

Mrs. Nels Tufteland

From interview by Hannah Lende

Mrs. Nels Tufteland was born August 8, 1847 in Norway. Her parents were Ole and Marie Olson. She was married to Nels Tufteland in 1877 by Rev. Hanson in Bergen, Norway.

In 1884 Mr. and Mrs. Tufteland with their two children came to America on the Allan line. The name of the boat was Peruveen. They landed in Quebec where they took the train to Montivideo, Minn. Here they stayed three years.

In 1887 Mr. and Mrs. Tufteland, Oliver Hageland, and Knut Tufteland left for Dakota territory by horses and covered wagon. They took their stock, chickens, etc along and were seventeen and one-half days on the road. They came to Nelson county, Dakota territory where they stayed about a week and then continued on arriving at ^{June 27} the present Willow township and located on section 7. They moved in a dugout where Peter Olson had previously lived.

There were very few settlers around there when the Tuftelands came. The closest neighbors were Nels Gilbertson, Anton Peterson and Frick Jacobson. Nels Gilbertson was the first white man who settled in that vicinity. There were no schools or churches until many years later. In 1888 Mr. Tufteland put ten acres of land into crop which yielded nothing. That year and the next two years there was no crop or garden for them, it being so dry.

The Tuftelands saw plenty of Indians the first years in Dakota. They would camp right outside their place for

#3
a length of time and would beg for bread, milk, etc. Early in the morning the Indians would peak through the windows. Mrs. Tufteland was alone with the children but didn't seem to mind the peculiar actions of the Indians.

Mr. Tufteland each year would hire out in harvesting and threshing near the Goose river. He and five other men bought the first threshing rig in the Red Willow lake vicinity, from John Arlen, Nelson County.

There were many prairie fires in the early years Mrs. Tufteland remembers. Around 1893 a prairie fire swept the country and destroyed thirty head of sheep for them. The same year Mr. Tufteland built a house near the dugout.

In the winter Mr. Tufteland went on skis to Cooperstown for provisions. He would leave early in the morning and would get back in the evening with a load of provisions on his back.

The Tuftelands were also out in snow storms. Mrs. Tufteland many times would sit home wondering where her children and husband were when the snow storms came up. Mr. Tufteland was at one time in 1895 on his way to Cooperstown for some provisions and was caught in a snow storm. He was forced to stay in Jessie four days. Unable to get to Cooperstown he started home from Jessie in cold and stormy weather. He was gone from home over a week. The children were caught in snow storms while at their neighbors and would have to stay there several days, Mrs. Tufteland worrying whether they were safe or not.

Seven children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Tufteland. Mr. Tufteland died in 1920. Mrs. Tufteland lives on the same
homestead