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My Story by

HANS EDWARD ISAACSON

Autobiographical notes as written by him
Copied by his grandson Stanley Lokken from Hans' handwritten text.

The original pages were found October 18, 1998
while cleaning out the effects of his daughter Agnes
(Stan's mother), who died April 21, 1998, at age 98.

We are sure Grandpa Hans would be pleased to know
his thoughts have been preserved for future generations
so they might know about him who they never knew in person.

The Beginning: Norway and U.S.A.

I was born the 24th of June 1863, baptized the 30th of August same year in Tranoy church in Nordland Norway by Chaplain A. Vinnaas. Confirmed by Pastor Jorgen P. Holmboe on the 29 of July 1879. Commenced to go to school at the age of 6 years. Father's name was Isak Hansen, mother's was Joakima Jorgensdatter. My Father's father was Hans Larsen and wife was Else Maria.

Their ancestry is supposed to go back to 8 or 9 centuries and is a direct descent of a King by the name of "Tore Hunn". He had his country from "Bodo" or about Arctic Circle and as far north as Norway had any land. This King had his home about 4 English miles west of Harstad. When Harald Haarfager got after this King of the North, he made short work of him. Harstad is about 12 English miles southwest from Tranoy.

My mother's descendants came north from some place in Trondheim or Steinkjer. The year after I was confirmed I went to Lofoten and hired to a man for 20 kroner per month with board and lodging. My work was to gather up codfish heads from the fisher boats and throw them up on the rocks to dry. After they were dry he sent them to a place called Brettesnes where an English company had a guano factory where they ground the heads up to meal and shipped it to England and used it for fertilizing purposes.

I got along fine that winter. My father was head sheriff of the same place or town. "Kabelvag" was the name of the town. The same spring I went to Finnmarken Berlevog not very far from Vardo where we fished cod. It was a hard life out in the North Sea. We did not know if we ever would see land again when we went out in the morning. There was always a sacred prayer in our hearts that the Almighty God would protect us and bring us back home. It was never an unbeliever to find along the northern coast of Norway because they had to fight God Almighty's elements for living and existence. I was in the Lofoten 3 years and in Finnmarken 3 that is 3 months at each place.

Emigrating to America

On the 26th of May 1882 I started for America arriving in Northwood Iowa the 15th of June 1882. My Aunt Hanna Syverson was glad I came. She was my father's sister and carried me to baptism in Norway. Did not know a word of English and so green I was afraid of the cows. The first summer I helped Uncle Syverson through haying and harvest the summer of 82. When fall came I went with threshers. It was horsepower them days. I made some money but it was hard work. As a newcomer I was in the straw pile but we had good things to eat. When threshing was over Aunty wanted me to stay with them that winter and to go to school, which I accepted gladly because I wanted to learn English. It looked almost impossible to begin but in 2 weeks I had translated my first reader to Norwegian. My teacher's name was Andreas Rohnne. He had been studying at Augsburg Seminary and good in Norwegian, and helped me a lot so after 4 months of schooling I got so r could understand almost everything. .

The next summer I hired out to a man by the name Kjarland at 20 dollars a month for 8 months. At his place I had to learn how to milk. At the end of my engagement at Kjarlands in the fall I wanted to go to Zumbrotta Minnesota to visit a girl I used to go to school with in old country. I found her all right. As I was looking around, a German by the name of Theodor Stecher offered me a job as clerk in his store -confectionery, groceries and restaurant combined. He offered me 15 per month, board and washing. I took it and was glad to get it. I worked for him over a year. His mother and sister came from Germany so I learned a lot of German both in the store and at home. Zumbrotta was a lively town.

There was no R.R. in Kenyon those days and one store in Wanamingo with Martin Halvorsen as owner. In Zumbrotta there was 2 R.R., MT St Paul had narrow gauge from Wabashaw and Northwestern from Rochester. The farmers all came to Zumbrotta to market for 20 miles around. They had a 17th of May festival in Zumbrotta that spring so I made a barrel of lemonade and took in \$50.00 dollars from half of the barrel. The other half was used for vinegar. I had dressmaker by the name of Tekla Sheffer to make me a Norwegian flag that I put up in front of the store beside the American. When they saw that flag they came by the hundreds and said "eg e suu tust". I had good business day that 17th of May.

Gertrude: Marriage and Family

There was a girl working in the dressmaker shop whose name was Gertrud Marie Skaar .I kind of like the girl, but she was so bashful she hardly looked at me. But one evening we walked together and sat down on the school porch and I asked her if she would be my sweetheart. She answered wright off the handle. It was love at first sight on both sides. She wanted to go home and wanted me to take her home. A man by the name of Coolidge (not the President) let me have his horse and buggy so we started for Skaars. We were not in a hurry either so when we got home every body was to bed, but she found a room for me. So in the morning when I came down to breakfast I had pleasure of meeting Mr. Osten Skaar, Mrs. Skaar and brothers Andrew, John and Nels. Also her sisters Martha, Anna, Cristina, who died at the age of 12. Bertha was not born yet. They all were nice to me. Everything in the house was spik and span.

That winter I work in Zumbrota for a man by the name of H. H. Palmer. He had the biggest general merchandise store in town. I work there till little before Christmas. I had not spoken to Skaar yet - if I could have his daughter. I finally got up courage to ask him. He told me that there was 2 things he would draw a line on, and that was an "infidel" and a "boos fighter". Otherwise he had no objection. But said he did not like to have wedding as Mrs. Skaar expected a baby, but he gave us \$100.00 and we decided to go to Minneapolis; but they wanted us to stay over Christmas. When Christmas was over there was such snowstorm that we could not get to Kenyon before the 30th of January. After saying goodbye to the folks the hired man Gulbrand took us to Kenyon. The Minnesota Northwestern R.R. came through Kenyon then from St. Paul. We took the Milwaukee R.R. to Minneapolis, got there late in the evening, and took up to hotel and stay there that night. In the morning we went to Augsburg Seminary to greet Professor Blegen who had been a minister in Wanamingo a few years, so we knew him well. We had dinner with them, we got a place in a boarding house. Gertrude was doing the cooking and I waited on the table. We stayed there 2 months. I got a place to clerk in the Chicago Store, which at that time was a branch of the Minneapolis Dry Goods, manager L.A. Gardner .

The Wedding

Yes I forgot to tell about our marriage. Mr. Skaar wanted us to go to Pastor M. Falk Gjertsen, so after getting a license at the Court House on Sunday evening the 6th of February 1886 we got married at Gjertsen's house, with Margrette Skaar who afterward became Mrs. Duvik and a student Henning Y Dinstad from Augsburg as witnesses. After a fine service we all went to a hotel for our dinner. We rented 3 rooms and Gertrude started to do some sewing in a dressmaker shop and I was at the Chicago Store, but it was small wages so I decided to quit. I got a job in a grocery for Susag and Barstad. It was Sven Susag, Mickal had not come from Norway yet. Minneapolis was not so big then, 25.000 inhabitants. On East Franklin Ave the last house was on 24th Ave So. On Minnehaha Ave and Franklin was the last house there. South of that was the State Fairgrounds. 2 Democrats and a lot of milk cows. A farmer here and there. The summer of 1886 Rev. Gjertsen asked us to take care of his house while his family stayed at Lake Minnetonka. We took it and moved in and got along fine. Gjertsen stayed home most of the time. Once in a while he went to the lake but seldom stayed long as he was busy with weddings and other ministerial duties.

The Children Arrive

While we stayed there that summer something happened the 9th of July. A girl was born to us. Rev. Gjertsen was home at the time and he saw the midwife and asked if something was wrong. I told him that we got a girl. He said "Is it not kind of early?". I said "you know a man in business always gets a discount" (I was working in the Chicago Store at the time) so I got 90 -days discount on my first girl. He laughed to beat the band and went after a box of cigars and said it was the best answer he ever received. In a few weeks we had him baptize the girl and Mrs. Gjertsen carried her. She got the name of Ida Josephine after my father Isak and mother Joachima.

In the fall we rented some rooms at 14th Ave. and 9th Street So. And I started to work on the sections on the Milwaukee R.R. track and kept on a year and 6 months. It was cold in the winter but I did not mind it much when we got used to it. October 15th 1888 we got a son. We called him Oscar Merriam after Osten and Marie Skaar or after the King of Norway and Sweden and the Governor of Minnesota whose name was Merriam at that time.

The spring of 89 Gertrude took the children with her and went home to the farm and stayed almost a year. I went to Northwood that fall because of my Auntie's illness. She died after Christmas. She left Sophie (Mrs. Fenney) and Elisa, (Mrs. Appedahl) and Carolina and Hans, Martin, and Clarence. In March '90 I went to Skaars and took Gertrude and the children to Minneapolis. I got a job in Walter A. Wood Harvester Works so we got along pretty good for about a year. The Harvester Works moved to St. Paul so we were all laid off. It was hard to get work then -fall of'91 and first part of winter '92.

Gertrude got another boy the 2nd of February. Our supplies of both fuel and food were low, so the night after the boy came I prayed earnestly and told the Heavenly Father that if He could not help, I certainly was unable to help myself. Anna Skaar stayed with us. I sat down to an organ we had in the house and played a Norwegian hymn, "Sorg o Kjare Fader du. Jeg vil ikke, Sorge". That was as far as I got. Somebody knocked on the door. It was Professor Sven Oftedal and Mrs. Georg Sverdrup. Mrs. Sverdrup went right to the pantry and looked over everything. Oftedal gave me \$5.00. The next day there came a whole load of groceries, a ton of coal and a load of wood. That same evening the boss of blacksmith shop in the Milwaukee R.R. shops asked if I would take a job as helper in his shop. What ever you do, do not come and tell me that God does not answer prayers for I know He does. When the boy was baptized we called him George Howard after Gertrude and Hans. I worked in the R.R. shop almost 2 years. We got another girl the 15th of December 1890. She got the name of Marie Bertha, a very nice girl. She died on the 22nd of December 1911, 18 years old. When Marie was born I got 11 shares in Cooperative Sash and Door Factory. I got a house belonging to the company and acted as night watchman and engineer for 6 years. Gjertsen, who at the time was a member of the Board of Education gave the man who was night man before me a janitor position in a school on the condition that he gives me his shares in the factory. The second year the day engineer went to Sweden, so I was elected to take his place days. It went all right. In 4 months he came back and I had to go on nights again.

Another boy came July 20th 1894. He got the name of Clarence Edwin. A girl was born the September 16, 1897. She got the name of Laura Mathilda. Another girl came December 7, 1899. She got the name of Agnes Florence Margaret.

-Pearl Irene was born March 19th 1901 and died November 18 1905. Gladys Evelyn was born June 20th 1904. Walter Eugene was born April 4th 1908. This was a lot of children, 10 in all. It kept me pretty busy but I done the best I could to keep them comfortable with food and clothing. Food was reasonable those days. If you had a dollar for groceries they had to have an old horse to haul it home. The Sash and Door Co busted up owing to a dishonest treasurer but I got a job as assistant janitor in a school on 12 Ave North and Gerard called the Grant School. It was hard work till I got used to it. It went all right. The teachers were very nice to me. They seem to like me better than the first man. Do not know why, and did not care. My mind was full of the welfare of my large family. After 3 years in the school I went to the Consolidated Milling Co. and took a job as oiler in October 18 1903 and work for them till New Years 1930. 27 years is a long time to work for one company. Well I have to go back to Ida. She got married to Oliver Dahlgren. They stayed in Minneapolis a few years and had 2 boys while they lived in Minneapolis. Gjertsen baptized them both. Lyle and Earl were their names. They then moved to Alvarado a few miles from Warren -Minnesota. Oliver had a brother Frank Dahlgren who was running a bank up there. While there they had 2 more children, Evelyn and Stanley. Ida was in poor health and after a while she went to the hospital at Grand Forks. She had leakage of the heart. She finally came home to us. After a few days she went to the Deaconess Hospital where she died the 5 of May 1918. Ida was a very : good girl, sympathetic and sunny disposition with Solid religious conviction. When a girl she went ; to Norwegian School in the Trinity Church 20 and 9 Streets every summer. Rev. Gjertsen was the Pastor of that church then.

The summers of 93 and 94 I worked for the Park Board. Was along planting trees, made the first fence around Lake Harriet. The fall of 90 I was along taking government census or, counting noses as they calls it. In 1896 I got into politics. The Democrats and Peoples Parties nominated me a candidate for the Legislature. I got 3000 and 26 votes out of 7000 that was' " cast. Of course I was not elected but experience was worth a lot. I got personally acquainted with many prominent men such as John Lind, Cedric M. Owen, Ignatius Dannely and many others. John Grottum took my place as night watchman in the Sash and Door shop while I was electioneering. Grottum was the father of Bjarne Grottum the County Attorney of Jackson County Minnesota, and Ingrid or Mrs. Erik something (do not remember his last name) Think it is Anderson.

In 1900 we moved to 2530 25th Ave to a four family flat. I worked in Scwins in the first summer we were there. On March 19 1901 Pearl was born. A year after I started in the mill.

Gladys came on June 20th 1904. In 1905 we moved 2022- 25th Ave So. While we lived there Pearl died November 18 1905. Walter was born at the same place on April 4th 1908. At that time Ida and Oscar was attending South High School and George too while they worked in the mill on the packing floor~ sewing sacks from 5 till 11 in the evening, and went to school in the morning. They were smart and good-looking boys both of them. After working and going to school for about 3 years, Oscar started out as a stock salesman. George went to Skaars and stayed with them till he got married to Clara

01stad and started farming on his own luck.. Oscar went east to Buffalo N. Y. .From there he went to Toronto Canada where he went into business for himself. Business was to erect mausoleums at the cemeteries. He built one in Toronto, one in Hamilton (a city 30 miles south of Toronto) and one in Winnipeg. All these buildings are put up of Italian marble.

Clarence also worked in the mill when he got big enough. He worked good many years then he started tending bar in a saloon which seems not to have a very good effect in molding his character. It was kind of hard to hang on to him. He got married to Violet Peterson who was a splendid girl and very good piano player. A while after, he was laid up with rheumatism and was unable to do any work for 4 years. His wife done everything she could to make him comfortable. After he got well enough to get around, him and Walter went to California in October 1927. Thought the change in climate would be beneficial.

Laura worked for 6 or 7 years in Cream of Wheat Co. She got married to Conrad Ellingson from Henning Minnesota. She had a fine wedding in the Bethany Lutheran Church the 24th November 1920. Ellingson came back from the Army and was troubled with his hands. They got so numb that he could not use them in cold weather. He lost all feeling in them when it was cold. He thought the warm climate of California would be good for his hands. He came to California January 14 1921.

Agnes studied at South High School where from she graduated and took up library work and was for a number of years as Assistant Librarian at the Seward Branch of the Public Library. On March the 7th 1925 she married Martin O. Lokken of Windom Minnesota, at the Bethany Lutheran Church, Bishop G. H. Stub officiating. In April 1925 Martin went to California. In September 1925 Agnes and Violet went to California. Clarence and Violet had a little daughter named Pearl Marie. She also went with her mother .

Alone in Minneapolis

As I was the only one left ~ Minneapolis I rented a room of an old man by the name of Rasmus Hesby and his daughter named Elisabeth Rosaaen. I stayed with them almost 10 years.

Elisa as we called her was good at times but her mental clockwork got out of gear sometimes and at such periods I used to shut up like a clam so we got along pretty good. Her father died, 92-1/2 years old October 22 1927. He was born July 5 1835 in Stavanger Norway, came to America in 1855 in a sailboat after 3 months on Atlantic Ocean, landing in Fox River Settlement Illinois. He cast his first vote for Abraham Lincoln for President. He moved to Fillimore County Minnesota in 1859 where he took homestead and started farming. If I had been his son he could not have treated me any better than he did.

An Early Norway Happening

Something I forgot to tell about; when I was 10 years old I used to herd cattle. We had bears and he used to come and take sheep from us. My mother told me if the bear should come I should I should let a yell out as nasty as I could, he would run away. One day about noon the cattle commenced to gather in a bunch and I saw something came running after them. First I thought it was the big pig that running loose but when he came closer I understood it was a big bear .The cows sheep and goats came towards where I stood. I then let a yell out of me. The bear he stopped and sat down to look me over. I got more scared than the bear. My heart was up in my throat. It was impossible for me to utter a sound if I was to be licked for it. I had a little dog. This dog was foolish enough to go after the bear and bite him. The bear sat on his hind end I and whacked the dog and when he came near enough, hit with his paw. The dog went 50 yards in air and came back to me, stuck his head between my legs. He was so scared he could not bark, just whine. The bear finally got a sheep and went. Some people in a boat rowing by came to my rescue and gathered the cattle together so I could drive them home.

One other time my father went with me one Sunday; we went with the cattle up along the river. We got to a place where our dogs became very noisy. Father said you better get the cattle together. I went and I came to a place where the earth was like a plowed field about 20 feet in diameter and I could see the back of a bear sticking up through dirt. I went to my Dad and told him that there was a bear laying asleep. He got to the place we found that 2 bears have been fighting, one has killed the other. He then proceeded to have a burial but dug too shallow so the -back of the bear was sticking up. We got 20 kroner in premium and 20 kr. for the hide, about 12 dollars in all.

The Loss of Gertrude

Mother Gertrude was a, good wife, honest and faithful in every way. Done everything she could to make the children comfortable. She had an independent disposition with set. I was reminded many times of the woman who said "right is right and wrong is also right". I was not always right either as to the method and best way of bringing up the children. Many times I found her right and I wrong. She hated gossiping and never mixed with the neighbors, tending to her own affairs almost too much, so she was a hard working woman with so many children to take care of. After Ida had died her health commenced to fail. During the change of life she was very sick at times. Finally a blood vessel started leak in the brain. Whenever the blood pressure went up she would drop and be unconscious, some time for 2 or 3 days. Her kidneys were in bad shape. too. She finally had to go to bed. After 3 weeks she passed away the 25 of September 1919. It's awful hard to lose her but God rules the destiny and He rules right. It was our loss and His gain. Blessed be her memory for us all. I am going write soon about her parents and other relatives in Goodhue County but have not the proper information at present, but expect to get it soon.

Travel to Norway

It was hard to be alone. All the children moved away from Minneapolis but I work steadily in the mill and saved up a little money so I wrote my sister in Norway that I might take a notion to go home to Norway and see my mother, as it was 44 years since I have seen her, so on May 29, 1926, I started for Norway.

Left Minneapolis Saturday 6pm on the Soo Line, arriving in Toronto Canada Monday Sam. Oscar did not expect me there, but the information lady called Oscar for me, so he came with his car and put me up at very good hotel. Riding on the day coaches I was very tired and went right to bed. Slept till 2pm. Oscar came, wanted me to fix myself up. I went out and got shaved, put on my best suit. Oscar came then and took me over to meet his wife and daughter .

Imagine my surprise when I greeted Mrs. Trano. She called me daddy and kissed me right on the -mouth. She had a splendid dinner prepared and we had a dandy time. The next day Mona had her sister and her daddy. After dinner we went for a ride in Oscar's big car on the 7-mile drive along Lake Ontario. I was sitting between Lady Trano and her sister. I managed to keep them roaring with laughter all along. So in the evening Oscar said "I am proud of you dad". I stayed with them from the 1 st of June till the 3rd. He asked me how I was fixed for money. I told him I had so I could get along, however he gave me \$60.00 for spending money and a good sweater. He took my tickets and got me a sleeper to Montreal where I was to get the boat.

Ocean Voyage

We got to Montreal 7 in the morning and a bus took us from the train to the dock where the boat was waiting for us. The name of the boat was Aurania of the Cunard Line. After our papers and passports had been looked over we were allowed to go on board and our compartments was shown to us. I did not have a trunk, just 2 big valises which I took down to my room. Each room had a number on the door and I remember the number and went up on deck to see what was going on. The tugboats was pulling the big liner from the dock and I was on the ocean once more. After 44 years a kind of sad feeling was creeping over me.. To leave America ! where I had both happiness and sorrow and laid down the best of my life. I could not help but thanking the Heavenly Father for His goodness and mercy for all these years of hard work, struggle and worry .Iam thankful that I have every reason to believe that the children think of their Old Daddy with love and gratitude. My hope and prayer is that the Heavenly Father's care will be with them in the future as in past.

As I got over my meditation I was going to my compartment but I could not find it. I met one of the ship's nurses and told her I was lost and could not find my home. She asked for the number. I told 336. She went with me and found it all right. At noon we was ordered to the dining hall to have our first dinner, consisting of pearl barley soup, roast mutton, sago pudding, ice cream and coffee. The weather was fine down the St Lawrence with beautiful farms and scenery all around.

At 4pm, we had tea. It was good. The English know how to make tea, black India not boiled but steamed. O Boy! It was good with sandwiches and cake. For supper we had fried whitefish, potatoes and some kind of pudding of which I don't remember the name but was very delicious. The rooms were very clean and comfortable to sleep in. I had a Bloody Blooming Englishman in the bed above and got along good together. 1:he rooms was cleaned and beds made every day. Saturday 6pm, in Quebec 15 minutes. All our letters was taken ashore from where they were sent back to U.S.A.. We went to bed. In the morning we got up, the ship was doing the "Charleston". on the Atlantic. It was very stormy but the storm was after the ship so we went with a good speed. On Sunday we had Episcopal service conducted by the Capitan of the ship. In the evening I got out my Landstads Salmebok and Testament and had a little meeting of my own. Tuesday we got pretty well out on the banks of Newfoundland. It was awful cold so the sweater Oscar gave me came in mighty handy. Because there was a lot of icebergs and fog we could not go with more than half speed. The sea was calm so it was nice just the same.

Wednesday it was stormy but I felt good. The food tasted fine, cream tomatoes soup and veal roast, bread pudding and coffee.

The ship's crew did everything they could to make us comfortable. They had 1 doctor, 5 nurses, 1 dentist, and 1 barber. The nurses looked after the passengers that were seasick.. For breakfast we always had bacon, eggs, and oatmeal. On Saturday morning we saw Ireland where the wild Irish rose and patties grows. That evening 9pm we were in Liverpool, but we could not land before Sunday morning. The agent met us on the ship and drove us to a fine hotel. I was the only one that had to stay at the hotel as I could not get a train before Monday 11 am. The place where I stopped was very nice. There was a big park and a lot of people sitting in the park on Sunday. Very few girls had bobbed hair. The braids most always hung down their backs.

Monday morning it rained. Almost every girl had long rubber boots and raincoats. At 10am , the agent came after me in a taxi and took me to the railroad station and gave me a ticket to Newcastle. A fine ride over England and a lot of nice things to see. The agent at Newcastle met the train and convoyed me to a hotel.

Visiting the Old Country

Could not get the boat for Bergen Norway before Tuesday at 5pm. As it was Norwegian -boat everyone spoke Norsk so I decided to leave all my English in England and use Norwegian from now on.

After 27 hours we landed in Bergen Norway Wednesday 8pm. It was light all night In June. The evening I wired my sister in Tranoy before I went to bed. The hotel was called "Missions Hotellet", very good place. Was not able to get a boat for north of Norway before Thursday 5 pm. That ship was called "Vesteraalen". I stayed on that boat till I got to Harstad in Senja. The agent had bought me a ticket second class to Harstad. When we got outside of "Stadt" it was open to the Atlantic. We got an awful storm so the ship sometimes ducked and sometimes over the waves. I was pretty sick and could not eat anything all day but when we got inside from the North Sea it was all right through the fjords. We arrived in Trondheim Saturday 7am. The ship stayed six hours so we had plenty of time to look around and get our dinner before we had to go on the ship again. I called on the Cunard Line agent Mr. Tolkim to arrange for return trip to America. We left Trondheim at 12 noon. Sailing out Trondheim's Fjord was something beautiful on both sides. We arrived in Harstad Monday at 2pm. I took my grips to a small steamer named "Dyso" and sat them down in the cabin (first class). The Captain on this boat came over to me and asked if I was Hans Isaaksen from America. I told him yes. He then shook hands and said he was my cousin Fredrik Svendsen Gjovik. I remembered him as a boy 8 years old when I first left the old country .After that I went up town and had something to eat. When I came back I met a man who came up and' asked if I was not Hans Isaaksen from America. I saw there was something the matter with the man's speech. I told him yes. When he told me who he was, I was surprised. It was my deaf and dumb brother Conrad. He was in Harstad attending a deaf and dumb gospel service. He was on the same ship going home. We had a good time together. The Captain insisted we should eat our meals with him in the cabin and we certainly had a good time. I arrived in Tranoy Tuesday. My brother Fredrik and Mr. Hansen my sister's husband was there to meet me. When we got home to Gammelseter the big flag was on the top of the also big pole and they met mother, 83 years old, and me came to greet me as we landed. I cannot describe the feeling I experienced in meeting mother after so many years of

absence. Mother and sister cried with joy in fact we all cried, also brothers Fredrik and Conrad. That they feasted and fed me is putting it mildly. I came home the 22nd of June, the 24th was my birthday. What did they do but invited the Minister, all his servants, and the "klokker" to a place and had dinner, the "prest", his wife and two daughters. We then started for home, got to Tranoy about 6pm. All the motorboats used kerosene oil for their motors.

After staying home with mother, sister and brothers I made preparations to start back to U.S.A.. I had been with them about 6 weeks. This minister's name was J.C. Severtsen. He wanted to know how the Lutheran Church in America worked. I gave him a constitution of the Bethany Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. As he read it over, "it is very good", he said. Yes, I said, "The Norwegian Lutheran Church in America is so far saved from the strife between Liberalism and Conservatism. We believe in a crucified and resurrected Savior; and think the people here in Norway who build their Heavenly hope on a dead Jew are so foolish they should not go loose". My sister told me that Pastor Severtsen did not believe in the Immaculate Conception of Christ. He was a son of Joseph and did not rise from the dead but showed himself in the spirit after his death, which is the Unitarian faith. So I thought if the shoe fit you can wear ". He did not say a word but turned red. He said to the "klokker" "that Amerikaner knows more than both you and I" I got order from Mr. Sotheim, agent in Trondheim that I should leave Southampton England August 10th, and Bergen the 6th. So I started from Tranoy July 28th.

Return to U.S.A.

I do not know of a thing in my whole life that pained me so much as to say goodbye to mother, sister, and brothers as well as other relatives but I had to do it. I had only 3 months leave of absence from the milling company, and wanted to visit a few places before I started back.

After getting on the steamer which I took from Tranoy when I saw my old home for the last time, my heart was heavy and I went down to the cabin of the steamer. The first thing I knew I was fast asleep, only 2pm. The girl waitress on the passengers woke me up and showed me my sleeping compartment. I slept until 5pm when I got a small bottle of bock beer and some lunch, which did me a lot of good. When I got to Harstad I met some cousins who invited me to their home for coffee and spent a pleasant hour at their home. I then took a steamer at Harstad for a place called Lodingen where I had the great pleasure of meeting Fru Holmboe the wife of Pastor Holmboe who confirmed me. She was very glad to see me and said I was the most welcome man she had had for a visitor in many a day. Her son was minister in the parish of Lodingen. I remembered him as a boy who was not big enough to dig potatoes, but I dug and he picked them up. He was about 8 years old at the time. He was Provst (District President) in the State Church of Norway. I had a very pleasant visit with him.

At breakfast in the morning old Fru Holmboe told about the time I was staying with them while reading for confirmation: Pastor Holmboe sent me and three other boys after the State midwife. It was over a fjord about 12 English miles distant. The pastor gave us each a quart bottle of beer so we should row so much better. We left about 10pm, sun shining nights and fine -weather. About half way we were going to find out what the beer tasted. We had heard about beer but never in our life tasted it. At first we did not think it was very good, but the more we drank the better we thought it was, so we did not quit until the whole bottle was inside of us. We forgot the Prestefrue, Midwife and whole thing and went to sleep. When awake it was 8am. The tide had taken us 20 English miles out of our course and we remembered. At 10:30am we came to Tranoy with the midwife. Pastor Holmboe asked us where we had been so long. We told him , we tasted the beer and fell asleep. He turned away from us and laughed till he shook. He gave us each 1 krone (about 25 cents) if we would promise not to say anything about giving us beer. Old Mrs. Holmboe told the whole story at breakfast and everybody laughed to beat the band. After an enjoyable time with the Holmboes at Lodingen I took the steamer for Trondheim where I spent one day arranging with the agent for my return, getting my railroad ticket to Oslo. When it was all arranged I had a little time to spare so I visited the Old Cathedral "Dom kirken", and put my name in the records as from Minneapolis Minnesota. It was the most beautiful church I ever saw; its white marble pillars with its carved trimmings were not only beautiful but impressive -as well. At 5 pm the train started. There was a lot to see over the "Dovre" mountains and down through "Gulbrandsdalen" V alley. There were very nice farms with white painted buildings, all around evidence of prosperity on every hand. We stopped at "Eidsvold" about 20 minutes where we saw the historic building where the Declaration of Independence was enacted the 17th of May 1814, after Norway had been under the rule of Denmark for 500 years. We arrived in Oslo 7am. Oslo is a cosmopolitan city. I went up to a restaurant and had breakfast as soon as I got off the train. At 11 am , I took the train for

"Lorum" about 50 English miles east from Oslo where I met 5 cousins who I had not seen for 44 years. They all were very happy to see me. They entertained me royally. One a rich merchant. One a pop manufacturer. One a farmer who had about 200 acres, 20 milk cows, 5 horses, also a lot of modern machinery -Mc Cormick binder and other American implements. After a two day visit I went back to Oslo and took the train for Bergen. First we went up through the valley of Halingdal and saw the churches of "Aal" and Gol. The scenery was most beautiful. After we got up among the snow capped mountains about 4000 meters above sea level then down to "Voss" and through to Bergen. There were 70 tunnels. Some was so long it took 20 'minutes to come through them. A fellow took me to Missions Hotellet where I was shown my room. It was only 11 am Sunday. There was a big church close by so I went in. The minister was just going on the pulpit. The organ and music was very nice but the sermon was very tame. Any Unitarian could have preached it. I went back to the hotel after church and had my dinner. All my hotel expenses were included in my ticket, both in Norway and in England. The tickets cost me \$242.00 from Minneapolis to Trondheim and return to Minneapolis. I had to wait till Tuesday before I could get a steamer for England. I had to stay in Bergen till Tuesday 3pm.

Monday I went up town. They had costumed grocery clerks to walk on the street with stovepipe hats and a gold-headed cane. They occupied the whole sidewalk so we had to get out in the gutter to pass them. I stopped one and asked if everybody had such poor feet that they had to use a cane. He asked if I was not a Torsk from America. I answered "no, the Torsk are fools. We get in America some from Bergen and we make Lutefisk out of them." He turned all kinds of color and walked off.

Tuesday we got on the ship for Newcastle England. It was very stormy. -The North Sea was awful choppy. I did not feel very good as I had my berth in the back of the ship. We arrived in Newcastle the next evening. The next morning we started for London where we spent two days. I saw the Westminster Abbey, the House of Parliament, also the museum, a place where I would have to stay 5 months to see all there was to look at.

We got the train Thursday August the 14th about 8:30am, for Southampton where "Askania", a sister ship of the Aurania of the Cunard Line, was. We got on board at 11am. At 3pm, she started over the channel to France where she took in 300 more passengers. After we left France for the Atlantic it was very stormy. One of the officers said it would be stormy for two days because it was called the "Devil's Hole". I told him "if you can get away from the Devil in two days you are doing fine". But he stayed right with us. We had bad weather all the way until we came pretty close to Labrador. The weather was nice.

We saw about 50 great icebergs, some of them 90 feet high with one-third out of the water. They look like Norwegian churches in the sunshine. When we got in through the strait between Newfoundland and Labrador we had nice weather all the way up St Lawrence River to Quebec' I where we slept a few hours. Then in the evening we started up the river to Montreal. I wired my son in Toronto as soon as I could from Montreal. After 8 hours ride I got to Toronto. Oscar met me and took me to his house where his wife had a splendid supper ready for us. After a pleasant day's visit I took the train for Minneapolis, rode on the sleeper all the way. I thank God for his protection through the long journey and it sure was good to get home again.

Gertrude's Family Background Skaar Family

I got information concerning my wife's parents in Goodhue County. Gertrude's father Osten Andresen Skaar was born November 11 1823 in Lordal in Indre Sogn Norway. The Sognefjord is a long arm of the North Sea that goes in through the country. The community at the outer part of the fjord is called "Ytre Sogn", and the inner part is Indre Sogn. There is also a marked difference in the dialect between the 2 sections of the fjord. Pastor O. P. Vangsness was from Vik, Ytre Sogn, Ludvik Brandanger and Matias Myre in Minneapolis are from Evensvik in the other part of the fjord.

Osten Skaar came to America in the year of 1854, 31 years old. He came to his brother Ivar Skaar who lived in Stoughton Wisconsin. He moved to Wanamingo and took a homestead in 1856. He also built a nice house on the place before his marriage to Marie Barsness. She was born August 10 1840, somewhere in Luster, Indre Sogn. She immigrated to America in 1855 and came to her uncle Ole Anfinson in Chicago, who a little later moved to Wanamingo. Marie Barsness came with them.

Osten E. Skaar was married to Marie Barsness November 28, 1859. Mr. Skaar was of a quiet disposition; an honest Christian, kind and helpful to the neighbors and very good to his hired men, and a very good man all around. He worked up his homestead to a model farm, probably the best 1/4 section in the county. He was very kind to us. I did not know how good he wanted to be to our children when they were there almost every summer during the vacation of school.

As I now look back, I am sure I express the sentiment of all my children as well as myself when I say God Bless the memory of Grandpa Skaar to all of us. He passed to his Heavenly Home October 8, 1898.

Grandma Skaar was a very good and kind woman, was a Christian lady if there ever was one. She lived 15 years after Mr. Skaar had died. My children as well as her own were glad she could be with them so long as she did. She finally passed on to the home above April 21, 1913. She had 3 brothers, A. J. Barsness who lived about 3/4 of a mile west from Skaar and Hans Barsness who was a blacksmith by trade and went to Alberta Canada and took up a homestead. He died the same year as Grandma Skaar, 1913. She also had a brother in Chicago, Anfin Barsness who afterwards changed his name to Alfred Johnson. He died long before Grandma, don't know what year. Osten Skaar had 3 brothers: Johannes Skaar, father of Mrs. A. J. Barsness who probably is the only one living of the old settlers in that vicinity. A loveable old lady, she was a twin sister of Mrs. Joranger who died a good many years ago. Gertrude's sister Martha has been like a

mother in kindness and consideration, an excellent cook and housekeeper. I will never forget her kindness to me personally whenever I came for a visit. She always used to go down in the cellar and bring up a can of preserved chicken. She knew me like a book, knew I was crazy for chicken. Believe me they tasted good too. I will never forget Martha's kindness and love by she treated both my children and me. My wish and ! prayer is that her life's evening may be full of sunshine. May God preserve her with health and) happiness the rest of her life.

One other sister Anna stayed with us a good many years in Minneapolis. She was very , kind, good to us all and full of kindness and love. She got married to Anton Hofstad, a brother of Ole Hofstad in Minneapolis, and moved to Kettle Falls Washington, where she lived a good many years. Anton died in 1928 or 29. She then moved back to Minneapolis and started housekeeping for a family in St Paul. May God bless her and comfort her in her great loss and sorrow. It is with love and gratitude we all remember her for everything she did for us all.

Another sister Johanna was a good girl, more of a happy-go-lucky girl or more of an optimist than her other sisters. Jenny as we called her always looked at the bright side of life. She married Ole B. Hofstad and lived in Minneapolis all her life, was very kind and sympathetic and good to us all. It was therefore a great shock and sorrow when she passed away in the hospital after an operation. Jenny's memory will not fade from any of us.

Sister Christina was only 10 or 12 years old when the Heavenly Father took her home to Him. A loveable little girl she was the short time she stayed with us.

Sister Bertha Susanna is the baby of the family, the last but not the least. It is no secret that we all love Bertha. She has always been a kind of pal of all my girls, more than Aunty. She attended the Oak Grove Seminary in Fargo North Dakota and acquired a lot of education, which is very useful for her development, both in home economics and music. Some girls that have been to college have an idea that they are better than everybody else. Their heads grow abnormally but Bertha's head always stayed normally. She is always the same good-natured loveable disposition as she was all her time. Thanks to her for all her kindness to all of us.

Brother John, a good boy indeed. He moved to Spokane Washington and got married so I do not know so much about him, but have an idea that he is making good.

Brother Andrew has always been a good hard working boy. Good natured, kind and considerate. Helpful in his relations with others. His kindness cannot be excelled. Was always ready to do a good deed if he could. It's therefore that we all sympathize with him when he broke his foot some time ago. May God preserve him with health, happiness and prosperity the rest of his natural life.

Brother Nels Olaus has always been an excellent boy. I remember him when he first started school in the brick house with John Begum as teacher. He made good progress in school,. Also attended Augsburg Seminary at Minneapolis. How long I do not know. He was always kind to all of us. He took a trip to California, visiting the nephews and nieces. I am sure they did everything they could to make his stay pleasant and comfortable. I will express my heartfelt sympathy with him on account of his eyes being so dim. I certainly hope they will improve either with glasses or otherwise. I am thankful to Nels for all the kindness shown my family and me.

It has always been a pleasure to meet the Skaar brothers and sisters. Thanks to them all.

Osten Skaar also had a brother named Ole Skaar, the father of Rev. E. O. Skaar and two daughters, Gertrude and Petra. Gertrude died some time ago, but Petra married and lives in Fargo North Dakota the last I heard. One other brother Ivar Skaar lived in Stoughton, Wisconsin. If I remember correct he was married 2 times. Henry Joranger and John Joranger named each a daughter of Ivar Skaar's second marriage. Both John and Henry moved to Stoughton where they still live.

Anders Joranger lives east a little ways from the old Joranger place. He married a Trygstad girl. Kaja and Eddy live with Johanna who married Mr. Bostad's son and resides about 3 miles southwest from Dale Church. When you come to them, Kaja and Johanna Joranger, it is kind of hard to get a word in edgewise for they inevitably insist on doing all the talking.

I will now leave the friends and relatives in Goodhue County and say something of myself.

Hans' Family Background My Father's Family

My father Isak Hansen was born May 14th 1842. He was Chief of Police in Lofoten, a place called "Kabelvag" under the fishing season from the 15th January, to 14 of April and was paid by the government. He continued 42 years in that capacity until he retired with pension. He died October 7, 1920.

My grandfather Hans Larson and wife Else Marie died a week apart in Typhoid, about 65 years of age. Their children was as follows: Mikal who died when I was a small boy, "Ole" who emigrated to America in 1870, was City Marshal in Spring Valley Minnesota for 30 years., Isak, and "Christian" who was still living when I was in Norway. He was a shoemaker. Daughters were as follows: "Marit" (Mrs. Eriksen) died in Aneta, Nelson County, North Dakota, and "Hanna" (Mrs. Erik Syverson) Northwood Iowa. She died 14th January 1893, leaving the following children: Sophie (Mrs. Fanny), Eliisa (Mrs. Opedahl), Caroline (Mrs. Lukeson), Hans, farmer in Enderline North Dakota, Martin and Clarence Syvertson is farming in Northwood Iowa.

I My father's sister Marit (Mrs. Eriksen), Aneta, North Dakota, had 2 sons and 1 daughter:

"Johan" and "Hans", Emma (*Miss Olsen*). Hans and Emma is still living in Hloetn North Dakota. Emma's son Frank Olsen is County Commisioner in Nelson County North Dakota.

Anna, (Mrs. Iverson) has 3 sons in America -"Ingvard", "Mikal", and "Bertran", as far as I know they are all farmers. .

Johanna I know nothing about.

Mrs. Iverson's daughter, "Christiana" (Mrs. Olsen) whom I visited when I was home in Norway. Her husband was president of the Tranoy "Spare bank" (saving bank). The bank is 40 years old. My brother Fredrik was one of the directors of the bank.

My Mother's Family

Joachima Jorgensdatter was born July 4th 1843 and died the 6th of October 1928. She had 9 children. "Hans" were born 24 of June 1863. Fredrik born 8 of March 1865. He used to go to Spitsbergen as Captain and pilot. Inbertina was born September 7, 1868, was married but died in 1902. Left 2 children "Valda" and Invald. I saw Valda, a beautiful girl but Invald was in the Military service so I did not see him. Albert died in infancy. Conrad born 9 February 1870 was normal till he was 7 years old, when he contracted scarlet fever and lost his hearing completely.

He went to Trondheim to the Deaf Institute for deaf and was confirmed in the cathedral. He also I learned the shoemaker trade. Edward was born January 14, 1873, was a farmer in McKenzie County, North Dakota for 10 years, went back to Norway and married a widow with a grown up daughter. She died 1 year after in childbirth. Then he married the daughter. Then he got the flu and died. Bernhard was lame from his waist down so he could not walk. Ho rolled down the riverbank and drowned. He was born February 19th 1875. "Amalie Johanna" was born January 20, 1880, married steam engineer Hans Hansen. He went as engineer on whaling ships in the South American

waters for many years and made good money. : "Ole Mikal" the last of the family I was born the 9th of November 1881. The last I heard from him he was in Brooklyn New York, I but neither I nor any of our folks have heard from him for over 10 years.

My Mother's Father

Her father Jorgen Jorgenson was born in the year of 1793 and died in 1885. His wife was f born 1805. Her name was Adrianna Gregus. Daughter died 1873. Their ancestors came from Trondheim. Their children is as follows: "Jon", "Jacob", "Johan", "Rasmus", girls "Engel Marie", f " Asuovidia", "Else Marie", "Severine", Joachima and Leonora. My mother Joachima and I Severine was the only ones living when I was home.

Move to California

My daughters Laura and Agnes wanted me to come to California and stay with them. I did not like the idea at first, but they were so persistent that I should come that I finally made up my mind that I would go. I went to my boss in the flourmill where I was working and told him I that I would take a layoff and go to California. .He said "you have been an efficient worker and whenever you come back you shall have your job back" .I thanked him most heartily. On the 30th day of January 1930 I left Minneapolis where I have laid down the best of my life for 45 years. I now look back in gratitude and thanks to the Heavenly Father for His mercy through all, I both sorrow and happiness, work and worry .In 1905 I lost a beautiful little girl, Pearl Irene, 5 I years old. In 1911, 22 January, I lost Marie, 18 years old, a very nice girl, pretty as a picture. ! Another sorrow came the 5th of May 1918 when Ida died. Ida was loved by everybody" I who~ knew her. She had a host of friends who mourned her, especially her 4 little children she left behind.

Another calamity struck when our dear wife and mother Gertrude died September 25th 1919. I cannot describe the grief of losing the best we had. But as God rules the destiny of mankind He rules right. We do not understand the meaning of things He does in dealing with us as poor mortals. It is probably for our own good that He sends us sorrow so we may not forget Him. I am thankful for all. I am all thankful to mother Gertrude for bringing to the world a lot of healthy children, every one good looking and perfect in every respect.

In the bottom of my heart I love Minneapolis. Hard to leave it, but I would not let my sentiment run away with me. So I arrived in Los Angeles February 1st, 1930, 6:30pm. All my I children was there to greet me. They took me to Clarence and Violet's for dinner. It felt good to I eat a meal with the children again. We had a good many meals together in Minneapolis. When I left Minneapolis it was 24 below zero, and 80 above in Los Angeles. It was some difference.

The climate here around Los Angeles is wonderful. In the middle of the summer you can be very comfortable with a couple of blankets over as the nights are always cool. The country reminds me so much of Norway with mountains all around. When I first came I stayed with Walter for a while then with Agnes at Altadena, then with Laura for 2 or 3 months at Pico in Los Angeles. Then with Walter again for 3 months in Culver City. Then I stayed at Laura's again for 4 months. Then Clarence and Violet wanted me to be a janitor for 15 families, as he had free rent as long as the janitor work was done satisfactory. I stayed there almost a year. Everybody seemed well pleased with my work, so I got along fine. The owner of the bungalows lost all his property through some mortgage deal and Clarence had to move so I was let out. The protest of the tenants did not help much, I had to go. I then went to Agnes' and dug up the lawn after which they seeded with clover and bluegrass and we had a fine lawn for 2 years. I went back to Laura again and stayed almost a year. Finally Martin Lokken rented a house for his parents Mr. and Mrs. August Lokken. They decided that I should stay with them, so I came to them in February 1933.

When I was in the employ of Judge Placher in the Antelope Valley

I was staying with Walter and Ann at the time. The Judge said he wanted an old man who would not be bossed around, would do just as he pleased, and I thought I would try it. When I got there I soon found out different. He bossed me around good and plenty. I had to get up at 5 in the morning and feed all the chickens in 5 different yards beside all the rabbits. When that was done I had to feed the cow and milk her and go to a sanatorium with 2 bottles of milk. Then I probably got breakfast consisting of bread, butter, and coffee. Then I was ordered to work, either in the vegetable yard or in the big orchard. Sunday was like the other days. I got milking and feeding from 6pm, when that was done I had to sprinkle the lawn, and when I got through it was 10 or after. I worked like a beaver for 30 days and had to give up. All I got was a pair of shoes for all my month of hard work, besides was almost starved as they never had any meats except when they had visitors. For dinner we most always got fried corn muffins. So one Saturday evening I got the people at the sanatorium to call Laura and Connie to come after me. Sunday about 11 am, a surprised man was the Judge because I said nothing to him about leaving till I came and said goodbye. Of course he said I should have told him beforehand. I said if you wanted to fire me you would not give me any notice beforehand, so I did not think it necessary to give you any notice either. Laura was glad I left him. I lost 5 pounds in a month I was there.

On a Chicken Ranch at Pomona

Mr and Mrs. Kansrud work hard as usual. Chickens were half of their produce. He said he was going to have about 200 chickens. He got about 25 in all. It was not enough either to live or : to die from. So finally he gave me \$2.50 per week so I got along pretty good but I work hard. I dug down the water main 750 feet long. Dug them 2 feet down all-the way. He finally sold the place so that was all that was to that.

Working for Mrs. Hummel in Hollywood

I stayed with Laura for about 3 months. She spied an ad in the paper, which led me to Mrs. Hummel who was a teacher in one of the High Schools. Her sense of justice was sometimes queer. I had a room in the garage with no water or sanitary accommodations at all. Nevertheless she charged 9 dollars a month besides doing all the work on a great big lot. Before I came she had a man to take care of the place, and he charged her 12 dollars. She said herself that I took better care than he did. It was kind of hard to do my own cooking, but the neighbors were very good to me. They brought me all kinds of mea~ and vegetables almost every day. Mrs. Michael, was a good cook and when she had, something good she called me back to the fence and gave me pudding or pie or meat or something. I work all day in keeping the flowerbeds clean from weeds, lawn sprinkling, always something to do. I stayed there 7 months. The children finally made arrangements for me to go to Altadena to the Lokkens. That was Thanksgiving Day 1935. They are very good to me. Mrs. Lokken (Gurina) does everything for me in mending my clothes and treats me as one of the family. I like very much to stay with them. If my health permits it I can go to church every Sunday as I am a member and enjoy hearing Pastor Berg who is very good. I am not in as good health as I would like to be, but I am thanking God for being as well as I am-

Hans died June 3, 1942, in Pasadena California

Note: Grandpa Hans' handwritten narrative stops here. My guess is that he wrote the whole thing after he had moved in with my other Grandpa August and Grandma Gurina, maybe around 1935- 36. Until one week ago, I didn't know this writing existed. My mother Agnes never mentioned it.

I want all family members who want access to Hans' own story to have it. I have copied I his words as he wrote them, with a few spelling edits. Hans wrote pretty clearly, but a few words ;' had to be my guesses. Remember I have the original, if you want to see it.

Just ask me for printed copies, or on floppy discs, 5-1/4 or 3-1/2 size. The file is entered with WordPerfect 6.1 for Windows, No kidding; this whole project has been a joy for me --a work of love

Stan Lokken

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