

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

of
Mr. & Mrs. Martin Opheim

Trinity Luth. Church
July 16, 1950

WELCOME by Rev. C. M. Rasmussen
PANTOMIME, "This Is Your Life." Reader, Mrs.

Norman Hoel

Scene I--Awaiting Your Marriage day

Young Man, Allen Turnquist

Young Lady, Linda Pratt

HYMN--"O Perfect Love"--p.538 (All Sing)

Scene II--Your Wedding Day

Bride, Linda Pratt

Groom, Allen Turnquist

Minister, John Hildre

HYMN--"Crown With Thy Benediction"
by Beverly Olson

Scene III--Family Table in Home

Mother, Kathleen Stromme

Father, Bobby Adams

Children, Manley, Charles Johnson

Gladys, Irene Turnquist

Clarence, Mylo Quam

Ella, Ann Rasmussen

Melford, Paul Rasmussen

Ole, Terry Turnquist

Vernon, David Lura

HYMN--"God Bless This House"

by Beverly Olson

READING, by Mrs Norman Hoel

HYMN--"O Happy Home"--p.537, vss.1,2,3,6
(All Sing)

READING, by Mrs. Norman Hoel

SHORT TALKS, by friends and relatives

READING, by Mrs. Norman Hoel
TALK, by Rev. C. M. Rasmussen
READING, by Mrs. Norman Hoel
HYMN--"Blest Be The Tie That Binds"

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne,
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows
the sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.

PRESENTATION, by Mr. J. Arnold Skofstad

CLOSING PRAYER, Rev. C. M. Rasmussen

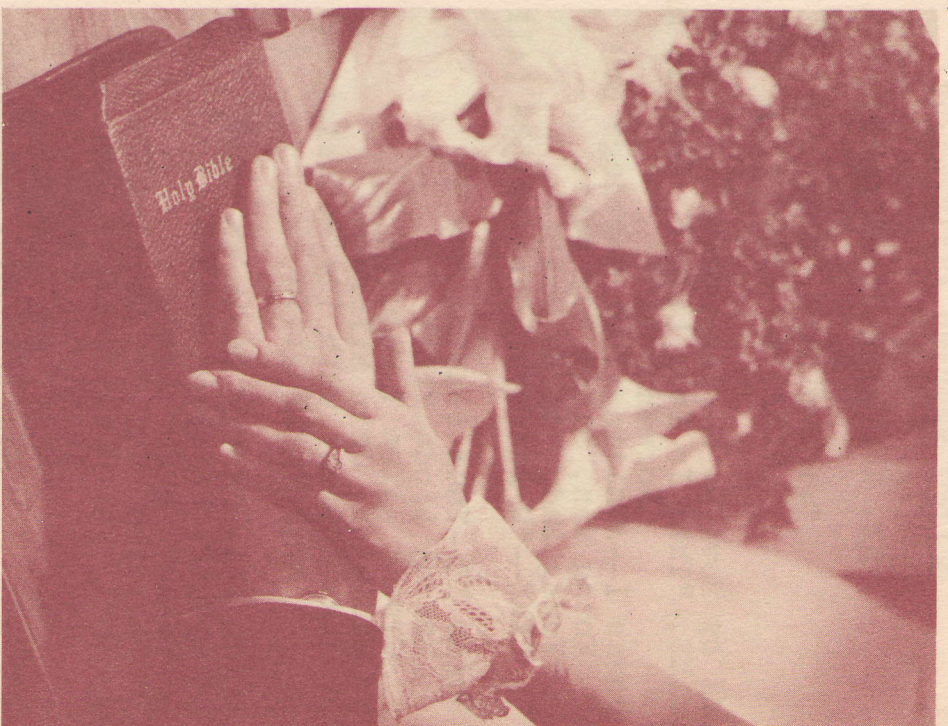
An Holy Estate

A MUCH used marriage service speaks of wedlock as an holy estate "not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, discreetly, and in the fear of God." If such counsel were more generally heeded there would be fewer broken homes, and more families where mutual respect, love, and understanding would bring happiness and peace.

The word "reverently" ought to be stressed in this connection. Marriage is an holy estate and should be so regarded. It was instituted by God Himself. Our Lord Jesus Christ in a singular way honored the estate by His presence at the wedding of Cana in Galilee. Those who enter marriage reverently, in the spirit of prayer and devotion, soon discover that only an intimate relationship with God can serve as a source of needed forbearance and patience. Constant fellowship with Christ in the Word and in prayer can sustain that mutual confidence and unity of spirit and of purpose.

Says the prayer with which the marriage service closes, "Give them grace always to commend themselves to each other, to cherish a due regard for each other's feelings and opinions, to be lenient to each other's faults and infirmities, just to each other's virtues and intentions." Where the spirit of this prayer is put into daily practice most of the shoals which often make the sea of matrimony rough and dangerous will be safely passed. Willingness to overlook, readiness to appreciate, determination to play the game of life together, these will go a long way in bringing happiness to heart and home.

Heavenly Father, give to Thy children grace always to regard marriage as an holy estate and so live together in love and in the unity of the Spirit of Christ, our Lord.



God Has Joined Together

By Nels Opheim

1. It was fifty-three years ago that my father, Omund Nelson Opheim, came to Griggs County to make his home. It was the spring of 1879 that he left Decorah, Iowa in the company of Lars Brekke, Hans Seim, Colben C. Grindeland and Lars Solberg, with thoughts only of finding a new home in the Dakotas. These men are the pioneers of Griggs County.

They travelled as most all pioneers travelled, with horses and covered wagons. In St. Paul they stopped to inquire about unclaimed land with good timber. Here they were given the name of a surveyor whom they were instructed to visit upon their arrival in Fargo. This man informed them that "There was no better land in the world" than the land along the Sheyenne River. He, also, gave them a plat of this land, so they journeyed on anxiously anticipating the country where they were to make a new home for themselves and their families. In Fargo, too, they traded their horses for oxen, as this animal is much sturdier than the horse, and it is better suited to this part of the country at that time.

Upon their arrival in Valley City they proceeded south, but found all of that land taken for a distance of at least fifteen miles, so they returned to Valley City and then went north in quest of the land the surveyor had told them they would find along the Sheyenne.

No one had, as yet, settled at this particular point, but when these men saw the land they were satisfied, and they unanimously decided that this would be where they would establish their new homes.

They had ordered their mail sent to Newbergh Postoffice over on the Goose River, and this was a distance of twenty-four miles from the place they were locating on the Sheyenne. One of the party, Lars Solberg, a brother of Mrs. Opheim, decided to settle on the Goose River when he saw it, as it appealed to him although the rest were very anxious to return to the Sheyenne. The other members of the party begged and pleaded with him to come back. They pointed out the disadvantages of splitting up at this time, and what it would mean to their families, but he had fully decided that the Goose River was where he wanted to make his future home, so they returned to the Sheyenne without him.

On their return to the Sheyenne they went up the Goose River to its source and then across to the Sheyenne, following the Sheyenne to the point where they had first chosen and where Opheim built a log cabin which was undoubtedly the first home built in what is now Griggs County, and which cabin is now located on the courthouse grounds at Cooperstown. The lime used for plastering the house was obtained by burning the limestone on the premises.

After building the cabin in 1879, Opheim returned to Iowa for his family and possessions going most of the way by train, and returning in a covered wagon with his family in the fall.

Needless to say, the hardships of these pioneers of Griggs County were many, even flour was considered a luxury, and the nearest point at which it could be obtained was Grand Forks. During the winter of 1879 it took three weeks to go there and purchase it.

The crops were sowed by hand, and dragged with a home made drag. The grain was cut with a cradle and threshed with a flail. Then, in order, to separate the wheat and chaf it was necessary to throw the grain across a room. The wheat was heavier than the chaf so it would go farther and so be cleaned.,

In 1882 they had their first term of school for the children. It was held in Opheim's log house, and Mr. Ole Serungard was the first teacher.

These facts are taken chiefly from a letter written to his wife by Omund Nelson Opheim, dated Sheyenne River, August third, 1879, which letter is still in my possession.

By Nels Opheim

Omund Nilson Opheim

Born Sept. 29, 1829
Ulvik Hardanger, Norway.

Died Aug. 5, 1885
Griggs County, N. Dak.

Kari Nilson Opheim

Born Feb. 2, 1825
Ulvik Hardanger, Norway.

Died Dec. 26, 1906
Griggs County, N. Dak.

Omund Nilson Opheim came to what is now Griggs County from Iowa in the spring of 1879, settling on the land that is now the Nels Opheim farm on the Sheyenne River, east of Cooperstown, and at this time he built this log cabin which is undoubtedly the first home built in Griggs County. Later, during the same summer he returned to Iowa and came back to Griggs County by covered wagon with his family and possessions, among which were these articles of furniture in the cabin, here.

Omund and Kari, as yet, settled at this particular point, but when there was any land they were satisfied, and they unanimously decided that this would be where they would establish their new home.

They had ordered their mail sent to Pembroke Postoffice over on the Snake River, and this was a distance of twenty-four miles from the place they were looking on the Sheyenne. One of the party, Lars Selberg, a brother of Mrs. Opheim, decided to return to the Snake River when he saw it, as it appeared to him although the rest were very anxious to return to the Sheyenne. The other members of the party begged and pleaded with him to come back. They pointed out the disadvantages of splitting up at this time, and what it would mean to their families, but he had fully decided that the Snake River was where he wanted to make his future home, so they returned to the Sheyenne without him.

On their return to the Sheyenne they went up the Snake River to the source and then across to the Sheyenne, following the Sheyenne to the point where they had first chosen and where Opheim built a log cabin which was undoubtedly the first home built in what is now Griggs County, and which cabin is now located on the northeast grounds at Cooperstown. The line used for measuring the home was similar to the working line on the prairie.

After building the cabin in 1879, Opheim returned to Iowa for his family and possessions going east of the way by train, and returning in a covered wagon with his family in the fall.

Difficult to say, the hardships of those pioneers of Griggs County were many, and their was no sheltered a luxury, and the nearest point at which it could be obtained was Grand Forks. During the winter of 1879 it took three weeks to go there and purchase it.

The crops were sown by hand, and dragged with a horse made drag. The grain was cut with a scythe and threshed with a flail. Then, in order, to separate the wheat and chaff it was necessary to throw the grain across a rock. The wheat was heavier than the chaff so it would go farther and so be cleaned.

In 1882 they had their first term of school for the children. It was held in Opheim's log house, and Mr. Ole Berglund was the first teacher.

These facts are taken chiefly from a letter written to his wife by Omund Nilson Opheim, dated Sheyenne River, August third, 1879, which letter is still in my possession.

Biography of Omund Nelson Opheim (oldest pioneer)
--Kenneth Monson

The parents of this pioneer were Mr. and Mrs. Nels Opheim. The name of this pioneer is Omund Nelson Opheim. He was born on September 29, 1829, in Norway.

He traveled in covered wagons from the state of Iowa and came to North Dakota in 1879 and settled on Section 12, Township 146, Range 58. Their first home was a log house. The closest place to go and get provisions was at Grand Forks to the mill, but later they went to Valley City.

Their closest neighbor was L. Martinson at the distance of twenty-four miles.

The machinery they had were walking plows, and a home-made drag. They cut grain with a cradle. They had a team of oxen, and sowed by hand. They threshed with a flail. The wheat yielded forty bushels to the acre. They got their wood from the timber on the farm. The first winter they had no wheat crop so Mr. Opheim took his team of horses (they had not traded off the horses for oxen) and drove up to Goose River where he bought some wheat from another farmer. Other farmers from Goose River accompanied him and they went to Grand Forks to get their wheat ground into flour. They followed along the river valleys because they didn't dare go across the prairie. The trip to Grand Forks took three weeks.

Prairie fires were frequent. When a fire started out the farmers had to plow up furrows and build back-fires. The prairie fires were not so bad around Opheim's farm because of the river. But it did happen that the fire jumped the river.

Omund Nelson Opheim was married to Kari Solberg in Norway. The only descendant of this pioneer is Nels J. Opheim, Cooperstown, N. Dak.

Mr. Opheim died August 5, 1885, on the farm.

(Amand Nelson Opheim)
Early Pioneers
--Pearl C. Mathison

The earliest pioneer was Nels Opheim, generally called pioneer Nelson. He came with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Amand Opheim, from Winesheck County, Iowa, in 1879 and settled on section 12 in what is now Washburn township. It was one year before other settlers came.

Next year, in 1880, came John Hogenson with his wife and two children. They settled on section 16 in Romness Township. Their means of travel was a covered wagon drawn by oxen. They were driving sixteen head of cattle and 26 sheep. They all arrived on September 30, 1880. After their arrival, they made two trips to Valley City. Their first real arrival before sending for the wife and children was on the 27th day of April, 1880, when he built a house and made some preparations for wintering his stock.

During the summer many settlers arrived, among them were Mr. and Mrs. B. Olsen and his sons and daughter. Mr. and Mrs. Bent Olson are the parents of the first white child known to be born in the county, who is Anton Olson, born January 31, 1881. He is still residing in a place near where he was born.

The next birth occurred on section 16, also Romness Township, when Elmer Mathison was born on May 17, 1881.

The free land had been taken up mostly further east, and in our state only a small portion of the Red River Valley had been settled, so prospective settlers could make their choice. Some went out to make a location, and informed their friends that they had found what they were seeking.

The pioneers left their former homes mostly to better their conditions, to make a home of their own for themselves and their loved ones.

The early experience of these early pioneers were like the others. They had to put up with blizzards, hail storms, droughts, prairie fires, gophers, not forgetting the loan sharks or money lenders that would collect their 12 to 15% interest on land.

THE FIRST SETTLER IN GRIGGS COUNTY

Omund Nelson Opheim, called "Pioneer Nelson", who came from the vicinity of Decorah, ~~Iowa~~ ^{Winnebago} County, Iowa and settled in the Sheyenne Valley in what is now Griggs County was the first white settler in Griggs County. He was born in Hardanger, Norway. He and his family were the only white settlers for a while. His youth was spent at Cambridge, Wisconsin, later he moved to Iowa and still later, to Dakota territory.

Together with the Omund Nelson Opheim family came Gustav Olson, who soon moved to other parts. Then in 1880 came John Hogenson, ~~from Lybuck, North~~ ^{from Lybuck, North} ~~Carl~~ ^{Carl} Olson, A. Nelson, Iver Seim, and J.E. Qualey.

Valley City, 45 miles distant, was the settlers' nearest market, where they traded their wheat and oats for food.

In 1880 came Ed Evenson, Aslak Gunderson, Sven Loge, Tobias Lima, J. Johnson and S. Nelson.

The first Norwegian church in Griggs County was the Ringsaker Church in what is now Romness Township in 1887.

Ringsaker, Thine and Ottawa congregations were organized in 1882 by Rev. L. Lundebj.

(The above is translated from the Norwegian language).

Bibliography: Normanden i America -1907
by Martin Ulvestad

AN OLD SETTLER GONE

(Quoted from Griggs Courier, Aug. 7, 1885)

" Wednesday morning about 5 o'clock Omund Nelson Opheim or "Pioneer Nelson " was found in his wagon at his farm on the river (Sheyenne) dead. His horses had become entangled in a wire fence and stopped. The body was lying face down, while the face was beaten into an unrecognizable mass. He had left town (Cooperstown) in the evening before eight o'clock. His team was seen running at various points on the river road without a driver; and at one point, his body was pounding on the wagon bed, as the horses jumped. This wild ride was over the Sheyenne bridge and through Mardell to his place on the river. It is now discovered that the deceased was suffering from rheumatism and to alleviate his misery, had while in town, been drinking considerably, although he was not a drinking man. The coroner's jury composed of H.P. Smart, Andrew Johnson, Julius Stevens, H. Retzlaff, H.G. Pickett and F. Thompson, found that he came to his death from apoplexy, heart disease or both; but the coroner thinks the pounding he received while the horses were running, sufficient to account for the death, concussion producing apoplexy. Mr. Nelson-Opheim leaves a wife and children, also grandchildren and a comfortable property. He was the first settler in Griggs County and was unanimously respected by all who knew him. His funeral occurred Thursday and was largely attended from Cooperstown and the county."

First Settlers

Mrs. Porterville

(in Griggs County)

In the spring of 1879, Omund Nelson Opheim left Decorah, Iowa in the company of Lars Brekke, Hans Sein, Colben Grindeland and Lars Solberg with thoughts only of finding a new home in the Dakotas. These men are the pioneers of Griggs County.

They traveled as most all pioneers traveled with horses and covered wagons. In St. Paul, they stopped to inquire about unclaimed land with good timber. Here they were given the name of a surveyor whom they were instructed to visit upon their arrival in Fargo. This man informed them that "there was no better land in the world than that along the Sheyenne River. He also gave them a plot of this land so they journeyed on anxiously anticipating the country where they were to make a new home for themselves and their families. In Fargo, they traded their horses for oxen as the ox was much sturdier than the horse and better suited to this part of the country at that time.

Upon their arrival at Valley City, they proceeded south, but found all of that land taken for a distance of at least fifteen miles, so they returned to Valley City and then went in quest of the land the surveyor had told them they would find along the Sheyenne.

No one had, as yet, settled at this particular point, but when these men saw the land they were satisfied, and they unanimously decided that this would be where they would establish their new homes.

They ordered their mail sent to the Newberry Post Office over on the Goose River, and this was a distance of twenty-four miles from the place where they were locating on the Sheyenne.

One of the party, Lars Solberg, a brother of Mrs. Opheim decided to settle on the Goose River when he saw it as it appealed to him although the rest were very anxious to return to the Sheyenne. The other members of the party pleaded with him to come back. They pointed out to him the disadvantages of splitting up at this time and what it would mean to their families, but he had fully decided that the Goose River was where he wanted to make his future home, so they returned to the Sheyenne without him.

On their return to the Sheyenne they went up the Goose River to its source and then across to the Sheyenne, following it to the point which they had first chosen and where Opheim built a log cabin, which was undoubtedly the first home in what is now Griggs County and which cabin is now located on the Court House grounds at Cooperstown. The lime used for plastering the house was obtained by burning the limestone found upon the premises.

After building the cabin in 1879, Opheim returned to Iowa for his family and possessions going most of the way by train and returning in a covered wagon with his family in the fall.

Needless to say, the hardships of these pioneers of Griggs County were many, for even flour was a luxury and the nearest point at which it could be obtained was Grand Forks. During the winter of 1879, it took three weeks to go there to purchase groceries.

The crops were sown by hand and dragged with a home-made drag. The grain was cut with a cradle and threshed with a flail. Then in order to separate the grain from the chaff it was necessary to throw it across the room. The wheat, of course was heavier than the chaff and thus it would go further and so be cleaned.

In 1882, they had their first term of school for the children. It was held in Omund Nelson Opheim's log house and Ole Serungard, now deceased, was the first teacher; also the first teacher in Griggs County.

Omund Nelson Opheim, the acknowledged first settler in Griggs County (locally he is called "Pioneer Nelson") who settled in the county of Griggs in 1879, was born Sept. 29, 1829 at Ulvik, Hardanger, Norway and at that place in 1847 he was married to Kari Solberg.

The early pioneers in the Sheyenne valley recall the hospitality of the Opheims and relate how Mrs. Opheim "good soul" worked early and late to accomodate the new comers to Griggs County.

Omund Nelson Opheim or Pioneer Nelson was found (Aug. 5, 1885) in his wagon at his farm home on the Sheyenne River, dead. The horses had run away and this wild ride was over the Sheyenne bridge and through Mardell (a ghost town now) to his home on the river. Mrs. O. N. Opheim died Dec. 26, 1906. They are both interred in Sheyenne Valley cemetery, located on their homestead, 2 miles from Sheyenne Valley church. This is the first cemetery in Griggs County.

Nels Ulven was the first settler buried in this homestead cemetery. Two children were born to this union, Nels Johan and Martha. Martha died Jan. 16, 1916 at Jamestown. Nels Johan Opheim is living at Cooperstown. There are seven grandchildren, Martin Olaf Opheim, Cooperstown; Katrina (Mrs. Gilbert Anderson) Minneapolis; Clara Mathilda (Mrs. Nels Johanson) Princeton, Minnesota; Carl Oliver Opheim, Bismarck, North Dakota; Omund Norman Opheim, Cooperstown, N. Dak.; George Edward Opheim, Cooperstown, N. Dak.; Clara Inez (Mrs. Wm. Bostrom) Cooperstown, N. Dak.

Bibliography:

Nels Opheim, son of "Pioneer Nelson"

Cooperstown, North Dakota

Griggs County Sentinel Courier, *Cooperstown, N. Dak.*
Vol. 53 No. 8 May 23, 1935

Judge Will H. Carleton

Member of the "Cooper group" of pioneers, Cooperstown, N. Dak.

A letter written by Omund Nelson Opheim dated Aug. 3, 1879 at Sheyenne River, to his wife who was in Iowa. This letter is in the possession of Nels Opheim, Cooperstown, North Dakota.

Notes

OMUND NELSON OPHEIM (Pioneer Nelson)

Omund Nelson Opheim, the first white settler in the Sheyenne valley -in Griggs County- (1879) was from Hardanger, Norway. In 1880 came John Hogenson from Aamot, Osterdalen, A.E. Lybeck from Land, Norway, Gilbert Olson from Ringsaker, A. Nelson from Ostmarken, Iver Seim from Hardanger and John E. Qualey from Sogndalen. Valley City was the nearest market place. In 1880 there settled in the vicinity of Cooperstown and Hannaford, Ed Evenson from Eastern Totten, Norway, and A. Gunderson, J. Johnson, S. Nelson Tobias Lima and Sven Loge.

Pioneer Nelson-His childhood was spent at Cambridge, Wis. then he went to Decorah, Iowa.

In 1881 S. Sanderson settled in the vicinity of Gallatin. He was the first settler there; he came from Christiania.

T.T. Fuglestad wrote: I started out in 1883. The ticket was bought to Valley City as there were no railroads N.W. of Valley City. " In that day, with oxen team, came we from Valley City to this county's deserted prairie, where many poor people had taken homesteads in 1882. In the spring of 1883 it looked dark for them. The provisions were nearly gone. Both people and animals were in danger of starving on account of the Sheyenne River flooding and the market place so far away. However, relief came in time.

FIRST SETTLERS IN GRIGGS COUNTY

The first settlers came to what is now Griggs County as early as 1879 but it was not until the spring of 1881 that they arrived in appreciable numbers.

In the spring of 1879, Omund Nelson Opheim also called Pioneer Nelson was the first settler in what is now Washburn Township, and also the first settler in Griggs County. Mr. Opheim came from Winesheck County, Iowa. He entered government land on Sec. 12 of Washburn Tp.

After building his log cabin, covering the roof with elm bark and plastering the house by burning limestone found upon the prairies, Mr. Opheim returned to Iowa for his family, returning with his family in a covered wagon the fall of 1879.

The nearest point at which they could obtain flour was Grand Forks. During the winter of 1879, it took three weeks to go there to purchase groceries.

Needless to say, the hardships of these pioneers of Griggs Co. were many. The crops were sown by hand and dragged with a home-made drag. The grain was cut with a cradle and threshed with a flail. In order to separate the grain from the chaff it was necessary to throw it across the room. The wheat, being heavier than the chaff, would go further and so be cleaned.

In 1880, came C. P. Bolken, Amund Pluto, Ole Havig and John Tarfin who took land in Washburn Township. Arne Luckeson, John Atchison and Alex Saunders arrived the same year and settled in Sverdrup Township.

In the spring of 1881, new settlers and land seekers came into the territory and the only place to go for a meal was Opheims. Mrs. Opheim worked early and late to accommodate the newcomers.

FIRST SETTLERS IN GRIGGS COUNTY

2.

In 1882, they had their first term of school for the children. School was held in Opheim's log house and Ole Serungard was the first teacher in Griggs County.

The Nelson log cabin, the first home in Griggs County was moved to Cooperstown in 1932, as a feature of the fiftieth anniversary of the county. It now stands on the court house square as a monument to Griggs County pioneers.

Bibliography:

Nels Opheim, *farmer*
Cooperstown, N. D.

A letter written by Omund Nelson Opheim
dated *Aug. 3, 1877*, at Sheyenne to his
wife who was in Iowa.

Judge Will R. Carleton
Cooperstown, N. D.

1. It was ~~fifty-three~~ years ago that ~~my father~~, Omund Nelson Opheim, came to Griggs County to make his home. It was the spring of 1879 that he left Decorah, Iowa in the company of Lars Brekke, Hans Seim, Colben C. Grindeland and Lars Solberg, with thoughts only of finding a new home in the Dakotas. These men ~~were~~ the pioneers of Griggs County.

They travelled as most all pioneers travelled, with horses and covered wagons. In St. Paul they stopped to inquire about unclaimed land with good timber. Here they were given the name of a surveyor whom they were instructed to visit upon their arrival in Fargo. This man informed them that "There was no better land in the world" than the land along the Sheyenne River. He, also, gave them a plat of this land, so they journeyed on anxiously anticipating the country where they were to make a new home for themselves and their families. In Fargo, too, they traded their horses for oxen, as this animal is much sturdier than the horse, and it is better suited to this part of the country at that time.

Upon their arrival in Valley City they proceeded south, but found all of that land taken for a distance of at least fifteen miles, so they returned to Valley City and then went north in quest of the land the surveyor had told them they would find along the Sheyenne.

No one had, as yet, settled at this particular point, but when these men saw the land they were satisfied, and they unanimously decided that this would be where they would establish their new homes. This is just 2 miles north of #7.

They had ordered their mail sent to Newburgh Postoffice over on the Goose River, and this was a distance of twenty-four miles from the place they were locating on the Sheyenne. One of the party, Lars Solberg, a brother of Mrs. Opheim, decided to settle on the Goose River when he saw it, as it appealed to him although the rest were very anxious to return to the Sheyenne. The other members of the party begged and pleaded with him to come back. They pointed out the disadvantages of splitting up at this time, and what it would mean to their families, but he had fully decided that the Goose River was where he wanted to make his future home, so they returned to the Sheyenne without him.

On their return to the Sheyenne they went up the Goose River to its source and then across to the Sheyenne, following the Sheyenne to the point where they had first chosen and where Opheim built a log cabin which was undoubtedly the first home built in what is now Griggs County, and which cabin is now located on the courthouse grounds at Cooperstown. The lime used for plastering the house was obtained by burning the limestone on the premises.

After building the cabin in 1879, Opheim returned to Iowa for his family and possessions going most of the way by train, and returning in a covered wagon with his family in the fall.

Needless to say, the hardships of these pioneers of Griggs County were many, even flour was considered a luxury, and the nearest point at which it could be obtained was Grand Forks. During the winter of 1879 it took three weeks to go there and purchase it.

The crops were sowed by hand, and dragged with a home made drag. The grain was cut with a cradle and threshed with a flail. Then, in order, to separate the wheat and chaff it was necessary to throw the grain across a room. The wheat was heavier than the chaff so it would go farther and so be cleaned.,

In 1882 they had their first term of school for the children. It was held in Opheim's log house, and Mr. Ole Serungard was the first teacher.

These facts are taken chiefly from a letter written to his wife by Omund Nelson Opheim, dated Sheyenne River, August third, 1879, which letter is still in my own possession. by Nels

Insert
Story on Jan 11

Nels John Nelson Opheim

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

Nels John Nelson Opheim, son of Omund Nelson Opheim and Karei Nelson Opheim, was born Oct. 23 1869 in Winneshiek County, Iowa. In the spring of 1879 his father came to Griggs County and located on land in the SE¹/₄ of Sec. 12-146-58, and built the first house of a permanent settler in Griggs County. Then he went back to Iowa, and in September 1879, returned with his wife, his son, Nels, his daughter Martha, his son-in-law, ^{Gustavo Olson} and grandchildren Martin and Oscar, and established residence on the Homestead. They came all the way by team and covered wagon. They were about two weeks on the road and lived in the covered wagon, sleeping in it nights and traveling by day. When they arrived at the ~~XXXXX~~ homestead and looked about they found that their nearest neighbors were about twenty-four miles to the east, Near Mayville. There they bought groceries, and the father went to Grand Forks when he had wheat to grind. On one trip to Grand Forks he was caught in a snow storm, and was three weeks making the trip. During this time the family were without flour, and were terribly oppressed by a terrible fear that the father had perished in the storm on the prairie. But at the end of three weeks he came home, bringing some food. Both ~~he~~ and ~~MM~~ his team were exhausted by hard work and exposure, having been three days coming home from the nearest neighbors, ~~threshed~~

The first crop of wheat was cut with a cradle, and ~~XXXXXX~~ with sticks, on the floor of the log cabin

The family were greatly rejoiced when settlers began to come in around them the following year.

Nels lived with his parents until they were called to their Eternal Home.

On June 4th 1893 Nels was married to Ingeborg Larson Haugse. They have three sons and one daughter: Omund N. born April 8, 1894; Edward, Nov. 23 1895; Clara Inez, May 4 1898; and Carl, Nov. 17 1900.

In later years, although the family did not live in the old log house, it was kept as a memorial to the pioneers Mr. and Mrs. Omund Nelson Opheim.

The neighbors and townspeople of Nels Opheim have honored him with various positions of trust. He has been a member of the school board for 17 years, several years as President. He was elected Secretary of his Church in 1893, and ~~MM~~ holds the office now (1915) He is also assessor of Washburn township.

PIONEER BIOGRAPHY

Omund Nelson Opheim (oldest pioneer)

The parents of this pioneer were Mr. and Mrs. Nels Opheim. The name of this pioneer is Omund Nelson Opheim. The pioneer was born on September 29, 1829. He was born in Norway.

He traveled in wagons from the state of Iowa and came to North Dakota in 1879 and settled on Section 12, Township 146, Range 58. Their first home was a log house. The closest place to go and get provisions were at Grand Forks to the mill, but later they went to Valley City.

Their nearest neighbor was L. Martinson at the distance of twenty-four miles.

The machinery they had were walking plows, and a home-made drag. They cut grain with a cradle. They had a team of oxen and sowed by hand. They threshed with a flail. The wheat yielded forty bushels to the acre.

They got their wood from the timber on the farm. The first winter they had not wheat crop so Mr. Opheim took his team of horses (they had not traded off the horses for oxen) and drove up to Goose River where he bought some wheat from another farmer. Other farmers from Goose River accompanied him and they went to Grand Forks to get their wheat ground into flour. They followed along the river valleys because they didn't dare go across the prairie. The trip to Grand Forks took three weeks.

Prairie fires were frequent. When a fire started out the farmers had to plow up furrows and build back-fires. The prairie fires were not so bad around Opheim's farm because of the river. But it did happen that the fire jumped the river.

Omund Nelson Opheim was married to Kari Solberg in Norway. The only descendant of this pioneer is Nels J. Opheim, Cooperstown, N. Dak. Mr. Opheim died August 5, 1885, on the farm.

--Kenneth Monson

PIONEER BIOGRAPHY

Omund Nelson Opheim (oldest pioneer)

by Kenneth Monson

The parents of this pioneer were Mr. and Mrs. Nels Opheim. The name of this pioneer is Omund Nelson Opheim. The pioneer was born on September 29, 1829. He was born in Norway.

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--Kenneth Monson

Coopersdown N.D. Oct 16-36

Mrs Claire Jackson

Hamraford N.D.

Dear Madam:

I received your letter today.

Osmond Nelson Ophim's ^{wife's} Maiden name
was Kari Solberg. They were married in
Ulrik Hardanger Norway in 1847.

Mr and Mrs Osmond Nelson Ophim is both
buried in the Shyenne Valley Cemetery
this is located on their Homestead about
2 miles from the Shyenne Valley church.
This was the first cemetery in Griggs co.
They had 2 children one girl named Martha.

Martha died Jan. 16. 1916 at Jamestown N.D.

and one Boy named Nels Johan Coopersdown N.D.

There are seven Grand children.

Martin Olaf Ophim Coopersdown

(Katharina) Mrs Gilbert Anderson Minneapolis Minn.

(Clara Mathilda) Mrs Nels Johanson Princeton Minn.

Osmond Norman Coopersdown N.D.

George Edward " "

(Clara Inez) Mrs Wm Gastrom cooperstown, N.D.
Carl Oliner Bismarck, N.D.

yours truly
Nels J. Ophus

THE FIRST SETTLERS IN GRIGGS COUNTY

In the spring of 1879, Omund Nelson Opheim left Decorah, Iowa in the company of Lars Erickson, Hans Seim, Colben Grindeland and Lars Solberg with thoughts only of finding a new home in the Dakotas.

They traveled as most pioneers traveled, with horses and covered wagons. In St. Paul, they stopped to inquire about unclaimed land with good timber. Here they were given the name of a surveyor whom they were instructed to visit upon their arrival in Fargo. This man informed them that "there was no better land in the world than that along the Sheyenne River". He also gave them a plat of this land, so they journeyed on anxiously anticipating the country where they were to make a new home for themselves and their families. In Fargo, too, they traded their horses for oxen as the ox was much sturdier than the horse and better suited to this part of the country at that time.

Upon their arrival at Valley City, they proceeded south, but found all of that land taken for a distance of at least fifteen miles, so they returned to Valley City and then went in quest of land the surveyor had told them they would find along the Sheyenne.

No one had, as yet, settled at this particular point, but when these men saw the land they were satisfied, and they unanimously decided that this would be where they would establish their new homes.

They ordered their mail sent to the Newberry post office over on the Goose River, and this was a distance of twenty-four miles from the place where they were locating on the Sheyenne. One of the party, Lars Solberg, a brother of Mrs. Opheim, decided to settle on the Goose River when he saw it as it appealed to him although the rest were very anxious to return to the Sheyenne. The other members of the party pleaded with him to come back. They pointed out to

him the disadvantages of splitting up at this time and what it would mean to their families, but he had fully decided that the Goose River locality was where he wanted to make his future home, so they returned to the Shoyenne valley without him.

On their return to the Shoyenne they went up the Goose River to its source and then across to the Shoyenne, following it to the point which they had first chosen and where Mr. Opheim built a log cabin, which was undoubtedly the first home in what is now Griggs County, and which cabin is now located on the Court House grounds in Cooperstown. The lime used for plastering the house was obtained by burning the limestone found upon the premises.

After building the cabin in 1879, Mr. Opheim returned to Iowa for his ~~belongings~~ possessions, going most of the way by train, and returning in a covered wagon with his family in the fall.

Needless to say, the hardships of these pioneers of Griggs County were many, for even flour was a luxury and the nearest point at which it could be obtained was Grand Forks. During the winter of 1879 it took three weeks to go there and purchase it.

The crops were sown by hand, and dragged with a home-made drag. The grain was cut with a cradle and threshed with a flail. Then, in order to separate the grain from the chaff it was necessary to throw it across the room. The wheat, of course, was heavier than the chaff and thus it would go further and so be cleaned.

In 1888 they had their first term of school for the children. It was held in Mr. Opheim's log house, and Mr. Ole Samungard was the first teacher; also the first teacher in Griggs County.

Omund Nelson Opheim, locally called "Pioneer Nelson", the acknowledged first settler in Griggs County, who settled in the county in 1879, was born September 29, 1829 at Ulvik, Hardanger, Norway and

at that place, in 1847, was married to Miss Karl Solberg.

Anon Nelson or Omund Opheim, as he was later called, tried to bring a Norwegian colony but failed because nearly all of the desirable land was taken before his settlers could come. His home was a well-known stopping place in the early days. The early pioneers in the Sheyenne Valley recall the hospitality of the Opheims and relate how Mrs. Opheim "good soul" worked early and late to accommodate the new comers to Griggs County.

Omund Nelson Opheim or "Pioneer Nelson" was found August 5, 1885 in his wagon at his farm home, dead. The horses had run away and this wild ride was over the Sheyenne bridge and through Mardell, a ghost town now, to his home on the river. Mrs. Omund Nelson Opheim died December 26, 1900. They are both interred in the Sheyenne Valley Cemetery, located on their homestead on section 12 in what is now Washburn Township.

Two children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Opheim. Their daughter, Martha died at Janestown, January 10, 1913. Their son, Nels Johan, is living at Cooperstown. There are seven grand children, Martin Olaf Opheim, Cooperstown, N.D.; Katrina (Mrs. Gilbert Anderson) Minneapolis, Minnesota; Clara Mathilda (Mrs. Nels Johanson) Princeton, Minnesota; Carl Oliver Opheim, Bismarck, N. Dakota; Omund Norman Opheim, Cooperstown, N. Dakota; George Edward Opheim, Cooperstown, N. Dakota; and Clara Inez (Mrs. Wm. Bostrom) Cooperstown, N.D.

Bibliography: Nels Opheim, son of "Pioneer Nelson"
Cooperstown, N.D.

Cooperstown Courier, August 5, 1885
Cooperstown, N.D.

Griggs County Sentinel - Courier
Cooperstown, N.D.

Bibliography: (continued)

W.H. Carleton, who came to this county in 1882
Cooperstown, N.D.

Claus Jackson, sheriff of Griggs County in the '80s.
Hannaford, N.D.

A letter written by Omund Nelson Opheim, dated August 5,
1879 at Sheyenne River, to his wife, who was in Iowa.
This letter is in the possession of Nels Opheim, who
resides at Cooperstown, N.D.

"Normenden i Amerika " by Martin Ulvestad
Volume I-page 66.

Government Surveyors 'Records
Published in six volumes
In office of County Auditor
Cooperstown, N.D.

THE FIRST SETTLERS IN GRIGGS COUNTY

A settlement in 1880 in what is now Romness Township included Mr. and Mrs. John Hogenson and children, Helen and Edward from Fillmore County, Minnesota, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Mathieson, Mr. and Mrs. John E. Qualey and five children from Minnesota. Also, Mr. and Mrs. Ole B. Olson and sons, Gilbert, Bernt, Martin, and Theodore from Iowa, John M. Dahl, A. E. Lybeck, Mrs. Anna Nelson and children, Andrew, Nels, and Marie from Iowa, and Andrew C. Knutson from Wisconsin. Iver Seim from Iowa settled just across the line. The above were Norwegians, hence they chose the Norwegian place name, "Romness". John Hogenson took land on section 16 in Romness Township, as did Peter Mathieson. Ole B. Olson "squatted" on section 24, Andrew C. Knutson and Gilbert Olson on section 35. Mrs. Anna Nelson took land on section 22. John M. Dahl "squatted" on section 36 and Martin Johnson, on section 6 of Township 147 N. and R. 58 W.

A settlement in 1880 in what is now Washburn Township included C. P. Bolkan, who took land on section 34, John Terfin from Iowa settled on section 26; Ole Havig took land on section 34; Ole Johnson Skrein took land on section 26, and Arund Fluto took land on section 26. Omand Nelson Opheim had settled on land on section 12 of this township in 1879.

Alex Chalmers, John Atchison, and Alex Saunders from Scotland, and Arne Luckason came to Griggs County in 1880 and took land in what is now Sverdrup Township. Arne Luckason "squatted" on section 10; John Atchison and Alex Saunders on section 24, and Alex Chalmers on section 22.

Bibliography: John Hogenson, pioneer in Romness Township
Cooperstown, N.D.

Government Surveyors' Records
Cooperstown, N.D.

Children of John Atchison, Ole Olson, P. Mathieson,
Cooperstown, N.D.

Rollin C. Cooper and his brother, T. J. Cooper, who had been successful in mining ventures in Colorado, arrived in what is now Griggs County, in 1880, looking for land. They bought railroad land, secured soldiers' script for some, took pre-emptions, homesteads and tree claims for themselves and their friends. About seventy friends and relatives of the Cooper brothers, from St. Clair, Michigan, came in 1881-1882 and formed the "Cooper Settlement", which later became the town of Cooperstown.

Bibliography: R. C. Cooper, pioneer
St. Petersburg, Florida

Judge W. H. Carleton
Cooperstown, N. D.

E. D. Stair, first publisher of "Cooperstown Courier"
Detroit, Mich.

Wm. Glass, Licenser Land and Loan Agent at Cooperstown
Big Timber, Mont.

From interview by Hannah Lende

Mrs. W. J. Opheim

Mrs Opheim

Mrs. Opheim came from Hardinger, Norway on the steamboat with her parents in May 1879 to Decorah, Iowa. There she stayed two years and went to school for two months in a church basement in Decorah. Her father was a night watchman at Luther College, Decorah, and her sister a cook at the same place. After staying in Decorah two years, they moved to Osain, Iowa where Mrs. Opheim attended school for several months.

Mrs. Opheim's father had had of some work at a place in Mpls. they called the "Glass Block"; a building covering a block and consisted mostly of glass all around, so he and his family went to Mpls. by rail and stayed there for a year. From there they came ten miles west of Portland where they farmed for five years until they moved to their farm in Washburn township. Mrs. Opheim was thirteen years old then. At the age of sixteen she was confirmed by Rev. T. H. Larson.

As time went by she attended house parties, and other simple social gatherings they had. Mr. Opheim was a neighbor of hers and very often attended these parties with her. They were married in 1893 at his place by Rev. T. H. Larson.