



This picture has several interesting features. It had to have been taken before 1925 as the windmill tower is not shown.

The large shed at the right was likely a machine shop that had been built. Helen (Akre) Langager recounted that it blew down in a windstorm. Gustav Tastad got a crew together to lift the roof and put walls under. It was almost ready to lift and put together when one board went askew and it fell down again. It was never rebuilt and the roof lay there for some time.

To the north of the main house, is a smaller house. This house was originally built on the quarter of land directly east of O.M.'s farm, the land homesteaded by Andrew Halvorson. Documents show that a house had already been built when Andrew filed for the land. It must have been erected by the original homesteader, Ole T. Nelson from Granite Falls, Minn., U.S.A., who later abandoned rights to the piece of land. It then became home for Andrew and his new wife, Lydia (Lena's younger sister). After Andrew and Lydia moved to Red Deer, Alberta in 1919, the house was moved to the Akre farm. There, it became sleeping quarters for the hired men. Sometime later, it was moved again, this time west of Strongfield to the Steven French farm NW-21-27-5. It was joined with another building to make one large house, a structure that is still there and has been lived in as recently as 2011.

Sylvia Jike

The Deep Well

About 1925, a deep well was dug on the Akre farm. It was dug after O.M. died, so Lena would have made the decision to proceed with this venture. Although it must have been a major expense at the time, it proved to be a benefit for many years to come for this farm as well as for neighbors and travelers. Water was a scarce commodity on the prairies. The well was deep and the windmill tower high - thought to be 60 feet high. When the wind blew (which was most days), the vanes turned and water was pumped to the surface. The well provided water for the livestock as well as for household use. It was safe to drink but not the best tasting for coffee or tea. It was sometimes referred to as "soda water". If one could lean over the water trough and drink right out of the pipe, when the water was ice cold, it tasted good.

It was told that during the 1930's, with the migration north of so many settlers, the farm was a popular stopping off point. Mildred (Akre) Joel (Lena's daughter) recounted that families would stop for water at the Joel farm in the Elbow area, at the Jacobson farm near Loreburn and then at the Akre farm on their trek to greener northern farmland. It was a place where they could water their horses and cattle and fill their water barrels before heading farther north. (Conversation held March, 2012)

Cecil Akre (Lena's son) said the well was 604 feet deep. He also said the well could never be pumped dry. On one occasion when pulling the pipes out, probably to make repairs, the pipes were accidentally dropped down the well but they were able to pull them up again. When asked if he knew how much it cost to have the well dug, he thought it must not have been too much as a number of wells were dug in the area at the same time. (Conversation held March, 2012)

Jim (Donnie) Torgersen, (Lena's grandson), recalled hearing that the vanes on the windmill were so well balanced that it took very little wind to turn them and bring water to the surface, although this was usually not a problem on the prairies! (Conversation held March 2012)



Item of Interest: Bank of Hamilton check issued to James W. Robinson.

According to the Loreburn History Book, a Bank of Hamilton opened in Loreburn in 1910. This check must have been one of the earlier transactions in the bank as the check is dated January 28, 1910 and cashed on January 31, 1910.

It is also interesting to note that the checks were originally issued to the bank in Abernathy, Sask.

It is unknown why the check was issued. One connection between O.M. Akre and James W. Robinson may have been Pleasant Ridge School. Two of James Robinson's children, Nora and Howard, attended Pleasant Ridge (see picture of "last day of school - 1909" copied from Strongfield History Book). Edith Apps^{**}, granddaughter of James W. and daughter of Howard, indicated that James W. Robinson, built a sod house on SE 12-27-5 (the homestead of H.R. H. Robinson). This land was in the Pleasant Ridge district. (where Dolehemby now lives) Speculation - was the \$25.00 salary for custodial duties at the school? (From discussions between Edith Apps and Karen Hopkins during the year of 2011).



Last day of school at end of the first term at Pleasant Ridge School, 1909. Standing at back, left to right, Laura Aadland, Lydia Syhre, Clara Aadland, Johnnie Ham, Emma Sather and Tillie Aadland. Second row from back, left to right, Olaf Syhre, Nora Robinson, Hans Sather, Elmer Aadland, Harold Cowan and teacher, Miss Tapscott. Seated, left to right, James Cowan, Christine Aadland, Alvin Sather, Howard Robinson. Two younger children in foreground are visitors for the last day of school.

LOREBURN, SASK. Jan 28 1910

To the *Bank of Hamilton*

ACCEPTED
JAN 31 1910
BANK OF HAMILTON
LOREBURN, SASK.

Pay to the order of *James W. Robinson* *Twenty Five* Dollars

James W. Robinson
\$25.00

Balance

No. 1
Jan 28 1910
Pay to Jas W. Robinson
Part of Salary
for 1910
\$25.00

After 1923

The years following O.M.'s early death, must have been very difficult for Lena. She had eight children to care for and a farm to manage. One can be sure the neighbors were there to give her help when needed and she had hired men much of the time. Because many of these hired men were recent immigrants from Norway, they would not have had experience in prairie farming. It probably was a learning curve for them as well.

Of course, her children were involved in the house and farm work. Cecil Akre related the story of hauling grain to the elevator in town, all by himself with horses and wagon, when he was only 9 years old. He became a very experienced and capable horseman.

In 1925, the three Syhre sisters, Lizzie, Lena and Hannah, were able to take a trip back to Pierpont, South Dakota to visit relatives. This must have been a treat for the recently widowed Lena who would have had a break from the responsibilities of the farm her family of eight. *Note: Information from Garth ~~A~~ Tastad's family history "The Lonesome Tree".*

Making decisions about finances and purchasing goods were a new experience. It appears that Lena met these challenges head on. One major decision would have been to have the deep well dug.

An Income Tax form from 1928 gives some insights into her decision to forge ahead! Interesting information from her tax return were some of the following entries:

- She had lived in Canada 22 years, was a widow, had 8 dependent children
- She owned $\frac{1}{2}$ section of land (S $\frac{1}{2}$ -16-27-4-W3) and was renting a $\frac{1}{2}$ section (W $\frac{1}{2}$ -15-27-4-W3). The rental land was owned by F. Brodeos (sp?) of Davenport, Iowa
- in 1928, she sold 2813 bushels of wheat for \$1406.50; 200 bushels of barley for \$80.00; 1 cow for \$80.00; cream and milk for \$102.40. Along with several other income sources, her total income was \$2900.66
- Some of her expenses that year were: 100 bushels of seed for \$60.00; 400 (balls?) of twine for \$60.00; repairs - \$25.00; blacksmithing - \$25.00; insurance policy - \$27.30; taxes on farm - \$137.39; paid for threshing - \$579.36. In all, her total deductions were \$1998.70
- She employed M.Langager for 35 days, H.Liknes for 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ months and (?) 2 days for stooking.
- She had made the following purchases: In 1924, a cultivator - \$75.00, a tandem disc - \$150.00, 3 plows - \$350.00, 4 wagons & 2 boxes - \$500.00, harrows - \$30.00, mower & rake - \$100.00, buggy - \$150.00; in 1925, a cream separator - \$90.00; in 1927, a binder - \$285.00; in 1928, a drill - \$233.00. She had also purchased a car in 1927 for \$860.00.
- The buildings now listed on the farm were a barn, 5 granaries, a machine shed, a garage, a pighouse, a henhouse and a blacksmith shop.



Helen Akre and Peder Tastad – taken at the Tastad farm

Helen and Gudrun Tastad washing quilts at the Akre farm in the “wash House”.

This building was originally used as sleeping quarters for hired men - Pete Paulson, Gordon Scanlon, Mandius Akre and others. Henry and Cecil slept in it in the summer. When later set up as a wash house, the quilts were first washed in huge tubs and then put through the hand cranked wringers to squeeze the water out. Quilt washing was an “annual affair”.

Name:	O M Ahre												
Gender:	Male												
Marital Status:	Married												
Age:	27												
Birthplace:	Norway												
Relation to Head of House:	Head												
Spouse's name:	Lena Ahre												
Immigration Year:	1906												
Province:	Saskatchewan												
Sub-District:	That Part of The District of Humboldt Bounded On The												
Description:	East By The Line Dividing Ranges 3 and 4, On The North By The Line Dividing Townships 30 and 31, On The South By The South Saskatchewan River and On The South By The Line Dividing Townships 24 and 25, A												
Sub-District:	7												
Neighbors:	View others on page												
Household Members:	<table> <thead> <tr><th>Name</th><th>Age</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>O M Ahre</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>Lena Ahre</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>Lydia Ahre</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>Olaf Ahre</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>Ole Ahre</td><td>6</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Name	Age	O M Ahre	27	Lena Ahre	24	Lydia Ahre	12	Olaf Ahre	9	Ole Ahre	6
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Source Citation: Year: 1906; Census Place: 7, Humboldt, Saskatchewan. Page 26. Family No: 338.

Source Information:
Ancestry.com. 1906 Canada Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2006.
Original data: Library and Archives Canada. *Census of the Northwest Provinces, 1906*. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada: Library and Archives Canada, 2008.
<<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/census-1906/index-e.html>>. Series RC31-C-1. Statistics Canada Fonds. Microfilm reels: T-18353 to T-18363.

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Description:
This database is an every name index to individuals enumerated in the 1906 Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta and also includes images of the original census documents. Information listed includes: name of each person in the household, gender, age, birthplace, relationship to head of household, and year of immigration to Canada. [Learn more.](#)

Name:	Lena Ahre												
Gender:	Female												
Marital Status:	Married												
Age:	24												
Birthplace:	Norway												
Relation to Head of House:	Wife												
Spouse's name:	O M Ahre												
Immigration Year:	1906												
Province:	Saskatchewan												
Sub-District:	That Part of The District of Humboldt Bounded On The												
Description:	East By The Line Dividing Ranges 3 and 4, On The North By The Line Dividing Townships 30 and 31, On The South By The South Saskatchewan River and On The South By The Line Dividing Townships 24 and 25, A												
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Name:	Harbart Lyra (Hagbert Syhre)																
Gender:	Male																
Marital Status:	Single																
Age:	15																
Birthplace:	United States of America																
Relation to Head of House:	Servant																
Immigration Year:	1906																
Province:	Saskatchewan																
Sub-District:	That part of the district of Humboldt bounded on																
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Coming to Canada – 1906

O.M. and Lena Akre came to Canada in March, 1906 as a young, newly married couple. According to a later document, they had entered Canada through North Portal. They would probably have continued by train to Hanley, Sask. as this seemed to be the route most settlers from the Dakotas took. The rest of their trip to the Strongfield area was likely by horse and wagon. It was also typical for the settlers to bring household articles, even cattle and horses on the train with them.

They were in Canada in time to be included in the 1906 Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. They were designated to be in the Sub-District of Humboldt, #7. Their Post Office address was Hanley. O.M. had already filed for homestead - the land description being Section 16, Township 27, Range 5, West of the 3rd. At the time of the Census, they had 4 horses, 5 milch cows and 3 other cattle.

O.M. and Lena were accompanied by Lena's two younger siblings, Lydia (age 12) and Olof (age 9). Because the Syhre parents had both died in South Dakota, Lena had probably accepted responsibility for two of her younger siblings. Although they are listed in the Census as "Akre", their surname is "Syhre".

Note: A third child, Ole (age 6), also listed as a son, is a mystery. Nothing is known about him.

Lydia and Olof stayed with O.M. and Lena and attended school. There is a picture of them, along with classmates, at Pleasant Ridge School during the 1909 School year. They both were confirmed in Skudesnes Lutheran Church.

Lydia later married Andrew Halvorson who had a homestead next to O.M.'s land. They moved to Red Deer, Alberta in 1919.

Syhrum Lake
Olof returned to the United States in 1917. (?)

Lena's other brother, Hagbert, had come to Canada earlier with another married sister, Lizzie and her husband Ludvig Aadland. On August 1, 1906 Hagbert was the first Confirmant in the newly organized Skudesnes Lutheran Church located near Loreburn, Sask. He later returned to the United States. In the 1910 Census of the United States, he was listed as a "hired man" with a Nygard family.

Lena's younger sister, Hannah, married Gustav Tastad on March 22, 1906 in South Dakota, then came to Canada in 1907 to homestead in the Hawarden area.

Marriage of Olaus M. Akre and Lena Syhre

On November 9, 1905 O.M. Akre and Lena Syhre were married. The wedding took place in Skudesnes Lutheran church, Lynn, South Dakota. The marriage was performed by Pastor K. Knutson. The witnesses to the marriage were John Akre and Gustav Tastad. It is possible that John Akre was O.M.'s brother from Norway as he apparently came to America to visit on occasion. He is the brother who later died at sea in a storm. Gustav Tastad, the second witness later married Lena's younger sister Hannah.

The marriage was officially registered on December 13, 1905.

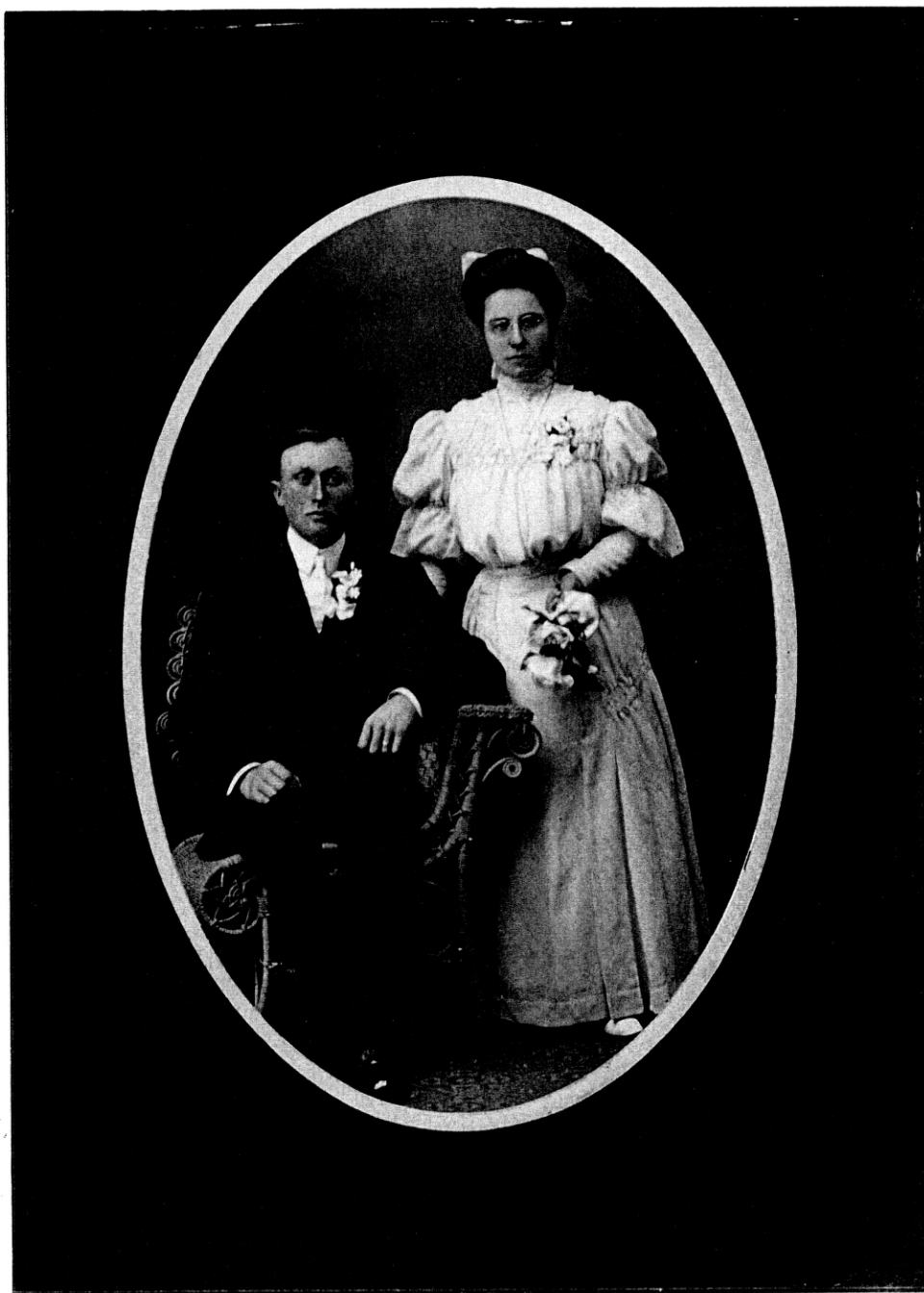
Husband: O.M. Akre, bachelor, age 28, from Pierpont, County of Day.

Wife: Lena Syhre, maiden, age 23, from Lynn, County of Day.

Your presence is requested at the
marriage of
Lena Syhre
to
Olaus M. Akre
on Thursday afternoon,
November ninth,
nineteen hundred five
at two thirty,
Skudesnes Lutheran Church
Lynn, South Dakota.

Reception at the home of
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Paulson.

Andrew Paulson
was Lena's Cousin



As for me and my house we will serve the LORD.



This certifies that

Claus M. Akre
of Bristol, S. Dak.

AND

Lena Syhre,
of Lynn, S. Dak.

Behold the tabernacle of God is with men
and he will dwell with them
and they shall be his people

This is my commandment
that ye
love one another
as I have
loved you

Were by me united in

MARRIAGE



AT

Lynn S. Dak.

According to the ordinance of God and the laws of the state
of S. Dakota on the 21 day of November 1905

WITNESSES

John Akre
Luntav Tastad

R. Knutson

PASTOR