
Svea V. Lindquist and Helga Olson Papers

M. Carey

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Svea V. Lindquist and Helga Olson Papers

Collection number: MS 331

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Svea V. Lindquist and Helga O. Olson papers

Dates: 1875-1991

Collection number: MS 331

Creator: Lindquist, Svea V.

Creator: Olson, Helga O.

Collection Size: 2 boxes

Repository: University of California, Santa Cruz. University Library. Special Collections and Archives
Santa Cruz, California 95064

Abstract: This collection contains biographical material, correspondence, photographs and information about "The Rock Garden Nursery" in San Mateo, CA.

Physical location: Stored in Special Collections & Archives: Advance notice is required for access to the papers.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access

Collection open for research.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

Svea V. Lindquist and Helga O. Olson papers. MS 331. Special Collections and Archives, University Library, University of California, Santa Cruz.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Roy and Francis Rydell

Biography

Svea Victoria Lindquist was born in Gotenburg, Sweden in 1881. She was from an affluent family and attended private school where she met Helga Ottila Olson. Svea studied landscape gardening and apprenticed in gardens in Gotenburg, Helsinki, and England from 1894-1912. In 1916 she came to the United States for a visit and stayed to take a position as governess. By 1921 she was in Maine working as governess for the Robert Law family.

Helga's family manufactured shoes in Gotenburg. She also studied landscape gardening in Europe. In the early 1900s, Helga came to the United States, to visit a brother who raised strawberries on Bainbridge Island near Seattle and decided to stay.

By 1925 the ladies had reunited and were living in California, in the San Francisco peninsula. They had become gardening consultants for wealthy clients who owned estates in the San Mateo area. In the 1930's they established "The Rock Garden Nursery" in San Mateo. They exhibited at the Golden Gate International Exposition on Treasure Island in 1939-1940 where

they earned a Certificate of Merit.

In 1943 Svea and Helga moved to Santa Cruz County, where their friends, the Laws, were living at Lawridge Farm and breeding polo ponies. They settled into the Landreth Errington house on the Lawridge Farm with life tenancy granted by Robert Law. In 1948, they met Roy and Francis Rydell who were in the area looking for a caretaker's job. The ladies asked the Laws if they could use another set of hands. The Laws agreed and the Rydells settled into the guest house "Cowslip" where they stayed for a year and a half until 1952-53. Svea and Helga introduced Roy to their gardening clientele on the peninsula where they were still engaged as gardening consultants. Roy, then a struggling young artist, became a landscape architect through the efforts and training of these two ladies.

Svea and Helga lived and gardened at the "Little Farm House" until 1973 when Svea died. Helga had died in 1971.

Scope and Content of Collection

This collection contains biographical material, correspondence, photographs and information about "The Rock Garden Nursery" in San Mateo, CA.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Lindquist, Svea V. (Victoria)--Archives

Olson, Helga O. (Ottilia)--Archives

Landscape gardening

California--Scotts Valley--Santa's Village

box-folder 1:1	History of Santa's Village Property (photocopy) 1991
box-folder 1:2-3, 5; 2:1-2, 5	Svea Lindquist ca. 1875-1969
box-folder 2:1	Biographical material Ca. 1898-1947
box-folder 2:1	Elementaskola report card 1898
box-folder 2:1	Passport 1916
box-folder 2:1	"Nésby-Visan" - sheet music ca. 1907
box-folder 2:1	Temporary Drivers License 1947
box-folder 1:2	Correspondence Ca. 1920-1969
box-folder 1:3	Letters of Recommendation Ca. 1894-1912
box-folder 1:5	Photo Postcards - family, gardens (blank) Ca. 1910-1969
box-folder 2:2	Photographs - album pages Ca. 1890-1916
box-folder 2:5	Svenska Familj Journalen 1875
box-folder 1:6-8; 2:4	Helga Olson ca. 1916-1973
box-folder 1:6	Correspondence ca. 1916
box-folder 1:7	"Bollnäs 1914-1916" - photo album ca. 1914-1916
box-folder 1:8	"Fotografier" - photo album ca. 1900-1916
box-folder 2:4	Photographic portraits by Robert Law ca. 1960-1971
box-folder 1:4	"The Rock Garden Nursery", Misses Ollins Ca. 1930-1960
box-folder 1:9	Photographs (b/w, color) ca. 1900-1973
box-folder 1:10	Plant Catalogs ca. 1934-1950
box-folder 2:3	Certificates of Participation and Certificate of Merit for "The Rock Garden Nursery", Golden Gate International Exposition, Treasure Island, CA 1939-1940