
Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center

FINDING AID

John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois records, 1934-1962

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Collection Title:	John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois records
Collection Number:	I/O 21
Dates:	1934-1935, 1948, 1953-1962, undated (<i>bulk</i> 1955-1958)
Size:	2 boxes and 2 folders in an oversized box (.66 linear feet)
Language:	English
Creator/Collector:	Lofgren, George C.
Subject Headings:	John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois John Ericsson Republican League of Knox County Swedish-American Republican League of Illinois Ericsson, John, 1803-1889. Illinois--Politics and government--20th century. Swedish Americans--Illinois--Knox County Republican party (U.S. : 1854-) Gustav V, King of Sweden, 1858-1950
Repository:	Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center, Augustana College, Rock Island, IL
Abstract:	<p>The John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois (first named the Swedish-American Republican League of Illinois) was organized and incorporated in 1894 in order to exert a Scandinavian-American influence on American politics. The league held an annual convention and banquet on or around March 9 in celebration of John Ericsson Day. Leading Republicans have attended and addressed League conventions, including President William Howard Taft in 1912.</p> <p>These materials were likely accumulated by George C. Lofgren of Galesburg, IL during his involvement with the League. He served as League president in 1957. Of note are the programs from the League's</p>

annual conventions and a letter from King Gustav V of Sweden from 1912.

RIGHTS AND ACCESS

Conditions Governing

Access: Collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation: [item identification], in I/O 21 John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois records, Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center, Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois

ACQUISITION AND RELATED MATERIALS

Provenance: King Gustav V of Sweden letter transferred to the Swenson Center by Marjorie Miller of Denkmann Memorial Library, Augustana College in fall of 1981. It is unknown when the other materials were donated to the Swenson Center. It is likely they came from George C. Lofgren.

Location of Copies: Reproduction of King Gustav V of Sweden's letter to League can be found in The Swedish Element of Illinois by Ernst W. Olson, 1917, page 342.

Digital reproductions of some of the photographs from this collection are available online at <http://augustana.pastperfectonline.com/>

Related Materials: *Monitor News*; MSS 376 John Ericsson papers, Special Collections, Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois

Processed By: Processed by SSIRC staff. Revised by Lisa Huntsha, May 2016.

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

Administrative/Biographical

History:

The John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois (first named the Swedish-American Republican League of Illinois) was organized and incorporated in 1894 in order to exert a Scandinavian-American influence on American politics. On December 4, 1894, after numerous advisory meetings, a meeting was held in Chicago of leading Republicans of Swedish descent from the counties of Cook, Henry, Knox, Rock Island, Will and Winnebago. The group was incorporated on December 31, 1894. First officers were Edward C. Westman of Chicago, president; Hjalmar Kohler of Moline, vice president, Will S. Hussander of Chicago, secretary; A. L. Anderson of Andover, treasurer.

The League held an annual convention and banquet on or around March 9 in celebration of John Ericsson Day. This day was to honor Captain John Ericsson, Swedish-American engineer and inventor best known for his creation of the Union ironclad warship *U.S.S. Monitor*, which defeated the Confederate ironclad warship *U.S.S. Merrimac* in a naval battle on March 9, 1862. This battle was instrumental in securing a Union victory in the Civil War. The first League convention was held on March 9, 1895 in Chicago.

The League endeavored to publish a small paper concerning its political interests. In 1895, the League published the first, and only, issue of *Monitor News*, with G. Bernhard Anderson as editor.

In 1905, the League founded the John Ericsson Monument Association of Illinois, headed by Dr. Gustav Andreen, with the object to build a monument in Illinois to the memory of John Ericsson. This project was never realized, however. Monuments to John Ericsson exist in Battery Park, New York City and on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

In 1918, the group changed its name to the John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois.

Over the years, leading Republicans have attended and addressed League conventions and banquets, including President William Howard Taft in 1912, Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives Warren L. Wood, Illinois Governor William G. Stratton, United States Senator from Illinois Everett M. Dirksen, and Secretary of the Navy Charles J. Bonaparte.

These materials were likely accumulated by George C. Lofgren of Galesburg, IL. Lofgren was born February 22, 1900 and died December 1962. He was elected president of the League in 1956 and served during 1957.

For more information on the League and Swedish-American political activities in Illinois, see: [The Swedish Element in Illinois](#) by Ernst W. Olson, 1917.

Scope and Content:

The John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois records, 1934-135, 1948, 1953-1962 and undated, contains records and papers likely generated by George C. Lofgren during his time associated with the League, particularly during his presidency during 1957. Of note are the programs from the League's annual conventions, particularly during the 1950s. Also represented are newspaper clippings related to the League's and Republicans' activities. The collection is arranged into five series.

The Correspondence series (1953-1960) contains letters concerning matters of the League, particularly to and from George C. Lofgren, with Herbert Friedlund, Bernard Schimmel of Hotel Custer, and others. Also contains correspondence related to the executive committee of the League.

The Resolutions, Speeches and Press series (1912-1960, undated) contains the transcripts from speeches read at annual conventions and resolutions commending prominent Republicans adopted by the league.

Of note is a letter from King Gustav V of Sweden written to the League on the 50th anniversary of the 1862 Battle of the *Monitor* and *Merrimack* in 1912.

The Programs, Pamphlets and Ribbons from Meetings and Events series (1901-1962, undated) contains mostly programs from League annual conventions, but also tickets, flyers and ephemera from League and other Republican group activities.

The Newspaper Clippings series (1934-1962, undated) contains newspaper clippings related to the John Ericsson Republican League and the Swedish Pioneer Centennial of 1948 from Illinois newspapers, particularly Galesburg.

The Photographs series (1948, 1955, 1957, undated) contains photographs of conventions and banquets and from Prince Bertil's visit during the Swedish Pioneer Centennial of 1948.

System of Arrangement:

The collection is arranged into five series. Items in each series are arranged chronologically.

- I. Correspondence
- II. Resolutions, Speeches, and Press
- III. Programs, Pamphlets and Ribbons from Meetings and Events
- IV. Newspaper Clippings
- V. Photographs

Collection Inventory:

Box 1

I. Correspondence

George C. Lofgren, 1953-1957 (all letters to or from George C. Lofgren)

George C. Lofgren, 1957-1958 (all letters to or from George C. Lofgren)

Executive Committee, etc. 1954-1960

II. Resolutions, Speeches, and Press

Letter from the King Gustav V of Sweden to Republican League 50th Anniversary, 1912

Swedish Pioneer Centennial, Chicago Events, 1948

Committee on Resolutions, history of organization and resolutions, Kewanee, 1955

Resolution commending achievements of Governor William G. Stratton, 1956

Executive Committee name and address list, 1956

Resolution, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois, Chicago, 1956

Press Release, Resolutions of Executive Committee Meeting, Joliet, 1956

Agenda, Executive State Meeting, Swedish Club, 1957

Illinois Senate Joint Resolution No. 18, commending League members, 1957

Greeting, 63rd Annual Convention by President George C. Lofgren, Galesburg, 1957

Resolution commending Dwight D. Eisenhower and William G. Stratton for their work for the Republican Party, Knox County League convention, 1957

Resolution to departed members of League, Knox County League

Speech by Honorable Joseph Peterson, State Senator of Princeton, at Galesburg, 1957

Scandinavian Luncheon Group, Governor Stratton, Herbert R. Friedlund, 1957

Treasurer's Annual Report, 1960

List of persons present at meeting regarding Herbert R. Friedlund's candidacy for State Treasurer, undated

III. Programs, Pamphlets and Ribbons from Meetings and Events

In Memorandum, William McKinley 1843-1901 ribbon, Galesburg, 1901

Program in honor of Prince William of Sweden, Hotel Custer, Galesburg, 1927

Custer for Governor Day ribbon (Omer N. Custer), Galesburg, 1932

Platform Address, Omer N. Custer Republican Candidate for Governor, Galesburg, 1932

George Washington Bicentennial Celebration, Labor Day Program, Knox County, 1932

John Ericsson Republican League Knox County Annual Meeting and Banquet program, Galesburg, 1934

40th Anniversary Banquet, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois, Rockford, 1934

Souvenir Program of the First Annual Conclave of Western Illinois Swedish and Swedish Americans, Galesburg, 1934

Voter reminder card for Geo. C. Lofgren, Candidate for Alderman 4th Ward, People's Party, 1935

John Ericsson Republican League of Knox County, Annual Meeting and Banquet program, Galesburg, 1935

41st Annual John Ericsson Day Banquet program, Rock Island, 1935

42nd Anniversary Convention booklet, Galesburg, 1936

John Ericsson Republican League of Knox County Annual Meeting and Banquet program, 1940

Jenny Lind Chapel Morning Service program, Andover, 1948

Swedish Pioneer Centennial, Centennial Breakfast, Hotel Custer, Galesburg, 1948

Swedish Pioneer Centennial Committee ribbon, Galesburg, 1948

57th Annual Convention, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois brochure, Elgin, 1951

57th Annual Convention, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois program card, Elgin, 1951

John Ericsson Republican League of Knox County, Annual Meeting and Banquet program, Galesburg, 1952

58th Annual Banquet, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois booklet, Chicago, 1952

59th Annual Banquet, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois booklet, Moline, 1953

Moline to Have 59th Convention John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois flyer, 1953

Swedish Pioneer Days program, Chicago, 1953

60th Annual Convention John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois program card, Joliet, 1954

60th Annual Convention John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois booklet, Joliet, 1954

60th Annual John Ericsson Day Banquet booklet, Joliet, 1954

61st Annual Convection John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois booklet, Kewanee, 1955

61st Annual Convention John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois program card, Kewanee, 1955

61st Annual John Ericsson Day Banquet booklet, Kewanee, 1955

Ticket for John Ericsson Republican Club of Winnebago County Annual Meeting and Dinner, 1956

John Ericsson Republican League of Knox County Annual Meeting and Banquet program, Galesburg, 1956 (signed by William G. Stratton)

62nd Annual Convention John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois program card, Chicago, 1956

62nd Annual John Ericsson Day Banquet booklet, Chicago, 1956

62nd Annual Convention, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois flyer, Chicago, 1956

Ticket to Inaugural Ceremonies State Officers Elect event, Springfield, 1957

Inaugural Ceremonies of the State Officers Elect invitation, Springfield, 1957

Inaugural Ball invitation, Springfield, 1957

63rd Annual Convention, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois program card, Galesburg, 1957

John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois Committee ribbon, Convention, Galesburg, 1957

Registration card, John Ericsson Republican League of Knox County, Galesburg, 1957

Ticket for John Ericsson Day Banquet, Galesburg, 1957

63rd Annual John Ericsson Day Banquet booklet, Galesburg, 1957

Gala Days in Galesburg flyer, 63rd Annual Convention, 1957

The American Swedish Monthly magazine featuring an article about John Ericsson and the 50th anniversary of the John Ericsson Society in New York, 1957

64th Annual Convention, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois program card, Rockford, 1958

Rockford invites you to the 64th Annual Convention flyer, 1958

64th Annual Convention John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois booklet, Rockford, 1958

Guest List up to April 21, 1958

50th Birthday Dinner in Honor of Herbert R. Friedlund, Swedish Club of Chicago, 1958

Republican Delegate Knox County State Convention ribbon, 1958

Republican State Convention Delegate ribbon, Geo. C. Lofgren, Galesburg, 1958

Annual Roundup and Golf Outing ticket, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois, Hinsdale, 1958

Illinois Republican State Convention 101st Session Celebrating the opening of a New Century of Progress program, Galesburg, 1958

Lincoln-Douglas Debate Centennial 1858-1958 program and booklet, Galesburg, 1958

65th Annual Convention, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois Banquet program, St. Charles, 1959

Ticket for the Go for '60 Dinner, United Republican Fund of Illinois, Chicago, 1960

Dinner with Ike (Dwight D. Eisenhower) program, Chicago, 1960

Ticket for the Swedish Club of Chicago Song Sillfrukost [herring breakfast], 1960

Ticket for the Annual Lincoln Day Dinner, Galesburg, 1960

Ticket for the John Ericsson Republican League of Knox County Annual Meeting and Banquet, Galesburg, 1960

Annual Banquet Meeting John Ericsson Republican League program, Galesburg, 1960

Identification badge, Geo. Lofgren, Knox, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois, 1960

66th Annual Convention, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois program card, Chicago, 1960

66th Annual John Ericsson Day Banquet booklet, Chicago, 1960

DuPage and Cook Calling 66th Annual Convention flyer, Chicago, 1960

Republican State Convention Delegate ribbon, Geo. C. Lofgren, Decatur, 1960

Republican State Convention 102nd Session program, Decatur, 1960

67th Annual Convention, John Ericsson Republican League of Illinois, Kewanee, 1961

Smörgåsbord ticket, 1962

Rotary International Reception Committee ribbon, undated

20th Century Railway Men's Club, Galesburg, undated

IV. Newspaper Clippings

Newspaper clippings related to the John Ericsson Republican League and related events.

Years: 1934, 1935, 1948, 1955-1962, and undated.

Papers: Galesburg Register-Mail, The Daily Register-Mail (Galesburg, IL), Chicago Sunday Tribune, Aurora Beacon-News, Peoria Journal-Star, The Rock Island Argus, Rockford Morning Star, and unknown papers.

Also includes photocopies of newspapers clippings on archival paper.

Some clippings in oversized box

V. Photographs

PH 1-37, 39-42: Photographs of conventions and banquets, 1955, 1957, undated

PH 38, 43-48: Photographs from Prince Bertil's visit, Swedish Pioneer Centennial, 1948

Individuals photographed include:

Carl Ahline, Albert Anderson, Eric Anderson, Eric Axelsen, Ragnar Benson, Harold R. Blomstrand, Fred Bostrom, Oliver Bovik, Russel Carlson, Charles Carpentier, Mrs. Carpentier, Emil Dahlberg, John Philip Dahlberg, John J. Dahlberg, U.S. Senator Everett Dirksen, Lambert Engdahl, Robert Ericson, Russell Ericson, Roy Erickson, Herbert Friedlund, William Gwynn, John Halden, Rog Harding, Elmer Hoffman, N. Chris Jargensen, Ralph B. Johnson, George Larson, Richard Larson, George Lofgren, Mrs. George Lofgren, Carroll H. Nelson, Alfred Nystrom, Clifford Ostrom, C. Henning Peterson, L. Victor Peterson, Charles Rosberg, Elroy Sandquist, Governor William Stratton, Mrs. William Stratton, Chan West, Mrs. Chan West, Prince Bertil of Sweden

Locations include: Galesburg, Chicago, Kewanee, unknown

PH 43-48 in oversized box