

Reier S. Lunde

By O.D.Purinton, Clerk and Historian of Old Settlers Association.

Reier S. Lunde, son of Sven and Justine Lunde, was born at Jaedern Norway Feb.17,1870. He came,with his parents, to Griggs County on July 6th 1881. They settled on NW $\frac{1}{4}$  22-145-58 on the Sheyenne River. The house was a log cabin with hay and sod roof, plastered with clay and cow manure , in which they lived ,together with another family , over the winter, all in one room.

Mr.Lunde was married on Dec.1st 1893 to Miss Christina Wuflestad.

In 1914, he lives in Cooperstown, engaged in realestate and insurance bu-  
business. He has a son and three daughters. He is a member of the city  
council and Board of Education.

R. S. LUNDE

I, R.S.Lunde of Cooperstown, N.Dakota was born on the Lunde gaard in HøilandPrastegjald, in Gandalen about two American miles south of Sandnas, in Christiansand Stift, Norway, February 17, 1870. My father was Sven Lunde of Lima, Norway and my mother, was born at Westley, Thine Prastegjald in Jæren, Norway.

In the spring of 1881 father sold his farm and we moved to the ~~United~~ United States, landing in New York, and then proceeded to Granite Falls, Minn. Very few incidents can I recall of my childhood in Norway. However, when a little boy in Norway, I went down to a small creek which ran through our farm to fish small trout. I walked out too far on the foot bridge and lost my balance and fell into the water. As the water was not deep at this point, I was none the worse for the mishap, but ran home crying for comfort. I also remember my first day of school in Norway. As the teacher, Torger Volstead was well acquainted with my folks, he called for me the first morning of school. I walked to school, holding his hand. One of the first days of school, snowballing was on and a hard snowball thrown by a boy named Ole Wagle hit me. I ran to the teacher for consolation.

Another incident still very vivid in my mind : One of our neighbors <sup>There</sup> Thore Lunde and my father were going out to a lake nearby to prepare the nets and boats for fishing and Thore Lunde being a regular teaser, said he was going to drown my father in the lake. This took hold of my childish mind to such an extent that I cried and screamed, pleading with my father not to go with him.

The auction sale of father's personal property in Norway, before leaving for America is also still vivid in my mind. It seemed so sad to me that everything in and about the home should be carried away, but it made me glad to think we were going to cross the ocean. As all the children in our family had developed whooping cough, father left for America with his uncle

, Ole Westley, Betuel Herigstad, Waldemar Klubben and Sven Loge in March 1881. We were to go as soon as father had found a new home. When arriving at Granite Falls, Minn. he went to Christian Aarestad's home with whom he was well acquainted and who had gone to America twelve years previous to this time. When father and his companions arrived at Aarestad's, Aarestad and others supplied themselves with as much as their money could buy: with oxen, cows, wagons, and a few farm implements; hired a box car and billed the contents to Valley City. Mr. Aarestad was the leader of this group of emigrants, was acquainted with Matthew Davidson who had gone ahead to Dakota Territory; Mr. Aarestad intended to locate near Mr. Davidson.

On a Saturday night, May 21, 1881 mother and we children, our uncle, Ole Stokka and family and Mrs. Klubben and her children left Norway, en route to America. It thrilled me to go aboard the big steamship which was to take us across the North Sea to England. The following day on that ship, they were dancing all day long. It was the first time in my young life that I had seen people dance and it left a picture on my mind never since wiped out.

Monday morning we arrived at Hull, England and it took us till towards evening to obtain our baggage and have it loaded on the railroad train which took us across England to Liverpool. On that train there were small coops or rooms in the coaches and no modern conveniences. ~~At the time we~~ ~~was alone over the train~~, ~~way~~ but there was no water on the train. A little boy, Hans Stokka, then about two years old could not be made to understand that there was no water to be had so he cried and screamed all the way across England. His father gave him oranges to quench his thirst but to no avail. He screamed for water until we arrived at Liverpool about midnight.

At Liverpool we were ushered into an emigrant hotel and to ~~obtain~~ *obtain*

rooms Uncle Stokka pretended he had three wives for whom he had to obtain rooms. The hotel manager being a Dane could understand the Norse language. The Dane hollered; "How under Heaven can you get along with so many? It is all I can do to get along with one". We stayed a week at this hotel, waiting for a steamship of the Cunard Line. Mother and five children slept in one bed. To us children it was a thrilling experience but mother took it more seriously.

At last our ship arrived and we were ushered on board, as I thought an enormous ship, called the Algeria. We were nine days and nights on the ocean between England and New York. Some days were calm and nice while others were stormy. One evening, while on the ship, I had become acquainted with some men and we sat on the front end of the ship, talking until late in the night. I was so interested in their talk and thoughtlessly had not told mother where I could be found. Mother and many of the passengers had been looking for me, fearing I had been drowned. When at last we retired to our rooms, mother was overjoyed at seeing me again.

Landing in New York we went through Castle Garden, which now is an aquarium. It took us all day to arrange our baggage and get on the train en route to Granite Falls. During the night we changed trains at Chicago and again at Hastings, Minnesota. We arrived at Granite Falls, Minn. June 8, 1881. Ole Lunde, the County Treasurer of Yellow Medicine County at that time, was another's cousin. He had been informed of our expected arrival: he sent one of his sons to meet us at the depot at Granite Falls and to escort us to their hospitable home where we stayed a few days, going from there to the home of Rev. Ole Nelson at Stony Run. Mrs. Berg was a cousin of my father. We stayed at the O.N. Berg home a couple of weeks; then mother received a letter from father that he had located on a piece of land and was building a log cabin for us in the forest near the Sheyenne River. He wanted us to come to our new home.

A team was hired to take us to Benson, Minnesota. The next day, with all our belongings, we boarded a Northern train at Benson, Minn. At Glyndon, Minn. we had to make connections with the Northern Pacific train. We stayed at the depot in Glyndon all night. We slept on the hard floor-when we weren't listening to the telegraph instruments. We boarded the Northern Pacific train in the morning and arrived at Valley City, Dakota Territory, July 6, 1881. I saw father standing on the depot platform and I had not seen him since the middle of March.

We ate our lunch and then got ready to ride in a covered wagon hauled by two large white oxen: one of the oxen had a horn-spread 36 inches. Christian Aarestad, Martin Ueland, Waldemar Klubben and Sven Loge had also come to Valley City to meet their respective families.

In the middle of the afternoon the caravan began its journey across the prairies towards the northwest, with four covered wagons and two oxen pulling each wagon. When ten miles out of Valley City, darkness was descending and it was thought wisest to camp until daylight as there were no good roads in those days. We slept in and under our wagons. The oxen were let loose so they could hunt for something to eat. One man had to herd them. That evening was hot and sultry and the mosquitoes were terrible. The mothers with small children were to sleep in the wagons. About midnight, the lightning crashed, and it thundered and rained so everyone had to seek shelter inside the wagons. When the rain ceased, it became very cold, so we shivered and shook.

At daybreak, the caravan started on its journey again. Brother Hans, dead many years now, was very cold and started walking before the oxen were hitched. A stranger who had joined us also walked with Hans. They were far ahead of the caravan and mother became so \*

worried thinking probably that the stranger was taking Hans in a different direction. Along in the afternoon, when we came to what is now known as Sibley's Crossing, a little north of Ashtabula, there sat Hans and the ~~st~~ stranger waiting for us.

Towards evening that same day our destination was reached and we took up our abode in the log cabin which father had prepared for us. On the roof of the cabin was long slough grass and the floor was bare ground. Our companions also landed that day at their respective homes, some made of logs; some of sod. For beds, hay was carried in and placed on the floor. Uncle Stokka and our family lived together in that log cabin during our first year on the Sheyenne River. The cabin was 14' by 18'. During the summer I spent most of my time roaming through the woods, which at that time was very dense. My work was to herd our one cow and also take care of Axeliana (now Mrs. Erickson) who was then the baby. I also helped father out and put up hay for the oxen and the cow and we also built a stable in the side hill to house the stock in the winter. My brother and I went swimming in the Sheyenne River nearly every day in the summer.

During harvest, father had to go away to earn money with which to buy necessary supplies for winter. He usually went to work near Valley City. Later in the fall when he returned, he had bought a gun. My brother and I used this gun when we hunted rabbits and prairie chickens. Wild game was the only meat we had, with the exception of a calf which father butchered in the fall. There were five children in our family and the Mrs. Stokka had two children.-- so we were eleven people in that cabin. A cook stove did service for heating and preparing food. Later in the summer, father cut bark from the trees and roofed the cabin and on top of the bark he placed sod. The log cabin was plastered with clay.

Halvor Aarestad, a son of Christian Aarestad, living a few rods further up the river, started a winter evening school for young and old-

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also

The purpose of this school was to learn the American language. They ~~also~~ studied reading, writing. Those living on the prairie who attended this school came to the valley in the evenings on their skis. As there were no roads and no fences to guide them, they usually carried a compass so they could tell directions.

In March mother and father noticed that their supply of flour was nearly gone. The river was breaking; the snow was melting, filling all the sloughs with water. Father started out towards Valley City--with the <sup>yoke</sup> ~~team~~ of oxen owned jointly with Ole Stokka. Arriving at Ashtabula, father could go no further as the river was too high to be forded and there <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ no bridges in those days at this point. He stayed at Ashtabula that night and in the morning rowed in a canoe across the river, planning to walk to Valley City, a distance of fourteen miles. Some pioneer came driving along and gave him a ride to Valley City, promising him a ride back again after he had obtained his provisions. As father had no money, he had to give a chattel mortgage on the cow and oxen in order to secure the actual necessities, as flour, coffee and a little sugar. Father journeyed homeward in the same way as he had gone to Valley City.

However it took father longer to reach home than we had planned. In the meantime, at home, we run out of bread, flour and all kinds of food, Mother often mentioned later about that never to be forgotten day when I was hungry and asked for a slice of bread and she had to <sup>tell</sup> ~~say~~ me there was no food left in the house. It was dusk one evening and <sup>father</sup> ~~father~~ had not returned. Just as mother was lighting the lamp, we heard <sup>father</sup> ~~father~~ on top of the bluff, talking to the oxen. The important question was "Had father obtained the food?" There was joy at home when he <sup>answered</sup> ~~answered~~ in the affirmative.

During the winter father, with some of the neighbors, had gone north along the river to get a little <sup>seed</sup> ~~seed~~ wheat. This was bought

From Omund Nelson Opheim (called Pioneer Nelson), and J.E. Quale. This wheat was black with cockles. We hand picked this seed wheat during the winter evenings, when not at evening school. During the summer of 1881 father had only been able to break up five acres of land.

During the early spring when the waters of the Sheyenne River was overflowing its banks, bands of Indians rowed by our cabin. We did not know if we should be scared or not. The Indians merely looked at us, said nothing and proceeded on their way.

In the fall of 1882 we had a good crop but the acreage was so small that it did not amount to much. When spring came, my brother, Hans, and I herded about ninety head of cattle and oxen for our neighbors for which we were paid One dollar a head. That was the first money I had ever earned except when I was hired girl at the home of Betuel Herigstad after Bard was born. After a couple of weeks work, I received two silver dollars for which I was very thankful. I gave all my money to father to help support the family.

The winter of 1882-1883 was a repetition of 1881. The same evening school with Halvor Aarestad as teacher was continued and in this way I learned the American language. In the spring, eight additional acres of land was broke for seeding.

In the fall of 1883 I started to work for Jack Brown on his farm, beginning Sept. I and the salary of \$15.00 per month. It was my first time away from home. I was to sleep in a granary a short distance from their house. I was scared to be alone but dared not say anything. I cried myself to sleep that first night. During threshing, a Dane came with the rest of the hired men. He was to sleep with me. He was so filled with lice that I could not rest night or day. When I changed my clothes I believe they really moved. I never dared to complain but stayed there until December I, when I brought home to father \$45.00 - my total earnings.

About the middle of December , after father had made a pair of skis for us <sup>he said</sup> "let us go up and see the new town they are starting," (meaning the present town of Cooperstown) We arrived there and they were building the Palace Hotel (now the site of the King -Bruns-Palace Motor Co.) Kn ute Thompson was opening up his first load of goods ,hauled by teams from Sanborn.I shall never forget these sights. In the early ~~spring~~ spring of 1883 the train arrived at Cooperstown and this was to my youthful mind quite an incident.

During the summer of 1883 father was gathering limestones in the hills and burning lime and I helped him as much as I could. This lime was burnt in kilns made by him and when burnt, father hauled it to Cooperstown and sold it for \$2.00 per barräl .It was used in the building of the houses in town(Cooperstown).

In the fall of 1883 I hired out to work on the Cooper ranch and was to do shocking and threshing. I was paid \$2.00 per day and board and room. My room was the barn floor. I was not quite fourteen years old at this time. I brought my money home to father but he gave me some of it for clothes. In the summer of 1884, father and I again burned lime. In the fall I went to work for R.C.Cooper again. In the spring of 1884 I was confirmed by a pastor named Lundeby, who conducted divine services in the schoolhouses and farm homes during those early years. Rev. Lundeby was a Lutheran minister.

Thus the time went on from year to year,working for neighboring farmers. In 1885,1886 and part of 1887 as well as 1888 and 1889 I worked great deal on the Newell farm when not at home helping father ,who by this time had broken considerable land. In the fall of 1889,I went to Willmar,Minn. where I attended the seminary. Karl Lunde and I roomed together. We attended the seminary during 1889,1890 and graduated in 1891.

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That was the year of our first bonanza crop. Father wrote me that he had never dreamed of Dakota's fertility to the extent that it showed up that year. His whole crop averaged 38 Bu. to the acre. That gave him a start so that he now purchased his first team of horses.

During the years 1892 and 1893 I worked around on the farms until in the fall of 1893 I applied for and obtained my first and only term of public school at what was then known as the Gallatin school. There was an enrollment of fifty pupils and the term was eight months. On Dec. 1, 1893, I was married to Christine Wufflestad and began housekeeping in a small hut built near the schoolhouse. This teacher's abode consisted of one room about 10' by 12'.

Jan. 5, 1895, I started to work for John Oie in his office at Cooperstown. In the late fall of 1894, a son was born to us. He died when twenty one years old. In 1899 a daughter was born to us. She is now Mrs. E.T. Thompson of Cooperstown.

After working for John Oie for eight years, we went into partnership and he went to Norway intending to live there if the climate agreed with him. As the climate did not agree with John Oie, he returned and in 1919 John Oie, Nels Paulsberg and I organized the Farm Loan Co. with a capital of \$50,000.00.

In Sept. 1900 a second son was born to us. He died at the age of ten. In November 1903 a daughter was born to us. She died of the flu when she was 17 years old. In April 1911, another daughter arrived. She is named Alpha. In November 1916 a son, Lorentz, was born to us.

~~Our Farm Loan Co. which had a fine outlook with not on a p. paying basis~~