

REMINISCING WITH MOM
(Hannah Tastad)

We often reminisced with our Mom, and enjoyed her stories, not least those about pioneer life on the homestead. One day she talked about her parents and family home at Pierpont, South Dakota, some of which follows:

We lived on a farm east of Pierpont, S. Dakota. - Mother, Father, Lisa, Lena, me (Hannah), Hagbert, Lydia and Olof. Mother had a spinning wheel and a loom, and washed, and carded the wool (often dyeing some), spun it into yarn, and on her loom she wove carpets and mats to cover the floor. They lived near the church and enjoyed that. There was always a month of Parochial school in the summer. Her father was a good singer and they had a church choir. Mom memorized many songs learned as a young girl. After parochial school they would have a picnic at a grove near the lake.

They had an organ in their home and sang together there. Her mother was good to bake bread, kringla, lefse, etc. and young people came over for birthday parties, etc. At Christmas there was always a tree at church with lighted candles and home-made decorations. There were a lot of young people in the area who were active in the church life. The 3 churches in the area (Skudesnes, Bergen and Falnes) had combined 3-day services at times, and there was always lots of singing. There were schools in the country, and Mom also went to school in town and would then stay at the Andersons, going home weekends. She remembers the spelling bees at school. On the last day of school the teacher presented them with an achievement card - we have one Mom received from the teacher, Tina Kettleison, who came from Minnesota, with the inscription - "For good conduct and close attention, you have my sincere thanks". Parents brought coffee and lunch.

Mom's parents died when she was only 14. Her Mom in Sept. 1901, and her father in Feb. 1902. Mom was confirmed a few months later in July 1902.

After her folks died, Mom lived closer to Pierpont for the next 4 years. She worked for the Potter and the Martyn families. She helped both with the children and in the kitchen, and learned many things, even became a good seamstress. These people were very kind to her, and she also got to know many others in the area. Gustav Tastad was one of the group of young people. He came from Norway and lived with Lochrems and Andersons at Pierpont. He took some English classes at school in the winter, and worked at Lochrem's Blacksmith Shop. In 1903 he went back to Norway and returned in Aug. of 1905. His mother had died before he arrived in Norway, and his father died while he was there.

While working in the blacksmith shop he travelled around in S. Dak. selling trip hammers that they made at the shop (Lochrem had a patent). He had to demonstrate the hammers and sold many, travelling with horses.

His brother and sister (John and Louise) came to S. D. in 1902. They didn't go back to Norway with father (in 1903). Louise worked for a Mrs. ~~Christy~~ Hersey near Langford, also in Aberdeen, who had T.B.

In March 1906, Hannah and Gustav were married at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Pierpont. They were the first couple to be married there. Their attendants were John Tastad, and Louise Tastad, Gunvold Nygaard and Anna Guttormson. Louise went back to Norway in the fall of 1906 and died there in 1907 from T.B. contacted when nursing Mrs. Hersey.

After the wedding Lisa and Lena and their families moved to Canada taking the younger ones - Hagbert, Lydia, and Olof with them.

For a while Hannah and Gustav lived in a house (Andersons) in Pierpont, then moved into another house where they lived 1-1/2 years. They had an oak kitchen cabinet, an oak table and chairs, stove, organ, and bedroom furniture. In Aug. 1907 they also moved to Canada shipping their belongings by freight train to Bladworth, Sask. Mom came on the passenger train and met Father there. The Akres and Aadlands helped load wagons and move to the homestead.

Mom remembers Christmasses at her home in the States - always a nice tree at church. The student pastor had services and met with the young people.

At the homestead, the Akres and Aadlands sometimes came to visit in the summer, and they made some trips down to see them. Olaf, Hagbert and Lydia came up to stay with them sometimes. She remembered they were invited down for Christmas one year, but didn't go because of the cold weather. Their neighbors near home came over though.

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Added memories - (Father was too young to take his military training in Norway, so he decided to go to the U.S. with his uncle Ludvig Aadland first, so arrived in Pierpont in 1894.)

A little brother Julius ^{Sybre} was born in April 1901 - was a bottle baby and not well. Her mother was unwell, and in bed. Sept 7, 1901 (Mom's 14th birthday) the baby had another convulsion in the morning. Mom carried him in to her mother and she knew he wouldn't live long, so they sent word for Mrs Nygaard to come over. She stayed until after the baby died. Her mother died 4 days later (11th) and was buried on the 14th. Her father was also sick - he had a severe toothache and a double tooth pulled (his only extraction). He lost so much blood, became anemic. He had to go alone to Webster to get a casket for her mother (17 miles with horses)

Grandma had a loom and spinning wheel. She carded wool and spun it for the loom. She worked hard to finish a large carpet, to cover a whole room, and let Grandpa give it to Lochrems to pay for a bill he owed at the Blacksmith shop.

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Mom remembers they had spelling matches, basket socials, and neck tie socials at the country school, after which they served lunch - and often oyster soup.

The brother and sister (the and Louise, came to S. B. in 1900. They didn't go back to Norway with father (in 1902). Louise worked for a Mrs. Henry Horney near Langford, also in Aberdeen, who had T.B. In March 1900, James and Gustav were married at the Methodist Church in Aberdeen. They were the first couple to be married there. Their attendants were Tom Gustaf and Louise Gustaf, Harold Nygaard and Anna Mattson. Louise went back to Norway in the fall of 1900 and died there in 1907 from T.B. contacted when nursing Mrs. Henry. After the wedding these and their families moved to Canada taking the young ones - Robert, Lydia, and Olof with them.

For a while James and Gustav lived in a house (Andersons) in Aberdeen, then moved into another house where they lived 1-1/2 years. They had an oak kitchen cabinet, an oak table and chairs, stove, organ, and bedroom furniture. In Aug. 1907 they also moved to Canada shipping their belongings by freight train to Blackfoot, B.C. Some of the passenger train and met other there. The James and Adelaide helped load young and move to the homestead.

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Added mention - father was too young to take his military training in Norway, so he decided to go to the U.S. with his uncle Ludwig and first, so arrived in the front in 1904.

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James had a loon and spinning wheel. The carter's wheel and spun it for the loom. She worked hard to finish a large carpet, to cover a whole room, and let things give it to someone to say how well he owed at the Blackfoot shop.

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