast unto the gospel the sea would never swallow him up and that he would live until he was tired of his own life. He went through many a storm, many a time when he faced death, but the blessing proved true.

“When dad was ninety-six years of age, he was at my sister's home in New York, and the doctor told the family that he wouldn't last so very long, so we went back to New York. When we got there dad was still alive, thank goodness, and we four boys, we brothers, were all converts in this church, and we decided that we would administer to dad,



Carl, Eugenie, Matthew, Ann, John and
Nicholas

This picture was taken in October, 1947 when Olof's children were gathered at his last illness

which we did, and I recall that my youngest brother did the anointing and I did the sealing, and dad seemed to recover to a great extent.

"My sister had been with dad for quite a while when he was sick and she and the family wanted to go out for a while. I stayed with dad. The doctor gave me some medicine. I sat beside dad's bedside and talked to him for a while and he got pains again and I had to give him one of those pills to ease the pain, and he started to pray for Heavenly Father to take him. I realized then that the time was finished and that he was tired of his own life. He lived about four to five days afterwards. He said to me, "I'm going to see your mother pretty soon."

And I realized the time was coming. He said that he wanted to be buried on top of my mother. In those times they were buried on top of each other as they didn't have the land as they do here to bury alongside. My sister told me that that would be so and that's what would be done, if he passed away. I promised that I would see that's what would be done. He had a ring and said that he wanted it left on his finger. I think that it must have been a ring that



Olof Pettersson

mother gave to him. My mother died twenty-nine years before dad passed away and he never married again.”

Olof enjoyed excellent health most of his life. He went through a serious illness that lasted about five months around the turn of the century, but overcame that by adhering to a strict diet. He was hard of hearing in his later years, but was always interested in current events even up to three days before his death. After an illness of two weeks he passed away on October 9, 1947 at the age of ninety-six years. His six living children were gathered together for the first time in forty-three years at the time of his last illness.

Olof Niclas Pettersson was respected by all who knew him. Many members of the crew that sailed with him would stay with him for long periods of time. He believed in discipline, but his sense of fairness was dominant. As an example, one time his brother-in-law, Matthew, signed on his ship as a fireman. When told to work, Matthew said, "Do you think I'm crazy, my brother-in-law runs this ship, I'm not going to work my

head off." He was immediately fired by Olof.

Olof Niclas Pettersson died at the age of ninety-six years and four months. He was buried in the Evergreen Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York according to his instructions.

1. Much of the material in this chapter is taken from a sketch by Matthew Marrington Pettersson Jr., *Biography of Olof Niclas and Eugenie Marrington Pettersson*, (Magna, Utah: 8 June 1955)