

Biography of Knute Stromme
--Borghild Foyen

Knute Stromme was born October 8, 1842, in Bergen, Norway. His parents names were Joe and . His early boyhood was spent in climbing trees, mountains and herding cattle, sheep, and goats. His schooling was very little. He did not learn to do anything else than to read. When he was quite young he hired himself out to a man as a sailor and earned but thirty dollars a year.

Later he came over to America in about 1873. When he came to Minnesota he met Gusta Rustad and later in 1878 they were united in marriage. They had but one child who was born July 11, 1880.

He made his first home in Red Wing, Minnesota. Later in 1882 he came to N. Dak. and settled on the homestead which he is now on. They did not have any cars or even horses to travel with so it was very hard many times to get any place at all. Later he got a team of oxen. They had to go way down to Valley City to get their supplies and had to drive with oxen. It took a week many times when the weather would turn out to be very bad. It was only prairie all over here at that time. Sometimes the prairie fires would come and destroy most everything they had.

In the olden times the grain, cows, horses, eggs, butter, etc. was not like the price is now. Grain was about 35¢ a bu., cows were about \$15.00, horses were about \$200.00, eggs about 8¢ a doz., and butter 12-15¢ per lb. Games and amusements they had in olden times besides going to church were that they came together and played games as Blind-man's-buff, Der Kommer Et Par Fra Vesten, Debate, Ladies Aids, etc.

Many times they had services in the homes as they did not have any churches. The first minister was Rev. Ludeby, the O. K. Quame, Henrick Voldal, Sigvard Olson, N. J. Vigingstad, and Rev. Haaland, When they had communion they did not have an altar in those days. They fixed two chairs and laid a plank on top of these which they would kneel down besides. The people used to go to services in wagons, hayracks, and sometimes they would have to walk.

The first schoolhouse was by name called the Baker school located on the northwest corner of Section 18, township 144, Range 58. Some of the school teachers they had in those days were very much unlike those they have now. One teacher they had in the olden days was very funny. Sometimes the pupils in the room would climb out the windows when they stood open and go outside and play or run around the schoolhouse or something and he would be so interested in his work that he would not see and then when people were going to tell him he would not believe it. There would be fifteen and twenty pupils in those days also. They would not have as many months of school as they do now, and generally it began in the spring and lasted until in the fall.

They had many experiences as the prairie fires which came nearly every year and destroyed most everything, and another thing was the long distance to town. The closest town they had was Valley City as Coopers-town was not yet started, and also the hard work they had to do and they only had oxen and hand plow.

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They had many hard snowstorms and blizzards. Once they had a very hard blizzard during the night and in those days the houses were very low so the doors were not very high and the next morning they had to shovel the snow away from the door before they could get out of the house.

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