

Before he was married, our grandfather in Norway was a ship's carpenter and for several years sailed with the crew of the ship (which was wooden then) and was responsible for all repairs and up-keep. Needless to say he had many exciting experiences during these years at sea which he told his own children, and I remember hearing the same stories from our father.

Father was the second child in a large family. His parents were hard working and had a deep faith in God. Although their home was a small "farm" on the outskirts of Stavanger where they had a market garden, dairy and other farm animals, grandfather often worked at several jobs in the community, being a good carpenter; but there was not much future on the farm to keep growing sons at home. Also these were the years of beginning emigration to the U.S. So when our father had finished school, and a course in blacksmithing, he was encouraged to "journey" to the U.S. to find work. It was difficult for his parents to see him leave and their letters to him were full of love and concern. In Pierpont, S.D. he worked in a blacksmith shop, and studied english at school in the winter. It was here he met Mom, and they were later married.

Mom's parents had died, and her older sisters were married and moved to Sask. Times were hard in South Dakota, so later the next year our folks also decided to move to Saskatchewan to homestead there and be closer to the rest of Mom's family.

Their homestead was in the Hawarden-Hanley area and neighbors were mostly bachelors. They brought bags of flour to Mom, who then baked bread for them. In exchange they would bring garden produce, or help with some type of work. They lived in a two-roomed sod house for a few years which Mom said was very cosy with whitewashed walls, mats on the wooden floor, and white curtains and plants at the windows. It was warm in winter and cool in summer. The frame house was built a few years later.

The neighbors were all friendly and helpful sharing work as money was scarce. Father did blacksmithing for others, and they helped him in return. It wasn't only work though as neighbors visited each other, and services were held in homes. Then Bethlehem Lutheran church was organized, the Ladies Aid, and then the choir, and the community grew and flourished.

There was no school nearby, so the family moved into Hawarden. Eventually father bought a farm at Loreburn where we were near church, school and town. Also Mom's two sisters were now neighbors.