



A Newsletter of the Norman County Genealogy Society

Letters to the Old Country – Part II

The crossing and arriving in America

The emigrants had family back home in Norway that waited anxiously to hear how the crossing had gone and what the impressions were of America.

Some letters gave detailed travel accounts with all its hardships, illness, deaths and births on board. Søren Andersen Tandberg wrote home from Minnesota on March 10, 1858 to his

brother-in-law in Modum with instructions to greet the people he knew. He had sailed with his family from Drammen on May 15, 1857, and they could disembark five Norwegian miles from Quebec on June 27. From there they took the train to Chicago, and then proceeded by steamboat to the town Winona, Minnesota.

They were fortunate enough to meet a man there from Sigdal who invited them home with

him where he gave them some instructions.

Søren's daughter became ill during the crossing and died eleven days later. There was no doctor on board, but one of the officers functioned as doctor. He was not certain what ailed the sick girl and gave her several types of medicine without any of them having an effect.

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Norman County – People, Industries and Institutions – Part II

At the meeting on January 1, 1884, when the board consisted of Messrs. Canning, Woodbury, Henderson and Juelson, with the first named as chairman, there was much new and unfinished business to transact. They fixed the salary of the county attorney at \$500; that of the judge of probate at \$300; that of auditor at \$1,200; school superintendent at \$500; and county physician, Dr. Koyle, at \$35 per month.

The Norman County Index was made the official newspaper of the county and the two safes, asked for at the last session, were reported as weighing three thousand four hundred pounds each and were received at \$160 each free on board, St. Paul. Textbooks were purchased at this meeting, valued at \$626, under the uniform text-book plan of the state at that date.

The county officers

reported receipts as follows: Register of deeds, for the last year, \$1,346; clerk of the courts, \$1,246; sheriff, \$1,299, and county attorney, \$75.

The county auditor, at the session of the board in March, 1884, was authorized to pay for thirty bushels of seed wheat for N. H. Helgeson; also \$15 was appropriated to furnish seed wheat for John Helland.

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Norman County – People, Industries and Institutions – Part II (continued from page 1)

“Soren Dahl of this county, living in Waukon township, petitioned the board to pay for an operation to be performed on his son, afflicted with a so-called double hare lip, he himself being unable to pay for the same.”

Excerpts from: *History of Clay and Norman Counties Minnesota, Their People, Industries and Institutions – Volume I and Volume II*, by John Turner and C.K. Semling, 1918, B.F. Bowen & Company, Indianapolis, Indiana

At the session of the county board in the spring of 1884, the following resolution was passed: “Resolved that we, the county commissioners in session assembled, would most respectfully urge and request the farms and business men of the county of Norman and the State of Minnesota to organize a Farmers’ Alliance in each town all over the county for the purpose of having our state ticket at the coming election pledged to support the principles and resolutions as set forth at the Farmers Convention held in St. Paul, March 18th, 19th and 20th, A.D. 1884.”

In June 1884, the board changed the name of Merton township to Winchester County.

At the December meeting of the board in 1884, the county auditor’s bond was fixed at \$7,000. and that of the treasurer at \$25,000. The county attorney’s salary was fixed at \$500 for 1885; Doctor Koyl, county physician, was to receive \$35 per month; the judge of probate was to receive \$350 per year in 1885, and the school superintendent was to receive a salary of \$650. The Index was again

made the “county paper.” The commissioners at their meeting on January 5, 1885, examined the books of the county treasurer and reported that there were at that date funds of the county in the Bank of Ada to the amount of \$5,342; in the Merchants Bank at Crookston, \$1,553; and cash on hand in vaults, \$108. This made the total of money on hand available for county use to be \$7,003. The county physician’s salary was cut down \$5 per month at this meeting. The county treasurer’s salary was fixed at \$1,200, and during the year Dr. C. S. Putnam was appointed county physician at \$450 per year.

Nothing of importance transpired during the year 1886.

In January 1887, the commissioners fixed salaries as follows: School superintendent \$720 per year; county attorney, \$600; county treasurer, \$1,200. Dr. Putnam was cut from \$450 to \$425 per year as county physician.

In 1888, the board was composed as follows: Messrs. Henderson, Ingberg, Juelson, Brown and Lund. It was during

that year that the following resolution was passed by the board:

Concerning Gophers
Whereas, the county of Norman during the last eight months expended the enormous sum of \$1,171.21 for the destruction of pocket and other gophers and blackbirds, and whereas, no provision by a levy of a special tax for this purpose has been made, to meet the expenditures for the year 1888, be it therefore Resolved -- by the board, that the payment of bounties on gophers and blackbirds be abolished for the year 1888 in Norman county.

In July, 1888, the board said: “Soren Dahl of this county, living in Waukon township, petitioned the board to pay for an operation to be performed on his son, afflicted with a so-called double hare lip, he himself being unable to pay for the same. Doctor Stuart, being consulted, stated that he would perform the operation for \$75, and as the parents of the boy would only consent to an operation by Doctor Stuart in Ada, the board instructed Doctor Stuart to perform the operation for him for \$75, the doctor to furnish all assistance and appliances.”

Supporting Genealogical Societies

I shelf periodicals received from genealogical societies by my genealogical society library. I recently noticed that a central U.S. genealogical society was disbanding. This society had been in existence since 1955 and this was the 45th volume of its quarterly. I was amazed that a society with that number of years of existence could fold.

Then I attended my local genealogical society meeting. I noticed the number of attendees had declined to less than half of the attendees from

when I first joined the society 15 years ago. At that time I was one of the youngest members. Today I am still one of the youngest members. Societies need the influx of new members to keep them active.

Local societies need to be supported. They index obscure local documents, record cemeteries, and answer questions on local genealogy and history.

The Internet will not answer all your genealogical questions. Support the local genealogical society and

the societies in the areas in which your families lived. These societies will usually do local research for a nominal fee and provide free queries in their quarterlies to members. Don't let another society fold.

By Sara-Jane Gilb

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Letters to the Old Country – Part II

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They had to bury her at sea, not far from the American coast. A coffin was built on the ship, and there was a funeral service just there would have been on land. "This was a very difficult separation for us." Even so he concluded: "As for the rest of the trip, it was a most pleasurable experience for all of us."

Other emigrants described the crossing as being a time of card playing, fun and frivolity and the joy of pleasant camaraderie with other countrymen.

In a letter to his girl friend, a young Norwegian described how the Norwegian national holiday was celebrated in 1903 on the ship *Hellig Olaf* far out on the Atlantic Ocean: "May Seventeenth began with beautiful weather and a calm sea as far as the eye can see. The first thing I did on our day of liberty was to get up at 6 a.m. and take a real bath, here there is a bathing facility you see, and you can imagine that the other 3 also took their turn. Later, the pastor conducted a worship

service on deck at 9:30. At 11 a.m. we all got in line to form a parade and we processed around the boat and sang our national anthem. Then there were speeches in honor of the King and the ladies. When this was done, or more correctly when we had listened to these, we went below deck and toasted each other with half a beer [...] that was the extent of our festivities that day."

Excerpt " From America to Norway: Norwegian Americans Write Home" by Knut Sprauten, The Norwegian Institute of Local History, Oslo

<http://www.nb.no/emigrasjon/emigration/index.html>

Prairie Roots
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Marijo Vik, Secretary
2230 – 160th Ave
Ada, MN 56510

HOME PHONE:
(218) 784-3794

E-MAIL
mvik@loretel.net

Attach Address Label Here

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.rootsweb.com/~mnnorman

About Our Organization...

The Norman County Genealogy Society was formed on February 27, 1997 in Ada, MN for the purpose of assisting persons interested in research family histories and sharing information.

Charter members of the society were Roland Carpenter, Iris Duklet, Colleen Goltz, Ardis Horn, Sharon Larson, Roger Niebeling, Gladys Prussia, Ronald Rasmusson, Christine Roesch, Ronald Roesch, DeFloren Rude, Edna Rude and Kathleen Skaurud.

A few resources available include:

- Obituaries taken from area newspapers.
- Cemetery records
- Marriage records
- Death records from 1871 to 1981
- Census records
- Civil War Veterans
- 1883 Pensioners on the Roll
- Churches and Towns

Much of this information is posted on our website.

The Society meets on the third Saturday of the month at 10:30 am in the Dekko Center or Norman County Museum, Ada, MN.

Annual Dues are \$10.00 for a family membership (local) and \$5.00 for an associate membership (out of area.) Dues should be sent to the Treasurer in January:

Ardis Horn
101 1st Street East
Ada, MN 56510