

**S. M. HILL: EARLY CAREER IN AMERICA,  
1868 to 1884**

by  
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Knowledge is power, and if we Swedish-Americans shall not become hewers of wood and carriers of water for other nationalities, we must get knowledge. The men of Swedish descent have the same rights as those of English ancestry. The only problem is that we fail to take advantage of these ... This is a free country, and if you have no shoes, you will go barefoot—if no knowledge, you will be left behind.

—S. M. Hill in *Wahoo Bladet* (Dec. 1889).

SAMUEL MAGNUS HILL came to America with his parents and his sister, Augusta in 1868. The Hill family was but a tiny ripple on the vast stream of immigration which some believed would eventually depopulate Sweden. Young Sam was seventeen when he left his motherland, and his name held much of the family history in Sweden. Two uncles had been living in America for some time, and like many Swedish immigrants they had adopted a new family name, Hill.<sup>1</sup>

The first address of the Hill family in America was a familiar one in the cycle of Swedish immigration. Illinois was already the home of Uncle Anders and Uncle Gustaf. Letters announcing the arrival of Samuel Magnus and his family were postmarked from Berlin and Paxton, Illinois. Though far from his aging parents in Sweden, Samuel Magnus did not forget them, and his letters reflected a pious tone which must have come easily to him. He was “sorry that the illness of age beset them,” but he sought to comfort them by assuring them that the Lord would give “rest and blessings on the journey to eternity.”<sup>2</sup>

The cares of earth were more pressing to Samuel, the son, and eternity would have to wait while he was seeking work to pay for the family’s journey to America. The passage had put the family in debt, and young Sam assumed the major portion of this obligation.<sup>3</sup> Apparently his father had difficulty in adjusting to life in America. He took

comfort in writing about “eternity” and in thanking the Lord for what little health he would vouchsafe unto him in a land where heat was “frightful” and where so many landmen were dying because of the “intemperate climate.”<sup>4</sup>

The letters of young Sam, on the other hand, were replete with practical observations of a healthy young man adjusting rapidly to a new land. They read like a catalog of every day living in America. Thus, he was surprised to learn about building methods: “Everything goes as fast as lightning. Even building houses is fast, and a three or four room house is finished in two weeks.” He was astonished to find lumber so plentiful with the boards and framing timber cut to standard sizes for the carpenter’s use. He was fascinated by the “smoothly plastered walls.” He himself had found work in a harness shop, a job which paid twenty-eight dollars a month with board. Pay was very good in America. Hired girls received one to three dollars a week. Unlike the women in Sweden, American women seldom worked in the fields, but their life was burdensome even though it was spent inside, for their work was over hot stoves in warm kitchens. As for the reading habits of the Swedes in America, *Hemlandet* had all their loyalty: “If we recommend the other paper [probably *Svenska Amerikanaren*] as interesting, it only brings forth amusement.” Turning his attention to farming, Hill wrote that land around Paxton was expensive, selling for fifteen dollars an acre, and it was difficult for a man to get a start in farming because of the high cost of machinery.<sup>5</sup>

Since the exigency of securing the little family against debt and starvation descended upon young Sam at once, he took work where he found it. He knew what it was like to follow the reaper in the hot grain fields of Illinois. He also found employment with a painter. He chopped wood and helped to build new houses. In a real sense he learned what it meant for a Swedish immigrant to be a “hewer of wood and a carrier of water” for the Americans. Poverty in Sweden had kept him from obtaining an advanced education, so he had apprenticed himself to the harness making trade. After trying sundry jobs in America he drifted back to his old trade at a harness shop in Paxton, Illinois.<sup>6</sup>

He soon discovered that a knowledge of the English language was imperative for success in America. He had written in one letter that he would be able to make better wages as soon as he learned to speak English.<sup>7</sup> His work in the harness shop provided the sesame for him. He, being left alone to manage the place for a week, was forced to

engage in conversational adventures in the unfamiliar language. He had been practicing the written language by reading an English-Swedish Bible, and he also had found it helpful to attend an English speaking Sunday School. These experiments with a new tongue, however, had some unpleasant results, for certain Swedes considered it treasonable and snobbish to show any interest in an alien language.<sup>8</sup>

His increasing knowledge of American life and culture gave his letters a practical bent which displeased some of his pious friends in Sweden. Writing from Hill's old home in Slättna on January 14, 1871, Carl Jonsson, a friend of the family, chided young Sam:

Thanks for your letter ... I was really astonished because I expected to hear something about God's word and Jesus' love for poor sinners. But no! instead I only hear you speak about "what shall I eat and what shall I drink and wherewith shall I be clothed." You say you have been sick, but you don't mention that you need the healer Jesus. It shows that He is not known of the heart, for when the heart is full the mouth speaks. You say that you didn't get enough to eat in Sweden, but when you now have it so good in America, you should not speak about how poorly you had it in Sweden. I notice that you have it so good that you wouldn't change place with the richest nobleman in Sweden. You have all that you want to point your finger at without any work, so no wonder that you don't want to come back to Slättna ... As much as we have heard about America it is not necessary for you to praise it so greatly, for I believe that there are many who wish they were back in Sweden. In the meantime, may the Lord teach us a better song ... I will close with many greetings from all of us to you.

Attached to this letter was a postscript: "May God in His eternal love win His purpose with you." Other letters suggest the pietistic background which the Hill family had known among friends and relatives in Sweden. A sister of Samuel Magnus wrote on December 26, 1869: "By grace we are saved, not by works ... There is joy that we do not have to be saved by works; then I would be lost forever." An undated letter from another relative in Sweden pursued the same theme: "In poverty I was born, and in poverty I shall die. I never expect to see you any more until the time of grace when we can meet without any poverty."

Perhaps Hill was sparing in his use of the pious phrase in letters to friends in Sweden, but he was at times equally cautious in avoiding effusive praise of conditions in America. In an undated letter he advised moderation in evaluating his adopted land:

Work is as necessary here as it is in Sweden ... The Americans have their share of crime ... American women are lavish spenders in their determination to keep up with one another. The American girls are much more inclined to the coquettish arts than Swedish

girls, and they study this art daily.

This letter continued with some observations about the problem of finding good jobs in America. Although Hill had promised his friend (addressee unnamed) that he would try to find work for him, he was now writing to discourage him from emigrating in view of the unpromising prospects for employment.

On the other hand Hill was himself quite content in his adopted land and confessed to relatives still in Sweden that he had never suffered any homesickness.<sup>9</sup> In his opinion Sweden was a land where opportunities were strictly reserved for the upper classes. A major motif which recurs in Hill's writing and speaking found its way into this early correspondence. As he grew older, he became increasingly impatient with any society which tolerated a caste system of privileges. He attacked the aristocracy in Sweden, while in America it was the preponderance of prestige and privilege attached to the Anglo-Saxon culture which caused him to emit indignant protests. This antagonism toward the social and cultural elite conditioned much of his thinking. An undated fragment of a letter to Ryden, a friend in Sweden, indicates that Hill, while having some touches of nostalgia for "Swedish nightingales and walks along little streams," was nevertheless glad to be free of the injustices of the prevailing social order:

I wonder what will become of Sweden if emigration continues. Many come here angry with the lords and high taxes. If all the industrious people come to America, all the rich lords will have to take the spades in their pretty hands and till the ground themselves. They would have the poor workers work for nothing. The trouble is that the one who is poor can't get anywhere but is obliged to remain in the slavery which is found in our native land.<sup>10</sup>

Many years later Hill was admonishing Swedes not to fall into slavery in their new homeland: "Landsmen, what do you think, would you work for the Americans for fifteen cents a day?" This protest was Hill's response to a suggestion that white workers could compete with the cheap labor of Chinese coolies if they would adjust their wage levels downward.<sup>11</sup>

Among his personal papers Hill collected little anecdotes on the snobbery of the aristocrats. One story described the fate of a young gentleman who had entered a merchant's shop. Upon leaving he was asked to close the door, a chore which he believed inappropriate to his status. It required "a punch in the nose" to show the young aristocrat

the errors of his upbringing.<sup>12</sup> Again, with much relish Hill related how two students of the gentry had come to Paxton to attend Augustana College. They were rooming with Uncle Gustaf Hill. As winter came on, it was necessary to set the stove in their room, and it was left to the gentleman scholars to fit together the sooty stovepipe. With much clumsiness the inept artisans proceeded with the task, while Uncle Gustaf averred, “It won’t hurt a Swedish lord to get his hands dirty.”<sup>13</sup>

The formula out of which Hill’s beliefs and convictions were being fashioned was a compound of piety, poverty, and plebeian sentiments. These ingredients formed the hard reality of Hill’s heritage. Friends in Sweden wanted to come to America, but the question kept recurring in letters, “How will we get the money?” or “Who will pay for the ticket?”<sup>14</sup> Hill wrote that his own parents would not have been able to immigrate to America if the new legislation governing immigrants had been in force at the time, for they would not have had sufficient money to meet legal requirements.<sup>15</sup>

Tragedy played its role in the Hill family. Almost from the inception of the American adventure Samuel Magnus, the father, found few promises fulfilled in the new land. On one occasion he concurred completely with a friend’s appraisal of the situation: “You say that it is unfortunate that we came here, and I believe that you are right.”<sup>16</sup> Illinois, the first home in America, did not hold the Hills long. To make the move westward was the common experience which they and other landsmen shared. Having spent the better part of two years in the vicinity of Paxton, Illinois, the family joined the westward migration to relocate in Chariton, Iowa.<sup>17</sup> Samuel Magnus and young Sam accompanied “an American” driving a team overland to a new home in the West.<sup>18</sup> Uncle Gustaf Hill had already made the move to Iowa where he bought land in the Halland settlement.<sup>19</sup> His move probably encouraged Samuel Magnus to take his own family to Iowa. Poverty and death went with them to Chariton:

Father had sixty-five dollars, and with this we bought lumber to build a little house on a little land secured from farmer Sandahl, east of town. We dug a little hole for a cellar, and we then put up a shanty. Down at the brook we found a little spring. We had no toilet, but we put up a little wall behind some bushes. After a few weeks father took ill with brain fever.<sup>20</sup>

When Samuel Magnus Hill died, he had been in America scarcely two years. He had never shown any zest for the American enterprise. Maria Kristina, his wife, had been

completely won over to the idea of emigrating before leaving Sweden, but it is clear from a letter written by Grandfather Samuel Samuelson on November 4, 1870, that his son, Samuel Magnus, had left Sweden reluctantly:

I must thank Samuel Magnus [young Sam] for the letter dated September 30 which carried in it the sad news about the death of your father. We have been very, sad that we insisted that he should go to America ... When we received the letter from Samuel Magnus, our grief was great. Let us fly to the Lord while it is time, and rely upon Him. ... May the Lord reward you, Samuel Magnus, for all you have done for your parents and sister in a strange land.

The saga of family misfortune was not over. Unaware that the little spring by the brook was the source of contamination, the three surviving members lived on in the little house until they too contracted the same disease that had claimed the father. Before the illness had run its course, they had to turn to neighbors and to county relief for support. With the restoration of health the family moved into town where the shanty, which had been brought in from the country, was placed on a little plot of land. There the Hill family had its residence until 1880.<sup>21</sup>

Hill returned to his old trade in a harness shop at Chariton. His mother earned some money by hiring herself out in domestic service to local American families.<sup>22</sup> The family joined a newly organized Swedish Lutheran church where Sam became both the janitor and the organist. He admitted later that his musical talent for the organ was precious little since at the time he was not even able to read a musical score.<sup>23</sup>

This was the state of affairs in Chariton when the Methodists began their proselytizing to win over Swedish Lutherans like Hill. These Methodists prayed publicly for Hill, calling him “a dead Lutheran,” and when they engaged him in argument, Hill recognized that he needed greater knowledge to defend the Lutheran cause. This battle with the Methodists reminded him of an old promise, and he determined to secure for himself an education at Augustana College. A gentleman boarder had just come to live with the Hills in their little house, and his rent could help support the family, permitting Sam to attend school.<sup>24</sup>

In January, 1875, S. M. Hill enrolled at Augustana. He was twenty-four years old, and some of his teachers looked askance at his intentions to take up an academic career. They informed him that he was too old.<sup>25</sup> Despite such misgivings, Hill was able to

complete his work leading to a college degree by the spring of 1879.<sup>26</sup>

When Hill began his work at Augustana, the synod's school was still very small. There were seventy-five students enrolled, and a number of them had come directly from Sweden to study for the ministry at Augustana. Among these was E. A. Fogelstrom who had abandoned his life as a seaman after his conversion in an English seaport.<sup>27</sup> Hill and Fogelstrom, whose paths were to cross again years later at Luther, shared the same room with another student by the name of Johannes Lundquist. Hill cherished few tender memories about his old room mates as he reminisced some forty years later:

I was in the same room with E. A. Fogelstrom and Johannes Lundquist. They were heavy smokers, and since I had got a cold on my journey to Paxton, I lay awake half the night with a bad cough. My lungs could not stand the tobacco smoke. I dared not tell them that the smoke caused my cough, but I didn't have a high opinion of their consideration for other people. I was certain that I had greater misery from their smoking than they had joy from it. But all smokers are alike in that they don't have much consideration for the unpleasant results which they produce. Apparently the use of tobacco like alcohol robs a person of thoughtfulness. I have yet to meet a smoker who is in all parts a gentleman.<sup>28</sup>

On more than one occasion student Fogelstrom must have irritated his fellow student. His constant references to his "wild life on the sea" before his conversion and his "distinguished ancestry" annoyed Hill. Since Hill and Fogelstrom are so much a part of the early history of Luther, it is of interest to note Hill's characterization: "he [Fogelstrom] had high thoughts of his own abilities, excessive in this as in everything else."<sup>29</sup>

As a student Hill was always conscious of the age difference separating him from other students. Aside from this disadvantage, he believed himself equal to the challenge of matching wits with them:

I knew that ... they had started their classes the previous fall. This did not frighten me, for because of my experience in the folkschool in Sweden I believed I could catch up by spring — maybe stand at the head of the class. But I was twenty-four years old the day I matriculated, and my memory was not so good as it had been ten years before ... Also, during my last years in Sweden, I had read so much fiction that it had injured my capacity to remember. I caught up with all my school mates except one boy of fourteen ... A struggle it was, for I had to start with English, Swedish, German, and Latin grammar all at the same time, and I didn't have any idea of parts of speech like subjects ... Through reading in the parish libraries I was ahead of my class. As I had figured, I was ahead of them all before long.<sup>30</sup>

Some non-academic activities claimed a part of Hill's attention while he was in school. His interest in music caused him to join the Augustana Band, which musical group made several tours to advertise the school.<sup>31</sup> He was affiliated with a discussion club; however, this little debating society found it necessary to ban all religious subjects because of the heated controversies arising on campus out of the Waldenström movement.<sup>32</sup>

Life at Augustana was good training for someone destined to cope with the administration of a church school like Luther, poorly endowed and poorly supported. As in the case of Luther, Augustana in its early days had to rely largely upon free-will offerings. Teachers' salaries sometimes came out of this uncertain source. Furthermore, the boarding department of the school adopted a procedure later followed by both Luther and Bethany — namely, an appeal to congregations for gifts of food:

We students got food that we had not counted on when registering. Many complained to high heaven over molasses and similar items on the menu. I could eat almost anything if it was clean, so I didn't suffer. But those who came from the universities in Sweden suffered terribly when they had to live on a poor man's food. In Paxton some had their "mush-woman" to whom they went every evening to fill up on mush and milk. This "mush march" started before I came to Paxton ... They ate themselves fat, and this fat shortened their lives.<sup>33</sup>

Food might be one area for student criticism at Augustana, but the teachers also came under merciless scrutiny. During Hill's student days a so-called "Baron" Lagerbjelke, claiming to be a political refugee from Finland, had been taken on as a professor. The Baron found himself a fitting companion in another teacher by the name of P. E. Melin. These two professors lent credence to Hill's antagonism toward aristocrats in general:

Both of these men clearly belonged to what we in Sweden called the upper class. They conducted themselves in a manner that made us plebeians look up to them with admiration, for they seemed to represent the highest examples of Swedish culture. They probably were, for I never had a high opinion of the moral status of the Swedish upper classes.<sup>34</sup>

Another teacher who came under Hill's censure was Herman von Stockenstrom. He too was of the noble class. In fact, his father in Sweden had purchased a ticket for his son and had accompanied him to the ship to make sure that he got out of Sweden. Forced to terminate his career at Augustana,<sup>35</sup> Stockenstrom went into Minnesota politics. There in



Hill's opinion, he became a respectable citizen: "He came to America as a social wreck, but when he went through the wash several times, we made a decent person of him."<sup>36</sup>

Hill's experiences at Augustana prepared him for his future career as a teacher at Luther. He was never free from poverty during his student days. His mother and sister in Chariton were equally hard pressed. Their income was sharply reduced when they lost the rent from their boarder.<sup>37</sup> Augusta wrote her brother about the distress at home. Fortunately, their neighbors stood ready with helping hands, offering gifts of food and fuel. Although Augusta was attending school, she was not always able to find money for books.<sup>38</sup>

After graduating from Augustana Hill went to St. Peter, Minnesota, where he taught music and other subjects at Gustavus Adolphus for three years.<sup>39</sup> Shortly after his arrival Gustavus Adolphus tried an experiment in coeducation, perhaps the first venture of its kind in the Augustana Synod. This idea was taken up later at Bethany and Luther, and at last Augustana opened its classes to women. Nyquist and Hill, who were to be together again in Wahoo after the founding of Luther, observed the success of this pioneer experiment at Gustavus Adolphus. There was a romantic as well as a professional interest for Hill in that first class of young women. Julia Johnson, who had registered for the course, held a special attraction for him. As soon as he saw her, he knew that she must be his wife. They were married in 1882.<sup>40</sup>

At the time of his marriage a new field of service was challenging Hill. Articles in *Augustana* had made him keenly aware of the Mormon threat to Swedish immigrants.<sup>41</sup> Sam had discussed the idea with Julia before their marriage, and both agreed that he should offer his services to help the Augustana Church in Utah. Immediately following the wedding, they left Minnesota to spend their honeymoon in Illinois and to attend the annual meeting of the synod. It was at this meeting that Hill's appointment to missionary work in Salt Lake City was confirmed.<sup>42</sup>

Hill's mission in Utah assumed a two-fold purpose, social as well as religious. Officially he became a part of a crusade to save Swedish immigrant souls. The urgency of the task was set forth by synodical dictum. The Mormon creed was just another form of heathenism.<sup>43</sup> Thus, the original purpose of his missionary work was strictly religious, and if Hill ever demonstrated a tendency to fanaticism, it was in the Utah field. After

arriving in Salt Lake City, he began a series of articles for *Augustana* under the title, “Suckar från Sodom” (Sighs from Sodom). The most fanciful tales were printed under his signature. The Mormons were accused of exacting human sacrifice in their version of the “blood atonement.”<sup>44</sup> Many years after he had left the work in Utah Hill wrote:

A person can be very religious and still a rascal. They [the Mormons] travel over land and water to make a proselyte, and when they have him, they make him a child of the devil worse than themselves.<sup>45</sup>

But a second purpose almost as cogent as the first occurred to Hill as he worked among the Swedish converts to Mormonism. Because of their ignorance of the fate awaiting them in America, girls, according to Hill’s interpretation, were lured to Utah from their homes in Sweden, and among the Mormons they fell into a kind of slavery:

English speaking husbands take Swedish women for concubines so that they can assign them all the household burdens, while their first wives, who are Americans, live in ease.<sup>46</sup>

Such reflections stirred Hill’s social conscience and caused him to protest against an arrangement where Anglo-Saxons could trespass upon the rights of Swedes.

But the Utah assignment was arduous and unpromising. At the end of three months of work he was ready to admit that there were no shining results to report.<sup>47</sup> Aside from little success on the field itself, he could not escape the feeling that the work did not receive strong support from the *Augustana* Synod.<sup>48</sup> In such a mental impasse Hill was ready for the call to another field. It had come in the spring of 1883 when the board of directors had tendered him a teaching appointment at the new school in Wahoo. He welcomed the chance to escape the loneliness and disappointment assailing him in Utah:

When I came here I was promised that a pastor would come so that I would not need to stay here alone ... No one was heard from, and my friends became impatient. “A pastor will never come,” they kept saying ... It is now Christmas time and still no pastor ... The field is now empty [since he was leaving for Wahoo], so there is no longer any reason to ignore the call. This, I admit, is a desperate decision on my part, but if the mission shall not lose ground, it must have a man who has the confidence of the authorities of the synod ... When I came here a year and one half ago, it was my full decision to work with the grace which the Lord should give me. But this thought kept coming before me, “Your work is not here.” Then I was no good ... Out of 178 pastors in the synod not a single one is impelled by the love of Christ to come to break bread with the lost landmen in Utah. It is painful enough to leave the work which I have just begun ... Surely someone will come, especially the one called last. We are leaving our household goods and my books for him.<sup>49</sup>

The foregoing excerpt suggests the insecurity that Hill felt in Utah. Writing to Carl Swensson on April 26, 1884, he set forth his convictions explicitly:

The leading men of the church are planning to kill the mission field in Utah ... Before this time I thought that the leaders were opposed to the mission because of me personally, but now I know that they are opposed to the mission itself.

On several occasions in his career Hill sensed a disadvantage in working for the program of the church as a layman. The question of his ordination had arisen at the time of the Utah assignment, but he left this decision to “God and synod.”<sup>50</sup> The result was that he went to Salt Lake City as a layman.

Devious and instructive were the ways by which Hill finally reached Luther. He had known both poverty and piety of an immigrant family. His quest for knowledge took him to Augustana where he met as fellow students the men destined to be associated with him during his later career in Nebraska.<sup>51</sup> His first experiences in classroom teaching came at Gustavus Adolphus where he met J. P. Nyquist, who had moved to Nebraska in 1882, became an important figure in the early history of Luther, and he was serving on the board of directors when Hill was extended a call to teach in the spring of 1883. Meanwhile, Hill had been in Utah long enough to fix in his mind the dangers confronting an immigrant people who had to compete in a strange land without adequate knowledge. A school could do much to save the Swedes from religious apostasy and the loss of social and economic rights. Thus, Hill was to devote thirty years of his life in promoting education among Swedes in their own school at Wahoo.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> S. M. Hill, memoirs, 4. Hill's grandfather, who stayed in Sweden, was Samuel Samuelson. Hill's father was Samuel Magnus Samuelson. Hill's two uncles, already in America, were Gustaf and Anders, residing at Paxton and Berlin, Illinois. The uncles dropped the name of Samuelson in favor of Hill; hence, when Samuel Magnus and his family came to Illinois in 1868, they also assumed the new name. This information was substantiated through an interview with Gertrude Hill, the granddaughter of Gustaf Hill, in the fall of 1956.

<sup>2</sup> Samuel Magnus (Hill) to Samuel Samuelson (probably July 17, 1869). The Hill letters were not always

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dated precisely. Young Sam apparently wrote all the letters for his father, signing them with the name Samuel Magnus. His own letters were signed simply Samuel or Sam.

<sup>3</sup> The fare to America was 180 *riksdaler* per passenger, and the Hills had borrowed 600 *riksdaler* before leaving Sweden. See Samuel Magnus to Ryden, the letter dated June 28, 1868. Young Sam, writing to his grandfather and uncles in Sweden in the summer of 1870, explained how he had freed the family from this debt.

<sup>4</sup> Samuel Magnus (Hill) to an “old honored employer” (n.d.) Samuel Magnus never secured regular employment during his short sojourn in America, and after three years of what must have been a precarious existence he passed on to “eternity.”

<sup>5</sup> S. M. Hill apparently to his grandfather in Sweden (Feb. 18, 1868); S. M. Hill probably to an uncle in Sweden (n.d.).

<sup>6</sup> Hill, memoirs, 3-6.

<sup>7</sup> S. M. Hill probably to grandfather in Sweden (Feb. 18, 1869).

<sup>8</sup> Hill, memoirs, 67; S. M. Hill to *leksyster* (n.d.) *Leksyster* is Swedish for playmate. Hill wrote asking her to have her brother write to him in English since he wished to correspond in the language and was aware that some others might take offense at his determination to learn English.

<sup>9</sup> S. M. Hill to Grandfather Samuelson (summer, 1870).

<sup>10</sup> A similar idea occurs in a letter from Hill’s uncle in Sweden.

<sup>11</sup> *Till Verksamhet* (April 18, 1886). Like some other pioneers in the progressive movement Hill was inclined to favor some restriction on competition of Orientals with white workers. This attitude partly explains his opposition to the imperialistic policies of America at the turn of the century.

<sup>12</sup> S. M. Hill, notebook fragments (n.p., n.d.).

<sup>13</sup> Hill, memoirs, 7.

<sup>14</sup> Amanda Charlotta Hultine to S. M. Hill (Sweden, March 1, 1871); A. J. Anderson to S. M. Hill (Sweden, Feb. 15, 1869).

<sup>15</sup> Hill, memoirs, 5 - 6.

<sup>16</sup> Samuel Magnus Hill to Ryden (June 28, 1868).

<sup>17</sup> Samuel Magnus Hill to his parents in Sweden (July 17, 1870).

<sup>18</sup> Hill, memoirs, 8.

<sup>19</sup> S. M. Hill to relatives in Sweden (Oct., 1868).

<sup>20</sup> Hill, memoirs, 9.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>22</sup> Augusta Hill to S. M. Hill (Oct., 1878). Augusta was Hill’s sister.

<sup>23</sup> Hill, memoirs, 14. Hill evidently played by ear, for he had never taken any lessons.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 - 17.

<sup>25</sup> Hill wanted to enroll at Augustana upon arriving in America in 1868; however, the family debt for passage from Sweden fell on him. Thus upon entering Augustana he found himself older than fellow students, and in addition to this age problem he had to catch up on both academy and college training.

<sup>26</sup> Hill, memoirs, 18. Augustana awarded an honorary M. A. degree to Hill in 1886. See *Hemlandet* for March 17, 1886.

<sup>27</sup> *Korsbaneret* (Rock Island, 1911), 129 - 131.

<sup>28</sup> Hill, memoirs, 20.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 18 and 21. Evidently Hill, like Fogelstrom “had high thoughts of his own abilities.”

<sup>31</sup> Hill, memoirs, 36.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 42-43. It turned out, according to Hill, that both Lagerbielke and Melin indulged in much drinking and frequented questionable establishments while they were teaching at Augustana.

<sup>35</sup> According to Hill, Stockenstrom had been caught on a drunken spree. Apparently he had been thinking of the ministry. For Hill observed, “In Sweden drunkness was no bar to the pastorate, but in America it was different.” See Hill, memoirs, 44.

<sup>36</sup> Hill, memoirs, 36.

<sup>37</sup> Hill has left the following notation: “Tingstrom, a bachelor for whom mother used to wash, wanted to live with us . . . I discussed the matter with mother, and I told her that I had been seeking for a sign from

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God to open the way for me to go to school. She wept for joy and embraced me, the only time that I ever remember that she caressed me. 'God will give you the opportunity, my son.' So it was decided that Tingstrom should live with us and take care of affairs while I went to school. I even thought that he might become my step-father, but there was too much difference in years. After a while a deaconess came from Sweden, and he married her and moved to Chicago." See memoirs, 17.

<sup>38</sup> Augusta Hill to S. M. Hill (Chariton, Ia., March 24, 1877; May 22, 1879). Hill himself was able to continue at Augustana because he was given free tuition, and he also made some money through private tutoring in Latin. See memoirs 19.

<sup>39</sup> Hill, memoirs, 63 and 70 - 71.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 70 - 71.

<sup>41</sup> Cf., *Prairie Grass Dividing*, Ch. III, p.51.

<sup>42</sup> Hill, memoirs, 78-79. Prior to his actual appointment by the synod Pastor J. Telleen, who was in charge of missionary work among Swedes in the West, had issued the following call to Hill: "Now get ready to go away from Your relatives and your father's house into a land which God will show you. I thank God who has directed you to go. You can now realize an inner calling, and you will be a missionary to a hard and stony people." The letter was dated April 4, 1882.

<sup>43</sup> Cf., *Prairie Grass Dividing*, Ch. III, p.83; p.51.

<sup>44</sup> *Augustana* (August 30, 1882).

<sup>45</sup> Hill, memoirs, 89 - 90.

<sup>46</sup> *Augustana* (Sept. 26, 1883).

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* (Oct. 25, 1882).

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* (August 1, 1883).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* (Jan. 2, 1884). Hill came late in the school year because he had delayed his departure for Wahoo with the hope that another missionary would be appointed to replace him in Utah.

<sup>50</sup> Hill, memoirs, 79. The Augustana Synod through special decisions could confer ordination on lay preachers even though they had not pursued formal seminary training. Hill was eventually ordained in this way in 1917 when he answered a call to a parish in Colton, Oregon. See Sandahl, *Nebraska Conference History*, 366.

<sup>51</sup> In the student body of Augustana were such later leaders as Carl Swensson, John Torell, C. J. E. Haterius, E. A. Fogelstrom, and Jonas Nordling.