

NHOH News

Volume 4 Number 3 Fall 1999

Published 3 times per year by: Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag

Who Are We?

NHOH Lag includes the following districts and kommuner in our bygdelag:

District 1:

Nord-Østerdal:

— Alvdal

— Folldal

— Os

— Rendalen

— Tolga

— Tynset

District 2:

Sør-Østerdal:

— Åmot

— Elverum

— Engerdal

— Stor Elvedal

— Trysil

District 3:

Hedemarken &

Hamar:

— Furnes

— Hamar

— Løten

— Nes

— Ringsaker

— Romedal

— Strande

— Vang

Hilsen fra Presidenten:

The event of the year, perhaps the decade, is now history. The Norwegian-American Bygdelag Centennial celebration at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa withstood the scorching heat index of 115 degrees to commemorate the development of the bygdelag movement, the contributions of our people to this remarkable land and to enjoy our cultural heritage in food, dress, dance, and song. We congratulate and thank the leadership of the Bygdelagenes Fellesraad for this all-lag event. It was a huge success—a tusen takk!!

Our Lag was well represented in Decorah. About 30 members attended and/or performed various tasks. Hats-off to: Marilyn Sorensen, who Co-chaired the event; Dixie Hansen, who served as a resource specialist and all-around volunteer; Len Jackson and Linda & Dale Herrick who worked in the genealogy lab; and, Roland Krogstad, Jane Olson, & Janice Stewart, who joined me in representing our Lag in the Parade of Lags on Friday evening.

Congratulations to the 1999-2000 Officers & Directors, who were elected at our annual meeting. They are President, Gary Olson; Vice President, John Reindl; Secretary, Dixie Hansen; Treasurer, Charlotte Helstad; Editor, Roland Krogstad; and Directors, Orrin Helstad, Paal Romsdal, and Marilyn Sorensen.

While the Centennial in Decorah was a joyous event, it was not without some controversy. We were shocked and

dismayed by the action of our sister lag—Solør lag. For whatever reason, they have decided to actively recruit members from the entire Hedmark area. Their new brochure and ad in the Centennial booklet depicts their lag as representing all of Hedmark. We regard this action as intrusive and unethical. Our Lag was formed to represent areas of Hedmark other than those served by Solør lag. We have expressed our concerns to the leadership of Solør lag, in person and in writing, and to the Fellesraad. To date, we have not received a response from either. In the mean time, our recruiting will continue to honor and respect the original areas of Solør lag.

One of the highlights at our annual meeting was the presentation of our Norway 2000 Tour by Ed-Ventures of Rochester, MN. The Tour is scheduled for September 15-26, 2000. Brochures have been mailed to all members. If you need more, please contact me (Gary Olson, 507-282-1090). February 1, is the deadline to take advantage of the \$100 early registration discount. Please refer to Tour Application Form elsewhere. While members will be given first choice, others are also welcome.

Officers & Directors met on October 30, in Black River Falls, WI to begin plans for Stevne 2000, which will be held in Alexandria, MN on August 3,4,5, 2000. We are still looking for volunteers to assist in the planning. If interested, please contact me.

Hilsen,

Gary M. Olson, President

4-3-01

THE THREE-DAY 2000 STEVNE

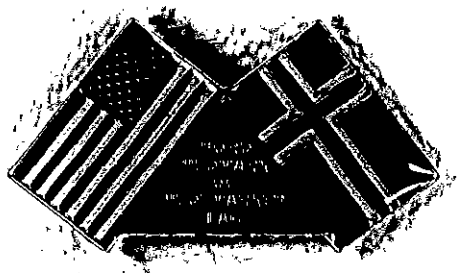
The three-day NHOH LAG Stevne is scheduled for the Holiday Inn, Alexandria, MN, Thur-Fri-Sat, August 3-4-5, 2000. A stevne planning committee is being formed. We could use some more volunteer help. Please contact Gary M. Olson, Rochester, MN. Takk. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this very meaningful and helpful event.

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS RE-ELECTED

At the 1999 Annual Business Meeting in Decorah, IA, all directors and officers were re-elected. Please see list elsewhere.

NEW LAG PINS AVAILABLE

Our exquisite new Lag pins for only \$5 each are "selling like hotcakes". This is part of our Lag fundraising efforts. They make excellent gifts. John Hogenson volunteered to serve as a salesperson during the year. If you want some Lag pins please send a check payable to NHOH Lag with a stamped self-addressed envelope to John Hogenson, 5904 Code Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55436-2622. A Tusen Takk go to Dixie Hansen for heading up this excellent fundraising project. See design elsewhere.



Lag pin 150% size
Lag name in center

2000 DUES

If your mailing label indicates "1999", it means your Lag dues expire December 31, 1999 and are now payable for the year January 1 to December 31, 2000. Please use the following **DUES RENEWAL FORM** to facilitate payment of your dues. Make checks payable to NHOH Lag and mail to Charlotte Helstad, Treasurer, 8 Sebring Ct, Madison, WI 53719-3521.

DUES RENEWAL FORM

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

E-mail _____

Address: _____ PH: _____

Roots in _____

Norway(See P.1): _____

Genealogy Fund: \$ _____

Dues:1yr=\$10;2yrs=\$18;3yrs=\$25 Enc:\$ _____

COUSIN-FINDING

Since organizing our NHOH Lag in 1995, several cousins have been identified for the first time, much to the delight of those involved. This involves submitting either Cousin-Finding Worksheets or ancestral charts(family trees) which indicate the ancestral kommune or parish, family farms, and family names with corresponding dates if possible. Charts are compared and notices sent to the matched relatives for further verification. If you have not done the above and are interested please send materials to Roland Krogstad, 2718 Regent Street, Madison, WI 53705.

MAP SERVICE

The Lag has over 45 large-scale topographical maps showing farms and other topographical features in each kommune of the NHOH Lag areas. If you want a "xerox" copy of the part of map showing your ancestral farm in Norway, please send the farm name(s) and the vicinity in which it is located, such as name of parish, kommune, city, village, or town. Please send a stamped self-addressed envelope to Roland Krogstad above.

PROGRAM BOOKS FOR SALE from the

**Norwegian-American
Bygdela Centennial**
AT DECORAH, IOWA

\$5.50 each postpaid to US addresses
extra copies \$4 each
Checks in US \$5 to

NABC BOOK
10129 Goodrich Circle
Minneapolis, MN 55437

LAG GENEALOGY FUND

(From the Helstads)

We occasionally receive questions about the nature and purpose of the "Genealogy Fund". Technically it is not a separate fund, but contributions to it are separately recorded on the Treasurer's books. Since the inception of the Lag in August of 1995 to October 1, 1999, contributions have totaled more than \$800. These contributions have helped to meet the cost of genealogical books and equipment purchased by the Lag mainly for use in the Genealogy Lab at our annual stevne. To date, the cost of these purchases has exceeded \$2,000.

As of October 1, 1999, the following persons have contributed to the Genealogy Fund: Noreen & Leonard Benson, Michael Bovre, Truman & Edna Carlson, Peter and Karen Christianson, Robert & Verene Crane, Karla & Kyle Engebretson, Jene Erickson, Harold Fisher, Mary Gagne, Michelle Giuliano, Harold & Genevieve Hagen, Dixie Hansen, Orrin & Charlotte Helstad, Carolyn Howland, William Jersey, John & Marcia Kittleson, Roland & Irma Krogstad, Mildred Larson, John MacPhee, Tim & Linda Martinson, Arthur & Isabelle Mathisen, Marlys McFadden, James & Magla Moore, Sheila & James Norton, John Reindl, Paul & Adell Rennord, Shirley Schoenfeld, Joy & Glenn Shong, Bettie Stevens, Constance Ternes, Jill Teslow, James & Sue Thompson, Margaret & Robert Tollefson, Eleanor Webert, and Janice Williams.

Contributions have ranged from \$1 to over \$100, but certainly all are greatly appreciated very much. A **Tusen Takk** to you all.

Lag members who have genealogical questions are encouraged to contact members of the Genealogy Committee and/or other members with similar roots for assistance. The list of members of the Genealogy Committee is attached to the Lag Membership List.

SEEK: YOU MAY FIND !!

To help members find missing ancestors and descendants.

Searching for information about:

- Inga Sophie Pedersen, born in Romedal, Hedmark 18 MAR 1884. Emigrated from Kristiania(Oslo) 20 MAY 1906 for Minneapolis, MN traveling via Hull in England on ship "Romeo". In US she married Earl Erikson(Ericson), perhaps lived in Minneapolis.

- Lars Pedersen Hekne, born in Romedal on 1 OCT 1888. Emigrated from Kristiania(Oslo) 27 SEP 1906 on ship "Oslo". Married Lina Hogasen and lived somewhere in Wisconsin. Please contact: Per Hansen, Ringsakerveien 4, 2380 Brumunddal, Norway. Email lfrogner@c2i.net

EMIGRATION FESTIVALS IN NORWAY NEXT YEAR

The year 2000 marks the 175th anniversary of the beginning of the massive emigration from Norway to America with the landing of 52 persons on the ship Restauration in New York on October 9, 1825. In Hedmark, the Norwegian Emigrant Museum near Hamar is planning several activities including festivals in July and October.

REPORTERS IN NORWAY NEEDED

Your editor could use more articles from Norway. If any members have an "in" for obtaining news articles, emigration stories, or other information about Norway, we'd appreciate receiving them for possible publication in your NHOH NEWS.

VELKOMMEN ! . . .

We extend a hearty welcome to the following new members:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| • Frank Evenson | Paso Robles, CA |
| • Anita Delegard | Edina, MN |
| • Terry Gilbertson | Delton, MI |
| • J. Andrew Holey | Cold Spring, MN |
| • Lori Ann Lahlum | Valley City, ND |
| • Karen Lunaas | Memphis, TN |
| • Jim & Beverly Lundeen | Littleton, CO |
| • Donald & Rosalie Olson | San Diego, CA |
| • Elvina Patterson | Brooklyn, WI |
| • Solveig R. Peck | Seattle, WA |
| • Everett & Jean Shogren | San Diego, CA |
| • Tom Stretlien | Lake Leelanau, MI |
| • Nancy Schmelzer | Madison, WI |
| • David & Cindy Spidahl | Erhard, MN |
| • Donald Teigen | Edina, MN |
| • Jill I. Teslow | Decorah, IA |
| • Merton & Roberta Thrugstad | Fairdale, ND |
| • Christy Helgestad Tupper | Stoughton, WI |
| • Janice A. Williams | Tampa, FL |
| • Gary J. Wold | Frederick, MD |

IN MEMORY OF . . .

- Paul Graham, who passed away January 17, 1999
- Gerhard N. Holte, who was killed in a tractor accident on August 16, 1999.

Our sympathy goes out to the families and friends of the above deceased.

NOTES FROM FORUMS

WHY THE EMIGRANTS LEFT NORWAY

By John Christianson

Timing of the push to emigrate varied from one part of Norway to another. It affected men and women of all ages and in most occupational groups. The underlying cause was population explosion without economic growth which began shortly after the Napoleonic Wars in 1814. Potatoes were introduced which doubled the arable land facilitating higher birthrate but the plague increased the death rate. Population didn't grow until vaccinations caused the death rate to decline. By 1860s population growth doubled.

The oldest son was entitled to inherit the farm, but the obligations of paying off debts, paying off siblings, and providing a pension for the father caused him to look toward America. Examples of regional effects include: Along the southern coast wooden hull ships gave way to steel in the 1880s causing layoffs. Sailors were aware of many countries including America. Around Sunnfjord the herring were susceptible to water temperature changes and began moving north 1811-1870 leaving people without a livelihood.

Pulls to America included letters from early settlers, the Homestead Act of 1862, and steam ships taking over from sailing ships. Pastors and judges also found jobs in America. Hedmark had heavy emigration facilitated by railroads built in 1854 and 1863 to Oslo. Then the area began to prosper in the strong farming area for food, the forests for lumber products, sawmills, match factory, cotton factory for women workers, distilleries.

The Norwegian communities in America were cross-sections of communities in Norway, e.g., farming, logging. Early on, **families** emigrated. Beginning in the 1880s **individuals** emigrated. The second railroad didn't go to Lillehammer but through Østerdalen, and Roros to Trondheim. A depression developed in Lillehammer in 1860s, all investors discontinued. The emigrants brought a rich array of skills to America.

EARLY NORWEGIAN SETTLEMENTS

By Forrest Brown

Norwegian immigrants tended to settle together in large rural areas which were not only linked to specific communities in Norway but also to other American settlements. Early settlements tried to recreate the old country bygd. It was natural to form settlements with relatives and friends. This served as a cushion against shock. Rural settlements centered around the church. They grew rapidly, doubling population every 3-4 years

Aided by the early railroad settlements at Muskego and Koshkonong moved west to Iowa, Minnesota, Dakotas, southwestern Canada, and other places. There are as many Norwegians in America as there are in Norway.

Family histories, church records, plat books, census are local sources of information on immigrant settlements. Another reference is **A Chronicle of Immigrant Life** by Elmer Howlan, NAHA, is being translated. No other country has anything like bygdeboker.

STORY TELLING: AN APPROACH TO FAMILY HISTORY WRITING

By Gordon Jacobson

Enhancing one's genealogical family group sheets and family tree charts with stories of our general heritage, traditions, and personal experiences make **family history books** more informative, enjoyable, and meaningful.

Heritage topics might include something about the Vikings and Kings, Denmark/Sweden involvements, art, music, dance; emigration conditions, leaving, crossing; immigration, arriving, settling, living conditions, family, church, school, jobs; descendants, families, living conditions, jobs, school, churches; changes that have taken place.

Documents to research might include: church and cemetery records, citizenship and naturalization papers, diaries and biographies, death certificates and obituaries, school report cards, yearbooks and other school records, military and court records, maps and plat books, passport and passenger lists, county histories, family pictures, letters, mementos, awards, occupations, businesses, old newspapers, and other records.

NORWEGIAN COURT AND PROBATE RECORDS

By Gerald Haslam

Probate and court records are among the earliest records(1600s), often predating the parish or church records by as much as a hundred years. The organization arrangement/format of probate and court records is not difficult. Usually the essential information is contained in the early paragraphs of a document. Early probate records were not separated from other court records. They are usually indexed by **farm**. Norway has many dialects which are reflected in records. Probate was required if there were children dependents. They are also significant for cotters and husmen. Probate records includes inventory of the estate of the deceased, lists of creditors and debtors, real biological relationships, dates of deeds. The probate remains open until all heirs are paid. Wills are a probate

(FORUM NOTES CONTINUED)

record. Military records are separate. Land/property records are difficult to use; they are not indexed.

The LDS Church has filmed probate records up to 1860, and are available through regional LDS Family History Centers. They are also available at Regional Archives in Norway. Court Records are rather sorrowful. Mothers of illegitimate children were sentenced to prison. If they were engaged, children born were considered legitimate. Stealing meant life imprisonment. Incest was a hideous crime and the guilty person was beheaded.

Norway was a violent society before 1850: murder, drinking was common after baptism, funeral. Burial needed a body. Disturbing the peace common. Priest could press charges for non-attendance at church or for working on Sunday.

NORWEGIAN FOLK ART: THE MIGRATION OF A TRADITION By Marion Nelson

The development of Norwegian Folk Art began about 500 years ago at about at the end of the Middle Ages. It consisted of wood carving, rosemaling, weaving, embroidery, and metalwork. During the Viking Period every thing was wild. By 1600s we get reflections from the Renaissance and return to the human figure. Baroque painting flourished from the late 1500s through the early 1700s. It featured the S-shaped curves and the acanthus plant from the Mediterranean which appealed to the rural culture of Norway. In 1750 chimneys were built which allowed color painting.

Folk Art came with the immigrants to America on simple everyday objects such as trunks, chairs, plates, ale bowls, wood baskets, wood carvings, etc. Dragons, serpents and animals were other designs for painting. Cupboards, church furniture, altars, pulpits, etc were decorated with carved ornamentation and painting. In the old days the carver and painter were usually the same person. Different styles emerged in Gudbrandsdal, Valdres, Hallingdal, Telemark, and the Southwest (Vest-Agder, Rogaland, Os). Hallingdal had a different style with a large central flower, figure or hole. Descendants of immigrants revived painting and carving by a desire to improve on earlier efforts. Rosemaling has become popular today.

CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF PROBABILITY OF FINDING NORWEGIAN KINGS AND VIKINGS IN YOUR FAMILY TREE By Lars Loberg

(Submitted by Shirley Schoenfeld)

There are a lot of mistakes and inconsistencies in the lines of

nobility. Desires to attach family lines to Kings appear to be politically motivated. Sagas were even "invented" to gain political power. Many Kings had illegitimate children by many women. There was the marrying of cousins and inter-marriages within clans. There were many Danish Kings in the Norwegian Royalty. Princes and princesses often married for special purposes, either to gain strength in their own nobility or with another country for protection purposes.

One should not put a King in their family tree unless proven. Such proof was hard to find before the 16th century. Be ready and willing to make changes and adjustments.

Genealogical research has been an aid to history. In the 1801 census of Norway 90% were farmers; most can be traced to the beginning of the 18th century and some to the 17th century. The years 1664 and 1666 are accurate accounts and can prove ancestry by farm name.



Parade Of Lags at Bygdela Centennial
New NHOH Banner

L-R: Janice Stewart, Roland Krogstad, Gary M. Olson,
Jane Olson.

Notes on Writing Your Life Story

A recent TV commercial shows an elegant lady of a certain age who is using a computer to write her life story for other family members. It's a wonderful idea, and it's important work. If you don't have a computer, don't let that stop you. All you really need is paper and a pencil. Everything else is frosting on the cake.

Some hesitate, fearing they must begin at the beginning. A better idea is to get a pack of 3x5-inch cards and carry a few at all times. One never knows when a memory will strike and with the cards, you can jot down notes. Then when you get home, develop the story and keep it to edit (make additions, deletions, corrections) later. Use a 3-ring binder with looseleaf notebook paper. Then you can move pages around, insert new ones where they best fit, take out something you'd rather not keep, do whatever you like to make the story "flow." You can put clippings and other stuff in where it best fits.

Some experts recommend taping (video or audio) your story and then create a print version. To retain your work for future readers, you need to put it in print form because even ancient books are still readable.

You can keep track of your family history with a homemade photo journal. Arrange your photos in an album with a narration about each one. The pages of narration make the difference between a photo album and a photo journal. There are two purposes for a photo journal: (1) to preserve those precious and oftentimes irreplaceable photos and (2) to preserve along with the photos all the information you can find about the subjects. Both demonstrate that the name, date and place are the bare necessities to write about a photo. With high technology, it's easy to get high-quality copies of pictures.

You'll need a large, three-ringed, three-inch album without pages. Use clear, see-through

sheet protectors that open at the top and have holes already punched for inserting into the album. Insert a card stock into the sheet protector which serves two purposes: you may attach your photos directly to the card stock, or attach them to a sheet of acid-free typing paper, using the card stock to give body and a professional look to your handwork. Place a sheet of typing paper with photos attached to each side of the card stock and your page is complete. Some photos you'll want on the page alone, others you'll group on the page.

It is predicted that acid-free products will add another hundred years or so to the life of the project. We'll need to take that on faith. Of course, you may use ordinary albums and paper, just be sure not to affix your photos to that sticky kind of backing paper used in some albums. In time some of those have damaged the photos.

Following the photo section with narration, you might include your genealogy outlines and burial information. If they are on acid-free paper you need not use sheet protectors or card stock for these lists.

If you don't have genealogies and don't want to get that involved, at least write down what you know about your own family and other relatives and preserve that. In years to come, descendants may want to refer to those lists to keep all their ancestors straight.

Making changes and additions is easy. You may change pages around or add additional pages without their looking added on.

You do need to give some thought to what will happen to your project when you're gone. You'll know who in your family would appreciate and cherish such a wonderful thing as a photo journal.

One thing is important: be sure whoever gets it will share copies of the contents with members of the family and will take good care of it, and they, in turn, will leave instructions to pass it along to generations to come.

An old Bjolstad Husmann tells his story

(From the Dec 1988 TELESOGA)

Translated by Conrad Byre

Introductory note by the translator:

The Norwegian word "husmann" means in English "houseman", and refers to a class of Norwegian farm people. There was a similar class in the British Isles, where they were called "cotters". They were tenants who had a life tenure contract with a landowner. In exchange for their labor, they received the right to live in a small house or cottage on a poor plot of land, where they and their family could spend the time when their labor was not needed by the landlord, in producing as much food for their own use as they could.

For most of them it was a life of impoverished drudgery, and not only that, in class conscious Norway of the 18th and 19th centuries, their standing in society was near the bottom, a status easy to fall into but almost impossible to get out of when the population increased rapidly in this poor country where tillable land was scarce. By the way farming was done at the time, the landlords had use for many laborers for seasonal work, in many ways not unlike the southern plantation owners and their African slaves.

It is easy to understand why "husmann" by the thousands left for America, when reports of abundant fertile land and a classless society reached them. This article in the 1981 Yearbook for Gudbrandsdalen is of special interest to us in American who are descendants of immigrant "hysmenn".

AN OLD BJOLSTAD HUSMANN TELLS

by Sigrid Heringstad

There is no estate (gard) in Gudbrandsdalen and maybe in all Norway, that has had as many "husmenn" as Bjolstad in Heidal. There were 26 holdings where the tenant had a fixed or obligatory duty to perform for the landlord. In the hard times of the 1920's and 30's some new husmann homes were es-

tablished where the husmann was not required to meet up for work, but had a rent to pay in money. So in all there were more than 30 husmann places belonging to Bjolstad. It is said that at one time there were 700 buildings that belonged to the gard. There were three seters, and many hay sheds on the widely scattered small clearings.

Ola H. Rindholen, 84 years of age, was one of the last of the husmenn, and he can tell much about life at Bjolstad in the 1890's and early 1900's. The Rindholen husmann place was one of the best of its kind, where they owned and fed two horses, seven or eight cattle, and many goats and sheep. Ten children grew up here, all good workers and respected citizens of the community. Ola does not have a copy of the contract, but remembers the terms clearly. The rent was five specie dollars (a specie dollar was about \$1.20 American) a year, to be paid by labor. Rate of pay per day was nine skillings for spring's work, 12 skillings during haying, and 24 skillings in harvest. A skillings was worth about one cent. The husmann could be called to work at any time. But after he had worked out the amount of rent, he was paid at the rate then prevailing in the area. At some husmann places no fixed money rent was set, but a certain piece of work was to be done, such as at Leirflaten, where the husmann was to harvest with sickle five skurmal (1 1/4 acres) of barley, and cut with scythe five maling hay, about 8 1/4 acres. At Rinseteren the requirement was that by a certain date in the spring up to 50 head of heifers and yearlings would be brought, to be fed and pastured.

The workday at the gard may seem long to us. But so it was at all places. Let us look at a day in summer. At 5:30 a.m. the stabbur bell rings, to wake the men. The girls had already cooked a big pot of coffee and set the table for the first breakfast, which was thick hard flatbread, butter, cheese and milk. The workday outside began at six o'clock. At 9:30 the bell rang for the second breakfast, called

"dugurd", this was always "graut", that is - mush - served with sour milk. It was not light work to prepare a kettle of mush for 40 people, cooked on a hot cookstove, or farther back in time, over the fire in the fireplace. One girl added the meal and another stirred, both had to take hold to lift the kettle off the fire. After this meal, a rest period until 11:30 before going back to work, a cup of coffee and a slice of oven baked bread at least an inch thick. For the girls, maybe a little rest, but not very long; they had the next meal to prepare. At 2:30 the bell was rung for "nons", the midday meal. Meat was usually served, with cabbage, or soup of peas or barley cooked with beef or pork, either fresh or "spekemat", that is, dried meat. Once a week some kind of sausage. A cup of coffee at 4, then back to work until 7:30, then back to the table for mush again.

To us this diet might seem monotonous, but it was nourishing and plentiful, and no one had been spoiled yet at that time. One day every summer there was a big celebration, that was when the "slatte grauten", or haying porridge, was served. Then everyone, young and old, belonging to the gard was invited, and got all the rich fat rommegraut they were able to eat.

The census of 1865 gives us these facts about Bjolstad gard: There were 25 "gardsfolk", the manager Tor, Torsen Tofte with his family, and their servaht girls and household servant men. There were 24 husmann places, adding another 160 people of all ages.

When the labor force at Bjolstad was at its greatest, the food was served on a table that reached clear across the house and several small tables were also needed. It was during harvest that there were the most workers. Ola tells that one fall there were 36 men harvesting barley with sickles.

All of these workers had to have a place to sleep. Only a few husmann places were near enough so they could go home at night, to the Rinholen place it was almost a Norwegian mile, which is seven English miles. A two story 'mens house' gave room for most.

The husmenn had the right to work on their own place on Saturdays. Every Friday evening in the summer the bell rang at six o'clock, then the husmenn who were going home quit work and left. The

rest kept on as usual until 7:30. Sunday evening a procession of husmann came marching back, with their scythes slung over their shoulders. Their Sunday supper was always "soll", that is, broken flatbread in milk.

Each man furnished his own scythe and sickle, and kept it sharp and in good repair.

One can puzzle about how there could be work for so many, all summer until late fall. But the system of agriculture took a great deal of labor. There were many small fields in outlying areas where grass was cut and made into hay, from above the tree line high on the mountain side to patches far down in the forest. Then there were fences to maintain, almost 15 miles of it, mostly of a type where a double row of stakes was filled with brush and saplings.

The last work in the fall was the more harvest, and a great deal of moss was used at Bjolstad for cattle feed. Most of it was collected along the banks of the Sjoa River, far north from the gard, it was piled in stacks, and hauled home as soon as the river ice froze thick enough for sleighing. Ola remembers as older husmann telling about a near disaster one time when they were hauling home more with 18 horses, each pulling a sled. For some distance the Sjoa flows between steep cliffs, where it is impossible to get off the river. As they were coming thru this stretch, they heard the ice loosen up stream. Then there was a horse race. No need to use the whip, the horses sensed the danger and ran at runaway speed. All made it to safety, but the last sled to get off the river was overturned by the breaking ice.

Because Bjolstad had the largest area of any gard in Gudbrandsdalen, there was a certain prestige in being a husmann there. Even though conditions were not as magnificent as a rumor that traveled over much of Norway had it, that at Bjolstad, one husmann was kept busy all summer, just breaking up the flatbread for the evening meal of "soll".

The husmann system came to an end in the late 1930's, when a government program of long term loans made it possible for the husmenn to buy their places. Also the rapid industrialization of Norway brought many to jobs in the cities.

Brothers reunited after long separation

By Mark Nepper
of the Telegraph Herald

Herman and Olav Melby have a difficult time talking about it, but the smiles and tears make it obvious these brothers feel very fortunate at being reunited after a 72-year separation.

Herman, 88, of Daleyville, Wis., has not seen his brother since he came to America in 1913. He had not heard from him since 1918 when they lost contact. Herman assumed Olav, 81, was dead. The reunion Wednesday night in Madison, Wis., was an overwhelming emotional experience for both men and their families.

Herman and Olav clasped hands and wouldn't let go, family members said of their airport meeting. "It is good to see you again," Olav said simply. Words couldn't adequately express



Olav and Herman Melby are reunited after 72 years. (Staff photo by Dale Stierman)

everything they felt at the moment. The men are getting re-acquainted with each other, hoping to catch up on every-

thing that has happened since their paths separated. They will have two weeks together. Herman and Olav are fighting a slight language barrier. Olav

doesn't speak English. Herman doesn't remember Norwegian very well.

Reunion

Continued from Page 1

Don Melby of Dubuque, Herman's son, says arranging the reunion was very easy once he discovered Olav lived in Trysil, Norway. Don made that discovery while he and his wife, Janet, planned a fall tour to Sweden and Norway.

He wrote to Oviken, Sweden, where his father's family lived before moving to Norway. Don's next letter went to a church in Trysil. The answer he received was exciting family news. He discovered he had an uncle, aunt and many cousins who lived there.

Olav's granddaughter, Toril Melby, who joined her grandfather in the trip to America and acts as his interpreter, sent two letters to Melby. "Olav said he wanted to see where his brother lived, the town, where he spent his whole life. He decided right away to go to the United States. He wanted to go right away, the next day," Toril said.

Toril's first letter overwhelmed Herman. "He sat and read the letter and he gently touched the photographs (of his brother)," Janet Melby said. He read the

letter again and his gaze and hands returned to the photographs.

Herman thought he was the only surviving family member. He assumed his two other brothers and three sisters had died.

Herman says he wanted to return to Norway after he was married. His wife, who died in 1984, didn't want to go so he dropped the idea.

Olav, the youngest family member, was a lumberjack. Herman spent 20 years working for the Chicago and North Western Railroad and worked several other jobs.

The reunion captured the imagination of Norway's national press. A weekly magazine helped fund Olav's trip to America and is chronicling the family affair.

"This is an experience we will never forget," Olav said.

Tears well in Herman's eyes when he thinks about what will happen in less than two weeks. He says he wants to go to Norway and visit his brother and family. But age is against him. "I am very happy that he came. It has been a pleasure."

The reunion, as short as it is, is providing enough memories to fill two lifetimes.

Her møtes TO BRØDRE etter 72 år



- Good to see you, Olav!
- Godt å sjå att deg, Herman! Enkelte ganger er ikke ord nok. Som da Olav Melby (82) møtte sin bror Herman (88) på præreren i USA - 72 år etter at de så hverandre sist - 67 år etter at det siste brevet gikk over havet. To sterke arbeidsnever ville aldri slippe hverandre, og to familier var gjenforent.

Don also located a first cousin once removed in Moorhead, MN this summer he had never known before.

Western Viking:

By permission from
NEWS OF NORWAY

In Ballard, a Seattle community in Washington with a distinct Scandinavian flavor, one can find the home of the oldest Norwegian newspaper in America. According to its editor, Kathleen Knudsen, "*Western Viking* has probably been the best kept secret of the century."

Published weekly (except for the month of August and last week of December), *Western Viking* is read by about 20,000 readers. The mailing list numbers 3,000.

Knowing that Norway is among the countries with the highest number of newspapers per capita in the world and that the number of Norwegian-Americans in the U.S. now totals more than the number of Norwegians living in Norway (about 4.6 mill.), one might see why Knudsen calls her paper a well kept secret.

This thirst for news was something the immigrants brought with them. When settling in the U.S., the immigrants entered the assimilation process, trying to become good Americans. They learned the language, attended school and worked hard earning a living. But the desire for news from the Homeland never died.

Since 1845, 562 Norwegian newspapers have rolled off the presses here in America, satisfying the immigrants need to stay connected to their roots.

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Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken

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Your editor finally found an enjoyable and effective way to learn Norsk. My wife, Irma, and I attended a Norwegian Elderhostel at Skogfjorden Norwegian Language Village overlooking a lake near Bemidji, MN. The program administered by Concordia College, Moorhead, MN included sessions on Norwegian Language, history, culture, music, crafts, and genealogy. Food, fellowship, and fun abounded!!

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ACANTHUS: (From **WORLD BOOK**). A group of shrubs or herbs that grow in Asia, Africa, and southern Europe . . . flowers from white to purple, and grow in clusters on spikes. The leaves have many narrow, sharp lobes, and are sometimes armed with spines . . . in architecture, . . . a leafy decoration popular in Greek and Roman times. An example is the design at top of the Corinthian column. From **THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FURNITURE** : Conventionalized leaf of a plant growing in Asia Minor. Romanesque and Byzantine acanthus were stiff and spiny. The Renaissance revived its use in graceful designs for every purpose. Every succeeding style has used the acanthus in exuberant OR restrained manner, according to its type.

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MISCELLANEOUS REFERENCES

(Submitted by Shirley Schoenfeld)

St. Alban's List at LDS Family History Library, a list of passengers going from Quebec, Canada to U.S.A.

Sorenskriveri (rural jurisdiction) on microfilm through 1860 at LDS Library, to find 96% of jurisdiction records for a district.

Peasants to Farmers, Jon Gierde, Cambridge Press, 1985

AETTEBOK, (Family Histories)Kittle(Charles)Bagley

A REQUEST FOR FAMILY EMIGRATION STORIES

Knut Djupedal, Director of the Emigrant Museum near Hamar, Norway would like people to send him some family emigration stories. Address is:

The Norwegian Emigrant Museum
Akershagen
N-2312 Ottestad, Norway