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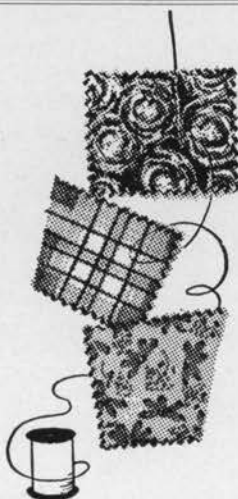
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Svens

by Mary Kay Pitzer

AMERICA is the country of cowboys, divorces, gangsters and cocktail parties. At least that's the picture American movies have painted for the people of Sweden, and Marcia Gaston Hadachek, a 4-H exchange student there last summer, had the job of helping to re-educate them.

Marcia, '49 graduate of Iowa State, was a member of the International Farm Youth Exchange, a program to promote better understanding between the rural young people of different countries.

Each county in Iowa selected a candidate for the youth exchange and from that group Marcia was one of two chosen to represent the state by members of the Iowa State College staff, the Extension Service and the Iowa Farm Bureau. To finance the trip, state 4-H clubs and the Rural Young Peoples' organizations raised \$1,000 to cover each delegate's expenses.

For 13 weeks Marcia lived on two typical Swedish farms. "At first," she explains, "my hosts thought I was there just to learn to cook and keep house the Swedish way, and they gave me plenty of chances to learn by experience. In spite of language barriers in the first farm, I had no difficulty in learning the Swedish words for dishpan and mop."

"However," Marcia continues, "living as an actual member of the household gave me a much better opportunity to observe the people and their way of life than if they had treated me as an honored guest."

5 Meals a Day

Five meals a day is the accepted thing in Sweden and this new practice added 15 pounds in a hurry, Marcia soon learned. Coffee is served daily at 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. along with a large selection of breads and cookies.

We've all heard about certain Swedish culinary specialties, but Marcia believes that American meals with their abundance of vegetables offer more variety than Swedish cooking. A famous Smorgasbord begins with bread followed by a serving of fish. The second course consists of more bread, this time eaten with meat. Then after more bread and salad, followed by bread and cheese, it's time to begin the actual meal of meat and potatoes.

* Swedish Home

Five meals a day, washings twice a year.

That's what Marcia Gaston Hadachek

found when she visited a

ka Hemmma *

Swedish coffee parties are held on birthdays and are occasions that call for food in quality and quantity. The hostess' idea is to serve as many different kinds of cookies and cakes as possible, and no self-respecting homemaker would think of serving less than seven or eight varieties. In return the guests are expected to heap their plates again and again to show their appreciation.

"Blue Mondays are practically non-existent in Sweden," Marcia reports, "for household washings are done only twice a year. Before a girl marries she probably will have woven and made at least 12 dozen hand towels, 12 dozen dish towels and 3 dozen sheets to keep her well supplied for 6 months at a time. Personal washings are done about every 2 months so each person must be well supplied with clothes, too."

More Languages Taught

Swedish children have two more years of freedom from teachers and books than their American contemporaries, for they start to school at the age of seven. However, they seem to make up for lost time. During grade school they have 4 years of English, 3 years of German and 2 years of French. "I felt a little subnormal telling them that I could speak only English," Marcia admits.

Most rural children attend school only for the 7 years of grade school although they may go on to a high school in a larger town for 3 or 4 years. For higher education they go to the gymnasium (comparable to our junior college) and then to the university.

Instead of going on to high school, most farm young people attend farming or homemaking schools when they are 18 years old. "The courses in these schools are practical, not technical," Marcia explains. "Chemistry and physics do not play the important role they do in our curriculum. Instead cooking, weaving, meal planning and gardening are emphasized."

If a girl wishes to teach home economics in one of these schools she must first practice in a home for 6 months and then attend a homemaking school for 2 years. Following this she must work in actual homes, this time for 2 years, to really have practical training in what she learned at school. By the time a girl is ready to teach, she is at least 23. The Swedish people found it hard to believe that Marcia was a college graduate and eligible for a teaching job at the age of 21.



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