

A CHAPTER OF MY LIFE

The present generation can hardly have a clear idea of the conditions in the northern part of the state of Minnesota as it was 50 years ago. And as we do not know the conditions we cannot understand the hardships that the early settlers and pioneer pastor went through. Therefore; I think that a chapter of my share of that hardship might be of interest to my children and grandchildren.

I finished Lutheran Normal School in 1898 and accepted a call as preceptor and parochial teacher in Rock County, Minnesota, and served there till the fall of 1900 when I was accepted as a student at Hamline Seminary in St. Paul. We were 18 in the class, and I was the only one from Luth. Normal. The great majority were from Luther College. I expected to find myself inferior to them in knowledge, but it did not take long before I considered myself equal to them with the exception of the languages. My knowledge of English was limited especially as far as theology was concerned. We had two departments, theoretical and practical. The practical for those who had no knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. In that department we had several that had attended Luther for some years, but were not graduates. As a rule they were inferior students. That was the first year that English was stressed and all old test classes were in English. Dr. Olaf Brant was the prof.

In April 1903 I was told that I had a call and was to take the final examination and be ordained at once, but after I had written my exegesis in the New Testament I was informed that it was not necessary to continue. At the time I did not know where the call came from, but later I found out that it was to be a mission pastor along Rainy River, Minn. Rev. Boyd, who was at Roseau, had urged that call be sent to me. The reason that the call was recalled was that Rev. Birkelo who served congregations in the south half of Roseau Co. had gotten his congregation to call me as his successor, and he and Boyd had agreed on that I should be called there and Olaf Grefthen, who was in the same class, should be called to Rainy River. I was glad of that change.

I got along well with all my classmates, and the fact that I was elected Vice President of our class showed that I was respected by all. It was a fixed rule that the President was to be from the theoretical department.

We had two exciting days the last year. The first was when the final standing for the three years was given out. I was rather surprised when my roommate came in and told me that I was tops in the class. He told me that he was glad of that. That does not mean that I was the most intelligent man in the class, but that I had been a more diligent student, and was, in some respect, more mature than many of them.

The next was when the calls were issued. In the Norwegian Synod no student received a call direct from a congregation. It came from the call committee made up of faculty and the districts presidents. Before that no one knew where they might be called. When the calls came out we got busy to find out the location and how far apart we would be. When I was told that I was called to Roseau Co., Minn., I did not know where it was, much less the conditions I would face. But we had at the Seminary a man who

had lived in Roseau for some time, and he gave me some information. He told me that Stephen was the nearest R.R. station and that I would have to take a stage from there. He also told me about where the 4 congregations that I was to serve were located, but that meant little to me. Prof. Hove, who had to do with the call informed me that with \$12.00 per month from the mission, they figured that my salary would be \$400.00 a year and asked me if I thought that I could get along on that. I assured them that I thought I could. I had to provide my own house. I was also told that I was to be installed the first Sunday in July.

As I was to be ordained at the Synod meeting in Decorah the 3rd week in June. I did not have much time to go on. After the Synod meeting I went back to the Seminary and packed all my belongings into a big trunk and a suit case and made ready to go to my field of labor. I also finished my installation sermon. The train for Stephen left St. Paul in the evening and was due in Stephen at noon the next day. There was no sleeper and I could not afford to take one even if there had been. As I, late in the evening, walked through the train, I found Rev. Boyd and he told me that he was going to leave Roseau as he had accepted a call in Wisconsin, and was just going back to pack his household goods. He also told me that he had a man who was to meet him in Stephen and that he was sure that I could have a ride with them. It was good news to me. Later I found a school mate for L.N. S., Miss Tykeson on the train. She was also going to Roseau to visit a sister that was married and had lived there for some years near Ross. Boyd said to me that they had not had any rain by Stephen, as there was an 8 mile grade out of Stephen that was nearly impassable after a rain on account of gumbo. It was a hot clear day when we came to Stephen, and the man that had promised to meet Boyd was there. He had a team of western horses and a two seat platform buggy. His name was Locram, and he lived in Badger, 60 miles from Stephen. He promised to take all of us, but not any of the luggage. He found a freighter by the name of Salomon who promised to take the luggage and leave mine at the store in Greenbush. I asked him how he spelled his name and he said he did not know, but thought it was the usual way. As you know, the land along the Red River seems to be as level as a floor. Englund located on a small sand ridge at the edge of the prairie seemed just a short distance away, but it was 8 miles from Stephen. Beyond Englund we crossed a big swamp and came to Fir, a store and a stopping place for those who wished to stop overnight. That was located on the west edge of the big sand ridge that extends to within 2 miles of Roseau. The country reminded me of the tableland up on the mountains in Norway. There were some open spaces, but mostly the road was just a trail through oak and poplar trees dwarfed by the poor soil in which they grew.

By evening we came to Pelan, about half way between Stephen and Badger. It was located on Two River, the boundary line between Kittson and Roseau counties. It came out of Twin Lakes, southwest of Pelan and the swampy land to the north east. In Pelan there was a hotel, a couple stores, a flour mill, bank, a newspaper print shop and several saloons. Every little inland town had a newspaper. Their main income was printing notices of intention to prove up homesteads. We stopped overnight in Pelan. The next morning, July 1st, I entered Roseau County.

We came to Badger the same day at noon. Rev. Birkelo was to meet me there but nobody knew where he was. They felt sure, however, that he would show up sometime in the afternoon. That proved to be correct. He took me along to a family that lived west of Badger. I now had the opportunity to see what the country looked like. It had been settled there for some time so we had kind of a road. Some of the land was cleared of brush, but most of the poplar tickets were left as that was harder clearing. The land was stony and flat so it was impossible to see in what direction the water would run. There was nothing between us and the horizon west and north. From there we went south to the inland town of Greenbush. There were two stores, a blacksmith shop, and printing shop. There we saw Salomon's load and my suitcase in the bottom corner. We did not see the man, but took it for granted that he would leave my suitcase, so we went southwest along the ridge to a man named Hereim, who had a team for sale. That was one thing I needed at once. It was rather late when we got there. I was offered the team and an old pair of harness for \$125.00, and I accepted the offer, especially as I was not asked to make a down payment. The fact was that I had only a few dollars in my pocket. It was a bronco team, not well broke. Dandy and Maud, they were supposed to be 3 and 4 years old. There we left Birkelo's horses and hitched my team to Birkelo's buggy and started out to the south east. By Hereim there was a stretch of open water, and as he had land south of it, he had a bridge across there. It was dark by that time even if the day was long up there that time of the year. It was only a short distance before we came to a long stretch of swampland, but the swamp was dry, then into willow brush that was about as high as the horses. It took a long time before we came to the family where he had asked for lodging for us. When we came there the house was dark so we knew that they were in bed, but Birkelo knew his way around so we put the horses into the stable and walked into the house quietly. That was a frame house with a bedroom downstairs. Birkelo led me in there and we found clean pillow cases and sheets laid on the bed so it could be fixed in a hurry when we came. We fixed the bed and slept soundly. When I woke up in the morning the sun was shining and I heard people talking in the kitchen.

I told Birkelo that I thought we ought to get up, but he declared that it was too early. He usually did not get up before 9 or 10 o'clock, therefore 11 in the evening was not late for him. Still it was much later than that when we got to bed the evening before. When we finally got up, I was introduced to the family. That was Falk, a very fine family in every respect. Mrs. Falk had come from a fine family in Norway and felt very bad because they had gone to bed before we came. She said they had waited until 11 o'clock and thought that we would not come since we were not there by that time. I, too, felt sorry for Mrs. Falk and felt then as I had the evening before that it was not right to sneak in the way we did. They did not know that we were there before Falk found the team in the barn. They had a cleaner house, were better mannered and better dressed than most people in Roseau County. They did not stay very long. When they found they could not make a living there and had a buyer, they sold and moved to Thief River.

Birkelo had proved up a homestead 3 or 4 miles south east of Falk, but as we had no food, we had to roam around. I think we had our next meal with the Hans Heieie family. There we got high bush cranberry sauce. I did not like the taste and there was a stone in the center of every berry that looked much like a bedbug. I wondered how they would serve anything like that to strangers. Later I ate a lot

of that sauce and liked it, but preferred it with the stones taken out.

In the evening we landed at Birkelo's homestead. All he had left in the house was a small kerosene lamp, a cot and a stove. That was intended for his brother-in-law who filed on a homestead 2 miles west. We had no bedclothes but we had our raincoats for cover and we slept in our clothes. Luck was that it was a warm night. Then it was Friday, July 3rd and the 4th was to be celebrated at the pastor's house. In the morning some ladies came to clean the house and make ready for the 4th. They soon became aware of the fact that we had no bedclothes and no food, so they saw to it that we had what we needed.

I had worn the same clothes from the time I left St. Paul and had no change before I got hold of my suitcase. Besides, I was to be installed on Sunday and had to get my gown and books. A young man offered to go with me and show me the way to Greenbush where my suitcase was supposed to be. By Greenbush there was open water and a bridge across. We inquired at the stores, but they knew nothing about a suitcase. I felt rather nervous about it as I did not know where to find Salomon, but decided we had to go to Badger and hope we locate either Salomon or the suitcase or both. Well, we found Salomon and he said he forgot which suitcase was mine so he did not dare leave any in Greenbush, and that mine was left with Hanson, who had a little store in Badger. So with a lighter heart we drove the 15 miles back to Birkelo.

The 4th was a cold and rainy day, so most of the day was spent inside and it was rather crowded as there were only two rooms downstairs and two upstairs in the 14 by 24 house. It cleared off towards evening.

Sunday the 5th was a beautiful day. I was to be installed in Poplar Grove Congregation in the forenoon. Rev. Flicke had organized that congregation some years before. He had some congregation in Marshall County and had been instructed to look up some families that settled west in the town of Deer. Two years before I came several families had settled in the east part of Deer. Between them was a swamp over 2 miles wide, but they had joined Poplar Grove. They had decided to have the services as near to the center as possible. They could hardly have chosen a worse place. The house would not have held half of the people that were there and there were not trees enough to give a shade, but it was fine sunshine and not too warm for comfort in the sun. There I performed my first baptism. Poplar Grove is half way between Greenbush and Stratcona. In the pm I was to be installed in the congregation where we celebrated the 4th. They had built a church on Birkelo's homestead. They had tried hard to get it ready for the installation, but not succeeded. They had got the side walls ready and the roof on, but the gable ends were open and the lumber for them piled inside, and that served as seats for some. Birkelo just had confirmation and announced communion. He had less than a pint of communion wine and I did not have any. I had not even thought of that. And as we saw family after family register for communion we wondered how we could make the wine reach, but they were aware of the fact so they were careful with the wine so we even had a drop left.

First part of the week we went to Badger and from there to Roseau to visit Boyd. We found him busy packing furniture so we went from there to Riverside Congregation by Wannaska where I was to be

installed the following Sunday. That Sunday got to be a busy day. Birkelo had promised to dedicate two private cemeteries and we were to have services in two different places. A few members in that congregation lived on the east side of the west branch of Roseau River, but most of them on the west side. There were 4 school houses; 2 on the east side and 2 on the west side. The one on the east was so far north that it was nearly outside the congregation, the other 2 miles north and 3 miles east of Wannaska. On the west, one in Wannaska and the other about 5 miles northwest. That was called Grimstad's school house. So there were always 2 services the same Sunday in Riverside. One time in the northeast and Wannaska and the other southeast and Grimstads. The cemetery that was to be dedicated in the A.M. was about one mile northeast from Wannaska on Mathias Johnson's farm. He had land on both sides of the river so he had a private bridge, the only one at that time between Wannaska and Malung. I do not recall just what hour we had the dedication, but the services in the east school house were at 11:00 A.M. We had to go back to Johnson to cross the river. We were in Grimstad's at 3P.M., and then drove to a cemetery on Jacob Johnson's farm about a mile and a half and dedicated that. From there it was about 14 miles to Badger as we drove in those days. Birkelo and Boyd had decided that I should preach in Badger that evening. As I had preached twice and given a short talk at each dedication and been in the buggy over rough roads the rest of the day with little time to eat, I was tired. In Badger I chose to preach my class sermon from the Seminary, such was that I knew that well. We had the services in the school house and no one had looked to see if there was kerosene in the lamps. The result was that all lamps went dry and I finished in total darkness. The day was not over, for we had to go to Hereim as Birkelo had promised to preach in Argile Monday evening on his way to South Dakota, and had to start out that night to make it. As he had decided to sell his buggy to me, we picked up an old platform buggy at Hereim and improvised a seat on it and sent Birkelo on his way at 1 A.M. Naturally I was glad to accept the invitation to spend the night at Hereim.

Birkelo had layed out the work for me for the week. Monday I was to go to Pelan and look up Larsons, a family that lived a couple miles northwest of Pelan, and from there to one Hanson who lived a few miles east of Pelan. (The only family that was interested in our church at that time) In Pelan there were mostly Swedes, and they were Mission Friends. I found Larson. He had a nice house for those days, but had located on land that was so full of stones that it was impossible to cultivate. I also found Hanson. He told me that he intended to move out as he had inherited some acres down by Lake Park. I stopped there overnight. He told me that I would not have to go back the way I came as it would be much shorter to go southeast into town of Deer where I was to meet the confirmation class on Wednesday. He said that I was on the main road out there. Town of Lind had been settled for some years. I started out in the direction he told me and followed the main trail. I had no idea of where I was. Towards noon I saw a man braking not far from the road so I decided that I better find if I was on the right track. He assured me I was. He looked closely at me and finally said: "It is our new pastor, is it not?" That was my first meeting with Sivert Haugtvvet. Later I spent many nights in his home. He said that I could just follow the trail and I would come to the place where we had services the week before and then I would be able to find my way to Larson where I was to meet with the confirmation class. Both in the east and west part of Poplar Grove we had a fine group of people. By Haugtvvet there was a school house where

we had our services; in the east there was no school house so we had services in the homes. They were small and everything movable had to be taken out in order to get the people in. Services were well attended.

I wish that I had kept some of the maps of Roseau County. The first map I had showed about one-third marked as swamp land. As the land was settled, that reduced the amount of swamp land. In a way, it was sparsely settled. A lot of young men had filed on homestead and would be on their claims just a few nights each 6 months and the rest of the time they worked around Stephen or out in N. Dakota. Most of the early settlers were Norwegians. The names of the Townships was proof of that. I have mentioned Lind; then we had Hereim, Nereson, Grimstad and Skagen. In Nereson I had a small congregation; only 4 families that I could count on. Hauge Synod had a congregation there, and there, as well as many other places, there were a number of Swedish families and they would come to services at times, and some would send their children to the confirmation class. This was especially true in Poplar Grove and Riverside.

Where had the settlers come from? A few came from Iowa, but most of them from different localities in Minnesota. As a rule, they had come in groups and settled as close together as they could. I found that to be true all over in the County. Many of them were related either directly or through marriage. Most of them were young couples. Few had children above confirmation age. They came there in order to build up a home of their own, full of hope for a brighter future.

Birkelo gave me the privilege to live in his house free of rent, as he would rather have me there than to have the house empty. An empty house would soon be without windows and doors. Some would even disappear entirely. Even if I was on the go most of the time I had to have some food in the house and also some cooking utensils, so I could make some meals for myself. It was hopeless to get a boarding place. Besides, I came home at all hours in the night. I had to go to Greenbush as soon as I got home from my first round to get the most necessary things. I did not have much money as I had to pay Birkelo for the buggy. I borrowed money to pay for the horses. I went into Olaf Hildahl's store. I had never met him. He was a young man at that time. He had evidently seen me and knew who I was, he came running, he never really walked, and said: "I am no church man, and I do not think much of the pastors we have around here, but I have heard that you are different. You can have all you need from my store whether you have the money or not, for I know that you will pay sometime". I appreciated that for I did not only need some for myself, but also oats for the horses that I had to get from Hildahl. Practically all lived on credit during the summer months. The farmers had a few cows and a few chickens, but they did not raise much money on that. They had plenty of pasture for the cows, but the cows did not produce much milk. In the day time the cleg was so bad that the cows had to be in the stable, and in the night they had to fight a swarm of mosquitoes. So the few pounds of butter and the eggs they could sell did not go far on their living expenses. Butter and eggs were cheap and were only good for trade.

Those who managed to raise a little oats brought it to the stores to pay their debts. I doubt that they ever received the market price, but it saved them the long trip to Stephen. Naturally the price would

advance a good deal when we had to buy. To begin with I did not feed the horses oats. Birkelo claimed to be an expert horseman, and he told me that the team would be too wild to handle if they were fed oats. The result was that they got so poor from just wild hay that they looked sick. It took all of a year before I got them in proper shape again. They had no chance to grow wild the way I drove them. As only a few farmers had oats I always had to have a sack of oats with me. So oats got to be a big item of expense.

Even if I had, so to say, unlimited credit, I bought just what was absolutely necessary. The only meat I could keep was ham. I had ham and potatoes at noon the days I was home, but those days were few. For breakfast I always had some oatmeal. The way I cooked it must have been nearly raw. I was no cook and hated to make a meal. For that reason I never got to make supper. I would put that off and study a little longer and before I knew it, it was midnight and too late to do any cooking, so I would take a slice of bread and a cup of water and go to bed. My greatest problem in food was bread. There was no bread to be had at the stores, so I bought my bread from Mrs. Vig. She was a young widow, who lived about 2 miles away from me. Her husband took a homestead because he had T.B. and thought that the climate might be good for him, but he passed away the first year he lived up there. She held on to the homestead even though it was an isolated place and was alone with a daughter below school age. She was considered well to do as she had a house in Starbuck and should have an income of \$12.00 from that. She was an angel of mercy to many. She shared her time and her means as far as she could. Her nearest neighbor was a German family. She told me that once she came up there to see how the family got along, as she knew that the husband was out in N. Dakota working. She found that the only thing they had to live on was soup made from green wild pea-vine. From her I got one loaf at the time, as a rule Friday afternoon. I always came home sometime early Friday so I could study a sermon for Sunday. I made a rule that I never failed to carry out that I should have a new sermon for every Sunday, and I always wrote them out in full. Sometimes I would leave home Saturday noon and have the confirmation class in the congregation where I was to preach Sunday morning. When I should be in Wannaska I had to leave Saturday noon to get there for Sunday. Really it was only the Sunday that I was to be in the home congregation (Zion) that I was home until Sunday morning. I always had some left of the loaf of bread, but I found out that it was molded. The only way I could prevent that was to leave it out to dry. It would be so hard that I could break it to pieces, but it was eatable.

As they had no pastor in Roseau, I had also to take care of that as far as I could. There were three congregations; Roseau, Ross and Badger. Besides, I was told to have services in a school house two miles south of Fox. I was there on a weekday and only three women and a couple children were there, and as there was a Free Church congregation close by, I did not go back as I thought I could use my time to greater advantages in other places.

New settlers came in continually. That made it necessary to begin new preaching places. The first one was on what they called the Siberian Ridge, a short distance south of Zion Congregation. The oldest settler there was Bjork. Some members had met Bjork and he had told them that we could have

services in his house anytime. So I decided to go there Sunday afternoon when I had services in Zion. Ole Heieie, a son of Hans, offered to drive. His father and uncle Gunnerius went along with us. If we could have driven straight across it would have been about 4 miles, but that was impossible. We started out southeast and later we drove southwest along a beaver dam. That was our cut through and when we had to go through there I thought that we would be stuck as the horses went down to their belly in water and peat, but they got through. That was August 9, 1903. There were only a few families there at that time, but they were interested in services. It was a cloudy day and while we were there it started to rain and clouds seemed to be hanging just above our heads. We were just across the worst place before it got dark. I had no idea of where we were going or how far we had gotten when Gunnerius said: "I will get off here". He stepped out and was soon out of sight in rain and fog.

There was also a new settlement along the east branch of Roseau River. I found I was there the 24th of July, 1903. It was an around about way down there. It had been heavy timber there and there was an old sawmill. Naturally the first road down there was a winter road. They had laid that in the open spaces as far as they could and then cut a trail through the timber. We had to follow the same trail in the summer. It was nearly straight east from Wannaska, but I had to drive northeast for several miles then east through swampy land until I got on the river bank and then southwest along the river. The trail was full of stumps and barely passable. One Tom Thompson had settled on the land where the sawmill was located, and I had services in his house. It was on a Friday in the P.M. His house was built of ruff home-sawed lumber, and could hardly have been more than 12 feet wide as it was roofed just one way (not a pitched roof). Inside it was papered with Decorah Posten and Skandinaven , the two leading Norwegian papers of that time. His wife said it looked cleaner than lumber. I had dinner there and for the first time ate fresh moose meat. He told me it was of a calf. It was very good. His house was filled with people and I had a baptism. After services all were invited for lunch. It was a rather rustic gathering. I do not remember much of the conversation, but I do remember one thing. It was a common practice in those days to have toothpicks on the table and pass them around. When that was done, one man spoke up and said: "Don't you know that the dentists have introduced that so people will spoil their teeth and give them more work to do?" I had only a few services in Thompson's home as most of the people moved out as they found it too hard to clear their land.

I continued to have services in Pelan the first year. Later I found it useless as I had only one family left there. I had the first services September 6, 1903 at Erik Hereim's. He must have been there at an early date as his father, Ole, and four sons had land adjoining on the sand ridge where Greenbush is now located. It was from his son, Ole, Jr., that I bought my team. More about them later.

I have told before that Birkelo had left his stove and cot for his brother-in-law so he could have them in his homestead when he came. I knew that he would come sometime in the summer, so I had to have a stove to cook on and a bed to sleep in. Gunnerius Heieie came one day and told me that there was a stove for sale and he thought that it could be bought at a reasonable price, but I had to act at once as the owner was moving to Canada in a day or two. He offered to go with me so I could find the place. It was only a few miles over there. The owner of the stove was a Bohemian widow, middle age, with

several children. She was going to Canada with an un-married man, who, the people claimed, had lived with her for some time. He was loading up her household goods, and he said it was impossible to take the stove as he had too much of a load already. The stove was in fine condition and as she asked only \$5.00 I was glad to get it. We used it as long as we were in Roseau County.

It was not long after this that the man who was to have the stove and cot Birkelo had left came. He was a single man from Hancock and owned land and other property there. He simply came to me and expected me to feed him. He came one of the last days in the week, and as I had to leave for Wannaska the next day, I did not have much bread on hand. So I had to go and get another loaf. We had just one slice each out of that. When I left, he said: "I suppose that I can take the bread that is left; as it will not be good by the time you get home next week". I took it for granted that he would get another loaf for me so I said he could.

On my way to Wannaska I stopped in Badger and bought a bed, spring and a mattress, and a neighbor had promised to bring it home for me. I was gone for several days, and as I always left Wannaska for home late in the afternoon, it was close to midnight when I came home. I had not had any food since dinner so I was desperately hungry. I found I had no bread and nothing else to eat in the house. I was rather provoked at the man who had left no food for me. I had to get my bed set up. That I wanted upstairs. It was a narrow, steep and crooked stairway so the spring got stuck half way up. I could not get it up and it refused to come down. The stairway was also closed so I could not get at my bed clothes; if I could have I would have slept on the floor. In the frame of mind I was by then I did not care if I broke the frame or the spring. I gave it a hard jerk and got it twisted some so I got it up. I finally got to bed very tired and very hungry. I slept late the next morning, and when I got up there was nothing for breakfast. In order to give my horses a little rest, I decided to walk to Mrs. Vig to get some bread. As the road was down there, I could walk as fast as I could drive. It was close to 11 when I got there. I did not tell her that I had not had breakfast, but I think she guessed it, for she put on the coffee pot at once and started to set food on the table. As I sat there, I noticed that there was a loaded revolver on the dresser beside the bed. I made the remark that I did not think it was much use as I did not think she would have the nerve to use it. She declared that she surely would if it became necessary. When I had eaten I told her that I had not had any food for 24 hours, and the reason for it. She said: "That is just like him. I know him well for he is my cousin, and he is so stingy that it is a shame".

I do not know of any country where it would be easier to get lost than it was in Roseau County. Every poplar ticket looks alike, and the high willow brush obscured the view. Besides, we had the impassable swamps to avoid. The only sign of a road was broken down brush. So it may not surprise you that I was lost twice the first summer. The first time was when I had the first services in Poplar Grove after my installation. The services were to be held in a school house located in the western part of the congregation. I had passed it on my way from Pelan to Poplar Grove 4 weeks before going east. I am sure that I would not have gotten lost even if I came from a different direction, if a man I met had not told me to take a different road than I intended to take. He told me that I might have trouble to get

through a swampy place so I should take the road that passed by his house and keep on the road west; then I would have good road all the way. So I did, but soon had my doubts about the road as it led too far to the southwest, but I could not see any road that led northwest. When I came to a section line that was cleared east and west I knew for sure that I was too far south. As the section line was open I knew that someone had to live close by. So I turned west and soon spied a log hut and drove up to it.

It was a Swedish family who lived there and they knew where the school house was. They told me to drive west and take the first road to the north. I drove on and looked for a road, but did not find any. It was then about time for services and I did not know where I was, but I had to follow the trail. I had in hope that I would soon find people. Finally I saw a house and drove up. A woman with several small children came out. She knew me as they were members of the congregation and she had been to the installation service. Her husband had gone for services. She was Mrs. Ole Christenson. I was about 3 miles southwest of the Gavig school house. She said she would go with me and show me the road so I would not be lost again. She got ready in a hurry, but we were rather late for services. Haugtvat told me that there was a much shorter road from there to home. I used to drive southeast and then northeast from there to home. He told me there was a road from there to Dock and told me to ask Dock for the road from there. I found Dock without any trouble. From there it was about 4 miles home. The sun was down by that time. Dock knew the road, but he said it was so little used that he was sure I could not keep on it. He asked if I knew the road home from Falk. I told him that I did. He said: "then you better go by Falk. You follow the road north and take the first road to your right." I asked if he was sure that I would be able to see it. He said: "yes, it is a big road and you can't miss it." The road that I was now on was the main road north to the sand ridge, the main highway in and out of Roseau County. It was easy to follow even in the dark, and I looked closely for a road to the right. But in the darkness I missed that faint trail, and finally saw before me, what we called the big swamp. I knew then that I was nowhere northwest of Falk. I was also surprised to see a light a short distance away.

I knew that there were a couple of shacks northwest of Falk, but did not know if anyone was living in them. I drove towards the light. When I came near to the hut I saw that the door was open and two very young women were inside. I was afraid that I would scare them so they would close the door on me if I walked up. So I drove so close up that I could talk to them. One came to the door and I told her who I was and that I was looking for the road to Falk. She said that they had just moved in and did not know me, but she knew the road to Falk and it was just a short distance from the house. It was so dark by that time I knew that it would be impossible for me to see the trail in the brush, so I asked her if she would dare walk ahead of the team until I got on the road. Yes, she would. She walked a short distance and stopped in the brush and said: "here it is". I looked down by the buggy and saw broken willow brush and felt kind of safe as I trusted the horses to follow the trail. It went southeast.

It was useless for me to try to steer them as I could not see ahead of the horses. I looked to see if there were any broken willows by the wheel, but saw no sign of that. I located the North Star and found we were heading northeast. So I was not on the road to Falk. I tried to turn the horses east, but they did not keep that direction even if I turned them. Then I saw another light that puzzled me. Was I mistaken

of the direction so we, in spite of all, were going toward Falk? I had seen an old shack northwest of Falk, but it was not fit to live in. Besides, that should be on my right hand and this was definitely on my left. Well, it was a light so there had to be people, so I let the horses walk as they would. After a while I saw that we were on a well-traveled road and the horses followed it. I had gone just a few rods when I came to a fire-break around the house where the light was, and I recognized the place. I was on the main road from the sand ridge southeast to where I lived. So I realized that the horses had left the road that led to Falk and taken across to the road that led home. The horses knew where we were going even if I did not. I marveled at the horses' sense of place and direction, but was also glad that I would soon be home.

Later in the summer I had a chance to find out if I could trust the team. By that time I thought that I knew the road between Dock and home. I came up from the south and drove on until I was sure that I had crossed the trail then I turned south again, but saw no sign of it. As it was in the middle of the afternoon, and I knew approximately where I was, I left it to the team to choose the way. They turned to the east and a little north, and I let them have their way. It was fairly open country so I could see the sand ridge to the north and I noticed a team that came south. As I knew that I would cross their path, I hurried the team in order that I should be able to talk to them. I told them that I was kind of lost and wondered if they could tell me where I could find a road that would take me home. They evidently knew me even if I did not know them. They pointed to a shack covered with tarpaper and said: "that is Tom Nelson's house; you know him and the road from him; do you not?" I assured them that I did. Nelson lived a mile west of where I lived. I let the horses go on and noticed that if there was no obstruction they would head straight for the stable. After that I had full confidence in my team. When I drove through timber in dark nights I would let them have their own way and they never failed me. In one way I am sure I owe my life to them.

One of my greatest troubles was gates. It was hardly any road that would not go through some fence, as the trail would lead from neighbor to neighbor. To open the gate was easy as I stood in front of the horses, but I had to leave the line and get behind the buggy to close the gate. It was not long before I had my first runaway. It was a "T" fence. The gate was in the fence north and south and just by the one east and west. So when I had opened the gate I walked back between the buggy and a barbwire fence. The horses started to run, I grabbed the tie lines and pulled the team into the fence, and in order that I should not be drawn into the barbwire, I had to let the horses go. They went into a farm yard not far away and they were stopped there. I found that Dandy, the horse on the right, had a long cut across the front leg close up to the breast. It was not deep so the muscle was not cut, and he also had some scratches close to the hoof. The man, a member of the congregation, claimed to be a little of everything, also a horse doctor, so I left it to him to doctor my horse. He said he would sew the skin together, but first he would put on carbolic acid. I knew that was wise, but when he put it on I knew that it was too strong as it turned the flesh white, and he sewed up the cut. He did not dare get down to the hoof with his hand so he fastened a feather to a stick and tried to get some carbolic acid on that way but when he touched the foot with the feather, the horse kicked. I do not recall why I drove that way as

I was on my way to Wannaska, and he lived northwest from my place and Wannaska was east. At least it must of have been some reason for that round-about way. He told me that he would let me take one of his horses to Wannaska and he would take care of my horse until I got back. When I came back the sore on the horse looked worse than when I left. Because the burnt flesh had started to itch the horse had bit it open and the skin had slid down and dried. It looked bad, but it would not hurt to drive it, so I used it. The sore was very noticeable and when I shortly after came by Hildahl's store, he told me that he had some liniment that was very good for wire-cut, so I got a bottle of that. When I used my hand to put the medicine on the horse never moved the foot and it healed up nicely. After that I got a long rope so I could tie that to the lines when I closed gates.

The first couple I married was from Poplar Grove. After I had read with the confirmation class down there in the middle of the week a man came and asked if they could be married on Saturday. I told him that they could if they came early, but I had to leave for Wannaska that day. He assured me that they would be there early. As I have told before, I hardly ever got to bed before midnight, so I was not up early in the morning. That Saturday morning I got up at 7. The first thing I did in the morning was to feed the horses. As I walked to the stable, I heard a lumber wagon coming. We could hear that for a long distance as the wagon tires hit the stones, and there were plenty of stones in Roseau County. I wondered if it could be the bridal couple coming at that early hour as they lived over 6 miles away. I hurried to get ready and sure enough, it was the bridal couple. They lived up to their promise to come early. Shortly after, I had a wedding at Wannaska where the opposite was true. After services in Wannaska in the afternoon, a man came into the school house after the people had left. He stood there with a grin on his face. So I asked him if he wanted to see me. I asked him what he wanted. His grin grew bigger, but he did not answer. So I asked him if he wanted to be married. Yes that is what he wanted. I asked him when and where. It was to be the next morning at his homestead. That was 2 miles north of Wannaska and east across the river. I had forded the river there once and did not like to do it again as the water was so deep that the buggy began to slide on the bottom, but I promised that I would come, but it had to be somewhat early as other appointments made it necessary to leave by noon. He said he could be ready half past nine. I told him that the bride might not be ready that early so we set for half past ten. Close to the river there were heavy timber and underbrush. As I came there, something scared the horses so I had a hard time to stop them. I looked back to see what it was. A young boy came running out of the brush. I asked him if he was there to see me. Yes, the wedding was not to be at Westling's; it was to be at Olson's. Was he there to tell me that? Yes. Did he know the road to that Olson? Yes, he came from there. So he piloted me to Olson's. It was a very nice place for those days. It was a frame house with a summer kitchen so far away that the road went between them. As I passed the summer kitchen I saw Mr.'s grinning face through the window. I got my horses into the stable and went into the house. Beside the kitchen there was a bedroom and from the kitchen a stairway upstairs. Mrs. Oslund, who I knew was busy in the kitchen and also in the bedroom. She was there to take care of Mrs. Olson, who had given birth to a baby a few days before. Mr. Olson was out in N. Dakota working. I thought I heard people upstairs, but wasn't sure. It was time for the wedding to begin. Mr. sat in the summer kitchen in his overalls, and there was no sign of the bride.

Mrs. Oslund began preparing dinner as it was 11, and I did not know what to say or do. Finally, a young girl, 14 or 15 years old came down and ran outside. I began to wonder if she was the bride. She wore a dress that once had been white, but was now yellow from many washings. After a while, she and Mr. W came in and both went upstairs. Time went on and I had to tell Mrs. Oslund that I soon had to leave-wedding or no wedding. When it was past 12, they finally came. The young girl was not the bride, but the bride's sister who was to be bridesmaid. No "best-man". Mrs. Oslund was one of the witnesses. When I came to make out the certificates I found that it was 29 days after he had got the license, the last day the license was valid. He had a hard time to get the girl willing to marry him. The wedding took place at 12:30 in place of 10:30.

We had a very active Ladies Aid in all our congregations. They all had the same object to work for, and that was religious instruction for the children. They would buy cloth and sew shirts, aprons and dresses, and they would knit mittens and stockings, and have an auction sale. The sale always went well. The things they had to sell were needed and were of better quality than what they could buy from the stores. We had plenty time for religious school as they had only 6 months of public school, if any. School for the children was a serious and difficult matter, in one way it was a simple matter to organize a school district, but that did not solve the question. They had to have a school house and get a teacher. There were hardly any who were qualified to teach. If a woman thought that she could teach the children to read, write and work arithmetic she would get a permit. I am sure that some of them had never passed 7th grade. The worst of all was the question of money. As no land was proved up there were no real estate taxes, and the personal property tax did not amount to much. They got apportionment money from the state, but that would not cover expenses even if they were very low. They would issue school orders and the banks would accept them, but as the legal rate of interest was lower than the banks would accept, they demanded that every order be written 10% more than what they paid out. They would be paid in order, but the banks would not hold orders indefinitely. When they figured the interest rates would drop down to 10% they would simply sue the district for the money it owed them, and then it became a question of a bond issue. If the valuation of the district could be placed so high that they could be on cash basis, they could gain by it as the state would charge only 6% straight. If not, they were in a very difficult situation as every farmer would be liable for the total amount.

In August I began to teach parochial school in Poplar Grove. There was no school house so we had the school in the home of Brunsvold. Every able-bodied man was in N. Da. that time of the year. They would leave for the harvest fields as soon as they had finished haying and stay until threshing was finished late in October or first of November. Man and team would earn \$5.00 per day in threshing. Brunsvold could not go as his wife died the spring before in childbirth. No doctor was available as the country was practically covered by water. Besides, the few doctors they had were, as a rule, men that had starting practicing medicine without any medical education. In those days a license to practice medicine was not required. Later when such a law was passed those who had practiced some years were not compelled to get a license. So they just kept on calling themselves "Doctor". Hardly anyone

who talked of Mrs. Brunsvold's funeral did so without tears in their eyes. It was hard to find a place that was above water, and when they started to dig, the water would flow in so fast that it could not be bailed out. So two men had to stand on the coffin and press it down in the water and mud so far that it could be covered. Later she was moved to the cemetery in Zion congregation. Brunsvold had the largest log house in the community, but just one room. I had 21 children there from 5 to 13 years old. Later that fall I had school in Zion congregation and had 19 children ages 6 to 13 years old. I would teach from Tuesday to Friday and have Saturday and Monday for Confirmation classes. I would work on my sermon after school during the week. It seemed easy to get a sermon while teaching.

One day while I was in Poplar Grove a young Larson boy from Pelan came and asked me to come and give communion to his sister as she had not long to live. It was T.B., and some in that family had died before from that. I promised that I would come after school was out. I did not have wafers and wine with me so I had to go by home and get that. It was only a few miles out of my way, but it made it about 27 miles to drive, so I came to Larson's about 11 in the evening. When I had talked to her awhile it was 12 midnight. I was given a small room upstairs to sleep in. I told them to wake me early in the morning so I could be at Brunsvold's before nine the next morning. I had a small kerosene lamp that did not give much light, but that was best for me. I could not see what the room looked like. I was tired and went to sleep at once. In the morning when I woke I saw that the wall that was close to the bed was yellow. I realized the reason for that. A boy who had died the year before had lain there and spit on the wall. I was in a pest house. No wonder that the whole family died of T.B. I got to Brunsvold's in time for school. I would have Ladies Aid on Saturdays and Mondays besides Confirmation classes, so the only thing that interrupted my schedule would be funerals, and I did not have many of them.

In order to give you some idea of how bad conditions could be when we got a lot of rain, I have to relate what Mr. Stone told me about his experience at the time Mrs. Brunsvold passed away. They ran out of food so they had to get to the store on the sand-ridge. They managed to get as far as the swamp south of the ridge with the team. There they had to leave the team and walk. He did not dare to walk across the swamp, so he took the end-gate out of the wagon, and when he came to the deepest place he crawled on his knees and pushed the end-gate before him so he would not sink. Those with him walked over, and he had to do the same back again in order that the food he had on his back would not get wet.

I found that the nights could be fearfully cold even in the summer. Some nights I got so cold that I had to get out and run after the buggy to try to warm up. So I realized that I could not get along in the winter without a house-keeper, as I could not get home half frozen into a cold house. So I wrote to sister, Kristi, who was in S. Dakota, to come and keep house for me. I would pay her the same wages that she had there, \$2.00 per week. She promised to come and Father and Mother would come with her as they would like to look for a homestead. That made it necessary for me to get two more beds and also some more chairs. I had two before, and Westerdahl, who was a carpenter from Norway, had made a table for me of home-sawed lumber. Hans Heieie told me that he was going to Thief River Falls. I asked him to get ½ doz. of second-hand chairs for me. He did. They were not all the same kind, but they cost me only 25 cents apiece. I also had to get a cow so we could have some milk. I got some

money from the Ladies Aid for teaching, and I had several baptisms, that as a rule, gave me \$1.00, but money was scarce. I was to meet my folks in Stephen September 4th, and had to go to Badger to get a platform buggy for that trip. I do not recall just how it happened, but one horse stepped on the pole in Greenbush and broke the pole, so I had to have a new one put in. That delayed me some and I do not recall where I spent the night, but, at least, I met the train in Stephen the next day at noon. My folks had more stuff with them that I figured on and I had a hard time to get it all with us. I took out the seats and filled in with boxes, put the seats on top of the boxes, and put all the bed clothes in the seats. It went along nicely. It began to be dusk by the time we got into the woods southwest of Pelan. The road was narrow and about impossible to pass a team. I saw something coming that looked like a mule team, and I wondered why the man did stop where I could pass him because I could not do that where I was. But the animals came right along. When they came closer to me they stopped and I saw that it was two moose cows. They crashed through the brush and went into Twin Lakes and disappeared from sight, but we could hear them splash along in the water. I kind of planned to stop in Pelan over night, but as we came there, the coach came with a lot of traveling men on and they immediately went into the saloons, and I knew that there would be a rough time. It would also be hard to get rooms, and as the team did not seem to be especially tired, and I could hardly afford supper, bed and breakfast, I decided to go on. But the horses were more tuckered out that I realized, so when we got a couple of miles beyond Pelan, they refused to trot, and it got to be a slow walk. The road seemed endless and it was also cold. I had Mrs. Vig prepare supper for us in case we would make it home. When we drove up to the house I saw that she took the lamp upstairs. She did not think that we would come. It was 12 midnight. The next morning the ground was white with frost. I had to bring the buggy back to Badger.

As Kristi and Mother had brought along an abundance of bed-clothes, I hoped that I should get along without a lap robe. I had the horse blankets and a quilt on me. That served the purpose for a while, but when it got cold, I found that it would not do. Hildahl persuaded me to order a goat robe, and later I was glad he did. We had our annual meetings in the congregation in November. They were to pay me \$3.00 per family. As far as I can remember, that was paid and I felt rich. I had \$39.00 in my pocket, the most I ever had since I left the seminary. I decided that I would pay up Hildahl. I did not think that I owed him so very much, but found out that I owed him over \$33.00. I paid and was nearly broke again. Then I decided that I would never again buy on credit. It was a hard rule to keep. Living expenses were now much higher and I had Kristi to pay. When Christmas drew near I felt that I had to have a few things extra, as Father and Mother had always managed that even if they were poor. Just how many dollars and cents I did have, I do not know, but when Kristi told me that we needed flour I asked her if we could get along over the holidays as I knew that if I should get flour, it would take every penny I had. She said that we could do that. So I told her I would get flour when I got a few dollars in the Christmas offerings. When Hildahl saw me he scribbled a few words on a paper and handed it to me as a Christmas gift. It stated that I should get \$5.00 worth of goods from the store. I doubt that I ever had a gift that made me happier. I could get flour and more of other things than I had planned on.

Christmas Day I was in Poplar Grove at 10:15 and in Zion at 2:30 and at Christmas tree at Nereson at 10:30 on the 26th and from there to Riverside for 2 services the 27th, which was on Sunday, also Christmas tree. I had the Confirmation class on Monday. Christmas Eve two of the Hereim boys came and told me that their brother, John, had died suddenly and wanted to know when I could have the funeral. We set it for the 30th, P.M. When I came to Lee, who had a store at Wannaska, to have lunch before I went home, he told me that the report was that 3 men at Greenbush had been drinking, and when the whiskey was consumed they had drunk wood alcohol and that John Hereim had died from poison. I do not know whether or not they had drunk wood alcohol. It was well known that one of the three had a still, and it might have been of his manufacture, but that could not be said, so the wood alcohol was given as cause of death. For me it did not make much difference. He died a drunkard and I had promised to bury him. I went home with a heavy heart, and it grew heavier the next day when I had to prepare a sermon. When I went in for that funeral I found some comfort in Jesus' words: "I will not leave you fatherless". I repeated that over and over again. When I came to Hereim I found more people than I expected. One man by the name of Skall (the name from Norway was Skarhus) took me aside and told me not to be too hard on them. I told him that I knew what I would say, which was only partly true. I preached a gospel sermon and never mentioned a name or what had caused the death. After services all were to have lunch. Most of the people were outside so I did not know what they talked about, but the same Skall told me that they thought I had done wonderfully well. Finally only the nearest neighbors were left and Skall made the remark that it was a fearful responsibility for such as him, that had such a big family, not to have any congregation in their midst. He had 12 children. I told him that they could have a congregation if they wanted one as I would help them organize any day they agreed on. We agreed on January 14th.

Here is my schedule for January 1904. The first, services at Pelan and Poplar Grove; the 3rd, services in Zion and Greenbush; the 4th, Confirmation class; the 6th, services in Nereson; the 10th, services at Wannaska, the 11th the Annual Meeting; the 12th, Confirmation class; the 14th, the meeting at Hereim, when St. Olaf's Congregation was organized and I was called as pastor. The charter members were: Ole Hereim, Sr., Knut Skall, Rud, Heltne (not married), A. Benson (not married), and Miss Heltne. Ole Hereim had a family, but was not confirmed; Carl Hereim had a family and was not confirmed. The last named were accepted as members on the condition that they would read and be confirmed. They were confirmed in the spring.

January 15th I had confirmation class in Poplar Grove; the 17th, services in Poplar Grove and Zion, and the 19th I began school in Grimstad's school house at Riverside Congregation. I was told that Grimstad's school house was built for a church served by a Free Church pastor who had a homestead 2 miles west of Roseau. They had promised him a certain salary, but as they could not raise his salary they had sold the church to the school district and they had no pastor. When Birkelo came he induced them to call him and I began my work with the idea that I was called as his successor, but later found out that was not true. Birkelo did not dare tell them that he was to leave, but got them to call me as his assistant. I was there several years before they told me. They also told me that they were well satisfied with the change. The fact was that I never had a regular call to Riverside.

There was to be 40 families in all spread over the townships, but not half of them were active members. Near Grimstad's schoolhouse I had 5 families who were interested in religious instruction for their children. Gilbert Johnson had 2; he was closest to the schoolhouse, his brother, Jacob had several; their brother-in-law, Jacobson, had some and Grimstad had 2. A Swedish family, Wicklander, his wife was Baptist, had one boy. The log house was so open between the logs that we felt the wind blow in on us from all the walls.

Jacob Johnson brought a load of poplar wood the first day of school. It was nice weather the first days, but Friday afternoon it started to blow hard from the northwest. I had to go home. We had a lot of snow and it drifted so it was hard to see the road where it was open country, and it was fearfully cold. I came to the conclusion that I had to stop over in Badger. When I was about 2 miles east of Badger I saw a man with a lumber load. The load had gotten partly out of the road and the horses were unable to move it. I knew that I could not get by him as the snow was so deep that the horses could not walk where it was not driven before. Just north of him was a house and I knew that there was a road onto it from the west. No one lived there. If it was driven in from the east I could get by that way. I found that there was a small track, so I turned in there. When the man with the load saw that, he came running and tried to say something in English. When he came close so I could see him, I saw that it was my nearest neighbor, Eilef Olson. He told me that he had been at the east branch of Roseau River and cut logs for lumber. They would cut logs on State land or unoccupied land. The saw mill would take half for sawing. He had left there in the morning for Badger to trade it in for food. His horses were all in and his load had slid over so he would have to unload and get the sleigh back on the road. He could not do that then because it was dark. He thought that I was the man who lived there since I drove up to the house and he wanted to know if he could stop overnight. Now he decided he better get a ride with me into Badger. He would lead one horse and he thought the other would follow. I advised him to lead both, but he said that would not be necessary. I had to open up the robes and thus get the cold wind in on me. It turned out the way I feared. The horse he did not lead would not follow. It was too tired to move. So we had to stop and he went back to get his horse, and so I got more cold wind in on me and also some snow around my feet. By that time the shivers went up and down my spine. I also had a problem to solve. I was sure that Eilef did not have a penny in his pocket as they had got a baby in the fall, and because his wife was in that condition, he could not go threshing. But I also felt that I could not just tell him that he did not have money so he could stop over. I just told him that it would cost him some money to have his horses in the livery barn and stop in the hotel. He said that Sjoburg, who had a store in Badger, would have to pay him cash enough on the lumber so he could do that. I told him that I doubted that as they never paid cash but would take it in lumber or trade. Eilef said: "He has to do that; he cannot leave me out in the street". I told him that I was not so sure. I thought I had 75 cents in my pocket which would take care of me as I could stop overnight with some family, but I could not take Eilef with me. So I decided I better give Eilef the money I had and drive home. I hoped that it would not be quite as bad driving southwest as it was northwest. So I dug the money out of my pocket and told Eilef that it would not cover all his expenses, and if he got in a pinch, he should go to the postmaster and tell him that I had sent him. I left Eilef and drove home, and suffered a great deal from the cold. It also took

me longer than I expected as the roads by that time were drifted full of loose snow. Saturday it was a regular blizzard and blistering cold.

In the afternoon a couple of boys came to arrange for the funeral of their sister. Their mother lived about 4 miles northwest from us. They said it was really bad, but they thought they could make it home. I thought of Eilef and his load of lumber. Would he be able to make it in that kind of weather, and what about his family? Sunday morning I was to be in Pelan in the morning, at Hereim in the P.M., and in the evening Carl Heltne was to be married. My brother John was with us at the time, so he went out to feed the horses so I would not have to go out before I should go. When he came in I asked him how the weather was. He said it was cold, but it was still. It felt that way too in the timber, but when I came out in the open it was a mild breeze from the northwest, and that was the direction that I had to go. I had a hard time to keep my face from freezing. When I came to Pelan they told me that it was -42.

After the services at Hereim's we went to Skall's for the wedding. They had two rooms downstairs. The house was filled with people and it was warm in there even though it was just a single wall around the house, but it was also damp so the water ran down the walls. I had planned to go home after the wedding, but they told me that was useless as I had to drive back to within 2 miles for the funeral the next morning. I would at least save the horses. They had traveled about 30 miles that day and would have more than that the next day, as I was to drive to Grimstad after the funeral. So I decided to stay. I would have gotten more sleep by going home as it got to be very late before the people left. I had a room by myself after a while, but as long as people moved around I could not sleep. Later it got cold as there was no stove in the room where I was to sleep. In the morning the walls were covered with ice. It was very cold but clear. It was 4 P.M. when I came home from the funeral and it was past five when I had lunch and got ready for the trip to Grimstad.

It was bright moonlight so was nearly as light as day, but it was cold. When I got about 3 miles east of Badger I saw a team with a load of wood, but could not see any driver. I did not see how we could pass as the snow was so deep that the horses could not walk it. But why was that team alone? Finally they came so close that I had to turn my horses out and they went down so deep that just their backs were above the snow. They laid there while the sleigh was on the road. I cried: "whoa", and the team that came against me stopped. A man appeared from behind the load. He told me that it was so cold that he had to walk. I told him that I was cold too and had a long ride ahead of me, and I did not like to get into the snow and unhitch the horses and draw the sleigh out. He told me that if I let him keep the road he would be glad to take his shovel and shovel a path around his load for my team, as his load would tip and he would have to reload if he would give me half the road. I gladly accepted that arrangement. I even offered to help him, but he just told me to keep covered up or else I would be frozen stiff before I reached my destination. I did not know the man, and, as far as I know, I never met him again.

Tuesday morning I was in school and all the men in the neighborhood went to Thief River with the little grain they had. They would get a little better price for it than in Roseau. Besides, they could buy what they needed cheaper, as the merchants in Roseau had an extra expense on freight from Stephen to

Roseau. They went in company so if they had any trouble on the road they could help each other. I do not know just how far it was to Thief River the way they had to go. Perhaps between 50 and 60 miles, but at least it was less than the 75 to 80 miles to Stephen. It was between 35 and 40 below zero every morning and the walls in the schoolhouse were so open that I had to fire hard even if I kept the children as far away from the walls as possible. The poplar wood burnt as fast as straw, and in a day or so the wood was used up. I had to get wood to the schoolhouse or close school. I boarded at Gilbert Johnson's and his house was about ¼ mile from the school. There was plenty of wood in stringers. He also had a small sleigh that he used to haul wood from the wood pile to the house. So I chopped wood and loaded the sleigh and pulled it over to school. I made two trips in the evening after school hours, got up early in the morning and cut some more. I took a load over and made fire in the stove, went back and had breakfast, and took another load back with me. I kept on thus the rest of the week. In five weeks I taught 20 days and the Ladies Aid paid me \$20.00.

The last week in February there was a Pastoral conference in Thief River. It was considered a duty for a pastor in those days to attend. If a pastor failed to take part he was shirking his duty. So Grefton, from Baudette, came partly by train and by bus and on foot to me to ride with me to save the pastors from the round-about fare to Winnipeg and Crookston to Thief River. We started out reasonably early, but had little idea of the road. When we got into the tamarack and cedar swamps east of the Siberian Ridge, we got confused by the many logging roads and got lost. That is when we found ourselves at the end of a road. We had to turn back and try another one. We finally got through and had dinner at a stopping place where Middle River is now located. It had the same name then. It was cold with drifting snow and progress was slow. When we came to a post office and stopping place called Sandridge, it was dark and we felt that we had all we could stand for that day, so we asked for lodging overnight. That was grudgingly granted us. We were then 12 miles from our destination. The people we stopped with were "Church of God" people and did not think much of Lutheran pastors and had no knowledge of Lutheran doctrine. They even had the idea that a Lutheran pastor was not allowed to preach without a gown. Greften said: "Njus, you preach here on the way back". I said I would do that on the condition that we could stop overnight and that they would have the schoolhouse heated. That was promised. I found the conference very profitable. Several papers on theological topics were read and discussed. It was more than a refreshing course; we received a good deal of theological information. One had to preach a sermon in the evening, open to the public, and one had a catechization with the children on some portion of the catechism. The next morning both were criticized. Both were very helpful. Besides, we had a fine fellowship. I think the pastors of our day lose a great deal by not having pastoral conferences. At Sand ridge the schoolhouse was filled with people, and I think they liked my sermon, as they were attentive and were entertained in a fine manner.

The first week in March Greften and I had what they now call an evangelistic meeting, in Wannaska. It was an attempt to work up some interest among the people there. Besides, I hoped that Greften would have some influence on his brother who had a store there. He was a hard person to deal with. He had left home at an early age and went up near Crookston where he had an older brother, who, according to reports, was a brilliant man and held some office, but he passed away shortly after Martin got up there.

So Martin drifted up to Roseau County where he took a homestead. Later he worked in a store in Roseau. In Roseau there were more infidels than church people so it was easy for a young man to lose his faith. He had a store in Wannaska a few years when I came there. Shortly after I came there I went into his store to meet him and greet him from his brother. He told me that he had no use for a pastor. He also told me the Rev. T. O. Tolo had been in his store when he had been up there surveying the field before Birkelo was called. He had argued with him and Grefthen had walked up to him and told him that if he did not leave his store at once he would slap his face. And he added: "just so that you pastors get our money you do not care if our souls go to hell". I did not answer him and I felt sorry for him. Rev. Grefthen stayed with his brother, but he told me that he had to leave him to me as he could not do anything with him. Martin Grefthen's wife came to services regularly and after a while he came with her. At least I gained his respect. He invited me to stop over in his home and was very friendly. His father had given him a bible when he left home, and I always read out of that for evening devotion. The influence from home was not entirely washed out. Even though he never joined the congregation he was my friend and did me many favors. When I left he gave me a \$5.00 bill.

Winter was the best time to work as the roads were good. Spring was the worst as the roads broke up. It was up to me to see to it that the congregations Ross, Roseau and Badger would call a man. Palm Sunday, March 27th, I had set aside for Ross and Roseau. I met with them after services and got them to authorize the mission committee to call a man from the seminary. To this they agreed. Tuesday I had the Confirmation class in Poplar Grove. Wednesday I had to prepare sermons. Holy Thursday services were in Zion, Good Friday at Bethlehem in Nereson, Saturday at one confirmation class in Wannaska. I was a little late as the roads were bad. When I came there I was surprised to see black ribbons on the door of Lee's and Hagen's store. They had come up from Iowa the summer before with their grandfather and uncle. Hagen met me and told me to hurry up and get a bite to eat as the people were waiting for me. He would take care of the horses. I asked the reason. He said: "Grandfather is dead; did you not get the letter we sent you?" I had to say no. It sometimes went weeks that I would not get any mail. I told him that I would be there right away. The lunch was ready, but as I sat down to the table I thought of the fact that I did not even know what text to use. I lost all appetite for nervousness. One verse from Hebrews came to my mind: "They were strangers and exiles on earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland". I cried to the Lord for guidance, and He heard that prayer as they told me that it was a very good sermon. Later I had the same experience at Greenbush. One Sunday I had services there they came and told me that there would be a funeral after services- a young boy was to be buried. Then the words of Eli came to my mind: "He is the Lord and doeth what is good in His eyes". Later in the evening a woman asked me if it really was so that I did not know about it before. When I assured that I did not, she said she did not understand that I could preach such a sermon without preparation. So I found out that the Lord was near with His help when I found myself helpless.

Now back to Wannaska. I had two services there Easter Day and from there traveled west-ward with services every day until I had covered the parish. I have given a rather detailed report of my work that

first year just to give you some idea of how busy I was and how much there was to do. In fact, the work increased as settlers moved in and congregations and preaching places became necessary. The first winter I was there several families settled along Klondike ridge east of Siberian ridge. The first time I met those people was at a funeral. A young wife had died and I was asked to have the funeral. There was no cemetery so they had chosen a place on the homestead. I am not sure, but I believe his name was Gulseth. As far as I could see, he was the only sober man in the gathering. They evidently thought it was an occasion for a celebration. An elderly man stepped up by me and said: "I was the preceptor in the congregation where we came from; I will help you to sing". I found him to be a hindrance in place of a help. Later I found out that most of them had come from Clarkfield, Minnesota. Sometime later the Superintendent of school told me of an episode in that community. They had organized a school district and they were to have a picnic to raise money for the school, and they decided to sell beer. Naturally they could imbibe freely as it was for a good cause. An Irishman was the treasurer and got the money taken in. He did not turn the money in to the school treasury, but kept it for himself. So they wrote to the Superintendent and wanted to know what they should do to get the treasurer to pay over the money. He wrote back and said: "Be sure that he pays for the beer". Did they consider themselves Christians? I do not know, but they wanted to have a congregation and I helped them to organize and promised to serve them.

I was told to gather money for the budget of the church. As the church made it possible for them to have the means of grace among them, they ought to support the church. This I did. However, it is just one thing that stands out in my memory of this solicitation. I did not find time to go around and see every family so in Poplar Grove I decided to do it before services at Pentecost. The service was at Brunsvold's home. I asked the men as they came. Brunsvold began the list with 50 cents and the others with 25 cents. When I came to the man, who in many respects was the leading man in the congregation, hesitated, but finally gave me 25 cents and asked to get 10 cents back. I felt a little hot inside and was at the point to tell him he ought to give all, but somehow the words stuck in my mouth and I did as he asked me to do. They all heard and saw what took place. Shortly after I stopped with O. M. Christianson and he told me why the man asked to get back 10 cents. He had loaned the man the 25 cents that he had so he could have an offering for me. If he gave me 25 cents for the budget he had nothing to offer. And he added: "every penny you got that day came out of what we had as an offering to you, so you might just as well given it directly". I surely was glad that I had not urged the man to give me all of his 25 cents. He surely felt bad enough as it was that he could give only 10 cents in the offering. This will give you an idea of how scarce money was among the people. My total income that first year was \$500.33.

I baptized 31 children, had school for 30 children, confirmed 33, and gave communion to 79. I had organized one congregation and had an increase in membership in all the others. Most of all, I had an accurate list of membership in all except Riverside. There I could easily count the members who took an interest in the church, but we had a lot of dead timber who claimed to be members only when it was something they were opposed to. We tried to get a church and deed to a cemetery. If we could get a

church I would not have 2 services each time I was in the congregation, and we could gather the few who met in each schoolhouse together. It was not very difficult to get the few who came to the annual meeting to agree on a place. But when that was done, there would be a request for a new meeting, and those who were opposed were sure of a majority. The logical place was near or in Wannaska, but the question was for a location. On the cemetery that was dedicated on Mathias Johnson's farm would be a fine place, and he was willing to give an acre. But there was no public road in there so that was rejected. But I always had the feeling that the main reason was that they would not donate the money. I proposed that we should dissolve the congregation and organize a new one and get rid of all who refused to contribute and never came to church. But they considered that too drastic action, and there would be too few. It was at a later date that I thought that we should succeed. A man promised that he would raise the money for the cemetery and a road. The next time I came there I asked a member how he had succeeded. He told me that he had decided to have a dance in his home to raise money, but only his son-in-law and his wife had been there. Even those who liked to dance had said that they hated to dance to raise money for their grave. So that was the end of that. I was not sorry for that failure.

It was only the east half of Grimstad's Township that was settled. Even a half-mile north of Wannaska was so swampy that they had a corduroy road. Further west there was a swamp that a person could hardly walk through in summer. Out in the edge of that swamp lived a family who never came to church. The sister to the man talked about her brother and deplored the fact that he never came to services. He was considered a member, so after the annual meeting in January 1905, I decided that I would drive out there in the hope that I could stop over-night. I came there just as the sun was setting, and the man was busy with his chores. He told me that a man who lived in the east part of Nereson had just gone by and if I hurried, I would catch up with him so I could find my way through. As I understood that it was an order to move on, I took his advice as I had 4 miles of absolute wilderness and would be lost in the night if I failed to see where he went. I saw a team ahead of me and followed without knowing where it would lead to. When I came to his home I asked for a road from there to the west of Nereson where I was aquatinted. From there the road was good, but it seemed fearfully far before I came to where I knew where I was.

We turn back to the fall of 1903. The people in Zion were anxious to have me live in their midst, so they wanted me to take a homestead. I could continue to live in Birkelo's house, but there was no pasture there for the cow and no hay as there were heavy poplar trees on that quarter; and besides, I like to have my own home. They thought they knew of a favorable place across the road from Gunerios Heieie. It had been filed on by a young girl and she had gotten the walls up on a log house, but she had married a banker in N. Dakota, and sold the improvement to Hanson in Badger. He could not get his wife to move out there. His time was up so he had to move on or lose it. He was anxious to get his money back, but he could not speak of it openly for someone might file on it. Ole T. Olson, who had adjoining land south of it, and Heieie had bargained with Hanson to sell me the improvement. He could not sell the land for it was not his. As for improvement, there was nothing there. McFarlane, who lived a mile north of there, had stolen the log house and had the logs piled up by his stable. Heieie wanted me to see the place. There was, according to him, an unusual fine building place. So I went over to see what it

looked like. He took me to the southwest corner of the quarter and from there he headed for a small poplar thicket to the northeast, which he thought was to be the place for the house. We soon came to water so it was hard to walk dry. Where the poplars were, it was dry ground, but he said it was not the place; it was much higher than that. So he picked out another poplar grove and we headed for that. There got to be more water before we came to that place and we both had wet feet. That was not the place. He was lost. He climbed a tree to see if he could locate a landmark. He said we had walked in the wrong direction; we had gone southeast. I knew that he was wrong; I knew we had walked northeast, but he was so sure that he knew where we were, I had to follow him. More water to wade through. We were now so wet that we did not care to jump from tamarack log to tamarack log. He came to another poplar grove in the swamp, but it was not the place. We had then walked to the northwest for quite a distance. Then Heieie admitted that he did not know where we were. Luck was that we saw a man walking. He called to him so we could speak to him. He informed us where we were. Then we were about half a mile north of the land we were to look at. When Heieie found out where we were it did not take him long to find his way, and finally the place where the log house had been. There it was high ground that would be above water at all times.

I could have filed on the land, but it was not considered a proper thing to do, and Hanson was a member of our church in Badger, so I bought the claim. I got home-sawed lumber cheap, and my brother, John, and a cousin who came from Norway, built a house 16 X 16 X 12 in the spring (just the outside walls). The frost was in the ground so there was no foundation.

We left Eilef Olson in Badger in January 1904. I heard that he came home in that fearful storm the next day and was badly frozen. I did not see him until late in the spring. I asked him if he got any cash on his lumber from Sjoburg. He said: "Just think he would not give me a penny". I asked him how he managed with the 75 cents he got from me. He said it was 71 cents he got from me, and the hotel let him have supper, bed and breakfast for that. What about the team? He had them in the livery stable and told them I would pay for it. I had my team in the livery barn several times since then, but had never heard anything about it. The next time I went through Badger I asked them about it. They told me they could not leave his horses out in the street and they could not ask me to pay for him. If I would give them 50 cents it would be fine, but it was up to me. Naturally I paid them even if it was not true that I had promised to do so.

In 1903 the Soo Line built the railroad from Glenwood to Thief River and was to extend the line to Winnipeg the next year. Naturally, there was a lot of railroad talk in Roseau County. Where would the Soo Line go and what would Great Northern do? They had built in by Thief River many years before, but had the depot about half a mile west of town. Thief River was still a sawmill town. Great Northern demanded \$50,000.00 to build into town and when that was refused, they built the depot that far outside. It caused quite an inconvenience, but they had to bear it. Soo got the right-of-way through the east part of town and had their depot on main-street. In 1904 the Soo Line built to Winnipeg, but it did not touch Roseau County. It crossed the sand ridge between Fir and Pelan. However, the Soo would get

all the freight that came to Roseau County by Stephen. Jim Hill did not want to lose that, so he would extend the road from Thief River north. Where would it come; straight to Roseau or to Warroad? It was settled in the spring of 1904. The Townsight Co. bought land for the town-sight from Hereim. Most of the road from Middle River north was built with wheelbarrow. They could not use horses and scrapers; it was too wet for that. Farmers would take a few rods on bids. The ditch on each side had to be so deep and so wide. They used planks to roll the wheelbarrows on, and the ditches could not be continuous. They had to leave the width of the plank. We did not see the reason for that at the time, but saw it later. If there had been a continuous ditch, the water would cumulate until it would flood the land to the east and finally wash out the road bed. As it was, the water would stand in the ditches.

Greenbush would be the terminal for some time. Naturally, it became the center of activity. Hildahl started to move his store from about 3 miles east. It was moved by horses, so it was a slow process. He had the store open and did business as usual along the way and continued to have his living quarters upstairs. He was married at that time. They used just one team of horses. They would fasten one end of the steel cable securely to a tree or strong stump, run it through pullies, and wind it around a heavy log that was turned by a long sweep. It was not many rods they could make in a day, but he got his store to the new town-sight before any other store was finished. As the town was located in the very center of our little congregation, we got several new families, but we did not have any place for services. The family houses were too small and the school house half a mile west of town had just an outside wall and the seats were home-made. We did use it in the summer but it was impossible for winter. The Townsight Co. would give a free lot to the first congregation that would build a church, and our congregation kind of had the inside track, but the congregation was not financially able to build. They had a basket party to raise money. It went well and they got \$40.00. We hoped to get a deed by laying the foundation, but that was not granted.

One Sunday when I had services there in the P. M. the members were excited. They had heard that a Hauge congregation that had a little church a few miles out of town planned to move it in and get the lot that was promised us, provided we built a church first. They insisted that I should stay and solicit the next morning to find out what money we might be able to raise. Hildahl and a few other business-men had become members so I approached them first as they were able to give more liberally. It was a cold, sloppy day and not easy walking, but I kept at it all day and when evening came I was to report the result. I had some over \$400.00 promised. Not anything to build on in our day, but we decided to go ahead. We got the outside finished that summer, but we could not use it in the winter in the shape it was in and it would be impossible to raise more money that year. But people would have to have school for the children and there was no school house. So the school board came and offered us that they would plaster the church if they could use it for school. As there would be no school on Saturdays, I could use it for the confirmation class, and if there should be a funeral, they would close the school. Most of the members on the school board were members of the congregation. It was a very satisfactory arrangement both for the school and for the congregation. We had a small indebtedness and it was decided in the fall that we should have an offering. Those who could not give money could offer wood. That offer met our obligations. We had a neat little church in Greenbush.

In the fall of 1904 I received a letter from President Bjorgo in which he informed me that he had received a letter from a man in Renville County that informed him that several families from their community had settled in the northwest corner of Roseau County, and had no pastor to serve them. So he told me that I had to look them up. The place was called Juneberry. I had no idea of where it could be for the only thing I knew of northwest was an immense big swamp. When Roseau River was high it would fill that swamp close down to Pelan. I talked about that letter to Hildahl. He told me that people from there would come to Greenbush to trade in the winter, and he knew some of them. He also told me the road that would take me there. North of Greenbush there was one big Polish settlement with a church by Leo. I had to go north of there. A Polish family lived close to the place where the road took across the swamp. I was told to write to a man by the name of Sigestad. I decided on the 8th of January.

Here is the schedule for the first week in January: The 1st, services in Grimstad and Wannaska; 2nd, confirmation class; 3rd, services in Father's home. They had located on land 11 miles northeast of Wannaska. January 4th; I drove home; 5th, confirmation class in Zion; 6th, Epiphany, services in Zion and Greenbush, and the 7th I would drive to Juneberry. I stopped over-night in Greenbush and slept, or tried to sleep in the attic of Hereim's hotel. No place to find a room; the town was booming. The 7th was a very stormy day with drifting snow, and I had the wind straight against me. I was told that I had at least 25 miles to go. It was a slow process and I was miserably cold before I was half way, but had to keep going. It was no trouble to find the road; it led straight northwest.

When I came to the place of the Poleander who lived where the road turned west across the swamp it was a good deal past noon. I was shivering from the cold and the horses were tired, but the shack of a stable was such that I saw it would be impossible to get the team in, and the house was not much better; so I decided that I had to go on. From there the road was good as the grass was about as high as the horses, so the snow had no chance to drift. The first place west of the swamp had fairly large buildings as the man had concentrated his efforts to raising cattle. I received a friendly welcome. They offered to take good care of my team, and as the stable was some distance from the house, they proposed that I should go in and try to warm up. I got fresh biscuits, but they were heavy and hard, and the meat was tough and there was no butter. But it was 4 o'clock and I was hungry so I was not particular about food.

There I met a young boy who knew me. He had been brought up by a childless couple who live in Zion congregation and had skipped from there the year before. As I knew the family, I did not blame him. He sent a letter back to them with me. They told me there that Sigestad had no team of any kind so there would be no road in there. His nearest neighbor would tell me where to go, and it was less than one-half mile from him. It was three miles up there. I did not fancy the idea to be in the edge of that swamp without a sign of a road after dark. I decided to move on as soon as possible as the sun was close to the horizon. I had not had time to warm up and the horses had little time to rest. I tried to urge them on, but they would not trot. I came to the man who was to inform me where to go to Sigestad. He was out doing chores and took me through his barn yard, and told me that he had been over to Sigestad and hauled in some hay the day before so I could just follow his track. So I got to my destination after dark.

They were a young childless couple with a small one room house, but well built. It was a very fine place to stay. Sigestad and I slept in the bed and Mrs. slept on a mattress on the floor. In the morning I even got coffee in bed.

Sunday morning it was clear and -40. We had services in a vacated house and it was filled with people. All, except two Swedes, were Norwegians. After services we organized a congregation and I promised to get someone to serve them. Carl Souer had come to Badger the spring of 1904 and had only 3 congregations and was closer to them than I was, so I would expect him to accept a call from them. During services, and after, I felt something crawling around me, and the night I spent in Greenbush I had felt itchy, but then I thought it was from the robe I had for a covering. Now I feared that I was filled with lice, so I decided that I better strike for home. An elderly Swede took me home for dinner. He had been a railroad conductor before he took his homestead out there, and had a fairly large and fine house. When we came in I smelled bread baking. I was taken in to the parlor, but could hear what they said in the kitchen. They would take a loaf out and cool it off. Shortly after, I heard a girl say: "Ma, it is frozen already". So they had to wait until it had thawed out again. Going home the horses were rested and more willing; the road was also better so I was home by midnight. I found that my fears were true; I was filled with lice. Now what about the family that I had stayed with? Had I left some lice there; and what would they think of me if I had? I had to go back and explain how it was. As I had no Sunday free, I wrote that I would have services there the 24th, a Tuesday. I stopped with the same family. No, I had left no lice there. They had a Poleander to dig a well so they were afraid of him and filled the clothes with cedilla seed and that had saved them. After that I knew how I could protect myself. Still, that was not needed as long as I slept in the homes of my own people. However, there were plenty of other bugs to contend with. Souer accepted the call to Juneberry so I never visited those people after that. In later years I met some of them at a synod meeting.

In the last weeks of March I tried to get in a few days of school in Hanson school house at Riverside. I was told that a family had settled by the east branch of Roseau River south of Tom Thompson who had several children of school age. The people thought they could send them to school as they had a fine road through the woods, and by that road they would hardly have 3 miles to go. So I decided to go and see them one evening after school. It was a fine warm day and I walked as I would go from there over to Father. They lived in a small log house built of green poplar logs. It was very low and as the door was on the side wall I had to bow rather low as I walked through the door. Along the opposite wall, there were two beds, end-to-end, which could be drawn out on the floor at night. On one end there was the stove and at the other end there was a table. There were green sprouts on the logs and as it thawed, and the walls were plastered with clay between the logs, clay-water was running down on the floor. They were glad to see me and I was urged to stay for lunch. All of them were ragged and everything proved that they were very poor. I told them that they should not go to any trouble as I had lunch before I came, but I had to have coffee. The cows were dry, so they had no milk and no butter. They had picked blueberries in the fall and canned without sugar. They had no granulated sugar, but a few pieces of loaf sugar that they melted and put in the sauce for me. I felt really sorry that I should eat any of the food

they so sorely needed for themselves. But I had to eat or else they would have drawn the conclusion that I did not think it was good enough for me. They could not send their children to school; they did not have clothes.

I think it was the same winter that Martin Graff called at my home. He told me that he visited a family who had moved in the year before, and found the children walked around in the house barefooted because they had neither shoes nor stockings, and the floor was cold as it was made of rough lumber. It was his intention to call on people and try to get some help for them. I gave him some and urged others to help as far as they were able.

One day I had dinner with the banker in Greenbush. His wife told me that the women did not like to have a single man for their pastor. She said: "if you are engaged, go and get married, and if you are not, you better find a girl". I do not know how general that feeling was, but I was married in September that year. As I took off a few weeks for the wedding, I did not teach much that year. But on the first round in the parish I had the greatest scare of my life. My wife and I had been in Wannaska and spent a day with Father and Mother. On our way home we went through Badger. I had noticed that a bolt in the single tree was worn so I had intended to get a new one put in, but it slipped my mind when we went through Badger. When we came about half way to Greenbush we met several hay racks on their way home from the harvest fields in N. Dakota. They stopped and passed their bottles around and some of them needed a toilet. I felt ashamed to let my wife sit and look on this, so I decided that I would try to pass them. The road was narrow and full of stumps on the side. The horses got scared and started to run, a wheel struck a stump, the bolt in the single tree broke and the pole went down. I could not hold the horses as I would only pull the buggy into their legs, and as they were in full gallop, I expected every second that the buggy would tip and we would be thrown into the stumps and be seriously hurt, if not killed. But that pole miraculously stayed in the center of the road as the horses pulled it by the lines. Thus we went along for many rods until we came to an open space on the left of the road. Then I saw that the horse on the right stepped on the end of the pole and the buggy tipped over. Then we got up; we were not hurt at all, and the buggy stood beside us, but we still saw the horses in full gallop down the road. The tugs in the other single tree had un-hooked so not even the buggy was damaged. A man came running to us. He was digging potatoes to the west of the road and he said that when he saw the horses coming, he was sure that we would be killed as the horses came in a full gallop. He was surprised to find us alive, not to speak of not even hurt at all. While we were talking and wondering where we should find the horses, another party and team from the harvest fields came with my team. He knew the team as they were members of Riverside and I had often stopped with them. They too were wondering in what shape they would find me. They did not know that I had a wife along with me. God does protect us from all danger. In some way I got it fixed so we could go on. I expected that my wife would be afraid to get into the buggy again, but she did not mind it at all. I doubt that she was fully aware of the danger we had passed through.

As we lived less than half mile from the school house, my wife taught there the first winter and sister stayed with us. I have told that I had determined never to live on credit. I do not know just what expenses we had, but we were hard up for money. I started school in Grimstad's school house the 6th of March. I was home the weekend of the 11th, and then was to be gone for two weeks as I had services in Riverside the 18th. My wife told me that they were nearly out of coffee and sugar. I had only 50 cents and gave her that and told her that she had to try and get along with that until I came home. That was the last time we were so short of money.

I have told that Poplar Grove was divided by a 3 miles stretch of low-land. They tried to agree on some place for a cemetery and a church in the future. The last place was a little hill in the west part of that low-land. It was nearly in the center of the congregation and so far an ideal place. The congregation met and cleared it of brush. I thought that the question was settled. But one day I received a letter from the east group that they desired to sever their relationship with Poplar Grove. That filled me with worry, as the majority of that group had come from a Free Church congregation by Donnelly. I was also told by Brunsvold that his brother, who was a pastor in the Free Church, had visited him and asked to have services in his house and get them to join in with that denomination. I hated to lose them because they were a fine group of people, and I also hated to think that we should have the community divided. It would make the church work so much the harder. I had to go down to them and find out. They assured me that they had nothing against me or the Synod, but they felt that they had to have a cemetery as they never knew when they might need it. They also wanted the cemetery on a place where they could build a church when they were able to do so. They felt that the place they had cleared was impossible as they did not have any member close enough to make fire in the stove when the church was built. I could not deny that fact. By that time they also had a school house that we could use for services. But I feared that I would run into trouble if I would try to organize a new congregation. As a family had moved in who was strongly in favor of the Free Church, it would be simpler if I could get the west group to leave the congregation as I was sure I would not have any trouble there. That worked out as I planned so we got Poplar Grove and West Poplar Grove. It did not mean any more work for me as we had two Ladies Aids before and I also had services east and west before. However, as it turned out in later years I see that it was a great mistake. The place that they discarded would have been a far better place for Poplar Grove church than the place it has now, and it would have been a stronger congregation.

Speaking of Poplar Grove leads my thoughts back to Christmas in 1904. The school house was built that fall and we had Christmas tree program there Christmas day evening. My plan was to drive home after that was over as I was to be in Bethlehem Congregation the 26th. The school house was 8 miles southwest from where I lived and Bethlehem was 7 miles northeast. But as we went to the Christmas tree, it started to snow as heavy as I have ever seen snow fall down, and later in the evening it started to blow so people had a hard time to find their way home. The family who I drove with had less than a mile home and we realized that it would be impossible for me to try to drive home. I had to stop overnight and try to get an early start next morning. The storm had abated by that time, but the snow was

knee deep. It was also bitterly cold. I started out as soon as I could see where to drive and tried to make the road as short as possible as there was no road anywhere. I found a few deep drifts, but got through. As it was only half a mile out of my way to go by home, I decided that I better let Kristie know that I had gone east so she could have some idea of where I was, but I did not get out of the sleigh. I asked what time it was and found out that I would be late at Bethlehem. When I came to the swamp between home and Nereson every tamarack stump was covered with snow. Finally the sleigh caught a stump, the doubletree broke, the lines slipped off my frozen hands and the horses ran away. But it was heavy going for them even without the sleigh so they made a short circle and came back heading for home not far away from where I sat. I called to them and they stopped.

I was still over three miles from the school house where I was to have services and the question was how to get there. I could not walk and carry my suitcase; the snow was too deep for that. Finally I decided that I could leave the suitcase in the sleigh and I would drive the horses and walk. That worked out as far as the sleigh was concerned, but I found that I could not walk that way. So I got into the sleigh and found that it went fine. When I came within a mile of the school house, I saw a man on top of the stable that was just across the road. I wondered why he was there. That riddle was solved when I came there. The few who had come for services had decided that I would not come so they wanted to go home. He was sure that I would come so he went on top of the roof to see if he could see me coming, and he did. It was 12 o'clock by that time. I was well clothed. I had a fur cap, fur coat and a long scarf around my neck and over my cap and face so I would not freeze my cheeks. I also had a full beard at that time. When I tried to take my scarf off, I found it was frozen to the cap, coat and beard. As I stood by the stove to thaw out, the people had a good laugh. It was not the only time that I had a broken doubletree from hidden stumps, but later I knew what to do when it happened.

In 1906 I had 90 days of school. I found that it helped me with the confirmation classes when I could have them every day for four or five weeks, besides I would get the younger children further along in their books. It was especially on the Klondike Ridge that school was needed. There was no school of any kind, and it was also a question where to find room to have school. One farmer had a granary built of slab. I knew that he did not have any grain in it in June, so I asked him if I could have school there. That was readily granted. The night before I should begin school I came home from Wannaska very late, and had to get up early in the morning so I could make some arrangement so I could seat the children. There was no window in the granary and on rainy days it would be cold to have the door open, and even with the door open, it would be dark for some children to see to read. We cleaned out the little grain there was, a sack half full that I found convenient as a seat for me. We made a table of the bin boards and seats for the children. I asked him if he would be willing to cut an opening in the wall and take a window from his stable and install it. That was a four pane window, 24 X 24. That he did. I had the little place packed with children. The oldest 14 could hardly read the ABC's. When evening came I was deadly tired. I said to myself that I would sleep regardless of how many bedbugs there might be. But I found out that was not true. There was an abundance of bedbugs; they crawled all around me. I did not only feel them, but I smelled them. Besides, the whole family snored around me. I simply could not

sleep. When the sun rose in the morning, the bedbugs ran for cover and I finally went to sleep and it was close to eight when I awoke. I took it for granted that the people thought that I had slept long and well, but I wondered what I should do with myself. I knew that it was impossible for me to stay there and it was too far to drive home, but it seemed to be the only way. I had to have some sleep if I should be able to carry. When evening came a man who had a young girl in school came and said: "if you want to, you can come to us tonight". The man was a little queer and his wife did not seem to be all there, but I decided that I had to try it. It could not possibly be any worse, and it might be better. So I thanked him for the invitation and told him I would come. His log house was new and it looked clean. As usual, it had just one room. When evening came he said: "there might be some bedbugs, but it should not be bad, because I have had the bed out and washed it with kerosene today. That made me happy for even if it should be some smell of kerosene, it would not be as bad as the smell of bedbugs, and I would not be eaten up. No bedbugs and I slept well in that place.

The reason bedbugs were so bad was that they would be in the cracks of the logs, and the beds were, as a rule, made of home sawed lumber, and therefore it was a fine breeding place. It was a hard task to keep the bugs out, but some tried and others did not seem to mind them. When I would dress in the first place I stayed, I found the inside of my clothes covered with bugs and when I shook them out they ran all over the floor. It was the only place that I found them that bad, but I lost many nights of sleep in summer on account of bedbugs. Later I knew what places to avoid in summer. I would stop there in winter when it was too cold for the bugs to be around. When it was sandy around the house they were troubled with fleas. They had only straw ticks up there, but as they did not have much straw, they would use hay. There would be fleas in the hay, and besides, if it was a low foundation, which was usual, the logs would be laid on the ground, and the fleas would jump in. I would try to avoid those places too in the summer. The first summer my wife was up there she had, without my knowledge, accepted an invitation to stop overnight in such a home. I told her that I was sorry and knew that she would be too. She asked why, and I told her that there were fleas in that bed. She said that it could not be so bad. I told her that she would find out. We had a room for ourselves in that place. Shortly after we had gotten into bed she said: "I feel something crawling on me". I told her: "I told her so, but she did not believe me". She had never seen a flea. I got up and lit the lamp and we took the covers off the bed and she was greatly surprised to see black things jumping around. But at least some people managed to keep their homes free of bugs.

In October I had school in West Poplar Grove. I had a very fine place to board. Foss had a large log house and was well to do in comparison to others. I had a good warm bed. The weather was fine and the ground dry, but the nights were cold that time of the year. About half mile west of Foss lived a man, Gilbertson, who had a large family and some of the children were of school age, but they did not come to school. Neither did they come to services, except they had a baby to be baptized, and that was about once every year. Mrs. Foss thought it was too bad that they did not send their children, and I thought so too. So I went over to see them one evening after school. There was just one room and one bed in the house. There were six or seven children. They seemed to appreciate that I called on them and I was

invited to stay overnight. I saw that they were desperately poor and told them it was no need of that as it was only a short walk back to Foss, and they had the bed ready for me as I knew that I would have very little sleep. But they insisted that I should stay. I hated to do so, but if I should have any hope of getting the children to school I had to do so. If I did not they would think I was too proud to stay with them. After supper Mrs. Gilbertson hunted for flour sacks and sewed them together for a sheet and also a thin spread. When it was bedtime she took the mattress and bed clothes off the bed and made a bed on the floor. That took practically all the space there was between the bed, stove and table. She laid the sheet she had made and the thin spread she had on the bed for me and Gilbertson. In some way she managed to get the children around her on the mattress on the floor. I got so cold that I could not sleep and would gladly get up and dressed. But I did not dare to get up as I might have stepped on some of those who were on the floor. I surely was glad when morning came so I could put my clothes on. I went behind the grove and ran back and forth until I got some heat in my body.

In November and December I was very busy. Even if I give you my daily appointments it would not mean much to you as you have no idea of the distances I drove, but I will give you my schedule from December 22 to January 3, 1907. The 22nd confirmation class in St. Olav; 23rd, services in St. Olav and Zion; (10 miles); 24th Ladies Aid; the 25th, services at Zion and St. Olav; 26th, services at Poplar Grove and West Poplar Grove (15 miles); 27th, services in Bethlehem (7 miles from home); then to Wannaska; the 30th, services at Gunderson school house south of Malung and in Wannaska; 31st, Ladies Aid at Wannaska; Jan. 1st, services in Poplar Grove and West Poplar Grove; Jan. 3rd, Ladies Aid at home. I had driven 150 miles, had 11 services, 1 confirmation class and 3 Ladies Aids. Kristi asked me how many dinners I had. I told her I had 3 dinners, the rest just lunches.

In November 1906 we got 24 inches of snow and it increased during the winter. I had not had time to get enough wood home for the winter and when February came we were out of wood. By that time the snow was so deep that the horses could not walk it even on the level. I had to try to make a road into the woods. It was not so far, but the snow reached my waist; it was slow progress. I had to press my knee into the snow in order to move my foot forward. Most of the dry tamarack lay on the ground, but as the snow had not drifted, I could not tell where the logs were or the size of them. I had to dig them out and carry them in piles along the path I made. I would have the same path to follow that I had walking to them. But when I got a log on my shoulder, I would sink a little deeper into the snow and every step would give me a jerk in my back. I had a sore back and was a tired man when evening came. The next morning my neighbor came with his team and helped me haul the wood home.

At one time that winter I had a close accident. The team went down in a hard snowdrift and one of the horses got a foot over the neck-yoke. They could not move without being unhitched. As they were in the snow up to their belly I had to get down on my knees in front of them to get at the neck-yoke. Maud made a lunge forward and pressed me back over my legs. It gave me a bad pain in my knee, and if it had moved further ahead, I felt sure that I would have a broken knee. I could not move as my foot was pressed down on the hard snow. I laid there and talked to it and patted its' nose as I tried to twist my foot and work it loose in the snow. I finally managed to get up and got the horses un-hitched. I also

managed to get the sleigh loose so I could drive the horses ahead of me and pull the sleigh until I got on a solid road. In order that you may fully understand the seriousness of my situation, you have to bear in mind that I was far from any people, and that it might not only be hours, but perhaps days before anyone would have come along and found me.

The hardest trip that I had was in March. I was teaching school in Wannaska. It was my intention to close the school Friday the 22nd. But Wednesday it turned mild, so I was afraid that the roads would break up so I decided to close school Thursday. I had to be home Friday evening as I had the confirmation class at Greenbush Saturday and services there Sunday. Besides, the following week was Easter week. I stopped with a man who lived south of Wannaska. It was unusually mild and I told the people that I had to get an early start in the hope that it would freeze a little during the night and that the road would carry. They assured me that they would get me up early and I need not worry about that. He would get out and feed and harness the horses so I would be ready to go as soon as I had breakfast. It was shortly after five when I got up and breakfast was about ready. The man was out getting my horses ready. When he came in I asked him how the weather was. He told me that it was very mild and that it had rained during the night. That did not sound so good. I started out before daylight. I drove about a mile south where I had to turn west on a less-driven road and more open country. There the road did not carry the horses. In our day you can have no idea of what that meant. The horses walked along the sleigh track and when it drifted the road raised so it looked like a high grade. When it started to thaw the track became so narrow and slippery that the horses would slip off and the high ridge would reach the horses' belly so they would hang on the narrow ridges and could not move. So I had to drive outside the road. Where there was high willow brush there would be a drift, and they were not far apart. When I got to a drift the horses could not walk it. One reason for that was that we had some rain in February and after that a lot of snow, so there was a hard crust of ice in every drift. To break that, I had to make a jump on the snow and break through. As I broke through the crust I would go down to my waist in the wet snow. Naturally the progress was slow, and as it cleared up it was really hot, and I soon was soaking wet.

I went southwest for some distance and then I would go mainly west heading for the Klondike ridge. There it was more timber and somewhat less drifted, so I walked on the road and drove the horses beside it so the sleigh would not go so deep. As I was on the west side of the road going south, I got on the north side going west. After a while I came to a place where I had the horses between the old road and a rail fence. Finally the space between the road and the fence was so narrow that I had to get the horses over the road to the south. The horses bolted over. But the cutter caught the high ridge and the double tree broke. I could not make use of my old trick to tie the tugs to the pole as it was too heavy going for that. I knew that I was not far from a farm called the "Lange Dahl". There were two men with the same name, so they had to have some way to distinguish them, so one was just "Dahl", and the other "Lange Dahl". I also knew that he was a carpenter, so I hoped to get tools to make a double tree. The question was whether to drive the horses up there first and leave the sleigh, or pull the cutter along with me. I decided on the later as it would save time and it would be safer as I could fit the double tree.

If I could have walked in the middle of the road and thus kept the runners on the old track it would have been comparatively easy. But I could not do that because I sunk down over my knees, but I finally got there wet and tired. The man was not home, but his wife found the tools I needed and gave me a short 2 X 4 tamarack piece. It was hot as a summer day and I did not get cold. Besides, it was kind of a rest both for me and the horses. It was close to noon by the time I got started from there. From there I had a long swamp ahead of me. I had to walk as the horses could not pull the cutter if I rode as the snow would pack ahead of it. Besides, they could hardly walk the snow when the cutter was empty. I do not think I made two miles an hour. When I got through the swamp and on the Klondike Ridge, the team laid down. They were too tired to walk any further.

There was a house about a quarter of a mile from me, and as I now was desperately hungry and thirsty, and it was way past dinner, I decided that I had to lead the horses up there and find out if I could get some hay for the horses, and also some dinner for me. I was about half way home. The woman was home alone, but she promised that she would give me something to eat and that I could put the horses in and give them hay. Time was getting precious if I should make it home. So I decided that I might as well go down and get the cutter while I waited, but I could not quite make it. When I was a few rods from the house, I also dropped. When I got into the house I asked if I could borrow a pair of stockings for a week. She said: "my husband has only one pair of stockings and that he has on him". So I took off my shoes and stockings and hung them by the stove to dry them, and sat barefooted. It was so hot that the woman kept the door open, and that was cold for me. She did not have any bread, but she was to bake in the afternoon. So she took some dough and fried it in fat and also fried some pork, only that it was just heated. Hungry as I was, I could eat neither that half raw pork nor that dough she had heated. There were a few crackers on a plate, so I ate them and drank a cup of milk. She asked 15 cents for that and I paid her. When I got my stockings they were not even warm as she had moved them away from the stove. From there I had a fairly good road as the people were hauling logs to the saw-mill further west and laid out a new road. But the horses were too tuckered out to trot; they just crawled along. When I got to the saw-mill nine miles from home, I realized that the horses could not make it home. The sun was about down by that time so I asked a farmer who lived close by the road if he would keep my team until Monday. He said that he could not possibly find room for them, but he felt sure his neighbor had room. He said: "I see him outside and I will call down to him". He hollered: "Tangen, can you keep the minister's horses until Monday?" He answered "yes". The man offered to take my team down there and I put on my fur coat and took my suitcase and started to walk home. As I had sat in the cutter for some time I felt kind of rested, but it did not take long before I felt weak and tired. I knew that I would need some nourishment and stopped in at a place close to the road and asked if I could get a drink of milk. I was now among my own people and I was asked to stay and they would make supper for me. But that invitation I could not accept as I was too wet to sit in my clothes and it would be dark before I would get away from there. So I drank all the milk I could and started out again. As I have told you before, from the Siberian Ridge and home, there was a crooked road through the swamp and no house for several miles. I got so tired that I simply dragged my feet along the road. The road went close by the house of my neighbor a mile south of my home. When I came there I saw through the window

the man-folks sitting around the stove, and it seemed to me that I had never seen anything as cozy as that. From there I had to cross a plowed field and as the snow had drifted off that, it was muddy and very heavy walking. I came to a big stone and I wondered if I should sit down and rest for a while, but as I stood there and looked at it, I decided that I better not do that as I was beginning to feel cold and I feared that I might go to sleep. But every stone I saw from there and home looked more inviting. I finally reached home, dropped down on the first chair I got hold of, and told my wife to come and get my shoes off. When she pulled off the overshoes, the water ran out of them.

I had planned Saturday forenoon for preparation of a sermon for Sunday. The confirmation class was to meet in Greenbush Saturday at 2 P.M., and as I had 10 miles to walk, I had to start out in the forenoon. I felt kind of rested out by that time, but it did not take long before I found out different. I did not have much strength left and I could not walk as fast as I had figured. Heltnes, the couple I married the Sunday I was installed in St. Olaf, lived half a mile south of town. When I came there I decided that I had to get a rest. When Mrs. Heltne opened the door for me she looked kind of surprised and said: "Are you sick, Njus?" I answered: "no, I am not sick, just tired". She said: "if you aren't sick, you surely must be tired". They had a room besides a small kitchen. She led me into the sitting room and got me into a rocking chair. She was home alone and she said she would prepare dinner for me. She warmed potatoes and fried some very good fresh pork, and I had a very good dinner. I thought she took too much time to do it as it was nearly time to meet with my class. I thanked her for the dinner and told her that I would have to go right away. She said: "no, you can't go; you go back to the rocking chair". I said: "that would be fine, but I do not have time". She put her back against the door and said: "you go back to the rocking chair; I will not let you go out". I had no choice. After a while she said she thought that I could go. Still I had a hard time to make the half mile.

I stopped in town over-night and had services there the next morning. In the P.M. I was to be in Bethlehem, 12 miles away, but I realized that I could never make that. So I skipped that service, the only service I missed in over six years. The snow was now nearly gone. I stopped with Heltnes, and Sunday P. M. he hitched up his horse and took me part way home. It was bad driving and when we were three miles from home, he asked if I thought I could make it from there. I assured him that I was sure I could. Still I was rather tired by the time I got home. Monday I had the confirmation class at home in the A. M. and in the P. M. I went back and got my team. Tuesday and Wednesday I prepared sermons for Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and for Easter Sunday. Holy Thursday Communion services were in Bethlehem and St. Olaf. Friday services were in Poplar Grove and West Poplar Grove. Saturday I went back to Wannaska on the same road that I came on the Friday before. When I came into the store in Wannaska, a man who lived south of Wannaska, began to laugh. He said it was a shame to laugh, but when he thought of how I was jumping on the snow drifts and then disappeared into them on my way home, he could not help it. I had two services there Easter Sunday and drove back for services in the Poplar Grove congregation, 2nd Day Easter. That spring I organized a congregation on Klondike Ridge. There was a store there by that time and also a post office called Benwood. From that time my schedule for services would be: the two Poplar Grove congregations, one Sunday, Benwood and Zion, Bethlehem and St. Olaf, and two services in Riverside.

In June I taught school. I also had an unusual wedding. A 79 year old man married an 18 year old girl, who I had confirmed three years earlier. He was from Sweden. Her parents were also from Sweden. The wedding was in the girl's home. I think it was the same summer that I saw some women walking to services, and all of them carried something. When they came close to the house where we to have services, they found some stones and sat down. Then I understood what they carried; it was their shoes and stockings. It was the only way they could have dry feet during services, but they did want to have their feet covered before they entered the house.

Grefthen from Baudette, Carl Souer from Roseau and I had a little circuit by ourselves. We had a two day meeting in the middle of the week twice a year. It was, at times, rather hard on us to keep it going. It was to be a free discussion, but we could not make any of the lay people to take part. There was a man by Ross who had been in the ministry for a while, but had quit and taken a homestead there. His name was Langemoe. He was a regular attendant, but we could not induce him to speak. That fall we were to be in Grefthen parish along Rainy River. I was also to dedicate a cemetery up there. We were told that Vasser, a town in Canada, was only about seven miles north of the boundary, and as the road from Roseau to Warroad had the reputation to be bad, Souer and I decided that we would walk to Vasser. I had to get rid of my team as Krsiti and my wife could not take care of them, and as well, all able bodied men from my home congregation were out threshing. I had to take my team to Brunsvold in Poplar Grove. That took one day. I walked to Badger and from there we took the stage to Fox, and started to walk from there. We stopped for dinner with a family by Ross. We thought we had plenty of time as it was only about six miles from there to the boundary, and, according to reports, only seven miles from there to Vasser. A mile further on we were invited to stop for lunch. That we declined as Souer had been told that a family by the name of Anderson lived just across the border, and he wanted to see them and, perhaps, we could stop overnight there. If not, Ole Oie in Roseau had given us a name of an Icelander who had taken a homestead a little north of the border, and Ole was sure we could stop with them.

We found the place on the border where we were told it would be, but we also found that the people had moved out. So we had to move on. There was a trail leading north and we followed that. We had before us the most desolate country that I have seen. There had been heavy tamarack sometime, and a fire had burned out the peat and the trees had tumbled over. As far as we could see tamarack roots rose above the willows that had grown up. There was not a house in sight. After a while we saw a barn far to our right, but no road led in that direction. As the sun was now close to the horizon we did not feel so well about it. But luck was that we spied a man walking north a distance away from us. We hollered to him and he stopped so we could talk with him. We asked if he knew where the Icelander lived. He knew that and pointed out that we could see the stove pipe on his house above the willow brush. That cheered us up a little. When we came to his place we found him outside busy butchering a sheep. We greeted him from Oie and asked if we could stop overnight. He told us that he could not possibly keep us as his wife had got a baby that morning. We realized the truth of his statement as he had a very small house, just one room, perhaps, 14 X 16. He told us that it was not far to a store, Pine Valley, where he was sure we could find lodging. It was dark by that time and I asked if it

was only one road from there. He thought for a while and said: "no there is a fork in the road". Could we be sure to find the right one in the dark? He told the boy who stood there to follow us until we got to the right path.

We found Pine Valley Store. The man there said that he had no room, but an Icelandic family who lived close by, used to keep people overnight. The man could speak Danish, but not his wife. We came there and the wife was home alone, but she did understand that we wanted supper and a place to sleep. She seemed pleased with that. Shortly after her husband came home. When we were eating Sauer made the remark that the meat was from the oxen that his grandfather drove when he moved into Iowa. It was tough but we managed to get it down. At least it tasted good to a hungry person. We talked a while to the man and he told us that we were still 7 miles from Vasser. The house was an old log house and the room we got had 2 small beds, one of home-sawed lumber and one of iron. Both Sauer and I knew what that meant. If there were bugs at all, we would have them in the homemade bed. So Sauer rushed to the iron bed. I was not troubled with bugs, but the bed was too short for me, so it took some time before I went to sleep even though I was tired. When we awoke in the morning we saw that there was a heavy fog and it looked as if it might rain any time. So we did not waste any time to get started. We were told that after we crossed a swamp we would get on a sand-ridge that would go clear to Vasser, and the road would be good. We had rather heavy suitcases as we change of clothes along and raincoats strapped on the outside. In so far as we were prepared for rain, but, never-the-less, we would not enjoy a walk in the rain. We hoped that we would at least get across the swamp before it started to rain. There was a corduroy road across there. There were logs laid atop on the peat to form kind of a bridge. We walked fast and were glad for every minute that it did not rain. When we got close to Vasser the sun came out and we slacked up as we were told that the train came shortly after dinner, so we knew we had plenty of time. When we came to Vasser we found there were only a section house and a water tank. We went to the section house and asked if we could have dinner there. A girl, who we figured was the only person there, told us that we could have dinner, but we could not come into the house. As it was hot and still we were well satisfied to stay outside. The section man and his son came home for dinner and we were asked to come inside to eat. We had old, fat salt pork, potatoes, bread and butter and strong black tea. There we were told that the train stopped in Vasser only every other day, and as this was the day for the fast train, we could not get it there; we had to go to Spraiige. We asked how far and were told about 11 miles. We were also told that if we got thirsty we would find a spring under a trestle and a tin cup about half way to Spraiige (Pine Valley is Piney now and Spraiige is South Junction.).

The only way to walk was along the railroad. It went through heavy timber all the way and it was hard walking as it was too far to step on every other tie and too short to step on each one. We could not walk on the outside as the roadbed was narrow and the ditches along the road were filled with water. It was also unusually hot for that time of year, and not a breeze to cool us off. We also suffered from thirst. Besides, Sauer did not feel well as the dinner did not agree with him. He became crabby and wanted to rest. As the trees were not high enough to give us any shade it would not help much to sit in

the hot sun. The water in the ditches was not fit to drink, but I washed my mouth with it and that helped some, but Sauer refused to do that. The spring that we were to find was not in sight even though we were sure we were half ways. Finally, Sauer sat down and said he wanted to rest, but that did not help our thirst. I urged him on and he was really angry with me. As we walked on I noticed a rather marked track by animals across the road into the swamp north of us, and there were fresh marks from deer. I drew the conclusion that the reason for it must be water nearby. I told Sauer that he could rest as I investigated. It was not far before I came to a spring, but it was hard to get close enough to get the water where it came up from the ground. I called to Sauer and told him that there was a spring. I took my hat and stretched it out and filled the brim with water. It was cold and good, but for a while Sauer refused to drink out of a hat. But finally he became more sensible and we rested and had another drink before we went on. We took our time after that as we knew that the train would not come before 11 in the evening. We were also tired as the suitcases we carried were heavy. We agreed that we would take a room in the hotel so we could get out of our sweaty clothes. We simply took it for granted that Sprague would be a rather big place since the flyer would stop there. With pleasant thoughts we walked on. We finally found the spring that we were told of in Vasser; it was not over three miles from Sprague. When we came there we were greatly disappointed. The only buildings there were a little store, a section house and depot. The only place we could get anything to eat was at the section house. There was a young couple with one young boy. There was the same kind of salt pork that we had for dinner, but we had peach sauce and coffee. The young wife told us that she knew that Americans preferred coffee to tea. Sauer did not dare to eat the pork, but I had a hearty meal. After supper we had to sit outside. The boy came out with us and climbed up on a stump and said: "lift me down". I did so. I had hardly got him down before I heard the voice of the mother: "Jr., where is your manners? Climb up on that stump again". The boy did so, and the mother said: "now say, please lift me down". I did so, and the mother said: "now say thank you". Even if he grew up in the wilderness I am sure he would not lack in good manners. Later as we began to get cold we walked over to the depot, and taking it for granted that there would be a waiting room, as the building was rather large, but there was no waiting room. Beside the ticket office there was a customs office. As we were wet from sweat, we were miserably cold. Finally, the agent took pity on us and asked us into his office.

When we came to Warroad, Greften from Wannaska, his wife and sister who was visiting there, and a couple other men came on the train. They had come by stage from Roseau. We came to Baudette at midnight. A little way from the depot was a rather large tar-paper covered house with light in some windows, and in the woods we heard a crowd of women chattering and laughing. They wanted to make their presence known. We were taken to a small hotel owned by a family by the name of Thomas. It was the only hotel where the lobby was not a saloon. All the buildings were on the right-away of the railroad and no one had a deed on the lot they had built on. Outside there was heavy forest, mostly spruce. Across the Baudette River there were a few shanties where no life was visible in the daytime, and no one went there except in the night. Rev. Greften was not there. He was further up the river at Clementson, and was to come down that forenoon. It was windy and there were a few white-caps on the river, so Martin Greften was afraid that his brother would drown if he took out. I had seen much

worse storms on the Sogn fjord and knew that there was no danger. Rev. Grefthen came in the forenoon. There were absolutely no roads at that time so the only way to get around was by boat. We went down to Wabanica Creek where the circuit meeting was to be. There was a fairly large congregation and Rev. Grefthen had his home there. The main delicacy up there was fresh or smoked sturgeon. They were taken in nets and on lines strung across the river bottom with hooks close together. Its' main value, however, was the eggs used for caviar. Everyone, more or less, did fishing.

I did not go home with the others as I had promised Rev. Grefthen to stay over Sunday. He took me up the river to Clementson where I preached on a week-day while Rev. Grefthen visited a place further up called Silver Creek. Two Clementson brothers had homesteaded by Rapid River. The time I had to spare I used for fishing in Rapid River. They had a dugout canoe. A big cottonwood made into a canoe. It was a dangerous thing to use as it would tip so easily. I came close to landing in the river once when I was to take in a pickerel. Sunday we were in Rainy River City. We had services in the home of a family who had just moved up from Minneapolis. The reason for that move was that a Minneapolis lumber company was building a large saw-mill there. They had their logs in Minnesota, but there was duty on lumber sawed in the U.S. into Canada, but no duty on lumber from Canada to the U.S. So they wanted to have their mill in Canada. So there was a boom in Rainy River City and a few Minneapolis people came there. But interest in church was about zero. There was no trouble to go from Baudette to Rainy or from Rainy to Baudette. People walked across on the railroad bridge.

I have to go back to our circuit meeting in Wabanica. They had planned a picnic for our last day there, but the morning was cold and rainy, so that was cancelled. As we had both the wind and current against us up to Baudette, we hated to think of rowing the 7 miles. While we were preparing to go, Rev. Grefthen spied a sailboat coming up the river. He recognized the boat and decided to ask the man to take us with him to Baudette. That was granted. He had a load of fish, mostly smoked sturgeon. It stopped raining and the wind went down, so the boat hardly moved. We got hungry and it was a question what to eat. Grefthen's sister had a loaf of bread along planned for the picnic. So we bought some smoked sturgeon, which cost us only a few cents, and had bread and sturgeon for dinner. At least we got to Baudette without work.

That reminds me when we went on a Canadian boat called Kenora up to Clementson. It went from Kenora on Lake of the Woods up to Fort Frances. To begin with it took passengers on both sides of the river, but later the U.S. stopped it from landing on the U.S. side. That made the traffic unprofitable so the boat was laid up. The main reason for that action was that some men in Warroad got a bote, Knute Nelson, and induced the government to spend thousands of dollars to dredge the harbor in Warroad River. Knute Nelson was to run from Warroad to Baudette. That did not pay, so that was also laid up.

When we stopped in Pine Valley we were told that several Norwegian families lived there. I made arrangements to have services there on my way home. I met a man from that locality and got a ride from him. He charged me a dollar for the ride. I had the service in the home of a family by the name of

Madson. They were elderly people. There were only 3 or 4 Norwegian families up there, so there was not any hope of a congregation. Madson had formerly lived by Ross so he decided that he was going down there to visit. So I got a ride. His horse was old and poor, so it was a slow process. I am sure that I would have made better time walking, but to ride was easier. He tried to make the horse move a little faster and told it that if it did, it would get something to eat. If the horse had understood that, it might have made greater effort for that was one thing the horse surely needed. (This trip just related was not in '07, but in '05.)

Sauer and I made a trip to Baudette also in 1907, but then we drove north from Roseau to Sprague and left the team with a farmer half mile from the station. We came there in the early forenoon, and as we were loafing around the depot, we heard a whistle of a train. We knew it was a freight train, but if we could get on as far as Warroad, we would at least find a place to eat. I asked the agent if we could get a ticket to Warroad. He told me that it was not lawful to take passengers on freight trains in Canada. I said: "does the law say anything about stealing a ride on the freight?" He did not answer me on that, but went into the customs office. When he came back he whispered to me: "ask the conductor". I asked if we could have a ride to Warroad. He did not give me an answer so I told my company to be ready to jump on. After the conductor had talked to the agent he went by me and said: "all right". So we got into the caboose. When the conductor collected the fare he told us to keep out of the window. When the train stopped in the yard in Warroad he told us that we better walk into town. I do not know how they split the money. THAT IS THE CLOSEST I EVER CAME TO BEING A RAILROAD BUM.

In the fall of 1907 I stopped with Matt Johnson. Mrs. Johnson's brother was there, and he told me that he had a claim by the east river and that several new families had moved in. He said that the people out there wanted me to come and have services there. I had not been there the last years as I knew that one Rev. Hoyme from the Free Church practically lived there. So I told him that I thought there was no need for me to go out there. He said the people there did not want Hoyme; he did not do anything. He stayed for days with the family where I had that scanty lunch mentioned before, and they had a boy that ought to read for confirmation, but he did not do a thing for him. He also announced services one day that fall and the people sat waiting for him, but when he finally showed up, he told them to go home as it was too late for services. He had found a patch of blueberries that was so fine he could not leave them. I told him that I would come out there just on the condition that they would organize a congregation. He said that is what we want. I asked if he knew if the rest of them would agree. He said: "yes, they sent me here to see you about that". So I told him I would be there the next time I came to Wannaska.

I organized the congregation there in the winter of 1908. In winter it was only 8 miles out there, but there was a big swamp that no one attempted to cross in the summer. To drive around would be twice that distance. As the time was short between services in Wannaska and Pine Grove congregations, I could not make it that way; so I decided to try the winter road. There was lots of water in the swamp, but the horses did not go through the prairie grass sod. After a while I noticed that the tamarack stumps would rise by the horses. I was out on a floating bog. I did not know what would happen to me, but I

could not turn around so I had to go on. I was glad when I drew near the first poplar thicket, but that was really worse for me as there was no sod and the horses sank rather deep into the clay. I came to the school house where we were to have services from the south and noticed that all the people sat and looked north. I tied my team and walked over to the men and asked them what they were looking at. They turned to me with a surprised look and said: "we were looking for you, where did you go?"

The people wanted to build a house for the pastor to be ready early in the spring. In preparation for that a cellar hole had to be dug at once before the ground was frozen. Some stones needed to be hauled in for the house to rest on until a foundation could be placed under the house. Several members of the congregation asked if they could bring some lumber for the \$3.00 they were to pay. It would be better for the pastor as they would bring the lumber on the place for the same price as have to pay at the saw-mill. It would help them as they did not have many dollars to spare. They would bring anything he would need. It would benefit them and the pastor.

When spring came there was enough lumber on the place for a house 14 X 16 and 12 feet high. That was all he would need for the present, and it would become the kitchen when the time came that there could be an addition. All the cash that would be required was for windows and doors. Yes, it would take some labor, but labor was cheap. It should not take many days for a couple of men to erect that house. The carpenters complained that it was hard to work with raw lumber. But in a few days the house was completed with only outside walls. The pastor moved into the new house. He did not have much to put into the house. He had a bed, some second-hand chairs that a neighbor had bought in Thief River Falls for 25 cents apiece; a few plates, cups, knives and forks; and he'd had a table made. In order that he could have a place for the dishes, he built a cupboard in a corner of the house from scraps of lumber left over. He had a woman make a curtain for the shelf that hid the materials. He considered himself to have a comfortable house. At least he had a place where he could be by himself. He had a trunk that held all his earthly possessions; the bed clothes that he had used in the seminary, and the few books that he had missed so much. He would have peace to do some studying and properly prepare his sermons. One thing he was badly in need of was a stove. He had to do some cooking for himself. He could do some of that outside in the summer, but it was very inconvenient when it rained, and that was often. When winter came it would be impossible. He could order a stove from a store, but he was in debt for the bed, windows, door, and dishes. He did not like to buy more on credit even though the store-keeper had told him that he could get all he needed on time, as he knew that he would pay for it sometime. The pastor who served the congregation where his parents belonged was as poor as a church rat, but he paid his bills as far as he could.

Holum knew of his need and one day when he knew that the pastor was home, he came and told him that he knew where he could get a cheap stove. There was a widow who had a homestead a few miles north from him who was to move to Canada and had to sell her stove. He had looked at it and it was a good stove. They were glad to know that she was to leave the community, for she had a bad reputation. It was known that a bachelor, who had a homestead adjoining hers, spent the nights with her when he was home, and it was with him she was going to Canada. He could not possibly take her stove as he had

too much of a load as it was. But he had to go at once as they planned to leave the next morning. How much did they ask for the stove? It was just \$5.00. The pastor looked in his pocketbook. Yes, he had \$5.00. Holum would take his team and wagon and go along with him so he could get the stove. The deal was soon made. The people said that they hated to sell the good stove for that price; it was worth at least twice as much, but they could not take it along. They were glad to get that much out of it. The pastor noted that she was a fairly young woman, and good looking, but she had several children. He was surprised that the man was willing to take her along with him. However, he was glad to get her stove. Now he could do his cooking in the house in place of by a stump outside.

One thing he could not do was to bake bread; and bread he had to have. Bread was not to be had at the store; he had to find someone who would sell him bread. Even if he could have baked, it would not have been convenient. He was away from home so much that bread would spoil on him. He had a widow, Mrs. Vig, in the congregation who might be willing to sell him bread. The reason she was there was that her husband had become sick with T.B. and had taken a homestead with the idea that the climate would be good for him. But he passed away the first year they lived there. She decided to prove up the homestead, and lived alone with a little girl. The pastor went down to her and asked if he could buy a loaf of bread from her as he needed it. She said she thought it could be possible, but, she said: "you sit down and I will make you a cup of coffee". The pastor was glad to do that. As he waited for the coffee, he noticed that the little cabin was furnished better than the homes he had visited. There was an organ, so she was interested in music. There was a dresser and a revolver on top of it. He noted also that it was loaded. The pastor pointed to it and said: "why do you keep that there, you would not be able to use it anyway"? She said: "I sure would if I had need of it". The pastor said: " yes, I believe you would". She was prepared for any eventualities, and she might well be, for she was close to a mile away from her nearest neighbor.

As they were enjoying their coffee, the pastor remarked that he was surprised that she could stand to be alone there with the little girl. She said: "if someone told me three years ago that I should have to live alone here, I would have declared that I could never do that, but a person does not know what she can do before she has to". The pastor realized that, for he also had experienced the same thing. He also knew that she did not spend her time in idleness; he had heard that she spent a good deal of her time helping those who were in need, especially in the home of Ole Ellefson. She not only helped with the work, but also sewed clothes for the children. Ole Ellefson said she was rich; she had a house in the town where they came from and received \$12.00 a month from that. That seemed to him a great income, and he took it for granted that she would be willing to share her abundance with those who were in need. He claimed he was a socialist and the rich should help the poor. He did not seem to be especially grateful for the help his family received, but Mrs. Ellefson was grateful to her beyond expression. The members of the congregation also knew of her kindness and respected her for it. As her girl was alone so much with her mother and had no opportunity to play with other children, her actions and talk were more like a grown woman than a child. In fact, she did not care to play with those of her own age. She was not childish even though she was a child.

As for the pastor, he felt he was well situated. He had a stove and bread. He hated to cook, but found it necessary to do so. He could make coffee and fry ham, the only meat he could keep, and potatoes. It was only once a day that he took time for such elaborate meals. He made oatmeal for breakfast. Not that he cared much for oatmeal; he had been fed on that in school and was tired of it. But, in some way, what he made himself tasted a little different. It was not soggy; it was rather dry and raw. Supper was his poorest meal. He hated to leave his book or sermon for the hateful task of making food. He would think: when I have finished another chapter of the book or when he had finished the sermon, he would see what he could think of for supper. He did not feel hungry. When he then saw that it was midnight, or a little later, it was too late to do any cooking, so he would spread a slice of bread and take a gulp of water and was satisfied to go to bed. He did not suffer from malnutrition. The pastor found that when he covered the bread so that it would not dry out, it was molded when he came home. In order to prevent that he had to lay it out and let it dry. It would be too dry to cut, but it was better than when it molded.

The extensive field he had to cover kept him away from home. It would be at most two days a week. It gave him a chance to catch up on his sleep. Most homes that he visited would like to talk and would keep him up until the early morning hours. And at some places, the bugs would keep him awake the rest of the night. People were very good to him. He said that if the chickens would know what would happen to one of them they would hide from him. The only meat people had, as a rule, was meat salted down in the fall, and it tasted old. They, themselves, were tired of it and did not think they could give that to the pastor; so they had to sacrifice a rooster or an old hen. He had one consolation, and that was that the family, especially the children, enjoyed it more than he did. At times he would get venison, especially in the outskirts of a settlement, where deer and moose were abundant. They had a tendency to ignore hunting laws, and those who shot an animal would share it with their neighbors. No one would report it to the game warden.

He was well aware of the fact that the raw lumber in the walls of the house would dry out in the summer heat, but not fully aware of what effect it would have. That became apparent when fall and winter came. The boards had shrunk and the wind blew through the walls. Wood was plentiful so he did not worry about fuel. He could keep warm by staying close to the stove. It was disagreeable to get up in the morning when the fire was low and ice was on the water in the water pail. But that was also the case in other homes in which he slept. At least he kept warm in the bed, which was not always the case in other homes where there was a shortage of covers.

When it blew hard he could see the lamp flicker from the draft from the walls. He had his chair close to the stove so his back was warm, but his arms and hands were cold, as he read or wrote his sermons. He could also feel a cold draft from the floor creep up along his legs. However, he had felt the same draft in other homes, some even worse. He would not admit, even to himself, that his house was colder than other homes where even little children would get along with scanty clothes. He had to change his mind when the first bad snow storm came. The lamp did not only flicker, but it was nearly blown out again and again. That was not the worst of it; snow did not only blow in around the walls, but it also drifted in

on the table. It could not be seen, but the paper on the table became wet. To begin with, he could not understand why the walls would not swell up and be frosty as they were in other homes with a single wall. But he finally realized that his home was empty and cold most of the week and the inside heat was not enough to dampen the walls. He realized that he had to do something to make the house fit to live in. The best thing to do was to have the house plastered, but that was beyond his means. He would have to be satisfied by boarding it up on the inside. He would try to get lumber that was somewhat dry. That he would have to get from the store, as there was no dry lumber at the saw mill.

When the store-keeper found out what the boards were intended for, he told him that he ought to get some deafening felt and put on. Yes, he had some on hand. It was dark gray, about a quarter of an inch thick, and would not crack, even if the boards would shrink. Another advantage was that he could do most of the work alone. The felt was heavy and it would take strong paste to make it stay on. In order to be sure that the paste would hold, he bought a glue and mixed in the paste. It was sticky stuff and the felt was very heavy when it was soaked in with the paste, but it also stuck to the wall. He had to get help to get it on the ceiling because it was too heavy to handle alone. Now he had a really warm house, but it looked drab with that dark gray color all around. However, he would remedy that some day when he got the money he would get some nice wall paper and put on.

He could do, as he saw was done in one house he had visited, cover it with old newspaper, but it did not appeal to him, although it would make the house lighter. Besides, it would be a long time before he could accumulate paper enough to cover the walls. It was useless to have many papers, when he, at times, got his mail once in two weeks, and never more than once a week, and then hardly had time to read them. He was comfortable now and that was all he needed for the present.

There was just one disturbing element and that was the wolves. They howled some in the summer, but much more when it was cold. It was continuous through the night. They prowled around the house and howled as if disappointed by the fact that they found nothing to eat. He wondered if they could smell the fresh meat he had frozen in the cellar hole. He had fresh meat now, but could not keep potatoes. Regardless of where he might try to keep them, they would freeze solid. It was just when he came by the store on his way home that he could have potatoes with his meat. He had potatoes at least twice a day when he was away, so it did not matter much if he had none the days he was home. One thing he missed was milk. Even those who had plenty of milk seldom offered him milk. It was coffee several times a day some days when he visited several families. A few families had no milk as the couple of cows they had were dry. Sometimes he felt sorry for the poor homesteader; sometimes partly provoked. He felt especially tempted to be provoked when he visited a large family that, by all appearances, was very hard up. They were all poorly dressed and the bed clothes on the bed were ragged. They were insistent that he should have lunch. He noticed that the oldest boy was asked to run over to a neighbor to get a cup of milk for the coffee. They had canned blueberries they had picked in the fall without sugar, and now the mother hunted up a few pieces of loaf sugar that she hid away and

melted them in a little hot water in order that the pastor should not have to eat sauce without sugar in it. He had told them that he was not in need of lunch, as he had lunch just before he came there. In fact, he would rather not have coffee again, but since he was so kind to call on them, he surely had to have a cup of coffee. He also knew that he could not refuse, that would cause offence. They would draw the conclusion that he was too proud to have lunch with them. It was queer how much it meant to some poor people that the pastor would sit down and share a cup of coffee with them. He was made fully aware of that. He visited an elderly couple who had lately come from the old country. They had a small log house. Everything was clean and neat. He was listening to the man telling about the condition where he came from while the wife was silent and just stood and waited for a chance to say some words. Finally, it came hesitatingly, and as if what she was about to say, may be something inappropriate: will the pastor be so kind to have a cup of coffee with us? He said: "I am not just in need of coffee, I have lately had my dinner, but surely I will take a cup of coffee if she so desired". It paid off; she told people what wonderful, nice man Pastor Johnson was, he was even willing to sit down and have coffee with them. Yes, it was kind of dangerous to refuse coffee even though they could hardly afford it and he was not in need of it. It might do to refuse that hospitality with people well off, but not with the very poor. He had to accept the hospitality regardless how he felt about it. He had to admit that the people were kind-hearted and meant well. In their poverty and loneliness they were so happy to have the pastor call on them; it brought some cheer and sunlight into their dreary lives. What so many of them missed most of all was the church where they had found so much comfort and brought back memories of happier days.

A SCHOOL PICNIC

The word picnic has a fascinating influence on most people. Just mention "picnic" and they are enthusiastic about it. A few cannot understand why people should want a picnic. They would rather eat at the table in comfort than outside among flies and mosquitoes. They would rather sit on a chair than on the ground. Their memories may have something to do with it. Some just remember the picnic when a shower of rain had come just as they were ready to eat and they had to run for shelter, and wait for the rain to stop. Some of the food would be soggy, and the coffee lukewarm; or they think of the flies on the cake and the ants crawling over the bread. Others just love to eat outside even though they have to chase flies and swallow a few ants. They will stand anything just so they can go to a picnic.

Some have picnics just for the fun of it; others for monetary consideration. That was the case down at Klemton. You may wonder why a community would have come by such a name. In this case, the explanation was quite simple, just so you had knowledge of past years. Some years past a man with that name had a saw mill there. So they talked about Klemton, and it came to include the territory surrounding it. Now the saw mill was removed as all timber fit for lumber was depleted. Just a log hut with a sagging roof was left, but new huts were erected all around it. A large group from central Minnesota was to move in. In a way they were all related, if not by blood, by marriage. They all had the same reason for this move from a prosperous community into the wilderness; the little they ever had had gone down the men's throats. They loved liquor. The very first summer they lived there, one of them, Gulshovd, lost his wife. Naturally they wanted a Christian funeral for her, so they went to get

ahold of Pastor Johnson. They found him and gave him as much information as was possible in regard to the place. Johnson drove into the place at the time set. The people were gathered around the new dug grave. Gulshovd, sad and sorrowful, sat by himself; the men had gathered to the right and the women to the left. Johnson thought the men had a peculiar look, but just why, he did not understand. The pastor asked if they had any hymn. When the pastor announced the number of the hymn, a man stepped up beside him and said: "I will help the pastor to sing; I was a preceptor in the congregation down below". The pastor was grateful for the help offered, but was in for a sad surprise. There was a strong odor of liquor, and the man could not sing. The pastor realized the reason for their strange look; they were all drunk. They swayed when they walked. He became afraid that they might follow the home made coffin into the grave, but they managed to keep their balance.

This does not belong to the picnic, but is a diversion as a background for the memorable picnic. They had organized a school district and there was a need of money both for a school house and equipment. In order to raise money the men decided on a picnic. They would ask the women to sell lunch, and they would have a lemonade stand. There was a moment of silence and some whispering among some of the men. Finally, Mohaug, the treasurer of the district, spoke up. Lemonade is all right for children, but to me it just sweetened water. I move that we get a couple kegs of beer, and sell beer; we will make more money that way. The motion was seconded and unanimously carried.

They considered it prudent not to tell their wives anything about the beer stand. They just told them that they would have a picnic to raise money for the school and asked them to serve lunch, and they would also have a lemonade stand. The women agreed. It would not require any outlay of money. They would pay for coffee, lemons and sugar out of the proceeds. It would be fine to come together and visit around the coffee table, and they surely needed a school for the children. They spread the news around that there was to be a picnic and they had promised all that they would have a good time.

They had some worry about the weather, but it turned out to be an ideal June day; just warm enough to enjoy the outdoors. People came not only from the district, but several who could be called outsiders. It was a break in their monotonous life, and a chance to associate with and get acquainted with other people. The women had charge of the lunch table and the lemonade stand. McDougal had volunteered to take charge of the beer stand. At the noon-hour there was brisk business at the lunch table, but proved to be a slack in the afternoon. The children gathered around the lemonade stand, but the nickels and dimes were soon expended. Most of the men crowded around the beer stand. With a smile on his face, McDougal cried out: "come men, have a glass of ice cold beer". Then the men said: "where is your ice, McDougal, your beer is lukewarm". McDougal answered: "lukewarm beer is at least better than no beer". Most of the men agreed to that and they felt they could drink with good conscience; the money was to be used for a good cause.

The sun was low and the kegs were empty so it was time to go home. The women had gathered their dishes and the remnants of the lunch. They had also disposed free to the children the lemonade that was left, rather than spill it on the ground. The money taken in was handed over to Mohaug. Not so,

said Mr. McDougal; he put the money into his pocket, gathered up his family and drove home. No one made any objection to that, even though some thought that he too should have made an account of the money taken in. But they considered him an honest man, and took it for granted that he would, in due time, hand over the money. However, no money came from McDougal. One day Mohaug met him and asked: "how much money did we take in on the beer stand"? McDougal said he did not remember just how much it was. Mohaug did not have the nerve to ask him to bring it to him. Time went and finally, Mohaug told him that they needed the money. McDougal gave an evasive answer. The school board understood that McDougal had no intention to pay over the money taken in. They discussed ways and means to get the money from him, and as a last resort, they would write to the superintendent of school and get his help. They informed the superintendent about the picnic, and that Mr. McDougal had neglected to pay over what they had taken in for the sale of beer. What would he advise them to do about it? The clerk, Svemoen, anxiously waited for instruction from the superintendent. When it came, it gave him a shock. It contained just one short line: "be sure to pay for the beer". When Svemoen read the letter received from the superintendent to the other members of the school board Mohaug said: "the dirty crook; he ought to be ashamed of himself, who would think that he would steal money from the school district". But McDougal did not feel ashamed; he met them with a smile; he had been smart enough to fool them. He was not concerned regarding the money problem of the school district. That would have to be taken care of in a more legitimate way.

There was to be a wedding. At the time the Lewis family settled, John was too young to file on a homestead. By this time the land in the immediate neighborhood was settled on, but there was a quarter section of land down towards Klemton that was vacant. It was not the most desirable piece of land as some of it went into a tamarack and cedar swamp. That was the reason it had not been taken. He was not yet of age, but would be in October. As no one outside the family knew just how old he was, they took it for granted that, if they built a house on it, no one would file on it before that time. It had one advantage; he would be as close to the rest of the family as he could be now. When he became of age he filed on it and it was legally his. In order that he could call it his home, he had to sleep there some nights. In order that he could do that when winter came, he had to have some heat in the house; he had to find a stove. He hunted around to see what he could find. In one store he found a stove that was traded in. It had a cracked oven door, and for that reason, was very cheap. He considered it just fine for him. It would not only serve as a heater; he could also do some cooking on it. He never thought of baking. So the deal was made. He had no chimney in the house so he had to have stove pipes enough to reach through the roof. That is what most of them had. It was easy to find lime and still more so to find some brick. There was a man out by Wanda who made lime from limestone, but it took him 36 hours of continual firing, and it was not very often he would fire his kiln. What he made was soon taken.

John had now a home to offer Kari Lillestrand, and love had overcome her fear of marriage, and she had promised to be his wife. The Lewis and Lillestrand families were well pleased by it. They had been friends and now they would also come into relationship with each other. The date for the wedding was set for the second Sunday in January. That would be a most convenient date for the pastor, as he would

have services in the congregation in the afternoon that date. The wedding was to be in the evening. In order that no one should feel slighted; they invited all members of the congregation. It was not a large congregation, neither was Lillestrand's house. It was a frame house 18 X 24, with a single wall. The kitchen extended from wall to wall in the west end, and a stairway led up to a small attic. The east end was divided into two bedrooms. They had removed the bed from the north bedroom in order to improvise a small altar where the wedding ceremony should take place, and also to provide more room for the guests.

The sun was low in the west as the people departed from Holum, where the services were held. It was just a yellow disk in the frosty air. The women and children covered themselves in gray shawls and quilts as they huddled together in the hay that covered the floor of the sleigh box. The man stood in front with a woolen scarf tied outside of the collar of the sheep lined coat, and turned his face away from the biting northwest wind. Lillestrand's house was soon filled to its utmost capacity. Some of the children were sent up in the attic; some hung precariously in the stairway. The women deposited their coats on the bed. As many as found room, remained there, and the rest gathered in the kitchen. Some were around the stove where a roast was in the oven and potatoes and coffee pots boiled on top. A few boys tarried outside to take care of the pastor's horses when he came.

The men were seated on a plank covered with quilts along the north wall. Chairs were provided for the pastor and the bridal party along the south wall. The pastor noticed that the bride wore the same dress she had worn at services, a dark blue woolen dress. The bridegroom's suit was dark gray, and it was not new. He had, however, a new tie and shoes. There was no wedding march or no special music, but they had their hymn books, and an appropriate hymn was sung by the people present, which added to the solemnity of the service. A Christian marriage was to them a sacred moment. Not a disturbing sound was heard until the pastor had pronounced the benediction. Then some of the men got their pipes out of their pockets again while the women were busy to get the food on the table in the kitchen.

The pastor was placed at the head of the table and on his right, the bridal party, to the left, the parents of the bride and groom. Some of the older people filled the remaining chairs. There was no fancy wedding cake, but cakes nicely iced, some brought by the wedding guests. There was roast beef, potatoes, gravy, bread and butter, coffee and cake. Good food for hungry people. When the pastor had given thanks to God for the food they had partaken of, most of the women became busy. Some cleared the tables, others washed dishes and others prepared the table for a new setting. It became unbearably hot in the kitchen. The kerosene lamp became dim as there was a lack of oxygen in the air. They tried to open a window but it was frozen solid. The only thing that could be opened was the door. That sent in a flood of cold air that turned to vapor as it met the hot, moist air in the kitchen. They all tried to avoid the icy blast. When the flame in the lamp became bright the door was closed until it became necessary to bring in fresh air. The water began to drip from the north wall in the kitchen. In the other rooms the walls were covered with ice. There was a cloud of smoke from the men's pipes and a strong odor of "True smoke smoking tobacco" that was the favorite among the men. They were happy and contented in spite of the cold draft from the walls. They wondered how cold it might be outside. The

pastor informed them that it was -42 in Pelan that morning, and it was not any warmer now.

The people were in no hurry to go home. They enjoyed visiting with each other. The only exception was the pastor. He was tired. He had been on the go since five in the morning. He had driven close to 40 miles in the cold, and two services before the wedding. He asked the boys if they would be so kind as to hitch up his team; he would like to go home. That seemed to come as a surprise. They said that they had planned that he should stay overnight. The boys had unharnessed the horses, watered and fed them. They said it was no sense in him going home, especially now since he would have a funeral in the morning and would have to come back practically the same road. It would just be so much extra driving. They would vacate the bedroom where the bed was, as the people could be in the kitchen now when supper was over. The pastor did not fancy the idea, but he had to give in to the general urging. The bedroom was his and he could go to bed. The room was not so cold just then, but the air was foul and damp, and he knew it would be very cold when the door would be shut. Never-the-less, he was glad to get to bed, and he was so tired that he knew he could sleep just so the people would not talk too loud. The murmur from voices in the adjoining room kept him awake for a while, but finally he went to sleep, and he did not know when the wedding was over. It was daylight when he awoke and found frost on the bedclothes from his breath. He shivered from cold as he hurried to get into his clothes. He was anxious to get into the kitchen where he knew it would be somewhat warm as he heard people talking and moving around. He also felt sluggish and felt the need of a dash of cold water on his face to quicken him.

The tin wash basin was on a small bench close by the door. Mrs. Lillestrand came with the water kettle to give him warm water to wash in. She was surprised to hear that he wanted to wash in cold water, but permitted him to have his way. The Lillestrand boys just stood and laughed when they saw how generously he spilled cold water to his face and neck. That was a thing they had never done, and they could not understand why the pastor would do so. He told them that he found he could stand the cold on his face better when he washed in cold water. Whether the family had slept or not, he did not know. They told him that the bridal couple had left in the early morning on their wedding trip out to John's cabin down in the woods.

The night was cold and clear. There was no moon, but the stars shone brightly and the northern lights played on the heaven in brilliant colors and lighted up the night. They huddled together in the homemade sleigh under the homemade sheep robe to keep warm. They were tired and sleepy, but the howling of the wolves, that seemed to be all around them, kept them awake. The barking of the wolves was not so bad; they were used to that, but that cold night there was mingled in with it the most blood curling cry. At times it sounded as if a child was crying, and then it turned into something that sounded as a cry of a person in intense pain. Kari shivered as she listened to it and asked John: "what is that"? He said: "people say it is a lynx, the fiercest animal in the woods".

When they came to the cabin, John said: "I hope it is not too cold inside. I had it warm when I left the house last evening, and I put as large pieces of wood I could get into the stove, so there still should be

some fire left". He sent Kari into the house while he took care of the horses. He did not even know that he was supposed to carry the bride over the threshold of her new home. She found the house very cold even though there were a few live coals in the ashes. She piled in wood, but it took some time before it started to burn. Her hands were cold even though she had home knit woolen mittens on. She took them off and held her hands over the stove in the hope that there would be some heat from it, but when she felt no heat, she put them on again. Even though it was not warmer by the stove than in the rest of the house she could not induce herself to go away from it. There she stood when John came in. He looked into the stove and said: "it will soon warm up now, it has started to burn". He took his arm around Kari and she leaned her head against his shoulders as they stood in silence and waited for the house to get warm. They could feel a little heat on their faces, but it was as though it had no effect on the air in the house.

Finally John said: "it is not so bad now, I cannot see my breath anymore", and he removed his overshoes and overcoat, but Kari still hesitated to leave the stove. She felt chilled to the bones, but finally she had to undress and seek the warmth of the bed. They slept the blissful sleep of youth, and the sun was shining when they awoke. It was cold in the house and it was hateful to leave the warm bed, but John knew that it would not be any warmer by waiting. He had to get up and get the fire going. He was not surprised to find ice in the water-pail when he went to get water in the teakettle for coffee. That was usual in cold weather. He told Kari that she would have to get up too if they should go to the funeral. She thought they should go. On their way home they could go by her home and get her few belongings; some of her clothes, a couple of quilts her mother had helped her to make, and their wedding gifts. They were in need of dishes and kitchen-ware, as John did not have much of those things.

They were too happy to feel much sadness as they went to the house of sorrow, but they could not be entirely free from a feeling of the insecurity of life even if they did not talk about it. Death could come to the young as well as to the old. Still, death seemed so far away when a person is young. Even if it came to others, it seemed impossible that it would come to them. They felt secure in their youth.

Yes, death had come to a young girl, a daughter of a widow who was a close neighbor to Lillestrand. It was a case when a person could be both sad and glad. She had been confined to her bed for several months with T. B. The pastor wondered too if there really would be any sadness at that funeral. His thoughts went back over his past experiences with that girl and her mother. He had her mother early in his ministry among them, but for some time he had not known that she had a grown up daughter. She had been working in Bender, keeping house for a saloon keeper who was a widower. It was stated to him that his wife had died from the same disease, and also a girl who worked for him before Miss Haldorson began to work there. Ole Olson, who had given the pastor this information, hinted that she might not have been so innocent; at least the pastor ought to go and see her. The pastor did not judge the girl by this insinuation as he had become aware of the fact that Olson would paint others as dark as he could in order that he could shine brighter on the dark background. He felt it as his duty, however, to visit the girl. She was not at home with her mother. One reason for that was that they did not get along well with each other. Another reason was that an elderly girl had a homestead a couple of miles away

from Haldorson and was to spend some time there during the summer. She had asked the ailing girl to stay with her as she did not care to stay alone in her shack out in the brush far away from people.

Now she had left and Miss Haroldson was there alone as far as they knew. This was the previous fall. There was a heavy snowfall in November that year, and it was very cold for that time of the year. He was informed where he could find the nearest neighbor to the shack where the girl was supposed to be. When he inquired there how he could find the place, he was told that there was no road in there, but they could see some smoke over the willow brush; that was the place. As the willow brush was not any higher, so he could drive to it, so he headed in the direction of the smoke. When he came there, there was no sign of life except the smoke from the stove pipe. He tied his horses to some willow bushes and went and knocked on the door. It was opened very carefully and very little, and a young girl peeked out at him. As she saw him, a smile came to her face and she opened the door. That girl he knew to be the sister; she had been at services a few times with her mother. The sick girl lay with her face toward the wall. When he spoke to her she did not turn her face or give any answer. He told her that he was the pastor in order that she should not have any fear of the strange man who had come into the house. No answer to that. He found a chair and sat down by the bed and asked how she was, but there was no answer to that. He could not induce her to answer any question or to turn her face towards him. He felt helpless. The only thing he could do was to read some word of God and pray for her. He pitied both her and her sister, about 12 years old, he judged, left alone there out in the brush. As he was ready to leave he asked if there was not anything he could do for them. He would be glad to help. Then the sick girl turned a little and said: "I wish you would get me some fresh water, the water we have is so warm and stale, and my sister cannot get any". Is there a well on the place asked the pastor? Yes, there is a well the little girl said, I will show you where it is. There was a long wooden pole out in the snow by the well. He took the pail and went for the well. It was covered with snow, but he managed to get the cover off. There was no rope. In place of a rope, they used the long heavy pole. A cleat was nailed to the butt end to hang the pail on. It had to be made so that the end of the pole would slip over the edge of the pail and extend so far up that the pail would not slip off when it was dipped in the water. The pole had to be lifted out with out-stretched arms. It was not a thing that could be handled by a child. When the pastor brought the pail of water he asked: "is there anything more I can help you with"? No thank you, that is all. Then the pastor said: "you cannot stay here alone; do you not like to go home"? She did not answer.

The pastor felt that he hadn't accomplished much, but at least he felt that he had gotten acquainted with her, and perhaps, won her good will. Perhaps her resistance was caused by timidity or fear that he would speak harshly to her. What he had to do now was go and speak to her mother. This was an impossible situation. Those girls could not remain there alone.

Mrs. Haldorson gave him a rather cold reception. She was a big strong woman, who seemed to be devoid of sympathy. When he told her that he just came from her girls and that it was impossible to leave them there alone, she became provoked. She said: "it is her own fault; she wanted to stay out there". Besides, she did not know where she could keep the sick girl. The pastor said: "have you

thought what might happen to them if we should get another snowstorm? You would have to face the consequences". There was no response. Perhaps she was hardened by the hardships of life. Her husband had not been the best kind of a man. She had struggled with poverty all her life. They had hoped to better their condition by settling on this homestead, and the first year they were there her husband had passed away, and she was left alone. Her oldest son was a bad character and caused her a lot of grief. Now she should have the sick daughter on her hands. When the burdens of life become so heavy that it seems more than they can carry, it is easy to become bitter. Self-pity takes the place of pity for others, even a child of their own. The pastor did not know if he had accomplished anything; at least he had no promise that she would take her home. He could only pray that God would soften her mother's heart. That prayer was heard. She had taken her girl home. The pastor had visited them several times, and the relationship between mother and daughter seemed to be natural. She gave her as good care as she was able to do. The sick girl became friendly and was glad to see him. The last time he had visited her she thanked him for his kindness and the comfort he had given her. No one can comfort me as you can, she said. He did not realize then that it would be her last word to him, even though he knew that the end was not far away. This he had kept to himself, but it all came back to him that cold morning as he was on his way to the funeral.

Would there be sadness or gladness in that home that morning? There might be reason for both. That would be what he would stress in his sermon. Sadness because a dear one had passed away and gladness because they could know she entered a better home than any that could be provided for her on earth. The house was crowded. The same people who, the evening before, had gathered at Lillestrand's to share in the happiness of the young couple, and wish for them a happy future, were there to express their sympathy for a family in sorrow. Both were equally sincere.

The homemade coffin was open and placed by the south wall under the window where a ray of sun shone on the white face, cold in death. She was dressed in her best, which in this case, was not the best. Some of the women wiped a tear out of their eyes as they looked at her. The pastor looked at Mrs. Haldorson. There was an expression of tender sadness and the tears she shed were not forced. Mother love had wiped out all bitterness from her heart; a tender cord was broken. Yes, he could honestly speak of sadness and gladness. Sadness because death removed a loved one out from the family circle, and gladness in the hope of a victorious resurrection through faith in Jesus Christ, and a reunion in the heavenly home that God had prepared for his children. When the service was over, the cover for the coffin was laid on and nailed down in preparation for her final resting place in the cemetery.

Lillestrands decided that they would not go to the cemetery which was several miles away. They would go home and help Kari and John pack their things. When they came there Mrs. Lillestrand said: "John, you better put your team into the stable, and stay awhile. It is time for a little lunch". When lunch was served they tarried at the table. No one seemed to dare to move. There was a touch of sadness there too. Kari was a little sad. Last night there had been no time for serious reflections. Now when just the family was gathered, she thought of the fact that this home, which was filled with so many happy

Memories, was no longer her home. The Lillestrands family would change because a beloved daughter was to step out of the family circle and leave for her own home. The relationship would from now on be a little different. But the time came, all too fast, that the young people would have to gather their things and leave. When Kari waved her hand as they drove out of the yard, Mrs. Lillestrand wiped a tear from her eye. She knew that Kari was happy, and she wanted her to be, but, never-the-less, felt a little sad. She would miss her in the home, but she also wondered what life had in store for her. It was a good thing that youth did not fully realize the trials of life. It would dampen their joys and cast a dark shadow over their hopes. She thought of the happy dreams she, as a bride, entertained for the future; dreams that had never become a reality, and the many unexpected disappointments that had come to her.

A GRUESOME DISCOVERY

A long and cold winter creates a strong longing for spring, but spring is frequently slow in coming in earnest. John Lewis was anxiously waiting for an early spring; there was so much work he should do. Some warm days in the last days of March gave him some hope that it was the beginning of spring, but it turned out to be just a prelude for another snowstorm and wintry weather. April came with more snow. John became impatient. It seemed as winter would last forever. However, warmer weather came and the snow turned to water. Spring seemed to be in the air, and John heard some blackbirds twitting in the treetops. Even the night was mild and in the morning he heard another bird singing in the clearing by the house. He thought he knew the voice and looked to see from whence it came. He saw the light brown bird. He turned and said to Kari: "it is spring, the meadowlark is singing". However, when evening came, it turned colder and dark clouds again covered the heavens. In the morning wet snow was falling. It was a dark and dreary day. They felt depressed. Kari stood by the window and looked at the snow-covered brush. She spied the meadowlark under a bush close to the house. It looked wet and cold and she felt sorry for the bird. She involuntarily gave expression for her thought: "I wish he would have sense enough to come into the house where it could be warm, and we would not hurt it". What are you talking about, John asked. I am talking about the meadowlark. It must be cold sitting there in the wet snow. It is afraid of us and does not know that we would not hurt it. At least we are dry and warm.

However, God's promises always prove to be true; "Seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter shall not cease". Spring came and the ground dried. John decided he was going to burn the old grass in the edge of the swamp. It was safe; the winter road was to the south and the swamp to the east. In the swamp there was still water to the west where he had cut hay. He would start the fire along the road and watch that it would not go across it. He got the fire going and took a wad of grass and walked backward and spread the fire a little distance away from the road. He stumbled in something and fell backward. He looked to see what he stumbled in and was horrified to see that it was a dead man. The head was in a canvas suitcase covered with blood. It was evident that he had been shot in the head. It seemed that the head had been placed in the suitcase in order not to leave a trail of blood when he had been dragged off the road. John had seen a spot of blood in the snow

on the road, but had just taken it for granted that some animal had been shot there. He felt a shiver go through him. He left the fire and walked home. When he came into the house Kari looked at him and saw that his face was white and she asked him: "what is the matter; are you sick or have you hurt yourself"? John answered: "I found a dead man out in the brush by the swamp". A dead man, that is awful, what are you going to do asked Kari. I am going up to Father. Kari said: "I am going with you; I do not want to stay here alone".

Martin Lewis was busy outside when he saw John and Kari drive in on the yard. He knew that they would not be there unless something was wrong. He walked over and asked them what was wrong. John said: "I found a dead man in the brush out by the cedar swamp". "A dead man; that is awful" said Martin. Did you know him? No, I think it is a stranger. It must be said Martin, we have not heard of anyone missing. Martin looked down for a while and finally said: "we have to notify the authorities about it. You, Kari better stay here while we are away; I suppose you do not care to go home alone".

Kari entered the house, and her mother-in-law had noticed their agitation and asked anxiously: "what has happened"? When Kari told her it was as a dark cloud hung over them. If they were told that a person had passed away it would not have affected them so much especially when it was someone they did not know, but murder, death by violence, has a far different effect on the mind. It is a disregard for the sacredness of human life, a trespass against the law of man and the law of God. It gives to a person a feeling of dread, as if one's own life is in danger. They could not talk about the indifferent things, even when they tried; it did not seem natural. Time dragged as they waited for the men to return even though they knew they would not be home before evening came. It was late before they drove into the yard. John and Kari did not care to go home. They would stay overnight. It was not a fear of a dead man, but of an unknown murderer.

THE HUNT FOR THE MURDERER

Early the next morning the sheriff and the coroner came to Lewis and asked John to go with them and show them where the dead man was. They also asked Martin to go with them. They might want a witness in regard to their finding. They found that he had been dead for some time, but also that crime had been committed sometime during the winter. There was still some ice under the body. They asked John if he could remember when he first had noticed the blood spot on the road. He said that he could not remember, but it was, perhaps, sometime in February. They also asked Martin and John to look closely to make sure that they had not seen the man before. They also asked if they had heard of any man who may have disappeared. To both questions, there was an emphatic NO.

They looked over the surroundings and sought to reconstruct the crime. The man had been shot in the back of the head at fairly close range. He must not have been aware of the fact that he was followed. It was not likely that he had been traveling eastward, as it was open to the west. To the east was a sharp turn in the road and the woods obstructed the view from the east. From that direction a person could have sneaked up on him without notice. The motive must have been robbery, as the contents of the

suitcase were gone and no money was found in his pockets. With these facts established, the sheriff told John and Martin that there was no further need of them that day. They might find it necessary to have them bury the body, but they might also take the body to the county seat and bury it there.

The sheriff said he would go out to Wanda and see what he could find out there. He went into the little store there and found a few men gathered. The men were talking politics. One man, rather young, was voluble in condemning the capitalists who were the cause of their poverty, and extolling the merits of socialism. However, conditions could and would be changed when people woke up and saw the truth, but meanwhile they had to do as Jesus said: "excuse them for they did not know what they do". It was evident that he knew all the answers; if people just knew as much as he did, conditions would be changed in a hurry. How had he become so wise? His father had planned to make him a preacher and sent him to an academy one winter, and in that time, he absorbed all wisdom, and came home to preach socialism in place of capitalism. He did not have any respect for preachers; they were servants of the capitalists, they just told people to be satisfied with the present conditions, and comforted them with the hope of a better life to come. The fact was that they were just preaching for the sake of money just so they could get our money; they don't care if our souls go to hell. They really should know better, but we have to excuse them for they know not what they do. They are too lazy to make a living by hard work.

The sheriff had a big smile on his face. He was a Republican. So also was Leland, the owner of the store. Leland said that he did not think that Pastor Johnson was lazy. I told him that you went around saying that he preached because he was too lazy to work; and he said: "I will leave a challenge; I will work side by side with any socialist, or any other man, for that matter, on any hard work and do more in a day than any of them." Do you accept this challenge? There was no answer. Most of the men laughed. Langedahl spoke up and said: "no, Johnson is not lazy, and he strong as a horse. One day last winter he came to my place. He drove the horses ahead of him and pulled the sleigh himself. He told me that the snow was so deep out in the swamp that he could not see the stumps; one had caught the sleigh, the double tree had broken and the horses had run away for a distance. He asked if he could get a piece of a 2 X 4, and if I had tools so he could make a new double tree. It did not take him very long before he had one made."

There was a pause, and the sheriff turned to Leland and asked if there had been any strangers around during the winter. There was no immediate answer. The men looked at each other and wondered what the sheriff was after. After a while Leland said: "yes, there were a couple of strangers around earlier in the winter. One of them said he was a Canadian, was in the store not long ago". One of the men said that the other fellow left sometime during the winter. He said he was going to Thief River Falls. The sheriff asked what kind of men they were. They did not know. What were they doing? Not much of anything. They stayed most of the time with Huslien, a bachelor who lived a couple of miles south. Do any of you have any idea of when the man left? There was a murmur of no; but Langedahl said that it was near the middle of February. We had a few days of mild weather then, and as I was hauling logs to the sawmill, I met a fellow. I asked him where he was going and he was on his way to Thief River. The

sheriff said: "I doubt he made it that far, we have found a stranger murdered in the swamp west of here." The men looked at each other in silence. The sheriff left. Langedahl looked through the window in the door and said: "he is going south to Huslien". Leland said: "he will find the murderer even if he has left the country". Leland remembered that the Canadian had never paid for anything they had bought; it was always the other fellow, but after the other fellow had left, he had some money. Huslien was surprised to see the sheriff drive into his yard. If it had been the game warden he would have felt uneasy. He had some venison hidden in the snow bank of the house. He had not shot the deer, but he could not prove that. He felt a sense of relief when the sheriff asked him if any strangers had been with him sometime during the winter. He readily admitted that a couple of men had stayed with him for some time. What were their names? He did not know; they called each other Tom and Bill. Who was Tom? Well, Tom said he was from Canada. Where did the other fellow, called Bill, come from? He never told me where he came from. Where had they met? Huslien did not know. Why were they there? Well, Bill was looking for a homestead, but did not like the country. Tom did not seem to have anything in mind. He was more or less of a bum. He had poor clothes and had no money. It was Bill who paid for some grub. He also used Bill's jacket when he went out alone. Were they still around? Not Bill, he left for Thief River sometime during winter; I cannot remember just when it was. It most likely was some day in February. We had a few days of nice weather and Bill said it would be fine walking, and he started out for Thief River. Did Tom go with him? No, shortly after Bill left, he asked if he could borrow my shotgun and get a few shells; he liked to go out hunting. I remember that as he had such a peculiar laugh when he asked for the gun. Had he ever borrowed the gun before? Huslien felt uneasy; he thought of the deer, yes a few times. Had Tom shot anything? When he came back he laughed and said he had shot a rabbit, but at such close range, he shot it all to pieces, so it was not worth taking home. Did you see if Tom had any of Bill's things, such as clothes, after Bill left? Yes, he had. I asked him why he had Bill's jacket, when he came home, and he said that Bill had given it to him, because he had too much to carry, and he did not need it where he was going. Again he laughed. Yes, he said Bill had also given him some money. Had Tom been around lately? Yes, Huslien had seen him in Wanda. He had not been much at his place since Bill left. He did not like that person, and let him understand that he did not care to have him around.

The sheriff thanked him for the information, and said: "Tom is the man I want. I am quite sure Bill never came to Thief River. We have found a man out in the swamp some distance west of here who was shot in the head with a shot gun at close range. His suitcase was empty and so were his pockets. That might be the rabbit Tom shot". Huslien turned pale. Had his gun been used for murder? He could not doubt it. The evidence pointed clearly in that direction.

When the sheriff had left Huslien could not think of anything but the murder. He felt in some way partly guilty. He had the habit, as most people have who live alone, to talk to himself. I should not have let him take my gun, but such a thing that he would kill Bill never entered my mind. Even when I saw him in Bill's jacket I never thought that he had murdered him. Tom made it sound so reasonable. I believed the story he told. I should not have let him borrow the gun and given him shells. If I had not, Bill would

be alive. Over and over again: "I should not have let him have the gun". He tried to get rid of the feeling of guilt, but he could excuse himself; I never thought of such a thing. He went to bed early. He wanted to find peace for his mind in sleep, but he could not sleep. He saw Tom walking down the road that Bill had taken. When he was out of sight he started running until he saw Bill ahead of him. He followed him at a distance. Bill was unaware of the danger and walked without looking back, but Tom was on the alert. If he should see Bill look back he would just drop down in the willow brush. He knew the place where he could surprise him; the swamp where there was a sharp turn in the road. Just before he came there it was an open space. When Bill disappeared behind the spruce and cedars, Tom started to run with the gun held before him ready to fire as soon as he came close to him. It worked out just as he had planned. When he came to the turn in the road, Bill was just ahead of him. He raised the gun and fired. Bill fell without a sound. Tom rushed to empty the suitcase, and threw the contents into the brush. He put the head into the suitcase and dragged the body out of the road. He had to hurry; someone might come even if it were not likely. When he had him there, he felt safe. He could hide if necessary. He took a rest. He went through his pockets and found his billfold; took the clothes he wanted, and threw the rest further into the swamp. It was all so clear in Huslien's imagination as if he had been present and seen it all. He went over and over it again and said: "I should not have let him use my gun". He went to sleep, but woke in terror; he dreamt that Tom stood there with the gun ready to shoot him.

The sheriff did not feel easy about it. Tom could have gone back to Canada, and if so, it would be like looking for a needle in a haystack. All he could get was a description of the man and contact the authorities in Canada. They had the saying that the Mounties always got their man, but in the sparsely settled country across the border it would not be easy to find a man who was in hiding. However, he contacted the authorities in Canada. After all, he was a citizen of that country, and they had to know. The next morning he went back to the neighborhood of Wanda and hunted for the man. The news had spread and all were anxious to help find the murderer, and the sheriff found him and put him under arrest on suspicion of murder. He called in witnesses. Tom declared himself innocent. Langedahl was called in order to fix the time when the murder was committed. Tom claimed that Langedahl was the guilty man. He was the man who had seen Bill walk down the road. Langedahl could prove that he did not have a shotgun. Tom said: "Langedahl has told me that he has used shot in his rifle". When he said so, he laughed. The evidence against Tom was so convincing that he was convicted of murder and sent to prison for life. We hear and read about parents who have lost a son; never heard from or of. Two disappeared that winter; one in an unmarked grave, one in a prison cell in Stillwater.

MRS JOHN LEWIS' FIRST LADIES AID

John Lewis thought he got a bargain when he bought the stove with the cracked oven door, but Kari did not think so. The very first time she baked bread, she exclaimed in disgust: "it is impossible to bake bread in this oven. It is burnt on the bottom while it is practically white on top". It was not actually raw, but it was not baked the way it should be. While they were alone, she did not mind this so much. But now she was asked to entertain the Ladies Aid and she wanted to have decent bread. She knew it was

useless to ask John for a new stove; they did not have the money, and besides, John thought the bread she baked was good enough. She knew that her mother would be glad to have her bake in her oven, but she could not seriously consider that. She was brought up with the idea that when people were married they should be on their own. How could she fix that oven door so the bread would bake evenly? That question was in her mind continually. She had not been able to solve that question when the day came that she should bake for the Aid. While she was kneading the dough the thought came over her that, perhaps, it would help to fill the crack with dough. At least it would not hurt to try it. She felt as though she had made an important discovery; she acted at once. She very carefully filled the crack in the oven door with some of the dough. She waited with some anxiety to see how it would turn out. When time came that she thought the bread should be about baked, she opened the oven door carefully and with a sigh of joy, she saw that the bread had browned just beautifully. Why had she not thought of that simple remedy before? When the bread had baked so evenly, so would the cake. She did not have to worry about the lefse; that was baked on top of the stove, and that was fairly even. The question there was the table which it had to be rolled out on. The table was not too bad, but it was not as smooth and even as it should be for that. She knew that she could not make her lefse as thin as her mother did, few women managed that, but she also knew that she could make it better than some she had eaten.

She did not know how it originated, but it had become a custom to serve lefse spread with butter and salmon at all Aids. It had, in fact, become the favorite to most people. She was not going to have less than others, or have anything different. The Ladies Aid was always well attended, not only by the women, but also by men. One reason why the men came was that the women could not handle the horses, still less the oxen. To walk was most of the time out of the question. It was always hard to walk along a trail through willow brush; in winter it was snow to wade through and in spring, water. However, the men liked to come together and have a visit and talk.

Their homes were small, and in winter when all had to be inside, it became crowded, it was hard to carry on a conversation when all were talking. This was in June, and the weather was fine, so the men were gathered outside where they were not disturbed by the women. This was an election year so politics was a natural subject. That did not prove to be very interesting as most of them were good Republicans. Holum was an exception. He was in fact a man without a party. He had been a Populist, but the Populist Party had been swallowed up by the Democrats, and he was not a Democrat. He would just talk about the victories the Populists won in the days of their glory. He just recalled the enthusiasm that was his when they had their rallies in the school houses in central Minnesota. They had defeated the Republican candidate and sent a Populist to Washington as the congressman from their district. His neighbors had heard that story so many times that they were not interested in it. They had to change the subject. They could not change the past; they were to face the present conditions and future possibilities.

When and where would the railroad come? They were sure that the Great Northern would soon extend the road from Thief River into Roseau County. The Soo Line was building from Glenwood to Thief River

now and would extend their road to Winnipeg the next summer. That would cross the sand ridge about 18 miles from Stevens and take all traffic away from the Great Northern. Jim Hill would never accept that loss. The Soo Line would also, most likely, build a branch from Thief River north to the Canadian line. The question was: where would the road or roads come? John Lewis told that he had been over at Wanda, and that the people around there were sure that the road would come there, if not the Great Northern, then the Soo Line. There had been a man around there who had a hatchet with Soo on the handle. He was very secretive, but he had hinted that he represented the Soo. Others said that the Great Northern would build from Thief River to Roseau; others to Badger. All argued for the route that would come nearest to them. This discussion about future possibilities, and what might be in other peoples mind, could go on endlessly as no proofs could be presented. They could also talk freely without provoking or give offence to anyone. They had a very pleasant visit together.

The women in the house could talk and work at the same time. They could knit socks and mittens and talk as freely as if they were idle. They were in all sizes. Men, women and children needed woolen socks and mittens and they sold well at an auction. They could also be made relatively cheap. Wool was cheap; some among had their own. All had a spinning wheel. Others were busy with aprons and dresses. They paid 10 cents for the lunch and they had used that money to buy material. It was not any fancy stuff, just things that were needed in every home. They also made shirts for men and boys. Some of the older women sewed pieces for quilts. They could make use of the pieces left from dresses, aprons and shirts, besides pieces they had taken along from their homes. They sewed the pieces together by hand. The few who were lucky enough to have a sewing machine would take the blocks home and sew them together. They would put carded wool on the inside; that would make a warm spread.

The women also had a very serious question for consideration; that was the time for their auction sale? Should they wait until the fall or should they have it in the summer? Or rather, should they have it before the men went out in the harvest fields or after they came home? Some wondered if they could have things ready before the men went out. Mrs. Lillestrand said: "surely we can get it ready if we all do our best; we might even have an extra meeting just to work". Some said it would be better to have it in the fall as the men will have more money than they do now. Others said it will be too cold to be outside in the fall and it would be too crowded to be inside; we should have it before the men go out. All had solid facts in their favor, but also had disadvantages. Mrs. Martin Lewis spoke up and said: "why not have the auction as soon as we can, and tell people that they will not have to pay cash, they would give them time until fall when they would have the money"? That was a new idea that might solve the question of time. Those who had their doubts whether or not people would pay when fall came did not dare give expression of their doubts as that would imply that they considered some of their neighbors to be dishonest. So they all agreed that they should have the auction as soon as possible. What time should they plan it? Mrs. Oliver Lewis asked: "why not the 4th which would be a celebration. That is a holiday and I kind of feel it is lonesome to sit home all day. Down home we always went some place the 4th". They thought that was a fine idea. They would make it an all-day affair. They could serve a lunch at noon and make some money on that. Besides, it would draw more people. They would have the sale

in the afternoon. During all this talk Mrs. John Lewis was busy to get the lunch ready. Now it was time to get it on the table. She said it was time for a cup of coffee, so will you kindly lay aside your work so we can get the food on the table. The table was cleared and the needles stopped clicking. The aroma of coffee had its effect and had made them all hungry for lunch. Mrs. Lillestrand began to pour the coffee, and said: "come and help yourselves to lunch", but no one came. They just sat and looked at each other. Some nudged their neighbor with their elbow, but no one wanted to go first; that was not the proper thing to do.

When the pastor was present, that problem was so easily solved. It was natural that he should be served first. Then they were willing to be the second one. Mrs. Lillestrand said: "Mrs. Lewis, you come first; you are the oldest among us, and you are half at home here". Mrs. Lewis answered: "you are as much at home here as I am". Mrs. Lillestrand said: "yes, but I have to pour the coffee; you come now or the coffee will be cold". Mrs. Lewis felt that as she was half at home, that was one reason that she should not be the first. But it was getting late and it was time to have lunch, so she came. That served as an electric shock; they all arose and began to hunt for the dime in their handkerchiefs. They all complimented Kari for the good lunch she had, and they agreed that John was lucky to have such a good cook and neat housekeeper for his wife.

When the women were served lunch the men were told to come and have lunch. They did not have to be asked twice; and there was no argument in regard to which one should go first, they all were willing to be first. They were tired of talking railroad and were hungry for lunch, besides, they noted that the sun was far out to the west, and it was time to go home.

Mrs. Lillestrand stayed and helped Kari to wash the dishes. She had taken along some cups and plates as she knew that Kari would not have enough to go around. She would take them home with her. She was pleased with the way Kari had acted as hostess, and said: "Kari, it is true you served a very good lunch; it was all very good". Kari told her mother about the worry she had about the stove and how she had fixed it.

The day for the auction had come. They were permitted to have it at the Martin Lewis home. He had built a small addition to his house and had more room than most of them. They had hoped for a fine day so they could have the tables and auction outside, and it turned out to be a fine July day. Naturally there were many there. The farmers were not busy as it was too early for haying and this was kind of a celebration. For the women had brought sandwiches, lefse, beans, cake and pie. There would be plenty to eat. The women had a consultation in regard to what they should charge for dinner. They all agreed that they could not charge too much, as they were to have the auction, but what should be a fair price? Some said 15 cents; we have brought the food, and those with many children will find it counts up. Yes, that was true but there were many outsiders, and the food they would have surely was worth more than

that. They could make it less for children. Some thought that 25 cents would not be too much. Some hesitated, and said: "it counts up". Well, what should they charge? There had to be a compromise. Mrs. Martin Lewis said: "let us charge 25 cents for adults, 10 cents for children between 5 and 14 years, and children below 5 shall go free". That was acceptable to all.

Then there was the question of who should be the auctioneer. Some said Martin Lewis and some said Lillestrand. Mrs. Lewis said she did not think Martin would do it. Mrs. Lillestrand said the same in regard to her husband; but they could ask them. They both refused. It was not because they were not willing to help out if they could, but they knew that they were not capable for the job. Mrs. Lewis said: "whom shall we ask now"? Mrs. Lillestrand said the only one she could think of would be the pastor. The pastor said that he had been at many auctions, but he had never been an auctioneer. However, he would try if they could not get anyone else. Someone had to do it if there would be a sale. They assured him that it would be just fine if he would do it. So that was settled. Then who should take care of the money or serve as clerk? Several were proposed, but they all refused to accept the responsibility. Finally, Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Lillestrand had to promise to do it together.

Now they were ready to start the sale. The pastor was really surprised to see how much they had prepared for the sale. There were piles of mittens, socks, aprons, dresses of different sizes, men's shirts and the quilt. The pastor knew that an auctioneer usually started out with a story in order to create good humor, but he could not think of any story that would fit the occasion, besides he did not know if it was proper for him to do so. He just told them how diligently the women had worked to prepare the articles they had to offer, and the proceeds from the sale would be used for the building of the kingdom of God in their midst. For most of them it just meant to take the money out of one pocket and put it into another. All that they had to sell were things that were needed in every home. They would not necessarily have to pay more than they would pay at the store; they could set their own price, and the quality would be much better than anything the stores had to sell. They would not have to pay for what they bought that day. The Ladies Aid had decided that they could wait until the fall when they would have a few more dollars in their pockets. While he was talking he had picked up a pair of socks and said: "this is something all you men will need next winter to keep your feet warm out in the woods. You know that you cannot buy anything as good as these for any price at a store. Look at these heels, double-knit, square, and will not wrinkle and blister your heel". "They surely are worth one dollar, but set your own price, what will you give for them"? Fifty cents came from several. It was quickly raised to sixty, sixty-five, seventy. There was a pause; the auctioneer said: "surely these socks are worth more than seventy cents. Seventy-five said another, another said: "I will give you eighty". Another pause; eighty-five; no one bid any more? They were sold to Sigurdsson for 85 cents. You are a lucky man Sigurdsson; you will not suffer with cold feet next winter.

Sigurdsson was an old bachelor who had taken a claim out in a swamp with spruce and tamarack. He had erected a small log hut, but not made an attempt to clear any, not even a patch for potatoes. He was a big man; his hair was gray, and so was his mustache that covered his mouth. His overalls were dirty, and his shirt was either dirty or just faded and gray from washing without soap in hard water. He

was simple minded and easily influenced by others and made to do foolish things, and often made fun of. He had been a hard- working man in his youth. He had spent most of his youthful years with railroad construction gangs in North Dakota. If it was a heavy job to be done, it fell to him. Just so they bragged of him, he would take it on and just show off this strength. When they got their pay the whole gang was ready to get his money. When they came to a town with a blind-pig, as they always managed to do after pay day, they would say: "Sigurdsson is a jolly good fellow, a good sport; he will treat the gang". Sigurdsson would feel important and pay for the drinks. When they had him drunk his money disappeared. When he sobered up he found himself broke.

Now he was too old to get a job, so he had taken a claim that no one else cared to have. They did not know just what he lived on. He spent a good deal of time with Ole Olson, where he would help with the work and get a few meals. He still had the idea that he was the strong man and would take some grubbing. He would start in at a furious vigor, but would soon be tired out and spent most of the time resting. It was the same when he scythed; he would show how well he could handle the scythe, and would soon just walk around and look at what he had done. Naturally they could not pay him much, but he got his meals and some cents for tobacco, and perhaps, for coffee and a sack of flour. The long road to town and his lack of money kept him sober. The day of the auction he had found a seat by Ole Olson. Olson was a smooth talker and could induce Sigurdsson to do the most foolish things. Now he had the chance to create some fun at Sigurdsson's expense. The auctioneer held up a dress, very nicely made, and made the remark that now there was a chance for some man to make his wife happy.

Olson nudged Sigurdsson in the side with his elbow and whispered: "now you must bid, Sigurdsson, you may find a wife yet, and she surely would enjoy having a dress as fine as that". Sigurdsson made his bid. People started to laugh. The woman who had made the dress had made it to fit herself and intended to buy it. She also made her bid, but Sigurdsson raised it. When he hesitated, Olson would say to him: "don't let her bluff you out". Then Sigurdsson would bid again. When the bids had reached such a figure that the woman knew she could make a dress for herself for less money, she let Sigurdsson have the dress. She was, however, provoked and said rather loud: "what will he do with the dress, no woman in her right mind will marry a man like him".

The sale went on. The men bought socks and mittens. They knew that they would need them when winter came. Girl's dresses sold well as most of them were made to fit some girl. The women bought back their aprons. Ole Ellefson cried out: "Sigurdsson, you need an apron; you cannot wash dishes without an apron." Sigurdsson bought an apron. When it was a man's shirt, the auctioneer said: "men, here are shirts well made from good material, even the buttons are well sewed on so you do not need to fear that the buttons will come out the first time you have it on". The men knew that it was true; the shirts were made by their own wife.

However, it was when the auctioneer held up an underskirt that the fun really started. Someone cried out: "Sigurdsson needs that underskirt with his dress". "Sure, said another, your wife cannot wear the

dress without an underskirt". They all laughed, Sigurdsson included. He bought the underskirt. Ole Ellefson said: "all you need now, Sigurdsson, is to find a wife to wear them".

When all were disposed of, the auctioneer thanked the crowd for their fine support and spirited bidding. The president of the Ladies Aid came and told him to announce that, since the auction had gone so well, they would serve free lunch. When the children heard that, they rushed to the coffee table. Here was a chance for them to get something out of the Ladies Aid auction. Some of the women wondered if it was right to fool Sigurdsson to buy so much. Mrs. Olson said: "he might as well spend his money here as for whiskey". Some wondered if he would ever pay for it. Mrs. Olson said: "I will see to that; he will go with my husband to the harvest fields, and when he comes back, I will get the money before he can spend it". That gave them some assurance; they knew that Mrs. Olson was a clever woman.

When all was over, Sigurdsson went with his head and hopes high to his lonely cabin out in the woods. His hopes turned out to be a disappointment; he never got a wife to wear the dress he had hanging in the cabin. No one really knew what became of it, but a couple years later, Mrs. Olson wore a dress that looked very much like it. By that time, Sigurdsson had met a very untimely death. There was a dance by Klimton. Sigurdsson was there, not to dance, but for the whiskey that was dispensed there. He was drunk, and went to a cabin close by, stumbled into the bed with the pipe in his mouth, and went to sleep. The pipe dropped out of his mouth and started fire in the bed. He slept on. When the people noticed fire in the cabin they rushed over, but too late. They saw through the flames Sigurdsson's burnt body in the bed. People felt sorry. In spite of all, he was a good-natured man, willing to help any way he could. The few tears shed at his funeral were sincere tears. A sad end to a sad life.

Pastor Johnson was very much concerned about the young people in the congregation. They lived a dull and lonesome life. There was nothing to break the monotony; no recreation or social gathering provided for them. He did not blame them too harshly if they perhaps, against their parents will, went to a dance. He knew that the surroundings were bad, especially because of the whiskey that created a demoralizing influence. It would not help much to confront the evil; they had to be offered something cleaner in purer surroundings, but he did not know just what to provide. It had to be something that the people in the congregation would be willing to open their homes for. It had to be something the whole family could take part in. One day, as he came to get his mail, he saw a violin hanging on the wall in the store where the post-office was located. That gave him an idea. He knew that the violin had a bad reputation, as it usually was used just for the dance; but it might also be used for a better purpose. The singing in the congregation was, as a rule, poor. They had no instrument to lead them, and most tunes were unfamiliar to them. He knew that he could not play much on that, but could use it as a teacher to play the melody for the children. He could use it to instruct a choir. Thus he could improve on the singing and at the same time give the young people a chance to have a social hour. What was the price of that violin? It was \$12.00 with the case. Measured by his income that was really more than he could afford to pay. He hesitated, but he still could not leave it. It would mean so much in his work, and would be so easy to take along. He decided that he had to make the sacrifice.

That did not solve the whole problem. To have a choir would require books. A songbook with songs not difficult for the beginners, but at the same time such that it would give them a taste for good music. It had also to be cheap so they could afford to pay for it. However, that was a future problem; he had first to create interest for music. He would start with hymns. They had the words in their hymn books, and they could memorize the melodies so they could sing better at the services. Later he would find out if they would form a choir. He had his choral book so he would begin with that and find out if they were interested enough to buy books. The following Sunday he announced that he would meet with them in the evening to practice hymns, and find out how many would be interested in a choir. They would meet in the school house.

When evening came most of the congregation was there. They were a little surprised when the pastor took the violin out of the case. Some associated that instrument just with the dance, but here it was to be used for singing of hymns. The pastor was surprised to hear how well they sang when led by the instrument and it made them put some spirit into their singing. The hymns that they dragged on at services became more meaningful to them now when they were sung by correct time and quicker tempo. They really enjoyed singing.

When the pastor asked all those who were interested in a choir to raise their hand, the girls and younger women's hands came up in a hurry; the boys hesitated, but Holum's hand came up. The pastor was satisfied; there would be a choir. Would they be willing to pay for the song book he recommended? Yes, the pastor could order the books and they would pay for their copies. The pastor knew that Holum was the only one who had any idea of what the notes meant, so he drew some notes on the blackboard. It now seemed so simple to him as a-b-c. But he also remembered how complicated it seemed to him when he had his first instruction in music, mainly because the teacher took it for granted that it was so simple, that she made it difficult to understand; so he made it simple. They practiced the scales and the cords. They had the beginning of a choir.

The choir practice proved to be tedious work for the pastor. He had to stand there and play the different parts over and over again until they, in fact, knew their parts by memory. They had some idea of when they should go up or down, and some value of time, but that was as far as their knowledge of what notes meant to them. But when he saw how happy they were when they had mastered the song so they could sing the song together, he thought it was worthwhile. It was not only those who belonged to the choir that met for practice; but the whole family would come, not only to listen, but for a social gathering. They gave up the school house and met in the homes. When the pastor was tired out, the singers never got tired; they would have a lunch and visit for a time. They all enjoyed an evening together. It was at a late hour when they broke up and went home.

It was not only the members of the congregation who were attracted by the choir practice, but also a few outside the congregation. There were some of those whose parents, for one reason or other, would not become members. Some members felt that they should also invite the choir to meet at their home. It would be simple to enjoy the hospitality of others without a return. So Miss Hulda Enockson, whose

parents did not belong, invited the choir to meet at her home. She was a fine girl and met up regularly. That led to an incident that was amusing to all except Hulda. The day when the choir was to meet at Enockson's in the evening, he went to town in the morning. He came home late and had barely got into the house as the members of the choir came. As was usual the case with him, he came home drunk. He had a small brown jug of alcohol with him. That he left close by the stove as he got his overshoes and coat off, and went and sat down in an old rocking chair back in the corner. He did not say anything as he was fully aware of the fact that his wife was provoked at him because he should be found in that condition when people came. She had not become aware of the jug before the first to arrive walked in. When she noticed it she gave it a kick and sent it in among some pails that stood close by.

The members of the choir acted as though they did not notice that Enockson was drunk, but the family knew that they were all aware of it, and they felt ashamed. Conversation did not seem to run smoothly or natural. When they started to sing, Enockson went to sleep in his chair and all seemed too well. The song they practiced ended in: "Glory be to God". When they knew their parts and sang it together, and came to the last phrase, the pastor said rather loudly: "sing out and hold out". Enockson somehow heard it and woke up and spoke out: "sing out, Glory be to God, Hulda, so it will be sufficient." It came out so unexpected and seemed so amusing to the members that the song ended in a peal of laughter, and it was increased and prolonged as one of the boys dropped his book on the floor. The pastor was so far away that he did not hear what Enockson said, and did not see the book dropped; so he stood there confused and could not understand what there was that was so amusing. He had to stand there until the merriment subsided. He did notice that Hulda's face was red as she stood there with a bowed head. When the members of the choir came out of their surprise and could control themselves, they felt kind of ashamed and were sorry for the family, especially Hulda.

When time came for lunch Enockson had sobered up to some extent and conversation went on more smoothly and more natural. The incident was forgotten for the moment. But when the members were sure Hulda was not inside hearing or when she was not present, they would mimic Enockson and say: "sing out, Glory be to God, Hulda, so it will be sufficient". It always produced a laugh.

A railroad is a necessity for any community if it shall prosper, but the road will come only when the company considers it profitable to build. It had been built into Thief River Falls early because of the saw-mill there. The depot was out in the open prairie half a mile west of the town. The reason for that was that the company had demanded \$50,000.00 to build into town. When the lumber company which was the main industry refused to pay that amount, the Great Northern built its depot out in the country. They knew they would have the business regardless of how inconvenient it would be for the town people and passengers who would come in. When the Soo Line came in, it was permitted to go through the east part of town and build the depot on the main street. Now the shoe was on the other foot. If Great Northern should get any business they would have to get its depot into the city also. But the city refused to give them permission to do so. It had to build a side track into the south side of the city. The Soo Line came to Thief River Falls in the fall of 1903, and was to build on to Winnipeg in 1904. That meant that it would cross the road from Roseau to Stevens and thus would take all freight to and from

Roseau County away from the G. N., which G. N. would not give up. The road was to be extended from Thief River into Roseau County, but not to any inland town, just straight to the sand ridge. In that way it came closer to the Soo Line and gave them less territory to draw from. They could also put pressure on Badger and Roseau. If they wanted to have the road extended they would have to pay \$25,000.00. They really did not have any alternative. If they should exist they would have to get the railroad; if they would get the road they would have to pay. In the spring of 1904 Great Northern got started on its road earlier than the Soo. They graded and laid the steel across the Soo's right away and placed some freight cars there while they graded the road further north. The Soo also graded their road-bed up to and beyond the G. N., but could not lay the steel as long as G. N. had their cars on the crossing. In order that the cars should not be moved, the G. N. had a watchman by the cars day and night. Some of the men from the Soo became very friendly with the night watchman, and one evening they invited him to come over to them for a party. They let him have all the whiskey he wanted to drink, and they soon had him sound asleep. Other men were busy; they moved the cars and laid in the crossing, and the next morning the Soo was laying steel west of the G. N.

The building of the railroad gave some employment to the local people. Part of the territory they had to cross was so swampy that they could not use horses and a scraper; they had to use spades and wheel barrow. The contractor would let out a contract of some roads to anyone who was willing to work. They would have a certain time to do it on, and it was up to them to decide how hard they would work or how easy they would take it. But it was stipulated that there should not be a continuous ditch; the water was to be kept where it was. Most of the farmers preferred the harvest fields to the work offered them by the contractor. There was the same exodus of men and teams out of Roseau County as in former years. The women were left alone with the care of the cattle and children. Most of them were fairly well provided with food. Credit was more liberal that time of year as the merchants had the prospect of payments when the men came home.

In the spring of the year Mrs. Vig had gotten a new neighbor, a German family, Schmit by name. As soon as the man had erected a hut for the family in which there were several children, he went out to North Dakota to work. Mrs. Schmit did not visit anybody, nor did anybody visit her. In fact, most of them did not even know that the Schmits had moved in. Mrs. Vig thought of her and wondered how that family was. One day she decided she was going over and find out how they were. As she came close to the door, she heard a child crying. She rapped and Mrs. Schmit opened the door a little with an expression on her face, partly of fear and partly of surprise. It was the first time anyone had rapped on that door. She hesitated to ask her to come in, even though there was an expression of relief on her face when she saw who it was. Mrs. Vig noticed that there was a peculiar smell in the house from what was cooking on the stove. She saw that something green was in the kettle unlike anything she had seen before. With tears in her eyes Mrs. Schmit told that she was entirely without food; she had been out and gathered some pea-vines, and was making soup, as the children were very hungry. That was the reason why the younger one was crying. Her husband had promised to send home some money as soon as he could; but she had not heard from him since he left. She did not know where or how he was; he might

be sick. Mrs. Vig was shocked; she had seen poverty before, but nothing like this. They were on the point of starvation, and nobody knew anything about it. Mrs. Schmit said: "there might be a letter from my husband now in the post-office, she hoped so, but she had no way to get there and find out". Mrs. Vig hoped it was so, but they could not wait to find out; help was needed immediately.

She hurried home. She did not have much bread on hand, but she could spare a loaf, also some butter. That would help for that day, but what for the days to come? It was beyond her means to feed the family. She had to find help for them. She went to the families who she thought were a little better situated; told them what she had found out; and asked to get a little help for them. They were all willing to help, but they had so little to take from. However, a little here and a little there, and the immediate need was met. Some days later Mrs. Schmit stopped by her house and informed her that she had been to the post-office and found a letter from her husband with some money. She had now bought as much groceries as she considered that she could carry. It did not seem to be so heavy when she started out, but it surely felt heavy now after a 10 mile walk. She would be glad to rest a while. She hoped the children would be all right. Mrs. Schmit looked relieved, but also very tired. Mrs. Vig knew that a cup of coffee would rest her and strengthen her. She most likely had not had any food since she left in the morning and perhaps, not much then. When Mr. Schmit came back in the fall he gave up his homestead and moved out. The vacated shack was just a reminder of the plight of the family.

A new town creates a remarkable excitement. It acts on people as if a goldmine was discovered. New people flock in; some local people discover that they are fit for business. All want to get a place on Main Street and be the first to be ready for business. They visualize prosperity or richness without considering whether or not the local community can warrant such a rosy prospect. So Bushville became overnight as active as bees around a rose garden. Strangers hunted for a place to sleep, and every scrap of lumber found a ready market. The buildings erected were only cheap shacks with a false front that hid the poor construction. Some had living rooms in the back of the buildings, some above the place of business. Surely there was need for hotels; three of them were under construction; each one hoping to be ready to open first. There were two banks on opposite corners, and one in the middle of the block. Restaurants, people had to have food, hardware stores, general stores, and four saloons appeared. All tended to create a show of prosperity. An elevator was under construction further east and across from that a large shack where some women were seen around. No one said anything about what kind of business was carried on there, but most people knew. It was outside the town site and they could not do much about it.

Yes, Bushville was ready for business, but business is dependent on the prosperity of the community, and that was not favorably affected by the town. The land was still too wet to cultivate, so they had nothing to bring to the elevator. There was a better market for cattle, but they were of poor quality and far from markets and brought little money. Butter and eggs sold readily, but only a few had much even of that. A lumber yard took away some of the market of home-sawed lumber; coal was in competition with their wood.

What the people needed cost about the same as before. There was competition, but poor business required big profits if it should provide a living. The saloons were like blood suckers that sucked the little money there was away from the stores. They asked for credit at the stores but little credit could be extended by a person with little capital. They had come in to make money for themselves and not with the idea to build up the community. They also found difficulties they had not taken into consideration. They had children, but there was no school house. Some important needs are, at times, overlooked until the need arises. There were disappointments and problems in Bushville too, and it was the mothers who first became aware of them. The husbands had their minds on and their main interest in the business; the mothers on the home and the children.

The coming of the railroad and a new town would naturally have its influence on the whole community. The winter road was changed so the people from Klempton now drove through the township. They could still dispose of some wood and lumber. Most of them drove oxen. They had to be out early in the morning to make the trip in one day. At times they would sit on the load, their feet covered with a dirty blanket and their heads covered, partly by the collar of their sheep-lined coats and partly by a home-knit scarf. When their feet became too stiff and their body too cold they would walk behind the load while the oxen would plod along with heads low, and their breath appeared like hot steam out of their nostrils. In the evenings on their way home, it was different. Not with the oxen; they were the same, perhaps with a little quicker walk as they looked forward to their warm stalls, but with the men. There was no driver to be seen. He had imbibed freely to keep warm on the way home and wrapped in the blanket, he was oblivious to time and place. When people along the road saw a yoke of oxen or a team without a driver, they just laughed and said: "there goes a Klempton".

The new town also affected the thinking in the community. The banks were there for business, and their business was to loan money. It became easy to get a loan on proved-up land. Some entertained the idea that they should get proof or title on the land; get a loan and use the money to get the land under cultivation. Others had the opposite view. They thought they could hardly get along now, how shall it be when we have interest and taxes to pay? That, the first group said, will not mean much; just so we have a crop to sell. We have to improve the land if we shall continue to live here. Besides, we have to have taxes if we shall be able to have a school among us. We cannot forever continue to sell school orders. That they suddenly became aware of. The school board received a letter from a bank stating that they would not continue to carry their orders. They would sue the district if they did not pay up. They advised them to bond the district. They could borrow the money from the state. They had no choice; they had to take the bank's advice. That solved the difficulty of the district for the present, but not whether or not to get a loan on their farms. Some did not hesitate to ask for a loan. Some had never intended to make it their future home. They had just taken the homestead in the hope to make some money on it. Some had given up hope of ever making a go of it. Land was hard to clear and the abundance of water made cultivation impossible. They would get as much out of it as possible so they could move into Canada where there was an abundance of free land. The Canadian railroads were anxious to get settlers on the western prairies and had agents to advise them to go where a

quarter contained 160 acres of good land.

It was remarkably easy to get a loan from banks. They had to answer just a few simple questions. Did they live on the land; was there a house and stable on it; was any of the land under cultivation; how much could be cultivated? Their answers were not always true, but no investigation was made, and it was taken to be the truth. Interest was high, 8%, and there was a liberal commission. Those who just wanted money to go to Canada left and their cabins soon stood without windows or doors, a rotten floor with a den of skunks beneath. The few who planned to clear and cultivate their homestead were partly hindered by water, and the money they received kind of evaporated like the water around them by the summer sun. The increase in taxes that the remainder expected failed to come, as the investors in the mortgages were failed to be paid they also failed to pay the taxes. Those who tried to hold on to their homestead found they were unable to pay interest and taxes so had the mortgage foreclosed on them. The result was that the community diminished about as fast as it first had increased. But some held out in hope of better times to come. Gjelheim was one of them. Although he had managed to be elected as treasurer for the township, he was not a popular man. By many he was disliked because of his sarcastic remarks regarding the congregation, partly because he was inconsiderate to the needs of others, although he could be pleasant when he found it to his advantage. They knew he was a regular visitor in the saloons, but he managed to hide his condition, so he was not considered a drunkard. He managed also to have the appearance of a well-to-do man. He never went out threshing in the fall. He drove with oxen which were cheaper to keep than horses. He had considerable livestock that was left for his two boys to care for.

The one thing that made people tolerate him was his family. His wife was loved by all, and also pitied. She had a sad look on her face that did not entirely disappear even when she smiled. She took her children along to services and was a member of the Ladies Aid. She grew up in a city in Wisconsin, and in some ways, more refined than most of them. She always had the appearance of being well-dressed, even though her dresses were made of cheap material. So was her only girl. She had the knack of using old pieces of material for trimming, so a cheap dress looked expensive. Her home, like the rest, was small and crowded, but was orderly and clean. She was unassuming, considerate, and had little to say. It was rumored that the sad look on her face was there because of her sad home life. Her husband was not good to her. He was cruel both to her and the children, especially when he came home drunk. They disliked Gjelheim even more because he could be so cruel to such a fine woman.

Gjelheim had been treasurer of the township for three years now, and had never given an itemized statement in regard to money received or money paid out. He just stated that so much money had been received and so much paid. He never mentioned any outstanding orders. They had a little money in the treasury. Some were not satisfied with such a statement, but they asked no questions as it would give the impression that they had their doubts about his honesty. Even the town board had failed to ask him to show proof of his statement. They also considered him an honest man and took it for granted that all was well as far as the finances of the township were concerned. However, among themselves they

asked: "what had the money been used for"? Nothing had been done that required money. The little clearing of brush out of the section lines was done by people working out their poll tax. They thought it might be well to elect another treasurer. Some even envied him for the \$10.00 a year that he received. It seemed good pay for so little work. So when the day of election came, Ole Ellefson was a candidate for treasurer besides Gjelheim. Those who observed him noticed that he showed some nervousness as he said: "perhaps you are not satisfied with me as your treasurer"?

When the ballots were counted Ole Ellefson was declared to be elected as township treasurer. Gjelheim gave Ole a nasty look as he came and told him that he would come some day and get the treasurers book. Gjelheim told him that he need not be in any hurry for that as he would have to go into town first and have the book fixed up. That trip to town was postponed from week to week. Finally Ellefson came and demanded the book. Gjelheim had to hand over the book, even though he did so reluctantly.

The next morning Gjelheim informed his family that he had an errand to Mill Creek and did not know if he would be home in the evening. He took his way to Enockson. He greeted Mrs. Enockson with a pleasant smile, but when she heard him ask Enockson if he would take him down to Mill Creek as he had an important errand down there, Mrs. Enockson frowned. She mumbled to herself: "why shall he come here and drag Erick with him, his errand is only to visit the saloons". Enockson also had the same idea, but he just smiled and declared himself willing to go along with him. They hitched up the team and started out for Mill Creek. They were in a happy mood. Snow was still on the ground and the road was good. It was clear and rather cold for that time of the year. When they came to Mill Creek, Gjelheim shook himself and said: "I am cold; we better go and get us something to warm up on". Enockson agreed. They tied the team to a hitching post, put blankets on them and went to the nearest saloon. There they remained, and between drinks, they chewed on sausage and crackers. Towards evening Gjelheim told Enockson that they had to go over to the drugstore. Enockson could go and get the team and drive past the drugstore and pick him up there.

The horses were cold and hungry, so they started out in a frisk trot; they longed for their warm stall and food. When they came to Enockson's, Mrs. Enockson saw that they were drunk, but she was happy to note that they did not have a bottle along home with them. They would not continue their spree. Gjelheim asked to stay overnight. That was granted; it would hardly be safe to let him go in the condition he was in. When Gjelheim was ready to go to bed, he took a small bottle out of his pocket with the remark that he had got some medicine for his cold. He put the bottle to his mouth and emptied it. Is that the way you take your medicine, asked Mrs. Enockson? Yes, said Gjelheim, that is the way I take my medicine.

All was quiet during the night, but in the morning they found Gjelheim dead in the bed. It was a shock to the Enocksons, and they found themselves in a bad situation. Not only did the Gjelheim family need to be informed of what had taken place, but also the authorities. The Doctor and the coroner came and

had many questions to ask. All Enockson could tell was that they came home from Mill Creek drunk, but had sobered up some before they went to bed, and that he had taken some medicine for a chest cold. Could they locate the bottle? Mrs. Enockson knew where she had disposed of that. The Doctor looked at the label and said: "poison". The case was clear; suicide by poison.

Gjelheim was buried on a corner of his homestead. Mrs. Gjelheim looked pale, and she and the children wept some, but there was no hysteria. The few who were there also wept, mainly out of sympathy for the family. Not because they considered that they had lost much, but because of the shock it must have been to them to know that the husband and father had taken his own life.

Naturally people would wonder what the reason was for his rash act. One thing was sure; he had not been despondent, not mentally unbalanced. In the morning when he came to Enockson he even seemed cheerful. However, the reason was soon discovered. The newly elected treasurer informed the town board that there was no money in the treasury; their orders not paid; there was a shortage of over \$400.00. Further investigation showed that all his property was heavily mortgaged. Gjelheim was fully aware of his condition. He saw before him an open prison door and a future life in shame, and that life he refused to accept. He had no faith in a future life, so the easiest way out was to choose the grave and thus end it all. He gave no consideration to his family or the predicament of his bondsmen; the only one he ever thought of was he. The bondsmen had considered that giving bonds was just a formality; now they became aware of their financial responsibility. In fact, they did not have too much to lose; they too had some mortgage on their property. The town board realized that they had been negligent; they should have had an audit made of the treasurer's statement. However, they did not say anything about that. They just said that it was not fair to take any action against the bondsmen, as that would hardly bring anything into the treasury; it would only ruin them and be no help for the township. They would just let things go and let the township take the loss.

When the fact came out that Gjelheim had stolen the money from the township there was considerable resentment mainly against Gjelheim, but also towards the town board. The loss had to be made up by increased taxes, and that they felt they could not afford. There was no resentment against the Gjelheim family, but Mrs. Gjelheim was more reserved than before. She took it upon herself the shame that her husband had refused to face. At the same time she and the children carried on the work on the farm, and some stated that she was better off without such a husband. At least the boys would not be influenced by the evil example of their father.

THE BUILDING OF THE CHURCH

In one sense a church is not a necessity. The worship of God can be conducted in a private home or in a school house. The main thing is that He is worshipped in spirit and truth. Still it is true that the surroundings affect the services. The home remains a home even though it is a place of services. A school house is the school house even though it is made into a place of worship. The surroundings affect the mind. It was not just the inconvenience connected with the services. They were always present, especially for the family who should be the host for the congregation; but also the fact that at times it was an infringement of the congregation and inconvenient for them to come that far. This was forcefully brought to the attention of the congregation one Sunday morning. The services were in the home of a family who lived west of what they called the Big Swamp. The difference of swamps was insignificant. They were all impassable some time of the year. The Big Swamp was wider and longer and was seldom entirely dry. This was the first part of summer and the water was several inches deep. Those who lived to the northeast could drive around it; those to the south had too far to go.

As they were gathered by the house before services they noticed a person who came walking over the swamp. It was a woman. She walked slowly and carefully in order that she would not inadvertently step into a place where the sod might have burned out. She held her skirt carefully above her knees in order that she would not get wet. They wondered who that person was or why she came wading through the swamp that nobody cared to cross. When she got so near that she could be recognized, one of the women said: "it is Mrs. Falkenburg". Falkenburg had filed a claim about a mile southeast of the swamp. Something must be wrong when she shall find it necessary to come here. A feeling of anxiety crept in to their hearts. When she came out of the deep water she let her skirt fall, but she still walked slowly and kind of dragged her feet. First they thought that she walked that way because she was tuckered out from the long walk through the swamp. But coming nearer, they saw the reason; she had her husband's rubber boots on. Why had she come? Was anything wrong in her home? No, nothing is wrong. I just felt that I had to get to services. I felt downhearted and lonesome. I knew that I would feel better just so I could join in the worship. The word of God cheers me and gives me strength. It must have been hard walking in those boots; you must be all tuckered out. No, I took my time. I had to walk slowly and carefully in order that I should not get my boots full of water. It was deep some places out in the swamp. Now I have to get my boots off me. And so, the people decided they needed to build a church.

A few weddings linger in my memory. The one was during my first summer at Wannaska and one was later when the groom had a hard time to convince his girl to marry him, which I described previously.

Another wedding in my memory took place after the last services I had in Pine Grove Congregation. A man came and asked me if I would marry him that evening. I told him that I would if it was not too late in the evening. He told me that it could be in an hour. He told me to go to the home of the bride. It was a little distance down the river and then into the timber. As it was the only house there I could not fail to find it; and I found it. It was a little shack covered with tarpaper. There was no stable and hardly room between the stumps to turn around, so I decided to do that while it was light. I did not see

anybody around so I knocked on the door. A girls; voice said: "come in". I did so, and the girl was busy by the stove in one end of the house stirring in a kettle and she acted as though she did not know that I was there. I got my coat off and threw it on the cot in the other end of the house and found a chair and sat down. I made an attempt to start a conversation, but she did not care to talk, so I just sat and waited for the people to come while she was busy with her kettle. It got dark and she lighted the little kerosene lamp and went back to her kettle. So we waited in silence. I was a little uneasy as I would very much like to get out of there before it got absolutely dark, and besides, I had a long way to go. Finally I heard a lumber wagon coming. Three men came in, the bridegroom and two with him. They were very talkative and were in no hurry. Finally I said that if they were ready we better have the ceremony. He said: "I am ready" and she said: "I am ready", and she turned around, took off her apron and stepped up beside him. After they were married she put on her apron and went back to her kettle. I was glad to start for home. I could not help but feel it was a dreary wedding.