

# Rags To Riches Story Of Pioneer Hanson

By ERIC SANDERSON

The blue and yellow flag of Sweden hangs at half mast today over the Consulate office on Third Avenue. It tells the world that Olaf Hanson—an immigrant boy who rose from poverty to prosperity—is dead.

The 70-year-old Swedish Consul for Prince Rupert and the Yukon, member of Parliament or Skeena constituency for 15 years, and successful businessman in the north country, died in Vancouver General Hospital Wednesday night.

Mr. Hanson is believed to have suffered a stroke while in Vancouver and was taken to hospital on May 25. He left here on May 22 for Washington, D.C., to attend a meeting of the International Fisheries Commission of which he was a director.

One of the best known men in northern and central British Columbia, he spent his last two days here greeting friends in his office at 315 Third Avenue West.

He said at that time that he was feeling much better after an illness that struck him about a year ago, but he planned to take things easy.

Mr. Hanson left his office in shipshape condition before departing. Everything was in order.

It was on May 21 that Mr. Hanson recalled in conversation on the steps of his office that he had been appointed Swedish Consul for B.C. exactly 32 years ago.

The diploma naming him Consul, dated May 21, 1920 and signed by the late King Gustaf VI of Sweden, is hanging in his office.

Another certificate, signed by the late King George V, offers him special privileges in Canada, and a third diploma, signed by the late King George VI, announces his appointment as Consul for the northern region.

## First Job as Chore-boy In Spokane

Mr. Hanson was born at Tanas, Sweden, and as a youth of 18, slight of build, of medium height, with a sharp-featured keen face set out to seek his fortune in a new and foreign land.

After reaching America, he found his way to Spokane where he found work as a chore boy, taking care of a team of horses for a well-to-do citizen, for which he received room and board.

That was all he needed while he went to school to learn to speak English. He devoted three years to this task and after completing his schooling turned his eyes to Canada.

In 1904, Olof Hanson was duly recorded as a homesteader on a quarter section of land near Manville, east of Edmonton.

For three years he worked hard and long to finance his homestead. In 1906 he found employment producing ties and other material for construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway (now the C.N.R.) and before long was taking on small contracts. The money helped him carry the burden of improving his farm.

## He Walked 800 Miles To the West Coast

Then in 1907, the pioneer spirit led him across the Rockies. At that time the railway surveys across B.C. were almost

not started and so, with no other means of transportation, he proceeded on foot.

A young, healthy man, he followed the railway survey walking the 800 miles from Stony Plain, Alberta, to Hazelton.

His journey of many hardships proved itself a source of profit as he decided to enter the timber business. With his previous experience and record, he had no difficulty obtaining a contract to supply timber products for construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific.

About that time Prince Rupert had been selected as the Pacific terminus of the railway and Hanson who had been here before the townsite was surveyed decided to make his headquarters in Prince Rupert when railroad construction began here in 1909.

He had established the Hanson Lumber and Timber Company at Smithers, which he directed up to his death, and many other lumber companies.

Financing his operations was a great problem, but his patient and persistent effort and unfaltering courage and optimism led him to success.

## Pioneered Lumber Industry in the North

Always mindful of the hardships he had gone through, Mr. Hanson dealt extensively with settlers and sub-contractors, many of whom he helped to finance, and built a tremendous business supplying material to the railway.

He always kept in close touch with all his manifold undertakings and it wasn't long after he settled here that he went into partnership in a real estate, insurance and brokerage business with the late John Dyb-

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## Rains Help Prairie Farms

WINNIPEG—Good rains during the past week have improved crop prospects throughout the three prairie provinces.

Rains were particularly welcomed in southern sections of Manitoba and Saskatchewan where little or no precipitation had occurred since April, according to the weekly crop report of the department of agriculture of the Canadian National Railways.

Seeding is practically completed except for low spots in scattered areas. Isolated cutworm and wireworm damage is reported and odd reports of grasshopper activity are noted in southeastern Manitoba. However, in the overall picture, damage from these sources is insignificant.

Ideal growing conditions continue in the Okanagan Valley where weather has been hot with few showers. Tree fruits report very favorable crop prospects with peaches, apricots and cherries from 75 percent to 100 percent increase over last year.

Present apple crop prospects indicate between 6½ million and 7 million boxes.



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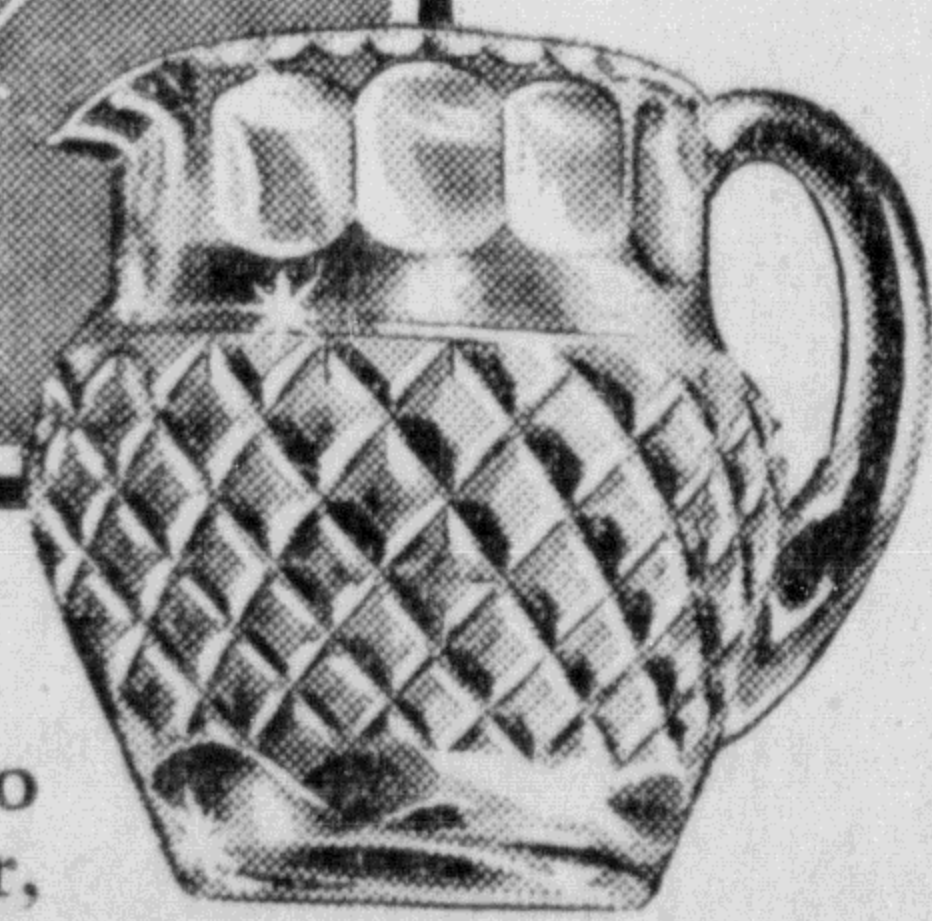
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