

Childhood

If you will set up the screen and projector, I will take out my slides and pictures. Some are quite old and faded but many are quite clear yet. The first ones are memory pictures as told to me. It was a sunny Sunday noon that I was born, the 4th of Nov. 1894. After church service our good friends Jorgen Nielsen's came to see why Father hadn't been to church. Jorgen Nielsen's sister Johanne* was staying with us to take care of my brother and sister and keep house for father and grandfather while mother was confined. I can almost see the day I was baptized. The pastor's wife wanted to carry me to the font and I can imagine how Mother looked in her pretty black satin wedding dress, a proud father and Pastor F. L. Grundtvig impressive in his robe. Frue Grundtvig gave the name as Augusta Smidt and that was entered on my baptismal certificate, but my parents had given me the name Elise Augusta which was my grandmother's name. How can I tell when my own pictures came into being? Was it the long winter days when Erik and Nora were to school and I made little rings on the white frost on the windows with Mother's thimble which I first warmed with my tongue. Or I sat in the closet where I could almost hear the stillness. When I sat there I could hear the schoolbell in Lyons and Lyons was a place to beware of, it wasn't in our circle. It was the unknown. One picture that I see so clearly was housecleaning in the spring. The featherbeds were hung on the clotheslines and the spring sun was warm. I laid on my back looking at the fleecy white clouds and just enjoyed being me. The beds were moved into the parlor so Mother could paint the bedroom floor. Everything was topsy turvy and what a picnic. Mother never complained about work, I wonder if she ever tired. Everything seemed to be so easy for her, tho there certainly was plenty to do. We always had someone staying with us. I can't remember my grandfather, he died when I was not quite two, but Nora and Erik could remember him as a kind and thoughtful man. They sat with him in church. Nora was his favorite, she was born shortly after he came to Clinton and was named for his first wife, Eleanora. She also got her other grandmothers name Augusta. Erik had been named for his two grandfathers. There was a Marie Hovgaard who was teacher in the parochial school and she stayed with us much of the time. Her home was in Nebraska where her Father lived, her mother had died and her father decided to go to Denmark to live. He came through Clinton and liked it so well there that he decided to stay. He stayed at our home for a long time how long I can't remember but it was before I started to go to school and we became good friends. We played cards, a game called "Rakker" and he was as much of a child as I, and hated to have me beat him. The one who lost the last game before bedtime had to "gaa Rakker i Seng" and he didn't like that. I finally got so smart that I let him win the last game. The spring I was 5 ½ years I started to go along to school and came home at noon. Hovgaard always met me, he had been lonesome, mother

*This Johanne married a man by the name of Porsild and they had a little boy by the name of Thorbjorn. They lived in Greenland for many years.

said. It made extra work for Mother to always have boarders. We didn't consider them boarders but it added a little to the income and many who came and stayed I'm sure never payed anything, they were guests.

When Hovgaard was sick Mother would bring his meals upstairs. I can remember his breakfast, it consisted of an enormous portion of real stiff oatmeal with a generous lump of lard in the middle and covered heavily with salt and black with pepper. He had a little covered bowl on his bedside table and his daughter kept it filled with some tiny candies. She taught me my A.B.C's and for each letter I could remember she gave me a little piece of candy. I had to learn the German letters too, because many of the books had both kinds of letters, they were some hard little ones to learn. Marie and her Father finally moved. She rented a little house in Lyons and later they moved to Tyler where she taught school. He died in Tyler. My uncle Therkild was in love with Marie and asked her to marry him but at that time she said "no". She later changed her mind and they were married in 1913 and lived in Omaha.

Our uncles Peter, Theodor and Christian were now well established in Halfa Iowa on a farm that Therkild had bought. It was always a thrill when we got up in the morning to see a fur coat laying in the dining room. One of the uncles had been in Chicago with a load of steers or pigs and stopped in on the way back. We liked Peter and Theodor the best. Christian always had candy in his pocket but he seldom shared. Peter was so much fun and always talked so much to us and played with us. He is the one I can remember most at Christmas when he stayed with us. We played with "Bakkenorre" and he had so many tricks that we fell for. One time I had gotten a little set of dishes. The cups were hardly larger than a thimble. I served make believe coffee all around and Uncle Peter put the whole cup in his mouth and pretended to swallow it. Of course that brought tears until I found out that I was the joke, then I guess I was mortified. Christmas was something to look forward to. We all had an evening shopping together. Shopping? It was mostly window shopping, we didn't really buy anything but just the thrill of being down town in the evening with Mother and Father was something to remember. One time in a china shop, Father loved to look at pretty china, and saw a beautiful vase that would be nice for a present for the teacher. He priced it and that was that, it was \$40. I saw a little vase it was a little basket with three little pigs sticking their heads out of the basket. I had to have it. I think I put up such a scene that I got it. I'm sure it didn't cost more than 10 cents but it was my treasure until it broke and I still kept the three little pigs for a long time. Then there was the Christmas that Nora discovered some red material sticking out of a package. She had longed for a red dress and Mother had found a remnant at a very reasonable price. It was the most beautiful material and the dress was made by our good friend Tina Knudsen so it must have been some time before 1904. She was married I think and moved to Halfa, Iowa. I was a little envious of Nora's red dress, I never had anything but blue, but finally Nora outgrew it and I got it for a little while. The dresses were usually made with at least a 4 in hem and Nora wore the pleated skirt with a black sateen shirt to school for a long time. Wool

dresses couldn't be washed and dry cleaning was unheard of so how it was kept presentable for all those years, I don't know. When I was 15 I still wore that skirt with a new black sateen shirt that I had made. It finally was given to some poor people and we often wished we had kept it.

Back to Christmas. One year I can well remember Nora was sick the night we were going window shopping but she wouldn't say so but she was real sick when we came home and had high fever. The doctor was called and he said it was gastric fever, most likely like a thyfoid. She was very sick and Mother had Gammel Stine come and help her as she had much to do getting ready for the holidays. "Ung Stine" came also, she was the daughter and a little retarded but such a good soul. She wasn't much help but said sh-sh as soon as we made any noise. Nora was a little better the day of Christmas eve and our teacher Karen Bisgaard who was going to spend the evening with us came and sat and sewed on a doily that Nora had started for Mother and had to be finished. I don't think Nora had any supper but she was wrapped in a quilt and sat in a chair when we later danced around the Christmas tree. When she finally got well enough to get up she was so thin and weak that it took a long time before she could go to school again.

Our Christmas

Mother & Father

In reading "The Fighting Angel" and "The Exile" I think of Mother and Father. We were so close to Mother and we really didn't understand nor appreciate Father till after he was gone. How often I have regretted that I didn't spend time in his old age to talk and ask, to communicate. We don't realize till it's too late what we miss, but we just don't seem to have the "time".

With Mother it was different. I was just at her side for so many years and I don't think a day went by that she wasn't told that I loved her. How could I look at her without loving her and tell her. She was unusual, for I don't think she ever was cranky, nor have I ever heard her nag. She could get sad, but she was a cheerful person and always had so many cute sayings from childhood. Mother was always there, and the home was Mother. Her word was law but not in the sense that we were afraid of her because it was love and how can you disobey love? She told us that once when Erik was big enough to crawl up on the table he had set his small teeth in all of her 6 teaspoons. They were very thin sterling and were really chewed. She spanked him so hard and then cried because she had spanked him and vowed she would never spank him again. I don't think she did, nor can I remember that she ever laid a hand on any of us. Her eyes were enough to put us to shame when we did something we shouldn't. Tho I can't remember Erik ever getting out of line. One day before I started school I can remember hiding a little red pocket book that Nora had. I think it had a penny in it. She was in a hurry and couldn't find it. I said I hadn't seen it, and of course it was all in fun as far as I was concerned but when Mother saw I had lied it wasn't fun any more. I can still remember her eyes. Or the time I had gotten 5 cents to buy a big pencil tablet. Nora talked me into buying a penny tablet and then some candy. It didn't take long before I needed another tablet and then I had to confess. No need to put the blame on "Eve" tempting me, I was responsible. There was no scolding, just disappointment in me. One lesson in honesty came one time. I don't know how old I could have been at the time, perhaps about 9. In the next block towards the river there was an empty lot with large billboards out too the street. A brewing company had started to dig a well there prior to building a brewery. We children liked to look around after the workmen had left. They pumped out some gray clay that looked like soft putty and getting your shoes in that was something hard to get rid of. There was a small barrel of resin standing there and we helped ourselves to a chew of that amber spicy stuff. Erik was sick and home from school so I thought he would enjoy a hunk. I took a piece about the size of a walnut. When I came in for supper I was happy to have this gift for Erik. Mother asked "what have you got there." Oh I got it over by the brewery." That doesn't belong to you and you go right back and put it in the barrel. No need to say that all the kids helped themselves. By that time it was dark and to walk alone over behind that bill board and thru that oozy clay and drop it in the barrel is a feeling I never forgot. Could I just have thrown it away? Not if I had to be able to look at

Mother with a clear conscience. She herself was such an example in honesty in all her life.

Mother's day started early. The fire had to be started in the kitchen stove and the kindlings were made ready the night before. We had pine slabs and she would select a thin dry slab, take the bread knife and make shavings along one side, it took but a match to start a fire in that. The coffee and oatmeal was made in a few minutes, the saucepans were set down on the flame and they were always black on the bottom but no waiting till you could cook on top of the stove, that took too much time and fuel.

Father had to be at work at 7 AM and there was a long way to go on the street car which ran on the next street. Father had to swallow his oatmeal in a hurry and Mother could make sandwiches in no time. They consisted of rye bread with maybe a little leftover steak from the night before or else cheese, probably homemade. We did get the best Swiss or brick cheese in those days. Then there was a jug of coffee and maybe a piece of apple pie if it was apple season, that was about all Father had for the day. No coffee break either forenoon nor afternoon and I suppose after a ten hour work day and a long ride home he was tired and not up to much nonsense from kids. He never scolded tho but we didn't get any attention either, tho I often ran out too meet him when I saw his head bobbing above the fence and took his hand. I know he loved us and in his way did things too make us happy. When I was sick and had fever, which seemed to be so often he was the only one that gave me comfort, tho I can't remember that he ever held me nor comforted me in any way, it was just the knowing he was there and the head of the house, I guess. Those spells of fever were like a nightmare always the same feeling.

After I had had a fever I would break out in a rash and the Dr would say "If he hadn't known I had had scarlet fever he would say that was it."

Family

Now I have set up the projector and screen and I wonder how many color slides are filed away in my memory. I wonder if I can show them so you can see them and maybe enjoy some of them.

Starting with the family tree is from memory of what my parents have told me. I have never seen any of my grandparents, except what a year and a half baby can see, that was my father's father who came from Denmark and stayed with us.

Father's father's name was Ahrendt Therkild Schmidt, he was born in 1822. His wife's name was Anna Eleanora Grau. Father has written about his family elsewhere.

My father was the oldest, Jes Petersen Smidt born May 5th 1855 in Fauervraa Tyrstrup Sogn in Denmark. His brothers were Therkild Petersen Schmidt Jan 28-1857. Peter Christian Schmidt born June 9-1862. Theodor Schmidt born Mar 31-1866. Christian Ahrendt Schmidt June 5-1872. There were also little girls born as listed in the Bible that Nora has, they all died as infants. You can see the change in family name, none wanted the German Schmidt as they lived in that part of Denmark that was taken over in 1864 by the Germans. Father and Therkild changed to Smidt. Peter, Theodor and Chris to Smith when they came to U.S.A.

Father's mother died early and grandfather married again and there was another flock of children, none lived very long and his second wife also died. He sold his property and blacksmith shop and he and his youngest son Christian set out for U.S.A. They arrived in Clinton early in July 1891 a few days before Nora was born and as she received the name Eleonora she became the favorite of Bedstefar. Mother said he was such a kind and gentle man and it was a pleasure to have him around. In the meantime Therkild had gone to Emmet County Iowa and bought land and as he was no farmer, his three brothers Peter, Theo and Chris went there to live. We have some of the letters from that time telling about wind and weather and mud on that rich Iowa soil.

My mother Adelheid Magdalene Raben was born April 13th 1854 also in Fauervraa Tyrstrup Sogn. Her parents were Elise Augusta Petersen born Aug 12-1818 and Erik Raben born March 5-1818.

Mother had two sisters Johanne who died real young from T.B. and Theodora who married a Jorgensen. Had two children Emil who came to this country and who visited us a couple of times, and a daughter Augusta. Their father died when they were quite young and Tante Doris had to try to support them, she worked in a tobacco factory sorting leaves. I have seen from letters that she was good at complaining and that my folk sometimes sent her a little gift of money out of their meagre funds. Mother's brother Peter had real curly hair and was mother's favorite. He also died quite young and probably also from T.B. Jens who was the oldest married and took over the farm when grandfather died. He had two children Holger and Dora. Both Jens and his wife died early in life and I don't know who took care of the children at least Mother knew very little about them. Erik August Raben was the

youngest and learned the butter-making trade but couldn't get a job. He was in love with a quite wealthy girl or rather her folks were wealthy. They had a "forretning" [business] in Haderslev. They wouldn't give their consent to their engagement as August was too poor. In old letters I learned how August begged Mother and Father to help them if they came to America. They would both do any kind of work if they could come. Rather than lose their daughter in that way the old Beck's relented and set up a store in Esbjerg for the young couple. Esbjerg was quite a new city and while it grew my uncle prospered and became quite a rich man. He teased Mother sometimes in his letters about her milking cows and thought she and father could have been better off if they had stayed in Denmark. Uncle August often wanted me to come and visit them but I had no desire nor was there ever money for a trip like that. His wife's name was Sofie Beck. They had two children, Elise who married a Andreas Nielsen and Peter who took over the store in Kirkestrade, Esbjerg.

Father came to Clinton in 1882, two of his brothers were already there and Peter and father came together. Father was rejected in the German service but his brothers would have had to be conscripted so they went to America. In the spring of 1888 father went to Denmark again. I guess he had always liked my mother since they went to school together, but didn't think she was interested but now he asked her and she said yes. He went back to Clinton to start to build a house. The stones for the basement were from a church. When he wrote that to Mother it made her happy, she thought it a good foundation for a good home, and we did have a good home. Mother came to Clinton in Sept 1888 but the house wasn't finished so she stayed with Pastor and "Frue" Grundtvig till the 14 of Nov when they were married. I'm sure my uncles helped my father build the house. Therkild was a good carpenter. It was a nice house for those times. Now we wouldn't say it was handy, but it was better than average, a lot of steps from stove to pantry etc. The pump was right outside the kitchen door but that was only for drinking, then there was a cistern with a pump by the sink that was for washing and dishes. There was also a pump in the cellar and a stove so it was also a pump in the cellar and a stove so it was real handy with washing. When Mother moved in, father's brothers also moved in, which Mother wasn't always so happy about. They however gradually found other places to stay. Theo and Therkild went to Emmet County where they built a house on the farm and the necessary out buildings. All well built and neat. Peter worked for an Armstrong Hardware Co. and soon found himself a girl friend by the name of Marie Lund. I wish I could remember the year they were married. That wedding is another story which I can just as well relate now. It was in early spring because they were going out to farm together with Theodor and field work there started in March. The wedding was to be at Marie's married sister, Hans Dahls. We were in our best clothes and a cab hired to take us. I don't know how many we were. I can faintly remember the dining room with I suppose much good food but I didn't ever eat when we were away so that didn't tempt me, nor can I remember being offered anything, kids didn't count. Nora was always quite aggressive when it came to

eating and I know she got something. Erik had gotten an orange which he put in his overcoat pocket for another day.

They had an organ in the parlor and someone started to play and of course I started to cry, not loud of course, just in my mother's lap. Wonder why I was so sensitive to music that I always got sad and wanted to cry. Well the wedding was over and we kids were full of cigar smoke and we all got stuffed into the cab. Nora got sick, the cab was dark and Marie Hovgaard had her best dress on sitting next to Nora. Mother held her hand tight on Nora's mouth and as Nora said rubbed it around in her face, but Mother was afraid of Marie's dress. What happened was that most of it went in with Erik's orange in his pocket. That fixed that, Erik couldn't eat it.

One thing I should mention was when uncles stayed with us, they a couple of times, had a party when Mother and Father were going some place and we were left home. There were 3 Lund sisters, Marie who was engaged to Peter, Lizzie who later married Theodor and Inez. Uncles would buy oysters and little oyster crackers and make oyster soup. We had some of those tiny crackers and that was a treat. They didn't seem to mind that we were around. When it came to washing the dishes the girls of course did that. Peter always liked jokes and when they poured water in the sink he told them it ran down in the basement and they hurried down to see what damage it had done. It went down in the basement alright but only thru a pipe to the sewer. We thought that a good joke. I guess Peter got all the humor in that family. My father and the other brothers didn't have much. Mother had the humor and had so many funny sayings and little stories from her childhood. Her mother was quite stern and strict and her father easy going and kind. Her brother August was often in mischief and was put in the dog house, a little closed off hole. It didn't take long before his father let him out. Mother's mother liked to read and read all she could get in that line. Reading matter wasn't too plenty ful. She couldn't spend all her time on that, there was a lot of knitting to do with 6 children. Often when the foot of socks were worn they were raveled and a new foot was knitted into the old leg during the evening so the child could get them on the next day. She didn't waste time however she would sit and read as she knitted and sometimes skip a needle having a long string of yarn on the inside, that she called a "hest" horse, for what reason I don't know. She made a beautiful bedspread for Mother with no mistakes tho Mother thought there was one till I discovered that it was Mother's initials and date A. R. 1888 that was knit into the border. She sent it in strips to my mother but died before she got the last strip finished so it is very small.

Knudsens

The family of Knudsen's were a part of us. Never could there be better friends. Father must have gotten acquainted with them as soon as he came to Clinton. Mrs. Knudsen had come to this country at an early age and spoke English very well, in fact without an accent. She was a great help to newcomers. Grandfather Niels Hansen's came too Clinton at about that time and Bedstemor Pedersen and Sine used to talk about what help she had been to that family when they had sickness and had to talk to the doctor.

Knudsens had many children and much sorrow. Diphtheria was a dreaded disease in those days and during an epidemic two little boys died. Alfred our good friend was so very sick that they didn't expect him to live. Of 12 children we only got to know 5. Tina, Henry, Alma, Alfred and Frederik. Little Fefe as we called him was a beautiful boy with large brown eyes. He was my playmate but it lasted only such a short time. He got pneumonia and that time there was little to do for that so he died. The church bell always tolled when someone died. We were in school in the basement rooms of the church. I cried, how could I not cry when my little playmate was dead. The teacher, otherwise kindhearted, gave me a little scolding. I still can see that little white coffin and smell the flowers. Poor Mrs. Knudsen, it was her lot to lose them one by one and still be brave.

By that time Peter Knudsen had built a house caty-corner to the church and school. He had also built a butchershop next to it and was in the meat business. I'm sure he did well in his business he was a shrewd dealer when it came to the wholesale but I'm sure generous when it came to the customers. We kids seldom came in without getting a weiner. They came in big baskets in long long strings and how he could flick one off for each of us with his thumb. After school we had to go in and get our pound of roundsteak. A pound of roundsteak was the round of a big hindquarter of beef. No wonder it made an ample supper for all of us plus a little to slice for Father's rye bread sandwich for the next days lunch. Speaking of weiners, we didn't know they were eaten any way but raw. We never had weiners for a meal. Peter Knudsen made his own sausages and smoked them, also made some small pork sausages that were twisted together in three to a bunch but in a long string. It was fun to see him do it. He was a tall angular man with extra large hands and feet. He always had a smile and a kind word for us kids. Their home was our home when we went to school and I now can't understand that we had the run of the house as we did. Our gym shoes were dropped at Knudsens at the end of the school year and we went there to look for them when school started again. There was a general hunt to find them in the corner of the closet or under the bed. Mrs Knudsen was a very heavy woman, easy going and didn't very often get to the bottom of things in those days. Meals were simple and she could get what she wanted from the shop or from the store across the street but she was very careful with money. A penny went a long way. I'll never forget her saying to Alma "I don't like to have you go to town with so

much money.” Alma was going Christmas shopping and had one dollar. She was a girl about 6 or 7 years older than me and Mother sometimes trusted me with quite a sum to go and pay the grocery bill. Mother didn’t run to town shopping very often, not for groceries, but that is another story.

Knudsen’s kitchen was so well packed that to clean it would be almost impossible. There was a certain smell in Danish called Hjemmets Luft [home smell]. It was a combination of perfumed soap and fried pork. Fried pork was what they usually had, not steak nor chops, just plain side pork, potatoes and milk gravy. I sat on a trunk in the corner and watched them eat. I had already eaten my meager lunch of rye bread with homemade cheese, which was all I wanted along for lunch. One day there was a delicious lemon pie for dessert. Mother never made lemon pie and I guess I almost ate it with my eyes. Tine saw that look and she told her mother to cut the pie in 6 pieces, they were five at the table, but Mrs. Knudsen cut it in 5. Tine cut her piece in half and gave me half of hers. Not a word was said but I never forgot it. As I said Mrs K was not generous. There was never a cookie or a handout. I could never begin to tell all the things that were in that kitchen but Mrs. Knudsen sat with her back to the stoves (they had both wood and gas) when they ate and she could turn around and take things from the stove. The frying pan a cast iron one had so handle but how she could take that with her bare hands I never knew. Pot holders weren’t invented I guess but there was always the bottom of an apron.

In one little corner of the kitchen Tine had her sewing machine by a window to the north. She was dress maker and she always made our Sunday dresses. One a year for Christmas. She of course helped with the housework. After dinner she put on a show. Her father had gone to the shop again. Alma went to High school which was quite a walk away and Alfred had also gone. I just had to go across the street. Tine would put her arms around her mother and try to twirl her around which wasn’t easy, then to entertain me she would curve her back as much as possible and dance with a teacup on her lower back. Then to the piano in the parlor where she would play and sing, “Dansker har Sejren vunden, hurra, hurra”. I think it was the only song she could play. After that it was time to run across the street to school. I think at that time Erik & Nora went to the Hawthorn School. My two good friends Sofie & Enok went home to dinner as did most of the children in the neighborhood so there was no one to play with. Sometimes there were big boys that came in from the country for a few months to go to school and confirmation classes. I don’t know how they spent the noon hour, they must have brought their lunch.

Well back to Knudsen. Eventually there came a young man into Tina’s life. He was from Denmark. A nice looking man with dark curly hair. Preparations for a wedding were started. Mother helped with quilts and pillows that had to be stuffed with goose feathers. They had plenty feathers from all the geese and ducks that Peter Knudsen butchered. The wedding was the 17 of Feb and I think we had white dresses on. In those days there was always a warm supper and a dance. It was held in the Forsamlingshus [meeting house or hall] where there was a kitchen and large dining room on first floor and hall on all of second floor where we danced. I was

always so happy if a grown up took pity on me and gave me a few rounds. That night it was the groom that swung me around a few times. Enok and I danced too. I can remember sitting in on a little talk between Mother and Mrs Knudsen while they sat at the coffee table. Mother had made a special cake and that stood in front of us. I don't think it had frosting, but it was many thin layers put together with so many kinds of jelly and filling. One layer was ground almonds soaked in rosewater. When there was a special dance they had an orchestra and a man by the name something like Barborka had a harp and we really thought that was about as close to heavenly music as you could get. Tina and Niels Jorgensen left for Halfa Iowa right after the wedding, they were going to live on a farm that Peter Knudsen owned out there. Farm life in those days wasn't the easiest. I don't know if it was the next year when they had a little baby boy that they both had to go to the hospital for operations. The little baby was at Knudsen's. He got pneumonia while Tina was at the hospital and died. Another little boy taken away from the family and it was sad. There were in time 5 little girls and finally a boy born to Niels and Tina. One was named Augusta for me. Tina was a perfect housekeeper and they had a nice home in Ringsted.

On Sundays when we had been to Sunday School and our parents were in church, we scooted over to Knudsens to see the funny paper with Happy Hooligan, The Katsenjammer Kids, Gaston and Alfonso, etc. When church was over and it was time to go home Alfred would say "Ma, kan æ gaa op te Smidt's?" Daa ka spor din Far." Pa kan æ gaa op te Smidt's? Spor din Moa. Ma sejer æ ka gaa vis daa sejer æ kan." [Ma, can I go up to Smidt's? Ask your father. Pa can I go up to Smidt's? Ask your Mother. Mother says I can go if you say I can.] That settled it and Alfred got a nickel which was duly exchanged for 15 dip caramels next door at the candy shop. With each of us chewing a caramel and Alfred holding the bag with the rest of the candy we trudged home. Maybe it was because Alfred came to dinner that the 3# beef roast was so generous. Mothers food was always blessed it seems because there was always enough and some left over. Of course we didn't eat much any of us, I can see that now. It often happened that Knudsen's and Faber's stopped in on a Sunday afternoon. Afternoon coffee wasn't a common thing but Mother put some supper on the table. How there could be enough meat left to make a plate of sliced roast, I don't know. There was always plenty of Mothers good rye bread and white bread and cheese, both brick or Swiss and home made Brttevost. Sometimes there was fried eggs and then Syndeskage [Sunday Cake]. One Sunday Mother must have known we would have company because the cake wasn't cut. Often we had a piece of cake on Sunday morning, it probably was our breakfast. At any rate the cake was cut and put on the table. We kids were playing "Hide the Thimble" and Pastor Faber volunteered to hide it for me. He stuck it down in the middle of the cake and we all thot it quite a joke when it finally was discovered. The thimble was duly licked of by either

Neighbors in Ringwood

When Father built the house that was the only one on that street or rather that block. Mother enjoyed the sunshine that came in thru the 2 south windows in the dining room, but soon someone built a house to the south and as the lots were very narrow it cast quite a shadow in the winter. Our neighbors were Green's. They were Yankees from down East. The back yards as most were divided by a high board fence. We seldom saw Mr. Green. He went to work early in the morning and in the evening he was seldom seen except when he had the first ripe tomatoes, then he would stick his head up over the fence and call Mother over to see them. Their outside doors opened to the other side so we seldom saw any coming and going and I'm sure Mrs. Green never left the house. However she could keep an eye on all our activities and would open the window and talk to my mother. Mother would walk over to the window and Mrs. Green would say, "Save your steps, Mrs. Smith." They were old people and their children were grown and married and seldom came home. One daughter's only child came every summer and stayed there. His name was Edwin Warren Camp, a beautiful boy with dark curly hair. It was a happy day to me when he came and we played together all summer. He had a little toy piano that he would bring over but when he was offended he took his piano under his arm and went home. Mrs Green would some times hand out a large white cookie, they were thick and not very sweet and had a few caraway seeds in them and we loved them. We never went to their yard to play and the few errands we had to their house only brought us just inside the kitchen door. The house smelled of vinegar and spices and a cruet always stood on the table. Erik was sometimes sent on an errand for Mrs. Green. She had to have vinegar from a special place and the mother of vinegar had to be washed off and put back in the jug. Once Erik went to get raspberries out in the country. I went with him. He had a basket with two handles. The boxes of berries were put in the basket and Erik carried the basket in different positions to show off a little. Finally he hung the handles on the button on his coat and that did it, the whole thing fell in the dust. We scooped the berries back in the boxes as best we could but they were quite covered with dust and mother had to keep the berries and I suppose Erik had to go and get some more. Raspberries we didn't ever get they were beyond our means. One more thing about Mrs Green. She saw us climbing trees and hang by our knees with our dresses hanging down over our head, that was too much for her, but what could she say except telling Nora that she was glad to see that she didn't do that any more. Edwin wasn't allowed to play on Sundays, so he sat on the edge of the lawn, a little forlorn fellow, while we played. Wonder what became of that little friend.

The lot in back of us was vacant. To the north was "Mr. Farmer". Their name was Childs, but they were retired farmers. They had a horse and we saw him clean the barn and that's about all we saw of them. The big house across the ally was Dirk's also retired farmers. They had a barn and 2 horses and a beautiful shiny buggy. We delivered milk there so we came into their shiny kitchen. The little milk

pail always had to be washed and it took Mrs. Dirk so long to wipe it dry while we stood there nervous to get off, there was little time to spare when we had to get to school in time and we were often late. Sometimes we had to wait for a cookie and she would go into the pantry to get a little vanilla wafer and tell us that they were so 'dear'. We often wondered how the rest of the house looked. Many years later when Einar and I were in Clinton we were driving around in the, old to me, familiar streets. But how it had changed, houses everywhere where before had been empty lots, fields and cow pasture. The small barns that we then thought were large were all gone and all fences that had enclosed the backyards were also gone. At the Dirk house there was a sign "Tourist Rooms." We had looked for a place to sleep so I said " I'm going to sleep in Dirk's house." So we inquired at the door and came into the front hall where there was an open stairway. I tried to push in a little further to try to see the living room and dining room but that better of it when I saw thru an open door that a man was lying in a bed. The woman wanted to see Einar's Social Security card and of course get our car license number. "We have to be careful or soon we have the police investigating," she said. I thought she looked like she probably had had previously encounters with authority. Well it still was a nice district so I guess it could go so bad for one night. We had a real nice room at the back of the hall upstairs and could look down into our old yard and the ally where we had walked so often and where Father always came from the street car, home from work. There were many cars parked in the little back yard beside ours, so there were probably many others in the house that night. There was also a window to the South looking down on Clausen's house and I wondered that at that time when land was so plenty ful that houses were built so close together. There was barely room for a sidewalk between the houses. Thank goodness ours hadn't been so close, we had a little place to spread and had trees. Clausen's were also Germans. There were four girls. Two were older than I was but we played together. I wouldn't say she was the best company for "innocense." Father somehow didn't like to have associate with the Clausen's. In their backyard was the largest Cotton wood tree that I have ever seen. It filled the yard and how they ever got it cut down I wouldn't know. It was larger than the "Big Tree" that was the boundary between Clinton and Lyons, a short block from our home. The first house in the next block was Hansen's. It was a large house and a large family. Also Germans but not retired farmers tho they could have been formerly. There were 5 grown up children staying at home, all working except Clara who helped at home and it must have been a full time job for her and her old mother to keep that big place. Then there was Alma and Alma was the star of our neighborhood and in her own family too. She was a little older than Nora and her best friend. Nora went there to play but I was just the tag a long and wasn't always wanted. I did see most of the house once in awhile. There was a large dark kitchen where we delivered the quart of milk morning and night. A large dining room with the long table always set for the next meal. A sitting room and a parlor with a fireplace, neither was seldom used. Then the large hall with open stairway. There of course was a back stairway as most houses had and a hodge podge room where

Clara had her sewing machine and the young sons their bicycles. One son was married and had quite a few children and how Alma hated when Christine and the kids were coming. Alma was so much fun and Erik liked her and liked to tease her and Nora when they played. Nora would get mad and Alma would enjoy it. It seemed that most playing went on in our yard always. We had that good stoop where we could make mud pies and wine by the quarts out of beet stalks. We had swing and the "elevator" a loop in a rope with the board seat fastened into. The rope was thrown over the big limb of the maple tree and the strong ones could hoist themselves up to the first limb of the tree. Then there was the barn with trapeze from the ceiling where we hung by our arms and legs and toes. That came to an abrupt end one day. The bar was an old broom handle and rather slippery but I could hang by my toes on it and didn't weigh much so I was the only one who could do it and was rather proud. I asked Mother to come and see my stunt and that was the time my shoes slipped and I fell flat on my back. I can still see Mother, I don't think I got much pity but she grabbed a hammer from the work bench and the biggest spikes she could find and the rope really got nailed to the 2X4s on the ceiling.

On Erik's birthday there were always the usual boys, Alfred Knudsen, Soren Juhl, Mathias Thuesen, Soren Nielsen. They played in the hay loft and slid down a rope into the alley, all those daring things, it burned the hands but they dared each other. Mother baked Æbleskiver in the basement and Soren always came to the cellar window to get a handout.

Nora's birthday was always quite a big affair, many girl friends and many little gifts of pretty little cups etc. She had lemonade and cake. We didn't splurge with so many kinds of food or cookies.

My birthday was a quiet affair. I had Enok & Sophie and little Fifi but little Fifi lived only a few years.

Going back to neighbors, when we went past Hansens there was a block of a little higher class people. The fathers were office workers, so Father in his office was a little more than Father going to a factory and we felt it. We were also foreigners, they had probably come over on the Mayflower. Also we didn't go to the same school at that time, we going to the Danish parochial school. Next to Hansen's were Heide Lueblers and her old mother. We only knew that she was engaged to a man who lived in Lyons but her mother would not let him come to the house nor let her marry him and leave her. So we saw her every evening take a walk north to see him. She was quite old even then and I hope her mother didn't live too long. Next came Coes, they had 2 boys. The youngest Alan was a real prig, walked with his nose in the air as if he owned the whole world. Then there was Walters. Charlotte was about Nora's age and they did play together. They had quite a large yard and some heavenly apple trees. They also had the most gorgeous outhouse, a large square house with 4 seats built on the 4 sides of a square wooden ventilator. There were different sizes from Papa Bear to Little Bear and all had covers that were hinged on. It was made of clear pine and almost smelled clean and good. I can imagine that the poor German washerwoman who came and did the washing and who could make

such good noodle soup could give the outhouse a good scrubbing in the same deal. I never saw Mrs. Walters but Mr. was a jolly man who told us not to eat too many green apples because he wouldn't rub our stomach. The last in the block were McMann's. There we also went with a pint of milk and we were called "honey" and "dear" and "sweetheart." She was always concerned if the bow on our kitty hood hung down a little and got a pin to pin it up, it could make us cross-eyed. On the front of the house was a lions head that Father had carved for them when they built the house. The first one he made had it's mouth wide open and looked ferocious so they didn't want that. I can remember it and wonder what happened to it. On the other side in the same block was a large rambling house set way back from the street. There lived 3 sisters, Mrs Cook, Mrs Gibbs, They had owned all the land in the neighborhood and still owned the cow pasture and the empty land across from our place. In the next block north and directly East of our place was another grand old house with a driveway up past the front door. That was one of our steady places to bring milk and they had 2 hired girls. At one time it was friends of our family. One evening Alma Knudsen went with me to the place. The young daughter and her boy friend were going thru the ice box. "Where is the lobster?" she said. Alma whispered to me "Right behind you." I thought that was clever and funny.

On the corner next block north of us, where we could scoot thru the alley were Crawfords. They had to have a pint of milk morning and night. The first thing they did was to pour a saucer for the cat. They were an old couple and the cat was probably all they had to lavish love on. Then Mr Crawford would put his hands together and make a hoop with his arms and say "Jump Tige," and Tige would jump back and forth a few times to his amusement. We had many places to take milk according to how much milk the cows would produce. People liked that rich Jersey milk. One place was a little farther away and Erik usually went there. I can't remember if it was on the other side of the track but it was in a poorer district and near the saw mill and paper mill. They were Danish. She was a frail kind woman and evidently had TB.

I have often wondered that Mother would let us go near the place but in those days TB was everywhere and I'm sure some of the children in school had it and we all drank out of the same dipper and what we didn't drink went back in the pail. However I can remember how this lady would hold a corner of her apron over her mouth and cough and cough and then kind as she was would hand me such a large Frosted Crème cookie.

While we are on the milk subject, I'll tell about the butter and the cheese. Butter was churned in a large crock made for that purpose and it often took a lot of patience to get the butter to form. As the dasher went up and down a little would start to form on the cover, then it took a little different stomping to get the butter together in a mass. Making cheese was a longer process. It took a lot of skim milk. It was no effort to get milk sour. It was poured in the boiler on the stove in the cellar, heated slightly till it curdled. Then it was dipped into a piece of cheese cloth placed in a strainer. The whey went in the sewer and the curds were wrung tight in the cloth. I

could have eaten myself sick in those curds but Mother said don't eat too much it makes worms. In those days they didn't know too much about nutrition. It would have been the best thing for me with my little appetite and paper thin nails.

After that process was over the cheese was put in a square wooden form that had holes in the bottom, a board to fit was put on top and it was pressed in the wine press with a jack screw. After it had been pressed for a few hours it was as hard a solid rubber. Then it was grated real fine and put in a crock, covered with a plate and set behind the stove. From then on it made quite a unique odor in the kitchen. When it had fermented into a sticky mass it was heated in an iron kettle with salt, caraway seed and a little butter. Then it was pressed into glasses and when it had cooled was ready to store away. It was a little rubbery at first but it got mellow and was it ever good. Many pieces of dark sour rye bread and cheese went to work with my Father. A thin slice of bread a cheese was all I had along to school. It wasn't much to grow on. What Erik & Nora had I don't know. I'm sure it wasn't much. Tho Nora had a better appetite.

“Gammel Stine”

She was our dear old friend. A little toil worn woman, squat and I'm sure not very pretty with a brown wrinkled face and wattles of loose skin under her chin, which were so soft to touch when I sat on her lap. She was the closest to a grandmother that I ever knew. She had known my folks from Denmark or at least my mother's parents as she had worked on the “Gaard” across from my mother's home and thought a lot of Erik Raben. She was 18 years older than my mother so I doubt Mother remembered her from Denmark so at this time when I first knew her she must have been an old woman in the early sixties. Her husband was dead. Little ears pick up things and one was that her husband was bad at drinking which had caused the youngest child, a girl, to be a little mentally retarded. “Ung Stine” (Young Stine) at that time could possibly have been twenty, I don't know. Quite a pretty girl, quiet and oh so neat. She and her mother lived in a little house on Elm Street about a block west of the church. How they got their living I don't know unless Gammel Stine had a little work here and there. There was one son also at home, not too ambitious, they said, he probably helped her a little. When the elders talked we always got the impressions, was it good or not so good, drinking then as now, was a problem for many. Then there were 2 other sons, Jes and Hans, they lived in “Groudy County” as Gammel Stine pronounced it and that was the way we pronounced it too. They were on farms, had quite a few children and both had lost their wives. Each had an oldest daughter by the name of Annie. So it was Jes' Annie and Hans' Annie. The two Stines sometimes went out there to help them and would tell a little about farm life when they came back. The separator was one thing I couldn't understand when they talked about all those cups that fit into each other and the job of washing them. I had a good picture of an Iowa farm in those days, mud and flies and smell of hogs. We liked to visit Gammel Stine in her little house, it wasn't often but she always had rock candy and I can yet see how she broke off the string, a little piece for each of us, her one thumb was about at least an inch across. Ung Stine could go to the store and meat market for her mother. They were her friends and I'm sure always gave her a little extra. She knew she got a good deal when it was Henry Knudsen who waited on her. One day when she was on the street a dog attacked her, she was afraid of dogs, maybe it was just friendly but it jumped up on her and tore her clothes. That was too much for her, she lost her mind entirely and was impossible to quiet down.

Both Mother and Mrs Knudsen were there to help, she tore off clothes and nothing was strong enough to hold her. Finally they had to take her to an institution in Independence Iowa where she spent the rest of her life. She had been such a good kind person. Mrs Knudsen went along when they took her away. Gammel Stine came with Mother home and stayed for awhile. Mother said “I saw her on her knees in her little bedroom praying, when she came out she was composed.” I slept upstairs with her and told her all the fairy tales I knew. I knew many in those days and she listened patiently as we snuggled together under the featherbed. She slept in

her underwear, I doubt she had a nightgown. She had quite tight fitting gray flannel pants, knee length, what could be seen of her legs and arms was about as brown as coffee. She had been good at dancing in her young days and could dance what she called "the Reel." She demonstrated for me but had to hold on to the bedpost to keep her balance while her little legs went. It really was a funny sight and I loved her. Finally the time came when she had to leave and go to one of her sons. I couldn't understand why she couldn't stay with us always. No matter how kindhearted and generous my folks were, it wasn't easy to have one more mouth to feed. We heard no more from her. Who Mrs Knudsen kept in touch with I don't know. Young Stine got along well where she was and Gammel Stine moved with one of the sons to Montana. Life must have become unbearable to this otherwise courageous little woman, she took her own life. Poor soul, God bless her.

Mette's Moa.

Mette's Moa was so called by us because she had a daughter by the name Mette. It seemed that these old people were too close to us to be called Mrs. Mette's Moa sometimes came to babysit when Mother and Father went to a "ball." What those balls were I don't know but I suppose it was a dance in the Danish Hall before we had our own "Forsamlingshus." Mette's Moa was like a grandmother too. She was small and mild mannered. She knew so many old rhymes that we thought were so funny, such as "Det var Lille Per Skokketaa, han kunde hverken staa eller gaa, saa tog de en stol og sate have paa." [There was Little Peter Skokketaa, he could neither stand nor walk, so they took a stool and sat him on it.] Mette's Moa and her husband Gammel Hans lived on the other side of the track and on the river's edge. They had a neat little house but how they got a living I don't know unless their daughter and her son helped them. I have no idea how old they were, to me they were very old. I think Gammel Hans was thru working, probably because of health. I[t] was hard for him to breathe and I have never seen him move around. When he worked I think he had worked as common laborer at whatever he could pick up. There was at that time a poll tax and as I understand it, it meant a days labor for the city. The ones who made good wages would hire a lower income man to fill their place. Father at \$3.00 a day could probably hire a man for \$1.00. This is just a guess. Well back to Mette's Moa. It was an interesting place to visit. A few steps from the back door was a wall, but the wall was down to the river. In low times there was quite a stretch to the main current but in the spring it came up to the wall and Mette's Moa watched carefully how far it crept up. In the years I can remember there was never a flood there, but later I guess there was and I have often wondered how far it covered. In her younger days Mette's Moa had a boat and would row out and salvage wood that floated on the river. There was a sawmill a few blocks north up stream and I'm sure she could

gather quite a few stray logs. How that little woman managed to tow them in I don't know. Her shed was up on poles and then she sawed them into stove wood.

I met her daughter many years later in Tyler and wish now I had asked many questions. We let so many opportunities pass by. Mette worked in Chicago and in the parlor where we were sometimes allowed to enter there were many interesting things to see when she was there to show us. She gave us a few doilies and silk thread to sew with. I still have one but it was never finished. Mette's Moa's weakness was tin pails, little lard pails etc. that hung shining from the ceiling in the pantry. One time I remember well was when I had to get the "sur dejg" sour dough that Mette's Moa had borrowed from Mother. Funny Mother dared let me walk alone. I had to cross the railroad track and I can't have been very old, it was before I went to school. Most places had board sidewalks but here on the East side of 2nd street was cement, it had rained and there were puddles of water which reflected the large elm trees and a little girl upside down. It frightened me so I ran home again. Mother wasn't too happy when she got the sour dough back it was so full of salt that the bread wouldn't rise. Mette's Moa's old age was I'm sure pleasant. Her daughter married a widow by the name of Jurgens who was a member of the Synod board and lived in Marinette Wis. He [was] quite wealthy and Mette's Moa went to live with them after her husband died. I know her daughter was good to her.

Gammel Mrs Juhl.

This old lady I didn't know very well except by name. In those days there was no social security nor old age pension, no nothing. Old people lived as best they could and the children maybe helped them if they could, but probably had all they could do to make ends meet for themselves. Mrs Juhl had a daughter who could have helped her, but didn't so she as they said had a "lysted tif hver dag." That meant someplace to visit each day. The day she came to our house, which was quite a walk for her, my mother made "sago vælling" for her. That was her favorite, it was sago cooked in milk. She had no teeth so I can still see her slurping it and enjoying each spoonful and as far as I was concerned not envied.

Julle (Yulle)

We met one day coming from town. I spent most of my waking hours on the corner of 4th and Elm. The stores were all beyond that, the first hardware store a few blocks south. She had been there to get a can of paint and that gave a gurgling sound at every step she took. Whether I caught up with her or visa versa doesn't make any difference, but we talked together and got acquainted. She lived just a block from my home in one of three houses in the next block across from our house. People seemed to move in and out of those houses and we really never knew who lived there. Yulle was a pretty girl with the sweetest smile I have ever seen and a row of not too straight teeth. Her hair was light brown and curly so there was always a row of little curls around her forehead. We saw each other now and then but didn't play together. I had my own friends. Our mothers met sometimes and had a little chat. Mrs Thompson was from that part of Germany bordering on Denmark and she talked a mixture of German and Danish and they understood each other very well. Tho I think Mother's German was better than her Danish.

Then they moved on and we still stayed in our nice house in Ringwood. We knew there was a change coming. Father was dissatisfied with conditions where he worked. Often they were laid off or there was a strike. Unions were being started and Father didn't seem to like them. Finally the first step was taken to try something else. Mother and Father took a trip to Ringsted and to Tyler to look for a farm. In those places well settled and prosperous land was beyond our reach. Mother didn't want to live on the prairie, she had Wisconsin woods in her mind. Nothing was settled but we had a buyer for our house. I can remember Nora and I were home alone when the agent and the buyer came. They went thru the house and felt the woodwork and pounded the walls. They were solid and I hated to see them touch and feel, it was us our body and soul our haven against the whole world. I remember Mother sitting on the front step and stroking the banister, she had tears in her eyes and it hurt. It was necessity and you had to have a stout heart. The house was sold and we moved to a little white house about 5 block away. It was below a hill in the outskirts of town. One of two houses in that neighborhood. On our East side not too close there was a big barn or rather a stable where they had Percheron stallions. It wasn't the most exclusive place to live and we resented it. We saw the caretakers exercise the animals, they were beautifully groomed and strong & spirited and the men mostly negroes were proud of them.

The house was real cozy but cramped. We seemed always to have extra people around. That year we had a boy by the name Holger Ottosen staying with us. He came from a large family who lived in Savannah. His mother was a widow and we thot they were poor but maybe better off than we were. At any rate he came to go to confirmation class and to danish school. His sister had stayed with us a few years earlier. Then Uncle Therkild also moved with us and I'm sure he always helped along financially. He always seemed to have work. Those two men had a little back

bedroom. Nora and I slept in the same bedroom as Mother and Father. Erik slept on a little folding cot that had to be set up each night in the living room.

That was the fall when I was 11 and I could bake a cake and was proud of it. That was what I was doing one day when Mother was entertaining a friend in the living room. Baking a cake meant putting the right amount of wood in the stove to make the oven the right temperature, not easy for a novice, but didn't seem to be a problem for a good cook. A cake was made from scratch. A lump of butter and so forth with a tea cup for measurement and one half a cup judged by the eye. We had just moved and the dishes and ingredients etc were stored on shelves in the pantry. I put in two teaspoons of Baking Powder out of the Royal can, got the batter in three pans in the oven. Peeking at it once in awhile I couldn't see it rise or get brown, it stayed flat and white. It was a sad cake that came out of the oven and Mother discovered that I had put in two teaspoons of Plaster Paris, which also was stored in a Royal Baking Powder can. I was never lived down and the cake was never downed either.

I remember my eleventh birthday. I got a long coveted fur collar, it was black and most likely cat-skin, it cost \$1.25. I also got a little black handbag and I went alone to the dentist to get my first filling put in a tooth. I was a proud girl walking up to 5th Ave to the office in all my finery.

To get back to Yulle. Mr Thompsen and a son Justus worked at a sawmill in Lyons. One day they hadn't gotten their lunch box along and Yulle had to bring it to them. I went along and while everything was at a standstill at the large mill we went exploring. This mill was on the great Mississippi River and the huge pine logs were hauled out of the river and into the mill. There were piles and piles of lumber stacked like buildings with streets in between and tracks where there were little flat cars that brought the lumber around. These little cars were pushed by the men. One was empty and we got on one and took ourselves a ride. It all went well and we got a little more brave, gave the car a good shove and that switch wasn't quite closed so we went towards the river at quite a good speed. What we didn't know was that there was a plank to stop the cars from going into the river. That stopped us but also threw the car off the track. There were two girls who headed behind a lumber pile and took off for home.

Yulles mother took in washing and that was not just family wash, it was for the Wartburg college boys, how many I don't know. On Mondays Justice sometimes stayed home to pull the washing machine and carry water. When the washing and ironing was done and also the mending Mother sometimes took home a large bunch of socks to darn, then it was Yulles turn to help and I loved to be in on that. Yulle could read and write and she had all of it in the book. The names and how many pairs of socks with such and such a mark. Shirts, underwear and handkerchiefs. I helped sort it out in piles and wrap in paper and Yulle put the name on. The student who took care of gathering the laundry and sorting it at the college got his washing done gratis. He always had lots of clothes in his list, many handkerchiefs with many

different names. It meant quite a bit with a penny here and a penny there for a poor student.

Mrs Thompsen was very concerned about her children. Justus was a good boy, maybe a little retarded but Chris was a dapper fellow, what he did or where he worked I don't know but Mrs Thompsen confided in Mother that she had promised him a gold watch and all manner of things if he wouldn't drink. Dora was a pretty young girl, but had to be watched over. One night there was a carnival a couple of blocks from our place and Nora and I got permission to go with Dora and Julia to see what we could see. We mingled with the crowd and that is about all I can remember. I'm sure we didn't have any money to spend. Suddenly Dora was gone but instead Mama Thompsen appeared and she ran here and there hunting for Dora. The next day she came crying to Mother. And to think, Mrs Smidt, my pretty girl has turned into a tough. I'm sure Dora was a good girl, she was young and maybe in love. At least she wanted to kick up her heels and not have mother watch every step.

One Sunday Yulle and I decided we were going to the ice cream parlor for an ice cream soda. How it came about that we got permission I still can't figure out. I had on a new white lawn dress with little light blue rose buds and I had 5 cents. Yulle also had 5 cents plus two street car chips that she had "found." We got on the street car and I think we were the only passengers. The conductor didn't even bother to come and collect fare, that was his business, so we rode all the way to 5th Ave. where the Dago's had the ice cream parlor. What a treat to sit and draw that heavenly concoction thru a straw. Strawberry in cream soda, my first one. And we had two chips to take us home again. Wonder what fate had in store for Yulle.

Our Two Worlds

One world was our home and surroundings in Ringwood. The other world was 4th & Elm Street. There was the church, the school, the grocery store, butcher shop, (not a meat market at that time) and a candy store. Best of all there were our friends in and around that neighborhood. The parsonage was next to the church and there were my dearest playmates Sophie "Tutt" as she was always called and Enok. I ran in and out of the house with them during recess and playtime and their house was special. Even the smell was more refined but of course on the parlor table there was the large crystal bottle that had a special perfume and the glass stopper was removed on in awhile to give out it's fragrance. They didn't wash at the kitchen sink but had all the requirements in the bedroom with fine soap and talcum powder. Meals and table setting was perfect at all times but of course they always had a hired girl to do the rough work. The pantry had built in cupboards at the bottom and shelves to the high ceiling, at least 10 ft. On some of the top shelves were the cookie boxes and there were always those perfect cookies. Kisses, the likes of which I have never seen, spritz in S shape, small "tvebakker" ["twice baked", like zwieback] and what not. Tutt would sometimes when she knew the coast was clear crawl up on the cupboard, reach up and get a cookie for each of us. Being real coy and talking English she would say "Ma don't need all of them." I felt guilty, it could never happen in our home. For one thing we didn't have cookies all the time. Only at Christmas and they were stored in some stone crocks behind the stove. Mother didn't have boxes and tins to store them in the pantry and it was cold and damp. We "asked" if we wanted a cookie and I don't think we were often refused if there was one left. I don't know what would have happened if Tutt had gotten caught but I would hate to have been there. Pastor Faber wouldn't have made such an issue of it. One Saturday Nora and I were there and he was going to cut a piece of cake for us. The cake baked each Saturday was also perfect. A large loaf cake turned out on a large tray and covered on all sides with chocolate frosting. The slices she cut were very thin about ½ in. Well Pastor Faber cut the end slice for Nora and me so it was all frosting. His children shouldn't be stepchildren so he cut the other end of the cake for them. That didn't sit very good with his wife when she saw it. He was always kind to us but he had the habit of squeezing our hand so tight that we almost hollered ouch when we shook hands with him. Birthdays and Christmas were quite elaborate festivities in their home. The birthday table was set with all the presents and there were many and at Christmas the whole family had to go shopping for fine candies. Chocolates and Bon Bons out of this world. We got a pound of hard candy and a pound of mixed nuts and that was that. Don't tell me that all the ministers in those early days had all hardships. Many were the things that came in their doors. Crates of berries and fruit. Shoes from the shoe store, groceries at a discount, anything and everything that we paid full price for. Doctor and hospital bills were taken care of by our good doctor and a generous gift besides. No wonder we were a little in awe of their way of living, but they were good friends. He didn't spare himself with visiting sick

people, whether they had this contagious disease or another and there was scarlet fever and diphtheria galore in those days. Their children never seemed to get sick. Mrs Faber was small and frail a pretty woman with beautiful wavy hair, she was well educated, had been a teacher in Denmark. Pastor Faber was of slight build, he was of quite wealth family in Denmark and I often wonder how they got the urge to come to U.S.A. It must have been the missionary spirit. Pastor Faber went to the seminary in West Denmark.

I have never seen anyone get into as many fights as Enok & Tutt. The hair would really fly, they pinched and hung on like leeches so their arms were always black & blue. Then they would get boiling red in the face. No wonder little Jens Kjær stod and jumped up and down watching and saying 'Rusta' rusta, (rooster.) I suppose he had heard at home that they said Enok looked like a rooster when he got mad. I could not have had nicer playmates. They were full of fun too and how Tutt could laugh, when she laughed she couldn't stop again and it made us all laugh.

The school yard was so small and covered with sand. Everything was fenced in, fence between the school and the parsonage, fence between the school and the parsonage, fence out too the street even tho it was only about 2 feet from the street to the school. Fence on both sides of the sidewalk that led to a complex of outhouses and the barn where the pastor kept his horse and buggy. How there could be place for all those buildings on that little space, I will never be able to figure out. We each had our own toilet, all in a row, the girls, the pastors, which was locked and they had to carry the key when they "went." Then came the teachers, also with a key and then the boys. On a dark night ours was bad enough at home but this was dark. I wonder if anyone ventured that far.

The school was the basement under the church. There was one small step down. It was quite dark. The windows to the South toward the street had been painted white on the bottom half so people couldn't look in when passing by and neither could we look out to see what was going on. The catholic school was just a block away and there was always a little friction. They could stand up on the picket fence and look in and make faces at us. We had to sit and take it. Outside it was "Danepup, Danepup" and the big boys would say, "cat lick it up, cat lick it up." I never dared do that, I might encounter one of them walking home alone from school.

We had long homemade benches and desks painted a dark brown. There were two rows, an isle in the center. There was a teachers desk, a stove in the corner a water pail with a tin dipper by the back door and a bookcase with a glass door and besides the few books there was a stuffed stork or maybe I should say a mounted one. There was a door to the teachers quarters, consisting of few small rooms. When the teacher didn't live there, she often stayed at the pastors or at our house, then it was rented to a small family. There was also a door going up to the church and one going out to 4th St. I can't remember many cheerful days from those schooldays, just drab. We had our bible class always beginning with Adam & Eve each year. During the day Pastor Faber would come in for a class in Nordic Mythology and Danish History so we knew our Odin and Thor and the line of Kings from Gorm den Gamle

up to date. We had to learn from what year to what year each one had reigned, so it went Gorm den Gamle from 1000 to so and so Harald Blaatand so and so and on and on. I wonder what that did for our knowledge of history, we did that over and over and nothing about later developments in Denmark. Our geography consisted of knowing Denmark from one end to the other. The islands and town and to point to each one on our large map. I had no idea that there was another country but ours and then of course Denmark. Our country we didn't learn much about, neither state of Iowa nor other states. When we had soup for supper. That good beef soup that Mother made with meat balls and dumpling, I sat and made Jylland, Sjælland, Fyn with carrots, potatoes and dumplings, all swimming in Vesterhav, Nordsø, Öresund and Östersøen. [North Sea, the Sound and the Baltic] They all surrounded Denmark and were theirs, outside of that there must have been a dropoff. We did sing many songs and hymns and for that I am thankful, they have been in my mind and heart always. Some were quite sad tho. About the little boy who had to leave home at such an early age to work for a not too kind man. Taking care of cows was often beyond his strength, and the food was often skimpy, so he was tired and sleepy.

The Old Clock

The old clock must have come into our family in 1888. It probably was a wedding present. When father built the house before mothers coming to Clinton to marry him, he made provisions for a clock. It was a little niche built into the wall in the dining room between two windows to the South. It was shaped like a church window and the moulding which made the frame was some discarded pieces from the factory where father worked. Father always seemed to have ideas how to utilize what was on hand. There from the beginning of my memory stood the clock and struck the hour night and day. It became part of me and how happy I was when Erik gave it to me, many years later. I sat for a long time listening to the familiar tick tock and let so many dear memories pass by in my mind. The little rounded top of the clock is gone. That is another story. When we moved to Milltown it was quite a change from our nice house in Clinton. It didn't take long for Father to try to change it for the better, what little could be changed. He bought brown burlap and pasted on the dining room walls to cover all the cracks. It made sort of wainscoting with a molding to finish it off. Shortly before we left Clinton we had gotten the dining room papered with beautiful woodbine leaf design paper. One or two rolls that they had given us was of a different shade so we had to get some that matched and we were allowed to keep the paper as it had already been cut. This came in handy, there was just enough to paper the walls above the burlap and did that ever trim up our little low ceilinged room. A shelf was hung on the wall and the clock on top of the shelf or just about, it was just that much too tall. A resolute cut with a saw solved that problem in a hurry.

Dear old clock, you are still standing on a shelf but you are not ticking and striking as before but I hope you will again some day and for many more days to come.

The Exodus

The 30th of May 1906 we left Clinton. That day stands quite clear in my memory. What went before that, the packing of all our belongings, I can't remember. I know our good friends Peter and Marie Knudsen were there to help. The railroad car had been ordered, I suppose, and it all had to be loaded so they must have had a dray man come to haul furniture, stove, barrels and boxes and trunks. It all went along, nothing was sold nor given away except the cradle and baby buggy, which may have been given away long ago. But the doll buggy we just couldn't take nor my two dolls with china heads, Lisa and Margrethe, one had light hair and one dark. Antiques they would have been now and the doll buggy had been Marie Grundtvig's and was given to us when they went to Denmark. But such was the law, who got them I don't know. Then there were the two cows, Bossie and Kibbies and maybe a calf and six brown leghorn hens a gift from a friend who had chickens and also at least a couple of cats. That all went in the car and father had to go along as caretaker plus Erik as a stowaway. They had built a little corner in the car where they could sleep and have their provisions. They must have left on the 29th. Mother, Nora and I stayed at Knudsen's overnight and as it was Decoration Day we were going out to the cemetery. Mother, Mrs Knudsen and I went to a little old lady who had plants for sale and they bought some to take out to plant. I had a nickel and I saw a rose bud that I wanted to put on grandfathers grave, I don't know if she was reluctant to sell it for five cents but I got it. Mother said I shouldn't have asked for it, she probably could have gotten more for it, but it was just an ordinary rosebush ready to bloom. We were invited to M. Thuesen's for dinner and had new potatoes from the garden and strawberry shortcake. Strawberries also from their own garden. We, Mrs Knudsen, mother and I walked out to the cemetery to plant the flowers. We stopped first at the Knudsen grave. So many little boys were buried there, one, my little friend Fefe, who died from pneumonia. Some had died from diphteria and some probably as newborn babies. I think they had had about 12 children in all and at that time there were four living. I'm not so sure I didn't put my rose on little Fefe's grave. My grandfather's grave was on a newer site toward the south and on a hill. It was probably the last time that flowers were planted there. There was no monument there at the time but Uncle Therkild put one there later. When Einar and I were in Clinton many years later we had no difficulty in finding it, and I took a picture there.

Evening came and our train was leaving sometime during the evening. Peter Knudsen got a cab to take us to the depot. It was too far for Mrs Knudsen to walk, and we had a lot of baggage, not luggage in nice suitcases. There were pillows and quilts to make the night comfortable on the train, lunch boxes and believe it or not a lard pail with chives. We couldn't get along without chives in our new country, and who knew if there was chives to be had there. There were many of our friends there to see us off. My best friends Enok & Sophie had gone to Denmark earlier, and I can't remember if Pastor Faber also had gone. I was given a box of candy by Mrs Thuesen, which was to be from her son, another little playmate. What a delicious assortment

which we enjoyed during our trip. Chocolates with rum-flavored filling that oozed out.

It must have been hard for Mother to say goodbye to her old dear friends and I know that for Knudsen's it was hard to see us go. There was much waving when the train left and we went into a new and strange life.

I don't know how we got by with train fare and tickets. It seems I remember that I got by either at half fare or nothing at all. I was very small at my age of 11 and I suppose I was tired after a long day. There was plenty of room so I had a whole seat to myself and I laid down and Mother covered me with a quilt and I slept (with my thumb in my mouth) so when the conductor came by, I guess he took me for a baby. Thus maybe I got to Wisconsin for nothing. We arrived in St. Paul in early morning and had to change train for Dresser Junction, where we again had to change for Milltown. I can still remember the conductor calling out the stations. Bald Eagle Junction stayed with me. There was no depot agent at Milltown or why we went to Luck I don't know but we arrived there at about noon and Ravnholt was there to meet us. It took a little while to get out belongings together. Our big trunk and boxes that were in the baggage car, so while this all got loaded on the wagon, Nora and I explored the surroundings. What a paradise of flowers and ferns, never had I imagined that ferns could grow so tall and so abundant. We picked a large handful each. Our ride out to Ravnholts was a bumpy one on a lumber wagon with spring seats. Little could I guess that we passed my future home or I would have looked a little closer.

Next day) This was now the 1st of June, the day we were to take over the farm, so I'm sure Ravnholt took Mother over there in the afternoon to make the transaction final. Father and Erik weren't due for another day. I must have gone along because on the way back when we came to the corner of the brick school, there came Erik walking at a fast pace. It seems that while the cars were being switched around in St. Paul to get from the C. B. & Q to the Soo Line, Erik had gotten off for a little fresh air and the car with our belongings had been switched to another place. Among all those boxcars it was hard to find the right one. I don't know if it worried Father that Erik didn't show up. However Erik must have had a little money in his pocket and got a ticket for Luck. Erik and Father had been in Milltown in April when Father bought the farm and Erik was supposed to stay at Ravnholts till we moved in May. He stayed about a week but couldn't see any reason for that so unexpected he showed up at home. In this way he was quite oriented in the surroundings and could find his way around. We were happy to see Erik. The next day June 2nd was Ansgar Ravnholt's birthday and Mother got the job of making her reliable cake but didn't get time to make frosting as the car had come and had to be unloaded. I was an old hand at making frosting so I was to make that. Olga a little foster child staying there had to go out and find an egg. Whether the egg was too warm or maybe not too fresh, I don't know, or maybe the dish a little greasy. The egg white wouldn't whip, try as I would. I guess the frosting wasn't much of a success. It must not have taken Mother long to get things organized. I'm sure we slept in our new

home that night. I don't know how much Nora helped, I know I didn't do much but explore. What stands most clearly in my mind is walking out the little road that led to the field and I saw oats about a foot high waving in the breeze. What a change from our spacious house in Clinton to this little house. It was solid and not too old. The tiny kitchen had been added to the L on the south side it was probably 8X10. In that went our stove a kitchen table 2 chairs and later we got a sink put in a corner with a pail under the drain. It was quite unhandy because the door to the dining room was left where it was and also the window, which had been made into an open cupboard with a few shelves for dishes. It didn't take long for Father to change that so the door was put where the cupboard was and the cupboard where the door had been. Then there was glass doors put in toward the dining room and plain doors in the kitchen. The table then could stand beneath the cupboard. The dining room was larger, narrow but quite long. There we had the old ice box beneath the cupboard the dining room table and chairs, the sewing machine between the 2 windows to the East. The two shelves on the walls one to the east and the one with the clock to the north, as mentioned elsewhere. The dining room got made more cozy with new wall covering over the cracked plaster. In the corner to the N.W. was a door to the pantry. It was a little hole under the stairway but there was a window and some shelves for storage. There we had our flour box and our few supplies. In the small livingroom, we had the sofa, the oval carved table, the "skaff" upright chest that Father had made in Denmark. It had come over with Grandfather when he came, crated in a big box and packed solid with 12 featherbeds. Then there was the organ, 3 rocking chairs, the little black table with the spindles that I always hated to dust, plus some of the 6 chairs that matched the sofa. The large palm by the south window and in the winter a stove that stood between the 2 doors on the north wall. There was also a little space where the window had been. The casing was still there and painted blue. Father soon got that boarded up and we got some nice dark red wall paper on the walls. The pretty hanging lamp with the prisms was hung above the table and it got to be a compact but cozy room/ On the north wall was a large open door to the tiny bedroom where Father and Mother slept. There was a tiny closet under part of the stairway. In this room was the double bed, the "skatol," combination bookcase, writing desk and three large drawers at the bottom. They had always been the childrens Erik's the top, Nora's the middle and mine the bottom one. Then there also was the "savant" the small dresser with the mirror, that I now have. The other door in the living room was to the upstairs. We came directly into a little room big enough for a double bed and that got to be Erik's room, which he shared with Uncle Chris when he came to stay with us for awhile. Then there was quite a big room to the South, which got to be the girls room. The stove pipe came thru to the chimney so it was quite warm in the winter. It was warm in the summer too with the low ceiling and slanting walls. There were 2 beds and we often had company and had to share as best we could.

The barn wasn't quite finished here and there. The main part was divided, one part for horse stalls which had a ceiling with hay loft on top the other was for hay from bottom to top. There was a cow shed to the East. There must have been board floor or dirt. At least we soon got cement put in, tho I'm sure it took a couple of years as there was much to do. Haying soon came on and Father went to many auction sales to buy what we needed. People weren't too honest then either and I think often thot it a joke to fool an innocent city man turned farmer. Father was rather trusting in many ways because he was so honest himself. Ravnholt had helped him buy a team of horses from Louie Sund. We had them for many years. Maud a dark brown we used for single buggy driving, she was cranky. Bill was gray and full of fun. When we had to turn a corner there was no holding him back, he often had the buggy on two wheels. At one auction sale there was a big old binder. A man next to father said 'You should buy that and Father bought it. It was a big old thing and it would take more than our two small horses to pull it. I don't think it even had the canvases or at all in running order. It got hauled home and there it stood for many years. We hired someone to cut the grain. We had gotten four cows with the place and we could be sure it was the culls. One red, one yellow, one black and one brown swiss. We were also to have a brood sow, but the man said it had died so there was nothing we could do about that. We heard later that the man had thought it was so good to leave for us and took it along. He had buried it in the field he said and if we didn't believe him we could dig in a certain spot. The informant said there was a pig buried there but not the sow. Father bought a cow, and the man said it gave a whole pail of milk. That was just what we needed but the trouble was the milk ran out by itself when it walked home from the pasture so there was very little left for the pail. Then we got 2 cows at another auction sale. One was small, one was big and got the names Lille Per and Store Per. A cow bought another place was Mathias. Now we had quite a herd. Of course each calf was kept whether the cow was good or not so there wasn't too much herd improvement and we weren't experienced in farming. Haying was quite a chore in those days, it had to be cut, raked and put in kocks. Then stand awhile and if it rained had to be split and turned. Finally when dry pitched by fork fulls on a wagon and hauled home. There we had a big fork to stick down in the load and the horses pulled it up with a rope. It was a slow process and it took several years before we got a new track in the barn and got "slings" which went faster. Threshing was quite an experience. Word was sent by kids from place to place and help was exchanged. Erik had to do a mans work tho he was barely sixteen and not fully grown. He had to carry sacks and it was up stairs in a granery. He was all in when he came home but didn't complain. I know Mother cried a little, he was too young to take a man's load. Mother never complained either tho she took her turn helping in the hay. Of course the milking was her job mostly as she was used to it and good at it. I wanted to learn to milk that first summer too. We milked outside in the cow yard. I got a pail and a stool and sat down to Lille Per but it walked away from me. I did learn tho. Father seldom tried to milk but when he did the milk usually got squirted up in his sleeve first, he never got foam in the pail. The

first year of threshing we had Martin Lawson, he had I don't know how many horses to pull the separator. All the horses that Martin had were fed well and could consume most of our crop of oats. I suppose the engine could pull itself. We had to have a big pile of wood to fire with. The engine spewed sparks all night and was set close to the stacks and barn so neither Mother nor Erik got much sleep that night. The men slept in the hay and were there for breakfast. How Mother managed in that little house with all those meals, I don't know but she was never stumped. It was a big crew to feed and we never had too plenty ful of supplies. When I read about how some pioneers lived on hams and bacon and pies by the dozens, I wonder if it isn't exaggerated. At least I don't think anyone in our neighborhood lived like that. On a little 40 acre farm there was a limit to what it could produce, and we couldn't eat it all up. Our sole income was from cream and a few pigs to sell and in the spring and summer the chickens had to try to pay for groceries. We didn't buy beyond what we could get for our eggs and it was pretty well figured out before we made our list and went to town. Eggs and cream weren't pin money for the wife to spend like it was on a large prairie farm where they had steers and pigs and corn for income. It was our only income. How Father managed I don't know but I know everyone was paid even if he had to borrow from Peter to pay Paul. The second year we were here Father decided to build a silo, there was very little corn grown and no ripe corn. Corn was cut by hand and put into large shocks in the field and hauled home in the winter. Spread in front of the cows at night for them to work with at will. In the morning there were the bare cornstalks to dispose of. There were very few silos at that time and it was a new venture but a few of the neighbors got together to buy a silage cutter. We got our silo built with the pit set up with stones. The outside was tar paper and Father painted it in many colors to resemble old copper. It must have looked quite realistic because Dixen went over and felt it to see if it was real. Also Father made a weather vane for the top of the barn. It was cut out of tin and painted black. It was a beautiful horse in full gallop and with flying tail and mane painted gold. One of Dixen's boys was so intreged with it that Father had to make a pattern of it for him so that they could also get one made. While we are on the subject of silo filling. The company couldn't afford the best and got one that had a carrier instead of a blower. It was in different sections and it was quite a job to get that assembled and hoisted up to the top of the silo. Neither could they afford to get an engine so they had to hire someone with an engine. The first one was Thomas Hermansen and Magnus Jeppsen a little boy of about 4 or 5 called him Thomas Tutkas. The next one was Gasoline Willie. The cutter was mounted on planks a "scoot" we called it and had to be dragged from place to place. We couldn't afford to get wheels. It was always a draw whose horses should pull that heavy thing, no one had very strong horses and it was a long haul out to Niels Petersens. Our little joke in our family was Uncle Chris. When he came he always said "Fan hjul under." [Get a wheel under it.] He didn't elaborate much in his talk and I guess couldn't understand that we couldn't afford that much. He came when he felt like it and stayed till he was tired of it. Helped a little when he felt like it, but it was an extra

person to feed and extra work for Mother. Father always took him as an authority but he was the one of fathers brothers that Mother didn't take to. If he had a pocket full of candy I have never seen him share a piece. I was often hankering for something good and would get permission to make a little candy which consisted of a little sugar and water boiled together and then whipped till it was creamy. I didn't know there was such a thing as fudge and was satisfied with this. I offered Uncle Chris a piece and he said, "Det vante flavoring." Vanilla was a luxury and wasn't on our grocery list. In fact I don't know how Mother managed, but I know we weren't big eaters and that helped. The summer of 1907 we had a lot of company all the time. Mrs Jorgen Nielsen and Kristine Kleis from Clinton came on their way to Dagmar Mont. Enok, Sofie and Alfred came. Mrs Faber came but stayed at Ravnholts and Enok was supposed to stay there too but that didn't last long. Marie Hovgaard was there too and Uncle Chr. Where we all slept I don't know but it was full house. That was not for just a day or two either but for several weeks. Poor Mother! One day I remember well. I had to go up to Jorgensens to get something that Mrs Faber had forgotten the day before when she had visited there. Sofie was probably along I don't remember that she was or where she was.

At any rate I came home hot dusty and tired. I had heard Mrs Faber say "Nu gaar jeg hen og hviler mig." [Now I'm going in to rest myself.] and that that was a good idea for me too so I took a book under my arm and said to Mother I was going upstairs to rest. That was too much for Mother, she said "No my girl now you are going to help make dinner and set the table." I'm sure there was no rest for Mother. We had our good times too and a lot of fooling around. Chr. Birkholm came as often as he could in the evening. Sofie called him C.B.& Q. She was so full of fun and how she could laugh. She & Enok had been in Denmark the year before and picked up quite a few things that we thought were a little risqué'. They were minister children and I wonder what "ma" and "pa" would have said had they heard them, but they enjoyed themselves getting by with it.

One day when Enok, Alfred, Sofie and I were down by the swamp, throwing sticks and stones into the water for our dog Snap to dive for. Tutt as we called her got the streak of dare devil and waded into the water. She dared the rest of us. I was always afraid of snakes and turtles and water. The boys went in and I of course had to go too, clothes and all. We got more daring and the water went almost up to our necks. It wasn't water any more it was mud. Our clothes when we got out was terrible and I wonder if Tutts dress ever got clean again, she had quite a nice dress on. One night we went over to Ravnholts for a visit. We went in the lumber wagon as that was our only vehicle big enough to hold us all. We all sang and what a chorus. Marie Hovgaard couldn't carry a tune, but didn't know it. Neither could Enok and Tutt, so Marie complained that they were off key.

It wasn't long after we got a little settled before my father went to visit the pastor. He was Jens Jorgensen. He had a family of eight children and I think all but the oldest boys were at home. The next day father announced that "Ferieskole" [vacation school] was starting and I should go. I had been going to parochial school all my life

except the last year in Clinton and every summer the same thing over again except with children that went to public schools during the year and were a little behind in Danish. I said "oh no." I thought I was thru with that. Well I had to go and to meet new children was quite distressing. It was a walk of about 1½ miles and it was the same thing over again, starting with Adam and Eve, as usual. Most of the children were in the same boat as I was they had gone to parochial school all year to the same teacher. Fortunately I knew the teacher, she had been my teacher in Clinton and had stayed at our house. A kind and good person but not much ahead of the older ones who went to school. Pastor Jorgensen came once a day but I can't remember what he taught. Most likely it was Danish history or mythology. I soon got acquainted with some of the children. Queer how you are attracted by some and others don't count at all. There was a little clik that was chosen by the older boys. When they went down to the lake they pointed out who could come with them. I can't really remember going down to the lake or if there was much to go for but I was one of the chosen ones. Peter Jorgensen, ___?___ Rahr, Gunnar Fenger and Einar Pedersen were the elite of boys. Herdis Laursen was one of the girls. I was a little smart, I had lived in a city and wanted to impress them so I told about how our doctor had invited us to a swell dinner at The River House before we left and what we had had to eat. I stressed the lobster salad, which by the way I hadn't even touched. I guess those little farmers weren't so dumb. I learned later that I went by the name "Lobster Salad" behind my back. Walking to and from school I had quite a crew of Petersen's to keep me company. There was Hulfred, Signe and Sara from the west road Sigrid, Sigvald from the East and also Olga. They were all barefoot, that I had never seen before and one day tried it at home. Stepping out of the barn door I stepped close to a snake. That was the first and last of barefoot.

Berry Picking

Maybe not such a big item to write about but they were precious to us those first years. We walked along the roadside and got a few raspberries that were canned in pint jars. Found gooseberries in the woods, wild ones covered with little sharp needles, they were good for jelly but we also sat and cut off the needles with a scissors so we could make sauce from them. Those precious jars were put on a row of shelves below the steps in our little cellar. Finally the shelves got so full that they collapsed and there lay our summers work. However some of the jars didn't break and Father soon put up some substantial shelves. One fall day word came from Ravnholts, did we want to go blackberry picking. Erik couldn't be spared at home so Nora and I trudged off early in the morning. We had no idea how or where but walked thru the woods to Ravnholts place on the old trail. We had on good clothes and our good coats thinking we could leave our coats somewhere. Clara & Ansgar were ready to go and Clara had made a few sandwiches from rye bread with pickles on. We had no idea we had to have lunch along but I guess we each had a little pail to pick in. We went thru some more woods and had no idea where we were but now I know we must have been on the Chippewa trail. Brush and briars was way above our heads. If we had left our coats anywhere we would never have found them. The briars tore at them and they got to be a sorry sight. Clara shared her sandwiches with us and as they had two milk pails along we got one of them to fill our berries in. The game was new to us and they got their pail full first and helped us fill ours. Clara wore overalls and in those days it was unheard of for a woman to wear pants so when we saw there were others there picking berries, Ansgar called Clara the "other fellow." After that long day we were a couple of tired girls, but a whole milk pail of berries was worth it. Father had discovered that he had a cousin living in Luck. She was married to a Kjeldsen. There were two brothers and they had bought land in North bone Lake on the Clam Falls road. They each built a house there in the brush and wilderness. Such friendly good people but maybe Nora and I looked down our noses a little bit. They came to visit us. Father's cousins name was Klaudine Petrine, the husbands name Kjeld. The brother was Peter and his wife Georgine. They had no children and she was such a dear lively little woman. Kjeld's had several girls 3 I think, the oldest one married and the other 2 married to Dutch neighbors. Then there was one son Niels who had been born with a crippled hand. They were masons by trade and earned a living by doing cement work, had a cow or two on their little farms that had very little cleared land. This is preliminary to berries. We got invited out there to pick berries for several years. In a lumber wagon that was quite a treat, so a couple of times Erik went along for the day and Mother and I stayed overnight. We picked and how they hung thick and black under those 7-8 ft tall briars. We had to keep track of each other because we could easily get lost, tho they knew the lay of the land. We never could see a foot ahead of us. Mrs Kjeldsen and Mother canned, not in pints, no it was 2 qt jars. We bought the large jars and sugar to bring along. It was a real picnic. Mrs Kjeldsen baked the best

pancakes I have ever tasted and then with fresh blackberry jam it was really a treat. Even the little pet dog Prule? Wouldn't eat pancakes without jam. The jars had to be stored out there till winter so they could be hauled in a sled. The bouncing in a lumber wagon was too much for jars of sauce. They took them along to Luck and we met them there. Mrs Peter Kjeldsen had a new little pail which she picked in, she fell over a log with a full pail of berries, she didn't care about spilling the berries but her pail was flat and that was a tragedie. I think we all enjoyed their visits to our house. They would come in the forenoon in their lumberwagon, all five of them. Mrs Kjeld was an epeliptic and about 10-12 years his senior. He and Niels were so good to her. On one of their visits she started to get a spell when we sat at the table and they each took ahold of her hand till it was over. Later she said, "Today I've held myself." "Sept one time," Niels said. Tho he said "Sept jen gaang."

We had other berry expeditions. Once a bunch of us young ones, Nora, Erik, Chr, Aksel, Agnes and I think Walter Jensen and Dodie were along too. We went out the Clam Falls road and I guess we had just as much fun as berries. We girls got warm and went aside, took our shoes and stockings off and sat with our feet in the creek. We were afraid the boys would see us with bare feet. That was those days. The first time we went out to Kjeldsen's we had gotten instructions how to find the way, but to be sure when we got to Luck, Father stopped in to the meat market to ask. He had a map along, what a map would do, I don't know, but when he spread it out on the counter he said, "Hva Pokker, det er jo North Dakota." [The Devil, it is North Dakota.]

Nora's Birthday Party

Just what year it was I can't remember but most likely it was 1909. Alma Knudsen was visiting us and maybe that had something to do with Father letting Nora have a dance in his shop. There must have been some preparation moving his stuff out to make room. We were going to have ice cream and cake. That too took some doing. Ice had to be bought at the creamery and an ice cream freezer borrowed from Peter Rasmussen. That also had a hitch, we couldn't borrow that without inviting their oldest daughter and she really didn't "belong." Nora had soon been taken into the young peoples circle as soon as we came to Milltown. That meant the Jorgensen girls, Sigrid especially got to be Nora's good friend. Then there was of course the Birkholm boys Aksel and Christian. I don't know just how many were there but I remember John & Walter Jensen and Lauritz Jepsen. At that time Walter Jensen had his eye on Nora and of course Nora has hers on Chr. Alma had a case on Lauritz and I was only a tag along and was happy when someone was good enough to ask me to dance. Herman Skow was hired to play his violin and I can remember especially Red Wing being so popular at that time. Nora and Alma had sent for patent leather pumps for the occasion and they came. Alma's were too small but fit Nora. Nora's fit me so I had the first pair of pumps patent leather at that and I was proud of my small feet. Walter Jensen was a tall heavy built man and had shoes like small canal boats. He asked me to dance and I guess I stepped all over his feet, he being so big and I so small. He said to me, Vil du op at køre saa staa bare op." It wouldn't have made any difference if I had stood on his feet. There must have been more boys than girls and I got to dance Home Sweet Home with Lauritz. We sat around the dining room table or at least the company and I can remember how loud John Jensen laughed and how jolly he was. Mother thought he was a little too loud.

I often have wondered that Nora got permission to go to all those barn dances at the age of 15. At that time confirmation was the difference between being a child and being grown up. There was a large group of young people then in W.D. and there was not much of a meeting place and if there had been, dancing except to our own singing was strictly prohibited. The M.C. Pedersen young people were always in on these barn dances and a fine lot they were. When the old parsonage was converted to a gym hall and the seminary to parsonage we had a little place to have Young Peoples meetings.

The first time we were permitted to have Herman skow play for a 4th of July dance was when Aage miller was home and talked his father into giving his consent. I guess old man Miller had been the barrier, tho I don't know why he had the whole say.

Getting back to the summer Alma was here. Our place seemed to be the gathering place for the young people in the neighborhood. Alma played very well and could really get music out of the old organ. She had brought some new pieces, among them "I wonder who is kissing her now." In the evening we would sit outside and sing. "Stars of the summer night," "Drink to me only" and so many of

those old sweet songs. Sometimes we played tag and Hide and Seek. Mother even played tag with us. One night while playing Hide & Seek, Alfred hid. Ansgar was "It" and hunted all over for him. Then he took a fly sprayer that was laying on the tank and sprayed into the tank. That made Alfred come out but he said "That wasn't fair." While on the topic of foolishness, I'll have to tell about one night over at Ravnholts. We young ones were out on the little narrow porch which was on 2 sides of the kitchen. Ansgar was going to show us how he could stand on his head. He raised himself gracefully up and then slowly lowered himself down but hadn't figured with the porch being so narrow so he stuck both legs thru the kitchen window with a crackle. "Gracious," was all he said as he laid there. In the house Mrs Ravnholt say "Wha wa det?" [What was that?] "Det war vist en Vinne Mue" [It was a window Mother] Clara said. Yes we had many good times and were with nice young people.

My faithful follower was Walter Nelson a neighbor boy. His home wasn't always too pleasant. He had a stepmother who was good to him in her way but there was no home life, except bountiful well cooked meals. He seemed to have a knack of being on the spot when there was something special going on and I think he loved to come to our house. Many an evening he came for a game of cards, checkers or "In My Row." Our little living room was cozy with the door closed to the cold dining room, a good fire in the little heating stove and most always an apple to eat or some left over brown "Bakkenørre." Father in his rocking chair reading, Mother probably knitting mittens or socks or even Fathers underwear, Snap the dog would also be there and when bedtime came Erik said Snap and it knew it had to go out in the barn, but if I said "Snap no skal daa ue," [Snap now you have to get out] it growled at me. Wood was quite a problem even here in the woods and we had to save on it, thus as soon as chores were over and supper done we didn't keep the kitchen stove going. It took a while in the morning to get things thawed out again but the rooms were small and low to the ceiling. If we had had a little understanding of insulation we would have put a layer of something in the attic above the dining room but then there was just the plaster to keep the cold out. The steam from the kitchen cooking would settle in frost on the ceiling and when a warmer day came it would melt and drip down, sometimes when the smoke too had settled then the drops would be pretty brown. It was a good time to get the ceiling wiped off before we had our meals.

Wash days in the winter was something else. The boiler had to be filled and the water heated to almost boiling. As long in the fall and early winter Mother had the washing machine out side, there just wasn't room in the kitchen. The two tubs for rinsing were set in the dining room and after the process of washing in the machine and boiling the rest of the dirt out in the boiler and rinsed the clothes were hung outside, as much as the lines would hold, the overalls thrown across the gate to the farm yard. One day Peter Gjerner came and saw Mother pumping the washing machine outside and it was cold. He said, "Det skal daa naa it gøre til dit valsprog." [It could well be that this will be your ?valsprog?] Mother was handy and never gave up nor complained. She had had things quite handy in Clinton, I had the feeling that

she was not always happy. One day I remember it was in summer and Nora and I were invited out to Birkholms. We had been washing in the forenoon and it was my job to rub the socks because the machine didn't do too much to dirty socks. I disliked the job and didn't do too much hard work on it. They were pretty stiff and dirty when I hung them up. Well we got dressed up and started out for our party but when I got as far as Gregor Nelson's blacksmith shop I got to thinking of Mother. My conscience bothered me and I thot "What if something should happen to Mother." I turned around and went home. Mother was surprised and asked why I had come home again. I never told anyone why, but I don't think I did the socks over again. Clothes wasn't too plenty ful and it was worn till it was good and dirty. We couldn't wash every day. We weren't the only ones who wore stockings for a long time without washing. Marie Hovgaard and her friend Søster Karen a nurse from Tyler came for a visit and they probably only had one pair of stockings to their name. At least Nora had to take them out and shake the dust out of them in the morning before they could put them on again. While they were there visiting we had a little outing which didn't happen often for Mother. St. Croix Falls was the main attraction and as Søster Karen was Norwegian she should see the cliffs down there. We went on the early morning train M. H., Søster Karen, Mother and I and spent the whole day down there till the train came back at about 8. Søster Karen and M. H. payed for a good dinner at the Dalles House which was then a hotel in Taylors Falls. I had raspberry pie and there was also Blueberry pie, something new to me. We went back and sat looking at the river. Søster Karen lit up a big cigar, that I had never seen before. While we sat there I saw another sight I had never seen before. A school of fish. The river was absolutely covered with fish and as I remember swimming north. I don't think the dam was made yet at that time, this must have been in 1907.

Well where did I leave off with my story there is so much in my memory, maybe not of any value to anyone but myself, but I enjoy reliving much of it. Especially do I often when I can't sleep, take a walk down 5th Ave and 7th Ave. It so happened that the St. Croix Trail cut thru a corner of our 40. I was so much a Clinton girl yet that I called it 5th Ave and a logging road that cut off to the south was 7th Ave. I wonder if anyone has walked on that trail as much as I have from early spring when the first Mayflowers peeked out of the ground there was hardly a day I wasn't there. That pretty bluegrass on the trail that was dug by countless oxen, horses and wagons. The delicate little ferns that grew in the moss by the sides, it was almost heaven to wander there. After we rented the 80 acres for pasture it was usually my job together with Snap to get the cows at night. I never knew if they were North or South, usually South, there wasn't much to eat in the north half but there was a beautiful little lake that Mother was thrilled to discover one Sunday when she and Erik were out for a walk. Snap of course was along and when they saw such a beautiful little animal, black with a white stripe down it's back, they told Snap to get it, which it did. They soon found out what kind of animal it was and Snap came home first to tell the tale. Not it's last encounter with a skunk. In the south half of the 80 was a swamp and when the cows were there they always went out into it on the way home and what a

job it was to get them going. It took lots of sticks and stones and urging Snap to get them to get them home. On 7th Ave in the spring was really a sight to behold, it was a blue carpet of violets and I picked one bouquet after another. Also there were some large butternut trees. Wonder what they would be worth now. In the fall we could pick up bushels of nuts. One year we found the squirrels pantry and robbed them, which wasn't nice but I'm sure there were many more other places. While I played and grew up Erik was the faithful plodder. Father wasn't afraid of work but it was still Erik who carried the heavy load on his young shoulders. He never went to the parties where Nora went but that's not saying there wasn't fun and life in him. Chr came often in the evening and we 4 would sit in the little kitchen and enjoy being together. Mother had made some of her good "Sine brö." Coffee cake with large raisins, or maybe it was cinnamon rolls. Erik sat innocently and wadded a little of Father's fine cut chewing tobacco into the shape of a plump raisin and put it into a bite size piece of roll and asked Nora if she wanted it. Nora popped it in her mouth and talk about spitting and sputtering and laughing on our part. Many such little innocent jokes were played, such as catnip in the pillowcase or a bone under the sheet in our bed.

Never in all my life did I have a quarrel with Erik or a hard word from him. Mother couldn't have had a better son and when they together did chores they shared so much. No wonder he was lonesome when she left us. I remember how he sat and stroked her hands in her last illness and said, "These hands have done so much for us." Yes such capable hands that seemed to make work so easy. That is why I love the little piece about "Mother" by _____ . She played with us, she prayed with us, was a good example in her whole being.

In the summer of 1907 Nora had a bad case of acute appendicitis. Dr Fenger came every day to check on her and was very strict about everything and she pulled thru, but it took quite a long time. In 1908 there was to be Young Peoples convention in Tyler and so many of W.D. young people were going. Nora was now the age where most young girls had to get out and work. She got a job at Geo A. Nelson's, neighbors a little to the south. She had to try to make enough money so she could go to Tyler. They were real good to her but I don't think they payed her much but at least she got a few new clothes that she made herself. She always had a knack for looking "nifty" and was real good at sewing. Later she worked for Jens Laursen's, that was not an easy lady to work for and one day when she washed she lifted the boiler off the stove and acquired a bad hernia. After that she worked different places, at the West Hotel for Anton Sorensen's and later in 1909 for Dr Fengers. There she was treated like a daughter but also there was plenty of work. Father thought it was a great chance for Nora to go with them when they moved to Cedar Falls. Mother didn't think it so great. They were good to her but she had 5 kids to manage when Mrs Fenger went to the office each day and then lots of housework to do. She came back in the spring of 1910 and was quite a lady in a beautiful green "bought" suit. That spring she had made enough to go to Tyler to Danebod for 3 months. After that she went with some Ringsted girls home and spent time with Uncle Peter's and at

Niels Jorgensens. From there to Clinton to visit old friends. From then on and till she was married in 1913 she worked off and on in the cities. In 1909 I graduated from 8th grade and in 1910 was confirmed. I would have liked to go on with school but there was little chance of that as the closest school was St. Croix and I would have to have room and board down there and that we couldn't afford. That fall of 1909 we had a new teacher in the danish school, a friend of Fathers Chr. Sorensen who had been at Ashland College when Father was there. He was better educated than those who had taught in W.D. and as I wasn't about to go out and work and was going to confirmation classes anyway, I went to Danish School again and I suppose learned a little, anyway had a good time. Pastor Helweg had now come from Denmark and we always looked forward to the classes he had and also learned a lot in his confirmation classes. I also helped a lot at home, with chores and household tasks and I know it was a help to Mother, but I maybe should have stayed at home all the time. I can remember one night after Mother had been digging potatoes and putting them in the cellar she went to bed dead tired. The way to the basement was a "klap" as we called it in the dining room floor and a little steep step down there and a little dark hole under the living room. I saw how dirty the floor was and as a good girl I got some warm soapy water and washed the floor. Floors had to be scrubbed in order to look nice and even then they sometimes got a little streaked. Well I washed the floor but I guess I didn't get my arms washed and was quite embarresed in school the next day when I saw my arms look like mud. I had a long sleeved shirt on and was careful to pull the cuffs down. Funny how such little things can stick in ones memory.

I know I was a faithful chore girl in the evening. In the morning it was a different story. One morning which I am ashamed to tell about, I came down late. Father was sitting in the dining room. He looked at me and said, 'You should get up and help your mother.' I said, "What about you?" Father looked stunned. I guess no one had ever answered him back, tho I think we resented that he had gone out on a farm on the strength of Erik & Mother. I wont ever say that Father was lazy, but cows and farm work was just not for him and when he had work in the shop he put in long hard hours. First starting a fire in the box stove and it must have been a cold floor to stand on all day. As he never had a power tool of any kind it took good arms to plane rough sawed oak boards into the smoothness for alters and pulpits. I'm sure he never got more than \$300.00 for any job of pulpit and alter, but it did help keep us on our feet. I guess I wouldn't have answered my Father as I did had this not happened. I came down one morning brimming over with good intentions and announced that I had turned over a new leaf and would get up as soon as I was called. Father said, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." I didn't say anything but I know I thought "to heck with it.' Father had little understanding of children and young people. Mother would have given me a kiss and encouragement. She was young with us and how we four could laugh and have a good time at the table when Father was away. In my own mind I often thot "what a pair Mother and

Peter Knudsen would have made, then Father and Mrs Knudsen could match up, but of course that meant we wanted Alfred.” I guess maybe it’s true that opposites attract each other.

The winter of 1910-11 Erik went to Grand View College in Des Moines. That left Mother and me with most of the chores. Father must have had some work in the shop. We hired Walter Nelson to come and clean the barn, and I suppose Erik had gotten the corn hauled home. The cornstalks had to be hauled in in front of the cows at night and then they could eat what they wanted during the night. The bare stalk had to be carried out in the morning before we could feed silage. Getting up in that cold silo could almost take our breath away. We really didn’t have the clothes in which to do farm work. It was unheard of in those days for a woman or girl to wear overalls or coveralls.

Einar

How I love that name and the man who bore it. I met him first as a little boy of 11 years. We went to the "Ferieskole", vacation school in W.D. Some people we are attracted to at once and he was such a neat looking boy, always, wide awake and full of pep. He and Pete Jorgensen and Gunnar Fenger seemed to be the leaders in games always and when they chose up sides we were really "it" when we were chosen first. I can see him yet throwing a ball over the little schoolhouse roof, of course I was on his side. He would holler "Det er løvn"* when the ball didn't come from the other side. I thot that sounded so cute. *It's "a lie" doesn't sound the same. Then we didn't see much of each other for some years. I went to the brick school, he went to W.D. parochial school and later to Luck public school. We went to confirmation class to Rev. Jorgensen and he was confirmed in 1909 and I in 1910. After I was confirmed I started to go to Young Peoples meetings and to gym classes. Boys and girls went the same night and while the boys or young men had their class we sat and watched. Einar was so nice looking, I thought, and when he did the arm exercises I noticed how broad his shoulders were and what muscles he had and wondered how it would feel to have him put his arms around me. There must have been some attraction from his side too. In church he always sat in the gallery and we always, as a family, had found our place in the side pews of the old church. I could so easily glance up to where he sat and I guess we caught ourselves looking at each other for a second. I asked him along home from church one Sunday but outside of that and meeting in W.D. we didn't get together. I guess he had friends and I did too, but not dates as we think of them now. I guess I flirted a little with this one and that one, no more. I was jealous of one certain girl who I knew had her cap set for Einar and when the Young Peoples convention was coming up in Askov in 1917 there was a little misunderstanding, I don't even remember about what. Anyway she didn't go but we went and when we met at suppertime in Askov, I said to Einar that I had a bone to pick with him. He suggested that we take a little walk and we walked out the road north of town. I don't know how it happened but Einar said "I didn't know you cared," and I guess I said I didn't either. His arm went around me so fast and that was the beginning of a long life together. That night we sneaked off from the meeting and sat in Carl Millers car and talked, my big hat was in the way and I had to take it off to put my head on his shoulder. I had never kissed a boy and I don't know if Einar had ever kissed a girl, but we didn't then either. A kiss to me was something special, not to be given till I was sure Einar was the one. We didn't want anyone to know our secret so on the way home on the train from Askov we stayed as far apart as possible. I was kind of in a dream when I came home, it was such a big step I had taken. I had a hard time telling my mother and I guess she was surprised, she said "I didn't know you liked Einar." That fall in Sept. Einar was going into the army. There was a farewell party at Einar's home and when we had sung our evening song as we always did in those days* and people were going outside and leaving I looked for Einar. I found him with my rivals arms around his neck. I know

it wasn't his idea but it took most of the rest of the night to straighten that out. Einar took me home by way of W.D. We quietly went in to the church, knelt at the altar and confirmed both our faith in each other and our love to each other.

*I had suggested that we sing "Alted frijdig naar du gaar" and was a little hurt when the pastor's wife said, "Why sing that old song." I had thought it the right one to sing.

[Free translation by Steen Erik from Danmark]

Altid frejdig, når du går
veje, Gud tør kende,
selv om du til målet når
først ved verdens ende.

Always confident when you walk
on paths, that God dare know,
even if only you reach the finish
finally at the ends of the world.

Aldrig ræd for mørkets magt!
stjernerne vil lyse;
med et fadervor i pagt
skal du aldrig gyse.

Never afraid of the powers of darkness!
The stars will shine;
with a pact of "Our Father,..."
you will never shudder.

Kæmp for alt, hvad du har kært;
dø, om så det gælder,
da er livet ej så svært,
døden ikke heller.

Fight for all you love,
Die, if it must be,
then life is not so hard
neither is the Death

I was such a skinny little person that Einar would often carry me so I wouldn't get my feet wet in the grass. He was much too good to me and I often wonder how he could put up with me. I know I was often unreasonable and the years I was sick I was shut off from all the things young people want to take part in and sometimes Einar wanted to take part without me and of course my feelings got hurt and he had to appease me. In April 1918 the time came when Einar was called into service. He went to Fort Casey out near Seattle and was in training there till in Sept. when he was sent to France. There was no chance of a leave in those days so we didn't get to see him. However he wasn't in France long enough to get into battle before the Armistice was signed. What a happy day the 7 of Nov was, we burned all the nutshells we had saved for gas masks and cooked chocolate with them. *Church bell rang and whistles blew and then the letdown came, it was false alarm. Those were sad days until the good news came on the 11th of Nov. Now the letters came uncensored from Einar telling

*J. P. Peterson rang the W.D. church bell. Wilmar was coming home!

of the winter in France. What a happy day in the Pedersen and Peterson homes when Einar and Wilmar came home. J.P. Peterson had gotten, somehow or other, the "flier" to stop in Luck so they could come on the train in the afternoon and what snappy looking fellows they were. They didn't want to come home in their old dirty uniforms so they had bought new ones. Einar's old overcoat later got dyed brown and made into an overcoat for one of the boys. During all this time I had had my battle with T.B. Been put in bed with complete rest. Dr. Diamond had prescribed that, but when Dr Arveson came back from service he took over again and sent me to a sanitorium. That was pure foolishness and I only stayed there 2 weeks. It was a great expense for my folks to keep me there and I could get better care at home. Einar had gone to Ringsted to work. Things were really booming in Iowa in those days. Still it wasn't easy to save up enough money for us to think of getting married and I needed a little more time to get real well. In 1922 we decided we wouldn't wait any longer. We looked for a farm to rent or buy. Einar had gotten talked into buying 80 acres out in Georgetown which was almost "way out" in those days even with a car. The idea of building both house and barn on uncleared land was beyond our means so that idea was dropped as a bad deal and I don't think we got our money out of it when we finally sold it. We borrowed some money, rented a farm in Bone Lake, bought some cows on the place. Einar owned the 2 of the horses they had at home but when it came to getting them they couldn't spare more than one so we had to buy one. Father gave us several cows can't remember if it was 2 or three so we had a nice little herd to start with. We had also bought into a nice herd of Bang's Disease which wasn't so good for a start. The house was big, but we managed to get new paper on the walls and with nice curtains and a rug which was my present from Einar. The pretty dining room table & chairs Father had made for us. I am getting ahead of my story. There was first the wedding. It was the 11th June 1922. It would be too much for all of us to have a big wedding so just the family was invited Jorgen, Anna & Palmer. Walter, Martha, Helen, Clarence & Doris. Einar's mother & father, Thorvald, Dagny, Neta, Asta and Erling. Nora, Chr. Adelheid & Doris. Pastor & Mrs Ravn and our good friends Andrew & Kristine Jepsen. There we got in trouble, they had a foster sister coming and said they were taking her along. The children weren't invited and none of my friends so I couldn't see having her. As it was we had 2 tables side by side in the dining room and were squeezed in like sardines in a can, about 21 in all. Hulfred Petersen a good friend, helped us bake the wedding cake and other cakes. Nothing fancy but the wedding cake was white fruit cake. She also helped prepare the dinner and served it. Nothing fancy there either pork & beef roast, potatoes and gravy, vegetables etc, no salads etc, we weren't used to that, and then cake for dessert. The wedding ceremony was very simple too, no bridesmaids. I walked in on Father's arm and that went fast, to the music played by Elna Paulsen. Einar stood and waited for me and we walked up to the altar. Paster Ravn not only used the marriage rituals but he gave us a long sermon while we stood there. I'm afraid my feet in new slippers took up much of my attention and was

ready to say "cut it short." We went and sat down side by side and sang the song "Jert hus skal i lygge" and the hymns "Kærlighed fra Gud" and "Nu takker alle Gud." "Now thank we all our God," which has been one of my favorites. When we got home we went into the little room and gave each other our rings. We and my folks took a quick trip to Luck and had our picture taken, I suppose while families got their chores done to come back for supper. Can't be expected to remember just how it went, but I think the wedding was at four o'clock and chores had to be done. After supper we helped with dishes and cleared up and then Einar and I took Hulfred home, which at that time was at Jacob Andersen's where she worked. They were in the process of remodeling the house and we picked up a nice big nail in our tire so had a flat on the way home. How Einar got that fixed I don't know, there was no spare in those days, it must have been moonlight or I don't see how he got it patched, but he was never stumped. It was late when we got home to my folks, our furniture hadn't been moved out to our new home. Einar had his old clothes along and a new nightshirt in a shoebox and I had a nice gown I had embroidered. Einar said to me, I don't think Erik would like if we sleep together." So he went into the guest room and I crawled into my old bed and old nightie. His nightshirt was still in the shoebox the next morning when he put on his old clothes and I went with him out to do chores. Once in awhile when we reminded each other of our honeymoon we had a little laugh and Einar had a little sheepish look. The next day we moved what we had of furniture. My folks had given us a nice stove tho it wasn't new. Einar's folks gave us a rocking chair. I had a dresser and a single bed and we had gotten one from the folks to match it. We borrowed a little kitchen table and with the nice dining room set we were settled. With dirty musty cellar and no refrigerator it was hard to keep food. Mother had given us some canned beef and with that and mostly vegetables from our nice garden we got our meals. We weren't used to canned foods nor could we afford them. We bought some little chicks which we had on the front porch, the only place safe from rats. In those days we didn't have a balanced chick feed so oatmeal and goodness knows what we feed them and many died. I guess there were a few roosters after awhile to eat and a few pullets to lay eggs the next winter. We were happy and sang a lot in the evening when we sat on the porch. After visiting at home or taking part in something in W.D. in the evening we sang all the way home. One evening Jorgen, Anna & Palmer came out to visit us, they got a kick out of seeing Einar sitting there milking and I sat and shelled peanuts and fed them to him. In those days I didn't help with chores. I later did my share of chores.

One funny thing I will have to tell. When Einar took over the farm May 1st, he also took over the widow and her three sons who we rented from. She kept house for him for a month. After the auction sale there was a lonely hen wandering around that had escaped when the rest were crated and sold. It had made a nice nest of eggs and Einar and Mrs Petersen decided to let it set on the eggs and come up with a nice flock of chicks. It sat and sat for a month but no chicks and they couldn't understand why? Einar never liked when I mentioned it. It didn't take long before the

neighborhood to the north discovered that Einar was a good mason and between ?arying and farm work he plastered many houses, among them the two Kjeldsen houses which never had been plastered and where other people now lived. We had a young boy help with the haying, that was the beginning of a long line of hired men, how I often have wished that we could have had a private family life, how differently we could have lived. One Sunday while we had this boy staying with us, we were going home to my folks and his folks must have lived in the neighborhood so he was along. When we came to the old Ravnholt place we suddenly saw a wheel roll into the ditch ahead of us and the back of the Ford dragged on one wheel and axel. How they got that put together I don't know. Einar was never a mechanic but he always managed some way to get things going. We had nice neighbors in Bone Lake, they were older than we but we enjoyed them and I think they liked us too. Especially Fritz Mohnsens. During that first winter we would walk over there and Einar and Fritz would play checkers and how happy Fritz Mohnsen would be when he said, "Naa ka daa gaa hjem m? en god skunk." [Now you can go home with a good skunk.] Mr & Mrs Lauritz Petersens would walk over then too at night, even in deep snow, but they carried a lantern. She was such a small woman and must have been quite old but always jolly--hen she fell in the snow she picked herself up again and laughed.

Sorrows started to come soon. It must have been that first fall that Anna [Einar's oldest sister] died. It seems she was never well and had been in the cities twice years before to have an operation for goiter. She was so very nervous and I suppose the goiter was the cause of it, but she was just a nervous type. They never got beyond getting started on the operation when they had to quit. I really don't know why but in those days they knew very little about that operation and many died. What Anna went to Frederic hospital for now was for an appendectomy. She didn't want to go thru with it as she had a cold but I guess the Dr had seen so much of her nervousness that he didn't pay any attention to her. She was operated and the only patient there as they were painting all the rooms. She got pneumonia and those days there were no antibiotics, it had to run it's course. Apparently she was a little better or I know Einar & I would not have gone to the Harvest Festival (Sept 25th) and the dance in the hall which always followed. Walter came and told us that Anna was very sick and we at once drove to Frederic. The whole family stood on the street and watched the window where the nurses and Dr were working with her. Finally Jorgen came out and it was all over. Jorgen said later, "I knelt down and prayed before I went to the hospital and when I got to 'Ske din Vilje,' [Thy will be done] I knew I had given her away." He still never forgave the Doctor and I can't say I blame him. What a sad sad time to go thru.

Walter rented the farm and Jorgen and Palmer stayed by Einar's folks, an added burden for Bedstemor, but she had so many of them and never complained. Jorgen got work in town and it had to go. Unless a person has tried to go thru something like that, you don't know what it is and don't have the understanding and sympathy.

I suppose Einar's and my life went on as usual we couldn't use the car in the winter so the few times we went any place we had to go with horses and bobsled. I can remember the first time butchering came along. It was after it got cold enough so we could freeze the meat. I had a boiler of water on the stove and Einar got ready for the job. He was about like his father, who moaned when he had to kill anything. Well Einar had never done the job but it had to be done he hit the pig in the head but it didn't stun it, he hit it so many times that the meat in the head was bruised but still it wasn't so he could stick it, finally he had to call for help and Willie Mohnsen came and shot it, and I suppose stayed and helped with the rest of it. It was good pork tho and as neither one of us cared for side pork we gave it to his folks and his father thought it was the best side pork he had tasted. The next summer I guess went with farming and plastering. But now we had a new interest, we were expecting, a boy for me or a girl for Einar, due in Nov. After it got a little cold and we were going somewhere in our open car Einar would tuck the robe around me and say "Sidder du godt Jens, saa kører we." [Are you sitting good Jens, then we're off.] It was the little one he talked to. The little one came on Thanksgiving day. Plans were that my folks and Erik, Nora, Chris and the girls were coming out for dinner. I had baked apple pies and I suppose I had plenty vegetables. Mother was bringing a roasted goose. Instead we had another party with Dr. and Mrs Ole Sorensen spending the night. They slept while I walked the floor and Einar kept me company. By morning nothing had happened so I made coffee and they had that and pie. Einar went out to do chores, but was called in to lend a hand. They put me on the kitchen table, in fact the one I am sitting at writing now. The next thing I knew was that we had a little boy.